

My Fortress, Prince of Peace, My Lord, Jesus – Aarti Modi

Family Background

My name is Aarti Modi (was known as Aarti Sharma before marriage). I was born in a small village in Rajasthan in 1985 in a Brahman family. Our family was devoted to all Hindu gods and goddesses and would religiously do idol worship in the temple. As part of this belief, we would also believe in associated superstitions. I was a very religious girl and would follow the example of my dadiji in performing religious duty. Dadiji used to tell Hindu mythological stories to other ladies in the village, go to temple every day - morning and evening, go for teerthyatra etc. I would follow her example and right from the young age, I started going to temple, teerthyatra etc. My dadiji did a lot of temple service and yet peace was far from her. This lack of peace would reflect in her day to day life. I would get upset quite often by her behavior. I could not understand why there was no change in her life, what the truth was and who is God. I was too young to understand all such complex things, I guess.

Our Troubles

I saw my mother always sad and unhappy, struggling with life. Papa used to stay in Delhi for his profession and yet he would also struggle for some sort of better work. Some of his own close relative(s) ditched him. This family who deceived us would still consider themselves part of Gayatri family and do yagya etc.



Papa did not have good work (sometimes no work); therefore everybody would consider us inferior and would treat us badly. Mummy used to suffer a lot. After finishing household chores, she would come back to room and weep for long times. She would hug me and bhaiya (my elder brother) and cry profusely. She would go for all Hindu saints etc in search of peace and prosperity in our house. Her main objective was to get Papa a stable work, but she would always come back miserable and with failures. She would cry before idols for hours together, longing for everything to just become alright by the grace of the gods she was worshipping. Nothing happened. I would wonder whether someone is really listening.

Papa used to come home every month or once in two months. Mummy would always request him to take us along with him to Delhi. Finally one day, Papa decided to take us to Delhi. In 1996, we moved to Delhi and started living in a rented room. We faced many difficulties there specially due to financial crisis. Few of our relatives (Tau ji – elder brother of my father) also used to live in Delhi; however, instead of helping, he would always abuse and go back. This would disturb us even more.

New Beginnings

Due to constant struggle, Papa-mummy started thinking of moving to Jaipur. They thought that some work could be found in Jaipur as well, but I was not at all prepared to go to Jaipur. I would cry everyday and try to convince my parents to not move once again. I would ask why this all was happening with us. Normally, they would heed to whatever I say, but this time, they were not ready to understand. They started preparing for moving.

My papa's aunt used to live in Jaipur, so papa asked her to look for a house for us on rent. We informed her that we were moving to Jaipur forever. Mamiji (papa's aunt) started searching the house but she found none. Even if she found some, wherever she gave advance money, they would return (for reasons known to them alone) the money and say – we don't want to let it out. Finally, when it was only one day left for us to move, mamiji found a house, and the house-owner generously agreed even on a sum less than he was expecting as rent. He did not know why he agreed on a lesser amount. Now I know, God was working out his plan for us.

Next day, we reached Jaipur with our entire luggage. We all were sad and were apprehensive of our future (and the new place). We had moved to Jaipur in year 2000. I stopped talking. Papa started his struggle to find a stable work. I used to live upset and therefore would frequently go to mamiji's house.

One Friday evening, we heard some sound of singing songs from our house owner (Arun Bhaiya's room). We found the songs soothing, so we just sat down and started listening to those songs. We could hear some music instruments also being played the songs being sung were very encouraging and full of hope. We felt a strange peace within ourselves as we listened to those songs. We almost forgot our pains and sufferings for a while.

Next day, mummy asked Arun Bhaiya's wife (Vandana) about the last night's singing episode. She informed my mother that it was a prayer meeting in their house. Couple of people from a nearby church would come to their house every Friday to worship and pray for some time with them. She informed that they all would read Bible together and meditate upon it in this meeting. This was all so new for us, but somehow we were happy by knowing this. We asked her if we could also visit a church sometime. Sister Vandana gladly replied saying, "Yes! Anyone can come to the Church!". We decided that we would also go and see the church soon.

First visit to the Church

Bhaiya went to the church with Arun Bhaiya once and after coming back, excitedly he told us that it was a very good experience. He said that he really like it. So, I also started asking Papa to take me to the Church at least once. After lot of persistent pleas, finally papa agreed to take me to the church soon.

11 November, 2000 was the Sunday when I went to church first time in my life. I remember the date because it was my birthday. As we were going to the Church, many things were going on in my mind. I was expecting a big colonial building with a big cross on the top, very peaceful environment inside. I was also apprehensive of what to do inside, and how would people react because we were Hindus. With all this in my mind, as we approached near to the church, no colonial building was to be seen, rather I started to hear similar but louder music from a nearby house. As we came still nearer, we found a pretty average sized house, full of greenery and a hall besides, out of which I saw number of shoes and chappals scattered outside. We entered the church and stood in the backside. We say people

praying for each other. I could not understand much so I was just looking around. Some people were praying in a language which I did not understand at all.

After church meeting, so many girls and ladies came to meet me. They met me with so much of love and I did not even feel that it was my first visit there. Pastor uncle gifted me a Bible. Now, I did not know again what to do with this Bible and what to expect in it. However, with this pleasant experience, I came back home and told everything to mummy. I told her to go together to the Church next Sunday as a family. Immediately after this, I opened the Bible and started reading it. Truly speaking, I did not understand many things, but one thing became very evident – Jesus Christ came for the whole human race. He did not come only for Christians, but he gave his life for every sinner as he died on the cross. I also came to know that Jesus rose again from the dead and has defeated death. Knowing this, my faith in Jesus started growing.

My faith and blessings

I came to know that Jesus Christ is alive and therefore whatever we pray, he listens and answers. Knowing this, all doubts flee from my heart and my heart was molded in such a way that whatever I read in the Bible, I just believed in it instantly without any questions or much thinking. Whatever I learnt about Jesus, I started telling to my relatives as well. I thought that as I, my mummy and bhaiya have believed in Jesus, they shall also do the same.

I would speak to Papa for hours about Jesus. As he realized that I was completely going for Jesus and have stopped idol worship, he stopped me from going to Church. He started forcing us to do idol worship as in Hindu traditional way to please God. I became very sad and started praying with tears for my Papa. After some time, God worked in Papa's heart and he got changed. Finally he believed in Jesus and in this way our whole family was now following Jesus Christ. However, slowly many questions again started troubling Papa and our neighbors also started ridiculing him in the name of religious conversion etc. He would get upset by such things.

When we started believing in true and living God (who was, who is and will remain forever) through Jesus Christ, we found him faithful in everything. Papa's work became stable and my bhaiya also got a good job. Likewise, many of our material needs were met by God's grace and we got TV, computer, motorcycle etc. God started filling us with all kind of blessing spiritual and material. People started suspecting that we had changed our religion and had taken money in lieu of this. We would become sad by hearing such things but would laugh them out. God had given us a peace which was not disturbed now anymore with anything, and this is what we were looking for, for many years. None of our efforts but our faith in Jesus Christ brought this peace (as he promised that he would give his peace, which no fame, no money, no beauty, no relationships and/or material need of this world can offer). Bible says that Jesus is the prince of peace and true peace can be obtained only through him. We have tasted and experienced this truth.

Now there was another thing which started troubling my mummy – how would Aarti get married? Now we don't do any idol worship etc so if she gets married in a hindu family who still does the same, it would be a big problem for Aarti. She did not have answers so she would just pray with these questions in her heart. After some time, God helped us to meet a family who had come in Christian faith from Jain family. This was the divine plan of God and undoubtedly both our families were happy with this union.

Persecution

As soon as our relatives came to know that the talks of my marriage were in progress, they thought that I was getting married to a traditional Christian. This confusion brought them all (my dadiji, tauji, chachaji etc) to our house overnight. A big crowd gathered at our house and they started interrogating us about the temple of our house etc. We told them about our faith in Jesus Christ so they all came in opposition. They stayed in our house for a week and kept on pressurizing us for re-conversion to Hinduism (which we did not convert though – we had changed our hearts and turned from our unrighteousness, not religion). They wanted us to do idol worship again. God gave us strength to tell them our last and final decision to follow Christ at all price.

Hearing this, they started forcing more and even to the extent that they started abusing us and threatening us of our murder. They ridiculed us. They would stay in our house and do all sort of things. We were pushed to a corner in our own house. We could not understand why all this was happening with us; however, God gave us strength by his Word in such times too. These were the times where we were unable to go to the church, nor anyone from the church could come to meet us, only God was our fortress, our strength and our peace.

One day they all decided to take me and mummy to Delhi forcefully. Papa objected to this but still they managed to take us along almost in a kidnapping sequence. They made several plans for next 7-8 days of forcing us to do idol worship and getting me married to an unbeliever person. God spoke to Papa in Jaipur and next day he was in Delhi to rescue us. Even after lot of resistance, he took us back to Jaipur. As we reached Jaipur, our mamaji started following all our activities like a detective, to make sure that we were not going to Church or are not meeting with any believers. They would stop us from going to Church and yet our faith was not moved an inch shorter. This persecution had increased our faith rather. They were so amazed about the fact that how we had become so rigid that so much of their persistent efforts could not change our hearts a bit. Many of us stayed with us for long time persuading us, however, finally they all left one by one back to their house and routine life. Only by God's strength, we kept on standing for our faith.

God's protection and peace

After few days, chachaji (Papa's younger brother) wanted to come to our house. His intentions were not good. He called up papa and asked us to stay at home while he reaches. Though by his character, papa knew that it could be something wrong, yet he invited him. Mummy-papa was a little afraid too. This incident happened after my marriage and so papa, mummy and bhaiya were at home. They were waiting and all of a sudden, God put them all in a deep sleep wherever they were sitting. Next day, they all woke up from their respective places and were surprised about such a sleep and also why chachaji did not turn up. Papa called him to find out and inquired. Chachaji informed that he had come but there were 7-8 big size man standing outside who would not allow him to even touch the gate of the house, much less entering the house.

Hearing this, mummy papa and bhaiya's fear was gone and they leaped with joy to realize that God had sent his angels to protect them from harm. All fear was completely gone and they thanked God. We had never employed anyone for our security but our good God loves us so much that he would not even allow anyone to touch us with bad intentions. God's love is so unique that who ever loves him can rest assured that he will really never leaven them nor forsake them. No one can touch you, as Bible says that if God is on our side, who can be against us, who can

harms us.

In the right time, I got married with Sunil Modi (from the jain family who had believed in Jesus). Today I am living a happy and blessed life with my husband and kids. We are enjoying the loving fellowship of God everyday and everyday of our life is filled with his grace, love and peace.

We know now that Jesus Christ is the absolute truth. Salvation (moksha) can come only by faith in Jesus Christ, the true and living God. You can also believe in this peacemaker and sin-forgiving God for eternal life. It does not matter, which religion you belong to, it does not matter what you have done or how big sinner you are, you can trust in him and he will save you. If you have felt encouraged by my life testimony, do [contact us](#). May God bless you as per your faith.

If you have started believing in Jesus now and want to accept him as your personal savior and Lord, please pray the following prayer with all your heart –

“Lord Jesus, today I have come to know that you are living God who forgives sins, gives true peace and hear your saints cry. I repent of all my sins today and I pray that kindly forgive my sins and be my savior. Please grant me your peace and life. I completely trust in you and give my life to you, please take control of my life today onwards. Help me in walking on your ways, living by your Word. I thank you for listening to me now. In Jesus name I ask you all this. Amen.”

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