



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Courageous Choices – Part 1

**Guest(s):** Diet Eman

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**Dr. James Dobson:** Welcome everyone to Family Talk. It's a ministry of the James Dobson Family Institute, supported by listeners just like you. I'm Dr. James Dobson, and I'm thrilled that you've joined us.

**Roger Marsh:** Welcome to Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh, and today's program is a classic from the vault featuring a timeless tale of courage and conviction. It has to do with the Holocaust, so listener discretion is advised. But Dr. Dobson wants as many people as possible to hear this message, because we must never forget that people were and are persecuted for their faith each and every day. World War II must never be forgotten. That will be our theme here at Family Talk over the next couple of days as we focus on Memorial Day this coming Monday. You know, some children today don't even know about the German occupation or the pain and traumatic suffering that Jewish people across Europe suffered at the hands of the Nazis. So parents, make sure that you take the lead in teaching your children about history. You may be the only godly teacher your children will have in today's culture.

Remember the words of the famous German Lutheran pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer? You recall that he was executed for his beliefs during the Holocaust. Remember the quote, "Not to speak is to speak and not to act is to act"? Well, today on our program you're going to hear from a woman who lived by that motto and spoke up against the evil of her time during World War II. Her name is Diet Aman. She was a Holocaust survivor who was imprisoned by the Nazis for helping Jews escape to safety. At the time she was captured she was a young woman in the Netherlands working for the resistance alongside her fiancé. Diet's testimony is powerful, and it's the basis of discussion for today's and tomorrow's program as recorded in her book called Things We Couldn't Say.

You'll hear her describe her incredibly difficult and dispiriting life under the barbaric Nazi-controlled incarceration, and you'll hear her explain why she fought for those who were persecuted. Now, on today's program, you're going to hear this classic conversation featuring Diet Eman and our own Dr. James Dobson. Of course, it was in 2019 that Diet Aman went home peacefully to be with the Lord at the age of 99. Here now is Dr. James Dobson to further introduce today's guest here on this special edition of Family Talk.

Dr. James Dobson: The people who are listening to us on the radio have heard your testimony, many of them, when you've talked about your experiences in wartime Holland and the atrocities of the Nazis and so on. As you think back on that era, do you deal with bitterness? I know that you became friends with Corrie ten Boom, a great Christian lady later after the war, and I know that the Lord had to deal with her hatred, or at least the temptation to hate, and He forgave her for that hatred and she learned to forgive those oppressors, the Gestapo and so on. Did you go through that as well?

Diet Eman: When everybody was being killed, yes, and in our family, we lost a lot of people. My oldest brother and uncles and aunts and so many. My sister's fiancé, my fiancé. And then you are very bitter and full of hatred. But you need some time and then you start thinking and then slowly I got to the conclusion that when I see injustice, I get fanatic. I get really upset. My hair goes up. And I thought, "Here I miss my character," which is getting very mad when I see injustice. And then I thought, "I grew up in a Christian home, a Christian family. We knew the Bible. And the border of Germany is so close by. What would have happened to me if I had been born on the other side of the border in a home where they did not know God?"

And the young people in Germany were at 12, 13, 14 taken by Hitler, forced if they want it or not, and they had all, they most liked it, but they had all to go in the Hitler Youth and there for years they got beautiful uniforms. They were trained in weapons and in everything. And for day after day, year after year, they were indoctrinated. The Jews are to blame for everything. The Jews are to blame. And they were brainwashed and they were ready to do. They were willing to do. I heard that the SS was trained in [inaudible 00:04:56], that were the volunteers, that when they started to study for the SS, they got a little German Shepherd puppy and they had three years, I think. So, your dog becomes your friend. At their exam with their own hands, they had to kill the dog and break his neck. They were trained in cruelty. And I think if that was the training of all the young people in Germany, what would've happened if I had been born there, did not know God? But by the grace of God I might have been a fanatic Nazi.

Dr. James Dobson: Now, you didn't think that through when you were in prison.

Diet Eman: Not in prison. This came-

Dr. James Dobson: It was afterwards.

Diet Eman: ... slowly later. It needs time. It needs time.

Dr. James Dobson: It is incredible that you and Corrie and others were able to forgive considering what you went through. Did you ever encounter anyone inside the prison from the other side, the Gestapo and the prison guards, who showed any humanity or any sense of shame or regret for what was being done to you?

Diet Eman: In the concentration camp, there was a 19-year-old beautiful girl, and she was married to a man of 27 and she was beautiful, and they were six months married and they were arrested. They had helped allies and they found it out. So, Anshe was in my back and slept close by in one of the rows and I was afraid that Anshe would go crazy. And then Anshe had her birthday. I never forget, August 7. And in the distance we saw all purple flowers. And we had sometimes to march in the camp street. And there was one guard and he was an Austrian. I got to know his name, Herr Kraus. And when he saw us march, he looked with pity. So, I think maybe he was called to be-

Dr. James Dobson: That's as close as anyone came to saying, "I'm sorry."

Diet Eman: Yeah. He looked friendly, and he looked kind of sad that I thought, "You have some feeling." And you know what I did? The evening before Anshe's birthday, the windows were all open. We had no showers. We had no change of clothing. So, it was warm and we didn't have clean clothing. So, the windows were open. Maybe otherwise it would've smelled. 175 women. But I took a chance and he was on duty and he stood at the corner and I said, "Herr Kraus. Herr Kraus." And he came close by and I said, "Remember that beautiful girl, Anshe?"

And he knew where we were. He said, "Yes." I said, "She has her birthday tomorrow. Will you please pick a purple flower?" And he did it. And he gave me a half rotten potato and I hollowed it out and stuck the flower in it. And out of my sock, I pulled some wool and I made three holes and hung it. And when Anshe was asleep and we all slept over each other, I hung it on the wire of the bed above her. And when she woke up the next morning, she had her pot of flowers.

Dr. James Dobson: Oh, my.

Diet Eman: And so this man had feeling.

Dr. James Dobson: Did she survive the war?

Diet Eman: She did, but he didn't.

Dr. James Dobson: He didn't.

Diet Eman: She was a widow at 20.

Dr. James Dobson: Oh, my.

Diet Eman: And she later, later married another resistance fighter. And he had been in so deep and he couldn't handle it. I visited her still later, years later, and she told me that this man, her second husband, couldn't handle it. And he was deep depressions. Yeah. You know what the crazy thing was? These survivors felt kind of guilty for a time.

Dr. James Dobson: Yes. Yeah.

Diet Eman: Have you heard that before?

Dr. James Dobson: Oh, yes. It's very common in combat for those who have friends and-

Diet Eman: You feel guilty.

Dr. James Dobson: ... officers who are killed and they come home whole or come home at all and feel like somehow that they-

Diet Eman: And I have that too.

Dr. James Dobson: ... have no right to be alive.

Diet Eman: And this man had it so strong and she told me it was terrible. She lived on a flat in an apartment building, beautiful, the sixth floor. And on a Sunday morning she said, "I went downstairs to get the paper," and her husband had jumped out of the window and he was lying there dead.

Dr. James Dobson: Oh, my.

Diet Eman: So, she has had a lot. And I heard of several of my friends who after the war, the people from the camp who couldn't handle it anymore, started drinking and so. So, that was-

Dr. James Dobson: You told about having to wash the clothes that were bloody. Explain what happened there.

Diet Eman: That was the hardest thing. When I found out that these were executed men and I found it out via spy, then I started looking for the bullet holes. And I had to wash it. Blood, you have to soak in cold water. So, the tubs in which we had to work to wash ourself, I had to fill with water and plug in and then throw those bloody clothes in. And that was all blood of our Dutch young men. Most of them hadn't even had a trial. And then I started looking if I saw names I knew and I tried to memorize them that I could later tell the family maybe. And then I looked where the bullet holes were. And that is when I got so angry.

Because the Geneva Convention that all the countries had signed said, "If you have to execute a person, it has to be done by three people, by machine guns, and on the heart level." And I found that nobody ever knows I did it. That's to protect each, and that it goes fast. And I found bullet holes here low in their intestines, which meant that they-

Dr. James Dobson: They suffered.

Diet Eman: ... had been lying there for hours and bleeding to death. And then I reported it to the Red Cross when I came out, and later there was at trial and I think in Nuremberg and so. But there was such a cruelty that I was [inaudible 00:10:45].

Dr. James Dobson: It's really difficult to imagine a people that cruel and that lacking in any kind of sensitivity. I understand what you just said about the training and the indoctrination, but we're human after all. And it is very hard for me to understand how that could have occurred. Take innocent people and subject them to such torture and such misery and then death.

Diet Eman: You know what I think? That we humans are much worse than animals and that are the people without God. But when we don't have God, we-

Dr. James Dobson: Yes, yes.

Diet Eman: An animal kills to eat. Without God, I think we are capable of anything, really.

Dr. James Dobson: Diet, explain how you felt when you were suddenly released, that the Germans had bought your story. It was a lie that you had concocted and you made it sound plausible and they let you go. That was 1944 and you walked out of there a free lady. You were still sick. You were miserable. You were ragged. Your future was very much in doubt, and yet you walked out of there free. What was that like?

Diet Eman: I was let out with another girl, and that was when Corrie and Betsy were brought to Ravensbrück and Baton was close by.

Dr. James Dobson: There are 10 rooms.

Diet Eman: That was all in the end of August '44. And then a few weeks later was that thing, the bridge too far, the Battle of Arnhem.

Dr. James Dobson: Oh, yeah.

Diet Eman: Just before that I got out. And I had said to a lady who said, "Really, if you want to get out, if you would get out, what day would you want?" And I said, "If I may choose," I said, "I wanted a bright sunshiny day and I would like it to be a Saturday morning. And then you can take a soap bath and shampoo your hair and clean underwear and clean clothes and Sunday go to church and thank God for freedom." I said, "But if it's pouring and it's Monday morning, I'll go too." And you know what happened? Two weeks later on a radiant Saturday morning, I was called out by one of the [foreign language 00:12:49] and she said, "You go to Germany." And deep down was a little voice that said, "No, you're going out." And-

Dr. James Dobson: To be sent to Germany was a death sentence.

Diet Eman: That was practically at that time a death sentence. But that little voice. And then another Anshe also, a widow, she didn't know it, they heard it later, her husband had been shot the night before, she was called. And the two of us were marched to another part as where we had come in, and they opened a gate and there was nothing but sand. Everywhere sand and trees and no path, only two wheel tracks and some horse manure. And they had been so cruel. And we stood there and very undernourished and we had to walk, and which way do we go? And we wanted to get away. We thought they might open the gates again and say-

Dr. James Dobson: Change their mind.

Diet Eman: ... "Big joke. Back in." And then we saw a little dot in the distance and we started walking. And this was the last year of the war, '44. And our farmers had never had any fertilizer and there was nothing anymore. So, for years they always collected all the manure from the horses, the pigs and the cows and everything. And when that pit that they put it in was full, they dumped it in a wooden cart. And those carts, they spread all the stuff out over the field, but they never scrubbed that cart. In a few days they did it again. And this was such a cart filled to the brim with you know what, manure, and a terrific smell. And the farmer was walking next to it and there was a seat behind the horse, but in four years never scrubbed. It was caked on anywhere and everywhere. And then he saw us, and we were then young girls. He said, "Girls, you just came out of the camp?" And he says, "Yes."

And he didn't know if he should offer us the seat because it was caked on with you know what. But to us, I say, it was a Cadillac. And we said, "Yes, please." He said, "Hop on." And he brought us to the railway station and there was a [inaudible 00:14:36] because we got bread. But when I was sitting on that car in my... I had given all my clothes away. I had only a raincoat and underwear because I thought, "They're going out to Germany." And it was near September. So, I was sitting there and I was singing, "God is faithful and He is love." And I think He has a sense of humor because isn't it a glorious exit out of a prison on a manure cart.

Dr. James Dobson: Your parents had been praying for you all this time.

Diet Eman: Oh, I think they had callouses on their knees.

Roger Marsh: Friend, you are listening to Family Talk, and I'm Roger Marsh jumping in here for a brief moment. If you just joined us, this is a classic episode of The Family Talk broadcast. Our guest today is Holocaust survivor Diet Aman. She's speaking with Dr. James Dobson six years before she went home to be with the Lord in 2019. Okay, let's rejoin the conversation with Diet Aman right now, and our own Dr. James Dobson right here on Family Talk.

Dr. James Dobson: Why did they let you out?

Diet Eman: I think I acted so super stupid that I think... And I had my little kicks out of that. When they talked to me I stood like that with my mouth half open. "I don't know what you're saying. Can you speak Dutch?" That I think they did not have enough trains. And they brought the majority of the camp to Ravensbrück, Corrie and Betsy. They shot the men. They let the widows out because the men were shot. And I think that they had a list. It is, of course, God in the end, but I think that when they came to me that they say, "[inaudible 00:16:14], she's a border case. She's too stupid to do anything," and that they let me out for that. And then I went back. I had seen the evil and I went full blast back. So many were arrested. So, I had to. I jumped right in it. And there were no trains anymore.

The Queen had said, "Don't use the trains. Every train will be shot by Spitfire. Don't take trucks. Don't do any bikes." If a German was walking, they've done it five times to me, "Halt. Your bike." And I'd always dangerous stuff on me, so I gave it. And one time I didn't have dangerous stuff, so I said no. And he took his revolver and he shot it right next to my shoe and he said, "The next one go in." So, you give your bike. And I walked The Netherlands. You've been there. I've walked from The Hague to Amsterdam. I've walked from Amsterdam to Amersfoort. Every day my rucksack on. I think that's why I'm now so fit and comfortable. And sometimes you were so tired. And I said to myself, "If you just put one foot in front of the other one and you keep doing that, you'll get there." But it was really amazing. It was a very strange time.

Dr. James Dobson: Why did you go back into the battle when you knew what awaited you? You knew that many of the people that you had been in prison with had either been shot or sent to Germany, which is worse in some ways. And they let you out kind of on a fluke, and you go right back into the resistance. What kind of woman are you? You were only 22, 23.

Diet Eman: 22 at that time.

Dr. James Dobson: I don't understand what you're made out of.

Diet Eman: I had seen so much evil that everything in me wanted to do something against it. And then when I was walking the whole Netherlands, people from [foreign language 00:18:01], a guy that I knew, he knew me and he came. He said, "Diet, you are walking the whole Netherlands. Would you be willing to do spying for the government?" I said, "Sure." And they gave me big maps with the area where I walk with every tree, every wall and degrees. And then I had to make reports if I saw troop movements and if I saw ships in harbors and if I saw that they were building fortifications. And then you had to coordinate the degrees and I'd make reports and that went to the front. I got a little thank you note for front [inaudible 00:18:33]. So no, after that evil experience, I wanted to do anything to get them out of our country.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, the courage and the bravery that you showed... You don't think of yourself as a heroine, do you?

Diet Eman: No! I think-

Dr. James Dobson: I do, and a lot of other people do. Why do you not?

Diet Eman: No. Because I think the heroes, and I hate it when they used that word, were in Germany. Those in the lion's den, like Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Martin Niemöller. And I heard a few years ago that in Berlin, so many Christians hid the Jews. To me, that are the heroes, that they had to rise up against their own government. But this power had marched in our country. I was furious. They had no right to be there. They touched our Jewish people since maybe since 1600 and the affirmation and the persecution from the Portuguese Jews that they had lived in the...

They were Dutch citizens. They had a right to be there. And here they come and they start torturing our people. I was mad. And apart from this, I still wanted to do something to get them out. And then that's God's will too. You can't let that they touched the apple of his eye. So, it was combined. My indignation against all the evil and that they had such an arrogance and power. And it's clearly... In every war they always say God is on our side. But this was so evil that I knew God was on our side. Definitely not on the Nazi side. In this you could say it. In other wars, I'm not always sure.

Dr. James Dobson: You lost your brother. He died in a Japanese concentration camp.

Diet Eman: He was in a terrible prison near Bandung, the Sukamiskin. And nobody got out of that prison.

Dr. James Dobson: They tortured him to death. How do you know that?

Diet Eman: Because we had many people, family, who had jobs in Indonesia and they were all put in camps. But we had seen a chance to smuggle a little note out and they heard later from others who... There was one guy that I met who had come out of that camp and he nearly apologized to me. And I said, "Did you know he came out of the Sukamiskin?" And I was decorated by Prince Bernhard, and 39 people from whole America had to come to the Dutch Embassy in Washington and we all got a resistance medal. And then we had an evening meal in the Army and Navy Club. It was very beautiful. And I sat next to this man, and people from Indonesia speak staccato. "Well, I have been there and then here," and he spoke like that. I said, "You come from Indonesia?" He said, "Yeah."

I said, "Where?" "Bandung." And I said, "My brother was there. But we all were victim. We all had resisted." He said, "I was in the Sukamiskin." So, I said, "Did you know my brother?" He said, "Yes." And he was very quiet. And then he says to me, like an excuse, "I only got out because I was 15." Like he had to excuse himself that he had survived. But my brother smuggled a note out to family and in it he said, "I have fought a good fight. Hence is the crown of life is for me." So we know that it was God. Yeah.



Dr. James Dobson: Your sister's husband was shot.

Diet Eman: My sister's fiancé.

Dr. James Dobson: Fiancé.

Diet Eman: He was shot the first war day and he was placed on a little airport outside The Hague. And the [inaudible 00:22:08] came down 6:00 AM and they shot him. They have those buddies in these. They were both shot. So, he was one of the first one to fall. And she was engaged. This was May 10, and they would've gotten married in September.

Dr. James Dobson: Diet, such sadness. Such incredible sadness during those war years. Little children orphaned, good people killed. You think it can ever happen again?

Diet Aman: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: How did it happen?

Diet Eman: You know what were the worst thing in that prison? They rounded up the Jews, put them in. But every Tuesday and every Thursday night in the night, they were rounded up out of their cells. And then we heard scream and it was heartbreaking. "Mama, mama, mama," children and parents. I wrote in a letter, I said, "I have to become hard. I can't handle this anymore. I'm cracking up. I'm cracking up." And he wrote that I may not get hard, but it was very, very difficult.

Roger Marsh: What a remarkable testimony from Diet Eman. She showed great bravery and strength and conviction to do what is right in the face of sheer terror and oppression. We have so much to learn from our shared history as nations, and I'm really glad to learn more about Diet Eman. We did so on today's program and she'll be back again tomorrow as we wrap up her amazing inspirational interview with Dr. Dobson. It's taken from our broadcast archive vault, and we're doing so to honor the men and women who have died for all of our freedom as we head into Memorial Day weekend. Now, if you missed any part of today's program, you can go online to [drjamesdobson.org/familytalk](http://drjamesdobson.org/familytalk). You can also share the audio from there as well. You can also easily share today's program from the official Family Talk JDFI app.

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you a friend and greatly appreciate the relationship that we share. We rely on God through your tax-deductible financial contributions to help us continue the work to which God has called us, and that is equipping families to stand for righteousness in today's culture by modeling healthy marriages and families.

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Announcer:

This has been a presentation of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.