

New Zealand shootings: Hero picked up mosque attacker's gun and chased him

Abdul Aziz tells Sky News that had he not distracted the attacker, the gunman "would probably have killed all of us".

By Adam Arnold, news reporter

Sunday 17 March 2019 15:22, UK



'I didn't have any fear - and I'm not a hero'

A survivor has told Sky News how he screamed at the Christchurch attacker as he tried to lead the gunman away from a mosque where several people had already been killed.

Abdul Aziz, 48, said he heard gunshots during Friday prayers and **left his family, including his four children, inside the Linwood Islamic Centre as he ran outside to confront the terrorist in a car park.**

He said his children were saying, "Please come inside".

"I told them 'you guys go inside, I will be alright,'" he said in an interview with Sky News.

He bravely carried on and picked up a credit card reader off a table to use as a weapon before seeing the bodies of two people in a nearby pathway.

Mr Aziz **spotted the attacker as he was heading towards his car to get hold of another gun,** and as he did so the worshipper hurled the machine at him.

The killer then got his new gun and started shooting at Mr Aziz about four or five times - but he was able to duck between cars.

It was at that moment that Mr Aziz **picked up a shotgun which had been abandoned by the killer and chased him as the attacker returned to his car for second time to get another weapon.**



A police cordon near the Linwood mosque following Friday's shootings

Seven people died at the Linwood Islamic Centre - the second of two mosques targeted by the attacker in the New Zealand city.

Fifty people were killed in the attacks, and scores were injured.

[Suspect Brenton Tarrant, a 28-year-old Australian has appeared in court](#) charged with one murder over the shootings.

Mr Aziz said: "I was screaming to the guy, 'Come I'm here, come I'm here'. I tried to put his focus on me. **I didn't want him to go inside the mosque.**"



Still images show mosque gunman's preparation

He added: **"I had the shotgun in my hands. Then I saw he dropped his gun** and he ran and I chased him."

But the shotgun Mr Aziz had picked up was empty and so when the gunman got back in his car, Mr Aziz said he threw the weapon "like an arrow", shattering the car window.

"It bust his window and that way he got shocked."



Speaking to Sky News, Abdul Aziz said the attacker was a 'coward'

Mr Aziz said the gunman "swore at me and took off" before he chased the killer down the street.

The attacker then managed to run away when the nearby traffic lights turned red.*

Mr Aziz then returned to the mosque where he found a lot of friends had been injured.

He has now been hailed a hero for confronting the gunman.

Latef Alabi, the mosque's acting imam, said: "He (Aziz) went after him...and that's how we were saved. **Otherwise, if he managed to come into the mosque, then we would all probably be gone.**"



Suspect Brenton Tarrant has appeared in court charged with murder

But Mr Aziz denied he was a hero, saying: "I don't think I'm a hero because if I was not there somebody else would do the same thing. That's part of humanity, to help another human".

He also said had he not distracted the killer, the gunman "would probably have killed all of us".

He also called the murderer a "coward" who had "no mercy for anyone".

- **My note: The official narrative is that the "gunman" did not run away at the traffic lights, but remained in his car until he was arrested.**