

# **THE GUIDE TO BECOMING A MUSLIM**

Informative steps for those  
interested in accepting Islam

Compiled by  
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## Editor's Note

This publication was compiled and formatted into a booklet by Suleyman Kurter.

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## Introduction

This guide has been prepared out of convenience for individuals seeking to convert to Islam; so that taking the steps to embrace this way of life will be easier to understand. You are delving into an area that perhaps you do not have in-depth knowledge. In which case our first suggestion to those seeking the truth of Islam is not to be distracted or confused by misinformation or one-sided views, which were misconstrued by a biased media. Do not worry, you will have time to explore other avenues of unbiased, factual information so that you will have a balanced perspective on Islam.

Muslims feel great joy when they hear that someone is converting to Islam because Islam is a religion that was sent to all mankind. Therefore, we welcome new converts with open arms! It is always inspiring to hear the stories of what led a person to embrace Islam as a belief and a way of life.

The Prophet Muhammad (May peace be upon him) welcomed all individuals from various social and economic walks of life, including those who had previously fought him and killed his loved ones. Later, as you study Islamic history, you will find that those same people became so passionate in their belief that they would be some of the greatest heroes of Islam. So, regardless, of your background and no matter what you may have said or done to Muslims or others in the past, rest assured that you will be openly accepted.

Islam is a religion for all of humanity, it unites people of different colors, languages, races and nationalities together into one community.

*"The Believers are but  
A single Brotherhood:  
So make peace and  
Reconciliation between your  
Two (contending) brothers;  
And fear Allah, that ye  
May receive Mercy". (Qur'an 49:10)*

Therefore, when you become a Muslim we will gladly welcome you as our brother or sister in Islam.

## **Who can be a Muslim?**

Any human being can embrace Islam. You do not need to take a course or obtain a certificate to become a Muslim, nor do you need to seek permission from any individual. There is no compulsion in Islam, which means no one can force anyone else to become a Muslim. This universal religion attracts individuals from all walks of life and from every nation. There are many Blacks, Whites, Asians, Latinos, and Native Americans who accept Islam everyday.

From some Muslims, you may hear incorrect advice due to their lack of knowledge of Islam. So please feel free to contact us via the information on the back of this booklet.

Some commonly asked questions:

■ **If you have tattoos, Can you still become a Muslim?**

Someone who says to you that you must remove all your tattoos to be a Muslim is incorrect. Tattoos are not allowed in Islam but they do not prevent a person from becoming a Muslim. Later, you can have the tattoos removed if you can afford it.

■ **If you have a shameful past or committed many sins, Can you still become a Muslim?**

No matter what sins you have committed or what your past was, you can still become a Muslim. Islam erases all sins committed prior to becoming a Muslim. Prophet Muhammad (May peace be upon him) said:

*"Islam annuls what came before it".* Hadith, Muslim.

Thus, as soon as you become a Muslim all your previous sins are forgiven and you can start with a blank slate.

**Word of Caution: If you recommit your former sins after becoming a Muslim, you will be in grave sin in the sight of Allah.**

## **The Process of Becoming Muslim**

To become a Muslim one must simply recite with sincerity and conviction the *Shahada* (Declaration of Faith). The *Shahada* is as follows:

**"AHS-HADU ANLA ELAHA ILLA-ALLAH WA ASH-**

## ***HADU ANNA MUHAMMADAN RASUL-ALLAH"***

The English translation is:

"I bear witness that there is no god worthy to be worshipped but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His Servant and Messenger".

After this declaration, you are a Muslim! Welcome to Islam!

## **You are a Muslim, now what?**

The *Shahada* (Declaration of Faith) is sufficient to make one a convert to Islam. However, you should begin to learn Islam and what is expected of you in order to be a good Muslim. Some of these characteristics are:

### **1. Knowledge**

In Arabic this means *Ilm*. The *Shahada* should be said with knowledge. If a person says the *Shahada* without knowing its meaning, or what its requirements are, then he will not benefit by it because he/she cannot believe in what it requires. Rather, he is like someone who utters some foreign words that he does not understand.

### **2. Certainty**

The heart must be firmly certain of the meaning of *Shahadah* without a blemish of doubt. Allah (SWT) says in the Holy Qur'an:

***"Only those are Believers  
Who have believed in Allah  
And His Messenger, and have***

***Never since doubted, but  
Have striven with their  
Belonging and their persons  
In the Cause of Allah:  
Such are the sincere ones.*** (Qur'an 49:15)

### **3. Sincerity**

Allah indicates in the Holy Qur'an that:

*"And they have been commanded  
No more than this:  
To worship Allah,  
Offering Him sincere devotion,  
Being True (in faith);  
To establish regular Prayer;  
And to practise regular Charity;  
And that is the Religion  
Right and Straight."* (Qur'an 98:5)

Abu Hurairah (one of the Prophet's companions) said:  
*"I asked the Messenger of Allah, Peace be upon Him:  
Messenger of Allah! Who will be most fortunate to en-  
joy your shafa'ah (intercession) on the Day of Resur-  
rection? The Messenger of Allah, Peace be upon Him,  
said: I was certain that no one else would ask me  
about this other than you, because I have noticed your  
keenness for hadeeth. The most fortunate of men who  
will enjoy my shafa'ah on the Day of Resurrection is  
the one who says: (La Ilaha Illa Allah) "None has the  
right to be worshipped except Allah", sincerely from  
his heart.."*

(Musnad Imam Ahmad)

### **4. Truthfulness**

This characteristic is necessary for a Muslim because it prevents hypocrisy. Hypocrites utter *Shahada* with their tongues, but do not inwardly believe in what it signifies in their hearts.

There is a Hadith that the Messenger of Allah said:

*"Any one who testifies that there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah would forbid his admittance to the fire". (Muslim)*

### **5. Love and affection**

The Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon Him) said:

*"There are three (qualities), whoever possesses them, will taste the sweetness of Iman (belief), to love Allah and His Messenger than anyone else, to love the Muslim only for the sake of Allah, and to dread returning to kufr (apostasy) as he dreads being thrown in the fire". (Bukhari and Muslim)*

Allah said to His Messenger:

*"Say: If ye do love Allah,  
Follow me: Allah will love you  
And forgive you your sins;  
For Allah is Oft-Forgiving,  
Most Merciful." (Qur'an 3:31)*

### **6. Submission**

Submission is obedience by fulfilling rights, that are obligatory actions, with sincerity to Allah and seeking His good pleasure.

Allah (SWT) says in the Holy Qur'an:

*"Whoever submits  
His whole self to Allah,  
And is a doer of good,  
Has grasped indeed  
The most trustworthy hand-hold:  
And with Allah rests the End  
And Decision of (all) affairs." (Qur'an 31:22)*

And Allah (SWT) also says:

*"Turn ye to your Lord  
(In repentance) and bow  
To His (Will), before  
The Penalty comes on you:  
After that ye shall not  
Be helped." (Qur'an 39:54)*

### **7. Acceptance and Conformity**

Acceptance that prevents rejection, this is achieved by acting upon what Allah has commanded and abandon whatever He has prohibited.

Abu Musa al-Ash'aree reported that the Prophet (Peace be upon Him) said: *"The parable of guidance and knowledge which Allah has sent me with is like a rain which fell on a land. A patch of land received the water and produced much herbage and grass. And a patch which was barren. The latter retained water wherewith Allah extended benefits to men: they drank from it, irrigated and planted their vegetation. And a patch which was a sandy plain, it neither retained water nor produced herbage. This is parallel to the person who conceived the religion of Allah and ben-*

*efited from the Message with which Allah has sent me, whereby he learned and taught others. The other person turned away from it (from my Message), and rejected the guidance of Allah with which I am sent.."*  
(Bukhari and Muslim)

Allah (SWT) says in the Holy Qur'an:

*"Ye have indeed  
In the Messenger of Allah  
A beautiful patter (of conduct)  
For any one whose hope is  
In Allah and the Final Day  
And who engages much  
In the praise of Allah."* (Qur'an 33:21)

And Allah (SWT) also says:

*"...So take what the Messenger  
Assigns to you, and deny  
Yourselves that which he  
Withholds from you.  
And fear Allah; for Allah  
Is strict in Punishment."* (Qur'an 59:7)

Again Allah (SWT) says:

*"O ye who believe!  
Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger,  
And those charged  
With authority among you  
If ye differ in anything*

*Among yourselves, refer it  
To Allah and His Messenger.  
If ye do believe in Allah  
And the Last Day:  
That is best, and most suitable  
For final determination." (Qur'an 4:59)*

## **What do you do once you have said the *Shahada*?**

Once a person has said the *Shahada*, he/she needs to complete certain purifications.

1. Both male and female should trim their nails short, shave their hair under their armpits and pubic hair (Note: pubic hair should not be allowed to grow long and should be trimmed periodically).
2. Take Ghusl (showers) and wear clean, pure clothes. Clean clothes should be free from impurities such as urine, feces and dog saliva.
3. Begin learning how to pray and other requirements in order to live as a Muslim.

## **Living as a Muslim**

You should try your best to live in accordance with Islam. You cannot learn everything at once, try to learn and acquire a thorough understanding of the basics duties of Islam. Some areas to learn are:

1. Prayer
2. Articles of Faith
3. Pillars of Islam
4. Dietary requirements (no alcohol, pork or pork bi-products)
5. Social behavior should be according to Qur'an and Sunnah
6. A Muslim should not allow urine, feces or dog saliva to be on their body or clothes.
7. Muslims should not flirt, date or have sexual relationships with the opposite sex, other than with their husband or wife.
8. Start studying and reading more books on Islam. Please see the list of publications at the end of the booklet.

## Some Recommended Books on Islam

### ENGLISH BOOKS

#### LEVEL I

1. Basics of Islam

#### LEVEL II

1. Jesus (PBUH) in the Qur'an
2. What the Bible Says About Muhammad (PBUH)
3. The Status of Women in Islam
4. Qur'an and the World Peace

#### LEVEL III

1. The Guide to Becoming a Muslim
2. *Tawheed* and *Shirk*
3. The Prayer Book (SALAH)
4. An Introduction to the Qur'an by Abu Ala Maududi
5. Qur'an
6. Selected Risale-i Nur by Bediuzzaman Said Nursi
  - a. The Short Words
  - b. Islamic Unity
  - c. Nationalism in the View of Islam
  - d. Letters to Prisoners

#### LEVEL IV

Islamic Classes are being offered to new Muslims. Nur Institute of America (NIA), with the collaboration of Esperanza Unida, are helping Muslims get training in welding, auto repair and customer services in order to get family sustaining jobs.

In the near future, NIA will collaborate with the Urban Health Clinic for training Muslims in health related jobs.

## ISLAMIC BOOKS IN SPANISH

1. Los Basicos de Islam
2. Cristo en el Islam
3. Muhammad en la Biblia
4. La Mujer en el Islam
5. La Oración en el Islam
6. ¿Cuál es su nombre?
7. El Sagrado Corán

If you need books or sessions on Islam or Job training for family sustaining jobs, please contact us.

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