



Your New Life

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The very moment a person embraces Islam is doubtless the greatest moment in his life, for it signifies his real birth through which he has come to understand the real reason behind his existence in this life and the manner of conducting his life according to the dictates of this great religion of Islam.

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***Sunan Al-Fitrah* (Practices dictated by Man's Pure Nature)**

> *How to Convert to Islam*

To enter the fold of Islam, all one needs to do is to pronounce the testimony of faith (*shahaadah*) with sincere conviction, being fully aware of its meaning. The *shahaadah* is the first and most important of the five pillars of Islam and consists of two parts, namely:

- 1 ***Ashhadu an laailaaha ilallaah:*** This means: I bear witness that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah; I worship Him alone without associating any partners with Him in worship.
- 2 ***Wa ash hadu anna Muhammadan rasool-ullaah:*** This means: And I bear witness that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah whom Allah has sent to all mankind; I will obey his commands and avoid anything he has forbidden and worship Allah according to His law and the teachings of His Messenger ﷺ. (See page 42-50)

Taking a Bath

The very moment a person embraces Islam is doubtless the greatest moment in his life, for it signifies his real birth through which he has come to understand the real reason behind his existence in this life. Now that he has entered the fold of Islam, he is recommended to take a bath (*ghusl*), washing his entire body with water. Just as he has cleansed his soul of such things as associating partners with Allah in worship (*shirk*) and committing sins, he is recommended to cleanse his body by taking a bath.

When one of the Arab notables embraced Islam, the Prophet ﷺ directed him to take a bath. (*Al-Bayhaqee's As-Sunan As-Sughraa*: 837)



> *Sincere Repentance*

Repentance (*tawbah*) means “sincerely turning to Allah”, and a repentant person is one who gives up sins and unbelief and turns to Allah in repentance.

A Muslim needs to repent and seek Allah’s forgiveness at practically all stages of his life; because it is only human to err, a Muslim is required to repent and beg Allah’s pardon every time he commits a sin.

What Are the Conditions of Sincere Repentance?

For repentance of all sins, including the sin of unbelief and *shirk*, to be valid and acceptable to Allah, a number of conditions must be met, including the following:

1 To give up the sin immediately

Sincere repentance from sin with the deliberate desire to continue to commit it is not valid and will not possibly take place; if, however, a person commits the sin again after sincerely repenting from it, his earlier repentance will still be valid but he will need fresh repentance, and so on.

2 To feel deep sorrow and regret for having committed it

True repentance cannot possibly take place without feeling deep remorse for having committed the sin. A person who talks about his past sins and brags about committing them is in no way considered penitent. As the Prophet ﷺ once stated, “Remorse is repentance.” (*Sunan Ibn Maajah*: 4252)

3 To sincerely resolve not to commit it again

Sincere repentance cannot possibly take place if a penitent person intends to repeat the sin.

Steps towards Acquiring Determination

- Pledging oneself not to repeat the sin under any circumstances and obstacles, not even for an instant, for the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever possesses the following three qualities will relish the sweetness of faith.” Of these three characteristics, he mentioned “to hate to return to unbelief (*kufi*) after Allah has saved him from it, as much as he would hate to be thrown into the Fire.” (*Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree*: 21; *Saheeh Muslim*: 43)
- Keeping away from people and places that are bound to decrease his faith and tempt him to commit sins.



- Repeatedly begging Allah ﷻ to keep him on the right path and adhere firmly to Islam until death, in any language or form. Examples from the Qur'an and the Prophet's *Sunnah* include the following:
 - *“Rabbanaa laa tuzigh quloobanaa ba'da idh hadaytanaa”* (Our Lord, do not make our hearts deviate after You have guided us) (*SooratAal-Imraan*, 3:8)
 - *“Yaa muqallibal-quloob, Thabbit qalbee 'alaa deenik”* (O Allah, Controller of hearts, make my heart adhere firmly to Your religion) (*Sunan At-Tirmidhee*: 2140)

What Happens after Repentance?

If a person turns to Allah in repentance, Allah ﷻ will definitely forgive his sins, no matter how serious they may be, for His mercy “extends to all things” (*Soorat Al-A'raaf*, 7:156). The Qur'an says, “Say: ‘My slaves, you who have transgressed against yourselves, do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Truly Allah forgives all wrong actions. He is the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Merciful.’” (*Soorat Az-Zumar*, 39:53)

After a person sincerely repents to Allah, Allah ﷻ will definitely pardon him and forgive his sins; in addition, He will reward him; immensely: He will change his bad deeds into good ones, as the Qur'an states, “Except for those who repent, believe and act rightly: Allah will transform

the wrong actions of such people into good — Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (*Soorat Al-Furqaan*, 25:70)

As this a reward is immense indeed, a sensible person ought to maintain such repentance and spare no effort to avoid falling into Satan's trap which will negatively affect his faith.

Sweetness of Faith

Those who will most certainly taste the sweetness of faith, experience deep tranquillity and take great delight in experiencing closeness to Allah are those who love Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ more than anyone or anything else, love others, commensurate with their closeness to Allah and dedication to Islam, and hate to convert to unbelief just as they hate to be punished in Hellfire. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Any person who combines these three qualities will certainly experience the sweetness of faith: (1) that Allah and His Messenger are dearer to him than anything else; (2) that his love of others is purely for Allah's sake; and (3) that he hates to relapse into unbelief as much as he hates to be cast into the Fire.” (*Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree*: 21; *Saheeh Muslim*: 43)



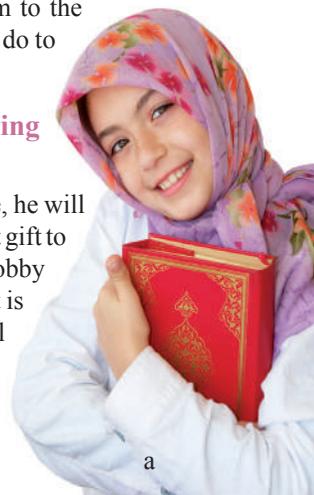
> A Muslim relishes the sweetness of faith when he hates to relapse into unbelief just as much as he hates to be thrown into the Fire.

> Showing Gratefulness to Allah for His Guidance

A Muslim owes Allah the Almighty a great debt of gratitude for helping him repent of the sins he has committed and for guiding him to the truth. The following are the best things a Muslim can possibly do to express gratitude to Allah for such blessings:

1 Holding Fast to Islam and Patiently Enduring Hardships that Come One's Way

It goes without saying that if a person has a priceless treasure, he will undoubtedly do his best to protect it. Islam is undeniably the best gift to mankind, for it is not a mere set of abstract ideology, nor is it a hobby which a person may practise whenever he feels like it; rather, it is a religion and a way of life which governs a Muslim's life in all its aspects without exception. Commanding His Messenger ﷺ to stubbornly hold fast to Islam and the teachings of the Qur'an, being on the right path, Allah ﷻ says in the Qur'an, "So hold fast to what has been revealed to you. You are on straight path." (*Soorat Az-Zukhruf*, 43:43)



A Muslim must not feel sad if he experiences any form of hardship, for it is part of Allah's wise plan to test His servants. Allah ﷻ even tested His prophets and messengers, who are far better than us, and the Qur'an tells us how they encountered untold suffering at the hands of relatives and enemies alike, without losing heart, weakening in their faith or wavering under adversity. The great hardship a Muslim faces due to his dedication to the truth is one of the ways Allah ﷻ tests His servants' faith. Therefore, live up to your lofty principles, try your best to pass the test, adhere to the truth under all circumstances and constantly pray to Allah to keep you on the right path, just as the Prophet ﷺ himself did. Repeat the supplication: "*Yaa muqallibal-quloob, Thabbit qalbee 'alaa deenik*" (O Allah, Controller of hearts, make my heart adhere firmly to Your religion). (*Sunan At-Tirmidhee*: 2140)

Allah ﷻ says in this context, "Do people think that once they say, 'We believe,' they will be left alone and not be put to the test? We certainly tried those who have gone before them, so Allah will certainly distinguish between those who are truthful and those who are lying." (*Soorat Al-'Ankaboot*: 2-3)

2 Doing One's Best to Call to Islam with Wisdom and Fair Admonition

Engaging in *da'wah* work (calling others to Islam) is undoubtedly one of the best ways of expressing gratitude to Allah as well as one of the most effective means to remain constant in faith. If a person recovers from a life-threatening disease which has caused him a great deal of suffering and misery after discovering the right cure for his disease, he will certainly spread such a remedy amongst people, particularly amongst his relatives and closest friends. This point is elucidated as follows:

> Calling Others to Islam (da'wah)

Virtues of Calling Others to Islam

Engaging in *da'wah* work is indisputably one of the best deeds in the sight of Allah and is highly commended in the Qur'an and the Prophet's *Sunnah*. Evidence to this effect includes the following:

- 1 **Da'wah is the means to success in this life and in the hereafter**, as the Qur'an states, "Let there be a group among you who call others to good, and enjoin what is right, and forbid what is wrong: those who do this shall be successful." (*Soorat Aal 'Imraan*,3:104)
- 2 **No one has a better speech than that of those who engage in da'wah activities.** Commending such people, the Qur'an says, "Who speaks better than one who calls to Allah, does good works and says, 'I am surely one of the Muslims.'?" (*Soorat Fussilat*, 41:33) It is clear, therefore, that there is no one whose speech is better than that of a person who calls people to the truth, for he is their guide to their Creator and Lord and the one who takes them out of the darkness of misguidance into the light of faith.
- 3 **Engaging in da'wah work testifies to one's compliance with Allah's command:** "Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair admonition, and argue with them in the best manner possible." (*Soorat An-Nahl*, 16:125) A person who dedicates himself to such a noble task must invite others to Islam with wisdom, making sure that he knows the personality of the people he wants to call to Islam so as to choose the best possible method to carry out the task,

all the while arguing with them in the kindest, most gracious manner which appeals to them.

- 4 **Engaging in da'wah work was the very task carried out by all of Allah's messengers without exception**, foremost of whom was Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, whom Allah sent to all mankind as a witness over people, giving news to the believers of immense reward in the hereafter, warning the unbelievers against severe punishment and spreading his light to all mankind. The Qur'an says, "Prophet, We have sent you as a witness, as a bearer of good news and a warner, and a caller to Allah by His permission and a light-giving lamp. Convey to the believers the good news that they will receive immense favour from Allah." (*Soorat Al-Ahzaab*,33:45-47)
- 5 **Inviting people to Islam is the source of unlimited goodness** for each person you invite to Islam, you will get the same rewards for his prayer, worship and teaching others. What a great blessing Allah bestows on those who engage in *da'wah* work! The Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever calls to guidance will have a reward similar to that of those who follow it, without the reward of either of them being lessened at all." (*Saheeh Muslim*: 2674)
- 6 **The reward Allah has in store for those who invite others to Islam is far better than all the enjoyments of the present world**, for such a reward is from Allah Himself, the Most Generous, who will recompense them abundantly

for such a noble endeavour: “If you turn away from me, remember I ask no reward from you. Only Allah will reward me, and I have been commanded to submit completely to Him.” (*Soorat Yoonus*, 10:72)

The Prophet ﷺ also said in this respect, “If Allah guides one man through you, this will be better for you than possessing red camels.” (*Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree*: 2847; *Saheeh Muslim*:2406) Camels were considered the most valuable property in ancient Arabia and the red variety was the most prized of all.

Requirements of the Correct Manner of Inviting Others to Islam

Allah ﷻ describes the correct manner of engaging in *da'wah* work as one which is characterised by certain qualities which distinguish it from others. These qualities are as follows:

1 Insight and Knowledge

A caller to Islam (*daa'iyah*) must be knowledgeable about the truth to which he invites others, clearly presenting divine instructions to them, based on clear evidence: “Say: This is my Way: I invite to Allah, on the basis of a clear proof, and so do those who follow me.” (*Soorat Yusuf*, 12:108)

He does not have to know many things before he starts calling people to Islam. Whenever he learns something new, he has to teach it to others. For instance, If he learns about the necessity of not associating anyone in the worship of Allah, he ought to convey this information to others. Likewise, if he learns about some aspects of the beauty of Islam, he must convey this to them. To put it in a nutshell, he must convey anything he learns about Islam, even if what he has learned is one single verse of the Qur'an,

as the Prophet ﷺ once ordered, “Convey what you learn from me [to others], even if [what you have learnt] is one verse of the Qur'an.” (*Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree*: 3274)

This was the very practice of the Prophet's companions; they would learn the principles of Islam in a few days and then they would go back to their people to call them to Islam and arouse their interest in it, especially through their high moral character.



2 Wisdom

The Qur'an says, "Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair admonition, and argue with them in the best manner possible." (*Soorat An-Nahl*, 16:125) Wisdom is the ability to make sensible decisions and give good advice at the appropriate time and place because of the experience and knowledge one has.

Given the differences between people regarding their character and level of understanding, a caller to Islam must choose the appropriate method to engage in *da'wah* work and wait for the appropriate opportunity to win them over.

He must approach them with gentleness and compassion, and engage in a calm and balanced dialogue which does not instigate ill feelings and inflame hatred. It is for this reason that Allah ﷻ reminds His Messenger ﷺ of the favours He bestowed upon him by making him gentle with people: "It is by Allah's grace that you deal gently with them; had you been harsh and hard-hearted, they would surely have deserted you."

(*Soorat Aal-'Imraan*, 3:159)

Inviting Family Members and Relatives to Islam

A person who has been guided to Islam must do his best to call his family members and relatives to this religion, because they are the closest and dearest people to him. He ought to endure any harm he may encounter patiently whilst doing so. He should also use all possible means in order to show them the truth. As the Qur'an states, "Instruct your family to offer their prayers, and be steadfast in observing them yourself." (*Soorat Taa Haa*, 20:132)



Some callers to Islam may find that people to whom they are not related favourably respond to the invitation, whilst their closest relatives refuse to do so, which causes them a great deal of distress and disappointment. A successful caller to Islam, however, never gives up hope; he tries his best to guide them to the truth, using various methods and techniques and praying to Allah to guide their hearts, even under the bleakest of circumstances.

The Prophet ﷺ did just that with his Uncle Abu Taa-lib. He left no stone unturned in calling him to Islam and continued doing so until the last moments of his life. When Abu Taa-lib was on his deathbed, the Prophet ﷺ begged him, "Dear uncle, say, *laa ilaaha illallaah*, (There is no god worthy of worship except Allah) so that I may be able to intercede for you on the Day of Judgement." (*Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree*: 3671; *Saheeh Muslim*: 24) Abu Taa-lib, however, declined to do so, and so he died a polytheist. It was on this occasion that Allah ﷻ revealed the

following verse: “You cannot guide whoever you please: it is Allah who guides whom He will. He knows best those who receive guidance.” (*Soorat Al-Qaṣaṣ*, 28:56)

A new Muslim, as soon as he embraces Islam, must build a strong and healthy relationship with his relatives and acquaintances, Muslims and non-Muslims alike. He must also observe high moral standards when dealing with them, for Islam is not a call to isolation and withdrawal from social life.

Indeed, showing kindness to people and observing high moral standards when dealing with them is the best way to introduce them to this great religion with which Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ was sent to perfect noble character.

Observance of high moral standards and good treatment must start at home, amongst family members. (See page 225)



Children's Religion

According to Islamic teachings, all human beings without exception are born Muslim, with an innate inclination to believe in Allah (*fitrah*), and that they may follow another religion following the manner in which their parents teach them and bring them up. As the Prophet ﷺ said, "Every child is born with the natural inclination to surrender to Allah (*fitrah*), (that is, to be a Muslim), but then his parents make him a Jew, a Christian or a Zoroastrian." (*Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree*: 1292; *Saheeh Muslim*: 2658)

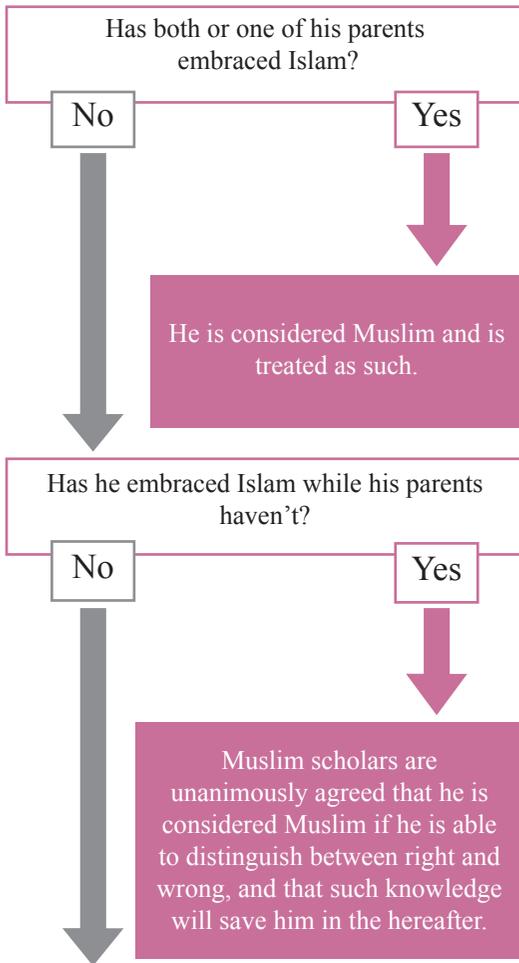
Regarding non-Muslim parents' children, we consider them non-Muslim in this life; if they die young, Allah ﷻ, the best of judges who does not wrong anyone and who knows their secrets and yet what is more hidden, will test them on the Day of Judgement; those who obey Him will be admitted into Paradise, while those who disobey Him will be consigned to hellfire.

When Allah's Messenger ﷺ was asked about the fate of the children of the polytheists on the Day of Judgement, he replied, "Since Allah created them, He knows what sort of deeds they would have done." (*Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree*: 1317)

However, when can we consider non-Muslim parents' children Muslim in this life?

To prove this, there are different cases, including the following:

- 1 **If the parents**, or one of them, embrace Islam, children born to them will be considered followers of the religion of the parent that is better than the other, namely, Islam.
- 2 **If a child, who is able to distinguish between right and wrong but has not necessarily reached the age of puberty, embraces Islam even though his parents are not Muslim**, he will equally be considered Muslim. A Jewish boy used to serve the Prophet ﷺ. One day, the boy became ill, and the Prophet ﷺ went to visit him. He sat by his head and said, "Become a Muslim." The boy looked at his father who was also sitting by his head. His father said to him, "Obey Abul-Qaasim ﷺ." The boy then embraced Islam. The Prophet ﷺ left saying, "Praise be to Allah who has saved him from the Fire!" (*Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree*: 1290)

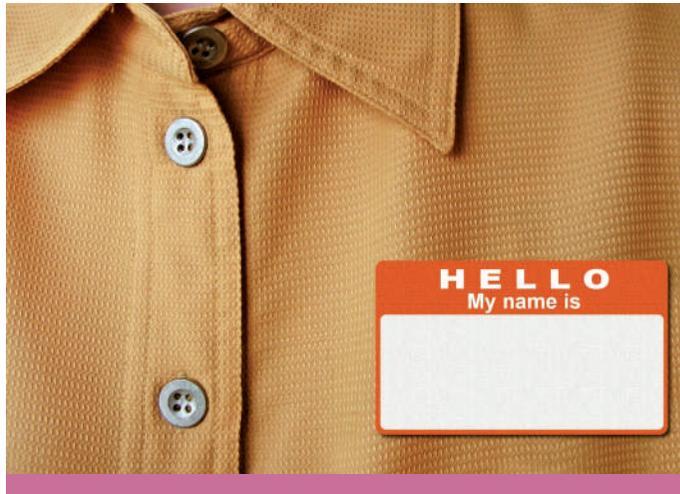


Regarding non-Muslim parents' children, we consider them non-Muslim in this life; if they die young, Allah ﷻ, the best of judges who does not wrong anyone and who knows their secrets and yet what is more hidden, will test them on the Day of Judgement; those who obey Him will be admitted into Paradise, but those who disobey Him will be consigned to Hellfire.



> Is it recommended to change one's name after embracing Islam?

The general rule is that a new Muslim can retain his name and does not have to change it at all. In fact, the changing of names was not known among the Prophet's companions, may Allah be pleased with them. Many people have embraced Islam and retained their non-Arabic names, unless the name has a bad meaning.



A name may be changed in the following cases:

- 1 **If it indicates servitude to other than Allah or has a meaning which contradicts Islamic beliefs:**
- 2 **If the name implies something that is offensive or not approved of by people with sound moral values:**

Names which indicate servitude to other than Allah include 'Abdul-Maseeh (slave of the Messiah), which is common amongst Arab Christians, and 'Abd-un-Nabiyy (slave of the Prophet), which is common amongst some Muslims. This also includes names which have a meaning that contradicts Islamic beliefs, such as Shenouda (commonly used among Egyptian Christians 'the Copts' which means 'the son of God'). Glorified is He, and High Exalted above what they say!

Names which indicate one of Allah's attributes are not allowed either.

An example of this is to ascribe to someone an attribute which is completely unique to Allah, such as the title 'king of kings'.

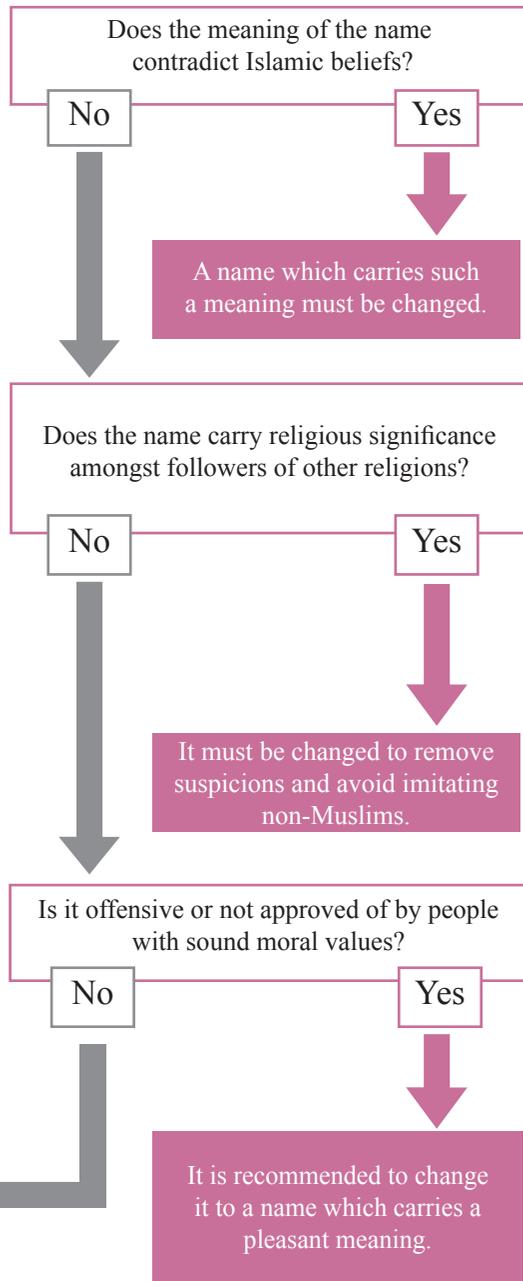
Indeed, Allah ﷻ has declared all bad things without exception unlawful; therefore, it is not appropriate to retain a name which carries a bad meaning after converting to Islam, as the Qur'an states, "Evil is a bad name after faith." (*Soorat Al-Hujuraat*, 49:11)

It is recommended to change the name:

If the new Muslim name to be acquired is dear to Allah, such as ‘Abdullaah (slave of Allah) and ‘Abdur-Rahmaan (slave of the Most Gracious), or such names which indicate one’s servitude to Allah ﷻ. These are recommended names but have nothing to do with one’s acceptance of Islam.

- **A new Muslim may** change his name for no reason whatsoever, such as by changing his non-Arabic name to an Arabic name, but this is not considered recommended and has nothing to do with his acceptance of Islam.

If it does not carry any of the above-mentioned meanings, it does not have to be changed. In fact, many Muslims retained their non-Arabic names after their conversion in the early days of Islam. He may change his name for no reason whatsoever; it is recommended to do so if the new name is dear to Allah, such as ‘Abdur-Rahmaan (slave of the Most Gracious).



> *Sunan Al-Fitrah* (Practices dictated by Man's Pure Nature)

> Islam encourages Muslims to maintain the best outward appearance possible.



What Does the Phrase *Sunan Al-Fitrah* Mean?

Sunan Al-Fitrah refers to a set of hygienic or cosmetic practices enjoined by Islam that is consistent with the pure nature in which Allah has created mankind and which serves to enhance their appearance and perfect it, making Muslims combine both inward and outward perfection.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “The customs of nature (*sunan al-fitrah*) are five: circumcision, removing the pubic hair, trimming the moustache, clipping the nails and plucking the underarm hair.” (*Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree*: 5552; *Saheeh Muslim*: 257)

Circumcision is the act of removing the foreskin (the loose tissue) covering the glans of the penis. This generally takes place in the early days after the birth of a baby boy.

It is a recommended act and one of the ‘customs of nature’ with regard to men. It also has numerous health benefits but is not a precondition for embracing Islam. One, however, would not be sinful if he does not get circumcised out of fear or for any other reason.

Removing the coarse hair that grows in the pubic area, the lower part of the abdomen just above the external genital organs, contributes to better hygiene and can be carried out by using any means that would serve the purpose.

Trimming the moustache: Keeping a moustache is permissible but not recommended; however, if a Muslim chooses to keep it, he must regularly trim it.

Letting the beard grow: Islam urges men to grow a beard, the hair that grows on the chin and cheeks of a man's face.

Letting the beard grow means not to shave it, in accordance with the Prophet's teachings.

Clipping the nails: A Muslim is required to clip his nails regularly in order to remove pathogenic organisms, dirt and debris that generally get underneath fingernails.

Plucking underarm hair: A Muslim is required to remove his underarm hair by plucking it or by using any other means to serve the purpose in order to keep bad odours away.



TRANSLITERATION SYSTEM USED IN THE BOOK

CONSONANTS

Arabic	Symbol Used	Approximate pronunciation/Notes
ء	’	This sound, called hamzah in Arabic, is the character which represents the glottal stop, as in Cockney “b <u>o</u> ttle”.
ب	b	<u>b</u> aby
ت	t	<u>t</u> ie
ث	<u>th</u>	<u>th</u> in
ج	j	mea <u>s</u> ure, lei <u>s</u> ure
ح	<u>h</u>	The sound of this letter resembles the sound of ‘strong, breathy’ H. The sound for <u>h</u> is produced from the proximity of the throat that the normal h is, but from an area slightly further up the throat, with more tension in the local throat muscle, with the back end of the tongue closing in against the roof of the throat immediately before the uvula.
خ	kh	The sound for this is perhaps somewhere between of that of ‘h’ and ‘k’, as far as the location of mouth where it is produced is concerned. It is generated at the back of the mouth, by pressing the back end of the tongue against the soft palate whilst forcing the air through in the outward direction, causing the uvula to vibrate. Example of the sound of kh found in English or that the English reader may be familiar with is Loch, the Scottish word for lake, where the ch in loch is pronounced as the designated kh in Arabic. Another example is the German bu <u>ch</u> , for book.
د	d	<u>d</u> id
ذ	dh	the <u>n</u>
ر	r	err <u>o</u> r (trilled)
ز	z	zo <u>n</u> e
س	s	<u>s</u> and
ش	sh	<u>sh</u> y

Arabic	Symbol Used	Approximate pronunciation/Notes
ص	<u>s</u>	The sound of this letter resembles the sound of ‘strong’ s. It is produced by involving the main trunk of the tongue, by slightly curving the centre of the front half of the tongue in the downward direction. In aid of pronouncing the sound of the ‘strong’ s, it would be helpful if you consider saying the normal letter ‘s’, when the front upper and lower teeth are brought closer together reducing the airflow, thus producing the sound of the letter ‘s’. The opposite process is used to generate the sound of the ‘strong’ s, i.e. the sound is produced when slightly moving apart the upper and lower teeth, thus pronouncing the ‘strong’ s. An approximate pronunciation of this sound can be found in <u>son</u> and <u>sorry</u> .
ض	<u>d</u>	The sound of this letter is somewhere near the sound of the normal d. Whereas the sound of a normal d is generated by placing the front end of the tongue at the front end of the hard palate or the roof of the mouth adjoining the top teeth, the sound of <u>d</u> is produced by touching, to the same location, more of the front trunk of the tongue while caving in the middle part of the tongue.
ط	<u>t</u>	The sound of this letter resembles a ‘strong’ t. Whereas a normal t is generated by involving the front end of the tongue, the ‘strong’ T is generated by pressing the front end of the trunk of the tongue against the front end of the hard palate or the roof of the mouth. Also when the normal T is pronounced, the lower jaw does not move, whereas in the case of pronouncing the strong t, or <u>t</u> , the lower jaw moves outwards.
ظ	<u>dh</u>	The best description of this sound is that it could be the strong version of the sound of ‘dh’ as in the word ‘there’. Whereas ‘dh’ is generated by placing the tip of the tongue between the upper and lower front teeth, whilst pressing against the upper front teeth, the sound for dh is generated by pressing more of the front end of the tongue between the upper and lower front teeth, whilst pressing against the upper front teeth, and the centre of the tongue is curved downwards.

Arabic	Symbol Used	Approximate pronunciation/Notes
ع	‘	A contraction of the throat (a pharyngealized vowel that is considered a consonant in Arabic). This symbol is used to characterize an Arabic alphabet that represents the sound of a strong ‘throaty’ a. Just as the sound for A is generated at the back of the throat, ‘ in the same proximity, the sound for or ‘ is also generated with the difference that the entire throat back is engaged in the process by a stroke of contraction in the muscle there. In this process more of the throat is blocked, which also involves the back end of the tongue, than when pronouncing the normal a. Just in the case of the normal a, the sound is actually generated at the time of the release of the contraction of the muscles involved.
غ	gh	The nearest sound for this is that of the French r, as in <u>rien</u> and <u>merci</u> .
ف	f	<u>four</u>
ق	q	The sound for this letter is a short and sharp version of the letter ‘gh’ or the French r. Whereas in the process of generating the sound ‘gh’ the back end of the tongue is pressed slightly against the uvula, allowing some air to flow, in the case of the sound of the Arabic alphabet represented by q, the same process takes place with the difference that the passage is completely blocked, and the sound is actually generated by the sudden release of the passage. A uvular sound produced farther back in the throat than any English k.
ك	k	<u>kin</u>
ل	l	<u>lily</u> (pronounced dentally)
م	m	<u>mime</u>
ن	n	<u>no</u> (pronounced dentally)
ه	h	<u>have</u> , <u>hat</u>
و	w	<u>watch</u> (as a consonant)
ي	y	<u>yet</u>

VOWELS

Short Vowels	Approximate Pronunciation
a	b <u>u</u> t
i	p <u>i</u> f
u	p <u>u</u> t

Long Vowels	Approximate Pronunciation
aa	f <u>a</u> ther, f <u>a</u> r
ee	e <u>e</u> , n <u>e</u> ed
oo	p <u>oo</u> l, n <u>oo</u> n

Diphthongs

aw, as in powder and shout

ay, as in might and kite

Shaddah

The sign is transliterated by doubling the consonant. It is represented in Roman letters by doubled consonants. In actual pronunciation, the letters are merged and held briefly like the “n” sound produced in the n/kn combination in the word unknown, or the ‘n’ in unnerve, the ‘r’ in overruled and the ‘d’ in midday.

Symbols Used in the Book and their Meanings

Symbol Used	Meaning and Definition
	This expression, which means, ‘May He be glorified and exalted’, is commonly said whenever Allah’s name is mentioned.
	This expression, which means, ‘May Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him’, is commonly said whenever Prophet Muḥammad’s name is mentioned.
	This formula, which means ‘Peace be upon him’, is usually said after the name of a prophet or an angel, such as Moosaa (Moses) u or Jibreel (Gabriel)u, respectively.
	This expression, which means, ‘May Allah be pleased with him’, is generally used for a male companion of the Prophet e, such as Abu Hurayrah.
	This expression, which means, ‘May Allah be pleased with her’, is generally used for a female companion of the Prophet e, such as ‘Aa’ishah.



Conclusion

What's Your Next Step?

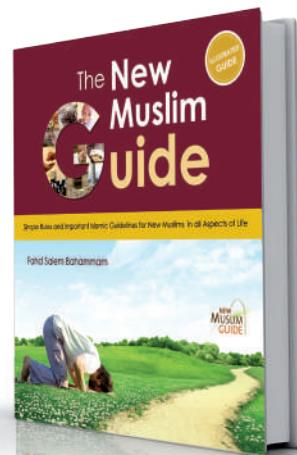
Once you have read this book, you will have taken the first step to learn about basic matters relating to your religion. Now you need to translate what you have learnt into action and make it a reality, for knowledge without practice will be a source of great regret on the Day of Judgement.

You must also do your best to learn about other matters which you need in your daily life, but which are not covered in this this book.

A Muslim, no matter how strong his faith may be, always needs more guidance, hence the prayer, "Guide us on to the Straight Path" (*Soorat Al-Faatihah*, 1:6), which is in the greatest *soorah* in the Qur'an that a Muslim repeats daily in his prayers.

Be mindful of Allah as best as you can

Neither the present book, nor any other book, will provide you with detailed information about situations and incidents you may come across. Therefore, in addition to seeking the opinion of religious scholars, you must try your best to be mindful of Allah as much as you can regarding the daily occurrences and relationships concerning which it is not possible to refer to scholars, as evidenced by the verse, "Be mindful of Allah as best as you can." (*Soorat At-Taghaabun*, 64:16)





Try your best to stay close to Muslim community members

Try to be as close to Muslim brothers and sisters as possible, visit Islamic centres and share Muslims' joys and sorrows. Despite the Prophet's unshakable faith, Allah ﷻ commanded him to seek the company of righteous people: "Content yourself with the company of those who supplicate their Lord morning and evening, desiring His Face." (*Soorat Al-Kahf*, 18:28)

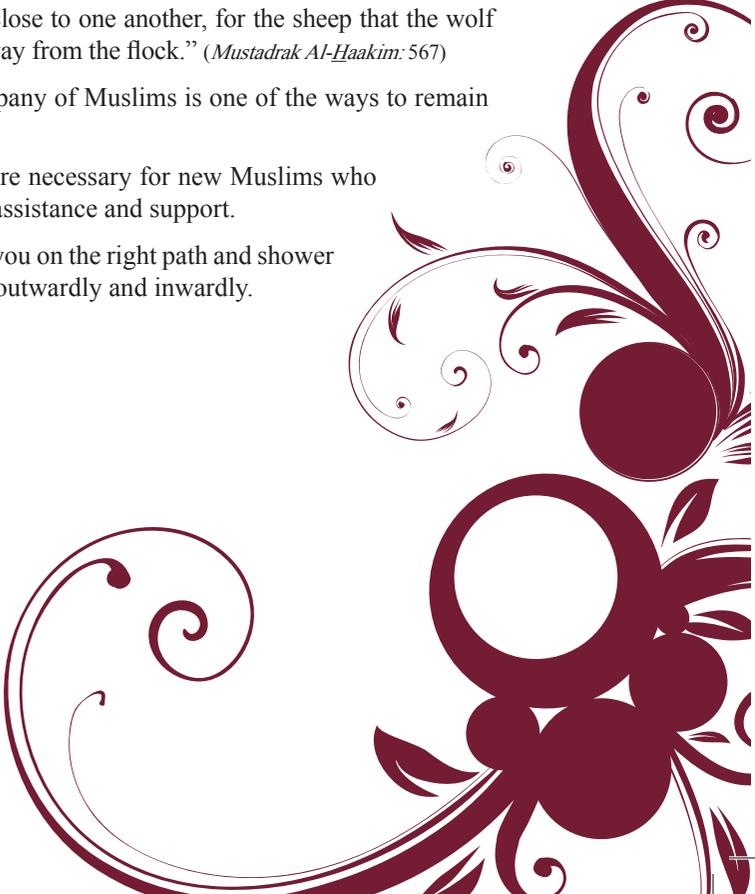
The Prophet ﷺ also warned against leaving the company of Muslims, as doing so is one of the ways that are bound to lead one astray, just as a sheep that is far from the flock becomes more vulnerable to wolf attacks.

The Prophet ﷺ said, "Stay close to one another, for the sheep that the wolf eats is the one that wanders away from the flock." (*Mustadrak Al-Haakim*: 567)

Therefore, seeking the company of Muslims is one of the ways to remain on the right path.

Doing so becomes even more necessary for new Muslims who are obviously in dire need of assistance and support.

May Allah guide you, keep you on the right path and shower His blessings upon you, both outwardly and inwardly.





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