



'Most of all it is my purpose to plant once more in the hearts of people the pure and shining unity of God.' -Promised Messiah (as)



## The Holy Quran

Allah is the Friend of those who believe; He brings them out of all kinds of darkness into light. And those who disbelieve, their friends are the transgressors who brings them out of light into manifold darkneses. These are the inmates of the Fire, therein shall they abide.

**(Chapter 2: Verse 258)**



## Hadith

Verily God forgives my people the evil promptings which arise within their hearts as long as they do not speak about them and did not act upon them.  
**(Sahih Muslim)**



### ❖ Islam a Universal Religion:

Islam presents itself as a universal religion with the remarkable and unique features mentioned in the following verses of the Holy Qur'an about its God, its Message and its Messenger:

Allah is the Lord – Chapter 1 Verse 2: and Chapter 114 Verse 2:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ *All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of all the world*

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الدَّارِ *"I seek refuge in the Lord of the dawn"*

The Holy Qur'an – Chapter 81 Verse 28:

إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْعَالَمِينَ *"It is nothing but a Reminder unto all the worlds"*

Prophet – Chapter 7 Verse 159:

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ النَّبِيِّ الْأُمِّيِّ الَّذِي يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَكَلِمَاتِهِ وَاتَّبِعُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ

*"Say, 'O mankind! Truly I am a messenger to you all from Allah to Whom belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth..."*

All other religions had always presented their God, their messenger and their Message to be only applicable to their specific regions and tribes. It is only the religion of Islam, which claimed to be applicable to the whole mankind.

### ❖ Islam advocates the Truth of all the Prophets and their books:

The Holy Qur'an says that all the prophets were true, because they were sent by the same God to different races and people. The Holy Qur'an says in Chapter 35, Verse 25 –

وَأِنْ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ إِلَّا خَلَا فِيهَا نَذِيرٌ *"...And there is no people to whom a Warner has not been sent".*

The Holy Qur'an reaffirms the original truth of other revealed Books and the Muslims are admonished to believe in all the other prophets in the same manner as they believe in their own prophet. This is not the case with other religions, which believe in the truth of their own prophets only.

### ❖ Islam an Everlasting Religion:

Islam claims to be an everlasting religion. The unique claim is based on the reason and logic that its Message is complete and perfect, and also guaranteed to be the preserved in its original form. The Almighty God Himself claims in the Holy Qur'an Chapter 5, Verse 4-



## Announcement from the Editor

Dear brothers,  
Assalaamo Alaikum  
[peace be upon you]

Alhamdulillah (All Thanks to Allah) that He guided us to the right path. Islam is a beautiful religion. The more you know about it, the more its beauty unveils to you. As a new convert myself, I urge all my brothers to find and learn more about Islam. The power of knowledge is the key for wisdom. If you need any books or literature, please feel free to write to the Garden of Peace team and we will send you the literature, InshaAllah. In addition, please contact us with any questions you may have and we will reply to every question individually. We also reply to some selected question in our monthly newsletter for the benefit of our readership at large.

I also strongly encourage you to share with us an article, poem, or your experience with Islam. ..."

Please mail your submission to

[joinislam@gmail.com](mailto:joinislam@gmail.com)

or mail it to:

11205 Hambright Rd, Huntersville,  
NC 28078

Jazakallah (thank you) for being part of the Garden of Peace family and May Allah bless you and guide you further in your journey, Ameen.

Humbly,  
**Ahmad Antar**

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## Mosques Around the World



Blue Mosque, Turkey

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

"This Day I have perfected your religion for you and completed My favor upon you and have chosen for you Islam as religion."

### ❖ Safeguarding of the Holy Qur'an:

The Almighty Allah who sent down the Holy Qur'an has Himself promised safeguard the verity of its content, Chapter 15, Verse 10-

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

"We have sent down this book and verily We shall safeguard it."

Preserving its Text – In the view of this divine guarantee, the text of the Holy Qur'an has not suffered even the slightest change, whereas the other books have been much altered. This fact has also been confirmed by a large number of Non-Muslim scholars.

Preserving its Essence – The Almighty God foretold that he has provided another important measure of safeguarding the real essence of the Holy Qur'an. He appointed Reformers in the beginning of each century, and sent the Promised Messiah in the latter days, to safeguard the true spirit of the Holy Qur'an.

### ❖ Islam combines all Truth in a new perspective:

Islam combines the best features of the earlier teachings with the everlasting and comprehensive teaching of its own. The Almighty God says in the Holy Qur'an Chapter 98, Verse 2-

فِيهَا كُتِبَ قِيمَةٌ

"Herein are lasting commandments".

Also, in Chapter 87, Verses 19 & 20 –

إِنَّ هَذَا لَفِي الصُّحُفِ الْأُولَىٰ وَصُحُفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ

"This indeed is what is taught in earlier scriptures"; "the scriptures of Abraham and Moses."

### ❖ Greater insight into Allah's Attributes:

Islam emphasizes the Unity and Universality of God. It teaches that God is the ultimate cause of all creation. He is the All-Knowing and Living God. None of His attributes has been suspended and, therefore, He communicates with mankind as before. Islam hold that there is no contradiction between Allah's word and His actions, and provides far greater insight into various attributes of God, compared to the other religion.

### ❖ Complete code of Conduct and a perfect model:

Islam is distinct from other Faiths in providing a comprehensive code of social and moral behavior. Also, to facilitate the observance of this code, the Almighty provide a perfect Model in the person of the Holy Prophet of Islam (SAW). He passed through numerous stages of human experience, and set noble examples for mankind.

### ❖ Revival of the Latter Days:

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Jam'aat was founded by Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad under Divine guidance, to be the Promised Reformer, whose advent was foretold by the Holy Prophet of Islam (SAW) and many other faiths. The fact that the Jam'aat as stands for the revival of Islam in another important distinction of Islam. As a final note here is a quote from Hazrat Al-Haaj Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmood Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih II, Second Successor to the Promised Messiah - "I find that Islam provides conditions of peace and comfort for me and for all those who may wish to tread path prescribed by it, whoever they may be, whatever they may be and wherever they may be, in whatever position I place myself, I find that Islam is equally useful and beneficial for me and mine, for my neighbors, for people whom I do not know and have not even heard of, for men and for women, for the aged and for the young, for the employer and the employed, for the rich and for the poor, for great nations and for small, for internationalists and for the nationalists, and that it establishes a sure and certain relationship between me and my Maker."

Provided by Br. Alauddin Ahmed, Charlotte, NC. References: Some Distinctive Features of Islam - A Speech Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, Khalifat IV ra.; Distinctive Features of Islam By Bilal Atkinson -(a convert to Islam). The author is an English convert and serves as the Regional Amir for the North East of the UK.

## First Family Visit as a Muslim

Texas Muslim, Juan Galvan, shares his experience of explaining to his Mexican-American family about his conversion to Islam.

As I fly home to Austin, Texas, I remember the days before my conversion to Islam. I am reminded of Armando, a Latino Muslim. He helped introduce me to Islam. While pointing to the East and then the West, Armando said, "Look what God has given us. He created everything. God is All-Powerful." He had just finished praying *maghrib*. The beauty of the sunset is still present in my mind.

"Truly, in remembering God do hearts find rest," God states in the Qur'an 13:28. Looking outside this window, I cannot help grinning as I look to my left and then to my right. I found the true purpose of life. The purpose is not to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Instead, we must accept God as God. We Muslims acknowledge the true nature of our Creator. By doing so, we accept our own purpose as servants of our Creator.

I am on my way home after visiting my family for the first time after my conversion to Islam. People who knew nothing about Islam surrounded me. My fourteen-year-old sister Cathy asked, "Isn't Muhammad your God?" "Uh, no," I replied. My parents, my brother, and my five sisters all live in Pampa, Texas. My dad and I joked about each other's religion.

"Why are you praying to that carpet?" he asked. "Why do you have statues of dead people on your wall?" I asked, pointing to the large Jesus cross in the living room.

On my first day home, I went to Cathy's room to pray after seeing a cross and religious images on my parent's wall. No crosses or Jesus pictures in her room. However, there was a huge Backstreet Boy's poster. I figured it was a lesser of two evils. My parent's have statues or pictures of Jesus and Mary on almost every wall in their house. I have a great relationship with my family. Mexican-American households are well known for their love of family and religion.

During my visit to Pampa, I spent much of my time discussing Islam. People who ask you why you chose "that religion" are asking for Dawah. I gladly provided answers. My dad said, "My mom was Catholic, and I'll be a Catholic when I die." Mexican-Americans seem to think that their ancestors have always been Roman Catholic. Our ancestors from Spain were Muslim. Our ancestors from Mexico were pagan. Clinging on to a religion simply because of tradition is insane. I refuse to be a blind follower. I am Muslim because I believe Islam is true.

While visiting my family, I spoke frequently about Islam. If you love something, you discuss it any chance you get. I hope I did not annoy my family. I gave my brother a copy of the Qur'an and a small introductory book about Islam. I asked questions that only the true religion of God can answer.

God is three? Jesus is God? Original sin? We find the answers to such questions by studying the fundamentals of Islam: the Oneness of God, prophethood, and the Day of Judgment.

I spent much time trying to clear up misconceptions about Islam. Why aren't Americans better informed about Islam? Americans have many questions about Islam. Many times, it is good to bring those questions out in the open. I wanted my sister to understand that Islam is not oppressive to women. I wanted to explain why Muslim women cover. Eventually, I would ask her, "Do you know why women wear scarves?" She simply replied, "Nuh uh." I feared her reply would be, "What? You think I dress like a slut or something?" I explained that Muslims believe that women should not be treated as sexual objects. I also explained that Islam is like risk management. Men and women are both instructed to lower their gaze.

On my way to Pampa, the airport security was very tight. A security guard checked my bags. He saw my Qur'an, my Islamic literature, my Islamic audiotapes, and my prayer rug. I hope I did not scare the security guard. I considered praying at the Austin airport before stepping onboard the plane but I did not want to give any passengers a heart attack. After telling my brother about this, he suggested that I return home with a flight instructor's manual. Soon after the September 11 attacks, my dad asked my mom, "What'd he get himself into?"

My mom cried after hugging me goodbye. I tried to hold back my tears. I hope that she cried because she would miss me and not because she feared I would join the Taliban. As I look outside my window, I see glimpses of the Texas Panhandle. I see canyons then farms and deserted roads then canyons again. I am reminded of Father Dale. During a Sunday sermon, he admitted, "While I was a priest in Hawaii, I would see a beautiful beach and palm trees on my way to work. Now, I see miles and miles of cotton on my way to work!"

Father Dale has since left the priesthood and has gotten married. Maybe he will embrace Islam next. You never know.

Looking outside my window, I must thank God for the canyons, the cotton, and the other gifts He has given us.



## Four Types of Prayers:

*Fardh, Wajib, Sunnat, and Nafl.*

**Fardh Prayers:** *Fardh* is Arabic word which means compulsory or obligatory. There are five obligatory Prayers everyday: Fajr, Zuhr, Asr, Magrib and Isha.

**Wajib Prayers:** The following Prayers are regarded as *Wajib* (necessary) Prayers:

- o Three *Raka'at* of *Vitr*.
- o 2 *Raka'at* of *Eid-ul-Fitr* and two *Raka'at* of *Eid-ul-Adha*.
- o 2 *Raka'at* offered while performing the *Tawaaf* of the *Ka'aba*.

**Sunnah Prayers:** The Holy Prophet (pbuh) offered extra *Raka'at* of Prayer in addition to those of *Fardh* Prayers. These Prayers are called *Sunnah* Prayers. Offering *Sunnah* Prayers is considered to be necessary by all jurists. The willful neglect of *Sunnah* Prayers is censurable in the sight of Allah. *Sunnah* Prayers are:

- o 2 *Raka'at* before the *Fardh* Prayer of *Fajr*; but if a person joins the congregation without having offered 2 *Raka'at* of *Sunnah* due to some unavoidable situation, he can offer them after the congregational lead Prayer.
- o 4 *Raka'at* before *Fardh* and 2 *Raka'at* after *Fardh* in *Zuhr* Prayer. In case one has not performed the 4 *Raka'ats* of *Sunnah* before the congregational 4 *Raka'at* due to unavoidable circumstances, one should do so after the congregational Prayer.
- o 2 *Raka'at* of *Sunnah* after the *Fardh* of *Maghrib* Prayer.
- o 2 *Raka'at* of *Sunnah* after the *Fardh Raka'at* of *Isha'a* Prayer.

**Nawafil Prayers:** Muslims also offer additional *Raka'at* of Prayer apart from *Fardh* and *Sunnah Raka'at*. These are called *Nawafil* Prayers or *Nafl*. These are optional Prayers. Those who voluntarily offer *Nawafil* Prayers reap the benefits of Allah's favors. *Nawafil* Prayers are as follows:

- o Eight *Raka'at* of *Tahajjud*.
- o 2 *Raka'ats* after the 2 *Raka'at* of *Sunnah* at the end of *Zuhr* Prayer.
- o 4 *Raka'at* before *Fardh* of *Asr* Prayer.
- o 2 *Raka'at* after the 2 *Raka'at* of *Sunnah* in *Maghrib* Prayer.
- o 4 *Raka'at* of *Ishraq* Prayer.
- o 2 *Raka'at* offered when one enters a mosque.
- o 2 *Raka'at* offered when seeking blessings from God Almighty.
- o 2 *Raka'at* offered as *Salaat-i-Hajaat*.
- o 2 *Raka'at* offered as a Thanksgiving Prayer.





## "I have recently become a Muslim; do I need to change my name?"

In the Name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful

Dear Brother,

Changing names for new converts comes in two parts, the forename and the last name. Muslims should have good names. The Holy Prophet (saw) said: "You will be called on the Day of Resurrection by your names and the names of your fathers, so have good names." (Abu Dawud).

As for the forename, new converts have to change their name into a Muslim name if their original forename has a bad meaning or it is un-Islamic. Different converts come from various cultures where names have various meanings. If the meaning is not appropriate like "Abdul-Bashir" which means "servant of the messenger", then it should be changed. This is a condition where the name is not

Allowed because only the names of Allah (Asma' el-Husna) come after the word Abdul (servant) where Bashir (messenger) is not one of them. If the forename has a good meaning or if it is a name of a prophet (Josef, Mathew, Jacob, etc...), then it is recommended to be the same. As for the last name, new converts should retain their sir name inherited by their ancestors. Again, if the last name is associated with an un-Islamic concept or associated with Shirk, then it should be changed. In all other cases, the last name should not be changed, because it is also not recommended in Islam to take the name of someone other than one's own biological father. However, some exceptions are allowed like in the case of African Americans (whose last names were inherited not by ancestors but by masters during slavery time) where they can choose to change their last name. Thus, there is no requirement in Islam to change one's name especially the last name. The original converts to Islam at the time of Prophet Mohammed usually kept the Arabic name they always had. The only exceptions were people who had a name with unpleasant or pagan connotations. Also, it is always good to seek the advice of your mentor at the mosque or the community before you start the name change process. Jazakallah.

Garden of Peace Team

Please submit your question to [joinislam@gmail.com](mailto:joinislam@gmail.com) or mail it to Garden of Peace, 11205 Hambright Rd, Huntersville, NC 28078. All questions will be answered.

## Conditions of Initiation (Bai'at) to Islam

By: Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian

The Promised Messiah and Mahdi (peace be upon him)

THE INITIATE SHALL SOLEMNLY PROMISE:

- I. That he/she shall abstain from Shirk (association of any partner with God) right up to the day of his/her death.
- II. That he/she shall keep away from falsehood, fornication, adultery, trespasses of the eye, debauchery, dissipation, cruelty, dishonesty, mischief and rebellion; and will not permit himself/herself to be carried away by passions, however strong they might be.
- III. That he/she shall regularly offer the five daily prayers in accordance with the commandments of God and the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him); and shall try his/her best to be regular in offering the Tahajud (pre-dawn supererogatory prayers) and invoking Darood (blessings) on the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him); that he/she shall make it his/her daily routine to ask forgiveness for his/her sins, to remember the bounties of God and to praise and glorify Him.
- IV. That under the impulse of any passions, he/she shall cause no harm whatsoever to the creatures of Allah in general, and Muslims in particular, neither by his/her tongue nor by his/her hands nor by any other means.
- V. That he/she shall remain faithful to God in all circumstances of life, in sorrow and happiness, adversity and prosperity, in felicity and trial; and shall in all conditions remain resigned to the decree of Allah and keep himself/herself ready to face all kinds of indignities and sufferings in His way and shall never turn away from it at the onslaught of any misfortune; on the

contrary, he/she shall march forward.

- VI. That he/she shall refrain from following un-islamic customs and lustful inclinations, and shall completely submit himself/herself to the authority of the Holy Quran; and shall make the Word of God and the Sayings of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) the guiding principle in every walk of his/her life.
- VII. That he/she shall entirely give up pride and vanity and shall pass all his/her life in humbleness, cheerfulness, forbearance and meekness.
- VIII. That he/she shall hold faith, the honor of faith, and the cause of Islam dearer to him/her than his/her life, wealth, honor, children and all other dear ones.
- IX. That he/she shall keep himself/herself occupied in the service of God's creatures for His sake only; and shall endeavor to benefit mankind to the best of his/her God-given abilities and powers.
- X. That he/she shall enter into a bond of brotherhood with this humble servant of God, pledging obedience to me in everything good, for the sake of Allah, and remain faithful to it till the day of his/her death; that he/she shall exert such a high devotion in the observance of this bond as is not to be found in any other worldly relationship and connections demanding devoted dutifulness.

Garden of Peace is a monthly newsletter for the Nau-Maub'a'en (new converts) published by Majlis Khuddam-ul-Ahmadiyya, USA. All new converts are welcome to submit their own articles, experiences and opinions to the newsletter team. Please send your request to: By Mail: 11205 Hambright Rd, Huntersville, NC 28078. By Email: [JoinIslam@gmail.com](mailto:JoinIslam@gmail.com) - Garden of Peace Team: Ahmad Antar, Bilal Rana, Atif Mian.

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