

## PRIMARY, IMPORTANT DIRECTIONS FOR NEW REVERTS TO ISLAM

**In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful**

**Praise be to Allah**, may peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allah

**Among the bounties** of Almighty Allah upon His slaves is that people – from various countries, nationalities, and races – are entering the religion of Allah, Islam, in large numbers, in groups and individually. There is not a single religion on earth to which the people are migrating, entering it voluntarily, besides the religion of Islam. **The Messenger of Allah (PBUH)** has spoken the truth (when he said): “this matter (Islam) will reach that which is reached by the night and day, Allah will not leave a house of mud or fur except that Allah has entered the religion into it”. A house of ‘mud’ refers to houses of established areas, in cities and towns, while a house of ‘fur’ refers to those houses and tents which are built in nomadic areas and deserts.

**Allah says:** “It is He Who sent His messenger with guidance and the Religion of Truth, to supersede all religions, even if the polytheists despise it” (Tawbah, 9:33).

**It is evident** that whoever enters Islam, and are new reverts to Islam, develop certain questions and inquiries, and face some problems. We will strive, by Allah’s permission, to answer them with succinctness in this article, through the foregoing points:

**1) Know that** the Islamic library is vast, the opinions are many, and the schools are various and divergent. That which is required upon you, and the evidence for which you will be held responsible, and which you will be asked on the Day of Judgement (is): ‘Allah said (such and such),’ and ‘The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said (such and such),’ i.e., the Noble Quran, the Book of Allah, and the authentic, established Sunnah from the Prophet (PBUH). The significance and role of the scholars is – when you ask and refer to them – that they arrive you to the Book of Almighty Allah, and the Sunnah of His messenger (PBUH), and the deduced and extracted rulings from the Book of Almighty Allah and the Sunnah of the Messenger Muhammad (PBUH).

**2) When you first** enter Islam, it may be difficult for you to directly interact with the Book of Allah Almighty – regarding detailed rulings – and the Sunnah of His messenger (PBUH). Thus, your responsibility is to ask and refer to the people of knowledge, as **Allah says:** “ask the people of remembrance if you do not know” (Nahl 16:43). You should in this circumstance ask about the most knowledgeable and pious of those in your city or town, or those you are able to connect with on the internet, and ask them your questions – those things which are difficult to understand – and when they respond to you, you should ask him – to realize the attribute of following the Prophet (PBUH) – “is this the Sunnah?” or “is this proven by the texts of the Book and Sunnah?” If he says yes, then embrace what he says, and if he says: this is my researched opinion and reasoning, then ask your question to somebody else.

**If you ask**, why am I required in the beginning to turn to the most knowledgeable and pious among those around me, among those I am able to contact? I respond: for two reasons. The first is that it is obligatory on you to expend your efforts, within capability, to gain acquaintance with the Truth, as **Allah says**: “be conscious of Allah as much as you can” (Taghabun 16), “he has not burdened a soul beyond its capacity” (Baqarah, 2:286). The second reason is that you can evade falling into the window of the people of ignorance, innovation, and desires, those who do not abstain from saying against Allah and His messenger (PBUH) without knowledge, without you knowing!

**3) You may be taken** by surprise over some of the wrong behaviours and morals of some Muslims: do not let this turn you from following the truth, or for that to be a reason for turning back, as Muslims can be both pious or wicked – some are God-conscious, others are defiant or fall short (in their obligations), making mistakes (at times) and doing good (in others). Their behaviours which oppose the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (PBUH) do not represent Islam, nor are they evidence against Islam. The Truth is not known through men, but rather men are known by the Truth.

**The only** representative of Islam, who represents the absolute Truth, who is evidence against you and all creation, is the person of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as **Allah says**, “There is certainly a perfect example in the Messenger of Allah for those who incline towards Allah and the Day of Judgement, and remember Allah abundantly” (Ahzab 21). **Allah says**, “Say: if you love Allah, then follow me, Allah will love you and forgive your sins, Allah is forgiving, merciful” (Al Imran: 31), “No, by your Lord, they do not believe until they make you judge concerning that which occurs between them, then they do not find within themselves and hardship in your judgement, and they submit wholeheartedly” (Nisa, 4:65).

**There are over** thirty verses of the Noble Quran exhorting the obligation of obedience and following the Messenger Muhammad (PBUH). In the hadith, it is authentically reported from the Prophet (PBUH) that he said: “By the one in whose hand is Muhammad’s soul (God), there is not a single person in this nation, Jew or Christian who hears of me and then dies without having believed that which I was sent with, except that he will be a companion of the Fire” (Narrated by Muslim).

**4) After the** Messenger Muhammad (PBUH) in terms of representing Islam, possessing high understanding of Islam, and complying with it in practical events and their lives, are the companions of the Prophet (PBUH), those who lived in his time and accompanied the Prophet (PBUH), who lived through revelation; these are those who transmitted the religion to those after them (one generation after another), until it finally arrived to us in perfect shape as it was revealed. Compared to those who came after, they are more knowledgeable, more pious, compliant, and wise. Allah has praised them greatly in His Holy Book in various texts, and likewise the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) praised them greatly, and bequeathed them with praise many, especially the Migrants (Muhajirin) and the Hosts (Ansar), and the four rightly-guided caliphs: Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali, may Allah be pleased with them all.

**5) The first** action which you must perform after bearing witness to the testimony of Monotheism (Tawhid), is the establishment of Prayer. It is required from you that you learn the necessary components and requirements of prayer, the purification of the body and clothing, ablution (wudu), and thus the prayer, (including) its pillars and obligated acts.

**6) Know that** the imperatives of the Shari'a require power and capability; in the case of incapacity, then the command is dropped until power and capability is sufficient (to perform the action). By implication, do not fear the size of the learnings and commands of the complete Shari'a which apply to all aspects of life. Thus, you are not required to fulfil except that which you are capable, so fulfil those which you can, and try your hardest to remove the incapacity of that which you cannot complete. There is no blame upon you after that, as it is authentically narrated from the Prophet (PBUH) in the hadith (tradition) reported by al-Bukhari in his Sahih from Abdullah b. Umar that he said: When we pledged allegiance to the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) to hear and obey, he would say to us: 'in that which you are capable.' (This narration is) agreed upon.

**Perhaps you may not**, for instance – if you are not Arab – be able to memorize Surat al-Fatihah in your first days of entering Islam, which is one of the pillars of prayer. It suffices that you say, in its place, “Subhan-Allah, al-Hamdu-lillah, wa-la-ilaha-illa-Allah, wa-Allahu-akbar” until you learn the Fatihah and are able to memorize it, as reported in the Hadith of Hasan recorded by Abu Dawud and others, that a man came to **the Prophet (PBUH)** and said: I am incapable of taking anything from the Quran – meaning, I am not capable of memorizing anything from Surat al-Fatihah, even though he is born and raised an Arab! – so teach me that which suffices me in it. **He said:** say: Subhan-Allah, Al-Hadu-lillah, la-ilaha-illa-Allah, Allahu-akbar, la-Hawla-wa-la-Quwwata-illa-billah al-'ali-al-adheem (Glorified be Allah, all praise is due to Allah, there is no deity besides Allah, Allah is great, there is no force or power except by Allah the High and Great). He said: O Messenger of Allah, this is for Allah the Powerful and High, what is for me? **He said:** “say: Allahumma-rhamni wa-rzuqni wa-'aafini wa-hdini (O Allah, have mercy on me, bestow me with sustenance, keep me safe (in the world and hereafter) and guide me).” When he stood he said 'this' with his hand (he moved his hand signalling he learned a lot), so the **Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said:** “as for this (man), he as filled his hands with good.” If you are unable to say this in Arabic, then say it in your own language, there is no harm in that.

**7) If you are** non-Arab, then that which is required upon you is to spend your effort and attention – as much as you are able – to learn the Arabic language, so that you may have a direct connection to the revelation, the Holy Quran, and the Sunnah of the Messenger (PBUH). Without the Arabic language, there will remain blockades: that there remains nothing between you and the address of the Shari'a in complete and authentic understanding is no small thing: 'Allah said, The Messenger of Allah said (PBUH)' ... 'one should do this,' 'it is not suitable to do that' (etc.). What is said about the high quality of translations and its importance is good, but it does not compare to the language of the Noble Quran, and the language of the Prophetic Sunnah, and the language of the Sahabah (companions) – may Allah be pleased with them – the language of knowledge and law.

**8) We further** advise spending time with the righteous, and abstaining from evil peers, this will help the new revert to Islam to enhance his religiosity and piety and righteous deeds. **Allah says:** “O those who believe, be with the truthful” (Tawbah: 9:119). **Allah says:** “Brothers on this day will be enemies of one another except the pious” (Zukhruf 67), and in the hadith, it is authentically narrated that **the Prophet (PBUH) said:** A man is on the religion of his close friend, so consider those whom you take as close friends”

**9) As part of** thanking Allah Almighty for guidance and salvation, and Allah’s presenting of the bounty of Iman and Islam, you should be active in calling to Allah the Almighty, and work to propagate of the teachings of Islam, removing people from the worship of slaves to the worship of the Lord of slaves, from the darknesses of polytheism (shirk) to the light of Tawhid. This should be by being an example, presenting your good morals, relying upon compassion, speaking pure words and admonishing with good conduct, through one’s speech, and adhering to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in all of that.

**Allah says,** “who is better in speech than one who calls to Allah and undertakes righteous acts, saying ‘Indeed, I am among the Muslims’” (Fussilat 33),

**Allah says,** “Call to the path of your Lord with wisdom and good admonition, and argue with them in the best (manner)” (Nahl, 16:125).

Do not let your lack of knowledge from departing on this great mission, as knowledge comes and develops with action, and through action, and any small effort you expend on others – which may be a reason for their guidance and salvation from the fire – is better than nothing. In the hadith, it is authentically narrated that **the Prophet (PBUH) said,** “Convey from me even if it is a (single) verse.” He said (PBUH), “that Allah should guide a person through you – i.e., to Islam – is better for you than acquiring red camels,” red camels are the best and highest quality of camels the Arabs were dying to have.

**10) All that** which has preceded is applicable to both men and women, and every address of the Shari’a encompasses them both; there is no text which specifies that the address is intended for men and not women, or women and not men. I ask Almighty Allah for steadfastness and the best destiny, for both you and myself. May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon our master and Prophet Muhammad, his family, and his companions abundantly.

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