

THE BENEFITS OF CONVERTING TO ISLAM (PART 2 OF 3)

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Many people around the globe spend countless hours reading and studying the principles of Islam; they pour over translations of the meanings of the Quran and are held entranced by the life and times of Prophet Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him. Many need only a glimpse of Islam and convert immediately. Still others recognise the truth but wait, and wait and keep on waiting, sometimes to the point of putting their hereafter in peril. Therefore today we continue our discussion on, the sometimes not so obvious benefits of converting to Islam.



“And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers.” (Quran 3:85)

5. Converting to Islam is the first step in establishing a lifelong connection to the Creator.

Every single member of the human race is born innately knowing that God is One.

Prophet Muhammad said that every child was born in a state of fitrah^[1], with the correct understanding of God.^[2] According to Islam this is a natural state of being, instinctively knowing there is a Creator and naturally wanting to worship and please Him. However those who do not know God or establish a relationship with Him may find the human existence puzzling and sometimes even distressing. For many, allowing God into their lives and worshipping Him in a way that is pleasing to Him, gives a whole new meaning to life.

“Verily, in the remembrance of God do hearts find rest.” (Quran 13:28)

Through acts of worship such as prayer and supplication, one begins to feel that God is close at hand, through His infinite knowledge and wisdom. A believer is secure in the

knowledge that God, the Most High, is above the heavens, and comforted by the fact that He is with them in all their affairs. A Muslim is never alone.

“He knows what goes into the earth and what comes forth from it, what descends from the heaven and what ascends thereto. And He is with you (by His Knowledge) wheresoever you may be. And God is the All-Seer of what you do.” (Quran 57:4)

6. Converting to Islam reveals God’s mercy and forgiveness towards His creation.

As feeble human beings we often feel lost and alone. It is then that we turn to God and seek His Mercy and Forgiveness. When we turn to Him in true submission His tranquillity descends upon us. We are then able to feel the quality of His mercy and see it manifest in the world around us. However in order to worship God, we need to know Him. Converting to Islam opens the gateway to this knowledge, including the fact that God’s forgiveness knows no bounds.

Many people are confused or ashamed of the many sins they have committed over the course of their lives. Converting to Islam completely washes those sins away; it is as if they never happened. A new Muslim is as pure as a new born baby.

“Say to those who have disbelieved [that] if they cease, what has previously occurred will be forgiven for them. But if they return [to hostility] - then the precedent of the former [rebellious] peoples has already taken place.” (Quran 8:38)

If after converting to Islam a person commits more sins the door to forgiveness is still wide open.

“O you who believe! Turn to God with sincere repentance! It may be that your Lord will expiate from you your sins, and admit you into Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise)...” (Quran 66:8)

7. Converting to Islam teaches us that trials and tests are part of the human condition.

Once a person converts to Islam he begins to understand that the trials, tribulations, and triumphs of this life are not random acts of a cruel and unorganised universe. A true believer understands that our existence is part of a well-ordered world, and life is unfolding in exactly the way God, in His infinite wisdom, has ordained.

God tells us we will be tested and He advises us to bear our trials and tribulations patiently. This is difficult to understand unless one embraces the Oneness of God, the religion of Islam, where God has given us clear guidelines about how to behave when faced with trials and tribulations. If we follow these guidelines, found in the Quran and the authentic traditions of Prophet Muhammad, it is possible to bear afflictions with ease

and even be grateful.

“And certainly, We shall test you with something of fear, hunger, loss of wealth, lives and fruits, but give glad tidings to the patient ones.” (Quran 2:155)

Prophet Muhammad said, “A man will be tested according to the level of his religious commitment, and the trials will keep affecting a believer until he is left walking on the face of the earth with no burden of sin whatsoever”.^[3] A Muslim knows with certainty that this world, this life, is no more than a transient place, a stop on the journey to our eternal life in either the hell fire or the paradise. To face the Creator with no burden of sin is a marvellous thing, certainly worth the tests that befall us.

In the next article we will conclude this discussion by mentioning that Islam is a way of life. It clearly defines the rights, obligations and responsibilities we have towards other human beings, and our care towards animals and the environment. Islam contains the answers to all of life’s questions both big and small.

Footnotes:

[1] Fitrah – the most pure and natural condition.

[2] *Saheeh Muslim*

[3] *Ibn Majah*

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