

146047 - He recently became Muslim; how can he show that he is Muslim and how can he change his name?

the question

I recently became Muslim; before that I was Hindu. My question is: how can I show to people that I am Muslim, and how can I change the name on my identity documents, other papers and in day-to-day interactions?

Detailed answer

We congratulate you on your becoming Muslim, and we praise Allah Who guided and helped you; we ask Him to grant you more of His grace and guide and enable you to obey Him, and to guide the dearest of people to you, so that your joy and happiness may be complete.

When it comes to declaring and showing your Islam, all you have to do is go to the mosque and tell the imam about that, or tell one of the Muslims, so that he will take care of telling others. Thus the people of your locality will find out that you have become a Muslim, and they will interact with you accordingly. This is what happens with everyone who enters this great religion. The Muslims' hearts are filled with joy when they see the new Muslim proclaiming the testimony of truth, and starting a new life which takes him out from the darkness of disbelief and shirk to the light of faith and tawhid.

As for changing your name on your identity documents and other official papers, you can follow the regular procedures in accordance with the law of the land in which you live, which requires you to check with the civil registration office or the government department that is responsible for such matters. You can seek the help of the Muslims who live in the place where you reside, or those who have taken this step before you, and they can tell you how to do that.

If you fear that harm may result from changing your name at present, or changing it in your official papers is too difficult and complicated, it does not matter if you delay this procedure for some time, because changing one's name is not a condition of entering Islam: rather it is only

recommended and encouraged to demonstrate your new Islamic identity, and to show how different you are now with your new religion. However, if your name is prohibited according to Islam, such as names which reflect servitude to anything or anyone other than Allah, then in that case it must be changed.

Shaykh 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn Baz (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked: Does the one who declares his Islam have to change his previous name, such as George, Joseph and the like?

He replied: He does not have to change his name, unless it is a name that reflects servitude to anyone or anything other than Allah. But having a good name is something prescribed, so acquiring a better name by changing it from a non-Islamic name to an Islamic name, is good. But is it obligatory? The answer is no. End quote from *Fatawa Islamiyyah* (4/404).

See also the answer to question no. [23273](#) .

And Allah knows best.