

Does Making Shahadah Need Witnesses?

Making *Shahadah* in public, we'd like to draw your attention to the fact that Islam trains Muslims that public and secret deeds are known to Allah. Therefore, making *Shahadah* in presence of witnesses is not an essential condition, though it's preferable to put the official arrangements in order. Islam, as a matter of fact, lays more emphasis on conviction on the part of the person who embraces Islam. This is what really matters, as there should be no compulsion in religion.

Strictly speaking, it is not at all considered an essential requirement for witnesses to be present when a person is embracing Islam; thus if a person declares *Shahadah* (testimony of faith) between himself and Allah, he is considered a Muslim in the sight of Allah. But in order for him to be recognized as a member of the Muslim community, he must declare the same in presence of two witnesses or before an Imam of a mosque who has been duly authorized to issue a certificate indicating the same.

It is, therefore, highly recommended for anyone embracing Islam to do so in the presence of persons authorized to issue certificates as he/she may be called upon to produce them while planning to go for Hajj or in case of any question concerning his Islamic identity. The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, taught us that while doing things we should try to do them as professionally and efficiently as possible.