6542 - She wants to become Muslim but she envisages a problem with regard to Hajj and official papers

the question

I would like to become a muslim but how do I embrace islam without being a part of a movement? I do realize all that is truly needed is to pronounce the shahada; but what about the Hajj? How do I articpate in that if I do not have a signed document saying that I am a muslim?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Islam is the relationship between a person and his or her Lord, submission to His commands, humbling oneself before Him, loving and fearing Him, placing one's hopes in Him, and worshipping Him in the manner He has prescribed. Islam also has certain pillars and duties. The key to all of this is to bear witness that there is no god except Allaah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah. With regard to Hajj, it is not a condition for entering Islam, rather it is one of the pillars and duties that come into effect after a person has entered Islam, and it is a duty only for those who are able to do it, because Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"And Hajj (pilgrimage to Makkah) to the House (Ka'bah) is a duty that mankind owes to Allâh, those who can afford the expenses (for one's conveyance, provision and residence)" [Aal 'Imraan 3:97]

(See Question # 5261 for details on what constitutes being able to go for Hajj).

Obtaining an official certificate from an Islamic centre as proof of your Islam so that you can use it to get permission to go for Hajj and enter the Holy Places is a means which you must use in order to go for Hajj in the future, but it is not a condition that is necessary for you to become Muslim or start to do the acts of worship such as Salaah (prayer) etc. When a person becomes Muslim he

becomes a member of the Muslim Ummah and is connected to all the Muslims who believe in One God by the bonds of Islamic brotherhood which includes friendship and mutual help and support, as Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“The believers are nothing else than brothers (in Islamic religion)” [al-Hujuraat 49:10]

“The believers, men and women, are Auliya’ (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another; they enjoin (on the people) Al-Ma‘roof (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do), and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e. polytheism and disbelief of all kinds, and all that Islam has forbidden); they perform As-Salaah (Iqaamat-as-Salaah), and give the Zakaah, and obey Allaah and His Messenger. Allaah will have His Mercy on them. Surely, Allaah is All-Mighty, All-Wise” [al-Tawbah 9:71]

So you must hasten to enter Islam. We congratulate you on the keenness that you have shown and we ask Allaah to help us and you to be sincere towards Him, to be strong and to attain success. And Allaah is the Guide to the Straight Path.