14296 - Consequences for one who does not adhere to Islam

the question

What are the consequences for one who does not adhere to Islam?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

As you know, Islam is the religion of Allaah, and it is the true religion. It is the religion which was brought by all the Prophets and Messengers. Allaah has prepared a great reward in this world and in the hereafter for those who believe in it, and He has prepared a severe punishment for those who disbelieve in it.

Allaah is the Creator and Sovereign, the One Who is in control of this universe, and you, O man, are part of His creation; He has subjugated to you all that is in the universe, and has prescribed His laws for you, which He has commanded you to follow. If you believe and obey what He has commanded you and keep away from what He has prohibited to you, then you will attain that eternal bliss which He has promised you in the Hereafter, and you will be happy in this world because of the different kinds of blessings which He will bestow upon you, and you will be akin to the most wise of creation and the purest in heart, namely the Prophets, Messengers, righteous and angels who are close to Allaah.

But if you disbelieve and disobey your Lord, you will lose in this world and in the Hereafter. You will be exposed to His wrath and punishment in this world and in the Hereafter. You will be akin to the most evil and foolish of creation, and worse than the devils, wrongdoers, evildoers and false gods. This is in general terms.

I will explain to you something about the consequences of kufr, the details of which are as follows:

1 – Fear and lack of security

Allaah has promised those who believe in Him and follow His Messengers complete security in this world and in the Hereafter. He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“It is those who believe (in the Oneness of Allaah and worship none but Him Alone) and confuse not their Belief with Zulm (wrong, i.e. by worshipping others besides Allaah), for them (only) there is security and they are the guided”

[al-An’aam 6:82]

Allaah is al-Mu’min (the Giver of security) and al-Muhaymin (the Watcher over His creatures); He is the Sovereign of all that exists in the universe. If Allaah loves a person for his faith then He will grant him security, tranquility and contentment. If a man disbelieves in Him He will take away his tranquility and security, so you will only see him either fearful about his destiny in the Hereafter, or fearing sickness for himself, or fearing for his future in this world. This is why the insurance business was established, to insure people’s lives and property, because of the lack of security and the lack of trust in Allaah.

2 – A life of hardship

Allaah has created man and has subjugated to him all that is in the universe. He has decreed for every creature its share of provision and its life span. So you see the bird going out from its nest in the morning to seek its provision, which it picks up, flying from branch to branch and singing the most beautiful songs. Man is one of these creatures whose provision and lifespan is already allocated. If he believes in his Lord and adheres to His laws, He will bless him with happiness and stability, and make things easy for him, even if he is only given the bare necessities of life.

But if he disbelieves in Him, and arrogantly refuses to worship him, He will make his life hard and fill him with worries and distress, even if he possesses all kinds of comforts and luxuries. Do you not see how many suicides in the world are committed by people who have all kinds of luxuries? Do you not see the extravagant spending on furniture and travel aimed at enjoying life? What makes people spend extravagantly is the fact that their hearts are devoid of faith, and their feeling that life is difficult and hard; it is an attempt to rid themselves of these feelings by ever-changing

means. Allaah indeed spoke the truth when He said:

“But whosoever turns away from My Reminder (i.e. neither believes in this Qur’aan nor acts on its teachings) verily, for him is a life of hardship, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Resurrection”

[Ta-Ha 20:124]

3 – He will live in conflict with himself and with the universe around him

That is because his own soul was created to believe in and worship Allaah alone (i.e., Tawheed). Allaah says:

“Allaah’s Fitrah (i.e. Allaah’s Islamic Monotheism) with which He has created mankind”[al-Room 30:30]

His body submits to its Creator, and acts in accordance with His system, but the kaafir insists on going against his own innate nature and lives in such a way that in matters where he is given a choice, he always chooses to follow the way which goes against the command of his Lord, so even if his body is surrendering to the laws of Allaah, in matters of choice he chooses to oppose the laws of Allaah.

He is in a state of conflict with the universe around him, because this entire universe, from the hugest galaxies to the tiniest insect is operating in accordance with the laws that Allaah has decreed for it. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Then He rose over (Istawa) towards the heaven when it was smoke, and said to it and to the earth: ‘Come both of you willingly or unwillingly.’ They both said: ‘We come willingly’”[Fussilat 41:11]

Indeed, this universe loves the one who also submits to Allaah, and it hates the one who goes against that. The kaafir is the rebellious one in this universe, where he sets himself up in opposition to his Lord, rallying others to oppose Him too. Hence it comes as no surprise that the

heavens and the earth and all creatures hate him and hate his kufr and heresy. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And they say: ‘The Most Gracious (Allaah) has begotten a son (or offspring or children) [as the Jews say: ‘Uzayr (Ezra) is the son of Allaah, and the Christians say that He has begotten a son [‘Eesa (Jesus)], and the pagan Arabs say that He has begotten daughters (angels and others)].’

Indeed you have brought forth (said) a terrible evil thing.

Whereby the heavens are almost torn, and the earth is split asunder, and the mountains fall in ruins,

That they ascribe a son (or offspring or children) to the Most Gracious (Allaah).

But it is not suitable for (the Majesty of) the Most Gracious (Allaah) that He should beget a son (or offspring or children).

There is none in the heavens and the earth but comes unto the Most Gracious (Allaah) as a slave”[Maryam 19:88-93]

And Allaah says of Pharaoh and his troops:

“And the heavens and the earth wept not for them, nor were they given a respite”[al-Dukhaan 44:29]

4 – He will live in ignorance

For kufr is ignorance, indeed it is the greatest form of ignorance, because the kaafir is ignorant of his Lord and he sees this universe that He created in such an amazing way, and he sees how great is his own creation, then he ignores the One Who created this universe and Who created him. Is this not the greatest form of ignorance?

5 – He will wrong himself and wrong those around him

Because he is subjugating himself to something other than that for which he was created, and because he does not worship his Lord, rather he worships someone other than Him. Wrongdoing means putting something in the wrong place, and what wrongdoing is greater than directing worship to someone other than the One Who deserves it? Luqmaan the Wise said, explaining the abhorrent nature of shirk:

“O my son! Join not in worship others with Allaah. Verily, joining others in worship with Allaah is a great Zulm (wrong) indeed”

[Luqmaan 31:13 – interpretation of the meaning]

He also does wrong to others around him, humans and other creatures, because he does not recognize the rights of those who have rights. When the Day of Resurrection comes, everyone whom he wronged, whether human or animal, will stand before him and will ask his Lord to settle the score between them.

6 – He exposes himself to the wrath and anger of Allaah in this world

He is exposed to that because disasters and calamities will befall him, as a punishment in this world. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Do then those who devise evil plots feel secure that Allaah will not sink them into the earth, or that the torment will not seize them from directions they perceive not?

Or that He may catch them in the midst of their going to and fro (in their jobs), so that there be no escape for them (from Allaah’s punishment)?”

[al-Nahl 16:45-46]

“And a disaster will not cease to strike those who disbelieved because of their (evil) deeds or it (i.e. the disaster) settles close to their homes, until the Promise of Allaah comes to pass. Certainly, Allaah breaks not His Promise”

[al-Ra’d 13:31]

“Or, did the people of the towns then feel secure against the coming of Our punishment in the forenoon while they were playing?”

[al-A’raaf 7:98]

This is the situation of everyone who turns away from the remembrance of Allaah. Allaah said, telling us of the punishments that befall the earlier disbelieving nations (interpretation of the meaning):

“So We punished each (of them) for his sins, of them were some on whom We sent Haasib (a violent wind with shower of stones) [as on the people of Loot (Lot)], and of them were some who were overtaken by As-Sayhah [torment — awful cry, (as Thamood or Shu‘ayb’s people)], and of them were some whom We caused the earth to swallow [as Qaaroon (Korah)], and of them were some whom We drowned [as the people of Nooh (Noah), or Fir‘awn (Pharaoh) and his people]. It was not Allaah Who wronged them, but they wronged themselves”

[al-‘Ankaboot 29:40]

And you see the disasters around you that have befallen people as a punishment and vengeance from Allaah.

7 – Disappointment and loss are decreed for him

Because of his wrongdoing he will lose out on the greatest things that hearts and souls can enjoy, which is knowing Allaah and conversing with Him, and finding peace and contentment in Him. He will lose in this world because he will live a life of misery and confusion therein, and he will lose his own soul for the sake of which he has been striving, because he did not subjugate it to the purpose for which it was created. He will not be happy in this world, because his soul lives a miserable life and dies a miserable death, and it will be resurrected with the doomed. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And as for those whose Scale will be light, they are those who will lose their ownselves (by entering Hell)”[al-A’raaf 7:9]

And he will lose his family, because he lives with them in a state of disbelief in Allaah, so they are the same as him in their misery and hard life, and their ultimate destiny will be the Fire. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“The losers are those who will lose themselves and their families on the Day of Resurrection”[al-Zumar 39:15, al-Shoora 42:45]

On the Day of Resurrection they will be gathered into Hell, what an evil abode. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“(It will be said to the angels): ‘Assemble those who did wrong, together with their companions (from the devils) and what they used to worship,

Instead of Allaah, and lead them on to the way of flaming Fire (Hell)’”

[al-Saaffaat 37:22-23]

He lives disbelieving in his Lord and denying His blessings

Allaah created him from nothing, and bestowed all kinds of blessings upon him. How can he then worship someone other than Him, and take as a friend someone other than Him, and give thanks to someone other than Him? What denial can be greater or more abhorrent than this?

9 – He will be deprived of true life

That is because the one who deserves a good life is the one who believes in his Lord and knows his purpose in life, who knows where he is going and is certain that he will be resurrected. So he acknowledges the rights of all those who have rights, and he does not deny any rights, or harm any other creature. He lives the life of the blessed and enjoys a good life in this world and in the Hereafter. Allaah says:

“Whoever works righteousness — whether male or female — while he (or she) is a true believer (of Islamic Monotheism) verily, to him We will give a good life”[al-Nahl 16:97]

“and pleasant dwellings in ‘Adn (Eden) Paradise; that is indeed the great success”[al-Saff 61:12]

As for the one who lives a life akin to that of the animals, not knowing his Lord or knowing his aim in life or where he is headed, rather his aim is to eat, drink and sleep … what difference is there between him and the rest of the animals? Indeed, he is further astray. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And surely, We have created many of the jinn and mankind for Hell. They have hearts wherewith they understand not, and they have eyes wherewith they see not, and they have ears wherewith they hear not (the truth). They are like cattle, nay even more astray; those! They are the heedless ones”

[al-A’raaf 7:179]

“Or do you think that most of them hear or understand? They are only like cattle nay, they are even farther astray from the Path (i.e. even worse than cattle)”[al-Furqaan 25:44]

10 – He will be punished eternally

The kaafir will move from one torment to another, in the sense that he will depart from this world – where he is exposed to shocks and calamities – to the Hereafter. In the first stage (of this transition) the angels of death will descend upon him, preceded by the angels of torment who will give him a taste of the punishment that he deserves. Allaah says:

“And if you could see when the angels take away the souls of those who disbelieve (at death); they smite their faces and their backs…”[al-Anfaal 8:50]

Then when his soul has come forth and he is placed in his grave, he is met with a more severe torment. Allaah says, speaking of the people of Pharaoh:

“The Fire, they are exposed to it, morning and afternoon. And on the Day when the Hour will be established (it will be said to the angels): ‘Cause Fir‘awn’s (Pharaoh) people to enter the severest torment!’”[Ghaafir 40:46]

Then the Day of Resurrection will come and all creatures will be resurrected and shown their deeds, and the kaafir will see that Allaah has listed all of his deeds in that book of which Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And the Book (one’s Record) will be placed (in the right hand for a believer in the Oneness of Allaah, and in the left hand for a disbeliever in the Oneness of Allaah), and you will see the Mujrimoon (criminals, polytheists, sinners), fearful of that which is (recorded) therein. They will say: ‘Woe to us! What sort of Book is this that leaves neither a small thing nor a big thing, but has recorded it with numbers!’”[al-Kahf 18:49]

Then the kaafir will wish that he were dust:

“the Day when man will see that (the deeds) which his hands have sent forth, and the disbeliever will say: ‘Woe to me! Would that I were dust!’”

[al-Naba’ 78:40 – interpretation of the meaning]

Because of the horrors of that situation [on the Day of Resurrection], if a man possessed all that is on earth he would give it to ransom himself from the torment of that Day. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And those who did wrong (the polytheists and disbelievers in the Oneness of Allaah), if they had all that is in earth and therewith as much again, they verily, would offer it to ransom themselves therewith”

[al-Zumar 39:47]

“The Mujrim, (criminal, sinner, disbeliever) would desire to ransom himself from the punishment of that Day by his children.

And his wife and his brother,

And his kindred who sheltered him,

And all that are in the earth, so that it might save him”

[al-Ma’aarij 70:11-14]

That abode is the abode of requital and not the abode of hope, so man must inevitably face the requital for his deeds: if they were good, then it will be good, and if they were bad, then it will be bad. The worst that the kaafir will encounter on the Day of Resurrection will be the torment of the Fire. Allaah has created different kinds of torment for its inhabitants so that they may taste the consequences of their deeds. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“This is the Hell which the Mujrimoon (polytheists, criminals, sinners) denied.

They will go between it (Hell) and the fierce boiling water!”
[al-Rahmaan 55:43-44]

And He says, describing their drink and clothing (interpretation of the meaning):

“then as for those who disbelieved, garments of fire will be cut out for them, boiling water will be poured down over their heads.

With it will melt (or vanish away) what is within their bellies, as well as (their) skins.

And for them are hooked rods of iron (to punish them)”

[al-Hajj 22:19-21]