

**Power Of Tabligh**  
**Conversion of the Mongols**  
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ISLAM was about to be submerged in the whirl-pool of the Mongol ardour of slaughter and destruction, as several Muslim writers had then expressed the fear, wiping it out of existence, but Islam suddenly began to capture the hearts of the savage Tartars. The preachers of Islam thus accomplished a task which the swordarm of the faith had failed to perform, by carrying the message of Islam to the barbaric hordes of heathen Mongols.

Conversion of the Mongols to Islam was indeed one of the few unpredictable events of history. The Tartaric wave of conquest which had swept away the entire Islamic east within a short period of one year was, in truth, not so astounding as the Mongol's acceptance of Islam during the zenith of their glory; for, the Muslims had by the beginning of the seventh century of Muslim era imbibed all those vices which are a natural outcome of the opulence, luxury and fast living. The Mongols were, on the other hand, a wild and ferocious, yet vigorous and sturdy race who could have hardly been expected to submit to the spiritual and cultural superiority of a people so completely subdued by them, and who were also looked down and despised by them. The author of the Preaching of Islam, T.W. Arnold, has also expressed his amazement over the achievement of this unbelievable feat.

“But Islam was to rise again from the ashes of its former grandeur and through its preachers win over these savage conquerors to the acceptance of the faith. This was a task for the missionary energies of Islam that was rendered more difficult from the fact that there were two powerful competitors in the field. The spectacle of Buddhism, Christianity and Islam emulously striving to win the allegiance of the fierce conquerors that had set their feet on the necks of adherents of these great missionary religions, is one that is without parallel in the history of the world

“For Islam to enter into competition with such powerful rivals as Buddhism and Christianity were at the outset of the period of Mongol rule, must have appeared a wellnigh hopeless undertaking. For the Muslims had suffered more from the storm of the Mongol invasions than the others. Those cities that had hitherto been the rallying points of spiritual organization and learning for Islam in Asia, had been for the most part laid in ashes: the theologians and pious doctors of the faith, either slain or carried away into captivity. Among the Mongol rulers — usually so tolerant towards all religions — there were some who exhibited varying degrees of hatred towards the Muslim faith. Chingiz Khan ordered all those who killed animals in the Muhammadan fashion to be put to death, and this ordinance was revived by Qubilay, who by offering rewards to informers set on foot a sharp persecution that lasted for seven years, as many poor persons took advantage of this ready means of gaining wealth, and slaves accused their masters in order to gain their freedom. During the reign of Kuyuk (1246-1248) who left the conduct of affairs entirely to his two Christian ministers and whose court was filled with Christian monks, the Muhammadans were made to suffer great severities

“Arghun (1284-1291) the fourth Ilkhan persecuted the Musalmans and took away from them all posts in the departments of justice and finance, and forbade them to appear at his court.

“In spite of all difficulties, however, the Mongols and the savage tribes that followed in their wake were at length brought to submit to the faith of those Muslim peoples whom they had crushed beneath their feet.”

Unbelievable and of far-reaching significance, although the conversion of the Mongols to Islam had been, it is also not less surprising that extremely few and scanty records of this glorious achievement are to be found in the annals of the time. The names of only a few dedicated saviours of Islam who won proselytes from the savage hordes are known to the world, but their venture was no less daring nor their achievement less significant than the accomplishment of the warriors of the faith. Their memory shall always be enriched by the gratitude of Muslims for they had, in reality, performed a great service to the humanity in general and to the Muslims in particular, by diffusing the knowledge of faith among those barbarians, winning them over to the service of one God and making them the standard-bearers of the Apostle of Peace.

After the death of Chenghiz Khan the great heritage of that Mongol conqueror was divided into four dominions headed by the offsprings of his sons. The message of Islam had begun to spread among all these four sections of the Mongols who were rapidly converted to the faith. In regard to the conversion of the ruling princes in the lineage of Batu, the son of Chenghiz Khan's first born Juji, who ruled the western portion as Khan of the Golden Horde, writes Arnold:

“The first Mongol ruling prince who professed Islam was Baraka Khan, who was chief of the Golden Horde from 1256 to 1267. According to Abu'l-Ghazi he was converted after he had come to the throne. He is said one day to have fallen in with a caravan coming from Bukhara, and taking two of the merchants aside, to have questioned them on the doctrines of Islam, and they expounded to him their faith so persuasively that he became converted in all sincerity. He first revealed his change of faith to his youngest brother, whom he induced to follow his example, and then made open profession of his new belief ... Baraka Khan entered into a close alliance with the Mamluk Sultan of Egypt, Rukn al-Din Baybars. The initiative came from the latter, who had given a hospitable reception to a body of troops, two hundred in number, belonging to the Golden Horde; these men, observing the growing enmity between their Khan and Hulagu, the conqueror of Baghdad, in whose army they were serving, took flight into Syria, whence they were honourably conducted to Cairo to the court of Baybars, who persuaded them to embrace Islam. Baybars himself was at war with Hulagu, whom he had recently defeated and driven out of Syria. He sent two of the Mongol fugitives, with some other envoys, to bear a letter to Baraka Khan. On their return these envoys reported that each princess and amir at the court of Baraka Khan had an imam and a mu'adhdhin, and the children were taught the Qur'an in the schools. These friendly relations between Baybars and Baraka Khan brought many of the Mongols of the Golden Horde into Egypt, where they were prevailed upon to become Musalmans.”