

Question

What is the important difference between Deen and Religion? Describe the importance of Deen in human life.

Introduction:

The terms Deen and Religion are often used interchangeably but in Islamic concept, they are completely different. In Islam, the word Deen is used comprehensively while religion is used narrowly.

1) Deen :-

The word Deen means to attain supremacy and dominion status.

→ Contextual meaning:

The contextual meaning of Deen is complete code of life.

→ Shariah:

In Shariah, the word Deen means to admit the sovereignty of Allah.

The Holy Quran Says:

"Today I have completed your religion for you, and perfected my favour for you and have chosen Islam as your religion"

(Al-Maida: 3)

This verse emphasizes that Deen (Islam) is a complete way of life to be followed. Deen encourages us to follow Prophet PBUH.

The Holy prophet PBUH is the best example for Muslims to live their lives according to Deen. Quran Says:

"Indeed in the messenger of Allah, you have the excellent example for anyone who hopes in Allah, in last day and remembers Allah often".

Deen also includes Tawheed, which means there is only one God to be worshiped and he is Allah. Quran says:

"Say, He is Allah, the one; Allah, the eternal, the absolute, He begets not, nor is he begotten, and there is no one like him".

Al-Baqarah: 1-4.

2) Religion

→ Contextual meaning:

The contextual meaning of religion is "way of life".

→ Shariah

The meaning of Religion is Islamic. Shariah is beliefs and practices related to God.

→ According to Anthropologist Edward Taylor: Religion is to believe in spirit spiritualism.

→ According to Sociologist Emile Durkheim: Religion is the practice of certain faiths related to God.

→ According to Dr. Israr Ahmad: Religion is the combination of faith, rituals and certain social functions.

Religion is a narrow term limited to the spiritual aspects of life such as prayer, fasting, Hajj and belief in God.

The Holy Quran says:

"Indeed, the religion in the sight of Allah is Islam."

(Al-Imran : 19)

This verse shows that religion in Islam is related to God. Religion is an important aspect of Islam but not the only aspect.

The spiritual aspects of Religion are the five pillars of Islam:

- i) Zakat
- ii) Salah
- iii) Fasting
- iv) Hajj / Pilgrimage.
- v) Shahd / Shahada.

Major differences:

- Both are used interchangeably but in Islam → different.
- Deen → comprehensive → all aspects of life.
- Religion → narrower term → beliefs and practices related to God.

1) Scope:

- Deen broader than religion
- Deen: all aspects of life social, political, economic, and personal, while religion → spiritual aspects of life such as fast, prayers, and belief in God.

2) Purpose:

Deen: to guide muslims in every aspect

Religion: to establish connection b/w God and individual

↳ to establish spiritual connection b/w God and indi... but doesn't guide in every aspect.

3) Flexibility:-

Deen: flexible + adapt to every circumstance.

Religion: rigid, can't be changed.

Deen: provide general principles that can be applied to different situations

Religion: specific rules that can be changed.

4) Universality:

Deen: Universal, applies to all people, regardless of race, nationality or ethnicity.

Religion: specific to a particular community / group of people.

2) "Importance of deen in human life"

Introduction:

- Islam is comprehensive way of life
- encompasses all aspects of human existence including spirituality, morality, ethics, law, social interaction and personal behaviour.

→ Importance of Deen is multifaceted.

→ Islamic emphasizes on importance of human life here and hereafter.

→ It is through this Deen that Muslims understand imp. of life.

1) Guidance in decision making:

→ Quran provides guidance how to make right decisions.

"There is no compulsion in religion. The right direction is henceforth distinct from error.

(Al-Baqarah: 256)

→ This means Muslims are free in decision making but Quran enable them to make right decisions align with their values + beliefs.

→ Quran also highlights the importance of seeking advice from Allah in making important decisions.

2) Moral values and Ethics:-

Islam emphasizes on ↑ which form the foundation of Fair Society.

"O mankind! we created you from a single pair of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other, (not that you may despise each other)." Al-Hijrah: 13

→ These verse promote equality, respect and tolerance towards people from different backgrounds.

→ Islam also encourages to be honest, trustworthy and compassionate towards each other.

3) Spiritual Growth:

→ Islam emphasizes on spiritual growth and development.

"O mankind! worship your Lord (Allah), who created you and those who were before you so that you may become pious

Al-Baqarah: 21

Piety.

→ Highlights the importance of worshipping Allah and striving towards

→ By following teachings of Islam Muslims can strengthen their faith and connect with Allah on a deeper level.

4) Social Responsibility:

Islam encourages to take responsibility of their actions and to be mindful of the impact they have on society.

If anyone killed a person not in retaliation for murder or to spread mischief in land, it would be as if he killed all of mankind. And if anyone saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of all mankind.
[Al-Maida: 32]

→ Highlights the importance of human life and the responsibility that comes with it.

→ Muslims are encouraged to contribute positively in society and make difference in the world.

5) Personal development:-

→ Islam promotes personal development and self-improvement:
"And say: My lord! increase me in knowledge."

→ Highlights the importance of seeking knowledge.

→ Muslims are encouraged to develop their skills, talents, and ability to improve in life.

6) Health and wellbeing:-

Islam emphasizes on good health and wellbeing.

"And spend in the way of Allah and do not ~~bring~~ throw [yourselves] with your [own] hands into destruction. And do good; Indeed Allah loves the doers of good."

Al-Baqarah: 195.

→ emphasis of importance of taking care of one's self and avoiding harmful behaviours that can lead to destruction.

→ Islam encourages Muslims to adopt healthy lifestyle and to take care of their physical, mental and emotional health.

7) Unity and Brotherhood:

Islam promotes unity and Brotherhood among Muslims.

"The believers are but brothers. So, make settlements ^{money} between your brothers. And fear Allah that you may receive

→ importance of treating others with kindness + compassion.

→ resolving conflicts in peaceful manners. Work together support one another

→ regardless of differences in race nationality or social status.