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Name: Rida Zamis
Assignment: Islamiat (2)

Q: What is Islam and enlist the salient features of Islam.

Answer:

What is Islam? / Concept of Islam:

- Literal meaning:

Islam is derived from two Arabic words. One is SLM and other is Salama. The first word SLM means 'to surrender', 'to submit', 'to give one's self up', and 'to yield'. Other word which is Salama means peace, it means to reconcile with one another or to make peace. So literally Islam is submission and peace.

- Conventional meaning:

Islam as a religion stands for a voluntary and complete submission of one's desires for the sake of Allah and to enter in peace by submitting to the will of Allah.

- Concept of Islam by Holy Prophet (PBUH)

Umar-bin-Khattab narrated that Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) described Islam as:
"Islam is based on five principles: To testify that none has the right to be worshipped, but Allah and Muhammad (PBUH) is Allah's messenger; to offer prayers; to

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Syeed Amir Ali:

In its primary sense, means, to be tranquil, at rest, to have done one's duty, to be at perfect peace; in its secondary sense to surrender oneself to Him with whom peace is made. ••

So Islam is a deen which requires from its believers the voluntary and complete submission of their desires to the will of Allah. Islam is the name of truly following all the commandments of Allah Almighty and the Sunnah of Holy Prophet (PBUH). Moreover, it is not only about submitting oneself to the will of Allah but it is also about making peace with the creation of Allah Almighty.

Basically, it is the message of God never preached by any prophet of Allah last of whom is Holy Prophet (PBUH) who presented it in its final shape and for all the times and places to come.

Islam is the complete and perfect religion with numerous features. Some of the salient features of Islam are briefly described here:

Salient Features of Islam:

1) Islam is a divine deen:

Islam is the only divine deen the world. Firstly, it is divine that means it is revealed by the Allah Almighty in the form of the holy Quran. Islam distinguishes from all other religions whose sources are human-made. On the other hand the source of Islam is Allah Himself as the Holy Quran says:

"And Indeed, (O Muhammad), you received the Quran from one wise and Knowing."

Surah Nermal: (6)

Secondly, Islam is deen. Deen is the complete and comprehensive. So Islam as deen. It not only deals with the relations of men to the God on vertical level but it also deals with the relations of the men-to-men on horizontal level. It stands for the submission on the vertical level and peace on the horizontal level. According to the Holy Quran Islam is:

"Act of devoutly loving God and being just and benevolent to His creatures."

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(2) Islam is universal deen:

Islam is the universal deen. It is not limited to the specific time, geography and ethnicity. Islam is the natural creed of every human being. It is for the whole of the humanity till the last day of the world. The holy Quran describe it as.

"Ideal system of living for all of mankind."

(5:32)

"O Muhammad we have not sent you except as a giver of glad tidings and a warner for all mankind, but most of men know not."

Surah Saba: 28

"O people I am but a messenger from God to you all."

Surah Al-Araf (7:158)

(3) Islam is the complete code of life:

Islam is the complete code of life. Every aspect of individual as well collective life of human being is completely addressed by the Islam. It guides an individual from the birth and upbringing to the matters of character building, education, livelihood, family life etc.

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Moreover, the concept of Islamic Tawheed is perfectly defined in the Surah Iklas of the Holy Quran:

"Say: He, Allah, is one. Allah, is He on whom depend all. He begets not, nor is he begotten. And none is like Him.

verses (1-4)

Basically, these ayats affirm the unity of Allah in His person, attributes and in actions.

Also in Surah Taha (20:14) Allah Himself proclaims that:

"I am God and there is no other God. worship me and keep up prayer for my remembrance."

Allama Shibli Nomani in his book 'Sirah-un-Nabi' says that Islam is like a fort and the gate of that fort is Tawheed.

So Tawheed is the most important and defining feature of Islam.

The Islamic concept of Tawheed separates Islam from all other religions including Christianity and Judaism.

(5) Finality of Holy Prophet (PBUH)

The prophethood is the process through which Allah has been conveyed his message to the humanity.

Moreover, a person can get complete guidelines in the aspects of collective life including: social, political, economic, judicial and even in global affairs. According to the holy Quran.

"And we have explained in detail in this Quran for the benefit of mankind every kind of similitudes."
 Surah Al-Kahf 8: 54-55

"And certainly we have set forth to man in this Quran similitude of every sort that they may mind."

Surah Al-Zumar (39:27)

So Islam is a complete code of life with guidelines in every aspect of life ranging from birth to the global affairs.

(4) Islamic Concept of Tawheed:

This is the most important and the defining feature of Islam. The Islamic concept of Tawheed is based on the unity of only one God, Allah. ~~This~~ feature. The Islam start with the negation of all other gods and the believe on the only one God, Allah. As been preached in the first Kalima (first part):

"La illah illa Allah"

Meaning: There is no god, but God (Allah).



discrimination, love, care, kindness, tolerance, sympathy, empathy for all humans. Humanity means to observe the human rights and animals rights as well.

Islam is the message of humanity. The pluralist concept of society given by Islam is completely based on humanity. Islam. Basically, Islam promotes humanity by practicing: character building, welfare of humans, charity, medical service, human rights, animal rights, environmental protection etc.

References:

- "The perfect among the believers are those who are best in character."

Saah Mujahid.

- System Zakat is the most source of humanity and Hazrat Abu Bakas (R.A) waged war against those who refused to pay Zakat.

- The last sermon of Holy Prophet (PBUH) is the first charter of human rights.

- Hadith regarding environmental protection.

"Planting a tree is the best kind of charity."

"Do not cut green trees even if you are in case of war."

So all these references portray the humanist spirit of Islam. In fact, Islam is the only religion in the

It started with honest Adam (A.S) and ended with the holy prophet (PBUH).
The Prophethood in Islam is also its significant feature which is sealed by coming of the last prophet • Honest Muhammad (PBUH).

As the second part of the first Kalima affirms: Muhammad Rasulullah is His prophet.

Moreover, in Surah Ahzab Allah clearly describes the finality of Holy Prophet (PBUH):

"Muhammad is not the father of any man among you, but he is the messenger of Allah and the seal of the prophets and Allah is aware of all things."

Hadith:

"I am the last prophet and there will be no prophet after me."

So the holy prophet (PBUH) is the last prophet of Allah. His way of life is called Sunnah which is the source of Islam and was perfect example to spend one's life according to which.

(6) Islam promotes humanity:

Humanity is the natural instinct. It stands for the • without any

Lastly, the Paradise too is the abode of Peace.

So Islam is the religion which itself means peace and every aspect of it signifies the actualization of peace.

(8) Islam advocates Equality:

According to Islam all men are equal regardless of colour, language, race or nationality. It banishes all false barriers of race, status and wealth. Islam proclaims the ideal of the whole of the humanity being one family of God. It fosters inter-racial understanding and cooperation.

Holy Quran:

"O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes" that ye may know each other. (not that ye may despise each other)
Surah Al-Hajj 49:13

Hadith:

"All creatures of God form a family and he is the best loved of God who loves best His creatures."

Islam wants to unite the entire humanity under one banner of equality. Islam stands for the extinction of race consciousness and evolution of revolutionary concept of unity

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of mankind. The only criterion for superiority is the Taqwa. As Allah says in the Holy Quran.

"Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous."
49:13.

(9) Islam is Simple, rational and Practical:

Islam is the simple religion. It is without any mythology, superstitions, and irrational beliefs. The teachings of Islam are intelligible and obvious. It is free from any hierarchy of priests, abstractions or rites & rituals.

Islam also is a rational religion. Basically Islam awakens in man the faculty of reason and exhorts him to use his intellect. It enjoins him to see things in the light of reality. As Holy Quran advises man to recite:

"O my Lord! increase me in knowledge."
Kusah Tahq

"And those who do not observe and understand are worse than cattle."
(Al-A'raf)

Hadith:

"He who leaves his home in search of knowledge walks in the path of God."

Moreover, Islam is absolutely a practical religion. In Islam faith

is not a mere profession of beliefs, but rather that it is the very encompassing of life. For Islam righteous conduct must follow belief in God. Religion is something to be practical.

Holy Quran:

"Those who believe and act righteously, joy is for them and a blissful home to return to"

Surah Al-Raad. (13-29)

Hadith:

God does not accept belief if it is not expressed in deeds and does not accept deeds if they do not conform to belief."

(10) Unity of Matter and Spirit:

Islam does not believe in asceticism. Basically, it stands not for denial of life but for the fulfillment of life. Islam is the balanced religion. It supports the spiritual as well as mundane life as the holy Quran advises men to pray:

"Our Lord! Give us something fine in this world as well as something fine in the Hereafter" &

Surah Al-Baqarah (201)

Holy Quran (injunctions):

"O children of Adam! Attend to your

embellishments at every time of prayers, and eat and drink and be not extravagant; Surely he does not love the extravagant."

Al - Aaraaf

Hadith:

"A muslim who lives in the midst of society and bears with patience the afflictions that come to him is better than one who shuns society and cannot bear any wrong done to him."

So Islam does not admit any separation between spiritual life and mundane life. It emphasis on the both sides of life. It avoids the one-sidedness of other religions.

(ii) Balance between Individual and Society:

Islam promotes a balance between individualism and collectivism. It believe in the individual personality of men and guarantees fundamental rights.

Individualism: Holy Quran

"Men shall have nothing but what he strives for. And that he striving shall soon be seen and then shall he be rewarded for it with the full of reward."

(Surah Mamel)



"For us are our deeds and for you are yours"

Surah Al-Qasas.

-Collectivism - Holy Quran:

"And in this property ~~was~~ a portion due to him who begs and to his heirs"
 Hadith.
 "Good." Al-Zarqani

"It is not a believer who takes his fill while his neighbour starves."
 "The believer in God is he who is not a danger to the life and property of any other."

(12) Permanence and Change:

Islam presents an ideology which satisfies the demand of stability as well as change. As Allah has revealed broad principles and he has endowed man with the freedom to apply them in every age in the way suited to the spirit of and conditions of that age for example. Basic principles are fixed, but doors of Ijtihad are also opened in Islam.

(13) Religious Tolerance and Freedom:

Islam as a religion and as a social system stands for the



total religious toleration and religious freedom. The life of holy prophet (PBUH) is the best example of it. Moreover, Holy Quran states:

"whoever wants and should believe, and whoever wants he should disbelieve."
Surah - Al-Kahf.

(14) Islam is a perfect religion:

Islam as a deen is the most comprehensive and complete code of life. It is the only perfect religion in the world and only religion acceptable to Allah.

Holy Quran:

"This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed my favors upon you and have chosen for you Islam as your religion." Surah Al-Maidah.

"The only religion before Allah is Islam"
Al-Imran.

(15) Complete Record of Teachings Preserved:

It is also significant feature of Islam that the teachings of Islam are completely preserved in its original form in the form of the Holy Quran and the Sunnah of Holy Prophet (PBUH).

So conclusively, Islam means Submission and Peace. It is a complete code of life with many salient features.



world that has been the flag carrier of humanity since 1400 years.

(7) Islam fosters Peace:

Peace is the essence of Islam. The root word for Islam *Salam* means peace. Islam is peace, and in Surah Al-Maida it is defined as "Subul-al-Salam" Path of Peace. Allah Himself is Al-Salam (the Source and originator of all Peace) (Al-Salam one of 99 names of Allah). ^{Prophet} Holy Prophet PBUH recited:

"O Allah you are peace and from you emanates all peace. Blessed are you O Posses of majesty and honours."

Holy Prophet (PBUH) is also mentioned in the holy Quran as "Mercy for all creation."

Ideal Society according to Islam is *Dusun* is *Das-al-Salam* (abode of Peace) Surah Yunus (10:25). Islam raises the banner of reconciliation (Sulh) Surah Nisa (4:128). ^{Prophet} Quran says that Allah does not like

the disturbance of peace (*qitnah*) Surah Al-Baqarah 2:205). The livelihood of the man is also depends on the peace as Holy Prophet (PBUH) said: "Allah grants through *raf* (gentleness) what he does not grant by means of *urf* (violence). In fact war in Islam is geared to the actualization of Peace and justice.

pay Zakat; to perform Hajj and to observe fast during the month of Ramadan. "

Another definition of Islam given by holy prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) is:

"Islam means to be witnesses of Allah and His messengers and to establish pillars of Islam. "

- Some scholarly definitions of Islam:

Imam Anazali:

"Islam is about the rights of Allah and the rights of peop. "

Sadar Uddin Islahi:

"Islam is the religion based on the faiths and rituals. "

Dr Hameedullah:

"Islam is the smoothest deen revealed through holy prophet (P.B.U.H). "

Imam Raghīb al-Isfahani:

"Islam in Law is of two kinds: one is a simple confession with the tongue... other is that along with confession there is belief in the heart and a fulfillment in practice and resignation to God. "

"Islam means entering into Salam and Salam and Silm bath ~~sign~~ signify peace. "