

(20 marks)

Question: Discuss distinctive Aspects of Islam.

Introduction:

There are many distinctive aspects of Islam from other religions. The first and foremost is the oneness and unity of Allah Almighty which creates uniqueness in Islam from other religions. In addition to this, believe in the finality of prophet (ﷺ) is the belief in this religion. Furthermore, concept of life after death exists in the religion. This concept creates best system of accountability among believers which no other than this religion creates. It is the universal in nature and guides in every aspect of life. Its teachings are simple, based on reason and are still in their original form. It hold balance between individual and society and does not divide life into different apartments separate from each other. It eliminates discrimination among people and promotes dignity of mankind. Furthermore, it gives religious freedom to humanity.

(i) Islam is based on unity and Oneness of Allah :-

The basic belief of Islam is Tauheed which means to believe in Oneness of Allah Almighty in all respects and no one shares in His Oneness of Allah. This concept of Tauheed differentiates Islam from other religions. As the tree is wonderfully extension of the seed so as the Islam; a multifaceted expression of a single basic concept of Tauheed. The first part of Kalma also reflects the concept of Tauheed.

لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله -

"There is none worthy of worship except God and Muhammad is the messenger of God." (Kalma Tayyab)

Allama Shibli Nomani in his book Sirat un Nabi writes: "Holy Prophet (ﷺ) said that Islam is like a fort and the gate of that fort is Tauheed."

(ii) Islam : A Universal Religion :-

The other religions of the world were named after their founders like Christianity and Buddhism or after land like Hinduism or after nation like Judaism. It has been observed that the world is fighting over person, land and nation. This indicates that such religions are not universal but for particular nation, land and person. However, Islam is named as Islam which means peace for all. It is universal in nature and is not named for particular nation like Arabism. Allah Almighty in Holy Quran says:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ -

"We have sent you only as a mercy for everybody in the universe." (21:107)

(iii) Prophethood in Islam :-

The second basic condition to enter

into the fold of Islam is to believe in the prophethood of Muhammad (ﷺ) as the last messenger of Allah. Allah Almighty has not left man without guidance in Islam. He has actually defined every single aspect of human life through the comprehensive words of the Quran. Allah Almighty in Quran says:

ما كان محمد اباً احد من رجالكم
ولكن رسول الله وخاتم النبيين. ﷺ

"Muhammad is not a father of any man among you, but he is the messenger of Allah and ^{the} seal of prophets."

(Surah Al-Ahzab: 40)

(iv) Islam is a complete way of Life:

There have been and are many religions in the world which are either

restricted in a certain way and do not cover all aspects of human life. These includes Buddhism who believes that one must be cut off emotionally from the material world to earn true spirituality and Hinduism who are restricted to a certain geographical location and believes in a chain of rebirths with progression. However, Islam is a religion which organizes all aspects of life on both individual and collective levels. It established a clear system of worship, Laws about living a life, civil rights, political rights, social issues and all other which people deal within their life. Allah Almighty in Holy Quran says:

“And We have sent down to you the Book as clarification for all things and as guidance and mercy and good news to all who would surrender themselves to God.”

(Al-Quran)

(v) Life After Death in Islam :-

Belief in the life after death is one

of the tenets of Islam. This belief teaches that this world is a place of trial and every human being will be judged based on the deeds that he or she has performed here. Everyone will be accountable for their own deeds. Those who were on the right path shall be awarded with paradise and those who were astray shall be punished accordingly. In this way, a sense of accountability will be developed among the people of the world. Holy prophet (ﷺ) said:

الدنيا مزرعة الآخرة -

"The world is cultivating field of the Hereafter." (Al-Hadith)

(vi) Complete Record of Teachings are Preserved in Islam :-

The teachings of Islam have been preserved in their original form without any alteration. The holy Quran has been in existence for the last fourteen hundred years but it is still available in its original form. The detailed accounts of the

Life of holy Prophet(s) and its teachings are also available in their pristine purity. There has not been one change made in these preserved teachings of Islam. Allah Almighty in Holy Quran says:

ان انزلنا الذكر واننا له حافظون -

"Indeed, We have revealed the Quran and We are its protectors."
(Al-Hijr: 9)

(vii) Islam Promotes Dignity of Mankind :-

Allah has bestowed very high excellence to mankind over all creations. In Islam, humans are titled Ashraf ul Makhloqat meaning the best of creation of Allah Almighty on the earth. Therefore, every man has respect and greatness in this universe. Allah says in Holy Quran that:

"Indeed We have honoured the Descendants of Adam and transported them over land as substance, and made them better than

most of our creation." (Al-Asra:70)

(viii) Islam: A Religion of Equality:-

In Islam, all people are equal regardless of color, language, race or nationality. It addresses itself to the conscience of humanity and banishes all false barriers of race, status and wealth. It has been observed that all such barriers have always continue to exist in other religions. However, Islam declares all people equal. Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) while defining this said:

"No Arab is superior to an Ajam or an Ajam to any Arab; No white is superior to black or any black to white - except piety."

(ix) Unity of Matter and Spirit is

Found in Islam:

Islam suggests creating

a balance between the worldly affairs and spiritual matters. It does not divide life into different apartments separate from each other. Finding the middle path is a general principle of this religion that makes Islam unique than other religions. Allah Almighty in Holy Quran says:

"Thus we have appointed you a middle nation." (Surah Baqrah: 143)

Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) said:

"Midway in every action is the best way."

(x) Islam Provides Religious Freedom To Mankind

Religious freedom is human right in Islam. It does not force any person to accept Islam. Allah Almighty in Holy Quran says:

لا إكراه في الدين -

"There shall be no compulsion
in the religion." (2:256)

At another place of Holy Quran, Allah Almighty
say:

لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ -

"For you is your religion, and
for me is my religion." (Al-Kafiroon:6)

A Hadith: narrated by Sahih Bukhari
tells that "After Hijra, a man came
to Medina and converted to Islam while
there. Shortly after his conversion, he
went to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and
informed him that he wanted to return to
his former religion. The Prophet accepted
this, letting him go freely, without condem-
nation, violence, or penalty."

Critical Analysis :-

The distinctive aspects of Islam provide
a valuable framework for personal and social

growth. By harnessing these aspects, the Muslim world can promote moral and ethical values, strengthen communities and address social and environmental issues. These aspects can be a source of strength, unity and progress for Muslim countries and their people.

Conclusion:-

To conclude, Islam has various distinctive aspects than other religions of the world. It is based on oneness and unity of Allah Almighty. It has belief of prophethood and Hereafter. Furthermore, it promotes dignity of human beings and denounces all discriminations among people of the world. In addition to this, this religion is universal in nature and provides complete code of life. Its teachings create balance between worldly and spiritual life. The teachings of this religion are still preserved in its original form. Lastly, it gives every human right that they can choose their religion.