

CGS : 2025

ISLAMIC STUDIES

ASSIGNMENT # 01

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Q. What is Islam?

Elaborate the salient features of Islam.

ISLAM:

Islam has been derived from the Arabic word *SLM* (سلم) which means to surrender, to submit, to hand over one's self. Thus Islam means to surrender one's self to the will of Allah and to His orders in such a way that gives peace of soul and mind. Thus Islam in its contextual meaning indicates, embracing peace by submitting one's desires to Allah's will.

The definition of Islam itself reflects the uniqueness and dignity of this religion among all the other religions. Islam is one of the three monotheistic and revealed religions.

Allah says in the Holy Quran,

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ ①٩

Verily, the religion in the sight of Allah is Islam. (Al-Imran, 19)

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) defines Islam as the witnessing of oneness of Allah and the finality of prophet hood and belief in the five pillars.

Imam Raghīb defines the types of Islam as, "Islam in law, is of two types, one in primary/simple, confession with the tongue, and the other that along with confession, belief in heart and fulfilment of practice and resignation to Allah's orders."

In the book, "Spirit of Islam", Syed Amir Ali says, Islam in its primary sense means to be at peace, at rest, to be tranquil, to have done one's duty and in secondary sense is to submit to the one with whom peace is made.

So Islam is the source of peace and satisfaction of heart as when a person ~~full~~ whole-heartedly submits himself/herself to Allah then

Allah makes his/her life peaceful.

Allah says:

إِلَّا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ ②

Unquestionably, by the remembrance of Allah hearts are assured. (Asad: 28)

Islam is a universal religion which has been revealed for the whole mankind, irrespective of race, geography and nationality. Islam is the religion free from any kind of force and compulsion,

إِلَّا الرِّبَا فِي الدِّينِ ①

There is no compulsion in the religion of Islam - (2: 256).

Islam has numerous attributes which guide in every aspect of life.

ATTRIBUTES OF ISLAM:

① ISLAM, THE RELIGION OF LOVE.

Islam in its true self is a religion of love and compassion. It is based on the true love (love for Allah and his creatures). So this love strengthens the faith of a believer

There are two types of love; one is horizontal love and the other is vertical love.

Horizontal love (man-man)

This love defines the love for other human beings. A believer should have affection in his/her hearts for other humans.

Holy Prophet says;

"You will not enter paradise until you believe and you will not believe until you love one another."

Vertical love (Allah-man)

Vertical love means the love for Allah and the deep faith in His supreme authority. The love for Allah is a true love which strengthens a believer's faith and guides him/her to a straight path.

As Allah says in the Holy Quran;

Say, "O Prophet, if you love Allah then follow me, Allah will love you and will forgive all your sins. As Allah is All-forgiving and the most merciful."

(Al-Imran : 3 ; 31)

② ISLAM, THE RELIGION OF TRUE SPIRITUALITY:

Spirituality is linked with the Arabic word "Ihsan" which means good or beauty. So Ihsan means inner beauty or spiritual excellence.

A famous Hadith explains Ihsan as: Jibril asked, "What is Ihsan?" Holy Prophet (PBUH) replied, "Ihsan means to worship Allah in such a way that you see Him or if you don't attain this state of devotion then to consider that as Allah is looking at you."

The believers who practice Ihsan are termed as "Muhsinin," and those of the believers (muhsin) who achieve this state are loved by Allah.

وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

And Allah loves the Muhsinine (the good)
(Al-Imran; 3: 134)

The subject related to spirituality is called "Tazkiyat-ul-Nafs" means purification of soul.

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قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا ، وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ رَسَّاهَا

And successful is the one who purifies his soul and doomed is the one who corrupts it.

(Al-Shams : 9-10)

③ ISLAM, THE RELIGION OF PEACE & TOLERANCE,

Islam teaches peace and tolerance in every aspect of our lives. Allah admires those who practice peace on earth and does not like those who create violence.

From the beginning, Islam defined itself a peaceful religion and made tolerance etc; cardinal value.

Allah says,

"O you who believe, enter all of you into your peace and do not follow onto the footsteps of Sataan, for he is your declared enemy. (Al-Baqra, 2 : 208)

Prophet (PBUH) says:

"May Allah have mercy on the man, who is tolerant in selling, buying and doing repayment."

④

ISLAM, THE RELIGION OF GOOD MORALS

The teachings of Islam also revolve around good manners and morals, and the practices which indicate characterfulness.

Good manners are built from, patience, justness, chastity and bravery.

The word patience has been used more than 40 times in the Holy Quran. Patience strengthens a person's faith, Chastity prevents vices i.e. lies etc., valour makes a person strong to face evil and to work against it.

However, bad manners arise from, ignorance, indecency, rage and excesses.

وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُطَهَّرِينَ

And Allah loves those who purify themselves.
(Al-Tauba: 108)

The Holy Prophet says,

"God has sent me to perfect good manners and to do good deeds."

"Strong is not the one who overcome people with his strength while strong is the one who control his anger."

⑤ ISLAM, THE RELIGION OF KNOWLEDGE:

Islam, from the very beginning emphasises upon gaining knowledge and sharing it with each other. As the first revelation of the Holy Quran also talks about knowledge.

"Recite in the name of your Lord, who created, Created man from a clinging clot, Recite and your Lord is most generous, who taught by pen, taught man which he knew not." (96: 1-5)

As before Islam, the Arabs were behind the curtains of ignorance and illiteracy. The religion of Islam led them to the path of knowledge and knowledgables.

Hadith, "The ink of a scholar is more precious than the blood of a martyr."

⑥ ISLAM, THE RELIGION OF PRACTICALITY:

Islam is not only filled with knowledge but it also preaches its follower to be practical in ~~our~~ lives. Some people consider Islam to be the religion of dormancy and inaction but it's not true.

As Islam preaches to be active and hard-working to achieve one's goals.

"And this is not for man except that for what he strives, and his efforts will soon be seen." (Al-Najm: 39)

⑦ ISLAM TEACHES SELFLESSNESS:

To be selfish and self-centered in life is not the teaching of Islam. A person should also concern about other people besides his/her own matters.

"And who ever is saved from the selfishness of their souls, it is they who are truly successful."
- (Al-Hashr: 9)

To be selfless is a recommendation of Islam and whoever follows it will be successful but who doesn't, won't be considered a sinner but he might face worldly problems.

"The best of men is the one who does good to others." (Hadith)

⑧ ISLAM, THE UNPREJUDICED RELIGION:

The enemies of Islam have spread false propaganda regarding Islam to be

a prejudiced religion. Because of a few muslims and their actions, the enemies of Islam try to defame the reputation of Islam globally. But in reality Islam preaches, tolerance, love, harmony and compassion towards the people of other religion.

"And do not abuse those who they worship besides Allah." (Al-Anam: 108)

Hazrat Ali Says,

"Know that people are of two types, either your brother in religion, or your equal in humanity."

⑨ ISLAM, THE RELIGION OF JUSTICE.

Islam is the true ambassador of justice. There are equal rights for people under Islamic Justice system and the laws are same for all the people.

The fair system of justice is the pillar of Islamic justice system.

The Quran enjoins,

"And when you judge between people, do so fairly and justly." [4:58]

(10) ISLAM, A RELIGION BASED ON AUTHENTIC SOURCES.

The scripture of Islam, The Holy Quran is, in its original form as Allah himself is the guardian of its words and meanings. Therefore, even after hundred years of its revelation, it has been well-preserved in its original condition.

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

And surely we have sent down the message and we are its guardian. (Al-Hijr, 15:9)