

Q. What is Islam? What are the salient features of Islam?

Start with the summary of the answer as introduction

Literal Meaning of Islam:

Islam is an Arabic word. It had been first used in the Holy Quran. The literal meaning of Islam is "Peace" and "submission". Whenever a word contains 'slm' in Arabic, it gives the meaning of 'Peace'.

Contextual Meaning of Islam:

The contextual meaning of Islam is entering in peace by submitting the will to Allah (or) the submission of desires to Allah.

Islam according to Shariah:

According to Shariah, Islam is the voluntary submission of desires to the will of God.

In his book "Islam: its meaning and message" Khurshid Ahmed writes that Prophet (PBUH) said that:

"Bear witness to Allah and His messenger and follow the pillars of Islam."

The same definition can be found in Hadith-e-Tibree; Imam Ghazali:

"Islam is the combination of two things: rights of Allah and rights of the people."

Sadr-ud-din Iqbal, an Islamic scholar also entails;

"Islam is the combination of two things: faith and rituals."

According to the Oxford dictionary;

"Islam is the practice and belief of monotheism of God, Prophethood of the Prophet (SAW) as the last messenger of God..."

Salient Features of Islam:

Scholars of the contemporary Islamic world define Islam as;

"Ideal system of living for all of mankind."

Khursheed Ahmad, a prominent Islamic scholar entails following features of Islam in his book "Islam: Its Meaning and Message."

1. Islamic Concept of Tauheed:

Tauheed i.e. "oneness of Allah" is the core pillar of Islam which constitutes the gist part of Kalma-e-Shahadah:

اشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له ...

"I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah ..."

Since tauheed is the core pillar of Islam, shirk is the biggest sin in Islam. Allama

Shibli Naumani quotes a Hadith of Holy Prophet (PBUH) in his book *Serat-ul-Nabawi*:

"Tauheed is the first chapter of Islamic syllabus."

He further writes;

One reference is enough for a single argument brief

"Islam is like a fort, and the door to that fort is tauheed."

2- Prophet hood

Prophet hood is the second essential pillar and feature of Islam.

Do not use one word headings. They should be elaborate and self explanatory

It is the firm belief of Muslims on the finality of the prophet hood on Hazrat Muhammad (SAW). It constitutes the second part of Kalma-e-Shahadah:

--- "شهادتي على رسول الله" ---

"...I bear witness that Muhammad (SAW) is His servant and Messenger."

According to Muslim beliefs, Quran is the theory and Sunnah is its practice.

3. A complete code of life:

Islam is a complete code of life for all human beings, in numerous aspects of life. These aspects include birth, upbringing, education, earning and establishment of family. Beside this, Islam also provides guidance with respect to the collective life of people in society. For the purpose of collective life, it provides guidance on the social system, financial system, justice and global affairs.

4. Revealed religion:

Islam is the only religion which has been revealed by the Holy deity and not made by the mankind.

5. A religion of Humanity:

In English literature, it is said that;

"There is a difference between a human being and a human person."

Minimum description under a heading should be 5 lines

There are certain qualities that make a human being a human person. These include love, care, affection, mercy, tolerance, human rights, animal rights and much more. Lord Radha said;

“Representation of good morale and character is also humanity.”

Quran says;

“Momin is he who has good character.”

- Al Muminun.

In Islamic law, the punishment for the character assassination of a person is 80 lashes. In Seerat ul-Nabwi, Mama Shibli Naumani wrote that Hazrat Ayesha (RA) narrated that;

“The most disliked person on the day of judgment ~~is~~ before Allah will be the one who is most quarrelsome.”

Dalai Lama, in 2015 said;

"The classical example of learning the humanity in 21st century is Prophet (PBUH)."

b. Environmentalist religion:

Islam prohibits destruction of and promotes the creation of a sustainable environment. It has been entailed in Serat-ul-Nabwi by Allama Shibli Naumani that Prophet (PBUH) said to his troops on numerous occasions that;

"Do not lay a hand on a woman or a child and do not destroy even a single tree unless it is extremely necessary."

He also said that;

"Do not waste even a single drop of water even if you are sitting on a running stream."



Add more arguments. A 20 marks answer should have around 15 subheadings and be on 7-9 pages

Conclusion:

The above discussion entails numerous aspects and features of Islam. It is a comprehensive way of life that emphasizes submission to the will of Allah (God), advocates for humanity's unity, justice, compassion and much more. It provides a universal framework for individuals and societies to achieve peace, harmony and fulfilment through adherence to divine principles.