

The second part of Kalima describes that Allah has provided guidance for human beings. He has revealed His guidance through His prophets and messengers and Muhammad (PBUH) was the last prophet.

2. Prophethood

The second basic feature of Islamic faith is to believe in the Prophethood of Muhammad (PBUH) and in the guidance which he bequeathed.

Surah Al-Mizab: 40

"Muhammad (PBUH) is not the father of any of your men, but is the Messenger of Allah and the seal of the prophets."

Dr. Khushid Ahmed in his book "Islam: its meaning and message" says,

"To believe in Muhammad (PBUH) means to accept his authority as representative of the Supreme Ruler and to follow his example in thought and behaviour."

3. Complete code of life

Islam provides us the complete code of life. However, other than Islam, none of the other monotheistic religions guides us in each and every way. Therefore, they are called religions and Islam is referred as 'Din'.

Islam guides us at every step of life. From the day we are born till the last breath.

Surah Aal-E-Insan: 19

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

establishes a balance between individual and collective life. Individual life of a human being discusses the relationship between a man and Allah (SWT).

On the other hand, collective life of an individual discusses the relationship between man and other society members.

Holy Prophet (PBUH) said:

"Live together, do not turn against each other, make things easy for others and do not put obstacles in each other's way"

Therefore, Islam establishes a harmony and a balance between the two aspects of a human being.

... (2nd part of Quran)
* Surah Ahras
33: 40
1. Way of life (Sunnah Nabawi)
2. Education: "Verily, I've been sent as a teacher to mankind"
3. Rules

10. Quran

Another unique feature of Islam is its Holy Book Quran. Islam as a din was revealed on Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH), and these revelation were preserved in the book we now know as Quran. It contains teachings and guidance for Muslims in how to live their lives.

In the Quran, Almighty Allah has stated:

"Indeed! We have sent down the Reminder, and indeed We will preserve it."

11. Islam promotes Humanity.

Islam is the religion of peace. Another unique and most special feature of Islam is that it promotes

humanity. In fact, Quran's object is not Muslim rather It's object is 'Human being'. Humanity can be described as 'following the natural instincts with out any discrimination'.

As Holy Prophet (PBUH) said:

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

The last Sermon is another example which could be seen under the definition of humanity.

"You all are equal. Nobody has superiority over other except by piety and good action."

12. Brotherhood.

This is another important

distinctive feature of Islam. When the state of Madina was established, its citizens were tied in the knot of brotherhood with each other. This brotherhood, hence, multiplied the love and affection among them. Therefore, brotherhood remains the distinctive feature in this contemporary world as well.

Surah Hujrat: 10

"The believers are like brothers to one another; so, promote peace and reconciliation among them, and fear Allah, that you may receive mercy."

13. True Spirituality

A true religion must also serve a spiritual purpose. It should

7. Islam is simple, rational and practical. Islam is the only religion which is free from irrelevant myths. It is free from superstitions. The three basic beliefs: unity of God, prophethood of Holy Prophet (PBUH) and the life after-death, are based on reason and logic. Everybody can approach Quran and follow the given teachings. To follow and to practice the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is as necessary as these basic beliefs.

"God does not accept belief, if it is not expressed in deeds, and does not accept deeds, if they don't confirm to belief."

Holy Prophet (PBUH).

8. Unity of Matter and Spirit

This is a unique feature of Islam that neither it denies the importance of material needs nor does it denies the importance of spiritual needs. Humans are advised to pray:

"Our Lord! Give us the good in this world and the good in the hereafter." 2:201

Allah (SWT) also advises human beings to eat and drink. However, in Quran He mentions: "do not exceed." Thus, Islam signifies the value of moderation.

9. Individualism And Collectivism

Al-Islam is a 'din' which

1. Education: "Verily, I've been sent as a teacher to mankind"

most basic beliefs:

1. Faith in the unity of God (Allah).
 2. Prophethood of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).
- Surah Baqarah: 256

"So whoever renounces false gods and believes in Allah (SWT) has certainly grasped the firmest, unshaking handhold."

According to English playwright, George Bernard Shaw,

"I have always held the religion of Muhammad (PBUH) in high estimation because of its wonderful vitality."

All of the above arguments and statements prove that Islam is true and universal din which revealed upon the last Prophet (PBUH) and it guides in every aspect of life.

Salient Features of Islam

The first part of the Kalima signifies the unique concept of Unity of God, which in other words is called Tawhid. In fact, the first Kalima itself is named as 'Tawhid'.

1. TAWHID

Tawhid is the core pillar of Islam and is also called 'The Bed Rock of Islam'. It means that there is no God except Allah (SWT). He is the Creator and Sustainer of the whole world.

According to Surah Baqarah, Allah says, "And Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing."

In other words, Islam is like a fast and a gate of that fast is Tawhid. An individual has to profess in order to become a Muslim.

save the soul which the soul can enjoy and relish. Performing religious duties like offering prayers, observing fasts, paying Zakat, performing Hajj, etc, help a man in attaining spirituality.

"It is only in the remembrance of God that hearts are comforted".

13:28

14. Practice of Social Services

Another important feature of Islam is that it orders to serve the respective society. A Muslim must pay Zakat to the needy ones, they should give charity as well in order to serve the community.

Hadith - E - Qudsi:

"One who saves an individual saved

the humanity."

15. Recognition of Allah: Islam's most striking feature.

When we look around ourselves, we see the stars, sun, moon, universe and all the natural objects. If the whole universe was made by different gods and deities, then these would be no perfection. However, the entire universe is the creation of Allah Almighty and He is the only Creator and Sustainer of the world.

He says

"Be, and it is"

Thus, each and everything reminds us that there is no god except Him.

These are some of the unique features of Islam and these differentiate Islam from other religions of the world. It is the religion of man, the religion of today and tomorrow. These features have appealed to many people in the past and present and these will continue to appeal to the man of future as well. Hence, it is concluded that Islam is the religion of truth and the right path for mankind.

2. Rules
→ Primary sources of Shariah — Quran
9:13-4

4. Teachings of Good morals.

Another striking feature of Islam is the preaching of good morals and virtues. These will help a Muslim to build his character in a way which Allah (swt) describes through Qur'an and through the teachings of Prophet (PBUH).

Surah Bani Israel: 32

"And do not commit adultery for, behold, it is an abomination and an evil way."

5. Reverence for Knowledge and Education.

In the modern times, the world has acknowledged the fact that nothing equals knowledge. We acquire knowledge through education. (Muhammad PBUH) was sent to educate and guide the Arabs and

the entire world.

Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) said,

"Acquiring the knowledge is must for every Muslim"

6. Concept of Life-after-death.

Allah has given a choice to human being whether to follow 'Islam' or to refuse it. Now, the question arises those who don't accept 'Islam' as a 'din' and 'religion', what will happen to them. Therefore, this unique concept solves this problem.

This concept is one of the fundamental dogma of Islamic beliefs. Life on earth, will, one day, come to an end. Death is inevitable. And it will be in this life-after-death that man will be awarded or punished. "Every soul shall taste death." 3:185

Q* What is Islam? Discuss the salient features of Islam.

Answer: 'Islam' is an arabic word and it is derived from the root word 'SLM'. The 'Salm' according to the root word, 'Islam' means "to surrender or to submit or to resign oneself to the will of Allah (SWT)".

Another meaning of Islam is 'to make peace' or 'to reconcile with one another'. Therefore, Islam means "to enter in peace by submitting to the will of God".

Dr Hamidullah says,

"Islam is the monotheist deen which was revealed upon Holy Prophet (PBUH)."

Basic concept of Islam

The basic concept of Islam is that this whole universe is created by Allah (SWT). He has created man in the perfect form and every man has a fixed period of life which he has to spend on Earth. For man's guidance, He has sent many messengers and prophets. Therefore, man has been given a choice whether to follow Islam or to refuse it. Those who follow Islamic code are called Believers (Musalmans) and those who refuse to accept it are called Non-believers (Kafirs).

An individual has to recite Kalima Tawhid in order to become a believer. This Kalima represents the true