

Q What is the concept of Islam and its salient features

Concept of Islam:

Islam means submission and peace. Submission to the moral imperatives of one and only God and peace with his creatures. On a vertical level (Man to God) it means submission. On a horizontal level (Man to Man) it means peace. Submission to Allah and peace with the creatures is the guarantor of peace in the society. One of the 99 names of Allah is Al-Salam, which means originator of peace. The peace which needs to permeate every sphere of this cosmos especially human society. Even the Holy Prophet ^(SAW) in Quran is considered a prophet of peace and Paradise too is considered an ideal abode of peace. The Holy Prophet ^(SAW) after the obligatory prayer used to recite this dua and Muslims are also advised to do the same.

"O Allah, You are Peace, and from You emanates all peace, Blessed are You, O Possessor of Majesty and Honour."

The very first verse of Quran gives us the message of peace.

"In the name of Allah the Most Merciful and the Most Compassionate."

The same theme is repeated 114 times in Holy Quran. Hazrat Umar (RA) narrates that the apostle of God said, "Islam is based on five principles: To testify none has right to be worshipped but Allah, to offer prayers, to pay zakat, to perform pilgrimage, and to observe fast during the month of Ramadan."

Literal meaning of Islam:

The word Islam is derived from Arabic word SLM, which means submission, to yield etc. Thus, "أسلم إلى الله" means he committed his cause to Allah Almighty.

Salient Features Of Islam:

(1) Unique concept of Tauheed:

Islam is a monotheist religion, which means it believes in one and only Allah. The very first Kalima says:

"There is none worthy of worship but Allah and Holy Prophet is the messenger of Allah."

To enter Islam one has to recite this Kalima with tongue as well as with belief in the heart.

There is one more instance where Allah has told us about his Oneness. In Surah Iklas

"Allah is one and only

Allah, the ~~Ex~~ Eternal and Absolute

He begetteth not, nor is beggotten

And there is none like him"

(2) Concept of Prophethood:

To believe in prophethood is the second part tauheed and kalima. To believe that Holy Prophet is the messenger of Allah, and the last prophet of Allah is another prerequisite that one needs to enter in Islam. Surah Ahzab verse 40

"Muhammad (SAW) is not the father of anyone of you but messenger of Allah and the seal of the prophets. And Allah has the perfect knowledge of All things."

(12) The teaching of Holy Prophet^P (SAW) is the second source of Islam, which one needs in this life. The teaching of Holy Prophet^P tells us about multiple issues and this way forward. It is absolutely necessary that one should take guidance from the Sunnah of Holy Prophet^P (SAW).

(13) Complete Code of life: Islam is a complete code of life. It is not just a religion but Deen. It guide Muslims in every sphere of life. It teaches us about multi-dimensional issues from birth to death. Islam teaches mankind the dos and don'ts of life. It teaches us about individual life, collective life in society, respect, obedience to parents etc. According to one hadith "The best of you are the best to their families, and I am the best to my family."

(14) Islam promotes humanity: Humanity means the quality of being humane. Islam is the religion of peace and the meaning of Islam is peace. Islam has always guided Muslims towards humanity. Islam promotes peace. Even war in Islam is a struggle towards peace and justice. In Islam, there is a system of rights. There are rights of people onto you. Humanity is the top paramount principle of Islam. Even in war Muslims have some rights of their enemies, non-combatants, women, children and the elderly. The Holy Prophet^P (SAW) used to tell his soldier not to kill women, children and the elderly.

Islam promotes Charity:

(5) In Islam, there is the concept of Zakat. Zakat is the third pillar of Islam. It is obligatory of every man and woman to give zakat if they are eligible. Islam promotes charity through zakat, sadaqat etc. It helps the poor people of the society. because Islam is the religion for the whole mankind irrespective of color, race, etc. In Islam every word, deed is worship of Allah, if it is done to please God.

(6) Protection of Human Rights:

Islam is a complete code of life, In Islam there are rights and obligations of every individuals in the society. Islam has stressed greatly on Human Rights. In Islam there are two types of duties on Muslims: Haqqoq ul 'Ibad and Haqqoq ul Allah. There Muslims are required to fulfill both if they want to enter jannah. The last sermon of Holy Prophet gave us some insight regarding human rights.

"Your blood and your property are as sacred as are this Day and Month. You will surely meet your Lord and He will ask you of your words."

(7) Animal Rights.

In Islam every living thing worships Allah. and the animals are also included in this. So there are rights of animals as well. The Holy Prophet^P on his journey of Miraj saw a woman in hell, when inquired about it, she ~~se~~ starved her cat to death. This tells us

about the importance of animal rights as well.

⑧ Environmental Protection:

In Islam, there are some guidance regarding planting trees as well. There are multiple Hadith regarding plants and trees.

"Planting a green tree is the best charity"

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

These hadith tells us about the environmental protective provisions in Islam.

⑨ Islam is not for a specific time:-

Islam is not for a specific time or for a specific society, rather it is for the whole mankind and for every generation. In Islam you will get answer for any modern day problem. For instance, Women Right, Islam gave women their rights 1400 year ago before any society or civilization.

⑩ Universal Deen:

Islam is a universal deen, which means it is for all the humanity. Every individual from any race, colour, caste can enter in the fold of Islam. Everyone is equal in Islam, Imam Razi Al Esfahani in his book write that Islam is of two kinds one simple confession with ~~mouth~~ tongue and the other is with ~~hand~~ confession there should be belief in heart.

In a nutshell, Islam means submission and peace. A Muslim is required to be peaceful and bear in mind the prohibition of Allah Almighty. Islam is a religion for all mankind and for all generations. It is a complete code of life. Therefore, one should adhere to its true spirit and principles.