

Topic: what is islam? Elaborate salient features of islam.

Introduction:

→ Allah has bestowed his prophets from time to time to guide human beings towards the true path of Allah. This array of blessings started with the arrival of prophet Adam (AS) and ended with the last of the prophets, Muhammad (PBUH - KHATAM UN-NABIYEEN).

→ Each of the prophets was gifted with a message to give to his respective followers in the form of books or treatises and was then replaced with new commandments from God according to the changing conditions and times until the last of the books, the holy Quran.

→ Islam is distinct from other religions due to some features that we are going to discuss.

Islam:

- Islam is an Arabic term which means To submit one's will to the will of God.
- It is a monotheistic religion that teaches that there is only one divine being, one supreme creator of the universe.

Salient Features:

1- Monotheism:

- Touheed is a revolutionary concept and constitutes the essence of the teachings of Islam. It means that there is only one supreme Lord of the universe. He is sustainer of the world and of mankind.

2- Protection of book:

- The holy books and treatises of earlier religions either disappeared or were changed with times due to personal or political motives but are not the case with the holy Quran which has been preserved by the Almighty Allah.

Allah (SWT) says,

"We have sent down this message (Quran) and we shall safeguard it." (Surah Al-Hijr)

3- Islam a Complete religion:

→ Islam as a final message of God has been sent to the whole of universe as a final covenant for all the times and for all people. This does not mean that Islam is a completely new religion with totally different laws and interpretations rather it is a continuation of the very religion of Prophet Adam (A.S).

The Holy Quran says:

"This day I have perfected your religion for you and completed my bounty upon you and have chosen Islam as a religion for you" (Surah Ma'idah)

4- Concept of Life after death:

→ The world, according to Islam, is a place of trial and man shall be judged for his deeds. He will have to give account of all that he does herein. It will be in this life-after-death where man will be rewarded or punished for his deeds and misdeeds.

5- Holy Prophet a Complete model:

No religion can claim that all the aspects of the life of its founder are known to its modern-day followers except Islam.

The sources of Hadith clearly describe in detail the each and every aspect of the Prophet Muhammad's life for his followers to obey, ranging from his dealings with the family to that as a head of the state.

The Holy Quran says:

"No doubt in the messengers of Allah
You have a perfect model to follow."

6- Din of moderation:

Neither it promotes monasticism nor materialism rather it takes a complete middle line where a follower of Islam will live his life according to the teachings of God while still being at the glory of spiritual life.

7- Direct Relation of individual with God:

unlike other religions, Islam does not teach nor recognize any intercessors to God. The concept of class dominance in Hinduism, use of idols in Buddhism has been rejected out rightly by Islam.

8- Unique political model:

In the dictatorial society of Arabia, Islam brought the message of true pluralistic democracy.

Allah (SWT) in Quran says:

"Their affairs are based on consultation among them" (Surah Shura)

The ruler will be appointed by the public on the condition that he will abide by the fundamental teachings of Islam.

9- Unique Economic model:

Islamic economic system provides a path of moderation by not letting elites to usurp poor's rights and by not letting society to become a purely materialistic society. Islam as the final message of Allah provides a complete way of life to follow both in its teachings and in its messenger.

10- Practical and rational religion:

The teachings of Islam are simple and understandable. Everybody may approach the Book of Allah directly and translate its dictates into practice. It enjoins him to see things in the light of reality.

11- Balance b/w Individual and Society:

→ Islam believes in the individual personality of man and holds everyone personally accountable to Allah. It does not subscribe to the view that man must lose his individuality in society or in the state.

12- Universality and Humanism:

The message of Islam is for the entire human race. God, in Islam - God of all the world and the prophet is a messenger for the whole of mankind.

Quran says:

"O People! I am the messenger of God to you all" (Surah Al-Araf)

13- Permanence and Change:

The elements of permanence and change co-exist in human society and culture and are bound to remain so. Too much emphasis on permanence makes the system rigid and lack of permanent values generate moral relativism, shapelessness and anarchy. Islam presents an ideology which satisfies the demands of stability as well as of change.

14- Concept of Hadd and Haram:

Islam in its teachings provides clear directions about the limits to access different things. The things that could be perilous for human's physical and spiritual life are considered as Haram. So by obeying the fundamentals of Islam, our life may become more easy, disciplined and practical.

15- Ban on Hoarding of wealth:

Islam believes in concept of equitable disbursement of wealth in society to vanish the gross disparities in elite and poor culture. So Islam put ban on hoarding of wealth to ensure that the wealth should always be in flow rather than be confined to small group of people.

Conclusion:

In general, Islam leaves no stone unturned as it teaches mankind on how to behave in every area of life: individual, social, material, moral, political, economic, and global. It is a complete, holistic way of living that covers every aspect of life.