

Q) What is Islam, Describe, Salient Features of Islam.

Introduction: Islam is an Arabic word, which was first used by Allah Almighty in Quran.

Literary Meaning of Islam is **Submission** **Surrender and Obedience**. Islam's contextual meaning is to enter into **peace by submitting to the will of Allah Almighty** It is called Islam.

Islam is "peace" Allah Almighty orders paved way for us to enter into peace. Islam is a "Deen" It is a complete code of life which provides guidance in every aspect of life.

In Surah Baqrah Allah says:

"There is no compulsion in Religion"

Definition of Islam:-

to be a witness to the holy prophet (P.B.U.H)

According to holy prophet (P.B.U.H)

"Islam means two things; To be a witness of Allah and his messenger, then to practice the established pillars"

Holy prophet said:

"It is the only prayer that brings distinction b/w believer and non-believer"

Dr Hamidullah :- "Islam is the purest Deen revealed at hol. prophet (p.b.u.h.)"

In conclusion Islam is submission of one's desire to will of Allah Almighty, obedience to his orders.

Salient Features of Islam:

Islam is a deen which provides complete code of life. Following are salient features of Islam.

1) Unique Concept of Tauheed:

Islam provides us with unique concept of tauheed. It means faith in oneness of God, to believe in superiority of Allah Almighty. It is our first part of kalma tayyaba.

لا اله الا الله

"There is none worthy of worship"

In surah Ikhlas Allah says;

قل هو الله احد
 له كفو الا احد
 لم يلد ولم يولد
 ولم يكن له كفوا احد

"(say he is Allah, the only one, Allah the one. Taking care of everything He didn't give birth and He was not born and he never had any equal at all);

Famous scholar Allama Shibli Naumani wrote in his book (Sirat ul Nabi) that Hazrat Muhammad (p.b.u.h) said:

"(Tawheed is first chapter of Islam's syllabus.)"

② Aqeeda-e-Resalat (Prophethood)

The second most significant feature of Islam is Aqeeda-e-Resalat; belief in finality of Hazrat Muhammad (p.b.u.h). It is second part of Kalma Teyyiba.

Hazrat Muhammad (p.b.u.h) is the Messenger of Allah. ←

Hazrat Muhammad a beacon of light for all Muslims, his life is practical example of Quran which teaches us toward straight path.

P.b.u.h says

"verily I have been sent as a teacher to mankind"

③ Islam is a complete code of life:

Islam is a complete code of life. It provides guidance in every aspect of life. It guides us in our individual life by providing rituals, faiths and beliefs. Islam emphasizes on importance of education. According to Hazrat Muhammad P.B.U.H.

"Education is compulsory for every man and woman"

It also guides us in our social lives by providing right of relatives, rights of neighbours. It also leads our political life by providing system of "Khilafat". Quran says:

"^{وَأَمْرٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَالنَّهْيِ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ} Determine affairs by "consultation". It also provides us financial guidance by providing system of Zakat and Ushr.

④ Islam promotes humanity:

Another guiding feature of Islam is that it promotes humanity. Advocates for rights of human as well as animals.

It emphasizes on values of sympathy, tolerance and social welfare.

once Hazrat Muhammad scolded a Bedouin man for not properly treating his camel.

Hazrat Muhammad also ordered for sustainability and protection of environment.

He said;

Don't cut trees and don't waste water even if you are sitting on a running stream.

⑤ Principle of Equality:

Islam is a staunch proponent of principle of equality, Islam emphasizes that in eyes of Allah Almighty people are equal. It does not allow any discrimination based on sex, race, origin and soon

In Quran Allah says: "No Arab has any superiority over a non Arab, nor does a non Arab has superiority over Arab nor does a white man have superiority over a black man, or the black man any superiority over the white man"

⑥ Holy Book (Al Quran)

All Muslims believe in The holy book of Al Quran, Quran is considered the literal word of Allah Almighty revealed on Hazrat Muhammad (p.b.u.h) It is primary source of Islamic theology and Law. Quran is guidance for All mankind and for All ages. It provides guidance in every field

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of life.

Al Quran Says;

"This Quran is Enlightenment for mankind and Guidance and Mercy for people who are certain in faith"

"Quran is Guidance for Mankind (Al Baqrah : 185)"

(7) Islamic Law (Shari'ah)

Islam has its own system of Law and order derived from the teachings of Quran and Sunnah. It covers both religious and secular aspects of life. It provides laws for crimes, for family for justice etc. Muslims can draw solutions from Law and order of Shari'ah.

It also gives concept of Ijma; A secondary source of Shari'ah of collective Reasoning among authoritative Muslims on particular issues.

According to Hazrat Muhammad (p.b.u.h) "My ummah will never agree on an error".

(8) Five pillars of Islam:

Shahada (Faith) It is declaration of faith inness of Allah and prophet hood of Muhammad (p.b.u.h).

2) **Salah (prayer)** performing ritual prayers five times a day, it connects Muslim with Allah.

3) **Zakat**: Islam orders Muslims to give Zakat (charity) (2.5%) of total wealth yearly to help needy and poor, it cleans wealth of Muslim and decrease accumulation of wealth in few hands.

4) **Fasting**: Observing fast in Month of Ramadan. It is another important pillar of Islam. It teaches Muslim patience, simplicity and value of blessings.

5) **Haji (pilgrimage)** undertaking a pilgrimage to Mecca atleast once in life time if one can afford.

⑨ **Faith in day of Judgement:**
Faith in day of Judgement is important feature of Islam. It is belief of all Muslim that one day this immortal world will end and Day of Judgement will happen and on that day All ~~human~~ individuals will be held accountable for their actions and rewarded or punished accordingly.

In Quran Allah said:

أَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ سَاعَاتٍ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

"on that day you will be brought to judgement and none of your secrets will remain hidden,"

⑩ Moral and Ethical conduct:

Islam promotes values such as honesty, justice, compassion and humanity. It prescribes guidelines of social conduct, social justice and community welfare. prophet (p.b.u.h) upheld justice and fairness in all aspects of life and taught us to do the same.

According to Hazrat Muhammad (p.b.u.h)

"The best among you is one whose conduct is good,"

⑪ Sovereignty of Allah:

Islam teaches that sovereignty belongs to Allah Almighty Alone and human is his representative on earth and he is accountable to Allah Almighty.

Allah is superior, and sovereign who is all knowing and seeing. He is the master of day Universe and day of judgement; In Pakistan Constitution It is given that sovereignty belongs to Allah Almighty.

In Quran Allah says

"It is he who is the sovereign"

Life and death and has power over all other things " (Al Quran)

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Faith in All prophets and previous Books

Islam teaches us to believe in all prophets Allah has sent towards mankind and the books revealed on them. All Muslim have firm believe in All prophet from Hazrat Adam to Hazrat Muhammad (p.b.u.h) and the previous holy book such as Taurat Injeel, Zabur and the Final Quran Kareem. All Muslim follow Quran Kareem as it was revealed on prophet Muhammad and is guidance for all mankind whereas all other previous books are changed by their believers and not in their original forms.

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Resurrection after death:

All Muslims believe in Resurrection after death, day of judgement and Reward and judgement.

It is our firm believe there will be an eternal life, people with good deeds will be entered in paradise as a reward where as people with bad deeds will be sent to hell as punishment. Surah Al Qayamah which chapter of Quran describes "The Rising of dead"

Faith is Al Qadar: ~~Proves~~ It is Islamic belief that Allah already knows everything that will happen in universe. Allah has already decided our fates. He already knows everything and nothing happens unless it is according to Allah's will.

Quran says; "No kind of clarity occurs except by Allah's permission"

(15) System of Khilafat:

Islam provides an Islamic form of government in which political and religious leadership is united. The head of the state is successor of (P.b.uh) Islam provides very clear instruction for selection of Caliph. He should be Muslim, a leader, a man of wisdom and unquestionable credibility etc

"The Caliph is a shepherd over people and shall be questioned about his subjects"

(Al Quran)

Conclusion: All the above mentioned features are important features of Islam they prove that Islam is a Universal Deen and it provides guidance in all aspects of individual and collective life.