

Assignment

Q1) What is Islam? Elaborate the salient features of Islam?

"Islam" is derived from the Arabic word 'slm' which means to 'Surrender, Submit, or yield'. It means to resign one's self to the will of God. Islam's other meaning is 'Peace' derived from the book of Sayeed Ameer Ali's book:- "The spirit of Islam".

The main basis upon which Islamic life is founded upon includes:-

- ① A belief in the unity, power and mercy of Allah.
- ② Charity and brotherhood amongst mankind
- ③ Shjugation of Passions
- ④ Being grateful to Allah and remembering to thank Him and being humble.
- ⑤ Accountability for human actions in another existence, being conscious of how we treat other human beings and the sins we commit.
- ⑥ Finality of Prophethood.

One ~~can~~^{cannot} deny the fact that Islam is a complete code of life, it teaches us the way, on how we should live according to the principles of Islam. Additionally, the whole concept of Islam also vests on the

Understanding that Allah (S.W.T) is Sovereign, all-mighty, and Powerful. He created the universe and man, gave him guidance and gave man the choice between being a Muslim or a Kafir, on the basis of which he will be judged in the hereafter. Reciting and believing in the first Kalimah allows man to join the fold of Islam; the first part of the Kalimah presents the concept of Tauhid (Oneness of Allah) and the second part affirms the Prophethood of Muhammad (P.B.U.H)

As, ~~I~~ mentioned earlier, Islam is a complete code of life and it covers fundamentals of Islam ~~which is~~ covering political, social, economic and legal aspects of life. Because Islam, the religion contains clear and definite rules and practices. The mission of the prophets and messengers has been to preach Islam and its teachings and to establish divine order on earth. As Islam, being a religion stands for the complete submission and obedience to Allah and it is only through the submission that one can achieve peace of body and mind.

Those who believe and whose hearts find comfort in the remembrance of Allah. Surely in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find comfort. 13: 28, (Surah Ar-Rad)

Islam is composed of five articles; belief in Tauhid (God), angels, books, prophets, day of resurrection / predestination. As well as well as five pillars of Islam; Kalimah, Salat, Zakat, Saum and Hajj, As well as Jihad forming a Central concept of Islam.

The Concept of Islam is divided into ^{two} ~~2~~ main types/categories according to which a person should lead his life;

- (1) Theoretical (beliefs and principles of Islam, or aqidah and usul of Islam)
- (2) Practical (hukms or orders) deeds or actions.

Characteristics of Islam =

1. Simplicity, Rationalism, Practicality =

Islam is a simple religion, its primary sources are Quran and Sunnah. Rational. It's rational approach encourages intellect and education, and it is practical, easy to follow without contradictions; promoting harmony between belief and actions.

2. Unity of Matter and Spirit =

Islam balances material and spiritual life, avoiding extremes. Both worldly and religious aspects are given due importance.

3. Complete Code of Life =

Islam provides guidance for all spheres - social, economic, political and legal. It rejects secularism, advocating collective practice of religion of in public and private life.

4. Balance between Individual and

Society = Islam grants individual rights and freedoms while imposing social responsibilities (eg Zakat, congregational prayers, Jihad) to foster collective welfare.

5. Universality and Humanism =

Islam is a universal religion with Allah as "Rehmat ul Alameen" (Mercy to all worlds). It upholds human dignity, equality and rights for all humanity.

6. Permanence and Change =

Islam maintains core principles (eg: pillars Sheikh) while allowing flexibility (ijtihad) to adapt to modern needs, avoiding rigidity.

7. Preservation of Teachings =

Unlike other religions, Islam's teachings remain pure and unaltered since their revelation 1400 years ago.

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Salient features of Islam =

① Unique Concept of Tawheed =

The basic principle of Islam is Tawheed. The belief in the unity of Allah. It is the starting point of Islam. Belief in the oneness and unity of Allah is the essence of Islam and is espoused in the Articles of faith as well as pillars of Islam. It is the core belief which talks about the facts that Allah has no partners in His dominion, no similarities with another, no rivals in His divinity and worship.

Even Surah Ikhlās talks about God's uniqueness and eternity.

Say, O Prophet, "He is Allah - One and
Indivisible;

Allah - the Sustainer 'needed by all'
He has never had offspring, nor will
he born.

And there is none comparable to Him."

Here this Surah proves This is early Makkan Surah that describes in a few words - just far ayaat - the unique attributes of Allah. The emphasis is on Tawheed and as opposed to other beliefs of the time, that Allah is unique in his Oneness, that He always was, and will be. He is eternal and absolute in his authority; and that He is above the need for mother source for His presence nor does He need an offspring, and nor is there any equal to him. Hence Islam is like a fort and the gate of that fort is Tawheed.

② Prophecy = The Second part of Kalimah also emphasized on Muhammad (S.A.W) being ^{example} his messenger and an exemplary for the mankind. It translated to: "I bear witness that there is no God but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His messenger."

Also Surah Al-Ahzab talks about the finality of Prophecy and ~~declared~~ declared Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) as being the last Messenger of Allah.

"Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the prophets.
And Allah has perfect knowledge of all things."

Hence Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) has sent was sent upon us to teach us way of life (Sunnah) by setting an example for the generations to come.

The saying "Verily I have been sent as a teacher" is attributed to the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) emphasizing his role as an educator, mentor, and guide for Humanity.

And Allah (S.W.T) has chosen him to become a role model for the humanity. And it is Allah who has sent down upon us His revelations through Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) =

“Nor does he speak of his own whims. It is only a revelation sent down to him” Surah An-Najm
53: 3-4

③ Dignity to Mankind =

Allah has bestowed special authority, superiority on human beings. He has given us knowledge and even assigned Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) to: “Read, in the name of Allah” in his first revelation. This is a trait that makes us superior over angels. This shows how Allah (S.W.T), ~~Allah~~ has made a Man ~~a~~ superior to all the creations, by also endowing them with reason and free will, which angels do not possess. And it is Allah's decree that it should be so.

It is the special abilities of humans also, that empower them to act creatively and do service to the whole world as well as to their fellow beings. The idea of the superiority of humans to the angels is brought out by ensuing ensuing verses:-

"And he taught Adam the nature of all things; then he placed them before the angels, and said:
"Tell me the nature of these if you are right."

They said: "Glory to You, of knowledge we have none, save what you have taught us. In truth it is you who are perfect in knowledge and wisdom."

He said: "O Adam! Tell them their names." When he had told them, Allah said: "Did I not tell you that I know the secrets of heaven and earth, and I know what you reveal and what you conceal?" (Al-Baqarah 2: 31-33)

The idea of the superiority of humans (3)
to other creatures is underscored by
Allah in the following verse too:

"We have honored the sons of Adam;
paired them with spouses on land,
and sea; given them for sustenance
things good and pure; and conferred
on them special favors, above a
great part of our creation." (Al-Israa,
17: 70)

And it was clearly brought home to the
angels that this new creation, that
is Allah's vicegerent on earth - is
really superior to even angels. This
was done by Allah's command to
them to bow down to Adam:

"And behold, we said to the
angels, "Bow down to Adam"
and they bowed down."
(Al-Baqarah 2: 34)

④ Complete Code of Life =

Islam is a religion that guides us, human beings in every aspect of life. From individual to collective life, Islam teaches how to live a life as a muslim, how to treat your fellow muslims, your neighbours, siblings, your parents and how to act accordingly in all public spheres of life.

Also seeking knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim

As Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) stated to have said:-

"If anyone pursues a path in search of knowledge, Allah will thereby easy for him a path to paradise; and he who is made slow by his actions will not be speeded by his genealogy." — Sunan Abi Dawud 3643

Also one can also follow Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) exemplary character examples to lead ^{his} ~~their~~ life as a true muslim, for instance, He was considered trustworthy by the Makkans and was entrusted with the business of Hazrat Khadija (A.S)". Later, when he faced problems of the early Muslim community, he showed courage, strength and patience.

⑤ Islam Promotes Humanity =

Islam is a peace-loving religion, and advocates for a peaceful coexistence with other people from different race, gender and ethnicity. For instance treating people with respect, love, care, sympathy empathy and tolerance. Also Islam is a religion that also asks us to protect animals, to not treat them harshly. Islam also talks about the right of women, as Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) in his last sermon ^{asked} ~~told~~ men to protect women and be kind to women. He said: "People, it is true that you have certain rights with regard to your women, but they also have rights over you." "Do treat your women well and be kind to them, for they are your partners and committed helpers."

Also the Quran states in Surah Al-Maidah (5:32) that "killing one person unjustly is equivalent to killing all of humanity and saving one life is like saving all of humanity". Islam also advocates for the protection of environment, long before it was even needed a thing. For example Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) ^{quoted} to have said: "Whoever plants a tree and diligently looks after it, until it

Until it matures, and bears fruit is
reunited." (Musnad)