

What is Islam? What are the salient features of Islam.

Introduction:-

Islam is the complete code of life (Deen) revealed by Allah (God) for the guidance of all humanity. Islam means the attainment of peace and submission to the will of Allah. It was revealed to the Final Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) over 23 years and preserved in a form of book Holy Quran and the sunnah (teachings) of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). It covers every aspect of human life (economic, social, spiritual, justice). It teaches human their responsibilities towards Allah, themselves, other humans, animals and nature. In today's world the rise of extremism, injustice or violation of the rights of human, it is important for everyone to seek what Islam told us. Islam is not only for Muslims, it is a complete guidance for the humanity.

Meaning and scope of Islam:

The word "Islam" comes from the Arabic word (S-L-M) which means

- Peace (Salaam)
- Submission
- Safety

Thus, Islam means peace itself and it is a complete code of life.

Definition:

"Islam means the attainment of peace and submission to the will of Allah."

It is a universal religion that covers

- Belief (Taqwa)
- Worship (Ibadah)
- Personal conduct (Akhlaq)
- Social system, Justice and economic system (A'dl, Huquq)

Core Belief in Islam:

The core belief in Islam is based on 5 articles of faith.

- Belief in Oneness of Allah (Tawheed)
- Belief in Angels
- Belief in Divine books (four books)
- Belief in Prophethood
- Belief in The Day of Judgement

-: Salient Features of Islam:-

Islam is completely based on the following features of Islam given below:

1- Oneness of Allah (Tawheed):

Belief that Allah is one, No one is his partner, having a strong faith and belief.

In Quran:

"Indeed, I am Allah, there is no God except Me, so worship Me"

~ Surah Ta'ha

In Quran:

Say: There is no God but one Allah

"Say: He is Allah The one, Allah is eternal and Absolute, None is born of Him, Nor was He born, there is no one like him."

~ Surah Ikhlas

Opposite of Tawheed is shirk that means associating partners with Allah. Allah will not forgive whom associate partner with Allah. Shirk is Haram, those who commit shirk will see their punishment on the Day of Judgement.

2- Finality and Universality of Prophethood:

Islam accepts all the Prophets such as Musa (AS), Ibrahim (AS), Isa (AS) but Hazrat Muhammad (S.A.W.W) was the last prophet.

In Quran:

"Muhammad is not the father of any man among you, but the messenger of Allah and seal of the Prophets."

~ Surah Al-Ahzab.

In this verse, it is considered that Muhammad (S.A.W.W) was the last Prophet and his message is for the whole mankind.

As Islam is a complete code of life, people can get guidance and teachings from Quran and Sunnah. The life of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.W) Sunnah is the complete way of life.

3- Comprehensive system of life:

Islam is not limited to rituals but covers every aspect of life such as.

Individual level → worship, morals, behaviour.

Family level → Marriage, inheritance, Rights of women, rights of Parents and children.

Societal level → Economic system,
justice, equality, rights
of minorities.

In Quran:

"We have not neglected
anything from book"

~ Surah Al An'am

4- Moderation and Balance (Wasatiyyah.)

Islam is a balanced religion as the individual should maintain a balance in the Dunya (Worldly life) and Akhirah (Hereafter).

Islam avoids extremes and teaches moderation, life style and worship.

In Quran:

"Thus, we have made you
a just and balanced nation..."

Surah Al-Baqarah.

5- Justice and Accountability:

Islam is the religion which focused on Justice. Justice (A'dl) is the pillar of Islamic law and society.

Hadith:

"The most beloved of people to
Allah on the Day of Judgement
will be the just leaders."

~ Tirmidhi.

Thus, ^{Once} Hazrat Muhammad (S.A.W.W) always prioritize for justice over anything. He also said if my daughter Fatima steal, I

will cut his hands. This shows that on the basis of Justice, it should prioritize truthfulness whether it can be anyone. On the Day of Judgement, Allah will increase their ranks who stood for justice.

6- Brotherhood and equality:

Islam focuses on equality whether it can be Muslim or Non-Muslim their rights should be prioritize.

Hazrat Muhammad (S.A.W.W) said in his last sermon that.

"You all are from Adam, And Adam is from dust; An Arab has no superiority over Non Arab, or a Non-Arab has no superiority over Arab. As the white has no superiority over black, or a black has no superiority over white, except on the taqwa"

Islam not judge anyone on the basis of colour, creed, race or caste.

In the eyes of Allah, everyone is respectable and equal.

7- Spirituality and Worship:-

Islam based on the five pillars of Islam:

1st Pillar → Touheed (Oneness of Allah)

2nd Pillar → Salah (Namaz)

3rd Pillar → Sawam (Fasting)

4th Pillar → Zakat (Charity)

5th Pillar. → Hajj

If any one pillar is not fulfilled, the Deen (Islam) is incomplete.

By following these pillars, a person gets closer to Allah and fulfill his teachings. They may polish the Iman and increase their faith on Allah.

8- Knowledge and Reflection :-

Islam emphasis on the knowledge for both man and women.

The first revelation of Quran was Surah Alaq the word "Iqra" which means "to get" "to read". Knowledge.

In Quran:

"Read in the name of
your Lord who created..."

~ Surah Alaq

Knowledge is permissible. Hazrat Muhammad (S.A.W.W) said:

"Seek knowledge from
cradle to grave"

9- Moral and Ethical Foundation :-

The best example of moral and ethical foundation is Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.W).

The life of Prophet (S.A.W.W) is a divine light for everyone. Even the non-Muslims were impressed by the character of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.W).

It involves:

- fairness in every aspect of life.

- The Truthfulness
- Justice and equality.
- Patience
- Forgiveness
- Avoidance of Anger, Pride, Jealousy and Envy.

10. Peace and Tolerance:

As The word Islam itself means "Peace". Islam teaches us peace and Tolerance in every aspect of life.

In Quran:

"There is no compulsion in religion..."

~ Surah Al-Baqarah.

Islam ensures:

- Protection of minorities.
- Protection of Human rights.
- Freedom of belief.

Conclusion:

Islam is divinely guided, balanced and universal system of life. It emphasizes Oneness of Allah (Tawheed), finality and universality of Prophethood, Brotherhood and equality, spirituality and Worship, Justice and Accountability etc. The Religion Islam is not only for Muslims but also for the humanity (all mankind). The message of Islam is universal.