

Q: What is Islam?; Elaborate the Salient features of Islam.

Ans: - "General Introduction of Islam"

- Islam means "Submission" and "Peace". i.e:-
 - Submission to the moral imperatives of Allah, which denotes relationship on the Vertical level (Allah to man) and,
 - Peace with His creatures, which denotes relationship on the Horizontal level (Man to Man).
- One of the most beautiful names of Allah is "Al-Salam", which means peace this indicating that He is the source and Creator of all the peace, which needs to be permeate in every aspect of this cosmos.
- The Holy Prophet (PBUH) used to recite supplication after every obligatory prayer
"O Allah, You are Peace and from You emanates all peace, blessed are You, O Possessor of Majesty and Honour."

- Very first Verse of Holy Quran:-

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

“In the name of Allah, the most Merciful, the most Compassion.”

It denotes the emblem of love, mercy & compassion.

Literal Meaning of Islam:-

The word Islam is derived from the roots of Arabic word "S L M" which means,

- a) Peace
- b) To surrender yourself / To resign yourself
- c) To submit
- d) To Yield-

Contextual Meaning of Islam:-

- a) To enter in Peace by submitting to the will of Allah.

- b) To surrender/resign yourself to the will of Allah.
- c) Submission of desires to the will of Allah.

Islamic/Shariah Meaning of Islam.

Voluntary submission of desires to the will of Allah.

Definitions of Islam according to Quran.

- **Surah Al-Maidah (5:16)**

The Quran refers Islam as "Path of Peace" i.e:

"By which Allah guides those who pursue His pleasure to the Paths of Peace and brings them out of darknesses into the light, by His permission, and guides them to straight path."

- **Surah Yunus (10:25)**

"And Allah invites to the Home of Peace and guides whom He wills to a straight path."

This denotes that the ideal society by Quran is
"Dar-ul-Salam" (Arabic), which means the
Abode / Home of peace

Definitions of Islam according to Islamic Scholars

- "Imam Raghīb al Isfahani" in his book *Al Mufradat fi Gharāib Al Qurān* says:
Islam in law is of two kinds:

"One is a simple confession by tongue. Other; along with confession, there is belief in the heart and fulfillment in practice and resignation to Allah in whatever He brings to pass or decrees."

- Sayed Ameer Ali in his book "The Spirit of Islam" defines Islam as; "Salam" which in;

Primary sense means:- to be tranquil, at rest

Secondary sense means:- to surrender oneself to Allah which whom peace is made

"Salient features of Islam."

① Simplicity, Rationality and Practicality:-

Islam is a religion that is easy to understand without any confusing ideals and unnecessary rituals. It is based on metaphysical reality free from superstitions.

It guides Man to use his intellect and follow the path in the light of reality.

② Islam promotes Man to seek knowledge

The Holy Prophet PBUH said;

"He who leaves his home in search of knowledge walks in the path of Allah."

Also,

"To seek knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim."

This shows Islam strongly encourages

seeking knowledge as through knowledge
Islam removes people from ignorance and
false beliefs and brings them into the
light of understanding and wisdom

③ Unity of Matter and Spirit:-

Islam teaches that both lives i.e. Wordly
life (Matter = Material) and Religious life
(Spiritual) should be balanced together
A person should live a meaningful life
facing difficulties with patience and faith
as it brings spiritual growth and gear
them towards religious teachings.

The Explanation of some of Hadiths of
Holy Prophet PBUH about balanced life
are:-

- Fast, but don't starve yourself.
- Pray at night, but also sleep.
- Take care of your body, family,
and guests

④ Islam prioritize Individualism & Collectivism

Each person is independent but should work together for the good of society as whole and a person should also focus on his own personal growth and freedom. This means Islam prioritize and protects basic rights of Man and doesn't allow anyone to take them away.

"Every soul will be (held) in pledge for its deed."

(Al-Muddaththir 74:38)

⑤ Islam promotes Forgiveness and Mercy:-

As Allah himself is most Forgiving Therefore Islam encourages forgiveness and avoiding grudges as it strengthens relationships and brings peace to individuals and society.

"And let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is the Forgiving and Merciful."

(An-Nur 24:22)