

Question:

What is Islam? What are the salient features of Islamic way of life?

"ISLAM AND ITS SALIENT FEATURES"

• Introduction:

Islam that was revealed to final Prophet Muhammad PBUH is not merely a religion but a complete code of life (Deen) encompassing spiritual, moral, legal, and social dimensions. Rooted in Tawheed (Oneness of Allah) and Risalah (finality of prophethood), it offers preserved guidance through Quran and sunnah for all aspects of human existence. Thus, Islam is not merely a religion confined to rituals; it is a complete code of life designed to bring

harmony between humans and their creator, as well as among fellow human beings.

- **What is Islam?**
(Defination & concept)

⇒ literal Meaning of Islam:

The word is derived from Arabic root S-L-M which carries meanings of peace, safety, and submission.

Literally, Islam means to enter into peace by submitting oneself.

⇒ contextual Meaning of Islam:

contextually, Islam refers to the submission of one's desires and will to the will of Allah leading to inner peace, spiritual discipline, and obedience to divine guidance.

⇒ Meaning of Islam in shariah:

In shariah, Islam is defined as comprehensive, voluntary submission to Allah. It is complete Deen which includes both faith and action bearing witness to the oneness of Allah and the prophethood of Muhammad PBUH and practicing five pillars of Islam.

⇒ universal and timeless message:

Islam is a universal religion not confined to any time, race or geography, it offers complete guidance for every aspect of life, making it applicable for all mankind across ages.

⇒ Scholarly Definitions:

Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah: Islam

is the final monotheistic religion revealed to prophet Muhammad.

Imam Ghazali: Islam is the combination of rights of Allah (Haquq Allah) and rights of humans (Haquq al-Ibad).

⇒ **Quranic Evidence:**

"There is no compulsion in religion"

(Surah Al-Baqarah 2:256)

"for you your religion, and for me mine"

(Surah Al-Kafiroon 109:6)

• Salient features of Islam

(A) ⇒ Theological uniqueness of Islam:

The Aqa'id (core beliefs) form the foundation of Islamic theology, distinguishing Islam

from all other world faiths.

These five essential beliefs

Tawheed, Risalah, the Quran,

Angels and Akhirah constitute

the theological backbone of

Islam, shaping its worldview

and practical system.

⇒ Tawheed Oneness ← of Allah

"Islam affirms Allah's absolute oneness (**Al-Ahad**), transcending form, lineage or partners, as He is self-sustaining (**Al-Qayyum**) and beyond comparison. In Quran Allah says:

**"say: He is Allah, the one.
Allah the Eternal. He
neither begets nor is
born, nor is to Him
any equivalent"**

(Surah al-Ikhlās 112:1-4)

Christianity's Trinity (Father-son-Holy Spirit) dilutes pure monotheism, while Judaism restricts divine accessibility to Prophecy alone. Hinduism's 330 million deities (devas) and incarnations (avatars) fundamentally contradicts Allah's transcendence.

⇒ finality of Prophethood ⇐ (Khatm al-Nubuwwah)

Prophet Muhammad is the universal "seal of prophets" finalizing divine guidance for all humanity.

**"Muhammad is not the father of any man, but the messenger of Allah and seal of prophets"
(Surah al-Ahzab 33:40)**

Judaism confines prophethood

to Israelites, rejecting Muhammad, while Christianity defies Jesus as God's "son". Hinduism lacks a unified prophethood, attributing revelation only to sages.

⇒ Quran: ⇐

Divine Revelation & preservation

The Quran is Allah's literal, unaltered speech - preserved in Arabic since its revelation.

**"Indeed, We have
revealed the reminder,
and we will guard it"
(Surah al-Hijr 15:9)**

The Jewish Torah and Christian Gospels acknowledge textual alterations (for example Dead Sea scroll variants), while Hindu Vedas, transmitted orally for millennia, lack of documented preservations.

⇒ Belief in Angels ⇐

Angels are sinless beings of light (nur) who execute Allah's commands flawlessly such as Gabriel delivering revelation.

"The messenger believes in what we revealed to him from His Lord, and so do the believers. All believes in Allah, His angels, His books and His messengers"

(Surah al-Baqarah 2:285)

Christianity "fallen angels" (for example Lucifer) conflict with Islam's concept of angelic infallibility. Hinduism venerates angels (devas) as deities and Judaism includes adversarial angels like Samael.

⇒ Akhirah (After life) ←

Islam teaches physical resurrection, divine judgment based on deeds, and eternal reward or punishment.

"Whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it, and whoever does an atom's weight of sin (evil) will see it"

(Surah al-Zalzalah 99:1-8)

Christianity prioritizes salvation by faith alone (sola fide).

Judaism's afterlife is undefined and Hinduism's cyclical rebirth (samsara) denies final accountability.

(B) ⇒ Practical Implementation (Ibadat):

Islam's daily practices turn faith into action guiding

believers to live with purpose.

⇒ Shahadah (Creed) ⇐

The declaration "**Lā ilāhā illallāh, Muhammadur Rasūlullāh**" ("There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is His messenger") is the foundational act of faith, integrating belief with identity and action. It signifies complete submission to Allah's oneness and acceptance of Prophet Muhammad PBUH as final messenger.

**"Allah witnesses that
there is no deity except
except him, and so do
the angels and those
of knowledge"
(Surah Al'Imran 3:18)**

Unlike Christianity's trinitarian baptism formula (In the name of

father son and Holy spirit) the shahadah emphasizes absolute monotheism. Hinduism's rituals (dīkṣa) often requires priestly intermediaries while Islam allows direct declaration by any individual.

⇒ Salāh (prayer) ⇐

Muslims perform five daily prayers at fixed times (Fajr, Dhuhṛ, Asr, Maghrib, Isha) to maintain constant God consciousness (tāwāqūf). These prayers involve physical postures (standing, bowing, prostration) and Quranic recitations, fostering discipline & humility.

**"prayers prohibits
immorality and wrongdoing"
(Surah al-Ankabut
29: 45)**

⇒ zakah (Almsgiving) ⇐

obligatory charity (2.5% of surplus wealth annually)
purifies assets and redistributes resources to the poor, ensuring economic balance. It is a right of needy not mere voluntary charity.

**"Take from wealth
charity to purify them"
(Surah at-Tawbah 9:103)**

⇒ fasting (sawm) ⇐

During Ramadan, Muslims abstain from food, drink and sinful behaviour from dawn to sunset to cultivate empathy for poor and strengthen self-discipline.

**"fasting is prescribed for
you as it was for those
before you so you may
become righteous"
(Surah Al-Baqarah (2:183))**

⇒ Hajj (Pilgrimage) ←

The pilgrimage to Mecca, obligatory once in a lifetime for able Muslims, symbolizes unity, equality and devotion.

It reenacts the legacy of Prophet Ibrahim (AS) and erases societal hierarchies.

"Pilgrimage to the house is a duty owed to Allah"

(Surah Āl-Imrān 3:97)

(c) ⇒ Social System in Islam:

Islam provides a comprehensive social framework that ensures justice, equity and harmony in all aspects of human interaction. Unlike secular or caste-based systems, Islamic social principles are derived from divine revelation balancing individual rights with collective welfare.

⇒ law formation ← in Islam

Islamic law (shari'ah) is based on the Quran and sunnah, ensuring divine justice rather than human bias. It covers all aspects of life from personal conduct to governance.

**"We have sent down
the book as explanation
for everything"
(Surah An-Nahl 16:89)**

⇒ Economic Justice ← in Islam

Islam prohibits exploitation through interest (riba) and mandates wealth redistribution via zakah, ensuring economic balance. Trade encouraged

but unethical practices are forbidden

**"Allah permits trade
and forbids interest"
(Surah Al-Baqarah 2:275)**

⇒ Gender Dynamics ⇐ in Islam

Islam grants women spiritual equality, legal rights and dignity while assigning complementary roles to maintain family and social harmony

**"Whoever does good,
male or female, shall
enter paradise."
(Surah An-Nisa 4:124)**

⇒ Human Rights ⇐ In Islam

Islam recognizes fundamental human rights life, property religious freedom as divinely ordained not subject to human alteration.

**"We have honored
children of Adam"**
(Surah Al-Isrā 17:70)

**⇒ Governance in ⇐
Islam**

Islamic leadership is based on consultation, justice and accountability, rejecting dictatorship and autocracy.

**"Their affairs are
by consultations"**
(Surah Ash-Shūrā 42:38)

Democracy prioritizes majority opinion, which can oppress

minorities. Hindu Arthashastra justifies autocratic rule, while Islam mandates just and consultative governance.

(D) ⇒ The complete Way of life: "Islam!"

Islam provides divine guidance for all aspects of life - spiritual, social, economic and political integrating faith with practical governance

• Core principles:

⇒ Personal and Social Ethics

Islam mandates honesty, knowledge and Justice just like mentioned in Quran and hadess that;

**"seeking knowledge
is obligatory for
every muslim"**

(Surah Ibn Majah 224)

**"Believers are
but brothers"**

(Surah Al Hujurat 49:10)

⇒ family and marriage ⇐

Islam protects women's
rights in inheritance, divorce
and dignity as Quran says:

**"They(wives) are
your garments, and
you are theirs"**

(Surah Al-Baqarah 2:187)

⇒ Economic Justice ⇐

Islam bans interests and
promotes trade

**"Allah permits trade
and forbids interest"
(Surah Al Baqarah 2:275)**

**⇒ legal and political ⇐
System**

rule of law with strict
evidence standards is
instructed to be practiced
by Islam

**"O believers! stand
firm for justice"
(Surah An Nisa 4:135)**

Leadership is instructed to
be done by consultation

**"Their affairs are by
mutual consultations"
(Surah Ash-Shura 42:38)**

⇒ Global Relations ⇐

Islam encourages peace
treaties like Quran says

**"If they incline peace,
they incline to it"**
(Surah Al-Anfal 8:61)

⇒ Science & Education ⇐

Islam values critical thinking
and very strongly promotes
education.

**"Are those who know
equal to those who not"**
(Surah Az-Zumar 39:9)

• Conclusion:-

Islam offers a holistic framework
integrating faith with societal
governance. Its theology establishes
absolute monotheism (Tawhid),
final prophethood and eternal
accountability. The five pillars

instill discipline and moral purification, while social system ensures justice across family, economy and law. As a complete code, Islam uniquely unites worship, politics, and ethics under Allah's sovereignty. The Quran affirms:

**"This day I have perfected
your religion for you"
(Surah Al-Ma'idah 5:3)**

Unlike compartmentalized secular systems or hierarchical traditions, Islam provides timeless solutions for spiritual and material harmony.
