

Q. What is Islam & elaborate the salient features of Islam

Islam: a true monotheistic religion

Allah has repeatedly stated in the Quran that Islam is a universal religion and the final religion. It is not false to argue that significant Abrahamic religions that come before Islam have lost their true essence of monotheism, and Islam rightfully takes their place through provision of Tawheed, Finality of Prophethood and awarding the mankind with Quran, a complete code of life for whole mankind, not just Muslims.

Islam, previously known as Din-i-Hanef, was revealed upon Muhammad <sup>Pbuh</sup> through Jibrael A.S. The term Islam simply means to submit by establishing and practicing the pillars such as Salah, Fasting, Hajj and Zakat. The practice is when an individual bears witness ~~that~~ of Allah and that Holy Prophet is his last messenger (Al-Quran, Hadith e Jibrael). Prominent scholar of the early Islamic years, Imam Ghazali divided practice between Haqq al-Allah & Haqq al-Insan (translated into rights of Allah & rights of the man). The rights of Allah are prayers and all other duties associated with faith whereas rights of man are those that are based on moral principles innate to man which are also recognised by Allah & his prophet, which shall be discussed.

It is understood that Islam means submission to the will of Allah. However, many other religions do the same thing for their false Gods. Therefore, there exists some salient features that make Islam distinct and the ultimate truth. Various Abrahamic religions have associated Allah with the system ~~he~~ has provided us with. For Example, Christianity believes Jesus <sup>Pbuh</sup> is son of God. In Surah Ikhlās it is established that Allah is one and there is no equal to him <sup>neither</sup> ~~nor~~ he fathered any children ~~nor~~ he is a child to someone. As Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi puts it, Creator is separate from creation. This statement clearly implies that he too cannot be associated with systems promulgated for his creations.

Each time, whenever there had been chaos on Earth, Allah sent down messengers for particular creeds and times. In Surah Azab, Allah puts seal on the prophethood through Muhammad <sup>Pbuh</sup> given he had no sons either. The prophet was sent down as guidance & that in Surah Nisa, Allah obligates Muslims to follow the messengers, and to follow him is same as following Allah.

It would be right to say that Holy Prophet was sent down as interpreter of Quran, establishing the law of Allah. Upon him the Quran was revealed, a complete guide to life.

The Quran is a unique book, recognising issues of the time & even contemporary issues. Badawi, a western jurist, stated that universality of Islam is proven through the interpretations relating to ~~pos~~ modern-day problems, which also existed at time of Prophet. Quran addresses birth, upbringing and social life towards the death which proves ~~it to be~~ Islam to be the last religion. Coulson and Kamali both state that the Quran has several legal verses, this ~~means that~~ further solidifies the claim for Islam providing with whole system. These legal verses address the family structure of Islam and criminal offences, including protection of human rights (often associated with Haqq Allah).

Furthermore, in Islam, every human is dignified. If someone who is a non-Muslim does not mean he or she does not have rights. In Surah Israah Allah declares that he has honoured the children of Adam & all human are children of Adam. It is pertinent to note that Islam <sup>saliently</sup> ~~is one of the~~ establishes a prominent system of human rights from rights of the women to animals, and to equality among whole humanity.

In Quran, Allah states that saving one man's life is as if the person has saved whole humanity, and to kill a man is murder of all mankind. This showcases that everyone is equal before Allah except in Taqwa (last Samar). Prophet <sup>ﷺ</sup> in his last sermon ended all form of racism, nationalism and recognised rights of all. There is no room ~~if~~ for racism in Islam as witnessed by marriage of Hadrat Bilal, a Abyssinian, with a Arab woman. Moreover, Allah in Quran, as addressed earlier, enforces good character of a human by restricting jewelry or appearance. A woman in Islam is responsibility of the man, and the mahr ~~is~~ on marriage is a testament that women are protected financially. Allah indeed loves those who spend (Al-Quran), which leaves no room for greed and encourages social work. Islam has established system of finance which is interest free that doesn't burden a soul.

Conclusively, ~~It~~ while Islam is a religion, it indeed is a sacred code on how to live in this world. Islam believes in Rule of law, equality, justice and unity, it is not just limited to the Muslims but also non-Muslims except everything flows from being witness of Allah and finality of the Prophethood. Thus, Islam is indeed distinctive from religions that came before it.