

What is Islam and its salient features.

The Religion of Islam.

Islam is a monotheistic religion which was announced in seventh century by prophet Muhammad (S.W). The core believe of Islam revolves around the oneness of god "Allah." Every action an individual does is for the sake of Allah and by his rules and commands for which, one would be tested on they day of ressuraction. Islam also revolves around its pillars after the faith of oneness. which are, Tawhid (Belief in oneness), Salah (worship of Allah through prayer) Zakat (charity for Allah) Sawm (Fasting for Allah) and Hajj (performing pilgrimage for the sake of Allah. Islam is not only a religion, but it is a deen which not only focus on the relationship of Human beings with their god, but also horizontal relationship of human beings with other human beings in different aspects of life.

Salient Features of Islam.

(1) Tawhid as the core belief.

A true follower of Islam has to belief in the oneness of Allah with all his heart. The author of the book Sirat-un-Nabi, Allama Shibli Naumani says that, Tawhid is the first chapter of Islamic Syllabus, which can be elaborated as any individual

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performing any deeds of Islam has to believe that

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

God is one and to be worshipped.

Tawhid also means that one should believe that Allah has no partner and Allah no children, he is the sole proprietor to the whole universe, he is omnipresent and omnipotent. no idols has to be worshipped for his remembrance, but he shall be remembered directly, Islam negates the belief of Father, The son, and the holy spirit.

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ
وَلَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ

112-1-4

He is one, He is alone, He is neither begotten nor he begets, He is neither sleepy nor he is asleep.

Allah says in the Quran that he is not the father to anyone or no one has been his parent.

Islam also negates the believe of Judaism in the Covenant to a nation, Islam believes in egalitarianism every individual is the same according to Allah but dependant on his righteous or wrongdoings. Islam reflects as a sole monotheistic religion negating polytheism in Hinduism, Tritheism in Christianity and covenants in Judaism.

21) Prophethood and The Seal of Prophethood.

In Islam, after the belief in Tawhid, the most important belief is belief in Messengers. Allah says in the Quran that he has revealed four books and different scriptures since the beginning of humanity, The final ^{book} of Islam is revealed upon prophet Muhammad (S.W), It is important to believe in him and his message to be a muslim. It is also very important to believe that he is the last messenger of Allah and no prophet will come after him. as Allah states in the Quran

33:40 وَأَنَّكَ أَكْرَمُ الْبَشَرِ
 He (Muhammad) is the last of messengers.

Allah gave prophet Muhammad (S.W) a mission to complete and conduct the message of Allah through his words and actions to the people who are ignorant. It is a core belief of Islam to have faith that whatever prophet says are not his words, but the words of Allah,

53: 3-4, وَمَا يَنْطَلِقُ مِنْ لَدُنِّي إِلَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ كَلِمًا مَوْجُودًا

He does not speak from his whim (intuition)

It is a revelation that revealed.

Prophet Muhammad (S.W) was not educated, he couldn't read or write, it is a miracle that he stated words that are true to its essence even in 21st Century. and to believe that he is the last prophet of Allah is the core belief of Islam.

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3)

Islam as Flagbearer of Egalitarianism
Islam dignifies human beings, gives them inherent worth, and honours them regardless of their, race, colour and appearance.

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ

17: 70

"Indeed, we have honoured the children of Adam. Every human being, male, female, black, white is honoured by their lord according to this verse. According to the teachings of the prophet (s.w) children shall be dealt with politeness, elderly shall be dealt respectfully. No individual shall be backbited, no one should be mocked, no one should be judged on their appearance. Every human being is created by Allah and his creation cannot be imperfect.

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَاكُمْ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ

Indeed, we have created human beings in the best way. Islam conveys the slavery and imperious behaviour or haughtiness even by kings. e.g. Umar (R.A) lived simplest of life when he was the king of three continents. Similarly the prophet (s.w) always preached politeness toward other individuals regardless of their age, colour and belief. Islam provided rights to women when born girls were buried by ignorants. Islam preaches and commands the basic fundamental human birth right, i.e. every human being is equal, he will be judged for his doing on the day of resurrection.

4) Complete Code of Life.

Islam is a deen, which is complete code of life. It not only teaches the worship of Allah but demands the actions in day to day life, according to the will of Allah. e.g. how someone, treats his family, peers, and neighbours, how someone deals in transactions and does business, how someone deals with minorities when in power, how someone justifies actions. Hence, Islam is the name of deen which provided, social system, political system, economical system and justice system to the world through shariah which is the rule of God in the world. Islam is not only the rituals, customs worship and belief it is the daily conduct of life according to the will of Allah. Famous Islamic Scholar Dr. Zsrar stated that it was the mission of prophet not only to preach Quran but to show how life is spent according to Quran - which was visible in the governance of Madina. For every muslim to do daily task according to Islam can take guidance from Allah and actions of prophet.

لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ مِنَ الرِّسَالَةِ

33:21

For you the patterns (actions) of prophet are the best examples.

Living life according to the examples of prophet is the essence of Islam because it promotes oneness of Allah and egalitarianism.

(5) The importance of human rights in Islam.

Islam promotes fundamental human rights, which is being compassionate towards other human beings. One is virtuous for his positive intentions and instincts in Islam. It is a virtue if any obstacle is removed from the path or way. Similarly it is a sin if someone is spoken ill of, it is prohibited in Islam to hurt someone through sayings and actions, as mentioned previously, human beings are considered the best creations in Holy Quran, and their rights are reserved. Islam also promotes social work and Environmental protection. According to Hadees-e-Qudsi anyone who murders a human kills the whole humanity. Similarly anyone who saves a human is like saving the whole humanity, it was prohibited for Muslims to cut fruitbearing trees even during wars. Caliph Umar (R.A) punished the son of a governor by the same person whom he violated to preach that in Islam every individual is the same, whether he is governor, his son or a common man; ~~there~~ it was a show of justice system promoted by Islam.

(6) The last day and belief in Resurrection. According to the Islamic belief, every creature on earth will be resurrected on the day of judgement and justice will be prevailed. It is the fundamental dogma of Islam because it perpetuates individual actions e.g. any act of an individual will be judged as a sin or virtue on the last day and all records will

displayed and all the results will be out as Allah states in the Quran

وَالْأَرْضُ تَنْبِئُ بِمَا عَلَّمَهَا

99:4

The day when earth will report its news.

According to this verse the earth will disclose all the actions, the individual has taken upon it and they will be either punished in jahannam or elevated to heavens accordingly.

Every action an individual is taking is for the sake of Allah, and to please him. It is one of the main fundamental belief of Islam. e.g. every true muslim believes in his resurrection, so he commits actions accordingly if an individual doesn't believe he will be resurrected, his actions cannot imply the will of Allah.

7) Simplicity and Rationality of Islam

Islam is a very simple and straightforward religion which demands faith and actions. Faith in Oneness of Allah, prophethood, Holy Books, Resurrection. Actions in worship of Allah and dealing of others. Any individual can follow Islam by reading and thinking himself. He doesn't need perpetuity of priests and superstitious action e.g. the action of priests in Hinduism and Christianity. e.g. A Pope in Christianity cannot marry whereas in Islam any individual can marry and lead his life.

like a simple man, he can perform simple asks and can do business. The companion of prophet (S.W) were rich businessman such as Usman (R.A) Abdur-Rehman bin Auf (R.A) any individual who is sick or a traveller can be exempted or reduced in worships during. e.g. the revelation of Tayammun in Surah Maida if there is no water around in case of impurity. Similarly to consult Allah through worship, one is ^{not} required to do it through a clergy or priest, he can simply do it himself, In the Quran Allah say.

وَمَنْ تَقَرَّبَ فِي سَبِيلِ الْوَرَعِ ۝

50:4

"Indeed, I am nearer to you than your jugular vein" which means every individual is the same towards Allah and he can be worshipped directly any individual can ask for forgiveness by himself not as in Christianity where one has to confront with the fathers of the church. Islam is a religion which promotes, monotheism, egalitarianism, human and social rights.