

Islamic Studies

Concept of Islam and its salient features

Islam

Introduction:-

Islam is derived from Arabic word which literal means "submitting oneself to Allah's will. All of deeds and things for that one entity.

Islam means peace - peace with oneself, peace with Allah and peace with the creator of this world. Islam is not a new religion but it has been a complete code of life from centuries. Muslims believe that Islam is a true religion that has been created by the god for humanity. They believed that anyone can practice it anytime and any part of their/its life.

In Surah Ash Shura (42:13)

Allah says:

“

He has obtained for you the same deen as he had enjoined on Nuh[ؑ] and that which we have revealed to you O prophet and we had enjoined on Ibrahim[ؑ] and Musa[ؑ] and Isa[ؑ].

Lexicology - Unveiling Linguistic Tapestry

Islam - the religion of peace:

The word Islam has been derived from S(س) L(ل) M(م) - meaning submitting oneself to Allah's will. The religious belief of muslims in solidity of God and Prophet Muhammad (PBOH) According to Dr. Zaik Naik;

Islam means peace required by submitting your will to Almighty God.

One more scholar Imam Raghif al-Isfahani in his book says:

Islam is law is of two kinds:
 One is the confession with only tongue and other is confession with tongue and believe in heart and fulfillment in practice and resignation to God in whatever He brings to pass or decrees.

Monotheistic Religion:-

According to this concept, muslims believe that there is only one divine and one supreme power of Allah is present in this world to whom they submit themselves to His will. As Islam is not a religion and refined to only rituals. Instead it is a comprehensive system of life that harmonizes beliefs, worship, ethics, law and society.

Kufr: The antithesis of Islam:

the opposite of Islam is Kufr derived from the letters (K-F-R) ك-ف-ر which means

that to conceal or cover up.
Theologically sense says that **Kufr** is the act of denying the truth of divine guidance. Islam embraces reality whereas **Kufr** obscures it.

It is a struggle between belief and disbelief, truth and falsehood, light and darkness, submission and arrogance.

Doctrinal And Spiritual Pillars of Islam (Salient Features of Islam) :-

These are the bed rocks upon which tapestry of Islam is woven:

- 1- Clear and pure Monotheism (**Tawheed**)
The oneness of God.
- 2- Islam as a complete code of life (**Deen**)
- 3- Nabuwat (Prophethood)
- 4- Protection of Holy Quran
- 5- Universality and Humanism
- 6- Simplicity, Rationality and Practicality

- 7- Unity of matter and spirit
- 8- Relationship of Individual with Divine
- 9- Divine decree
- 10- Balance between Individual and Society
- 11- Economic justice and social welfare
- 12 Akhiraat - The life after death
- 13 Angels and divine Books

1- Tawheed: Clean and pure monotheism -- The oneness of God.

Absolute monotheism: This belief shows Allah as a sole creator and sovereignty of this world.

Quran says,

قل هو الله احد

Say, He is Allah the one

(Surah Ikhlas verse 1)

Liberation of tawheed:

Tawheed liberates humans from servitude to Idols, men, wealth or desires.

This shows that there is only supreme power like Allah and no one can be like him.

2- Islam as a complete way of life (Deen):-

As there are many faiths that are restricted to private rituals. Islam is a complete code of life, a complete way of life morally, socially and ethically. It has guidance for all the humans of the world.

وَمَنْ يَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ
(3:85)

Whoever seeks a din other than Islam, it will never be accepted from him.

3- Nabuwat ... Prophet hood:-

Prophets play roles as role models and conveyors of revelations

Harzat Muhammad (PBUH) is the final prophet sealing the chain of divine guidance.

Quran says:

وما ارسلناك الا راحة للعالمين

We have sent you O prophet as a mercy for the whole world.

Muhammad (PBUH)! is not the father of anyone among you. (33:40)

4- Protection of Holy Quran:-

The Holy Quran and other ~~books~~ treatises of the early religions disappeared with time due to personal or political reason but this is not the case with the Holy Quran as Allah said in Quran;

We have sent this message (Quran) to you and we shall safeguard it. (Surah Al Hujraat)

A non-Muslim William Muir said;

We may, upon strongest presumptions, affirm that every verse is the

genuine and unaltered composition of Muhammad (PBUH) by himself.

Although Munir was not muslim but he still witness the unchanged verses of Holy Quran. From this, it is concluded the Islam is the religion of man, tomorrow, today and forever.

5- Universality and Humanism:-

Islam is for all the human races, God in Islam is the God of all world.

Allah says in Quran:

إِلَهُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

(Surah Fatiha: 1)

He is the God of all world

At another place, Allah said in Quran,

O people!, I am but a messenger

from Allah to you all. (Surah Al Asaf 7: 158)

6- Simplicity, Rationality and practicality:-

Islam is a religion which is free from all mythologies and

superstitions. It is simply a practical religion that allows its followers and any other human in world to dictate it through righteous deeds. Prophet (PBUH) said;

To seek knowledge is obligatory to every muslim. (Ibn Majah).

7- Unity of matter and spirit:-

Islam does not divide into compartments like "sacred" and "secular". It rejects all such ^{denial} material things. Islam holds all the permissible things but all these should be according to principals of God. Muslims are taught this prayer;

O Allah! Grant us something ^{fine} in this world as well as the ^{fine} in the hereafter (Surah Baqarah 2:201)

8- Relationship of Individual with divine

As in other religions, there are different concepts of intercession of God like in Hinduism and Christianity. In Islam it is not like that, there is only one God, there is no intercessor of him. As Allah says in Quran;

The intercession of their intercessors will be of no benefit to him
(Surah Muddassir)

At another place, Allah says,

And guard against a day when no soul will suffice another soul, no will compensation accepted from him it, no will intercession be of use to it no will they be aided
(Surah Baqarah).

9- Divine decree (Qadar):-

Everything which is happening in this world is in Allah's knowledge and will as well. But human are responsible for their own choices. There is a balance between divine ^{destiny} and human to choose their will freely.

Allah says in Quran:

(Al-Qamar: 40) اِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ

Indeed, we have created everything perfectly, preordained.

10- Balance between Individual and Society:-

Islam maintains a balance between Individualism and Collectivism. It

ensures every man deserves respect and is personally accountable to Allah for all of his acts. It develops a proper personality within a man through education.

Allah says in Quran;

Man shall have nothing but what he strive for. (53:59)

Prophet (PBUH) said;

Muslim Ummah is like a soul; if one part of body is in pain whole body will be restless.

11- Economic justice and social welfare:-

Islam believes on maintaining a balance in society through proper distribution of wealth. This happens in different ways like one form is **Zakat**. Islam allows for Zakat because by giving Zakat, there is distribution of wealth instead of collectiveness and it reduces the gap between rich and poor. Islam has forbidden the concept of **riba** to lessen the difference of wealthy and poor.

Allah says in Quran;

Allah has permitted trade and forbidden interest (Surah Baqarah 2: 275).

12- Akhirah - The life after death:-

This world is a trial between a man and a world hereafter it. Those who have done good deeds properly followed their Lord will be rewarded at the end of day. Those whose have not done good deeds and disobey his Lord will be given punishment according to it.

Allah says in Quran;

Read your record: This day there need to be none, but yourself to make out an account against you (Surah Al-Isra : 13-14).

فمن يعمل مثقال ذرة خيرا يرهه ومن يعمل مثقال ذرة شرا يرهه

So whoever does an atom of good deed will see it And whoever does an atom of weight of evil will see it (Surah Az-Zalalah)

13- Angels and divine books:

Angels are spiritual souls that follows Allah's command. Divine books include,

Taurah, Zaboor, Injeel and Quran.
Both these combine together in an
unseen & spiritual order and the
visible guidance of scripture.

Allah says in Quran;

وانزلنا ايتنا الكتاب بالحق مصدقا لما بين يديه
من الكتاب و همينا عليه (Almaida: 48)

We have revealed to you O prophet
this book with the truth, a
confirmation of previous scripture and
a supreme authority on them.

Conclusion :-

Islam is a complete and
comprehensive system for both
private and public life. Islam is
not a religion but a civilization which
is shaping the world. Islam is a
practical system that covers the
different aspects of life whether
its about economical point of
view, set of rules and laws,
equality, race colour and creed.
In today's day and age, where
humanity has grappled with global
crisis, Islam balances rational and
universal framework and ethical solutions
of all problems.