

Introduction To Islam

CONCEPT OF ISLAM

Meaning of Islam:

Islam means to achieve peace

- peace with God
- peace within oneself, and
- peace with the creation of God

through wholly submitting oneself to God and accepting His guidance.

Literal meaning of Islam:

The word Islam is derived from the

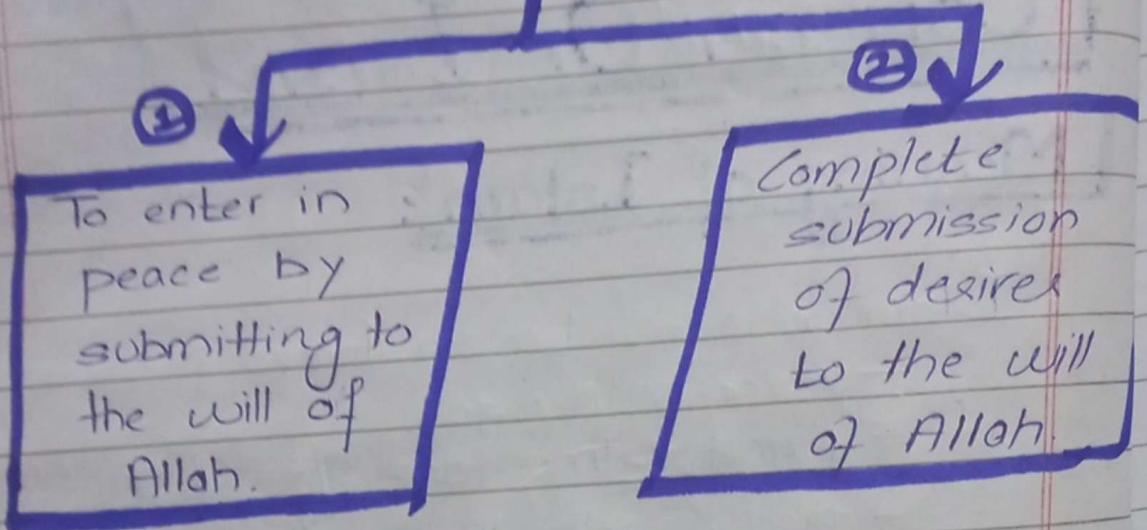
Arabic word/root س-ل-م (S-L-M)

- that means
- peace
 - safety
 - submission
 - Surrender.

Imam Raghīb said:

“Islam means entering into salam and salam and slm both signifies peace”

Contextual Meaning:



Allah Almighty says in the Quran;

“Whoever fully submits themselves to Allah and is a good-doer, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold”

~ Surah Luqman 31:22

Meaning A/c to Shariah:

Islam is the VOLUNTARY submission

of one's will and desires to Allah Almighty and entering into peace by completely obeying His commands.

Allah Almighty says in Quran

“Indeed, the religion accepted by Allah is Tauhid”

~ Surah Al-Imran 3:19

Definitions of Islam

“The religious faith of Muslims including belief in Allah as the sole deity and in Muhammad as his prophet”

~ Merriam Webster

“Islam is the combination of believing in Allah and His Messenger (SAW) and practicing/establishing the pillars of Islam”

~ Hazrat Muhammad (SAW)

☺

(توحيد)

Islam is a monotheistic religion revealed to Prophet Muhammad (SAW), and we can only know it through him. ”

~ Dr. Aameedullah

☺

Islam is the name of the combination of the rights of Allah and the rights of human beings. ”

~ Imam Ghazali

☺

Islam is the combination of faith (إيمان) and act of worship (عبادة). ”

~ Molana Sadar Uddin
Ilahi

That is the reason, Makki surahs came first to strengthen our faith, and Madni surahs come later to guide us in worship and practical actions.

A/c to Prophet (SAW);

(deeds → ʿamal)

Actions are judged by intentions

(beliefs → ʾaḥādīth)

(Sahi Bakhari & Sahi Muslim)

Universal Deen

⇒ Islam is a universal religion, b/c it provides guidance in every aspect of life:

↳ Individual ⇒ moral, spiritual, and personal development.

↳ collective ⇒ social conduct, justice, and harmony.

↳ Society ⇒ Rules of governance, fairness, and ethical behavior.

⇒ Unlike earlier religions, which were revealed for specific times and periods, Islam is eternal and universal:

↳ Previous scriptures like Torah, Zabur, and Injil were limited to specific ppl and times.

↳

Allah explained in Quran;

“When the previous revelations (Taurat, Zabur, Injil) became insufficient or lost, Allah sent the Quran as the final and complete guidance for all humanity.”

(Surah Al-Maidah 5:3)

Allah Himself
has promised
to preserve
this
book.

And **Quran** is also presented by Allah Himself, said in the **Quran**:

“Indeed, We have sent down the Quran, and indeed, We will surely protect it.”

(Surah Al-Hijr 15:9)

⇒ **Islam is also not confined to any specific geography**

↳ Previous religions were often local or regional, (e.g.) revealed only to certain nations.

↳ Islam was first revealed in Arabia, but its teachings are

are valid for all Humanity, everywhere.

→ Any human being who sincerely accepts the Kalma (shahada) b/c a Muslim, regardless of location or ethnicity.

* This universality is clearly visible every year during Haji, when Muslims from all countries, races, and backgrounds gather in Makkah, demonstrating that Islam is truly global and inclusive.

⇒ Islam is not restricted to any ethnicity.

↳ Earlier religions sometimes emphasized birth or ethnicity, (e.g) Judaism accepted only those born Jewish.

↳ Islam is inclusive, open to all communities. Anyone who declares faith sincerely can join.

↳ Anyone who sincerely accepts the Kalma (shahada) b/c a Muslim, regardless of race or place.

As Hazrat Bilal (RA) exemplified, even a former slave from Africa became a leading companion, showing Islam's universal acceptance.

The Prophet (SAW) said;

“All mankind are equal; none has superiority over another except in piety and good deeds”
(Sahih Muslim)

Conclusion:

Islam's teachings are timeless, universal, and inclusive, guiding humanity in every aspect of life, and open to all ppl irrespective of time, place, or ethnicity.

**Islam is for Entire
Mankind**

Islam was revealed not only for Muslims, but for all humanity.

It provides guidance, moral principles

and an ideal system of life for everyone. Islam is a complete way of living, addressing spiritual, social, and ethical needs of all mankind.

In fact, the very meaning of Islam can be remembered as an acronym;

↓
I - Ideal
S - System
L - Living for
A - All of
M - Mankind,

showing that it is the Ideal System of Living for All Mankind,

applicable to every human being regardless of religion, ethnicity, or region.

→ The Quran itself shows its uncertainty: Just like every book has a theme or title, the theme of the Quran is "Mankind", and many Surahs begin by addressing all people.
 (Ya Ayyuha An-Nas)

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Allah Almighty says in Quran;

“Whoever kills an innocent person, it is as if he has killed all humanity. And whoever saves one life, it is as if he has saved all humanity.”

(Surah Al-maida)
5:32

Conclusion:

This shows that Islam's guidance is relevant for everyone, making it a perfect system for all humanity, and its principles can be followed by anyone, anywhere, at any time.

SILENT FEATURES OF ISLAM / Islamic Beliefs

① Tauheed: The Principle of Divine Unity

- Allah is One and there is no god but Allah⁹⁹ is the most unique, first and foremost, and fundamental feature of Islam.
- It is the core belief upon which the entire structure of Islam stands. The essence of Tauheed is beautifully expressed in the First Kalima,

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

“There is no god truly worthy of worship except Allah”

This part negates all false gods and affirms absolute monotheism. It establishes that sovereignty, authority,

and worship belong to Allah alone.

Allah defines His Oneness in the Quran ;

“Allah is One, self-sufficient, neither born nor gives birth, and none is equal to Him”

(Surah Ikhlass 112:1-4)

This surah presents the purest and most comprehensive definition of Divine Unity.

Tauheed is not confined to belief only ; it shapes faith, worship, rituals, law, morality, and the entire social system of Islam. It is the foundation of Islamic civilization. Without Tauheed, no act of worship has value.

According to Abul Ala Maududi in Towards Understanding Islam ;

“Tauheed is a revolutionary principle that reshapes both individual character and social

Order by placing ultimate
authority in Allah
alone. ”

Merely reciting the Kalima without understanding its meaning cannot bring this transformation - just as repeating the word 'food' does not satisfy hunger, or chanting a prescription does not cure a disease. The real power of Tauheed lies in to express this belief by his tongue and demonstrate it through his deeds.

Likewise, Allama Shibli Nomani, in Seerat-un-Nabi, highlights that;

” The Prophet (SAW) began his mission with Tauheed, first chapter of the Islamic syllabus, making it the foundation of all moral and social reform. He compares Islam to a fortress and Tauheed to its gate - without Tauheed, one cannot enter the true path of Islam. ”

Thus, Tauheed is not merely a theological belief; it is a complete worldview.

It establishes that Allah alone is the Creator (Rabb), the sustainer, and the Supreme Lawgiver. This removes all forms of human domination and liberates mankind from slavery to wealth, race, status, or rulers.

② Risalat: The Finality and Universality of Guidance

→ "Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah" is the second vital, fundamental feature of Islam that translates Divine Will into human action. This concept is fundamentally rooted in the 2nd part of the Kalima:

محمد رسول الله

"Muhammad (SAW) is the Messenger of Allah"

This declaration leads directly to the Finality of Prophethood, which is a unique feature of Islam. While other religions may

believe in a continuous chain of future messengers, Islam is unique b/c it establishes that the chain of divine messengers ended with Prophet (SAW). He is the last guide for all mankind, and his message is preserved forever as the final authority.

The Quran confirms this in Surah Ahzab (33:40);

“ Muhammad (SAW) is not the father of any man among you, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the last of the prophets. ”

The Prophet (SAW) was sent as an “Educator” for humanity. Upon receiving Prophethood, he himself declared his mission as a teacher to civilize and refine mankind:

“ Verily, I have been sent as a teacher to mankind ”

B/c he was a teacher, his Sunnah (his actions, saying, silent approvals) became a complete Way of Life. This provides us with our primary Rules and Laws. In Islam, following the commands of the Prophet (SAW) is the same as following Allah, b/c his speech was guided by Revelation.

As ~~per~~ Quran states in Surah Najam (53:3-4)

“ He does not speak from his own desire; everything he says comes through revelation from Allah. ”

Finally, the most practical aspect of prophethood is that the Prophet (SAW) stands as the ultimate Role Model for all of humanity. Islam is not a religion of mere theories; it provides a living demonstration through the Prophet (SAW) life, proving that Divine laws are practical and lead to success in this world and the next.

The Quran highlights this in

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Surah Al-Ahzab (33:21);

“There is an excellent example for you in the Messenger of Allah”

Similarly, the finality of prophethood represents a psychological turning point for humankind; mankind no longer needs new prophets or revelations but must now apply reason and ijtihad within the guidance of the last prophet, as per Allama Iqbal in “The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam.”

~~Likewise~~, ~~Justice~~

Likewise, Justice Ameer Ali in the spirit of Islam, emphasizes that the Prophethood of Muhammad (SAW) transformed tribal society into a global brotherhood based on character rather than lineage.

Thus, Risalat provides the 'Model' for the 'message'. Without it, Tauheed would remain an abstract theory. Through Risalat, the

sovereignty of Allah is translated into a socio-political and moral system for mankind.

③ Dignity of Mankind: The Divine Elevation of Humanity

One of the most profound silent feature of Islam is its revolutionary concept of human dignity. At a time when humanity was divided by race, tribe, slavery, and class, Islam declares him the vicegerant (Khalifa) of Allah on earth;

“I am going to create a ruler (vicegerent) on the earth.”

(Surah Baqarah 2:30)

This appointment as Khalifa elevates human status, granting mankind moral responsibility, intellect, and authority within divine limits. Human dignity is Islam, therefore, begins with divine trust

divine trust and accountability.

The Quran further affirms;

“And we have certainly honored the children of Adam”
(Surah Isra 17:70)

Man is described as Ashraf-ul-Makhluqat (The Noblest of Creatures).

- Firstly, mankind has been given superiority over other creation through intellect and moral responsibility and rationality.
- Secondly, the honor is universal - all human beings are equal; there is no elite class, and even minorities are entitled to rights.
- Thirdly, it includes men, women, children, and all genders, showing that dignity in Islam is for every human being without discrimination.

Just like Aristotle defined man; that;

“Man is a Rational Animal”

because he is endowed with intellect and rationality. Unlike other creatures, humans can think, reason, and distinguish between right and wrong, that is why man is regarded as
 (اشرف المخلوقات)

An illustrative incident from the life of Prophet (SAW) demonstrates this clearly;

When the Prophet passed by a funeral, he saw it was the funeral of a Jew. Despite the deceased not being a Muslim, he stopped and offered respect, saying:

“Every human being has a right to dignity, and every soul deserves respect.”

In Quran, Allah says;

“We have certainly created man in the best of stature.”

(Surah Teen 95:4)

Humans are honored by Allah, created in the best form, and possess inherent dignity and value, regardless of status or background.

Anas bin Malik reported;

The prophet (SAW) said;

“A momin (true believer) is the one who loves for his brother what he loves for himself.”

True faith in Islam is linked with caring for others, treating everyone with justice, kindness, and dignity, just as one wishes for themselves.

Islam shifted the criterion of superiority from lineage to righteousness;

“Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you.”

(Surah Hujurat 49:13)

The Prophet (SAW) reinforced this principle in his farewell sermon;

“No Arab has superiority over a non-Arab, nor a white over a black, except in piety.”

He appointed former slave like Bilal (RA) to positions of honour, proving that dignity in Islam is practical, not theoretical.

Allama Iqbal viewed this Quranic vision as the foundation of a spiritually democratic society where every individual possesses selfhood (khudi) and moral worth. Thus, Islam does not merely advocate equality - it sanctifies human dignity as a divine trust, making justice, and brotherhood inevitable outcomes.

④ The Holistic Nature of Islam as a Complete Way of Life:

The concept of Islam as a complete code of life is rooted in the belief that Allah's guidance is not confined to the mosque but extends

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to the marketplace, the court of law, and the halls of parliament.

Abul Ala Maudidi said in his book "Towards Understanding Islam";

"Islam is a "totalitarian" scheme of life that leaves no aspect of human existence to the whims of man, ensuring that every action is an act of worship if performed a/c to Divine Law."

This totality is biblically affirmed in the Holy Quran:

"Today I have made your religion complete and chosen Islam for you"

(Surah Maida)
5:3

This verse serves

foundation for the 'Complete Code', suggesting that no further evolution in fundamental moral or social principles is required beyond the Islamic framework.

At the individual level, Islam governs the human experience from "cradle to grave". It begins with the sanctification of birth and upbringing, where the parent is charged with Tarbiya and Islam introduces the child to the Divine from birth (adhan in the ear).

The prophet (SAW) stated:

“The best of you are those who are best to their families.”

This individual code extends to the character building and education, which are viewed as religious obligations rather than mere social choices.

The Prophet (SAW) emphasized the

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mandatory nature of intellectual growth, saying:

“Seeking knowledge is a duty upon every Muslim”

By framing livelihood as Rizq-e-Halal Islam ensures that an individual's professional life is governed by integrity, viewed honest labor as a form of Jihad.

Imam Ghazali in Thyo Ulum al-Din argue that;

“A society cannot be healthy unless the individual first undergoes Tazkiyah (purification of soul)”

The collective level of Islam is where it truly shines as a “Code of life” through its social and political systems.

The social structure — built → huquq-ul-ibad (rights of humans), ensuring

that vulnerable are protected. Politically, Islam introduces the concept of sov of Allah, ruler is merely a trustee.

Muhammad Asad in his book

"The Principles of State and Government in Islam", explains

"how islamic law provides a flexible yet firm framework for governance based on the sov of Allah and the Shura (consultation) process."

Economically, Islam provides a financial system that prevents the conce of wealth in a few hands. By mandating Zakat and strictly prohibiting Riba (interest), Islam ensures social equity.

The Quran said;

"so that it (wealth) may not circulate only among the rich among you"
(surah hashr)
59:1

Justice Mufti Taqi Usmani said;

“Interest-free model is the only way to achieve global financial stability”

Furthermore, the Justice and Adm-system is based on global financial stability absolute impartiality

The Quran commands;

“O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice..even if it be against yourselves.”

(surah Nisa 4:135)

The Prophet (SAW) reinforced this by saying;

“Help your brother, whether he is an oppressor or being oppressed”

Lastly, in Global Affairs, Islam offers a code for IRs and the ethics of war. It emphasizes the sanctity of treaties & human

“ O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another ”

(surah hujurat)
49:13

② Institutionalized Charity:

Long before modern humanitarianism, Islam established a revolutionary system of social justice 1400 yrs ago by transforming charity from a choice into a divine obligation (zakat). This sys is so vital to the state's socio-economic stability that the first caliph, Abu Bakar (R.A), famously used state authority to collect it by force from tribes who refused to pay, proving it is a fundamental right of the poor.

A/c to surah Baqarah (2:177)

“ True righteousness is defined by those who give wealth, despite love for it, to their kin and the needy ”

Furthermore, Surah Baqarah (2:215) clarifies the hierarchy of this spending: wealth is not for the Prophet or his family, but must prioritize parental close relatives first, followed by orphans and the wayfarer, ensuring that charity strengthens family bonds (sila-e-Rahmi) before extending to the wider community.

③ The Sanctity of Life and Medical Care in Islam:

Islam places the highest value on human life, considering it a sacred trust that must be protected. The Quran provides the ultimate motivation for medical and rescue services in

Surah Al-Maida (5:32), stating that

“whoever saves one life, it is as if he had saved all of humanity.”

→ This means that saving a single person is globally significant in the eyes of God.

Furthermore, a famous Hadith-e-Qudsi highlights;

“ On the Day of Judgment, Allah will identify with the suffering: “O son of Adam, I was sick and you did not visit me. Had you visited the sick, you would have found Me with him.”

④ Systematic Social Work and Universal Mercy:

Islam transforms every believer into a social worker by making communal support a religious decree.

The Prophet (SAW) said;

“The Merciful (Allah) shows mercy to those who are merciful. Show mercy to those on earth, and the One in the heavens will show mercy to you.”

This teaching creates a culture of "systematic social work", where kindness is not restricted to one's own group but is a universal requirement toward all living things. This turns every believer into a social worker by religious decree.

⑤ Protection of Human Rights and Equality:

Islam established a universal "Charter of Humanity" long before modern human rights declarations.

In his Last Sermon, the Prophet (SAW) abolished all racial hierarchies by declaring:

"All mankind is from Adam and Eve; an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab, except by piety."

This ensures that every human being is born with equal rights and dignity. By making taqwa (good character) the only measure of a person's worth, Islam protects individuals from discrimination based on race, wealth, or social status.

⑥ Animal Rights and Compassion in Islam

Islam teaches that animals are a sacred part of the divine order, and our treatment of them has direct spiritual consequences.

The prophet (SAW) has this through two key examples:

- ⇒ A person was forgiven of all sins simply for showing mercy to a thirsty dog by drawing water for it.
- ⇒ While, a woman was punished for her cruelty in locking up a cat and leaving it to starve.

These teachings prove that Islamic compassion is universal, making the humane treatment of animals a religious duty and a path to God's mercy.

⑦ Environmental Protection:

Islam views the Earth as a

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a beautiful and sacred trust given to humanity. This led to the creation of the world's first "environmental laws", as the Prophet (SAW) strictly forbade the cutting of trees or the killing of livestock, even during times of war.

He emphasized the long-term value of nature by advising:

"If the Day of Judgement is about to begin and you have a palm-shoot in your hand, you should plant it."

Furthermore, the Prophet (SAW) taught that planting a green tree is a form of sadaq-e-Jariya (continuous charity), as any person, animal, or bird that eats from it or sits in its shade earns the planter a reward. This proves that protecting the env is a core religious duty in Islam.