

Q1) Islam is a Deen which extensively covers all aspects of human lives whether it be communal systems like justice system, political system or matters that pertain to how individuals should live their lives e.g. prayers, enjoining good, forbidding evil, good character. The rubric of Islam lies down principles and rules on how individuals ~~the~~ should navigate through their day to day tasks. It encompasses rights, duties, obligations, how to earn, how to get married, what to eat and what not to. In this way Islam is a complete code of life that guides Muslims in every domain of life.

Salient Features of Islam that make it unique from other Religions

1) Tawhid: The Cardinal Pillar of Islam

Islam says the concept Tawhid: Only Allah is worthy of worship. Tawhid is the main building block of Islam, and it is only after a strong, unwavering belief is established in this pillar that a person is allowed to enter the folds of Islam. Tawhid ~~is~~ comprises of three important facets:

- 1) Oneness of Allah: Belief that Allah is one, and Has no partners.
- 2) Attributes of Allah: Means that Allah has the most beautiful attributes and no one shares it with Him.
- 3) Unity in Actions: This means that Allah alone has ~~the~~ power ~~to~~ over everything.

Emphasising the significance of Tawhid
the Quran say:

"Indeed your god is one god,
There is none worthy of worship except
Him, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially
Merciful".

This belief in Tawhid sets Islam apart
from the other religions.

2) Concept of Hereafter

Belief in Akhirat/Hereafter is another vital concept in Islam. As per this belief, the Muslims believe that this life is only a temporary life, and after they die, they will be resurrected and will have to account for all the deeds they have done in this world. ~~The~~ Muslims also believe that the life of Hereafter will be permanent, and this life is merely to earn reward for the life that is to come.

3) Finality of Prophet P^{buh}:

Prophet Muhammad P^{buh} is the last and final messenger. This is another vital belief that the rubric of Islam stresses upon, and is a feature that distinguishes Islam from other religions. The Quran says in this regard:

"Muhammad (S:AW) is not the father of any man among you, but is the messenger of Allah and the last of the prophets".

4) Self-Accountability:

Islam inculcates a belief of self-accountability. Islam states that every human will be resurrected when the Akhirat comes and they will be held accountable for what they did

in this world. Hence, ~~a~~ an individual realizes that even if they succeed in escaping the law of the land, there is no escaping the divine justice. In this regard, the Holy Quran says:

"Whoever has done an atom's weight of good will see it, ~~and~~ And whoever has done an atom's weight of evil will see it".

5) Muslim Unity:

Islam also stresses upon muslim brotherhood / unity. It encourages one to go out of their way to help and support their fellow muslim brothers/sisters. Prophet ^{pbuh} said in this regard:

"The parable of the believers in their affection, mercy, and compassion for each

other is that of a body. When any limb aches, the whole body reacts with sleeplessness and fever".

6) Enjoining Good And Forbidding Evil:

The fabric of Islam also teaches Muslims to partake and cooperate in righteous activities but avoid and reject evil. This is another salient feature of Islam that distinguishes it from other religions. The Quran says in this regard:

"...cooperate with one another in goodness and righteousness, and do not cooperate in evil and transgression".

7) IJMA To Find solution in the fast evolving world:

Ijma is another salient feature of

Islam that distinguishes it from other religions. Ijma refers to the unanimous agreement of Muslim jurists, of any period following the demise of the prophet (SAW), on a shariah ruling. Hence, this shows that unlike other religions, Islamic teachings are not confined to specific time line, but it is to evolve with the evolving times.

Conclusion

In a nut shell, The teachings of Islam guide muslims in all spheres of life, making it a complete code of life. There are several feature of Islam that sets it apart from other religions of the world. Further more the concepts of Ijma, Islamic unity, Tawheed are not found in any other religion of the world, making it superior to others and reinforcing the belief that it was revealed by the creators of the

world.

(Q2) Prayer / Namaz is a pillar of Islam and therefore holds ~~for~~ much significance in ~~the~~ Islam. The importance of prayer can be discerned by the fact that the first question to humans on the day of judgement will be about the five obligatory prayers. 'Namaz' is an arabic word which means to pray. Prayer is a form of worship which was made obligatory on 10th Nabwi, following the Prophet ^{pbu}s journey to Mehraj.

Philosophy of Prayer

The main purpose of obligatory prayers is to reject immorality. It helps a believer to avoid evil doings and ~~keep~~ prevents them from going astray.

The Holy Quran says in this regard:

"Indeed, Prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing".

The prophet ^{Pbuh}, stressing upon the significance of five obligatory prayers, said:

"Between a man and polytheism and disbelief is the negligence of Prayer"

Types of Prayers

Prayers can be categorized into three main categories: Obligatory prayer, Sunnah prayer, and Nawaafil prayers.

1) Obligatory Prayers Obligatory prayers are the five daily prayers that were made obligatory on all Muslims in 10th Nabwi. These prayers consist of

Fajr prayer (2 Rakats), Zuhr Prayer (4 Rakats), Asar Prayer (4 Rakats), Maghrib Prayer (3 Rakats), and Isha Prayer (4 Rakats). In total there are 17 Rakats of obligatory prayers in a day.

2) Sunnah Prayers: are optional prayers that the prophet ^{pbuh} used to pray in addition to everyday obligatory prayers.

3) Nafil Prayers: These ~~at~~ are also optional / voluntary prayers that are prayed to ~~reap~~ reap the benefits of Allah's favour, or to establish / solidify one's connection with Allah. Some of the Nawafil Prayers are as under:

-) Tahiyyat al-Masjid: upon entering mosque
-) Tahiyyat al-Wadu: after performing wadu

- 1) Gharaq prayer: 20 minutes after ~~the~~ sunrise.
- 2) Chast Prayer: Performed ~~bet~~ after sunrise and before meridian.

Spiritual, Moral, And social impacts

1) Purification of soul:

~~When~~ Praying regularly ~~purify~~ purifies one's soul. People's connection with their creator strengthens, and one's desire for worldly and sinful things fades away.

2) Satisfaction of Heart and Mind:

When one starts to pray regularly ~~they~~ they find their heart and mind at peace. ~~The~~ Prayer alleviates stress and helps one to relax and find peace. The Quran says in this regard

" Verily in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find peace".

3) Social Equality:

Prostrating before Allah also makes people humble and down to earth. People realize that their status and wealth are a mere illusion and having pride ~~of~~ or a sense ^{of} superiority might bring upon Allah's wrath.

Regarding Social Equality, the Holy Quran says:

" O People! We created you from a male and female, and made you races and tribes so that you may know one another. The best among you in the sight of Allah is the one who is the most righteous. Allah is All-knowing, well-experienced.

4) Sense of Purpose:

It is easy to ~~lose~~ lose one's sense of purpose in this fast evolving world. However, by praying five obligatory prayers daily, one is constantly reminded that this world is temporary and one's true purpose is to worship and please the almighty Allah. The Quran says in this regard:

"I did not create jinn and humans except to worship me!"

5) Social evils are reduced:

Five obligatory prayers also ~~to~~ ~~are~~ keep one from transgressing the limits prescribed by Allah. People realize that it is their responsibility to avoid/prevent the spread of evil, which

eventually lowers crime rates in a society. The Quran prohibits Muslims to assist others in wrongdoings in the following words:

"..... Cooperate with one another in goodness and righteousness, and do not cooperate in sin and transgression"

b) Prevents Social Decadence :

Regularly praying also helps people to uphold their moral values. In this world, it is easy to give in to the temptations and pursue worldly profits even at the expense of one's moral values. However, when one stands before Allah in prayers, they find the strength to combat/suppress such urges. Furthermore, being regularly reminded (5 times) about the insignificance

of this world helps one to muster up the courage to shun such ~~tem~~ immoral temptations.

7) Closeness to Allah:

Praying five times daily is an order of Allah, and hence when one establishes five daily prayers, they feel ~~closer~~ closer to Allah. Praying five obligatory prayers enables one to strengthen their connection with Allah, and change their life as per Islamic teachings to further solidify their connection with the creator of the worlds. The Quran orders ~~the~~ five five daily prayers in many verses, with a notable verse being:

"And Establish prayer and give Zakah and bow down with those who bow [in worship and obedience]"

Conclusion:

In a Nutshell, The five obligatory prayers are a vital pillar of Islam and therefore hold immense importance. Prayers can be categorized into three categories: Fard, Nafil, Sunnah. The establishment of prayer can have profound moral, social, and spiritual impacts. It is also note worthy to mention that the command to pray is meant for ~~is~~ ~~ego~~ one's own benefit, and that Allah does not require our worship. He is above such requirements, and if one does not pray they only cause harm to themselves.

Q4) Much like how Islam extensively defines the rights of women, animals, prisoners, parents, etc., it does not leave the determination of the rights of minorities solely to human intellect. Minorities in Islam are called 'dhimmi'. Minority refers

to a racial, ~~the~~ linguistically, religiously distinct group of people that is living with another dominant group. The rubric of Islam ~~lays~~ ~~to~~ provides comprehensive rights to minorities. Some of the rights are as under:

Rights and Duties of Minorities

D) Right of Life

Islam prohibits the killing of any human unless there was a reason for it. The prohibition of killing humans applies to minorities as well. The Quran says in this regard:

".... whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or corruption (done) in land - it is as he had slain mankind entirely. And whoever saves a soul - it is as he had saved mankind entirely."

2) Freedom of Religion:

Islam also allows minorities to follow their religion. Under no reason should Islam be enforced on them or to anyone ^{else}. The Quran says in this regard:

"Let there be no compulsion in religion"

3) Economic Rights:

The minorities are allowed to select any profession or the source of income ~~unless~~ so long as it does not go against Islamic teachings. For instance, minorities can trade cloths / goods but they cannot deal in riba since it is prohibited in Islam.

4) Protection of Honour and Dignity:

Minorities have the right of dignity and honour. Muslims are prohibited to humiliate or ridicule minorities. They shall be respected. The Quran upholds human dignity and honour in following words:

"We have honoured the children of Adam, and carried them through land and sea, and provided them with good things, and greatly favored them over many of those we created"

5) Political Rights

The minorities are also granted political rights. They have the right to vote and elect/choose representatives that represent their communities. During the caliphate of H. Umar^{R.A},

non-muslims were also granted monthly pensions. This shows that ~~to~~ muslim states have the ~~auto~~ responsibility to look after minorities.

Duties of Minorities

1) Not to partake in espionage:

Minorities are not to taking part in any spy/espionage missions. Such acts can lead to ~~set~~ severe repercussions for a state, and hence if any one is found guilty of such act, they will be punished.

2) Do not Redicule Islam or Prophet ^{pbuh}

Minorities should not redicule the Islamic teachings nor prophet ^{pbuh}. Since Islam grants them exclusive

rights, it also expects them to respect the ~~vet~~ ~~de~~ ~~en~~ ~~of~~ Allah and the messenger. Hence if a minority is found guilty of disparaging ~~the~~ Islam or its teachings, severe punishment should be meted out.

3) Respect Islamic Jurisprudence:

Though Islam provides minorities the right to resolve their internal matters through their legal system, it is also important to keep in mind that Islamic law is the supreme law of the land, ~~and~~ and if there is a crime concerning the state or a muslim, Islamic law will always prevail over the law ~~or~~ or judicial procedure of the minorities. Hence, it is important for minorities to allow Islamic law to take its course without resistance.

Conclusion

To sum up, Islam endows ~~ex~~ minorities with exclusive rights that no other religion or community does. But with rights also comes duties, and the duties/responsibilities Islam has set for minorities should be strictly adhered in order to create a harmonious and ~~free~~ well-functioning society.

Q6 ii) Much like how Islam extensively covers the contours of every aspect of human life, it does not leave an important facet such as political system on human interpretation. The principles and guidelines of an Islamic political system are extensively ~~to~~ laid down by Islam. A political system refers to the key governing body that is responsible for

regulating ~~poli~~ internal as well as external policies of a state. It is also responsible for regulating the key affairs of a state. ~~It~~

Islamic Political System and its features

1) Sovereignty belongs to Allah

Sovereignty of Allah is the core of an Islamic political system. This means that the ruler in an Islamic state is ~~it~~ does not hold the ultimate authority or shares it with Allah. Rather his position is always of a subservient to Allah.

2) System of Caliphs

Islamic ~~poli~~ state is to be ruled

by a caliph. The caliph acts as a representative of Allah on land and works for the betterment of the muslim state.

3) No Nepotism:

Islam does not encourage nepotism. In an Islamic state, the caliphs are chosen based on their capabilities ~~of~~ and intellect, and merely having a blood relationship with the caliph does not automatically make them the heir to the throne. This is also evident from the era of first four ~~the~~ caliphs, who had sons that could take the reins of powers. However, the duty to lead the muslim ummah was always ~~of~~ entrusted to the most capable in line.

4) Accountability of the Caliph

Caliphs, although the head of the state, ~~and most~~ powerful were not considered above the law. The actions of caliphs were severely scrutinised. This is also evident from the example of H. Umar^{R.A}, who despite being the caliph at the time was questioned on how he acquired the cloth to make his garments. The issue was quickly resolved when the son of H. Umar^{R.A} informed that he had given his cloth to his father. The example serves as a testament ~~to the~~ ~~of~~ extensive accountability in an Islamic political system.

5) Consultation Process :

In an Islamic political system, the caliph cannot take arbitrary decisions, and is suppose to consult his

advisors ~~in~~ before making a decision. The Quran says in this regard:

"And consult them in your conduct of Affairs".

Conclusion

To sum up, Islam has ~~exta~~ extensively define the parameters and principles of political system. Islamic political system is unique in a way that since day one it has encouraged and promoted rule of law, accountability, consultation. While ~~the~~ in other political systems, people had to struggle for centuries to bring monarchs under the law, and hold them accountable.