

Chapter 2

INTRODUCTION TO ISLAM

Islam (إسلام) is the name of a famous religion amongst the religions of the world. It is the religion of truth containing both thoughts and practices. According to the divine scripture Al-Qur'an, it is the true religion with Allah the Exalted and the final and complete version of the divine guidance.

Etymology:

Word "Islam (إسلام)" is an Arabic word derived from another Arabic word "Salam (سلام)" without Alif (الف) which literally means "Peace" and "Safeness". As per the linguistic rules of Arabic, another letter "Alif (الف)" is added to it and it turned "Islam (إسلام)" which is the title of the religion. After "Alif (الف)" is added, the word is changed now and obviously the meanings as well. So, it is no more in the sense of "peace & safeness" now, instead, it stands for "Obedience", "Submission" and "Surrender".

Definition & Concept:

"A complete code of life set and revealed by Allah (The Creator, the Owner & the Lord) to His Prophets & Messengers (From Adam (AS) to the last of His messengers MUHAMMAD ﷺ) from time to time to guide His slaves (Mankind & Jinn) to the success in life and afterlife".

Important Note 1:

Islam is unlike other religions as they contain some typical traditions and customs particularly at three occasions i.e. the birth of a child, the marriage and the death of a person, or maximum some rituals are being performed as worships. They do not have systematic and organized structure of worships, social dealings, economical system, political and legal affairs based upon their religion.

On the other hand, Islam is a complete code of life and is fully equipped with teachings for every aspect of life. For instance, along with above mentioned disciplines of life, Islam also stresses upon daily routine of life such as eating, drinking, sleeping, dressing, and also commands to perform the necessities of daily life as per the commandments of Islam.

Secondly, Islam is a divine religion set, chosen and revealed by the Almighty ALLAH (The Creator, The Owner and The Lord of all the worlds). It is not a man made religion. Its teachings are genuinely from The Lord and are beyond doubts. Allah has sent its last version down to the last of His Messengers MUHAMMAD (ﷺ) through one of His angels Gabriel (A.S.) who is considered as the chief of all of the angels as described by Almighty Allah. Allah reveals in Qur'an;

وَإِنَّهُ لَنَزِيلُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٩٥﴾ نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ ﴿١٩٦﴾ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ ﴿١٩٧﴾ بِلسَانٍ عَرَبِيٍّ مُبِينٍ ﴿١٩٨﴾ (الشعراء : 195-192)

"And truly, this is the revelation from the lord of all worlds. The trustworthy spirit (Jibreel) brought it down. Upon your heart, so that you may become one of the warners. In plain Arabic language".

The Subject of Islam:

The Subject refers towards the study of some particular thing or object which, as a topic, is discussed under a discipline. For example, human body is discussed under medical science. Therefore, it is the subject of medical science. And machine is the subject of engineering because it is discussed under the discipline of engineering.

In the same way, when Islam is considered as a discipline and the code for life, definitely there should be some subject to be discussed in it too. And the subject for the entire Islamic teachings is...

"The human beings and Jinn being slaves to Allah the Exalted", Allah the Exalted says;

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥١﴾ (الذاريات 51 : 56)

"I did not create mankind and Jinn except for the Purpose that they should worship me." Islam reveals the teachings through which human beings may enable themselves to become good slaves to Almighty Allah.

The Objective of Islam:

The objective behind this revelation of Islam is. . .

"To provide complete guidance to mankind and Jinn that leads them to the success in life and afterlife".

Important Note:

A noteworthy point should also be remembered that the actual concept of success, as per the interpretation of divine scripture Al-Qur'an, lies down with safe removal from the fire of hell and the entrance into paradise. Allah says....

فَمَنْ زُحْزِحَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ، وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ ﴿١٨٥﴾ (إل عمران 3 : 185)

"So, whoever is safely removed from the fire of Hell and admitted to Paradise, he succeeded indeed. And the worldly life is not but the goods of delusion".

The Aayah reveals that beyond this actual success, no worldly success is appreciable and reliable especially when this world itself is a mortal one and until the man is safely removed from the fire of Hell.

Fore face of Islam:

In a very famous Hadith from prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) entitled with Hadith-e-Jibreel, prophet (ﷺ) introduced Islam by its face features as a reply to a question asked by Jibreel (A.S.). For details, Umar (r.a.) reports that once Jibreel (a.s.) came to see prophet (ﷺ) in the shape of a man while some of the companions (including reporter) were sitting around him in the holy mosque of Madinah. He asked few (five) questions which were replied by prophet (ﷺ). Amongst all those questions, the very first was about Islam's initial and elementary introduction as he asked;

"O Muhammad! Tell me about Islam" ... يَا مُحَمَّدُ ! أَخْبِرْنِي عَنِ الْإِسْلَامِ ...

Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) replied;

الْإِسْلَامُ أَنْ تَشْهَدَ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، وَتُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةَ، وَتُؤْتِيَ الزَّكَاةَ، وَتَصُومَ رَمَضَانَ، وَتَحُجَّ
الْبَيْتَ إِنْ اسْتَطَعْتَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا (متفق عليه)

"Islam is that you bear the witness that there is no one worthy of worship (God) except Allah and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah, and you establish Prayers, and you pay Charity, and you keep the Fasts of Ramadan, and you perform Hajj of the House if you can manage the way to it".

This hadith describes the face features of Islam by following five;

- | | |
|--------------|----------------------|
| ➤ FAITH | (Shahadatain,Eimaan) |
| ➤ PRAYERS | (As-Salah) |
| ➤ CHARITY | (Az-Zakah) |
| ➤ PILGRIMAGE | (Al-Hajj) |
| ➤ FASTS | (As-Saum) |

Important Note 1:

The above mentioned five teachings are just a fore face and a small part of Islamic teachings, not a complete Islam. Because, Islam, in its teachings, is broader than these five same as man holds organs and body parts other than face features as well.

Pillars of Islam:

Another very famous Hadith from prophet (ﷺ) reveals Islam through a constructed building that has been set as an example for its teachings by the prophet (ﷺ) as he said;

بُيِّنَ الْإِسْلَامُ عَلَى خَمْسٍ ، شَهَادَةِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ ، وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ ، وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ ، وَالْحَجِّ ، وَصَوْمِ رَمَضَانَ (متفق عليه)

"Islam is constructed upon five (pillars), bearing the witness that there is no one worthy of worship (God) except Allah, and Muhammad (ﷺ) is a slave to Him and His messenger, establishing Prayers (Salah), paying Charity (Zakah), performing pilgrimage (Hajj) and keeping Fasts of Ramadan (Saum)".

The above mentioned reference again describes the same five teachings of Islam same as in the previous one. But a column structured building which is founded and based on five columns and pillars has been set as an example for Islam in this Hadith.

Important Note 2:

But again it is important to understand that the hadith fixes the above mentioned five as highly profiled important teachings of Islam but not a complete Islam. Because the columns only, are not a fully fledged building, there are so many other parts in a building as well. In the same way, these five are not a complete Islam; there are many other sections of Islamic teachings as narrated by prophet (ﷺ)

"The Faith secures more than seventy sections". (متفق عليه) أَلَا يُمَانُ بِضْعٌ وَ سَبْعُونَ شُعْبَةً

Importance of the five:

In order to understand the importance and the specialty of above mentioned five amongst the entire teachings of Islam, two of the reasons appear primarily for what these five have been considered as the pillars of Islam, the foreface of Islam and the initial elementary introduction to Islam.

- 1- The first one of these five belongs to faith and beliefs of Islam while the rest four belong to worships of Islam. The faith and worships are the actual objectives human beings and Jinn have been created for. Allah reveals;

“I did not create mankind and Jinn except for the Purpose that they should worship me.”

- 2- Secondly, these five have ever been the part of the divine religions i.e. the religion with Almighty Allah as we shall discuss it under their respective studies.

Complete Structure of Islam:

Islamic teachings have been categorized initially into five major categories

1:- Beliefs: (عقائد و ایمانیات)

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|---------------------|----------------|
| 1- Oneness of Allah | (توحید) |
| 2- His angels | (ملائکہ) |
| 3- His books | (کتاب) |
| 4- His messengers | (انبیاء و رسل) |
| 5- Final day | (الیوم الآخر) |
| 6- The Destiny | (قضاء و قدر) |

2:- Worships: (عبادات)

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| 1- Prayers | (صلوٰۃ، نماز) |
| 2- Charity | (زکوٰۃ) |
| 3- Fasts | (صوم، روزہ) |
| 4- Pilgrimage | (حج) |
| 5- Preaching + Holy War | (دعوت و جہاد) |

3:- Dealings: (معاشرات ومعاملات)

- 1- Social dealings (معاشرات)
- 2- Money dealings (معاملات)

4:- Rules & Laws: (حدود وقوانين)

- 1- Political system (سياسات)
- 2- Legislative system (قانون سازی)
- 3- Judicial system (عدل وانصاف)

5:- Ethics & Purification: (اخلاقيات و تزكیه)

- 1- Concept of ethics (تصور اخلاق)
- 2- Concept of Good & Evil (تصور خیر و شر)
- 3- Concept of Fair & Unfair (تصور معروف و منكر)
- 4- Ethical Values (اخلاقی اقدار)
- 5- Purification (تزكیه)

Finality of Islam:

In the end, it is also important to understand the status of Islam in the eyesight of Allah, the Lord of all the worlds. According to the divine scripture Qur'an, the concept of the finality of Islam contains following two points;

- 1: Islam (The final version, revealed upon Muhammad PBUH) is the only religion with Almighty Allah in true sense.

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ --- (آل عمران 3 : 19)

"Truly, the religion with Allah is Islam".

Also one should not die without believing and following Islam. As Allah has warned clearly in Qur'an stating;

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾ (آل عمران 3: 102)

"O you, who believe, be afraid of Allah, as He deserves to be feared, and let not yourself die save as Muslims."

- 2: The concept of success in true sense i.e. the success in afterlife totally depends upon following this final version of Islam, and there is no other possible way or key to success. No other religion is acceptable to Allah, the Lord and the Master of the Day of Judgment. Allah has announced it in Qur'an saying,

وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ ، وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾ (آل عمران 3: 85)

"And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, It will never be accepted from him, and he, in the hereafter, will be among the losers".

Also, dying without having faith in this final version of Islam will cause the definite & eternal punishment in Hell. Allah states;

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمْ مِلْءُ الْأَرْضِ ذَهَبًا وَلَوْ آفَتَدَىٰ بِهِ أُؤْتِيكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ ﴿٩١﴾ (آل عمران 3: 91)

"Those who disbelieve and die as disbelievers, an earth-full of gold even shall never be accepted from any of them, even if one were to offer it as ransom. They are the ones for whom there is a painful punishment, and for them there are no helpers."

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ وَالَّذِي نَفْسُ مُحَمَّدٍ بِيَدِهِ ، لَا يَسْمَعُ بِي أَحَدٌ مِنْ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ يَهُودِيٍّ وَلَا نَصْرَانِيٍّ ثُمَّ يَمُوتُ وَلَمْ يُؤْمِنْ بِالَّذِي أُرْسِلْتُ بِهِ إِلَّا كَانَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّارِ (رواه مسلم)

Abu Huraira (r.a.) narrated that the messenger (ﷺ) of Allah said; "I swear by the one who holds the life of Muhammad, any of the Jew or Christian from among the people who comes to know about me, and then dies without having faith in what I have been sent with (Islam), he will definitely be among the hell members".