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**RELIGIONS  
OF THE WORLD**

*By: Gaurav Sahni*

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# QUESTION PAPER

( June – 2019 )

( Solved )

## RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

Time: 3 Hours ]

[ Maximum Marks: 100

Note: (i) Answer all questions.  
(ii) All questions carry equal marks.

**Q. 1. Discuss the religious teachings and beliefs of Judaism.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-10, Page No. 93, 'Beliefs and Practices of Judaism' and Page No. 95, Q. No. 2 and Q. No. 3.

**OR**

**Discuss the religious issues of tribal religions.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-16, Page No. 144, 'Tribal Religions', Page No. 148, 'Destruction' and Page No. 152, Q. No. 5.

**Q. 2. Explain the metaphysical theories of religion.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-1, Page No. 2, 'Metaphysical Theories of Religion'.

**OR**

**What do the psychological studies of the different aspects of religion reveal ? Discuss.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-3, Page No. 22, 'Psychology of Religion'.

**Q. 3. Answer the following questions:**

**(a) Elucidate the marks of plurality of religions.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-4, Page No. 30, 'The Marks of Plurality of Religions'.

**(b) Write an essay on the Hindu scriptures.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-5, Page No. 38, 'Hindu Scriptures'.

**(c) What are the central teachings of Jesus? Explain.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-11, Page No. 100, 'The Kingdom of God' and 'The Central Teaching of Jesus'.

**(d) Elucidate the philosophical aspects of Shintoism.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-15, Page No. 138, Q. No. 1, Page No. 139, Q. No. 3 and Q. No. 4.

**Q. 4. Answer the following questions:**

**(a) Briefly discuss the ethical principles of Jainism.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-7, Page No. 67, 'Jain Ethics'.

**(b) What are the major institutions in Sikhism?**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-8, Page No. 76, 'Sikh Institutions'.

**(c) What is the prime focus of Hindu ethics?**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-5, Page No. 42, 'Hindu Ethics'.

**(d) Discuss the major Quranic themes in brief.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-12, Page No. 109, 'Divinity of the *Quran* and Its Message'.

**(e) What is the core of Zoroastrian philosophy?**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-9, Page No. 84, 'Zoroastrian Philosophy'.

**(f) Briefly explain Buddhist Middle Path.**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-6, Page No. 57, Q. No. 2.

**Q. 5. Write short notes on the following:**

**(a) Confucianism**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-13, Page No. 117, 'Introduction'.

**(b) Zoroaster**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-9, Page No. 83, 'Life of Zoroaster'.

**(c) Haji**

**Ans. Haji** is a title which is originally given to a Muslim person who has successfully completed the

*Hajj* to Mecca. It is also often used to refer to an elder, since it can take time to accumulate the wealth to fund the travel (particularly before the advent of mass air travel), and in many Muslim societies as an honorific title for a respected man. The title is placed before a person's name; for example Joshua Omo becomes Hajji Joshua Omo.

In Arab countries, *Haji* and *Haji* (pronunciation varies according to the form of Arabic spoken) is a commonly used manner of addressing any older person respectfully, regardless of whether or not the person in question has actually performed the pilgrimage. In Malay-speaking countries, *Haji* and *Hajah* are titles given to Muslim males and females respectively who have performed the pilgrimage. These are abbreviated *Hj* and *Hjh*.

**(d) Sociology of Religion**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-3, Page No. 19, 'Sociology of Religion'.

**(e) Bible**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-11, Page No. 99, 'The Christian Bible'.

**(f) Guru Nanak**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-8, Page No. 73, 'Guru Nanak (1469-1539)'.

**(g) Pillar of Silence**

**Ans. Ref.:** See Chapter-9, Page No. 86, 'Death Ceremony' and 'The Tower of Silence'.

**(h) Final Judgement**

**Ans.** The Final Judgement or The Day of the Lord is part of the eschatological world view of the Abrahamic religions and in the Frashokereti of Zoroastrianism. Some Christian denominations consider the Second Coming of Christ to be the final and infinite judgment by God of the people in every nation resulting in the approval of some and the penalizing of others. The concept is found in all the Canonical gospels, particularly the Gospel of Matthew. Christian Futurists believe it will take place after the Resurrection of the Dead and the Second Coming of Christ while Full Preterists believe it has already occurred. The Last Judgement has inspired numerous artistic depictions.



# Sample Preview of The Chapter

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# RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

## Introduction to Religion

### Religion: Its Salient Features



#### INTRODUCTION

Religion has emerged out of 'life' and in future can never be separated from it. There is a need in us, for a great comfort, which in turn necessitates a knowledge of the universal in which we live. We are put in physical and social scenario which tell of fellowmen with their past stories and prophecies – that have emerged as an outcome of competitive and co-operative enterprise of different generations. It is a fact that different parameters of science, ethics, economics, sociology, history, traditions and myths are all intermingled. Hence, these have very important approaches on the separately and community. But in this broad 'sketch of life' there is need to assign a right thing to individual's impulses. From the period, immemorial, philosophy, ethics and religion have played very important role in life. The message of religion is that which together people and also which binds the loose ends of impulses, ambitions and different processes in everyone's life. Further it is our very good experience both the way, individually and collectively.

#### CHAPTER AT A GLANCE

##### DEFINITION AND NATURE OF RELIGION

The Latin term *religiō*, origin of the modern lexeme *religion* is of ultimately obscure etymology.

The religion here indicates that the two objects of unification were originally unified and it separated temporarily. Religion is founded on the faith in the ultimate unity of humans and God. Various thinkers have attempted to define religion in the following manner:

1. Max Müller termed religion as "A mental faculty or disposition which enables human to apprehend the infinite" in his book "Science of Religion".

2. "Primitive Culture" defines religion as "A belief in spiritual beings" by E.B. Taylor.

3. Hoffding in his work "Religious Philosophy" describes religion as "Faith in the conservation of value."

4. Galloway explains religion as a "Man's faith in a power beyond himself whereby he seeks to satisfy emotional needs and gains stability of life and which he expresses in acts of worship and service."

5. William James believe that religion as "The feelings, acts and experiences of individual men in their solitude so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine".

6. Mathew Arnold is of the view that religion as "Nothing but morality touched with emotion".

7. James Martineau explains "Religion is a belief in an ever-living God that is Divine Mind and Will ruling the universe and holding moral relations with mankind".

8. Sri Aurobindo finds that "In most essence of religion... is the search for God and finding God. Its aspiration is to discover the infinite, the Absolute, the One, the Divine who is all these things and yet no abstraction but a Being...".

In all the above definitions, there is no correct definition of religion so far, every definition tells different feature of religion. In every definition, there is a reference to "Power" or "Divine", which is essential point. It may also be observed that according to thinkers like Mathew Arnold, religion is a matter of morality. A good definition of religion is possible only when a cognizance of its essential aspects is taken. Normally,

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it is a process which has two sides, an inner and an outer – according to inner aspect; it is a state of belief and feeling, an inward spiritual disposition. There is “worshipping” and “religious commitment” in practice of any religion. There must be belief in the existence of a ‘Higher Power’ without which there cannot be true worship. On almost every religious issue, honest, knowledgeable people hold significantly diverse beliefs. Feeling, belief and will – these three together constitute religion both in the lowest and highest form of civilization.

**METAPHYSICAL THEORIES OF RELIGION**

The idea of a supreme will of the world, to which we have been led, calls for some explanation – especially of the relation in which this will stands to the world. To know about the God better if we must examine certain conceptions of God which stand out in the historic development of the religious consciousness. In one aspect, the development of religion is a development in the representations of God. On the other hand, the various forms of conceiving the Divine object points to the needs of which the growing religious spirit becomes the matter of concern. Of these various representations, three broad types are mentioned below:

These are *deism*, *pantheism* and *theism*.

**Deism**

Deistic thinking has existed since ancient times. Among the Ancient Greeks, Heraclitus conceived of a logos, a supreme rational principle, and said the wisdom “by which all things are steered through all things” was “both willing and unwilling to be called Zeus (God)”. Deism, a pre-dominant religious philosophy of British thinkers, was introduced by Herbert of Cherbury (1583-1648) and was greatly popularized by Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727), and was also accepted by Charles Darwin (1809-1882).

The deistic conception of God was formed under the influence of human analogy. As human is contrasted with one’s work so is Deity, here set over against the world that is considered to be one’s creation.

The famous scholar, Charles Darwin, Newton required God to interfere with the workings of the world from to take the care of planetary movements. Some of the important features of deism are as follows:

- (a) God is transcendent to this world. This world created by a perfect man called God, does not require any divine supervision and interference.
- (b) God is described as absentee God.

(c) God being transcendent remains essentially a “Hidden God.” This makes God an object beyond the worship and knowledge of human.

(d) The great force of deism lies in its acceptance of a natural light in human which alone is taken as the sole authority which is related with the religion.

Deism has raised a number of important theological issues. Its emphasis on the transcendence of God robbed the religious minded human of the possibility of one’s encounter with and worship of God. God create the world or did he create time along with the world? Again, if God is perfect, then, is this world of no value to Him? If so, is this creation a mere incidence in the life of God? And if God is infinitely good and omnipotent, then why is there evil at all?

There are no answers to the questions asked above, in any rational form of religious philosophy. And deism certainly claims to be wholly rationalistic. The ‘religious mind’ who wish to enter into a personal relation with God.

**Pantheism**

Pantheism is a phase of religious thought opposite to deism and this then has appeared and reappeared in various systems of culture. It seems the purpose of religion is to regulate the lives of its followers for various and questionable reasons. It had made its mark in the far East, in ancient Egypt and in Greece, among the Western people of Medieval and of modern times. Pantheism on the other hand promotes individuality and reverence, awe, respect of nature and the universe in your own way without the direction of a spiritual leader or the guidance of group thought. The Pantheistic theory is of the view that all is God and God is all. This is derived from two Greek roots – ‘Pan’ and ‘Theos’. The famous verse of Bhagwat Gita; in which it is stated that “He who sees all in Me, I am never lost to him and he is never lost to me”. Again, the same thought from another upanishadic text (Isavasyo panisad) mentions that, “he who sees all the animate in God and sees God in everything living, can hate none”.

Apart from deism the pantheism is the older concept. Some pantheistic systems posit God as self-conscious. Sankara’s version of pantheism theorizes that this variety is false, since everything is identical with God. Materialistic pantheism and idealistic pantheism are two broad forms of pantheism.

### **Theism**

Theism, the view that all limited or finite things are dependent in some way on one supreme or ultimate reality of which one may also speak in personal terms. Theism as a form of religious belief understands God as a supernatural person, who is also the creator of value – evolving world. The major characteristic of theistic God is that he possesses a personality which enables Him to accept the devotion and prayers of his followers and to help them.

Theism is not meaningless; however, it also isn't as meaningful as some might typically assume—especially those for whom their theism is an important part of their lives and/or religions. According to the philosophy, God loses his quality of infinity if qualities are attributed to it since whatever quality is attributed to God implies the destruction of opposite quality.

### **Foundation of Religious Belief**

In the segment of practicing religion, it is an experience of the whole person which means that it includes one's cognition, conation and affection, conscious and unconscious in them to learn it in the proper manner. In prophetic religions, it is maintained that, there is the "breath" of God in human which directs one to find rest in Him. But the term 'belief' may be analyzed as follows: 'belief-in' is an attitude to a person, whether human or Divine; and 'believe-that' refers to a proposition. Our belief-in God is highly evaluative, that is, acceptance of an existential proposition, we can also say that, religious belief is not merely cognitive and cannot be fully understood only in terms of factual or scientific knowledge. It has an element of heart, of effectiveness and warmth of feelings. Thus, the foundation of religious belief rests on reason, revelation, faith and mystic experience.

**Reason:** Reason solves many religious problems. It is helpful for religious beliefs, and issues remains a responsible rule in every one of them. Religion takes out people in search of one's ideal self, which is kept forth in one's religious up bringing. But the nature of the deity which embodies this ideal self, appears revealed to increase human knowledge, which we takes as our top concern. Therefore, rational faculty in people makes help one to settle one's belief in the kind of deity whom oneworships.

**Revelation:** To reveal means to 'discover.' Revelation takes into public what was under cover before. But people have gut feeling to know God. Therefore, people stand in help of some sort of promptings through God. He exposes himself through

prophetic religious scriptures and also through workings of nature. God's exposes is also helpful by the grace of God, which never be objectively analyzed. God, Brahman, is essentially considered to be unknown. Hence, God remains a supernatural power and super sensuous entity. God being transcendent lies beyond the ordinary means of knowing.

**Faith:** Someone's faith is superb, than it will short the firmness in dedication towards religion. There is a different kind of certainty in having belief in God. But it is not come out of scientific idea. According to Kant, faith has subjective certainty sufficient for action, but insufficient for objective knowledge. It is one of the most crucial, fundamental and significant tenet of religious life and behaviour manners. It is very important and sufficient rule of religious life. No religion can be without faith. There is very important relationship between the depth and gravity of religious life and the depth and gravity of faith.

Some of the general characteristics of faith include:

1. The object of faith in the religious scenario is the superb concern of people.
2. Faith never be minimized to ordinary or scientific knowledge and idea.
3. Faith includes all aspects of a human being at work and means all-pervasive attitude to the whole reality, society and one's total relationship.
4. Faith is a concern of people's total self-involvement and full dedication to a certain area of action. Faith without actions is like a tree without fruits.
5. There is total self-surrendering to God.
6. Faith is a main source of inspiration and encouragement in human life.

### **The Mystic Experience**

Mystical experiences tend to be experiences felt or experienced beyond the realms of ordinary consciousness. Occasionally they are referred to as states of altered consciousness. It is found in Upanishads, Advaitism, Bhakti culture and Shri Ramkrishna's experiences. Mysticism is also found in the thoughts of people of ancient Greece. Also in the Contemporary Western Philosophy, French Philosopher, Henry Bergson, represents it. The Sufis also subscribe to mysticism. Such states may involve ineffable awareness of time, space, and physical reality. Mystical experiences often defy physical description, and can best be only hinted as such experiences are universal and share common characteristics, despite the culture or religion in which they occur. They are invariably spiritual, yet they may not be religious; that

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is, they are not limited to monks or priests. However, all personal religious experiences are rooted in mystical states of consciousness, and all mystical experiences are part of religions.

Although mystical experiences are common in occurrence, they occur unbidden to a person perhaps once or twice in a lifetime, if at all.

The important characteristics of mysticism are as follows:

1. It associates personal relation with Ultimate Reality.

2. The mystic knows intellectual knowledge and idea to be unusual for the realization of His aim.

3. William James mentions, four marks of mystical experience:

(a) Ineffability, Mystical states are more like states of feeling than intellect, subtle shaded with fine nuances that are difficult to convey in their import and grandeur to another.

(b) Noetic quality, Mystical experiences are states of knowledge, insight, awareness, revelation, and illumination beyond the grasp of the intellect.

(c) Transiency, mystical experiences are fleeting in linear time, though they seem to be eternal. Most last a few seconds, some perhaps up to ten minutes.

(d) Passivity, The individual feels swept up and held by a superior power. Such phenomena are regarded in Eastern thought as states of pseudo-enlightenment, part way up to the real thing, but not quite there.

**RELIGION IN ITS RELATION TO OTHER**

**DISCIPLINES: MORALITY**

Different views have been taken with reference to the relation of religion to morality.

1. Religion and morality are inseparable and never depend on each other.

2. Religion is independent of morality.

3. Morality is independent of religion as an autonomous belief.

**Interdependence of Religion and Morality**

Religion and morality are not synonymous. Morality does not depend upon religion, though for some, this is “an almost automatic assumption. We can study this with the example that Judaism and Christianity have accepted the Ten Commandments which shows about the morality. Some of these commandments are the same as ‘*panchamahavrata*’ of Jainism as well as all Indian religions. Both Kant and R.B. Braithwaite postulate God as the psychological booster of morality. Performance of one’s duty should

be regarded as Divine command, according to Kant. Religion with its derivative of ‘re’ and ‘legere’ means to bind also the loose ends of lower impulses within each person, hence morality includes both the external and the interiorized rules of conduct. Conceptually and in principle, morality and a religious value system are two distinct kinds of value systems or action guides. Polytheistic religions such as Buddhism and Hinduism generally draw from a broader canon of work. There has been interest in the relationship between religion and crime and other behaviour that does not adhere to contemporary laws and social norms in various countries. Studies conducted in recent years have explored these relationships, but the results have been mixed and sometimes contradictory. The ability of religious faiths to provide value frameworks that are seen as useful is a debated matter. Religious commentators have asserted that a moral life cannot be led without an absolute law giver as a guide. Other observers assert that moral behaviour does not rely on religious tenets, and secular commentators point to ethical challenges within various religions that conflict with contemporary social norms.

**Religion as Independent of Morality**

In primitive religions, there is more of magic than the word morality. In early patterns of religion there is more of taboo than morality. Many religious folks argue that while science can explain much of the natural world, some issues are simply outside of the scientific realm, the classic example of which would be morality.

**Autonomy of Morality**

Kant has argued for the case of autonomy of morality. He is of the view that morality is good not because God wills it, but God wills it because it is good. In addition to the mistaken view that morality is inseparable from or impossible without a belief in one or more deities there is also that view which holds that religion and morality are not separable. Contrary to that position is that which holds not only that religion is separable from morality but that they must be separable. There are those who hold that the only real or workable basis for morality is separate from a deity or god or a belief in a god and spiritual realm and separable from religion itself. Kant recommended that duties should be performed as divine commands, because he felt that the performance of duties is difficult for humans without such a booster, hence religion and morality have to go together by refining, criticizing and sublimation of one with another.