UG PH S4-02
(DSC)

FOUR YEAR BACHELOR'S DEGREE COURSE

(CBCS in Accordance with NEP 2020)

SEMESTER IV

PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

PHILOSOPHY

Surya Kumar Bhuyan School of Social Sciences
KRISHNA KANTA HANDIQUI STATE OPEN UNIVERSITY

Subject Experts

1. **Prof. Sauravpran Goswami,** Dept. of Philosophy, Gauhati University
2. **Dr. Sabitri Devi,** Associate Professor, Dept. of Philosophy, Cotton University.
3. **Dr. Naba Prasad Nath,** Associate Professor, Dept. of Philosophy, Nowgong College, Autonomous

Course Coordinator: Dr. Tejasha Kalita, Assistant Professor, KKHSOU

SLM Preparation Team

UNITS	CONTRIBUTORS
1, 5, 8, 10	Dr. Sucharita Dey, B. Borooah College
2	Dr. Anjana Neog, Pragjyotish College
3	Dr. Karabi Goswami, Narengi Anchalik College
4,9,11,12,13	Dr. Namita Kalita, Nowgong Girls' College
6, 7	Dr. Maina Sharma, B.Borooah College
14	Dr. Mousumi Bhattacharjya, Gauhati University
15	Dr. Anjana Chaliha, J.B. College

Editorial Team

Content:	**Mrs. Meenakshi Sarma Pathak**, Handiqui Girls' College
Language :	**Dr. Kapana Bora Barman,** Dept. of English, Cotton University
Structure, Format & Graphics:	**Dr. Tejasha Kalita,** KKHSOU

April, 2025

ISBN NO: 978-93-87940-31-4

This Self Learning Material (SLM) of the Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University is made available under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial-Share Alike 4.0 License (international): http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

Printed and published by Registrar on behalf of the Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University.

Headquarters : Patgaon, Rani Gate, Guwahati - 781017

Resham Nagar, Khanapara Guwahati-781022; Web: www.kkhsou.in

The University acknowledges with thanks the financial support provided by the **Distance Education Bureau**, **UGC** for the preparation of this study material.

CONTENTS

UNIT 1 : Philosophy of Religion: Its Nature and Scope

Nature of philosophy of religion, Different philosophical approaches, Distinguish philosophy of religion and science of religion, Philosophy of religion and psychology of religion, Scope of philosophy of religion

UNIT 2 : Nature of Religion, Dimensions of Religion

Meaning of Religion, Nature of Religion, Religion and Morality, Religion and Art, Religion and Science, Religion and Philosophy, Dimensions of Religion

UNIT 3 : Religions, Philosophy and Science

Religion and philosophy, Philosophy of religion and philosophy, Religion and science, Science of religion, Philosophy of religion and science of religion, Religion, philosophy and science, Inter-relation of religion, philosophy and science in India

UNIT 4 : Religious Consciousness

Introduction, General meaning of consciousness, Characteristics of consciousness, Religious consciousness, Rudolf Otto on religious consciousness, Difference between religion, consciousness and religious consciousness

UNIT 5 : Theories of Origin of Religion

Need of anthropological theories, the animistic theory of E. B. Tylor, The ancestor-worship theory of Herbert Spencer, Totemism, Manaism as the origin of religion, Taboo, Psychological theories, Religious instinct theory, Single elemental emotion theory, Religious faculty theory

UNIT 6 : Freud's Theory of the Origin of Religion

Freud's life and works: general background, Psychoanalysis and religion, Freud's theory about the origin of religion, Oedipus complex, Critical Comments

UNIT 7 : Revelation and Faith, Spirituality

Revelation in Christian Faith, Faith, Natural theology and revealed theology, Different ways of revelation, Revelation in Indian tradition, Spirituality, its definition and features

NIT 8 : Some Basic Characteristics of Christianity

Christianity and its development, Christianity and its fundamental Characteristics, Christianity and the concept of Trinity

UNIT 9 : Islam: Five Pillars

The salient features of Islam, Five pillars of Islam, Pilgrimage(Hajj)

UNIT 10 : Hinduism, God, Man, and Liberation

Sources of Hinduism, Characteristics of Hinduism, Hinduism and Law of Karma, Hinduism and Moksha

UNIT 11 : The Problem of Evil

What is evil? The Basic Problem, The Existence of Evil, regarding evils: different views, Why do Evil and Suffering Exist?

UNIT 12 : Proofs for the Existence of God: Causal and Teleological

The Causal Argument, The First Cause, Cosmological Argument, The First Cause, Aristotle's First Cause Argument, Russell's View, The Argument from Contingency/ Thomas Aquinas's view, Thomist's view, Some Steps of Cosmological argument, Criticism of the causal argument, The Teleological Argument for The Existence Of God, Criticism of teleological proofs for the existence of God

UNIT 13 : Proofs for the Existence of God: Ontological and Moral Argument

Ontological Argument, The moral argument for the existence of God, Kant's view, Indian Conception God (Moral Argument), Three general approaches of Moral Argument, Criticism of the moral argument

UNIT 14 : The Symbolic Nature of Religious Language

The problem of religious language, Various approaches to the problem of religious language, Symbolic nature of religious language

UNIT 15 : Religions Tolerance

Rise and development of religious tolerance in the West, Tolerance in some of the main religions of the world, Tolerance and Christianity, Tolerance and Islam.

COURSE INTRODUCTION

This course introduces to you the subject of religion. Religion is one of the deepest experiences of mankind. It is based on the intuitive awareness of an infinite Being that is supposed to create, sustain and destroy the universe. The word 'religion' is derived from the Latin word 'religio'. It consists in the belief and reverence for the Gods. Again, the Latin root of 'religio' is the verb 'religare'. It means 'to bind together'. This meaning indicates that religion is a relationship between the worshipper (devotee) and the worshipped (the objects of devotion that is the Gods, God etc.) So, religion is nothing but the relationship that binds the worshipper and the worshipped together. In another sense, religion creates a relationship among men who share the same view or similar religious attitudes. In this context the word 'religion', by its very nature involves concepts like brotherhood, sisterhood, love, peace, kindness, compassion, generosity, honesty, selfless service etc.

This course consists of fifteen units in total.

The first unit of this block is 'Philosophy of Religion: Its Nature and Scope'. This unit will discuss the relation between Philosophy and Religion. This will again analyze the methods of Philosophy of religion and will describe the nature of science of religion. This unit will again explain the scope of Philosophy of religion and will discuss the problems related to Philosophy of religion.

The name of the second unit of this block is 'Nature of Religion, Dimensions of Religion'. This unit is going to study the basic outlines of religion. Religion is an intrinsic element of human nature. The study of mankind can never be complete if it does not include the study of religion. Whatever may be one's opinion concerning religion or one's attitude towards religion, one cannot but admit that it is the most important and outstanding feature of human life. From the earliest times and throughout the ages, religion has occupied a central place in human life and history.

'Religions, Philosophy and Science' is the third unit of this block. This unit introduces to you what is Religion, Philosophy and Science and their inter-relationship. In this context the two related concepts namely, Philosophy of Religion and Science of Religion are also brought under discussion along with the Indian viewpoint regarding Religion, Philosophy and Science.

The fourth unit of course one is 'Religious Consciousness'. This unit will introduce to you the general concept of consciousness with special reference to religious consciousness. Religious awareness arises due to the consciousness of religion. There is something which makes everyone feel that one isnot absolute and there must be someone who is absolute, omnipotent and omniscient etc. The incompleteness of one person implies that there should be something which is above all these and this feeling of completeness would be realized.

The fifth unit of this course is 'Theories of the Origin of Religion'. After going through this unit, one will be able to know that philosophy of religion draws the attention of the anthropologists and archaeologists in different areas in the field of primitive religions. Anthropologists and archaeologists did tremendous service to the students who work in the field of religion. Students, working in the field of religion, often find the most fundamental question asked regarding the earliest form of religion. In this unit an attempt is being made to explain the different theories of the origin of religion.

The sixth unit of this block is 'Freud's Theory of the Origin of Religion'. This unit introduces you to Sigmund Freud's (1856-1939) theory about the origin of religion. Freud was the founder of psychoanalytic school. He was the psychologist from Vienna, Austria. Freud was a figure comparable in importance to Galileo, Darwin and Einstein. Freud devoted a good deal of attention to the question of the origin and nature of religion. He presented the most controversial natural history of religion. During the latter part of the twentieth century Freud shocked not only the field of medicine but society at large with his startling new analysis of the human personality.

The seventh unit is 'Revelation and Faith, Spirituality.' This unit introduces you to a very important topic of philosophy of religion, that is, revelation, faith and spirituality. Virtually every major religion of the world finds a necessary place for revelation, faith and spirituality. In traditional Jewish-Christian and Islamic theism, if God is transcendent and 'other' it is not to be taken for granted that God is accessible to unaided human reason. God is not necessarily an object to be 'discovered'. Further, if God is omnipotent or almighty, it may be the case that God Himself will reveal where and when God maybe known.

The eight unit of this course and the first unit of this block is 'Some Basic Characteristics of Christianity'. After going through this unit one will be able to discuss the teachings of Jesus Christ on Christianity and will be able to analyze Christianity as a missionary religion. Again by reading this unit one will find the fundamental characteristics of Christianity and will be able to describe the concept of Trinity of Christianity.

The ninth unit of this course is 'Islam: Five Pillars'. This unit introduces to you that through many scholars say that Islam is nothing but Judaism added with a missionary zeal, yet it has a number of distinctive features. Being a Semitic religion, it has been influenced by Zoroastrianism, Judaism and Christianity. But in spite of these influences, Islam has many features of its own. In respect of the conception of God, the ideas of heaven and hell etc., Islam resembles Christianity and Judaism, but Islam prescribes a distinctive way of life to its followers, and that distinguishes it from other religions.

The tenth unit of this course is, 'Hinduism, God, Man, And Liberation'. After going through this unit one will be able to know that the core of Hinduism consists of holistic nature of the Vedas, the Upanishads and the scriptures including the two great epics. In Hinduism we also find the Tantras dealing with the

esoteric aspects of the spiritual quest and the different systems of oriental philosophy. Hinduism which is one of the most ancient living religions of the world make an enquiry on wisdom which ends with the words 'Tat tvam asi'—'that thou art', meaning that the Atman is essentially Brahman.

The eleventh unit of this course is 'The Problem of Evil'. After going through this unit you will be able to explain the concept of evil and will be able to discuss the existence of Evil. Again you will be able to describe evil from different viewpoints and will also be able to explain why Evil doers and Sufferings exist.

The twelfth unit of this course is 'Proofs for the Existence of God: Causal and Teleological. After going through this unit you will be able to explain Causal proofs for the existence of God and will be able to discuss Aristotle's First Cause Argument. This unit will again describe and discuss Russell's view, Thomas Aquinas' view and Thomist's view. By reading this unit one will be able to explain some steps of cosmological argument and will be able to discuss critically the cosmological argument. Again explanation of Teleological proofs for the existence of God, Plato's view on teleology proof, Kant's View on teleological proof, Henry More's View on teleological proof and F.R. Tennant's View are also incorporated in this unit.

The thirteenth unit of this course is 'Proofs for the Existence of God: Ontological and Moral Argument'. This unit will explain ontological proofs for the existence of God and will discuss St. Anselm's View and Descartes' view. After going through this unit you will be able to discuss critically ontological argument and will be able to explain the moral argument for the existence of God. This unit also discusses Kant's view and Indian Conception God (Moral Argument)

The fourteenth unit is 'The Symbolic Nature of Religious Language'. Language has occupied a very important place in the lives of human beings. Language may be defined as something that differentiates human beings from other animals since the former has the ability to communicate through language while the later does not have that ability.