PG PH S4-03 (DSC)

TWO YEAR MASTER'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

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CONTENTS

		Pages
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	**9-19**
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	**20-32**
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	**33-42**
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	**43-50**
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	**51-60**
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	**61-67**
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.	**68-75**
UNIT 8 :	**Some Basic Characteristics of Christianity** Christianity and its development, Christianity and its fundamental Characteristics, Christianity and the concept of Trinity	**76-85**
UNIT 9 :	**Islam: Five Pillars** The salient features of Islam, Five pillars of Islam, Pilgrimage(Hajj)	**86-97**

UNIT 10 : Hinduism, God, Man, and Liberation **98-114**
Sources of Hinduism, Characteristics of Hinduism, Hinduism and Law of Karma, Hinduism and Moksha

UNIT 11: The Problem of Evil **115-125**
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 **126-143**
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 **144-154**
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 **155-162**
The problem of religious language, Various approaches to the problem of religious language, Symbolic nature of religious language

UNIT 15 : Religions Tolerance **163-170**
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. First unit of the course is 'Philosophy of Religion: Its Nature and Scope'. This unit will discuss the relation between Philosophy and Religion. This will again analyse 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 is not 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 realised.

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 analyse 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.

The fifteenth unit of this course is, ‘Religions Tolerance’. This unit introduces to you the concept of religious consciousness. Religious tolerance is the condition of accepting or permitting others’ religious belief and practices which disagree with one’s own. The concept of religious tolerance can be understood clearly only with reference to religious intolerance. When any religion claims that it possesses the whole truth and also the only right method of contemplating and worshipping the Almighty,

While going through this course you will come across some boxes which are put on the left side or right side of the text. These boxes will give us the meanings of some words and concepts within the text. Apart from this, there will be some broad and short questions included under Activity and Check Your Progress in every unit. Activities will increase our thinking capacity because questions put in Activity are not directly derived from the text. But answers to the short questions are put in the section Answers to Check Your Progress. Besides, there are some text-related questions which are put in Model Questions. These questions will help you in selecting and mastering probable topics for the examination so that you can prepare for the examination with confidence.

UNIT 1 : PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION: ITS NATURE AND SCOPE

UNIT STRUCTURE

1.1 Learning Objectives
1.2 Introduction
1.3 Nature of Philosophy of Religion
1.4 Different Philosophical Approaches
1.5 Distinguish Philosophy of Religion and Science of Religion
1.6 Philosophy of Religion and Psychology of Religion
1.7 Scope of Philosophy of Religion
1.8 Let us Sum up
1.9 Further Reading
1.10 Answers to Check Your Progress
1.11 Model Questions

1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to :

- discuss the relation between Philosophy and Religion
- analyse the methods of Philosophy of religion
- describe the nature of science of religion
- explain the scope of Philosophy of religion
- discuss the problems related to Philosophy of religion

1.2 INTRODUCTION

It is been known to us that the word 'Philosophy' literally means 'love of wisdom' while the word 'religion', on the other hand, derivatively means 'a principle of unification and harmonisation' (i.e. to bind). Philosophy, when seriously taken into consideration influences life through wisdom and a whole human personality. Philosophy studies the reality from rational standpoint. It studies man and his relation towards this universe. Moreover, it investigates the nature of matter, soul, human life and God. Philosophy also investigates the inter-relationship between matter and life, life and God etc. Religion has developed a faith in a super-human power or powers, usually called God or by many other names like Ishwar, Allah etc., etc. It is a popular belief that this superhuman power controls and guide human life and destiny. Consequently, the sentiments of devotion, dependency, love, reverence, self-surrender have developed in human behavior. We can see that all the living religions of the world are the expressions of human effort to understand the relation between man and God.

Philosophy and Religion have common purpose in relation to man and his society. But Philosophy and Religion are not identical. Religion is a matter of emotion that touches

human soul and therefore practical in nature while philosophy is a matter of intellectual understanding and therefore theoretical in nature.

Cecero described philosophy as, “the director of our lives, friend of virtue and enemy to vice”. On the other hand, W. T. Stace defines religion “as the hunger of the soul for the impossible”. Inspite of the difference between philosophy and religion, both are complementary to each other. Both philosophy and religion have one nobler perspective i.e. to elevate both man and society for a better understanding in the art of living both within ourselves and also with others living in a society. Both philosophy and religion help man to lead a life of peace and happiness by following the path of morality. Again, religion takes the help of human imaginations and therefore different images and symbols of God’s existence have been developed by different religions of the world. Philosophy, on the other hand, is fundamentally speculative in nature and makes a critical analysis of religious experiences. Therefore, to the most fundamental issue, we should all agree that the philosophical study of all religions constitute the nature, scope and subject-matter of the philosophy of religion.

1.3 NATURE OF PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

When we contemplate on the nature of philosophy of religion, we can highlight that its study is devoted ‘to seek unity through diversity of different religions’. Again, the term ‘philosophy of religion’ is popularly associated with the understanding of religion from an intellectual and rational stand-point. Religion when studied from the perspective of philosophy of religion, is not accepted as a dogmatic, irrational, superstitious belief in God. Religion in this rational study is considered the intellectual and logical argument of our religious beliefs and practices. Philosophy of religion studies religion as a process of being and becoming. Moreover philosophy of religion as an intellectual analysis of religious experiences understands religion as a process of realisation. Here Religion becomes possible only in the super-sensuous plane. You should always remember that philosophical thought is always rational and therefore, logical. So when such rational analysis is related with our religious experiences like, prayer, faith, worship, God, immortality of the soul, heaven and hell, every concept is explained not from the sectarian or institutional perspective but from the standpoint of essential reality. Philosophy of religion therefore, concludes that ‘All religion is one’.

It will become clear to you when you study the observation made by Hegel. He says that the ‘truth of religion’ and ‘the object of philosophical inquiry’ are same.

The philosophy of religion therefore, studies the religious teachings from the philosophical standpoint. It is not true that only theologians and philosophers study philosophy of religion. Even the atheist and the agnostic thinkers study philosophy of religion. You will be interested to study philosophy of religion as a branch of philosophy and not as a branch of theology. Theologians study religious experiences only from a specific religious standpoint. The word theology stands for a system of beliefs about the world. It also explains uncritically problems like the creation of the world and its relation with God. In theology the center of religion is ‘cult’. Any cult is explained in reference to the myths associated with that particular religion.

Theology is tied down to some external authority such as the Bible, the Church, or dogmas. A theologian never limits the validity of the subject matter of philosophy of religion rather broadens its out-come and enters into the domain of the subject-matter of philosophy of religion.

Kant has critically examined the interdisciplinary nature of philosophy of religion and states that 'thoughts without content are empty, perceptions without concentrations are blind'. it can therefore be stated that 'a philosophy of religion without history is empty, a history of religion without philosophy is blind'.



LET US KNOW

Being : Everything real and nothing unreal belongs to the domain of being. This concept has a central place in philosophy from Parmenides to Heidegger.

Becoming : This concept deals with change or unreal things. As for instance, Heraclitus is the chief advocate of the concept of becoming**.**



ACTIVITY - I

- What does philosophy of religion try to explain? Discuss.
  ……
  ……
- Is philosophy of religion a branch of theology? Discuss.
  ……
  ……

1.4 DIFFERENT APPROACHES OF PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

An analysis of the philosophical approach to religion shows that it has four distinguishable but interrelated aspects. They are namely,

1. Phenomenological aspect
2. Epistemological aspect
3. Metaphysical or Ontological aspect
4. Axiological aspect

Phenomenological aspect*:* In this aspect philosophy of religion spreads out a number of sciences that deal with specific aspects of religion. In other words, in its phenomenological aspect philosophy of religion is connected with religious phenomena. It studies the origin, growth, development and forms of religious experiences ideas and beliefs. It is an empirical study of religion.

Epistemological aspect*:* In this aspect philosophy of religion is connected with nature, source and validity of religious knowledge or experience and faith.

Metaphysical aspect: Religious experience claims to bring the finite individual into communion with a super-sensible reality that is also the world of spirituality. This Metaphysical aspect of philosophy of religion is also known as *the speculative theory of religion*. It is concerned with the ultimate reality and with the ultimate truth and justification

of religion. It has to examine the different conceptions of reality, the destiny of man and the problems of evils and freedom.

***Axiological aspect**:* Philosophy of religion has an evaluative aspect. It is not merely a matter of empirical proof. It also seeks to evaluate religion in the light of its ultimate ground. Philosophy of religion is not merely a factual study of religion but is also an attempt at appraising the meaning and significance of religion in the whole framework of experience.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: What does religion means?

.....

.....

Q 2: What are the interrelated aspects of philosophy of religion?

.....

.....

Q 3: What is science of religion?

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.....

Q 4: Mention two names who has contributed to the psychology of religion.

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Q 5: Who describes philosophy as “the director of our lives, friend of virtue and enemy to vice.”

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Q 6: What is theology? (Answer in about 30 words)

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.....

Q 7: State whether the following statements are True or False

a) W.T. Stace defines religion “as the hunger of the souls for the impossible’’ (True/False)

b) A philosophy of religion without history is empty, a history of religion without philosophy is blind. (True/False)

Q8: What is the epistemological aspect of philosophy of religion? (Answer in about 20 words)

.....

.....

1.5 DISTINCTION BETWEEN PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION AND SCIENCE OF RELIGION

The philosophical approach to religion is distinguished from science of religion. A science of religion is a systematic, empirical study of religious phenomena. It is a positive

study of religion as a fact of experience with reference to a particular aspect of religion. As there are different aspects and standpoints, we do not have a single science but sciences of religion. All the sciences dealing with religion are collectively called *phenomenology of religion*.

Do you know what Phenomenology of religion studies? It includes the Historical-Anthropological study of religion, sociology of religion, psychology of religion and the comparative study of religion. There are special sciences dealing with religion. They have the same subject matter viz.—religion as an experience of fact and they follow similar methods. But they emphasize different aspect of the same subject matter.

Thus what we call Phenomenology or science of religion has certain important characteristics. **First**, it is factual or empirical or positive in character. **Secondly**, as it is positive it has nothing to do with the axiological aspect of religion. It is concerned with religion as it is and not with the significance of religion in the context of experience as a whole. **Thirdly**, it raises no epistemological questions concerning the validity of religious knowledge. **Fourthly,** it asks no ontological question concerning the relation of religious experience to ultimate reality. Hence Philosophy of religion is to be distinguished from science of religion.

The distinction between the two becomes clear when we deal at some length with the different branches of science of religion.

One of the main tasks of Philosophy of religion is to explain the nature and formation of religion. It has to show what religion is and what purpose it fulfills in the life of the individual and of the society? But the nature and formation of religion can be explained only when a careful investigation is made into its historical and psychological origin and development. If we can learn from the anthropologists, the historian, the psychologists how and why man became religious as well as how and why religion developed from its crude beginning to its highest form, we can hope to arrive at a solution of the problems concerning the nature and purpose of religion. The Historical- Anthropological study of religion is concerned with the historical or rather pre-historical origin of religion. It seeks to answer such questions as the following:

1) How and when did religion first appear in space and time?
2) What was the most rudimentary form of religion?
3) How did the religious nature of man first express itself?

While the Historical-Anthropological investigation of religion supplies data to philosophy of religion the two approaches are different. In the first place the historian is not concerned with the truths of religious statements while the philosophers have a genuine interest in the truth of such statements. What religion has said is a historical issue but the truth of what has been said is a philosophical problem. Thus, there is an epistemological difference between Philosophy of religion and the Historical-Anthropological of religion. Secondly, Philosophy of religion seeks to discover the meaning of religion in human experience. It is concerned with the evaluation of what Hocking calls 'the meaning of God in human experience'. Historians never judge the reports of their own investigations regarding religious statements. But the value of religious claims is a philosopher's problem.

Sociology of religion is another science which deals with religion. It is not philosophy of religion. The sociologists like the historians and the anthropologists are indifferent to religious claims to truth.

1.6 PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION AND PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION

Another branch of phenomenology of religion is psychology of religion. The most important early work in this field is **William James**' 'Varieties of Religious Experience'. James wants to show that religious experience can be studied in the same fashion as other types of experience. Another psychologist who has made an important contribution to the psychology of religion is **Freud**.

You will be interested to know that Psychology of religion seeks to answer the question of origin of religion. Again, Psychology of religion seeks to discover the psyche or the inner conditions. Psychology of religion is concerned with several questions like: What are the factors of man's inner life which account for his being religious? What is there in his mental constitution that induces him to seek satisfaction in religion? What are the psychical factors that account for the development of religion from its crude beginning to its highest religious account?

Like every other Philosophy, Philosophy, of religion collects its materials from among the facts of experience. But the facts of religion are different from facts in the sphere of mechanics or of biology. Facts of religion are expressions of conscious mind but those in the sphere of biology or mechanics not so. You should always remember that Religious Phenomena are reactions of the mind to the experienced world. Interpretation of religious phenomena is important without the help of psychology. Any attempt to read the meaning of religious phenomena must involve some knowledge of different psychic elements. A general conception of the nature and meaning of religion through its development leads us to regard that development as a conscious expression of the human mind seeking satisfaction for its needs. At every stage of its development, religion bears the mark of the human mind. The unifying principle which underlies the multiplicity of religious phenomena is the psychical nature of man. Thus, Philosophy of religion cannot do without psychology of religion.

Psychology of religion is important because we must know the facts of religious experience and how they work before we understand their meaning. In studying religious facts we cannot ignore the part played by the mind. Rites and acts of worship are religious facts only because they express man's feelings, beliefs, desires and purposes. The psychologists study religion from an inner perspective. Such a study is of great importance because religious facts are influenced by man's inner or psychical life. To construct a philosophy of religion apart from psychology is to try to explain without knowing the thing we are explaining.

You can conclude from the above discussion that philosophy of religion has intimate connection with psychology of religion. Psychology of religion is an empirical and inductive science. It starts with careful observation of facts and shows they illustrate laws and general principles of psychic life. It tries to show religion as a product of the mind and reveals the working of the mind. The purely empirical and inductive character of psychology of religion, distinguishes it from philosophy of religion which as empirical-speculative character. Secondly, like the historians the psychologists differ from the philosophers at the epistemological point .As a science, psychology of religion is not concerned with truth

of religious claim but philosophy of religion seeks to determine the ultimate value and significance of religion.

1.7 SCOPE OF PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

The scope of philosophy of religion is very wide. Its wideness depends on the intellectual and logical interpretation of religious experience. Philosophy includes philosophy of religion insofar as philosophical thinking of religion is concerned. You should remember that philosophy is highly intellectual and argumentative and logical; we find that both the deductive and inductive methods are applied for the study of philosophy of religion. The conclusions of the philosophy of religion are analytical and are free from human personal sentiments. The philosophers who study the religious practices and scriptures often take the help of figures, symbols and analogies so that the conclusions are universally accepted. While taking the help of the method of synthesis philosophers always provide the methods for the study of different religions. This is the reason perhaps why philosophical conclusions are more cognitive in nature. Understanding and reason help philosophers to analyze religious instinct, blind-faith, religious impulses, superstitions more appropriately and accurately.

Philosophy of religion includes within its subject-matter the study of different living religions of the world. It also includes the study of different primitive religions of the ancestors. Thus religion is understood from a philosophical foundation and henceforth religion here becomes a way of life and living experience.

Philosophy of religion is more dependent on the philosophy of Idealism. Idealistic philosophers of both East and West have devoted themselves to making religion free from the clutches of mere theological dogmatism. Now you should understand the meaning of 'theology'. The word theology is 'used to denote a system of beliefs about the world and its creation, man and God accepted uncritically as the ultimate and unquestionable truth'. Therefore, you will find that theological approach to religion is dogmatic in nature. It is interesting to know that in theology we find cult as the centre of religious understanding. Cults are explained in reference to legends and myths of different religions. Theology always develops from the study of the development of different historic religions. Thus, philosophy of religion understands religion from the speculative standpoint. This is the essence of philosophy of religion.



ACTIVITY

- Is philosophy of religion and theology identical? Discuss.
  ……
  ……

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 9 : Fill in the blanks

a) The term 'philosophy of religion' is associated with the ……. study of ……..
b) The ……. approach to religion is distinguished from ……. of religion.
c) Philosophy of religion is more dependent on the philosophy of……
d) Philosophy of religion understands religion from the ……standpoint.

Q10: State whether the following statements are True or False

a) Philosophy of religion cannot do without psychology of religion. (True/False)
b) The psychologists study religion from inner perspectives. (True/False)
c) Psychology of religion is not an empirical and inductive science. (True/False)
d) Philosophy of religion never seeks to determine the ultimate value and significance of religion. (True/False)
e) Cults are explained in reference to legends and myths of different religions. (True/False)
f) The wideness of philosophy of religion depends on the intellectual and logical interpretation of religious experience. (True/False)
g) Theology is not tied down to some external authority such as the Bible, the Church, or dogma. (True/False)
h) Philosophy of religion never concludes that 'All religion is one'. (True/False)

Q11: State two important characteristics of science of religion or phenomenology.

.....
.....

Q12: State one branch of phenomenology of religion.

.....
.....

Q13: Does psychology of religion differ from philosophy of religion? (Answer in about 70 words)

.....
.....

1.8 LET US SUM UP

The main points discussed in this unit are:

- Philosophy of religion is the branch of philosophy that tries to understand and evaluate the beliefs and practices of religions.
- The term philosophy of religion refers to the scientific study of religion
- Philosophy of religion becomes a branch of philosophy in so far as it studies religion from the perspective of philosophical thinking.
- Philosophy of religion is the rational analysis of different religious experiences.

- Subject-matter of philosophy of religion includes the nature of religion and belief, religious faith as a form of belief and nature of religious experience, the existence of God, life after death and law of karma as conceived by various religious traditions.
- Theology has come from the Greek word 'theos' which means 'God' and 'logos' which means 'the study of'.
- Theology refers to the ordered systematic study and interpretation of God's existence, nature and attributes, the revelations, doctrines and beliefs about God. It also studies the relation between God and man and God and the universe.
- Philosophy of religion is not dependent on religious teachings. Therefore, it is not a part of religion.
- Philosophy of religion is always guided by reason and intellect. Rationalism is its fundamental nature.
- Philosophy of religion takes the help of the doctrine of idealism and explains spiritualism as the essence of all religions.
- Philosophy of religion explains the unity of all religions in-spite of its differences.
- Philosophy of religion is depended on the foundation of philosophical argumentations and principles.
- Philosophy of religion studies the values of man. Humanism often becomes the universal trait of every living religions of the world.

1.9 FURTHER READING

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1.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1 : Religion means a principle of unification and harmonization

Ans to Q No 2 : The four interrelated aspects are:

i) Phenomenological aspect
ii) Epistemological aspect
iii) Metaphysical aspect
iv) Axiological aspect

Ans to Q No 3 : A science of religion is a systematic, empirical study of religious phenomena.

Ans to Q No 4 : William James and Freud

Ans to Q No 5 : Cecero

Ans to Q No 6 : Theology stands for a system of beliefs about the world. It also explains uncritically problems like creation of the world and its relation with God.

Ans to Q No 7 : a)True b)True

Ans to Q No 8 : Philosophy of religion is connected with nature, source and validity of religious knowledge or experience and faith.

Ans to Q No 9 : a) Scientific b) Philosophical, Science c) Idealism d) Speculative

Ans to Q No 10 : a) True b) True c) True d) True e) True e) True f) False g) True

Ans to Q No 11 : First, it is factual or empirical or positive in character. **Secondly**, as it is positive it has nothing to do with the axiological aspect of religion. It is concerned with religion as it is and not with the significance of religion in the context of experience as a whole.

Ans to Q No 12 : Psychology of religion

Ans to Q No 13 : The purely empirical and inductive character of psychology of religion, distinguishes it from philosophy of religion which indicates an empirical-speculative character. Secondly, like historians, psychologists differ from philosophers at the epistemological point. As a science, psychology of religion does not deal with truth of religious claim but philosophy of religion seeks to determine the ultimate value and significance of religion.

1.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very short questions

Q 1: What do you mean by religion?

Q 2: Who says that religion is 'the hunger of the soul for the impossible?"

Q 3: What is theology?

Q 4: Mention two important characteristics of science of religion.

Q 5: Who are the advocates of Science of religion?

B) Short Questions (Answer in about 150-200 words)

Q 1 : Philosophy and religion are complementary to each other. Explain briefly.

Q 2 : Briefly comment on the nature of philosophy of religion.

Q 3 : What are the different aspects of philosophy of religion?

Q 4 : What are the differences between philosophy of religion and science of religion? Explain briefly.

Q 5 : What are the basic questions of psychology of religion. Explain briefly.

Q 6 : Briefly comment on the scope of philosophy of religion.

C) Long Questions (Answer in about 300-500 words)

Q 1 : Explain the nature of philosophy of religion.

Q 2 : Explain the scope of philosophy of religion.

Q 3 : Can you explain how philosophy of religion differs from theology?

Q 4 : Is philosophy of religion and science of religion identical?

Q 5 : Explain the four interrelated philosophical approach to religion.

Q 6 : Explain the fundamental task of philosophy of religion

Q 7 : How Kant has critically examined the interdisciplinary nature of philosophy of religion?

Q 8 : What are the important characteristics of Phenomenology or science of religion?

UNIT 2: NATURE OF RELIGION, DIMENSIONS OF RELIGION

UNIT STRUCTURE

2.1 Learning Objectives
2.2 Introduction
2.3 Meaning of Religion
2.4 Nature of Religion
2.5 Religion and Morality
2.6 Religion and Art
2.7 Religion and Science
2.8 Religion and Philosophy
2.9 Dimensions of Religion
2.10 Let us Sum Up
2.11 Further Reading
2.12 Model Questions

2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to

- describe the meaning of Religion
- explain the nature of Religion
- explain the relation of Religion with Morality, Art, Science and Philosophy.
- discuss the dimensions of Religion.

2.2 INTRODUCTION

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. It is the most profound form of human activity. In a sense, as philosopher Comte admitted, religion embraces the whole of existence, and the history of religion resumes the entire history of human development. Max Muller also admitted that the true history of man is the history of religion.

2.3 MEANING OF RELIGION

Literally speaking, religion is a principle of social unification and harmonization. The term 'religion' is derived from the Latin word 'religare' which means 'to bind'. So etymologically, religion means a binding of man to something. However, Religion is not

supposed to bind people by chains but by laws, rules and injunctions, so that they would not degenerate, and would be able to lead a spiritually significant life. Thus religion in its correct form consists of principles and injunctions. The Sanskrit equivalent of religion is 'Dharma'. The term 'Dharma' is derived from the root 'dhri' meaning 'to support'. Thus dharma is the supporting principle of one's being, and the existence of the universe.

The term 'Religion' in general may be taken to mean man's conscious aspiration for the attainment of some kind of infinity intuitively felt. This statement about religion includes all the three aspects of man's nature, viz. – thinking, feeling and willing as involved in religion. On the other hand, by 'religions' we mean the specific ways which an individual follows for the attainment of religious goal. In fact, all other religions viz., Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Jainism, etc., may be called religions.

2.4 NATURE OF RELIGION

Three essential elements of religion is concerned with the nature of religion. These three elements are reason (thinking) feeling and willing. As to the nature of religion, the question that arises here is : What essentially is religion? The issue of the essential nature of religion may be approached in two ways. We may ask what religion is in itself, without reference to anything other than itself. And then we may seek to elucidate its inner nature by defining its relations to other forms of activity. How especially is it to be distinguished from certain forms of life and culture that seems most akin to it, such as morality, art, science, philosophy?

Religion in history has had such diverse and even contradictory meanings that any attempt to express its essential character seems foredoomed to failure. This is especially true in view of the perplexing changes and evolutions through which religion has passed. Yet surely religion, has some characteristics which are universal and unique, otherwise the word "religion" would have no assignable meaning.

It is not easy to define religion in one sentence. The attempts to define religion have been many and varied. Different people draw different definitions of religion. Some definitions restrict religion too much to one aspect of the psychical nature of man. Of these some make religion a matter of intellect. Hegelians, while defining religion, emphasise the element of reason in it. Religion, as Hegel declares, is "the knowledge possessed by the finite mind of its nature as absolute mind", or as he elsewhere puts it, looking at the matter from the divine side, it is "the Divine Spirit's knowledge of itself through the mediation of the finite spirit". It is thus a form of knowledge, the knowledge of the Absolute Idea or absolute knowledge, involving the ultimate unity of the finite and the infinite. According to E.B.Tylor, "Religion is the belief in spiritual beings." Max Muller says "Religion is a mental faculty or disposition which enables man to apprehend the Infinite".

Others define religion in terms of feelings or emotion. The most influential of all such definitions is that of Schleiermacher, "The essence of religion consists in a feeling of absolute dependence on God". According to Schleiermacher pure religion is pure feeling i.e., feeling disconnected from thought on the one hand, and from morality or action on the other? It has nothing to do with knowledge, quite apart from it, its nature can be known. According to Schleiermacher, religion is a warm, intimate, immediate awareness

of the Infinite in the finite, the Eternal in the temporal, a sense of dependence on the Whole.

It can be pointed out to Schleiermacher that the feeling element in religion can never be mere feeling. The feeling must have some idea content, and the feeling cannot be so divorced from the idea as to make the former essential and the latter non-essential. Moreover, to speak of the feeling of dependence on God or the Infinite is to give the feeling an idea-content, however vague. So religion cannot be mere or pure feeling.

Some other people have defined religion in terms of the moral will, practically identifying the religious with the moral consciousness. The classical instance of this in philosophy is Kant's definition of religion as "the recognition of all our duties as divine commandments". A popular variation of this, but with the addition of an undefined emotion (which Kant rigorously excluded) is found in Matthew Arnold's dictum "Religion is morality touched with emotion".

In Kant's conception of religion, there is no room left for the mystic experience of fellowship with God, prayer, worship, reverence, which is so characteristic of religious experience. We must bear in mind that religion does not merely occupy a part of man's nature, but is the reaction of his whole being to what he regards as superior beings (or a Superior Being) on whom his destiny depends.

Religion is declared to be a matter of belief and faith, not of reason. As German thinker Auguste Sabatier has said, "Religion is an affair of the heart not of reason and is perpetually born out of the living needs of the human spirit. The soul hampered and oppressed by the limitations of its material environment is driven to seek deliverance by an act of faith and through faith it wins the good it seeks."

Religion involves thought activity as well as beliefs and values. Religion is not simply worship or rituals. R.Flint observes – "Religion is man's belief in a Being or Beings, mightier than himself and inaccessible to his senses, but not indifferent to his sentiment and actions, with the feelings and practices which flow from such belief."

All these definitions given above contain an element of truth, but they are all one-sided. They are oversimplifying religion, which is a complex phenomenon. Religion includes thought, will and feeling and yet it is more than all these. In the words of Sri Aurobindo, "The inmost essence of religion …… is the search of God and finding of God. Its aspiration is to discover the Infinite, the Absolute, the One Divine who is all these things and yet no abstraction but a Being."

From the above discussion we may sum up our view of the nature of religion in the following manner. Religion involves both a subject and an object. On the subjective side it includes all man's psychical functions, feeling, will and thought; on the objective side it has reference to a trans-subjective divine reality. Religion is not mere belief in a Suprasensible Reality as the seat and source of all values. It is still more the emotional response and volitional reaction to that Reality, the adjustment of one's whole life so as to bring it into unity and harmony with such Reality.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Fill in the Blanks

(a) The term religion is derived from the Latin word _____

Q 2: What according to Hegel is the definition of religion?

.....

.....

Q 3: What is the essence of religion according to Schleiermacher?

.....

.....

2.5 RELIGION AND MORALITY

Morality is that aspect of life which is popularly and rightly regarded as nearest to religion. It is rightly demanded that the religious man should be a morally good man. The term 'Morality' may be taken to mean the system of principles by which we judge over actions as good or bad, right or wrong. The term 'Religion' may be taken to mean man's conscious aspiration for the attainment of some kind of infinity intuitively felt. As religion is man's conscious aspiration for the attainment of an ideal, it naturally involves actions. So it is the business of morality to judge these actions as good or bad. Hence, wherever Religion is involved, there morality also is involved. It belongs to the nature of man to be religious as well as moral.

Now the question is what precisely is the relation between Religion and Morality? The relation of Morality and Religion has been widely discussed and many different views have been forwarded. There is a controversy as to the question whether religion precedes morality or whether morality precedes religion. According to one view, morality comes from religion, while according to another view, it is religion that comes from morality. Again there are some who hold that morality and religion comes from two different sources. Still another view identifies religion with morality. Regarding the exact relationship between religion and morality, there is no generally accepted view.

According to Descartes, Locke and Paley, religion is the source of morality. Morality arises out of religion. Religion precedes and produces morality. All our moral notions of right and wrong, good and bad conduct, sense of duty and obligation can be traced back to the religious belief in the existence of God as Creator and Moral Governor of the Universe. What God commands is right and what God forbids is wrong. In other words, God creates morality at His Will. Acts are right or wrong, simply because they are commanded or forbidden by Him.

But this view, that morality comes from religion, cannot be accepted owing to certain difficulties. If moral rightness or wrongness depends on the arbitrary Will of God, then no action can be taken to be intrinsically right or wrong. Moreover, there are many religions which do not believe in the existence of God, yet they believe in morality. So if God is not necessary for religion, it is doubtful whether it is necessary for morality.

The view that religion comes from morality have been upheld by some eminent thinkers like Kant, Martineau, Mathew Arnold etc. They all believe that morality is the source of religion. According to Kant, morality leads to religion. Morality can have value in life when virtue leads to happiness. For, bringing about this, we have to pre-suppose a God who is regarded as postulate of morality. Morality is thus the basis of religion.

According to Martineau, it is obligatory upon us to do what is right. Obligation means obligation to some higher authority. The ultimate source of moral authority is God. We are under moral obligation to God to do what is right and to refrain from doing what is wrong.

It is a fact, that morality and religion are very closely connected. But this does not imply that one is dependent on the other.

There is another view that traces religion and morality to two different sources, but somehow, joined at their later stage. Religion originates in the emotion of fear. That is, fear of some mysterious powers lying concealed behind the mysterious events of Nature. Religion is believed to have arose out of man's attempt to please these powers and win their favour. And morality arose of out man's awareness of social utility. Man appears to have found that certain other actions lead to happiness, while certain other actions lead to disharmony, discord in society. As religious and moral actions were found to be useful to society and the individual, so they came to be combined. This is how morality and religion came to be closely associated in man's life.

The above view however fails to explain the real relation between morality and religion. It ignores the essential nature of both morality and religion. Morality is useful to society no doubt, but it is wrong to maintain that all our moral sense of duty and obligation are the outcome of the sense of social utility. Similarly, a clear analysis of religion will show that fear cannot explain our idea of God as an Infinite Being.

The view that religion is identical with morality has been upheld by R.B.Braithwaite. He holds that religion and morality are essentially one. The only difference is that, in the case of religion in addition to the intention to subscribe to a moral policy, one entertain stories. So, apart from stories religion is nothing but morality.

But such identification between religion and morality cannot be accepted. Morality or religion is not merely the intention to behave in a certain way. There must be something more than mere intention.

The true view seems to be that neither morality precedes religion nor religion precedes morality. They are not identical nor completely different. If we enquire into the real source of morality and religion, we will find that both arise from a common matrix. They both are concerned with the Absolute Good. But religion is more comprehensive inasmuch as it includes all other values, the Beautiful and the True as well as Good.

In short, we can explain religion and morality from our awareness of Infinity. This also explains the close relationship between morality and religion. A really religious man will be moral, and a really moral man will be religious. Religion is necessary to morality and morality is necessary to religion. Religion without morality is blind superstition. Religion elevates morality and leads it to perfection. Morality culminates in religion, and religion finds its expression in morality. Thus morality and religion are very closely related.

Hence from the above discussion, it follows that religion and morality are partners in the spiritual enterprise of human life. They are very intimately connected and once cannot be perfect without the other.

2.6 RELIGION AND ART

Religion is a holistic response of man to Absolute Reality. Hence, it has included all the three mental processes of cognition, conation and affection. Art is a superb expression of man's quest for the ideal, chiefly of ideal Beauty. Its function is to embody beauty in sensuous forms, colours, and sounds.

Our main questions are: Can religion be completely independent of art? Or can art be pursued independently of religion?

Religion can never be completely independent of art, for art includes a great many cultural expressions without which no civilized life is possible. Art includes music, poetry, dance, literature, sculpture, architecture and so on. Religion cannot continue without some sort of art. Even a mosque is built with its own beautiful domes, minarets and lattice work.

Our next question: Can art flourish without religion i.e. pursued independently of religion? Art without religion means art bereft of moral and spiritual values. The function of art is to express the beautiful and if the meaning of beauty is essentially spiritual, we may expect to find an intimate relationship between art and religion. Some of the most inspiring pieces of poetry, sculpture, archaeological remains have been sanctified by religion. From the earliest times, religion and art have walked hand in hand.

But religion and art have to be distinguished from one another. Art cannot be restricted to religion. Art cannot remain confined to the singing of praises of gods. In modern times, religion and art have somewhat been estranged from each other. There is a demand of art itself for autonomy, expressed in the cry "Art for art's sake;" the claim that art in its creative effort has to be judged by its own standards alone and not by moral or religious standards.

We may agree with the artistic demand for autonomy provided that it is relative and not absolute autonomy. There can be no ultimate disharmony between the three values, the Good , the Beautiful, and the True. True art is essentially religious, though it cannot take the place of religion. For reality is beautiful as well as good. Religion needs art. Likewise art needs religion, which alone can lead man to the ultimate source of all creative inspiration. Thus art and religion are interdependent to each other.

2.7 RELIGION AND SCIENCE

The term 'Science' in its widest permissible sense includes any systematic knowledge of any intellectual enquiry. But science as commonly understood is a systematic enquiry into some particular department of the world. It is thus a study of a definite section or portion of the universe which includes Nature.

Religion consists in a belief in an ever living God who is the Creator, Sustainer and Moral Governor of the world together with the feelings of awe, reverence, trust, love and the voluntary acts of devotion, dedication and worship. Religion is concerned with personal and social values. It is subjective and normative.

Both Science and religion represent man's quest for Reality. They both have certain attitudes or methods of approach to Reality. The three spiritual values are Truth, Beauty and Goodness. Science is concerned mainly with Truth. But religion is concerned with all the three spiritual values viz., Truth, Beauty and Goodness. Science is objective and impersonal.

The question whether science is opposed to religion can best be answered if we examine carefully the precise relation between science and religion. Let us consider the points of similarity and the points of difference between these two.

- **Similarity between Religion and Science:**

History shows that in the earliest stages of their development religion and science were identical. Even in the glorious days of Greece, science and religious speculation went together. In the middle ages pioneers of science such as Copernicus and Roger Bacon were monks.

- **Difference between Religion and Science:**

It was the Church which took the task of separating religion from science. In the 17th and 18th Century, a sort of tacit compromise between religion and science was reached which allotted the physical world to science. Religious and Spiritual world remained with Religion. It became almost axiomatic that science was in opposition to religion.

- **Harmonious relation between Religion and Science:**

But today with an increase in knowledge of the limitations of both science and religion there is little inclination on the part of either to seek matters of controversy. Science and religion may represent different aspects of man's quest for Reality; but there can no more be a conflict between science and religion. What is taught in the name of science, and equally what is taught in the name of religion may conflict, but between science and religion as such, there cannot be any dispute. Conflict between science and religion is only possible, either when religion abandons its own proper domain and seeks to give a scientific or factual explanation of the world, or when science leaves its own special territory and turns its own limited viewpoint into a materialistic or naturalistic philosophy of reality as a whole. Thus, there is a harmonious relation between science and religion.

We do not for a moment suggest that there can be no interaction between science and religion. Science has made enormous contribution to human life which religion can afford to ignore only at its peril. Religion can and ought to assimilate the new scientific knowledge and modify its theology accordingly where necessary. Experience is ultimately one and indivisible, and knowledge is one organic whole. The interactions of science and religion are therefore bound to be intimate. They cannot be kept apart, as it were, in air-tight compartments. Religion must gratefully recognize that science is making contributions of immense value to our right understanding of the world, and so indirectly to our right understanding of God. Thus science and religion interact on each other.

- **Limitations of Religion and Science:**

But the interaction of science and religion does not make us blind to the fact that there is a vital difference between the two. Science and religion respectively adopt completely different attitudes or methods of approach to reality. The religious attitude is frankly personal or valuation. It goes forth to the world definitely to make demands upon it and to find satisfaction for certain personal desires; it interprets the nature of reality in terms of personal and social values. On the other hand, scientific attitude is completely

impersonal. “It sets no emotional value of any kind on the facts of life. The scientist ignores the values which we call the Good and the Beautiful as irrelevant to his purpose and limits himself to the search for what is objectively true as the only value with which he is concerned.”

Science merely appeals to our understanding, religion touches the whole man in all its aspects, it evokes besides intellectual satisfaction, awe, reverence etc.

Science deals with the actual and religion deals with the ideal. Moreover, science deals in any case with a selected aspect of reality rather than reality as a whole. It is concerned with what is, with facts taken apart from value. But religion holds that the world has embodied an ideal of perfection. Religion deals with what is and also what should be the task of science is to explain the universe, that of religion to interpret. A mechanic might be able to explain the construction of a machine, showing the mechanism that made it work and at the same time be totally unable to guess for what purpose it was employed. That is to say, able to explain its working, but not to interpret its meaning. So science explains the Universe, but the interpretation of the Universe, if there is one, is not the matter that science undertakes. On the other hand, religion studies the values of existence and deduces from them what it takes to be the meaning.

Thus we have seen that the fields of science and religion are sufficiently distinct to allow both, full scope without interference with each other. Religion and science cannot simply be merged with one another. Religion must retain its independent standpoint and unique insight.

2.8 RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

The term ‘Religion’ in general may be taken to mean man’s conscious aspiration for the attainment of some kind of infinity, intuitively felt.

The term ‘Philosophy’ may be taken to mean an attempt at a rational explanation of the Universe as a whole. It seeks to gain a true insight into the general structure of the universe and man’s relation to it.

As to the precise relation between philosophy and religion, there are two different views. One view maintains that philosophy and religion are identical. While according to the other view, religion and philosophy are distinct attitudes of the mind without anything in common.

Some philosophers are of the opinion that philosophy and religion are completely different attitudes of life and study. The main points of difference between them are as follows:-

Philosophy is intellectualistic; it deals with all that is rational. Philosophy does not give us God; it merely gives us arguments for the existence of God. Religion is more or less a matter of feeling and practical experience.

Religion is a matter of simple faith and enjoyment. In religion we are absorbed in spiritual communion with the object of devotion. In philosophy, we break the harmony of spiritual enjoyment and make it an object of critical reflection.

In religion, theory is subordinate to practice. In philosophy, theoretical element is uppermost.

Finally, it may be said that though philosophers may be religious and religious man be philosophers, the religious temper is obviously different. It is geared by action. Religious mood is highly charged with emotion, and it is impatient with the halting progress of philosophy towards ultimate truth.

Some philosophers, however, uphold the view that philosophy and religion are identical. The chief exponent of this view is Hegel. According to him, philosophy and religion are identical on the ground that the content, the need and the interest of philosophy represent something which it has in common with religion. Again, the object of religion as well as philosophy are the same, viz., eternal truth in its objectivity i.e. God.

But we must say that, though philosophy and religion have much in common, they cannot be treated as identical. Every developed religion must have a sound philosophy upon which the practical attitude of religion is based, but nevertheless the two are not identical.

Philosophy and religion, the two disciplines have something of value to contribute to each other. Philosophy may teach religion to be discriminating with regard to the goodness which it seeks to achieve. Religion, on the other hand, reminds the philosopher that, before and after being a philosopher,, he is a responsible moral human being.

Thus from the above discussion, we come to the conclusion that religion and philosophy are neither completely different nor completely identical. Philosophy is closely allied to religion.

2.9 DIMENSIONS OF RELIGION

By dimension or scope of religion we mean the range of its subject-matter i.e. the particular subject with which religion deals.

Religion consists in man's belief in a Supreme God who is the Creator, Sustainer and Moral Governor of this Universe together with the feelings of awe, reverence, trust, love and the voluntary acts of devotion, dedication and worship. Therefore, religion discusses the nature of man's belief, thought, feeling and will and other related topics like man's conduct, behaviour, religious consciousness etc.

Religion is primarily concerned with the union of the finite i.e. man with the Infinite i.e. God. There is great affinity between God and man. Although there is an intimate relation between God and man, there is something in God which is unique and incommunicable. The idea of God is associated with exaltedness, sublimity, ineffable majesty, holiness etc. So religion discusses about the idea and nature of God, the metaphysical and ethical attributes of God, and His functions.

The idea of God leads to the question of God's existence. Religion deals with the various arguments offered for the existence of God, namely, Ontological, Cosmological, Teleological, Moral and also some others.

God-realisation is generally regarded as man's highest aspiration. Man follows different paths to reach one and the same goal i.e. God. These paths are Bhakti or devotion, Karma or divine service, Jñâna or intellectual knowledge and mystic intuition. The business of religion is to explain these paths and make it clear that any path that takes a person to his goal is accepted as the authentic way of reaching God.

The religious element present in man is essentially the same but the rituals, dogmas, cults, creeds followed by man are not the same. That is why the ritualistic differences among the great religions of the world like Buddhism, Jainism, Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism and others exit. All these great religions fall within the dimension or scope of religion. Thus religion discusses the principle doctrines, creed, dogmas, theories taught by the great religions of the world. Religion has certain fundamental postulates viz., Personality, Reason, Freedom of the Will, and Immortality of the Soul. Religion therefore concerns itself with the discussion of these postulates. The word religion is generally associated with a group of things like a temple, church, mosque, prayers, sermons; rituals etc. and all these concepts come within the scope of religion.

Seers and prophets often have religious experience of God. They are sometimes expressed in languages and symbols. Religion discusses the nature of various religious experiences, religious symbols and religious propositions of seers and prophets.

Liberation is another name for release of the human soul from bondage. It literally means escape from the cycle of endless births and deaths. The ultimate aim of finite beings is to attain liberation or spiritual realization of God. So religion cannot remain indifferent to the discussion of the nature of liberation preached in different religions. Moreover, religion deals with other religious doctrines like incarnation i.e. descend of God into the world, miracle, i.e. event which is incomprehensible, rebirth, migration of the soul etc.

Though religion has a definite range of subject matters for its discussion, yet its primary aim is to attempt a definition of the highest ideal of religion according to which all religions could be evaluated. In this attempt, religion has indirectly to deal with several problems which are psychological, philosophical, sociological and moral in nature. The psychological problems with which religion is concerned are those of the nature of belief, trust and faith. The philosophical problems are those of the nature of human personality, his relation with the Absolute Reality. The sociological problem in religion is that relating to the relation between individual and society. Moral problems are those relating to human values of life.

Thus it can be said that over and above the different religious concepts and experiences, religion deals with several other problems. So its dimension is very wide.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 4 : What is meant by the term ‘morality’?

.....

.....

Q 5 : What does the term ‘religion’ mean?

.....

.....

Q 6: What is the commonly understood meaning of ‘science’?

.....

.....

Q 7 : What is meant by the term 'Philosophy'?

.....

.....

2.10 LET US SUM UP

- The term 'Religion' is derived from the Latin word 'religare' which means to bind.
- As to the nature of religion some philosophers emphasize the element of reason, some the element of feeling and some the element of will in man's nature. But religion includes all the three aspects of man's nature viz.., thinking, feeling and willing.
- The term 'religion' may be taken to mean man's conscious aspiration for the attainment of some kind of infinity intuitively felt. The term 'morality' may be taken to mean the system of principles by which we judge our actions as good or bad, right or wrong. As to the relation between religion and morality, there is a controversy as to whether religion precedes morality or morality precedes religion. Some again hold that both came from two different sources. According to some both are identical. In fact religion and morality are very closely connected. They are partners in the spiritual enterprise of life.
- 'Art' is a superb expression of man's quest for the ideal, chiefly the ideal Beauty. Though religion and art have to be distinguished from one another, they are independent to each other.
- Science as commonly understood is a systematic enquiry into some particular department of the world. Science and religion represents man's quest for Reality. They both have certain methods or approach to Reality.
- The term 'Philosophy' may be taken to mean an attempt at a rational explanation of the universe as a whole.
- Some philosophers holds that religion and philosophy are different while some others hold that both are identical. Religion and philosophy are neither different or identical but closely allied to each other.
- By dimension or scope of religion, we mean the range of its subject matter- i.e. the particular subject with which religion deals.
- The subject-matter of religion is God, i.e. the nature and idea of God, metaphysical, and ethical attributes of God. The different pathways that man follows to reach God viz., Bhakti, Karma, Jnana, and mystic intuition are also discussed in religion.
- The great religions of the world like Buddhism, Jainism, Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism falls within the dimension of religion.
- Religion includes within its scope certain fundamental postulates viz, personality, reason, freedom of the will and Immortality of the soul.
- Religious experience, religious symbols and religious propositions of seers and prophets come within the dimension of religion.
- Religion has indirectly to deal with several problems which are psychological, philosophical, sociological and moral in nature.

2.11 FUTHER READING

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2.12 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No. 1 : Religare

Ans to Q No. 2 : Hegel defines religion as "the knowledge possessed by the finite mind of its nature as absolute mind. ''

Ans to Q No. 3 : According to Schleiermacher ''the essence of religion consists in a feeling of absolute dependence on God."

Ans to Q No. 4 : The term 'Morality' may be taken to mean the system of principles by which we judge our actions as good or bad, right or wrong.

Ans to Q No 5 : The term 'Religion' may be taken to mean man's conscious aspiration for the attainment of some kind of infinite intuitively felt.

Ans to Q No 6 : Science as commonly understood is a systematic enquiry into some particular department of the world.

Ans to Q No 7 : The term 'Philosophy' may be taken to mean an attempt at a rational explanation of the Universe as a whole.

2.13 MODEL QUESTIONS.

A: Very Short questions

Q 1 : What does the Latin word, religare mean?
Q 2 : What is the Sanskrit equivalent of religion?
Q 3 : What does 'dhri' mean?
Q 4 : Who defines religion as 'morality touched with emotion'?
Q 5 : What is 'Art'?
Q 6 : Who is the Chief exponent of the view that Religion and Philosophy are identical?
Q 7 : Name the philosophers who uphold the view that Religion precedes Morality.
Q 8 : Who uphold the view that Religion and Morality are identical?
Q 9 : What is meant by dimension or scope of religion?
Q 10: What is generally regarded as man's highest aspiration?

Q 11 : What are the different paths that man follows to reach God?

B. Short Question (Answer in about 150 words)

Q 1 : Write a note on the nature of Religion.

Q 2 : Does Morality precede Religion? Discuss in brief.

Q 3 : Is there any conflict between Science and Religion

Q 4 : Can Art flourish without Religion? Discuss.

C Long Questions (Answer in about 300-500 words)

Q 1 : Bring out the relation between Religion and Morality.

Q 2 : Discuss the relation between Religion and Art.

Q 3 : Explain the relation of Religion to Philosophy.

Q 4 : Discuss the relation of Religion to Science.

UNIT 3: RELIGIONS, PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE

UNIT STRUCTURE

3.1 Learning Objectives
3.2 Introduction
3.3 Religion and Philosophy
3.4 Philosophy of Religion and Philosophy
3.5 Religion and Science
3.6 Science of Religion
3.7 Philosophy of Religion and Science of Religion
3.8 Religion, Philosophy and Science
3.9 Inter-relation of religion, Philosophy and Science in India
3.10 Let us Sum up
3.11 Further Reading
3.12 Answer to Check Your Progress
3.13 Model questions

3.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- describe the relationship between religion and philosophy.
- explain philosophy of religion.
- describe the relationship between religion and science.
- explain science and religion.
- analyze philosophy of religion and science of religion.
- explain the inter-relationship between religion, philosophy and science.
- discuss the relation of religion, philosophy and science in India.

3.2 INTRODUCTION

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.

Religion, philosophy, and science are the three different branches of human knowledge. Every branch of human knowledge has its reason, its merits and its own sphere of work. In this unit we will try to explain religion in the light of its relation to philosophy and science. Therefore, Philosophy of Religion, which is the philosophical discussion of religion, and Science of Religion, which is the scientific analysis of religion, also come within the purview of our discussion.

The Indian concept of religion, philosophy and science is another important area of our discussion. The Indian view of these three concepts is an integrated view as the three are interrelated.

3.3 RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

Before we discuss the relationship between religion and philosophy, let us know what we understand by religion and philosophy.

Religion is among the earliest and the most profound forms of human activities. Literally it is the principle of unification. It is based on the ultimate unity of man and God, the finite and infinite.

Synthetic: Combining separate ideas, beliefs, styles etc. Dialectic: pertaining to a method of philosophy discovering a truth of ideas by logical argument and also of considering ideas that are opposed to ideas.

Philosophy is a comprehensive and rational study of the world as a whole. It is a speculative study.

But we must admit that religion and philosophy are not identical. They differ regarding their aim, problems, attitudes, methods, activities etc. The aim of religion is conservation of values in the world, while the aim of philosophy is the rational interpretation of the world. Religious problems are practical, but philosophical problems are mainly theoretical. The religious experience is generally intuitive experience or supra-rational experience. While philosophical methods are mainly speculative, synthetic, dialectic, deductive, which are all rational?

The above mentioned distinctions between religion and philosophy however, should not lead us to forget their intimate relation. Let us now see how they maintain an intimate relation. Philosophy and religion both are complementary to each other. Though Philosophy is theoretical and religion is practical, both share a close interaction, because theory without practice is an important mental conviction and practice without theory is a mere blind impulse. Both philosophy and religion raise the life of an individual and the community to a higher level. Religion preserves values but it is philosophy which determines what the true or correct value is for human being. Moreover, the ultimate truth can be achieved by a co-operation of philosophy and religion. Max Muller in his book “The Origin and Growth of Religion” says “We should clarify religion if we separated it from philosophy: We should ruin philosophy if we divorced it from religion.”

3.4 PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

Philosophical discussion of religion is called philosophy of religion. It is the application of philosophical principles and methods to religion. Religion, taken in its usual sense, is constituted of purely emotional experiences. In philosophy of religion, such experiences are raised to a speculative level. “Philosophy of Religion”, in the words of George Galloway, “is the application of philosophical thought to specific phase or stage of experience in order to determine general meaning and value”.

Philosophy is a rational systematization of facts and values and religion is faith in the realization of God. God is considered the supreme of all inclusive values. Hence, the task of philosophy of religion is to explain as best as it can in its own language the truths, the experiences, the laws of religion. It is a rational interpretation and critical analysis of religious experience. The pious duty of philosophy of religion is to discipline religion by eliminating all kinds of dogmatism and irrationalism from it. However, philosophy must not try to dissect the supra-rational element of religion. Moreover, religious experience cannot be explained by intellect without the use of figures, symbols and analogies. Hence,

philosophy must learn to understand the language of religion. Then alone can philosophers serve religion.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1 : What is religion based on?

.....

.....

Q 2 : What is philosophy of religion?

.....

.....

Q 3 : State whether the following statements are true or false:

(a) Religion and philosophy differ in aim, problems, attitude, methods and activities.(Truth/ False)

(b) Religion is emotional and philosophy is intellectual. ((Truth/ False)

(c) Religion and philosophy are not intimately connected. (Truth/ False)

(d) Philosophy and religion are complementary to each other. (Truth/False)

3.5 RELIGION AND SCIENCE

Religion and science are two different modes of human life. The former satisfies man's emotion and faith and the latter satisfies man's reason. Science is generally held to be opposed to religion because of its distinct aim and method. The aim of science is cognitive and its method is empirical. It is based on human experience. Experience in science means observation, experimentation and verification. Science is a study of physical phenomena in the light of our sense experience of them. Hence, from the standpoint of science, a real cause must be physical, because senses can give us knowledge only of the physical. In the matter of scientific explanation there is no room for the supposition of divine intervention. Religion on the other hand, is largely a matter of personal faith and belief. Its aim is to liberate man from bondage which leads to materialistic life. It makes man free from the materialistic concerns as the only purpose for life.

Analogy : Parallel resemblance, similarity.

Causal: relating to or being a cause of something.

Theology: Study of God religious belief.

Science is based on causal concepts while religion is based on teleological concepts. Science is solely interested in the physical causes and conditions of things and events. But religion goes beyond it. It tries to find out a purpose beyond this causal concept. Religion is wholly interested in the moral and spiritual ends which are believed to underlie and guide them. Both religious faith and the moral and spiritual values of things cannot, of course, be proved by science. In the matter of moral or spiritual valuation science is of no use. Similarly in the matter of scientific explanation the religious faith is more than useless. But, if science cannot prove the religious faith, it cannot disprove it either. We cannot brush aside our genuine moral and spiritual experiences simply on the ground that they do not admit of a scientific explanation. Even a scientist can be a religious man provided he has genuine religious or spiritual experiences.

Some people think that though theology is a science, but it is different from natural sciences. Theology may be called mystic science. According to some, science has no

right to evaluate religious matter. Scientists like Mach, Oswald, Poincare, and Pearson thought that science should be influenced by religious ideas, because religious mentality has a universal outlook. To them, science is a part of religion.

Again, according to some, religion is developed according to the development of science. Development of science influences the mentality of human beings and ultimately it purifies and modifies religion. Religion originated earlier than science. It is an outcome of simple belief. Later on science finds out the drawbacks of such beliefs and modifies it. Some thought that the progress of belief from polytheism to monotheism is due to the influence of science on religion. Einstein said, "Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind".

Even though you may feel that science and religion are totally opposite to each other yet actually there is no scope for conflict between religion and science. The subject matter and province of both are quite distinct. But conflict arises if one enters into the other's field of study. So, A.N. Whitehead says "The future civilization of mankind depends on the degree to which we can balance the forces of science of religion".

3.6 SCIENCE OF RELIGION

In the preceding sections you have been acquainted with religion, philosophy and science as three separate disciplines and how the three also have some kind of interrelationship. In this section you will learn about science of religion. Let us begin our discussion with what Max Muller has said about science of religion. According to him, "it is the object of the Science of Religion to find out by what small and timid steps the human mind advanced from what is intelligible to what at first is almost beyond our comprehension." He compares Science of Religion with Science of Language.

Poletheism: Belief in and worship of more than one God.

Monotheism: The belief that there is one God

As the aim of science is to establish laws, therefore Science of Religion tries to establish some universal laws regarding religion. Science of Religion discusses questions such as what is Religion? How is religion possible? How does the concept of religion occur and spread among human beings? How is it developed and how has it reached the present status? To answer these questions Science of Religion studies the history of religion. It studies the origin and development of different religions, the place of God in different religions, the causes of disappearance of some religions etc. It is not concerned with the question whether a particular religion is true or false.

The study of Science of Religion is generally psychological. It may also be called psychology of religion, as it studies the religious consciousness scientifically. The method of Science of Religion is empirical and inductive. As it is based on simple observation, its conclusions are probable. There are three sources through which it is possible to study religion scientifically. They are –

1. To ask different questions regarding religions among people.
2. To examine itself
3. To study the writings of and writings about different religious persons or preceptors.

However, there arises the question whether it is possible for the science of religion to exist as a branch of philosophical enquiry. Most of the thinkers deny its possibility because both religion and science are two different branches of human knowledge. Science is concerned with sensuous experiences and religion is concerned with super

sensuous experiences. John Caird supports this view. But he also mentions that science of religion enables us to estimate the measure of truth which the various positive religions contain and also to determine what is the place and value of each religion and its relation to other religions.

John Caird: (1820-1898) A theolologian, born at Greenock (U.K) His famous book is *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religiion*.

ACTIVITY

- Is there any relationship between Religion and Science?
  .....
  .....
- Is Science of Religion possible?
  .....
  .....

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 4 : Name the scientist according to whom: "Science without religion is lame, Religion without science is blind".
.....
.....

Q 5 : According to whom science is a part of religion?
.....
.....

Q 6 : The conclusion of Science of Religion is based on simple Observation. — Is it true?
.....
.....

3.7 PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION AND SCIENCE OF RELIGION

After having read about religion and science of religion in previous sections you will find it easier to see the difference between philosophy of religion and science of religion. Let us discuss the topics in greater details. We know that religion is a matter of belief for people living in society and in this sense it is a social phenomenon. The task of Science of Religion is to explain the cause of the emergence of religion in human society. It tries to explain religion and its characteristics, different religions and different religious rituals prevailing in the society.

You may be interested to know that philosophy of religion is a rational and critical analysis of religious experience. It tries to remove dogmatism and irrationalism prevailing in religion. Its duty is to discipline religion.

Sometimes philosophy of religion and science of religion are regarded as synonymous. But it is not correct. Both are different.

- Science of Religion is empirical and inductive like any other science. It determines the general concept of religion by examining different religions prevailing in the world. It is an analytic study. It analyses all the existing religions including the tribal religions. It analytically discusses the different rituals, religious beliefs, religious languages etc. of different religions and it tries to eliminate the irrelevant and accidental factors from them. So, it must study the history of religion for all these analysis.
- On the other hand, philosophy of religion tries to find out what the ideal religion should be. Besides the philosophy of religion also has certain characteristics which we ought to know. It studies how to establish a universal religion by eliminating communalism, rigidness, superstition from it. For this reason philosophy of religion should be critical and evaluative in its study. It is a synthetic study in the sense that it includes all these aspects and brings them together.
- Science of religion studies religion as it is, but philosophy of religion studies religion as an ideal religion. So science of religion is regarded as social studies while philosophy of religion as social philosophy.
- Philosophy of religion is dependent on the evidences given by science of religion. Both are interdependent. Philosophy of religion will synthetically evaluate the analytic examination of science of religion and tries to find out an ideal concept of religion.

3.8 RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE

So far we have discussed the three terms - Religion, philosophy and science separately. But it is quite useful to discuss them under one heading in order to find out their similarities and difference.

Religion, philosophy and science are three different modes of human knowledge. Science is generally held to be opposed to religion. The aim of science is to increase our knowledge of the physical nature while religion is largely a matter of personal faith and belief. Philosophy is distinct from both science and religion. It does not entirely rely on observation and analysis like science for the discovery of truth and neither is it personal faith or belief like vision. It aims at developing the right understanding of life and the world by critical reflection. Science and philosophy are in some ways similar since they are both cognitive disciplines. Again, religion and philosophy are similar in concerning themselves with the nature of man and his destiny.

Both science and philosophy are the intellectual pursuit of truth while religion is a mode of life. Science is an intellectual attempt to know the physical phenomena; philosophy is also a similar attempt to know reality and its relation to phenomena. Science rationalizes our sense experiences of the physical world, while philosophy tries to rationalize our super sensuous experiences of reality. Religion is not so much an attempt to rationalize any experiences as to attain certain forms of super sensuous experience. It consists mainly in man's effort to attain and maintain the experiences of a supersensible reality and to live a life in conformity with them. It affects and transforms the whole of our life. It consists in the training of the body and the mind, so as to realize the super sensuous in our life and in the world. While science and philosophy make us think in certain ways, religion makes us think and feel in certain specific ways.

The reason why we have religion is fundamentally the same as the reason why we have philosophy. We have Philosophy because it seeks to know the supersensible reality beyond the phenomena or the visible world. We have a religion through which we want to realize it. While science gives us reliable and useful knowledge of the physical things and events, it fails to do justice to our experiences of supersensible realities, including moral and spiritual values. Both philosophy and religion are centered in the supersensible reality. Here again, there is some difference. The interest of philosophy in them is theoretical, while religion is practical. Philosophy tries to rationalize them, but religion tries to develop and perfect them. Science cannot prove the reality of the super sensuous or moral and spiritual values, since it is limited, by its very nature. It is concerned only with the sensuous and physical world. It cannot be proved by philosophy either. But even if philosophy cannot finally prove the super sensuous or the moral and religious values, it can justify them by a criticism of science. It shows how the scientific view of the world is inadequate to explain the totality of our life and experience.

The scope of philosophy is wider than that of science and religion. It refers to a way of thinking, an attitude to life, and therefore, hence, no aspect of human experience is without philosophy. Science enquires the phenomenal world on the basis of sensuous experience. Religion consists in man's effort to attain and maintain the experiences of supersensible reality. But philosophy harmonizes and evaluates both the activity of science and religion. Religion, philosophy and science then are all inter-related and complementary to one another. The traditional view of religion is based on ritualism and dogmas and it is opposed to science, but religion in its correct senses perceives the inner unity in apparent diversity. Again, philosophy can be religious when it admits God as the foundation of all activities.

Every branch of human knowledge has its reason, its merit and its own sphere of work and each is helpful in the dialectical progression of knowledge. Philosophy, for example logically arranges the eternal modes of 'sat' or 'existence'. Religion practically and vitally arranges the personal relations of 'sat'. Science arranges the particular forms and modes of 'sat' through observation and analysis. Philosophy is a systematization by critical analysis; religion is faith in union with the Divine and science is the observation and analysis of particular forms. Thus, all these are interrelated. Science serves mainly the needs of our practical life and philosophy satisfies those of the intellectual life. Religion perfects our moral and spiritual life. All of them are necessary and should be given their proper places in any scheme of life.

LET US KNOW

Reality : It denotes the external world, the Past, future, the real existence of some kind of things, some kind of fact or state of affairs. It includes mind as well as matter.

Sense experience : Experience that can be apprehended through any one of the faculties of sight, sense and touch by which the body becomes aware of the external things.

Super sensuous : Beyond the senses or sensuous experience by which the body becomes aware of the external world.

3.9 INTER-RELATION OF RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE IN INDIA

In ancient India, science was always connected with common belief. Some thought that the ancient scriptures of India had many latent scientific evidences. For example, it is thought that Sanjay's description of the Mahabharata war in front of Dhitrarastra is similar to the concept of television. Likewise, in the Ramayana, Ravana's flying "Puspak Ratha" is regarded as the concept of aeroplane of modern times. But today in scientific language all these are science fictions. However, the philosophy of Nyaya and Vaisesika has great scientific value. But their philosophy is also mixed up with religious faith.

In India, religious truths are regarded as the basis of philosophical enquiry. Indian philosophy is founded upon the 'Vedas' and the 'Upanisads', which are the works of great sages. The task of philosophy is to explain them. But all philosophical enquiries are not dependent on the so called scriptures. Some philosophical schools exist independently. However, it cannot be denied that in India, religion, philosophy and science all are so intimately connected that it is difficult to explain them individually.

ACTIVITY

- Do you find any meeting point among religion, philosophy and science?
  .....
  .....
- Write your opinion on the Indian concept of religion, philosophy and science?
  .....
  .....

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 7: Philosophy of Religion and Science of Religion are synonymous (True/False)
Q 8: Philosophy of Religion is dependent on evidences given by Science of Religion (True/ False)
Q 9 : Religion, philosophy and science all are complementary to each other (True/False)
Q 10: The scope of philosophy is wider than that of science and religion. (True/False)

3.10 LET US SUM UP

- Religion preserves values and philosophy determines the true or correct value for human being. The ultimate truth can be achieved by a co-operation of philosophy and religion.

- Philosophy of Religion is the rational interpretation and critical analysis of religious experience.
- Religion is based on emotion and faith but science is based on reason.
- Science of Religion tries to establish some universal laws regarding religion by analytically discussing different existing religions.
- Science of Religion studies religion as it is but Philosophy of Religion studies religion as an ideal religion.
- Science and philosophy make us especially think in certain ways; religion makes us think and feel in certain specific ways.
- In India religion, philosophy and science are so intimately connected that it is difficult to separate them.

3.11 FURTHER READING

1) Edward. D. Miall Edward. 1993. *The Philosophy of Religion*, Progressive Pub.
2) Chatterjee, S. C. 1964. *The problems of Philosophy*, University of Calcutta.
3) Sharma. R. N. 1988. *Philosophy of Religion*, Kedar Nath Ram Nath.

3.12 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOU PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1 : Ultimate unity of man and God

Ans to Q No 2 : Philosophical discussion of Religion. It is also the application of philosophical principles and methods of religion.

Ans to Q. No. 3 : a) True b) True c) False d) True

Ans to Q. No. 4 : Einstein

Ans to Q. No. 5 : Scientists like Mack, Ostwald, Poincare, Pearson

Ans to Q. No. 6 : Yes, it is true.

Ans to Q. No. 7 : False

Ans to Q. No. 8 : True

Ans to Q. No. 9 : True

Ans to Q. No. 10 : True

3.13 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions

Q. 1 : What is the literal meaning of religion?

Q. 2 : Point out a distinction between religion and science.

Q. 3 : Who is the author of *the Origin and Growth of religion*?

Q. 4 : What do you mean by Philosophy of religion?

Q. 5 : What is science of religion?

B) Short Questions

Q. 1 : Briefly explain the relation between religion and philosophy.

Q. 2 : What are the differences between philosophy and science? Explain in brief.

Q. 3 : Write short notes on:

a) Religion and Science

b) Philosophy of Religion

c) Science of religion

C) Long Questions (Answer in about 300-500 words)

Q. 1 : Explain the relationship between religion and philosophy.

Q. 2 : What do you mean by philosophy of religion? Discuss

Q. 3 : Is there any conflict between science and religion? Discuss.

Q. 4 : What do you mean by science of religion? Is it possible? Discuss.

UNIT 4 : RELIGIOUS CONSCIOUSNESSES

UNIT STRUCTURE

4.1 Learning Objectives
4.2 Introduction
4.3 General meaning of Consciousness
    4.3.1 Characteristics of Consciousness
4.4 Religious Consciousness
    4.4.1 Rudolf Otto on Religious Consciousness
4.5 Difference between Religion, Consciousness and Religious Consciousness
4.6 Let us Sum up
4.7 Further Reading
4.8 Answers to Check Your Progress
4.9 Model Questions

4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- define Consciousness in philosophy
- describe what is religious consciousness
- identify the fundamentals of religious consciousness
- identify the difference between religion, consciousness and religious consciousness.

4.2 INTRODUCTION

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 is not 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 nature of this 'beyond' has been chosen in religious and philosophical circles in different ways. Some philosophers have concluded that it can never become an actual fact and we cannot experience it. When we say, "Something is beyond me," we have already accepted that it is not possible for us to experience or perceive it. Philosophers of religion have tried their best to explain this peculiar situation which is mysterious. However, at the same time it is necessary also. There are various arguments, which are called the arguments for the existence of God. People have not found a suitable word to describe the nature of this Being. It must be existing as a complete answer to the incomplete quest of the human individual. Completeness is a reality, because it exists. But the real or practical fact is that it is very difficult to prove God's existence and in the same time it is very difficult to prove that God doesn't exist. Without 'God' it is very difficult to discuss something about religion and

when we talk about God certainly religious consciousness is coming to us. It is very clear that religious consciousness is a very important concept in religion without which it will not exist or we may say that the growth of religion will stop without religious consciousness. It is also important to discuss here the general concept of consciousness, and to find out the difference between religion, consciousness and religious consciousness. We will try here to find out some of the fundamentals of religious consciousness.

4.3 GENERAL MEANING OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Consciousness is a subjective experience or awareness about something. The word 'consciousness' is originally derived from the Latin 'con' (with) and 'scire' (to know). Consciousness is the most central issue in current philosophy of mind and is also importantly related to major traditional topics in metaphysics such as religious consciousness etc. Meaning of something will come only when we will be conscious about that particular thing or matter.

We can say that consciousness means not only the awareness of something; but the actual meaning of consciousness will be very clear when we define it, "consciousness is being aware of something and to respond about something". If someone is aware of something we must know about his consciousness but here one question arises. How do we come to know about someone's awareness? How are we to understand this? The answer to them is very clear. If someone responds then only would we come to know that he is aware or he is conscious. There are many ambiguities about the meaning of consciousness and many questions arise such as: Whether it is subjective or not? How is the conscious mental state related to the body?

But there is also another question. If it is impossible even to conceive what is beyond the possibility of human perception, how does this idea arise at all? This is a very serious question that was raised by the German philosopher Immanuel Kant. His book *Critique of Pure Reason* is a commentary on this theme. He concludes that the idea of a Perfect Being, as he calls it, is an idea of reason. It is not to be identified with the area which is enclosed by human understanding or sensory perception. Rene Descartes, a French philosopher, tells us that the consciousness of the finitude establishes the existence of the Infinite. We cannot be aware that we are limited, unless we are at the same time aware that there is something unlimited. Descartes' main dictum: "I think; therefore, I am." - *cogito ergo sum*. Our thinking, or our being conscious of our finitude, is connected all together with the possibility of transcending the finite, which also is an object of consciousness. Therefore, the nature of the Infinite must be existing. So, the nature of the Infinite is pure consciousness.

We can say that all consciousness, as Husserl has shown, is consciousness of something. Consciousness is defined by intentionality; all Consciousness is a revealing intuition of something. Husserl's theory of intentionality has been modified in Sartre's philosophy. Whereas for Husserl intentionality is one essential feature of any consciousness, for Sartre intentionality is Consciousness. Consciousness is not self-enclosed; it is intentional.

The intentionality of consciousness establishes *firstly* the contentless, empty and transparent character of consciousness (consciousness has no 'inside', and no substantiality) and *secondly* the dependence of consciousness on reality. For Sartre, when consciousness is conscious of something, it is implicitly conscious of itself as not being that thing. By self-consciousness, consciousness is aware of itself as not-being that objects also.

LET US KNOW

Husserl: (1859-1938) Husserl was one of the most influential philosophers of the 20th century. He has made many important contributions to the field of philosophy. Phenomenology is a school of philosophy originally founded by Edmund Husserl, who was much influenced by the theory of intentionality propounded by Franz Brentano. The aim of phenomenology is to study self-awareness and to describe the objective world as it appears to human consciousness. The insights of phenomenology and philosophy were applied to religion by Max Scheler, Rudolf Otto, Vander Leeuw and others.

Sartre: (1905-1980) Jean Paul Sartre was one of the major thinkers of the Twentieth century, and undoubtedly the greatest among his contemporaries in France. Jean Paul Sartre, the literary genius, the Existentialist Philosopher, often oscillates (swing like a pendulum) between Existentialism and Phenomenology, between Ethics and Aesthetics, between Literature and Politics, in his authentic search for defining man on these very terms, i.e., man's essence is to be defined in terms of the role man plays in these diverse fields of his/her existence.

4.3.1 Characteristics of Consciousness

Consciousness has four characteristics. They are

a) Subjectivity
b) change
c) continuity and
d) selectivity

The most important character of consciousness is subjectivity. Secondly we can discuss change as one of its main attributes. If there is no change, it means it is object like. To be conscious change must be there for each. *Continuity* is another characteristic of consciousness. Similarly, subjectivity is thought of as another feature of consciousness because our mind always selects something for consciousness**.**

'Consciousness' and 'being' cannot be separated from one another. When we say, "I am here," we are actually saying, "I am conscious of my being here." Our consciousness is not different from our being. When we say the Infinite exists, God exists, this awareness about the infinite, is called religious consciousness.



ACTIVITY

- Do you find any relationship between 'religion' and consciousness'? Discuss.

  .....

  .....

- Do you accept 'that consciousness' and 'religious consciousnesses are two separate concepts? Discuss.

  .....

  .....



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1 : From where is the word 'Consciousness is derived'?

.....

.....

Q 2 : Can consciousness be separated from being? (Answer in about 40 words)

.....

.....

Q 3 : What is religious consciousness?

.....

.....

Q 4: What are the four characteristics of consciousness?

.....

.....

Q. 5: What is 'consciousness according to Husserl? (Answer in about 30 words)

.....

.....

Q. 6 : State whether the following statements are True or False

a) The most important character of consciousness is it's objectivity. (T/F)

b) Our consciousness is different from our being.(T/F)

4.4 RELIGIOUS CONSCIOUSNESS

There are many religions in this world. All of you must know the categorization of these religions. The differences that we observe among the various religions in the world arise due to various factors such as geographical, cultural, ethnic, and anthropological backgrounds of people.

Consciousness is always mind-dependant. There is a demarcation between religion and the religious consciousness. Religious consciousness is about the divine power. Again, we can say that for consciousness we need attention. We know if we have attention then only we can be conscious about something. Religious consciousness consists of faith, belief, thinking, willing and feeling. We have already discussed that there

is something which makes everyone feel that one is not complete and this incompleteness leads to the concept of God and religion. Neuroscientists have identified the region of the human brain connected with religious feelings and this discovery has established beyond any doubt the fact that religious instinct is an inborn natural characteristic peculiar in human beings only.

Religious practices are considered the most effective means for improving human thoughts, feelings and behaviour. Worship of the Creator should not and cannot lead to a diseased brain or an abnormal mind. Consciousness and life spirit are closely related to the mind and the brain. The mystery of religious consciousness cannot be torn wholly by the use of modern scientific techniques. The neuroscientists have so far been successful only in tracing the source of religious instinct but have not solved the mystery of religious consciousness.

Finally, we can say that feeling, thought and willing are the fundamentals of religious consciousness. We will be religiously conscious only when we can feel, think and have will in our heart about religion.

4.4.1 Rudolf Otto on Religious Consciousness

In the previous section we have discussed religious consciousness. In this connection it will be useful to know Rudolf Otto (1869–1937) an eminent German Theologian and great scholar of comparative religion. Otto is often classified as a theoretician of mysticism and he is particularly remarkable for his contribution to the Phenomenology of religious consciousness.

Otto's most famous work is *The Idea of the Holy*, (*Das Heilige*) published first in 1971 which is one of the most successful German theological books of the 20th century. The book defines the concept of the holy which is *numinous*. This new term is based on the Latin word *human* which means deity. Otto explained the "numinous" as a non-rational, non-sensory experience or feeling whose primary and immediate object is outside the self. He seeks to identify the necessary components of our idea of the Holy. By introducing the notion of the numinous, he does not suggest that there is a hidden, non-rational element in the divinity. But he suggests that our mind cannot conceive of the Sacred without including a non-rational, or numinous, element. All people have the feeling of Deity. To Otto, religious experience is unique that cannot possibly be expressed in rational language. It can only be described analogically through "ideograms" or symbols. According to some, mysterious feelings are there in our notion of the sacred that goes beyond reason. This type of knowledge is called "numinosity" and according to Rudolf Otto this type of knowledge is very mysterious. Therefore, he expresses this feeling of God as Mysterium Tremendum. Some inner holy fear is related with this type of feelings so man is always afraid of the curse of God. Every practitioner of any religion regards certain things as "sacred" or "holy" and some others as "impure" or "polluted". Otto felt that religious experience contained three elements like mystery, fear, and attraction which are intimately related. The irresistible attraction for the sacred felt by the believer is the very essence of religious consciousness, according to Otto. Human reason is unable to break its code and therefore, the

numinous also appears as a mystery. However, Otto's real focus of interest is the reality of the Sacred, not its simple conceptualization.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 7: What are the fundamentals of religious consciousness?

.....

.....

Q 8 : Write a name of a philosopher who contributes to the phenomenology of religion.

.....

.....

Q 9 : What are the three elements in religious experience, according to Otto?

.....

.....

Q 12 : What is the meaning of the Latin word "*numan"* ?

.....

.....

4.5 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RELIGION, CONSCIO-USNESS AND RELIGIOUS CONSCIOUSNESS

Every religion contains certain elements which are peculiar to the culture, time and historical circumstances of its birth. Consequently, the various rituals and theological beliefs of each religion will necessarily reflect its unique character and will differ from one another. Religion and consciousness both are two different words and both are different in meaning. But without consciousness religion can't revealed properly. At the same time we can also say that we can define consciousness without religion also. It is not necessary that religion always comes with consciousness. But when we bring religion and consciousness together it becomes just indispensable for each other. From the above discussion we can say that consciousness in general may be about something or it may be of anything but religious consciousness is simply about the consciousness of religion only.

4.6 LET US SUM UP

- The word 'consciousness' is originally derived from the Latin 'con' (with) and 'scire' (to know).
- Consciousness means not only the awareness of something; but the actual meaning of consciousness will be very clear when we define it as " consciousness is being aware of something and to respond about something".

- All consciousness, as Husserl has shown, is consciousness of something. Consciousness is defined by intentionality; all Consciousness is a revealing intuition of something.
- Husserl's theory of intentionality has been modified in Sartre's philosophy. Whereas for Husserl intentionality is one essential feature of any consciousness, for Sartre intentionality is Consciousness. Consciousness is not self-enclosed; it is intentional.
- To Otto, religious experience is an unique experience that could not possibly be expressed in rational language. It can only be described analogically through "ideograms" or symbols. Otto felt that in the religious experience there are three elements like mystery, fear, and attraction which are intimately related. According to some, mysterious feelings are there in our notion of the sacred that is beyond reason. This type of knowledge is called "numinosity" and according to Rudolf Otto, this type of knowledge is very mysterious. Therefore, he expresses this feeling of God as Mysterium Tremendum.

4.7 FURTHER READING

1) *Religion Today*, A Vedanta Kesari Presentation,published by Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras.
2) Chander, Jagadish Raja Yogi B.K. *Eternal Drama of souls, Matter and God*, Part-I, *Souls*, Prajapita Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishva Vidyalaya, Pandav Bhavan, mount Abu, rajastahn, India.

4.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1 : The word 'consciousness' is originally derived from the latin 'con'(with) and 'Scire'(to know).

Ans to Q No 2 : Consciousness and being cannot be separated from one another. When we say, 'I am here', we are actually saying 'I am conscious of my being here." Our consciousness is not different from our being.

Ans to Q No 3 : Human awareness regarding the existence of God or infinite, is called religious consciousness.

Ans to Q No 4 : The four characteristics of consciousness are -a) Subjectivity b) Change c) Continuity and d) Selectivity.

Ans to Q No 5 : According to Husserl, consciousness means consciousness of something. Consciousness is defined by intentionality; all consciousness is a revealing intuition of something.

Ans to Q No 6 : a) False b) False

Ans to Q No 7 : Feeling, thought and willing

Ans to Q No 8 : Rudolf Otto

Ans to Q No 10 : Mystery, fear and attraction

Ans to Q No 11 : Deity

4.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short questions

Q 1 : What is the latin word from which the word *consciousness* has been derived?

Q 2 : Name the author of *Critique of Pure Reason.*

Q 3 : State the four characteristics of consciousness.

Q 4 : What are the fundamentals of religious consciousness?

Q 5 : Who is the author of *the Idea of the Holy*

B) Short questions (Answer in about 150-200 words)

Q 1 : Briefly comment on the idea 'consciousnesses as put forward by Philosophers like Husserl and Descartes.

Q 2 : Discuss briefly the four characteristics of consciousness.

Q 4 : Write short notes on:

a) Consciousness

b) Religious consciousness

C) Long Questions (Answer in about 300-500 words)

Q 1 : Analyse the different aspects of religious consciousness. Discuss.

Q 2 : Do you agree that religion can exist without religious consciousness? Explain.

Q 3 : Explain how religion and consciousness are related with each other. Are both indispensable to each other? Discuss.

Q 4 : What is religious consciousness? Explain Rudolf Otto's view on consciousness.

UNIT 5 : THEORIES OF THE ORIGIN OF RELIGION

UNIT STRUCTURE

5.1 Learning Objectives
5.2 Introduction
5.3 Need of Anthropological Theories
5.4 The Animistic Theory of E. B. Tylor
5.5 The Ancestor-worship Theory of Herbert Spencer
5.6 Totemism
5.7 Manaism as the Origin of Religion
5.7.1 Manaism as the Satisfactory Theory of the Origin of Religion
5.8 Taboo
5.9 Psychological Theories
5.10 Religious Instinct Theory
5.11 Single Elemental Emotion theory
5.12 Religious Faculty Theory
5.13 Let us Sum up
5.14 Further Reading
5.15 Answers to Check Your Progress
5.16 Model Questions

5.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- analyze the problem of the origin of religion,
- explain the need of the study of the origin of religion,
- describe the problem of the origin of religion from the scientific standpoint,
- identify the different anthropological theories of the origin of religion,
- discuss how primitive people developed the spirit of fear,
- explain the satisfactory theory of the origin of religion,
- identify the different psychological theories of the origin of religion,
- discuss the critical evaluations of different psychological theories of the origin of religions.

5.2 INTRODUCTION

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.

5.3 NEED OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL THEORIES

The most fundamental question put before the students, working in the field of religion is: what is the origin of religion? Or what can be the earliest form of religion? This is a very difficult question to which a ready answer is almost impossible to find accurate data as it involves the reconstruction of the remote past**.** Here comes the necessity of the survey reports and study materials provided by the anthropologists and archaeologists.

Can you say, what is the earliest form of religion? Anthropologists, in this context support the evolutionary theory of Darwin. Again, do you know what is Darwin's opinion regarding the evolutionary theory? It is 'survival of the fittest', the famous Darwinian dictum.

Anthropologists have surveyed the primitive religions. In their investigations it is revealed that though today we are remotely connected to primitive ancestors, there is still certain physical, social and mental continuity between us and our forefathers. On the basis of such a hypothesis anthropologists have observed that the question of the origin of religion is independent of many questions related to it.

Moreover, anthropologists study the behavioral patterns of the primitive people. Some of their descendents still inhabit this world and are less influenced by modern technology. These studies therefore made the anthropologists propose different theories regarding the origin of religion. These theories are as follows:-

5.4 THE ANIMISTIC THEORY OF E. B. TYLOR

E.B. Tylor : (1832-1917) British Anthropologist.

Hoffding: (1843-1931) Danish Philosopher. A Brief History of Modern Philosophy is one of the Best work.

E.B. Tylor for the first time studied the problem of the origin of religion from a scientific standpoint. He studied the behavioural patterns of the remote primitive forefathers thoroughly and scientifically. He writes in his monumental volumes, the 'Primitive Culture' that 'at a certain stage of culture men everywhere attribute a kind of soul to the phenomena of Nature—e.g., to trees, brooks, mountains, clouds, stones, stars'. He observes that Animism in any form was the earliest form of religion. All the different objects of Nature were believed by the primitive ancestors to be animated by some kind of spirit. According to Tylor, the primitive people ascribed some kind of psychical activity (somewhat of his own nature) to all the diverse objects of Nature, and religion arose out of this. Tylor contends that primitive men 'discovered' some of the spirits in the natural objects. After that he tried to establish some kind of relation with the 'discovered' spirits in the natural objects. Primitive men then tried to satisfy some of them. Perhaps this attitude, Tylor says, was the root of primitive religion and the primitive worship of our ancestors. The Animistic Theory of E. B. Tylor propounds that 'All Nature was alive, filled with innumerable spirits'. Therefore according to him on the basis of this belief about Nature, (i.e. the animistic view of the world) religion had its origin.

Critics are of the opinion that though animistic belief is accepted as universal at a certain level of primitive culture, yet it cannot be accepted as the origin of religion. Animistic theory of Taylor as such, faces several criticisms and is not accepted as satisfactory.

According to Hoffding, Animism can be accepted as a kind of rudimentary philosophy but not rudimentary religion. To quote Hoffding here, Animism is "the most elementary of human philosophies". Animism appears to be simple. But when Tylor

comments that primitive man has ascribed the conception of the soul or spirit to nature or natural objects, Animism faces several problems.

The problem here arises: How did the notion of the 'soul' appear in the mind of primitive people. To this problem, Taylor puts forward the 'dream-theory'. Dream here is defined as a 'mysterious phenomenon'. Dream images happened to have a kind of 'vaporous materiality'—"the images come and go, they appear as real and yet when 'touched' vanish into nothingness. Hence from such images primitive man could have developed the 'idea of spirit apart from body'".

Critics here again are of the opinion that at certain level of primitive culture, "'beholding' of some kind of visionary shapes as the chief characteristic of primitive man's religious experience" is possible. But it is in questionable whether it can be called the earliest belief in the primitive religious development.

Thus Animism fails to be a satisfactory account of the origin of religion. The notion of 'soul' appears to be too intellectual or sophisticated a concept for the primitive mind. According to James, to represent the savage as an intellectualistic 'reasoner' is to reduce him to a 'state of pre-logical mysticism'. Again to put what Marett says in this connection: "He (the savage) is merely concerned to mark and exploit the difference when presented in the concrete."

5.5 THE ANCESTOR-WORSHIP THEORY OF HERBERT SPENCER

Herbert Spencer explains Ancestor-worship or Ghost worship as the earliest type of religion. According to him, the origin of religion is 'to be found in the worship of dead ancestors re-appearing in the form of ghosts'. Animism is only a derivative form of the worship of 'Ancestor-worship or Ghost-worship'. From the worship of ghosts the primitive people could develop the generalized notion of spirit-worship as such.

Herbert Spencer's theory is so simple that it cannot be accepted as the origin of religion. Religion is an extremely complex affair. Such a complex affair cannot be raised on a narrow foundation of the worship of ghosts only by the primitive ancestors. It is, therefore commented by many thinkers that Spencer's theory is only a kind of primitive philosophy.

Again in Spencer's theory the worship of ancestors means the worship of some supernatural beings i.e. as gods. Therefore, we can say that a sense of supernaturalism dominated the field of religion from its origin and gradually it was developed to its full grown stage.

To conclude, we can say that Herbert Spencer's theory of ancestor-worship is not satisfactory enough to explain the origin of religion.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1 : Who has propounded the Ancestor-worship theory of origin of religion?

.....

.....

Q 2: "Survival for fittest"- who has given this statement?

.....

.....

Q 3: What is the elementary of religion?

.....

.....

5.6 TOTEMISM

To many anthropologists, totemism is accepted as the earliest form of religion. It is allied to ancestor-worship. Totemism is believed to be found in certain places especially in North America, Africa and Australia.

It is propounded by F. B. Jevons that the fundamental characteristic of totemism is the 'alliance of a clan with an animal (or plant or natural object) species. This is found in his book *An Introduction to the History of Religion*. Moreover, totemism is accepted by some authorities as the simplest and most primitive religion. A totem is said to be 'a species of animal or plant'. Again it may be a very rare class of inanimate objects. A totem or a species of animals stands in a very intimate relation to a particular clan or a special group.



Cognate : Related in some ways and therefore similar

Totem: An animal or other natural object that is chosen and accepted as a special symbol of a community or family.

The totem is believed to be the ancestor of the clan, which provides the name to that social group (a clan). The totem is not a god. It is a cognate being or akin to god. So it has to be respected. Totem cannot be used for any common purposes. It can be slammed or consumed only in an auspicious occasion and out of respect. Thus it is not the individual animal or plant that can be considered a totem. It is, therefore, the species which represent the totem

Totemistic theory of the origin of worship found its development in the writings of W. Robertson Smith in his book *Religion of the Semites* (1885). His view was furthermore developed by F. B. Jevons in his *An Introduction to the History of Religion* (1896).

Totemism is found everywhere as a social institution. It is a community affair. The individual participates in rituals only as a member of a community. As a species is recognized as the origin of a social group, so the totem and the totemites have a blood-relation. They are one flesh. Consequently, the totemites believe themselves as having a common blood-relation. This makes them develop a spirit of fellow-feeling towards each other. The totem to the totemite is very personal but to others the totem is only non-anthropomorphic in nature. Totemism involves symbolism, imagery and a very wide system of ritualism.

Critics are of the opinion that totemism can be accepted as the earliest forms of social organizations and earlier than the earliest form of religion. Robertson Smith observes, in his book, "Religion of the Semites", that what we have in our religious beliefs regarding the sacrificial system has come from the totemistic practices. Moreover, in the book *Philosophy of Religion* the French Sociologist Emile Durkheim writes that totemism can be accepted as the earliest form of religious and social organization. But this observation he holds cannot be generalized. Primitive man worshipped the totem to bring in the strength of the tribal custom.

But modern anthropologists while in the further research works advocate that totemism at earliest time was only 'universally practiced religious system'. It cannot be accepted as the earliest form of religion because there are many people like the Veddas of Ceylon, people of Andaman Islands, Brazil for whom totemism is unknown. Religion has a social aspect (i.e. which binds together) and totemism emphasizes the social aspect. In every religion, the supreme object is to worship and pray. But in many places, the totem animals cannot be object worship in spite of having super-natural powers. Again, it is also found that the totemistic rites are more associated with magical significance rather than religious significance.

5.7 MANAISM AS THE ORIGIN OF RELIGION

Anthropologists suggest that the primitive man developed a spirit of fear and respected those visions which have power. The Polynesian calls this power as Mana. Terms like *manitou*, *orenda*, *wokanda* are used by different tribes to imply the same spirit of fear love (awe). Anthropologists and students of Comparative religion use the word 'mana' to explain the earliest type of religious feelings.

The term 'mana' refers to those sacred persons and things that are attributed with powers. This is the way how primitive man expressed their religious attitude. Bishop Codrington, in his book, 'The Melanesiss' uses for the first time the term 'mana'.

Mana is believed to be an 'all-pervading super-sensual power. Mana operates in an unexpected way. Mana appears in natural object in a very unique character. Mana is mysterious or magical. Mana, being supernatural, is therefore different from natural objects. Mana is associated more with psychical power than with ordinary physical character. Mana is an indefinite store-house of energy in this earth. Mana depending on this energy receives good or evil. Mana is thus the incalculable power that manifests itself in extraordinary things and persons and unexpected events. Codrington comments in his book on 'The Melanesians and writes in 1891, that all conspicuous success is a proof that a man has mana. The political or social power or any power of a man is his mana.

Hence, mana refers not only to an external power existing outside in the phenomenal world. It is also believed that an extraordinarily powerful man also acquires mana from objects to empower him to show his bravery in war field. Mana refers to an internal power that can evoke certain psychical power.

5.7.1 Manaism as the Satisfactory Theory of the Origin of Religion

Mana is accepted as the most satisfactory theory of the origin of religion by the anthropologists and the students of comparative religion. Mana as such can explain animism, ghost-worship and totemism. The supernatural beings present in Animism are present in mana. In the ghost-worship, ancestors are proposed to have mana. The totem animals are also believed to have mana. In animism and totemism we find an operation of a vague fear and an attachment to mysterious power. This mysterious power is considered as extraordinary. In mana this mysterious extraordinary power plays an important role in the minds of the

primitive man. Marett remarks here that the doctrine of mana can be considered the basis on which the animistic doctrine has been constructed later. Edwards also observes that in mana we have the common root of magic and religion. Perhaps in the primitive mind the distinction between the personal and the impersonal power did not come. Mana is thus understood as the integrated form of all widely pervading energy viz. physical, psychical, and moral.

5.8 TABOO

According to Dr. Marett, the two groups, viz. mana and taboo, give the idea to rudimentary pre-animistic religion. Mana can be understood as the positive aspect of the supernatural or miraculous happenings. Taboo, on the other-hand, can be understood as the negative aspect of the supernatural power. The anthropologists ultimately consider human psychology to be very fundamental regarding the origin of religion.

5.9 PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIES

Gradually there developed Psychical factors regarding the origin and development of religion. The first theory takes into consideration 'feeling' as the genesis of the origin of religion. The second theory considers 'emotion' as the cause of the origin of religion. The third theory depends on religious faculty as the cause of the origin of religion. Therefore, we have three theories regarding the origin of religion from the psychological standpoint. They are viz. the *instinct-theory*, *the faculty theory* and *the single elemental emotion theory*

5.10 RELIGIOUS INSTINCT THEORY

This theory attributes the origin of religion to a religious instinct. The term instinct is not used in a strict sense. Here instinct indicates that 'religion has something innate'. To be more precise, we can say that "an instinct is a series of activities which originates out of an organic want or need and aims at the satisfaction of this need. Instinctive powers are hereditary, natural, innate and inborn". Marshall gives a new interpretation of instinct-theory. According to him, religious instinct developed from those activities which are useful to a clan or a race. He also observes that people often had to perform several activities against their self-interest. Religious instinct is used here in a scientific way.

But the theory is not satisfactory. Man is fundamentally religious but to say that the religious instinct can solve the problem of the origin of religion demands an explanation. Here we can say that it is tautology to say that man acts in such and such a way because he has an innate tendency to do so.

Secondly, the instinct theory fails because religion is not a simple specific reaction to a simple and specific impression. It is a complex product of several instincts which is not of the same nature (heterogeneous in nature). Hence, to attribute religion to an instinct is to over simplify a highly complex phenomenon. The only merit of the instinct theory is

that it contains an element of truth. The truth is that religion is deeply rooted in human nature. Further, the theory implies that religion is a normal and natural thing for man.

5.11 THE SINGLE ELEMENTAL EMOTION THEORY

According to many psychologists religion has its origin under the influence of a 'single emotion of human psychology'. To this view, some thinkers consider 'intellect' while some others speak of feeling and some thinkers say 'will' as the chief religious faculty. Again, a few thinkers consider fear to be a common emotion present to all religions. The Epicureans of Greece are the chief exponents of this view. David Hume also supports this view of-course he thinks that fear is always accompanied by hope. Hume thinks that religion has its origin in the fear of the gods which was tempered by the hope of securing their good will.

But this view is also criticized by the critics. There cannot be any doubt that emotion of fear plays a prominent part in religion, especially in lower religions. A vague fear of the forces of nature pervades the life of the savage. He endeavours to propitiate these forces. In certain cases the fear of the evil spirit leads to actual religious activities. But to seek the origin of religion in the emotion of fear is not to explain the origin of religion in a satisfactory way.

5.12 RELIGIOUS FACULTY THEORY

This theory attributes the origin of religion to a kind of activity or a type of behavior. Religion is an inward feeling and psychologists believe that religious faculty plays an important role in formulating different religious activities. As an activity religion is controlled by certain purpose. It is believed that man is religious in nature because he has a religious faculty. The days of the old faculty psychology are gone. Faculty psychology has been proved to be a pseudoscience. It has joined the heap of discarded theories. To imagine a separate religious faculty is to ignore the fundamental unity of the human mind. The departmental view of mind on which the faculty theory is based is wholly unscientific. There is no part of man's psychological nature which may be labeled as religious in the sense that it alone functions in his religious life. Religious experience is composed of the same elements of which the conscious life of man as a whole is composed.

A survey of the psychological theories of the origin of religion leads to negative results. There are no separate elements of man's psychical nature that can be called especially religious. There is no instinct or faculty or emotion which can be described as religious in the sense that it cannot be found in the non-religious tribe of being. Even if we hold that religion had its beginning in fear it would still be obvious that fear is not exclusively a religious emotion. All fear is not religious fear. Nor can we say that religious consciousness is a mere aggregate of many psychic elements. It is an organized whole which is greater than its parts. The ultimate elements of human nature are the same in the saint as well as the sinner. The difference lies in the organizing principle or the guiding purpose.

The psychological problem of the origin of religion can be best solved not by putting the mind to pieces but by getting inside religious consciousness by an act of sympathetic imagination to apprehend in its wholeness.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 10 : What are the theories regarding the origin of religion from the psychological Standpoint?

.....

.....

Q 11: What is faculty theory?

.....

.....

Q 12: Who are the exponents of the single elemental emotion theory?

.....

.....

Q 13: Fill in the blanks

a) Hume thinks that religion has its origin in the fear of the…….....

b) The ultimate elements of human nature are the same in the ….....…….. as well as The…….....…

Q 14 : State whether the following statements are true or false:

a) Religion is deeply rooted in human nature.

b) Faculty psychology has been proved to be a pseudoscience.

c) The Epicureans of Greece are not the chief exponents of 'Single emotion of Human psychology'.

5.13 LET US SUM UP

We have discussed in this unit the different theories egarding the origin of religion. The most important points discussed here are as follows :

- E.B. Tylor for the first time studied the problem of the origin of religion from the scientific standpoint.
- Herbert Spencer explains Ancestor-worship or Ghost worship as the earliest type of religion.
- Totemism is believed to be found in certain places especially in North America, Africa and Australia.
- The term 'mana' refers to those sacred persons and things that are attributed with powers.
- Mana is accepted as the most satisfactory theory of the origin of religion by the anthropologists and by the students of comparative religion. Mana can explain animism, ghost-worship and totemism.

- There are three theories regarding the origin of religion from the psychological standpoint. They are viz. the 'instinct-theory, 'the faculty theory' and 'the single elemental emotion theory

5.14 FURTHER READING

1) Edward, Mial D. *The Philosophy Of Religion.* Progressive Pub.
2) Chatterj.i P.B.: *Studies IN Comparative Religion*. Das Gupta & Co. Private Ltd.
3) Mohapatra, A.R. *Philosophy of Religion*. Sterling Pub.

5.15 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: E.B Tylor

Ans to Q No 2 : Darwin

Ans to Q No 3 : Animism

Ans to Q No 4 : a) True b) True c) True

Ans to Q No 5 : J.B. Jevons

Ans to Q No 6 : A totem is said to be a species of animal or plant.

Ans to Q No 7 : Bishop Codrington

Ans to Q No 8 : The term 'mana' refers to those sacred persons and things that are attributed with powers.

Ans to Q No 9 : Personal and impersonal

Ans to Q No 10 : The instinct theory, the faculty theory, and the single elemental emotion theory.

Ans to Q No 11: This theory attributes the origin of religion to a kind of activity or a type of behaviour.

Ans to Q No 12 : Epicureans of Greece, David Hume

Ans to Q No 13 : a) Gods b) saint as well as the sensualist

Ans to Q No 14 : a) True b) True c) False

5.16 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Objective questions

Q 1: What is totemism?

Q 2: What is taboo?

Q 3: What is religious faculty theory?

Q 4: What is manaism?

Q 5: What are the three theories regarding the origin of religion from the psychological standpoint?

Q 6: What does the term 'mana' refer to?

Q 7: Who are the exponents of the single elemental emotion theory?

Q 8: Who propounded the theory of totemism?

B. Short questions (Answer in about 100-150 words)

Q 1 : What is religious instinct theory? Briefly explain

Q 2 : Briefly explain the religious faculty theory

Q 3 : Write short notes on:

a) Taboo
b) Totemism
c) Religious instinct theory
d) Religious faculty theory
e) Manaism

Q 4: What is manaism? Briefly explain.

C. Long questions (Answer in about 300-500 words)

Q 1 : Explain different anthropological theories regarding the origin of religion

Q 2 : Explain Totemism as the origin of religion. Do you consider it to be satisfactory?

Q 3 : Critically explain Mana as the origin of religion Do you think it to be a satisfactory theory?

Q 4 : Name the psychological theories as the origin of religion. Explain any one of them.

UNIT 6 : FREUD'S THEORY OF THE ORIGIN OF RELIGION

UNIT STRUCTURE

6.1 Learning Objectives
6.2 Introduction
6.3 Freud's Life and Works: General Background
6.4 Psychoanalysis and Religion
6.5 Freud's Theory about the Origin of Religion
6.6 Critical Comments
6.7 Let us Sum up
6.8 Further Reading
6.9 Answers to Check Your Progress
6.10 Model Questions

6.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the general background of Sigmund Freud
- discuss the meaning of the school of psychoanalysis
- describe Freud's explanation of the origin of religion.
- explain Oedipus complex.
- explain Freud's general views on religion.
- examine critically Freud's theory about the origin of religion.

6.2 INTRODUCTION

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.

6.3 FREUD'S LIFE AND WORKS : GENERAL BACKGROUND

Freud was born in 1856 in Moravia, a part of central Europe in a Jewish family. While still a boy, Freud moved with his family to the capital of the empire, Vienna, where he lived almost rest of his life.

In high school, Freud was a gifted student who took courses in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew and finished at the top of his class. In 1873, when he was seventeen, he became a medical student at the University of Vienna, where he started research in anatomy and

physiology. After graduating as a doctor of medicine in 1881, he began working in the Vienna General Hospital, where he continued his research in human brain.

In 1885, Freud visited Paris to study nervous disorders. This visit became a turning point, for it ignited Freud's interest in the psychological study of the mind rather than purely physiological research on the brain. After Paris, Freud returned to Vienna, and continued his work with the patients who are mentally ill. Freud also successfully treated neurosis- that is, the irrational behavior of mentally ill troubled people by using hypnotism or simply by engaging them in discussions of their illness. In the process, Freud developed a way of investigating and treating the human mind, which he called "psychoanalysis". Once he had developed the basic ideas of psychoanalysis, Freud found religion a most promising subject of study.

His personal outlook however was one of complete rejection of religious belief. In his biography, the biographer Jones, comments- "…he went through life from beginning to end a natural atheist."(Life and Work of Freud, p. 3:351)

Freud found no reason to believe in God and therefore saw no value or purpose in the rituals of religious life. In his personal life, Freud was an atheist.

Among the major works of Sigmund Freud, we mention the following three – 1. Totem and Taboo (1913), 2. The Future of an Illusion (1927) and 3. Moses and Monotheism (1938).

6.4 PSYCHOANALYSIS AND RELIGION

Psychoanalysis is a way of investigating and treating the human mind developed by Sigmund Freud. Freud established psychoanalysis as a school of psychology.

Freud's theory about the origin of religion is shaped and developed by his special knowledge of psychoanalysis. Freud holds that the deep unnoticed elements of personality shape man's religious faith. Freud highlights the role of unconscious. Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961) was another notable figure of the school of psychoanalysis and a follower of Sigmund Freud.



LET US KNOW

- Neurosis is a form of psychological disorder that is not caused by organic disease; it involves symptoms of stress, depression, anxiety, obsessive behavior etc.
- Psychoanalysis is a set of theories and therapeutic techniques related to the study of the unconscious mind which together form a method of treatment for mental-health disorders.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Fill up the blanks

a) Freud's theory of the origin of religion is developed by his special knowledge of ————————

b) In his personal life, Freud was an ————————

Q 2: a) Name three books written by Sigmund Freud.

Q 3: State the name of another important figure of psychoanalysis and follower of Freud.

6.5 FREUD'S EXPLANATION OF THE ORIGIN OF RELIGION

Freud devoted a good deal of attention to the question of origin and nature of religion from the standpoint of psychoanalysis and also from his own personal attitude towards religion.

In his book 'The Future of an Illusion' Freud presents religious beliefs as 'wish fulfilling illusions'. He regarded religious beliefs as "…..illusions, fulfillment of the oldest, strongest and the most insistent wishes of mankind." Freud means by these words that human beings find themselves in a world which is not at all conducive to their happiness. They have to suffer the pain and indignity of illness, angst, failure and ultimately death. Religion offers a defensive solution to such problems. For Freud, religion is a mental defense against the more threatening aspects of nature- earthquake, flood, disease and inevitable death. According to Freud, with these forces nature rises up against us; therefore, the human imagination transforms these forces into mysterious personal powers. It is for this reason Freud states that religious beliefs are 'illusions'. Feud is however careful to state that 'illusion' is not an error; therefore, religion originated by way of offering a compensation for worldly sufferings.

Freud further holds that when religious believer personifies the threatening forces of nature, this gives him or her apparent possibility of influencing the course of events. These forces are personified as God and it is believed that we can influence and appeal to these forces through prayer, ritual and sacrifice.

Freud compares the effects of religious belief to that of a narcotic. In his article, "Obsessive Actions and Religious Practices" (1907) Freud observes that there is a close resemblance between the activities of religious people and the behaviors of narcotic persons. Both for example, place great emphasis on doing things on a patterned ceremonial fashion.

6.5.1 Oedipus Complex

In his "Totem and Taboo" Freud uses his distinctive concept of Oedipus complex to account for tremendous emotional intensity of religious life and the associated feeling of guilt and obligation to obey the deity. Oedipus is a figure in Greek mythology that unknowingly killed his father and married his mother. The Oedipus complex of Freud's theory expresses the child's unconscious jealousy for his father and desire to own his mother. Freud postulates a pre historical human stage in which the family unit was the 'primal horde' consisting of father, mother, and offspring. The father as the dominant male retained exclusive rights over the females and killed any of the sons who challenged his position. The son's eventually bounded together to kill and also to eat him. This patricide was the prime crime that has set up tensions within the human psyche out of which have developed moral inhibitions and other phenomena of religion. The remorse stricken brothers

find that they cannot all succeed to his position and that there is a need for self-restraint. The dead father's prohibition takes on a new moral authority as a taboo against them. This association of religion with Oedipus complex is said to account for the mysterious authority of God in the human mind and the powerful guilt feelings which make men submit to such a fantasy. Religion is thus "a return of the repressed".

According to Freud, God is nothing other than 'an exalted father'. So Freud concluded that "religion is the universal obsessional neurosis of humanity".



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 4 : What does Freud mean when he describes religion as "wish fulfilling illusions"?

.....

.....

Q 5 : Name the article written by Freud where he compares the effects of religious belief to that of a narcotic?

.....

.....

Q 6 : Why Freud has compared the effects of religious belief with that of a narcotic?

.....

.....

Q 7 : In which book Freud has referred to the distinctive concept "Oedipus complex"?

.....

.....

Q 8 : State why Freud has used the distinctive concept of "Oedipus complex" in his theory of the origin of religion?

.....

.....

6.6 CRITICAL COMMENTS

Any appraisal of Freud requires comment not only on his theory of the origin of religion but also on the larger framework of psychoanalytic science that serves as its support. There is an extensive literature discussing the Freudian theory of religion involving vehement criticism.

1. It is to be observed that Freud's theory about the origin of religion is not so much a theory of religion in general as it is a theory of Judeo-Christian, or at least a monotheistic religion in particular. In all the three major works of Freud, the ideas of the Oedipus complex and the need for a father image are so central to his theory that it is hard to see how the arguments of Freud could be applied to any form of religion that is not monotheistic. In other words, his theory is not applicable to any non-monotheistic religion. Much of his theory constructed specifically to

account for those religions that affirm one, and only one, all-powerful Father God. Others just do not fit.

2. In his 'The Future of an Illusion' Freud argues that religion is similar to a neurosis. Just as neurotic people believe and do irrational things, so religious people also believe and do irrational things. For Freud, the behavior of a nun who spends hours at devotions moving her prayer beads and a neurotic who spends hours counting the buttons on his shirts are engaged in the same form of behavior, but only, one is mentally disturbed. Here Freud's argument is wrong. He had assumed that prayer is an abnormal behavior. That is why he claims that the behavior of the religious person and a neurotic person arises from irrational motive located in the unconscious. Here, his argument is circular, because he assumes the very thing that he sets out to prove.
3. The critics have raised their fingers against psychoanalysis itself as a form of science. In recent decades psychoanalysis has come under severe scientific attack. Over the last twenty years especially, critics have subjected the entire enterprise of psychoanalysis –to a rigorous and searching reassessment. Their common verdict can be summarized in two sentences: Whatever his talent, Freud was not a scientist; and whatever his claim, psychoanalysis is not a science.
4. 'The primal horde' hypothesis which Freud took from Darwin and Robertson Smith is now generally rejected by anthropologists. The Oedipus complex itself is no longer accepted by many of Freud's successors as the key to solve such problems.

The view that religion grew out of a collective Oedipus complex is pointed out by these critics' involves a logical error known as the 'Genetic Fallacy'. Further, it is pointed out by his critics that Freudian account of the origin of religion is not convincing at all so far as personal experiences of millions of people around the world go.

In the light of these criticisms, it must be said that the scientific future of psychoanalysis does not seem to be promising. Freud's theory of religion fares no better. At the same time it should be duly noted that psychoanalysis is only one strand of modern psychology. Psychological research as a whole will definitely continue to throw light significantly on the ways and means of explaining religion.

6.7 LET US SUM UP

- Freud's theory of the origin of the religion is based on the basic ideas of psychoanalysis, developed by Freud himself. Psychoanalysis is a set of theories and therapeutic techniques related to the study of unconscious mind, which together form a method of treatment for mental-health disorders. The aim of psychoanalysis therapy is to release repressed emotions and experiences, i.e. make the unconscious conscious. It gives insights to the unconscious domain of human psyche.
- From the psychological perspective, religion draws on a deep fund of images and ideas that belong collectively to the human race and find expression in mythology, folklore etc. Religion, like other endeavors, draws on the resources of this "collective unconscious"

Freud presents religious beliefs as "wish fulfilling illusions". Freud holds that religion is a construction of the human mind to cope with a world which is not at all conducive to man's happiness. Religion offers a defensive solution to the problems of suffering arising out of pain and indignity of illness, angst, failure and untimely death. For Freud religion is a mental defense against the more threatening aspects of nature-earthquake, flood, disease, and inevitable death. Human imagination transforms the forces of nature into mysterious personal powers. These forces are personified as God and it is believed that we can influence and appeal to these forces through prayer ritual and sacrifice.

- Freud in his article, "Obsessive Actions and Religious Practices (1907) observes that there is a close resemblance between the activities of religious people and the behaviors of narcotic persons. Both for example, place great emphasis on doing things on a patterned ceremonial fashion.
- Religious life has a tremendous emotional intensity along with an associated feeling of guilt and obligation to obey the deity. In this context Freud utilizes the distinctive concept of Oedipus complex. This association of Oedipus complex is held to account for the mysterious authority of God in the human mind and the powerful guilt feelings which make people submit to such a 'fantasy'. Religion is thus in the words of Freud, "a return of the repressed". In this way Freud concludes that religion is the universal obsessional neurosis of humanity.
- Freud's theory of religion represents a modern approach to explain and understand religion. However, it has faced severe criticisms and it is no longer accepted as an account for the origin of religion.

6.8 FURTHER READING

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2) Gay, Peter (1987). *A Godless Jew: Freud, Atheism, and the Making of Psychoanalysis*. New Haven: Yale University Press
3) Palmer, Michael.(1997).*Freud and Jung on Religion.* London: Routledge
4) Robinson, Paul. (1993) *Freud and his Critics*. Berkley: University of California Press
5) Neu, Jerome, (1991). (ed). *The Cambridge Companion to Freud*. New york: Cambridge University Press

6.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1 : a) Psychoanalysis

b) Atheist

Ans to Q No 2 : Three books written by Freud are-

1. Totem and Taboo (1913), 2. The Future of an Illusion (1927) and 3. Moses and Monotheism (1938).

Ans to Q No 3 : Karl Jung.

Ans to Q No 4 : Freud means by these words that human beings find themselves in a world which is not at all conducive to their happiness. They have to suffer the pain and indignity of illness, angst, failure and ultimately death. Religion offers a defensive solution to such problems. For Freud, religion is a mental defense against the more threatening aspects of nature. For these reasons, Freud comments that 'religion is a wish fulfilling illusions'.

Ans to Q No 5 : The name of the article is, "Obsessive Actions and Religious Practices" (1907).

Ans to Q No 6 : Freud observes that there is a close resemblance between the activities of religious people and the behaviors of narcotic persons. Both for example,place great emphasis on doing things on a patterned ceremonial fashion. That is why Freud has compared the activities of religious people with that of a narcotic.

Ans to Q No 7 : The Name of the book is, "Totem and Taboo"

Ans to Q No 8 : In his "Totem and Taboo" Freud uses his distinctive concept of Oedipus complex to account for tremendous emotional intensity of religious life and the associated feeling of guilt and obligation to obey the deity.

6.10 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very short questions

Q 1 : Who is considered the founder of psychoanalytic school?
Q 2 : Write the names of two books of Freud.
Q 3 : Who is the author of 'The Future of an Illusion'?
Q 4 : According to whom, 'Religious beliefs are illusions'?

B) Short questions (Answer in about 100-150 words)

Q 1 : What is meant by psychoanalysis?
Q 2 : Briefly explain Freud's theory of origin of religion.
Q 3 : What is Oedipus complex? Briefly explain this distinctive concept of Freud.
Q 4 : How does Freud explain that religion is similar to neurosis? Briefly explain.
Q 5 : How does Freud critically explain the theory of religion? Explain in brief.

C) Long questions (Answer in about 300-500 words)

Q 1 : State a brief general background of Freud.
Q 2 : Explain the meaning of 'Psychoanalysis'.
Q 3 : Describe Freud's explanation about the origin of religion.
Q 4 : Explain Oedipus complex.
Q 5 : Discuss critically Freud's theory about the origin of religion.

UNIT 7: REVELATION, FAITH AND SPIRITUALITY

UNIT STRUCTURE

7.1 Learning Objectives
7.2 Introduction
7.3 Revelation in Christian Faith
7.4 Faith
7.5 Natural Theology and Revealed Theology
7.6 Different Ways of Revelation
7.7 Revelation in Indian Tradition
7.8 Spirituality, its Definition and Features.
7.9 Let us Sum up
7.10 Further Reading
7.11 Answers to Check Your Progress
7.12 Model Questions

7.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the nature and meaning of revelation
- define faith
- discuss the relation between revelation and faith
- explain the distinction between natural theology and revealed theology
- explain the different ways of revelation
- explain the place of revelation in Indian context.
- describe the meaning of spirituality.

7.2 INTRODUCTION

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. Many eastern religious traditions are also rooted in appeals to scriptural texts as revelation. Faith and spirituality are also associated with revelation as important foundations of religious belief.

7.3 REVELATION IN CHRISTIAN THOUGHT

Christian thought contains two very different understandings of the nature of revelation. The first view is called the 'propositional' conception of revelation. According to

this view, the content of revelation is a body of truths expressed in statements or propositions. Revelation implies some divinely authenticated truths which are imparted to people. In the words of the older Catholic Encyclopedia, "Revelation may be defined as the communication of some truths by God to a rational creature through means which are beyond the ordinary course of nature". This view dominates the medieval period and even today it is represented by more traditional forms of Roman Catholicism and even by conservative Protestantism.

7.4 FAITH

Corresponding to this conception of revelation there is a view of faith as people's obedient acceptance of these divinely revealed truths. For Aquinas, the key thinker for the discussion of faith in Roman Catholicism, faith is a belief in revealed truths. Faith is defined by the Vatican Council of 1870 as, "a supernatural virtue, whereby, inspired and assisted by the grace of God, we believe that the things that He has revealed are true."Such a definition presupposes knowledge about the existence of God who has revealed the proposition in question. This view dominates the medieval period which can be called the "propositional" understanding of revelation and faith. According to propositional view of revelation and faith, the content of revelation is a body of truths expressed in statements or propositions. The other view is called the voluntaries' view of revelation and faith which consisted in the part played by will in religious faith. At the same time, it takes the believer out of the theoretical attitude. This is expressed in the following contention—"Faith is a 'yes' of self-commitment, it does not turn probabilities into certainties. But it is a volitional response which takes us out of theoretic attitude".

A recent American theologian writes about faith in the following words-"To a Catholic, the word 'faith' conveys the notion of an intellectual assent to the content of revelation as true because of the witnessing authority of God the Revealer…… Faith is the Catholic's response to an intellectual message communicated by God."

These two interdependent conceptions of revelation as the divine promulgation of religious truths, and of faith as our obedient reception of these truths are related to a view of the Bible as the place where those truths are authoritatively written down. They were first revealed through the prophets, then more perfectly through Christ and the Apostles, and are now recorded in the scriptures. This view therefore implies that the Bible is not merely a human and therefore, a fallible book. In the words of the protestant Evangelist, Dr. Billy Graham, "The Bible is a book written by God through thirty secretaries". It is claimed that through the Bible God speaks directly to the church as a whole and to the mind and conscience of individual believers.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: What is revelation?

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Q 2 : Define revelation.

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Q 3 : What is faith?

.....

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Q 4 : Define faith after the Vatican Council of 1870.

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Q 5 : What is the propositional view of faith and revelation?

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7.5 NATURAL AND REVEALED THEOLOGY

The propositional theory of revelation and faith has always been accompanied by the distinction between natural and revealed theology. This distinction has been almost universally accepted by Christian theologians of all traditions until the present century.

Natural theology was held to consist of all those theological truths that can be worked out by the unaided human intellect. It was believed, for example that the existence and attributes of God and the immortality of the soul can be proved by strict logical argument involving no appeal to revelation.

Revealed theology, on the other hand, was held to consist of those further truths that are not accessible to human reason and can be known to us only if they are specially revealed by God. Thus the doctrine of Trinity was considered to be an item of revealed theology, to be accepted by faith. The truths of natural theology were believed to have been also revealed for the benefit of those who lack the time or the mental equipment to arrive at them for themselves.

Many modern philosophical treatments of religion, presuppose this propositional view of revelation and faith, whether attacking or defending religion. For example, Walter Kaufmann in his 'Critique of Religion and Philosophy' assumed that the religious person who appeals to revelation is referring to theological propositions that God is supposed to have declared to mankind.

7.6 DIFFERENT WAYS OF REVELATION

The prophetic religions hold that man stands in need of some sort of promptings through God, since God is essentially a transcendent Being, beyond the ordinary means of knowing ordinary things. Following are some of the means of revelation commonly accepted in prophetic religion——

1. Revealed religious Scriptures such as the Torah and Talmund (Judaism), the Bible (Christians) the Koran (Islam) and the Vedas (Hinduism) and so on.
2. Through His angels as held in Judaism, Christianity and Islam.
3. Also in dreams and visions.

4. Prophets in Semitic religions and Parsism are considered as the special messengers of God for revealing Him to the people.
5. Christianity accepts the mediation of the Holy Spirit for revealing the message of God.
6. Both the Bible and Koran hold that God can be known through His creation.

Most of the Christian theologians think that the Holy Scriptures are inspired writings, but a few fundamentalists in Semitic religions take their Scriptures as eternal, and, a copy of which is said to be in Heaven.

7.7 REVELATION IN INDIAN TRADITION

The Indian religious tradition also supports the doctrine of Revelation, and the points relating to it can be laid down thus

1. Brahman or God is revealed through Nature. Similarly, Shankara, the advaitin, gives a teleological argument in favour of the existence of Isvara.
2. However, the Indian religious tradition lays great stress on the scripture as the source of knowledge of the Supreme Being who is super sensuous. There are two important views about the Vedas which is the most sacred Scripture of the Hindus. Accordingly, the Mimamsakas hold that the Vedas are eternal. But the Naiyayikas hold the Vedas to be inspired revelation, wholly reliable and authoritative about our knowledge of God.
3. Through His incarnation, God reveals Himself to the people. The well-known verses of the Gita (iv.7) may be referred to here.
4. Brahmasaksatkara is a well-known term often referred to in Advaita Vedanta. Shankara accepts the doctrine of Jivanmukti (release in this very life). Such released souls are there to teach about the reality of Brahman.
5. There is also the remarkable doctrine of Grace which says that God reveals Himself to His devotees, according to His inscrutable will.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 6 : What is natural theology?

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Q 7 : What is revealed theology?

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Q 8 : Fill up the blank

a) The doctrine of ———was considered to be an item of revealed theology, to be accepted by faith.

Q 9 : Find out the correct answer

a) The Indian religious tradition supports\ does not support the doctrine of revelation.

7.7 SPIRITUALITY, ITS DEFINITION AND FEATURES

Spirituality is the vital force of religion. Spirituality refers to spirit, mind, higher faculties, soul and highly refined thought and feeling. It implies habitually or naturally looking to things of the spirit. It means awareness of the incorporeal, and the concept that spirit exists independently from matter. Spirituality also means to be free from sensuality and to be concerned with the human spirit. The practice of spirituality means to understand one's identity as a spiritual being or a soul, to consider all others as spiritual brothers and sisters and focus on our original spiritual qualities of peace, purity, love and light. It is the opposite of materialism.

The dictionary definitions of spirituality and religion give both words the same meaning in some cases and the opposite in others. Religion is the belief in and recognition of, or awakened sense of a higher unseen controlling power to which morality and emotions are connected. When one refers to a particular religion, it has specific name and an institutional identity, for example, Buddhism. Both religion and spirituality influence the life-styles, beliefs and practices of people but spirituality is not confined to any particular religion and its institutional identity. Thus, though spirituality is a vital force of religion and in many a time, spirituality is the igniting germinal seed of the development of religion, spirituality is not the same as religion.

In order to understand the deeper meaning of spirituality let us focus on certain specific features of spirituality in brief. They are as follows-

1. **Spirituality is a connection with the Divine.**
   People having a personal experience of the Divine, which includes that dimension of human experience outside the range of sense perception, is likely to take up a spiritual way of life. Research has revealed about near death experience (NDE) where a person 'sees' his or her body for a short while, then suddenly feels again sucked back into the body. The majority of people who have had NDEs also record seeing a Divine Being or a Divine light. This can leave a profound and lasting impression that gives an undeniable conviction of being a spirit, distinct from the physical body.
   The great poet and the Nobel laureate RabindraNath Tagore, for instance, often talked about 'surplus in man' the element of divinity in man which enables him capable of a higher quality creative vision. Thereby, Tagore highlights the spiritual nature of man of which the great poet was constantly aware of. On the other hand, those who experience and perceive the world as materialists usually consider there is no such thing as spirituality, or confuse intellectualism with spirituality, asserting that anything esoteric is imaginary.

1. **Spirituality is subtle**
   Spirituality is very subtle in the sense that it is concerned with the non-material dimension of our existence. The practice of spirituality strengthens the voice of conscience and enables one to hear its small inner voice.
2. **Spirituality involves self-discipline.**
   Spirituality requires self-discipline because it is inner work. It motivates people to study, to meditate and to spend time checking the conscience. It involves one to

analyze one's motives and behavior, to respond when the conscience bites and change the self accordingly.

3. **Spirituality is universal.**
   Spirituality is not blind faith. It refers to truths and realities that apply to all people at all times and in all places. It can be studied, understood, tested and has universal scope. The laws of spirituality are not laid down or represented by any human authorities. These Are discerned intuitively and discovered by study and investigation. In this sense, spirituality is like science, especially physics. 'As you sow, so shall you reap', is a well-known saying that describes the laws of action and the philosophy of karma.
4. **Spirituality is not fear driven.**
   Spiritually based people are not fear- based. A spiritual person can prepare for the inevitable death in an enlightened way as far as he or she experiences the being as an eternal soul, and not as a material body. A spiritual person is not bound by tradition but is free to investigate and is open -minded.
5. **Spirituality leads to happiness.**
   One of the prime consequences of leading a spiritual life is profound self-acceptance. This in turn generates feelings of peace and happiness that are not based on anything external, such as name, fame, position, etc. Thus it may be concluded that spirituality refers to a higher unseen power which is divine in nature, and the strength, emotion, and values connected with this divine, enabling one to be free from sensuality.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 10: What is spirituality?

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Q 11: State two features of spirituality.

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.....

Q 12 : Find out the correct word or words-

(a) Spirituality is the same as \opposite of materialism.

(b) Spirituality is confined to \ not confined to any particular religion and its institutional identity.

7.9 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have made brief philosophical analysis of some of the fundamental concepts of philosophy of religion. Revelation, faith and spirituality form the foundation of religious belief.

- Revelation means bringing into light what was hidden before. Religion is concerned with man's search for the Supreme, the Divine or God which is a super sensuous entity. God is essentially a transcendent Being, beyond the ordinary means of knowing ordinary things. But man has an inner urge to know God or the Supreme. Therefore, man stands in need of some sort of promptings through God, according to prophetic religions of the Semites. According to this tradition, God reveals Himself through various means as stated in the above discussions. The Indian religious tradition also supports the doctrine of revelation. Corresponding to the conception of revelation there is the view of faith as man's obedient acceptance of these divinely revealed truths.
- It has been generally accepted by religious thinkers that there is something in human nature which prompts man to turn to the Divine beyond the limitations of his material existence. This is the element which we may call 'spiritual', the vital driving force of his nature leading man towards different spiritual pursuits which, at a point, gives rise to religious beliefs. Hence, revelation, faith and spirituality are interconnected as the foundations of religious belief.

7.10 FURTHER READING

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5) Smart, Ninian (1969). *The Religious Experience of Mankind*. Charles Scribner's Sons. New York:1969

7.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1 : Revelation implies some divinely authenticated truths which are imparted to people.

Ans to Q No 2 : In the words of the older Catholic Encyclopedia, "Revelation may be defined as the communication of some truths by God to a rational creature through means which are beyond the ordinary course of nature".

Ans to Q No 3 : Faith is a belief in revealed truths.

Ans to Q No 4 : Faith is defined by the Vatican Council of 1870 as, "a supernatural virtue, whereby, inspired and assisted by the grace of God, we believe that the things that He has revealed are true."

Ans to Q No 5 : According to propositional view of revelation and faith, the content of revelation is a body of truths expressed in statements or propositions.

Ans to Q No 6 : Natural theology was held to consist of all those theological truths that can be worked out by the unaided human intellect. It was believed, for example that the existence and attributes of God and the immortality of the soul can be proved by strict logical argument involving no appeal to revelation.

Ans to Q No 7 : Revealed theology was held to consist of those further truths that are not accessible to human reason and can be known to us only if they are specially revealed by God. Thus the doctrine of Trinity was considered to be an item of revealed theology, to be accepted by faith.

Ans to Q No 8 : a) Trinity

Ans to Q No 9 : a) Supports

Ans to Q No 10 : Spirituality is the vital force of religion which refers to spirit, mind, higher faculties, soul and highly refined thought and feeling. It implies habitually or naturally looking to things of the spirit. It means awareness of the incorporeal, and the concept that spirit exists independently from matter.

Ans to Q No 11: a) Spirituality is universal,(b) spirituality is not fear driven.

Ans to Q No 12 : a) Opposite of, (b) not confined to.

7.12 MODEL QUESTIONS

a) Very short questions

Q 1 : Define Revelation.

Q 2 : What is spirituality?

Q 3 : Define faith.

Q 4 : What is propositional understanding of religion?

Q 5 : What is natural theology?

b) Short questions (Answer in about 100-150 words)

Q 1 : Distinguish between natural theology and revealed theology.

Q 2 : Write a brief note on faith, with special reference to the definition of faith given by Vatican Council of 1870

Q 3 : Write a brief note on spirituality. In what sense it is supposed to have universal appeal? Briefly explain

Q 4 : Write a short note on revelation in Indian thought.

Q 5 : What are the different features of spirituality? Briefly explain.

c) Long questions (Answer in about 300-500 words)

Q 1 : Explain the nature and meaning of revelation in this connection.

Q 2 : Explain the propositional view of revelation faith.

Q 3 : Describe the different ways of revelation accepted in prophetic religion.

Q 4 : What is spirituality? Are spirituality and religion same? Give reasons for your answer.

Q 5 : Explain the meaning of spirituality with special reference to its features.

Q 6 : Explain the concept of revelation and faith.

Q 7 : Discuss the different features of spirituality.

UNIT 8 : SOME BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF CHRISTIANITY

UNIT STRUCTURE

8.1 Learning Objectives
8.2 Introduction
8.3 Christianity and its Development
8.4 Christianity and its Fundamental Characteristics
8.5 Christianity and the Concept of Trinity
8.6 Let us Sum up
8.7 Answers to Check Your Progress
8.8 Further Reading
8.9 Model Questions

8.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- discuss the teachings of Jesus Christ on Christianity,
- analyze Christianity as a missionary religion.
- explain the fundamental characteristics of Christianity,
- describe the concept of Trinity of Christianity.

8.2 INTRODUCTION

Christianity owes its origin from Jesus Christ. It is believed that the life, teachings and death of Jesus Christ at a glance constitute the basic features of Christianity. Jesus was born in a Jewish family in 4 B.C. in the small town of Bethlehem. But his original home was in Nazareth in the province of Galilee. It is believed that Jesus was born miraculously of virgin mother, Mary and Joseph is accepted as the foster father. Jesus is considered as a Messiah. Prophet Isaiah explained the life of Jesus in Chapter 53 as a 'suffering servant of God'. Several sources like the Old Testament, the Apocryphal books of Enoch and Daniel have influenced the teachings of Jesus. But you will find interesting to know that apart from all these sources, the Christians are inspired from 27 books which constitute the New Testament. The 'Bible' in Christianity means 'a collection of Books'. So accordingly the New Testament is divided into four gospels. These four gospels give a documentation of the life, teachings, death and resurrection of Jesus. The first three gospels record the common contents. But the fourth Gospel is written by St. John. It is called as 'Johannine'. St John here gives vivid information about Jesus and Jesus being the Messiah and the Son of God. You have to be very careful while understanding the terms like 'son of man' or 'the son of God' in the context of religious language of more than two thousand years ago.

Christianity involves adherence to the teachings and Person of Christ. Christians believe that Christianity as a religion is complete and final revelation of God to men. Usually

every Semitic religion acknowledges two fundamental features to be very important. They are viz.

1. The Founder as a man and
2. The teachings of the Founder

But in Christianity the life of Jesus is more important than his teachings. It is because the Christians 'hope for salvation only in and through Christ.' Christians consider that Christianity is the 'complete and final revelation of God'. To justify the record that Jesus is the Messiah or Lord's Anointed of ancient Hebrew prophecy, the term 'Christ' is used as the title for Jesus. The term 'Christ' is derived from the Greek word 'Christos'. Christos means Messiah. Therefore, the name 'Christian' is associated for the first time to the followers of Jesus of Nazareth at Antioch in Syria. It is recorded that Christianity from the time of its inception is very intimately related with Judaism.

In the Apostles' Creed the Divine Character and Life of Jesus is briefly described thus: "Jesus was the Only Son of God the Father, and was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. He descended into hell: the third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, whence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead".

But there are certain controversies regarding the life of Jesus. Some believers of Christianity refuse to accept the life story as recorded in the Gospel. According to them, Jesus was not a historical character. Many others observe that Jesus was a man who tried to establish morality in the human mind. So, he was a moral reformist. The popular view is that 'Jesus was both son of man and Son of God, the Redeemer of Mankind and that he suffered crucifixion only to atone for the sins of mankind'. Thus you can observe that Christianity is a missionary religion. The vision of this religion is to revolutionize Judaism. Though the prophets of the Jews tried their best to give a universal religion and a religion of heart yet with the advent of time ritualistic and narrow minded spirit of the Jews people brought an eclipse in the original status of Judaism. The last words of Jesus follow just about the time of his ascension as:

'Go, then to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples'. (Mt. 28.19)

In support of the missionary zeal of Jesus you will also find that the prophets have also refuted the ritual sacrifices and thus opined:

"The Lord says, 'I hate your religious festivals; I cannot stand them! ..... I will not accept the animals you have fattened to bring me as offerings'. Instead, let justice flow like a stream, and righteousness like a river that never goes dry. (Amos 5.21-24)

As a reaction against animal sacrifice of Judaism, Micah writes that God never allows animal sacrifice. To quote his words:

"What he requires of us is this: to do what is just, to show constant love, and to live in humble fellowship with our God" (Micah 5.8)

Jesus therefore advocated and preached the spirit of universal brotherhood of man as sons of loving Father and He is called as God. Jesus preached the spirit of equality of all human beings before God.

Thus you will not find very strict theology or theological instructions in the teachings of Jesus. Jesus himself has worshipped in the Jewish Temples and Synagogues. He

respected Jewish rites but vehemently opposed all those ritualism which emphatically glorified the letter of the Law and not its spirit. Jesus glorified in optimum the principle of monotheism stating that God is one, holy, all-powerful and compassionate'. He strictly honoured the Fatherhood of God and emphasized that to have bliss and peace of mind we have to accept God as the Eternal Father. Jesus always inspired by preaching that just like a father loves every individual child instead by rule of law so also God who is our loving father and as such loves every individual unconditionally and not by any rule of laws. So ritualism never constitutes the nerve of Christianity.

8.3 CHRISTIANITY AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

The religious teaching of Jesus Christ was furthermore developed by many other mystics, saints, critics and thinkers. It may be mentioned that the contribution of St Paul has an important and immediate influence on Christianity after Jesus. Many critics and theologians believe that St Paul (the greatest of Jesus' disciple) is credited to have shaped Christianity as a religion because Jesus only tried to be a reformer and attempted to teach the Jews his own conception of 'God as love'. You have to remember here that Jesus only tried his best to 'cleanse Judaism of the rubbish which clustered around it in course of time'. Thus he repeatedly asserted that his attitude is never of destruction of the old faith of the Jews but 'to fulfill the Law and the prophets'.

St Paul following Jesus propagated the teachings of his master with devotion. St Paul formulated and vividly explained the doctrine of Atonement. He honestly supported and introduced certain important principles independently in Christianity. St Paul conceived that the death of Jesus symbolizes a unique act of Divine Sacrifice for the sins of the world. You will therefore come to know that along with Jesus, St Paul also plays an important role in the growth and development of Christianity. But here you will be informed more with Jesus's interpretation of Christianity. Moreover you will find interesting to know that St Paul supports the paradigm that in order to relief mankind from their sinful actions God takes the responsibility of sending his only begotten son to this world to be a willing victim of sacrifice in the name of 'God's love for mankind'. St Paul has also elaborated the doctrine of Trinity. This concept of Trinity explains that that the 'same godhead appears in three forms: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of Trinity holds that God is the Father. God represents Himself as the Creator. God being all powerful represents Himself as the Ultimate Source of everything. In this particular explanation it is also propounded that God as Son he was incarnated in Jesus and as Spirit he dwells in our hearts and in all creation. Christianity represents a Trinitarian religion. In this chapter you will come to know the fundamental characteristics of Christianity along with the concept of Trinity as propagated by Jesus Christ.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1 : Mention the fundamental feature of Christianity.

.....

.....

Q 2 : Name the theologian who is credited to shape Christianity as a religion.

.....

.....

Q 3 : Fill in the blanks :

a) Jesus was born in a ……..……. family.

b) Jesus is considered as a ……..

8.4 BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF CHRISTIANITY

The following are the basic tenets of Christianity:

1. **Influence of Old Testament in Christianity**
   Along with Judaism Christianity also beholds that Old Testament is the revealed word of God. In addition to this view, Christianity observes that The New Testament is the final revelation of the words of God. Revelation of the words of God becomes possible with the culmination of the incarnation of God in the form of Jesus. Jesus here is believed to be residing still in heaven and still bestows the power of Holy Spirit upon man. Christianity propounds that God reveals His words in and through Jesus because according to Christianity Jesus is the one and only revelation. Jesus' revelation is the absolutely supreme and thus focuses on God's supreme manifestation of redeeming Love.

2. **Christianity is monotheistic in nature**
   Christianity is fundamentally monotheistic in nature. It believes in one and only one God. Though Christianity supports the concept of Trinity yet it in and out strictly follows the theological concept of only one God-head. God the Father, God the son, and the Holy Spirit therefore these three personifications of the single Godhead are reconciled into one and thus follow the concept of Christian monotheism. Christianity therefore advocates that the one supreme God is of the nature of a pure spirit. Though Christianity preaches of God having a personality but you must be careful in remembering that God here is not an ordinary personality. God is characterized as unlimited, infinite, omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. He is regarded as eternal and His existence is necessary. Therefore, God exists and you cannot conceive His non-existence. God is eternal and so He is without beginning and end.

   God is the creator and sustainer of this world. God being omnipotent has created the world out of nothing. God in Christianity is believed to be both immanent and transcendent. God is identified with all values of life like kindness, holy, benevolence and love. As such God is never a source of fear and finally sent Jesus as a redeemer of mankind. Therefore, Jesus is accepted by the Christians as the concrete and living paradigm of God's love.

3. **The analysis of the World in Christianity**
   Christianity supports creation as a Divine Act God and follows 'ex nihilo'. God is the creator of this world, sustainer and finally the world is maintained by God Himself. The nature of the world can never be eternal as the world is ultimately dependent on God. This world is contingent. According to Christianity the contingent

effect of the world is real and therefore it makes this world a place for living experiences of human-being and beholding universal brotherhood. The world will cease to exist if God does not sustain and maintain it. The world is evolved with all intrinsic values because God the benevolent and the loving Father had created it. "And God saw the things that he had made, and they were very good."

Christian Genesis (Chapter 2), narrates the creation of Adam and Eve along with other human beings. According to a myth God created the Universe and man out of nothing to justify that God is omnipotent. Consequently it is believed that God created everything out of nothing. Christianity beholds that 'besides God nothing can be co-existent with God'. To quote Bible 'The raging ocean that covered everything was engulfed in total darkness, and the power of God was moving over the water'. (Gen. 1.2). According to Christianity creation is a myth. Hence you cannot raise philosophical questions related with the theory of creation. In Christianity even 'A Creator God' is only a myth. The Bible supports here the creation as a myth and therefore you will find the explanation as: 'the world has been created by God and God takes care of what he has created. Not even a sparrow falls to the ground without the Father's will (Matt. 5.2; Luke 12.25). And God was happy with His creation (Gen. 1.31).

You must remember here that in Christianity 'A Creator God' is only a myth. In order to justify the omnipotent nature of God, Christianity supports that God created everything out of nothing. Therefore, the world, with its space and time man and his final destiny depends on the will of God. That which is not created is therefore eternal. The Chapter 2 of Genesis, which is considered as the first book of the Bible narrates the creation of Adam and Eve along with other creation of human beings. God and His Laws in Christianity are accepted as eternal and everlasting. Therefore, man has the potentiality to explore the 'secrets of nature'. It is here you can understand that while exploring the secrets of nature, Christian theology asserts that man through this activity actually can know the will and commandment of God. Bible allows scientific pursuits as nature itself is God's creation. God is revealed and glorified through nature and pursuit of science is considered as sacred. Nature is spiritualized by the intervention of God as a loving Father for the welfare of Human living and its growth and improvement. So it is stated that: 'Be as wise, as the father in heaven is'.

It must be clear enough that by encouraging the pursuit of science in exploring nature, Christianity is not supporting materialism. You will find rather the creation of myth of the Bible is teleological in nature. The world is sacred in nature and therefore the goal of human life is not merely to satisfy one's own individual selfish interest. The world is not prior for man where he lives and has his being. The world has only secondary value. Therefore man has to know God intimately and seek his righteousness and the kingdom of God. Jesus preached thus:

O men of little faith! Why do you worry about food and raiment? Birds do not sow seeds, nor do they harvest. Yet God takes care of them. …….. Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all other things will be added to you. (Matt. 6. 12-21; 24-34).

The world is only a means for human living and the end is to establish the kingdom of God in this world. Thus it is stated:

Do not store up riches for yourselves here on earth, where moths and rust destroy, and robbers break in and steal. Instead, store up riches for yourselves in heaven, where moths and rust cannot. (Matt 6.19).

4. **Man and salvation in Christianity**

Christianity propounds that God created man in the final day of His creation. Accordingly man must strive for ethical holiness. You must understand here that Christianity develops a subtle distinction between the flesh and the spirit. The Christians hold that the Flesh is liable to sin more easily. As the flesh is easily liable to sin so the Fall of man in the Garden of Eden is considered as the original sin and then and then after human beings are called sinners. But Christianity allows freedom to individual man (i.e. the flesh) in considering himself a sinner. The freedom to strive for holiness by identifying oneself with the Sacrifice of Christ allows the Flesh from the accountability of being a sinner. To make the individual free from the original sin Christianity encourages Grace from God. You have to remember here that Christianity is very emphatic in the tendency of human being in committing sin very easily. Thus the Christians depend on the need of 'Grace and sanctification for the redemption of mankind'. Christianity is not rigid in the concept of sin of the flesh. It creates a flexible attitude regarding the actualization of sin and also for a light of hope to strive for righteousness. Man is thus glorious in his potentialities. The flesh is easily liable to commit sin and on the other hand can even rise higher than the angles with the grace of God.

The concept of sin opens the door for salvation in Christianity. 'Salvation', 'Immortality', 'Life Eternal' and 'Redemption' are the words usually referred to give explanation on human destiny. It is holiness of life which assures man to lead a life free from sin. God the loving Father bestows his pure love to every individual and thus man rises above all sins. 'The Cross is the expression of that Love. God the Son affected the atonement or reconciliation of man by the supreme act of sacrifice love, and thus forever beacons all sinners to follow the path of love and thereby to attain salvation'. Though man has committed the original sin, yet he has the capacity and potentiality to overcome the original sin by surrendering himself to the Divine will of God. Man therefore strives for Divine goodness. The saying flows on thus :

When I look at the sky, which you have made, at the moon and the stars, which you set in their places. What is man that you think of him: mere man that you (God) care for him? (Psalm 8.2-3).

5. **An analysis of Life after death in Christianity**

Christianity advocates the immortality of soul. Accordingly death is not the ultimate end of human life. This particular feature reflects that there is life after death. To justify this view you have to take into consideration of three fundamental features. They are as follows, viz.

1. The Day of Judgment,
2. Resurrection of the Dead

3. The assignment of Heaven or Hell to human being according to the effect of actions in this earth.

The body gets destroyed with the death of the human life. But the soul survives. The Christians understand that with the final end of the world, there is resurrection of the dead. It is only God who being omniscient has the knowledge of the final end of the world along with the happening of resurrection of the dead. The Scripture justifies that the final end of the world will be followed on by re-arrival of Christ and he will finally judge all men. Here on Christ will preach the universal teachings of the Holy Gospel and will make religion free from all external disturbances. Thus you must understand here that at this juncture Christ will spiritualize religion because with his re-advent in this world religion will never be a bewilderment of rigorous rites and ceremonies. Christ will teach: 'God is my Father and at every moment of life every individual must be free oneself from every temptation.' He also asserted that 'Grace of God is fundamental and it is possible because God is our loving Father'. Therefore, Christ is accepted as the redeemer of mankind. Jesus was crucified and it symbolized God's unconditional love for his creation as Christ revealed that 'I am the Son of God'. St Paul speaks thus:

Christ died for our sins, as written in the Scriptures; that he was buried and that he was raised to life three days later, as written in the Scriptures: that he appeared to Peter…… Then he appeared to James, and afterwards to all the apostles.

Last of all he appeared to me (1 Cor.15.3-8).



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 4 : How God is characterized in Christianity?

.....

.....

Q 5 : Why the world is evolved with all intrinsic values?

.....

.....

Q 6 : State whether the following statements are True/ False

(a) Is God immanent and transcendent in Christianity. (True/Yes /False No)

(b) Jesus is not accepted as the living paradigm of God's love (True/Yes /False/ No)

8.5 CHRISTIANITY AND THE CONCEPT OF TRINITY

Christianity essentially propounds monotheistic theology. But it is also found to accept three persons in one single Godhead. This is the concept of Trinity which holds the view that God is one but God is painted into three persons. The three Persons in one are: God the Father, God the son and the Holy Spirit. Jesus is considered as the second person, the son incarnated. The third person is thus the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit symbolizes the spirit of unconditional Love. The Father and the Son is thus followed by the Holy Spirit. Thus in Christianity the idea of Trinity is a mystery. Just like you cannot

raise certain philosophical questions regarding the creation of the world as it is a myth in Christianity so also the concept of trinity is not within the periphery of philosophical dimension. Mystical explanation is beyond the dimension of rational enquiry. Mystical explanation has the strength of inward revelation and clarity. Hence Trinity has the strength of conscious revelation and as such cannot be merely justified only by human cognition.

Often it is highlighted that the idea of Trinity comes very near to Hinduism. In Hinduism also there is the idea of Trinity. The Three Persons are the triad of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswar. Critics hold that the three Persons cannot be one 'no matter how much closer they may be'. But critics and theologians never accept any non-philosophical query about mysticism. The critics hold that Jesus and God are not identical because this identical status between Jesus and God will not allow Jesus to be a man. On the other hand the crucifixion of Jesus also cannot be accepted because God is eternal. Moreover the identical nature of Jesus and God will not be taken into accountability because if so then Jesus' prayer 'God is my Father' becomes meaningless. Thus Jesus is regarded as the 'visible likeness of the invisible God'. (Col.1.15).

The critics and theologians also raise the question that if Jesus is a human being then Christians will be favoring worship of 'idols'. In this case, Christians will be called as 'idolaters' in strict sense if you accept Jesus to be an ordinary human being worshipping God as the creator of this world. This philosophical question become self-contradictory if you consider that 'a being is both finite and infinite'. You will find that Indian interpretation of Trinity is less self-contradictory than the western idea of Trinity. Thinkers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Keshab Chandra Sen and many other thinkers opine that the trinity involved in the conception of 'Saccidananda' is less objectionable.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 7 : Explain the view on salvation as found in Christianity.

.....

.....

Q 8 : How Christianity has explained the idea of Trinity?

.....

.....

Q 9 : Fill in the blanks

(a) In Christianity the idea of Trinity is a ……

(b) The Holy Spirit symbolizes the spirit of …….. love.

8.6 LET US SUM UP

- Christianity owes its origin from Jesus Christ. It is believed that the life, teachings and death of Jesus Christ constitute the basic features of Christianity.
- The term 'Christ' is derived from the Greek word 'Christos'. Christos means Messiah. Therefore the name 'Christian' is associated for the first time to the

followers of Jesus of Nazareth at Antioch in Syria. It is recorded that Christianity from the time of its inception is very intimately related with Judaism.

- St Paul following Jesus propagated the teachings of his master with devotion. St Paul formulated and vividly explained the doctrine of Atonement. He honestly supported and introduced certain important principles independently in Christianity.
- Christianity observes that The New Testament is the final revelation of the words of God. Revelation of the words of God becomes possible with the culmination of the incarnation of God in the form of Jesus.
- God is characterized as unlimited, infinite, omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. He is regarded as eternal and His existence is necessary. Therefore God exists and you cannot conceive His non-existence. God is eternal and so He is without beginning and end.
- The concept of sin opens the door for salvation in Christianity. 'Salvation', 'Immortality', 'Life Eternal' and 'Redemption' are the words usually referred to give explanation on human destiny. It is holiness of life which assures man to lead a life free from sin.
- The Christians hold that the Flesh is liable to sin more easily. As the flesh is easily liable to sin so the Fall of man in the Garden of Eden is considered as the original sin and then and then after human beings are called sinners.
- The concept of Trinity which holds the view that God is one but God is painted into three persons. The three Persons in one are: God is the Father, God the son and the Holy Spirit. Jesus is considered as the second person, the son incarnated. The third person is thus the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit symbolizes the spirit of unconditional Love.

8.7 FURTHER READING

1) Masih, Y. (1989). *A Comparative Study of Religions*. Motilal Banarsidass, Publishers Pvt. Ltd.
2) Tiwari, K.N. (1983). *Comparative Religion.* Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd.
3) Chatterji, Pritibhushan. (1971). *Studies in Comparative Religion*. Das Gupta & Co. Private Ltd.

8.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q No 1: The life, teachings and death of Jesus Christ take together constitute the basic feature of Christianity.

Answer to Q No 2 : St Paul is the theologian who is credited to shape Christianity as a religion.

Answer to Q No 3 : a) Jew b) Messiah.

Ans to Q No 4 : God is characterized as unlimited, infinite, omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. He is regarded as eternal and His existence is necessary.

Answer to Q No 5 : The world is evolved with all intrinsic values because God the benevolent and the loving Father had created it.

Answer to Q No 6 : a) True b) No

Ans to Q No 7 : The concept of sin opens the door for salvation in Christianity. 'Salvation', 'Immortality', 'Life Eternal' and 'Redemption' are the words usually referred to give explanation on human destiny. It is holiness of life which assures man to lead a life free from sin.

Answer to Q No 8 : This is the concept of Trinity which holds the view that God is one but God is painted into three persons. The three Persons in one are: God is the Father, God the son and the Holy Spirit. Jesus is considered as the second person, the son incarnated. The third person is thus the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit symbolizes the spirit of unconditional Love. The Father and the Son is thus followed by the Holy Spirit.

Answer to Q No 9 : a) Mystery b) unconditional

8.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very Short Question :

Q 1 : What are the two acknowledged fundamental features of Christianity?
Q 2 : Mention only three basic tenets of Christianity.
Q 3: According to Judaism, which is considered the revealed word of God?
Q 4 : What is meant by the 'concept of trinity'?
Q 5 : What does the word 'Christos' mean?

B. Short questions (Answer in about 100-150 words)

Q 1 : Write briefly the monotheistic character of Christianity.
Q 2 : Explain briefly the concept of trinity.
Q 3 : What is 'immortality of soul' in Christianity? Briefly explain.
Q 4 : How does Christianity explain the distinction between the 'flesh and spirit'? Explain in brief.
Q 5 : How does Christianity explain the concept of salvation? Briefly explain.
Q 6 : How Christianity is influenced by 'Old Testament'? Explain in brief.

C. Long Questions (Answer in about 300-500 words)

Q 1 : Explain the characteristics of Christianity.
Q 2 : Explain the relation between God and Man in Christianity.
Q 3 : Discuss the concept of monotheism in Christianity
Q 4 : How Christianity has explained the creation of the world?
Q 5 : What are the similarities regarding the concept of trinity between Christianity and Hinduism? Discuss.

UNIT 9 : ISLAM : FIVE PILLARS

UNIT STRUCTURE

9.1 Learning Objectives
9.2 Introduction
9.3 The salient features of Islam
  9.3.1 Islam is a monotheistic religion or not
  9.3.2 Doctrine of absolute oneness of God
  9.3.3 Relation between man and God according to Islam
  9.3.4 The Question of the Final Destiny of Man (The idea of Heaven and Hell)
9.4 Five pillars of Islam
  9.4.1 Utterances of Kalima
  9.4.2 Daily prayers (Namaaz)
  9.4.3 Fasting (Roza)
  9.4.4 lms giving (Zakat)
  9.4.5 Pilgrimage(Hajj)
9.5 Let us Sum Up
9.6 Answers to Check Your Progress
9.7 Further Reading
9.8 Model Questions

9.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to

- explain the philosophy of Islam
- discuss the salient features of Islam
- explain whether Islam is a monotheistic religion or not
- describe the doctrine of absolute oneness of God
- explain the relation between man and God according to Islam
- elaborate the idea of Heaven and Hell
- discuss five pillars of Islam
- explain utterances of Kalima
- explain about daily prayers (Namaaz)
- explain fasting (Roza)
- explain Alms giving(Zakat)
- discuss Pilgrimage (Hajj)

9.2 INTRODUCTION

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.



LET US KNOW

- Zoroastrianism : the ancient pre-islamic religion of Iran that survives there in isolated areas and more prosperously, in India, where the descendants of Zoroastrianism Iranian (Persian) immigrants are known as Parsis.
- Judaism : it is one of the oldest monotheistic religions and was founded over 3500 years ago in the middle east. Jews believe that God appointed the Jews to be his chosen people in order to set an example of holiness and ethical behaviour to the world.
- Christianity : is an Abrahamic monotheistic religion based on life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

9.3 THE SALIENT FEATURES OF ISLAM

In spite of its being influenced by Judaism, Islam has got certain distinctive features of its own. These features of Islam may be presented as follows—

1) Islam believes in one and only one God, called 'Allah'. It is therefore, a monotheistic religion.
2) It is totally opposed to polytheism, ritualism, idolatry and priesthood.
3) It believes in the reality and authenticity of prophets who are regarded as carrying the message of God to man. It admits that there have been prophets like Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus even before Mohammad, but Mohammad is the last, the greatest and the mightiest amongst prophets and his message is to be respected by all.
4) Islam believes in a life after death comprising of the resurrection of the death on the Day of judgement and retribution of reward and punishment by God in the form of heaven and hell.
5) It teaches an ethics of perfect purity, service of humanity and brotherhood of man.
6) Amongst many ethical and religious duties as prescribed by Islam, absolute submission (Islam) to God in perfect piety is regarded as man's primary duty.
7) Islam takes Quran as the greatest and the most sacred and it is the book on which the entire structure of Islam is based.
8) It believes in the existence of angels and spirits, both of good and evil dispositions. Angels of good disposition always stand at God's call in heaven to carry out his orders. They maintain a record of man's conduct for the last judgement. Besides good angels, Islam also believes in one fallen angel Iblis and his companions. Iblis is the ruler of the hell. Besides angels, Islam also believes in good and bad jins.

LET US KNOW

- Idolatry: the worship of idols.
- Monotheism: The belief in one God
- Polytheism: The belief in or worship of more than one God.
- Polu(Greek word)-many, Theos(Greek word)-God.
- Semitic Religion: the three main semitic religions are- Christianity, Judaism and Islam. They are related by a common belief in God.
- Pietism : A devotional movement in the Lutheran Church; also any attitude to religion stressing piety and faith rather than evidence and reason.
- Prophet: A person who speaks for God or a deity, who is believed to have a special power that allows them to say what a god wishes to tell people, especially about things that will happen in the future.

9.3.1 Islam is a Monotheistic Religion

Islam is strictly monotheistic in nature. The Semitic religious tradition of monotheism has been carried by Islam to its furthest logical conclusion. Islam even criticises the Christian concept of Trinity as something opposed to the spirit of monotheism. In the various chapters of Koran the unity of God has been asserted time and again in respect of its monotheism. Islam is different from Hinduism. In Hinduism polytheistic and monotheistic trends are found together. Polytheism and idolatry have no place in Islam. Islam is also different from Buddhism. As a religion early Buddhism is atheistic. But belief in the existence of God is one of the fundamental traits of Islam.

The word Allah is actually a short form of two Arabic words-"Al and Ilah" . This word literally means 'mighty'. There can be only one power who is mighty in the supreme sense. Therefore, it logically follows that there can be only one God.

There are various verses of the Koran in which monotheism is strictly asserted. It is the basic duty of every Muslim to repeat the following line before every prayer "There is no God but Allah, and Mohammad is His Prophet". The call to prayer, which is given from the entire mosque five times in a day, is as follows- "God is the most great, I testify that there is no God but Allah…….I testify that Mohammad is the prophet of God. God is great" In Koran, polytheism is strongly rejected and various false gods are denied.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: State whether the following statements are true or false.

a) Islam is a monotheistic religion(T/F)
b) Hindu is a polytheistic religion (T/F)
c) Islam is a Semitic Religion(T/F)

Q 2 : Is there any place of Idolatry in Islam?

.....

.....

Q 3: Fill in the Blanks :

a) Early Buddhism is ….....……

b) The word Allah is actually a short form of two Arabic words ……....….....and…….....……

Q 4 : What is the basic duty of every Muslim before every prayer?

.....

.....

9.3.2 Doctrine of absolute oneness of God

Perhaps the most important article of faith in Islam is that God has revealed his will to mankind through apostles who brought a written massage. The Koran is the last and most complete divine revelation. Muhammad is the last prophet and the series of prophets have come to an end with Mohammad. But in spite of the point that Mohammad is held in Islam in great esteem, He is not equated with God. Islam says that God is completely transcendent. The idea of divine immanence is completely absence in Islam. The Hindu conception of incarnation is not to be found in Islam. Mohammad was specially chosen by God to receive the divine message.



LET US KNOW

Apostle : messenger, one who is sent out by God.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 5: Who is the apostle of Islam?

.....

.....

Q 6: Who is the last prophet of Islam?

.....

.....

Q 7: Whether incarnation is found in Islam or not?

.....

.....

9.3.3 Relation between man and God according to Islam

Mysterious : difficult or impossible to understand, explain or identify, secret.

Inscrutable: impossible to understand or interpret.

A.C. Bouquet : He is the author of " comparative Religion: A short Outline"

Reverential: implying worship-a devoutly religious person feels reverential towards God.

In Islamic theology there is a detailed treatment of the topic of the relationship between God and Man. The entire treatment of the topic of the relationship between God and man is ultimately based on the Koran.

Firstly, according to Koran, God is completely transcendent. Moreover; the ways of God are mysterious and inscrutable. God therefore is not the immanent indwelling spirit. Hinduism generally considers God to be imminent (inherent) indwelling spirit. But this is not the way in which Islam conceives the relationship between God and man.

Secondly, According to Islam the relationship between God and man is the relationship between the creator and the created. According to the Koran, man was created by God from clot of blood. There is a famous Surah or chapter of the Koran which is entitled "The Clot".

Thirdly, according to Islam, in relation to God, man has no right but duties. The basic duty of man is to submit to the will of God. The literal meaning of the word Islam is submission. Man is to submit himself completely to God. Therefore, the relationship between God and man is something like relationship between master and slave. Man is first to pray God and secondly to serve God. In the strict sense he cannot ask anything from God. A.C. Bouquet has pointed out that Islamic prayer is not petitionary but only reverential.

Lastly, the relationship between God and man has been represented in Islam with the help of the idea of guidance. Man may pray to God seeking his guidance. According to Islam freedom of will has not been granted to man. The final destiny of every man is completely pre-determined by God. The course of action of every man is also pre-determined by God. Therefore, there is complete pre-determination and no freedom of Will.

It is in this way Islam attempts to give a comprehensive picture of the relationship between God and man. One can see that this picture has a number of affinities with the corresponding Judaic and Christian view.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 8 : Fill in the Blanks:

a) According to Koran, God is completely ……..

b) The ways of God are mysterious and…….

c) According to Islam man has no rights only …….

d) Islamic prayer is not petitionary but only…….

Q 9 : What is the relationship between God and man in Islam?

.....

.....

Q 10 : What is the literal meaning of the word Islam?

.....

.....

Q 11 : Is freedom of will accepted in Islam?

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.....

9.3.4 The Question of the Final Destiny of Man (The idea of heaven and hell)

The question of the final destiny of man has also been discussed in Koran. The idea of Heaven and Hell are found in Islam. For the believers there are seven heavens which God has created for them and for the disbelievers God has appointed hell. Many Muslim thinkers such as Iqbal considered heaven and hell as stages of human spiritual progress.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 12 : Fill in the Blanks :

a) The idea of Heaven and …….....are found in Islam.

b) There are ……..... ..Heavens in Islam.

9.4 FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM

The practical teachings of the Koran are equally as important as the doctrinal ones. They can be divided into two main categories. First, there are the religious duties which are laid down for the faithful. Second, there are the ethical and social duties. The religious duties have given shape to Muslim practices through the ages, and help to account for the remarkable cohesion of a movement which has never relied upon a hierarchy of organized priests. They are constituted by the so-called “Five Pillars” of Islam. These are: the repetition of the brief creed of Islam, *La ilaha illa ILLahu: Muhammad resulu ILLah* (There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his Prophet): Prayer; Almsgiving; Fasting and Pilgrimage. It is generally said that Islam as a religion is based on “Five Pillars”.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 13 : How many Pillars are there in Islam?

.....

.....

Q 14 : What is the meaning of *La ilaha illa Allah: Muhammad rasul Allah* ?

.....

.....

9.4.1 Utterances of Kalima

As a strict monotheistic religion, Islam prescribes it to be the basic duty of every Muslim that before every prayer he should repeat the Kalima. The utterances of Kalima are actually the utterances of the following lines-"*La ilaha illa' llahu, Muhammad resulu' illah*" (there is no god but allah and Mahammad is the prophet of Allah.) This repetition is intended not merely as a recital of words quite unmindfully but as a reaffirmation of the wholehearted conviction that Allah is the only supreme God and that this important message has been brought to the people of the world by the revered Mohammad.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 15 : What is Kalima?

.....

.....

9.4.2 Daily prayers (Namaaz)

Prayer is the core of the Muslim's religious life. Daily prayer is an important aspect of the Islamic faith. The faithful Muslim is required to pray five times in a day. The Koran does not lay down as a rule, but there is little doubt that the practice goes back to the Prophet himself. The first prayer is at sunset and it is followed by the early night, dawn, noon and mid-afternoon prayers. According to A.C. Bouquet, the innate psychological skill with which these devotional postures are planned is "Remarkable, and the nearest parallel is to be found in the system of Yoga postures in India" The call to prayers is given from every mosque. The Muslim is expected to pray, facing towards Mecca. Originally the Prophet told his followers to bow towards Jerusalem, but Jewish opposition and other factors induced him to introduce the later rule. The most common prayer is the recitation of the words of the first *Sura* which express the heart of Muslim devotion.

Friday is a special day set aside for devotions. Congregational worship centres on the mosque, which, though simple and unadorned with images, in accordance with the Muslim view of images as idolatrous, is analogous to a Christian church. In place of the altar there is a semi-circular recess known as the *mihrab*; in facing this the faithful are bowing towards Mecca. Prayers are led by a prayer leader, or *imam*, who recites the words while the faithful prostrate themselves at appropriate times in accordance with his example. It is also usual for the prayer leader to preach, expounding Muslim doctrine. Daily prayers have great importance in Islam. They are regarded as "Keys to paradise". It is said, "God has promised to take into Paradise him who keeps the five prayers and omits none…"

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 16 : How many times Muslims have to Pray Namaaz?

.....

.....

Q 17 : At what time Muslims offer Prayer?

.....

.....

Q 18: Fill in the blanks:

a) The Muslim is expected to pray, facing toward ….....……

b) ….....…….. is a special day set aside for devotions.

c) Prayers are led by a prayer leader, or ……..

9.4.3 Fasting (Roza)

Fasting centres on the great fast of the month of Ramadan. It varies in date, since it is a lunar month, not corresponding with the monthly divisions of the Western calendar. During this period no food or drink may be taken from sunrise to sunset. One important duty is the observance of fasting during day time all through the month of Ramadan. However, children, the sick and travellers are made exceptions. It is believed that this fasting remits all kinds of sin committed during the whole year. This represents considerable effort, especially in hot, dry countries, fasting also enters into the obligations of Pilgrimage.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 19: In which month Muslims observed fast or Roza ?

.....

.....

Q 20: What is the time of fasting?

.....

.....

9.4.4 Alms giving (Zakat)

Giving alms to the poor and the needy is another essential duty of every Muslims. It was at one time obligatory-one fortieth of one's income was collected on behalf of the community. Various formulas for the giving of alms have been worked out in Islam, sometimes, one-tenth and sometimes one- twentieth. But this obligation long since fell into disuse. The Koran stressed the importance of giving money to help the poor. It has remained a central part of Muslim charity. Through it, the

compassion and solidarity of the community are expressed. It was recommended by Mohammad from the very beginning as a mark of piety and liberality toward the poor, but later on it took the form of a regular religious tax called, Zakat.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 21 : To whom does the Muslims give Zakat?.

.....

.....

Q 22 : What is the ratio of giving alms to the poor?

.....

.....

9.4.5 Pilgrimage (Hajj)

The last duty of a devout Muslim is pilgrimage. Every Muslim who is capable of under taking the journey must visit Mecca at least once during his lifetime. The journey is often a hazardous and perilous undertaking. Once within the boundaries of Mecca, every pilgrim must wear a certain sort of plain, white clothing. People of different nations and customs, and people of different social rank are levelled together to a brotherly equality during the period of the main ceremonies connected with pilgrimage. These start with the act of going seven times around the Kaaba, kissing the black stone on each occasion. Following this, the pilgrims engage in the rite of running seven times between two nearby hills. Then they move off on the eighth day of the feast to Arafat, some twelve miles east of Mecca. During the following day they spend their time on the plain, engaged in meditation. On the way back to Mecca, they stop at Mina, where the ceremony of casting, seven stones is performed by each pilgrim-This is the “stoning of the Devil”. Sacrifices follow, and meat is distributed among the poorer brethren. Fasting and merrymaking give the sequence of prescribed acts a joyous flavour. The pilgrims return to Mecca and circumambulate the Kaaba last time. During most of the period they have been fasting from dawn to dusk, and they must remain sexually constraint. Hair must not be cut; nails must not be pared. No pilgrimage is complete without a visit to the tomb of the prophet at Medina.

The above mentioned five pillars of Islam give a solid foundation to Islam. It is noteworthy that the obligations are laid down for individuals: it is through the willing conformity of the individuals who constitute the community that the ritual traditions carry on. Islam is notable for its lack of an organization of priests. Each man, in principle, stands directly before his Maker, without intermediaries. Thus we may conclude that Islam has a number of distinctive features and as a religion it occupies a unique place among all the world religions. Koran lays down many ethical virtues and duties for the observance of every Muslim in his dealings with others. Muslim ethics, therefore, is mainly social. Hospitality is one of the greatest

virtues that Islam teaches. It also preaches the ethics of the brotherhood of man and service to humanity. Furthermore, virtues like obedience to parents; avoidance of adultery, cheating and lying; refraining from stealing, murder etc. are also emphasized.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.23 : What is the last duty of a devout Muslim?.

.....

.....



9.5 LET US SUM UP

The most important points discussed in this unit are:

- Islam is strictly monotheistic in Nature.
- There are various verses of Koran in which monotheism is strictly asserted.
- Islam is a Semitic Religion.
- Polytheism and Idolatry have no place in Islam.
- Muhammad is the apostle of God.
- According to Koran God is completely transcendent, mysterious and inscrutable.
- According to Islam the relationship between God and man is the relationship between the creator and created.
- The basic duty of man is to submit to the will of God.
- The literal meaning of the word Islam is submission.
- The idea of Heaven and Hell are found in Islam.
- It is generally said that Islam as religion is based on Five Pillars. These Five Pillars are-The utterances of Kalima, Daily Prayer(Namaaz), Fasting (Roza),Alms Giving (Zakat) and Pilgrimage(Hajj)



9.6 FURTHER READING

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9.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: a) T b) T c) T

Ans to Q No 2 : No

Ans to Q No 3 : a) Atheistic b) Al, IIah

Ans to Q No 4 : The basic duty of every Muslim to repeat the following line before every prayer “There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his prophet”.

Ans to Q No 5 : Muhammad

Ans to Q No 6 : Muhammad

Ans to Q No 7 : No.

Ans to Q No 8 : a) Transcendental b) inscrutable c) duties d) reverential

Ans to Q No 9 : According to Islam, the relationship between God and man is the relationship between the creator and the created.

Ans to Q No 10 : The literal meaning of the word Islam is submission.

Ans to Q No 11 : No

Ans to Q No 12 : a) Hell b) Seven.

Ans to Q No 13 : Five.

Ans to Q No 14 : The meaning of *La ilaha illa llahu: Muhammad resulu Allah* is there is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his Prophet

Ans to Q No 15 : *La ilaha illa Allah: Muhammad rasul Allah* (there is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his Prophet) is known as Kalima.

Ans to Q No 16 : Five times.

Ans to Q No 17 : The first prayer is at sunset and it is followed by the early night, dawn, noon and mid-afternoon prayers.

Ans to Q No 18 : A) Mecca b) Friday c) imam

Ans to Q No 19 : Ramadan

Ans to Q No 20 : Sunrise to sunset.

Ans to Q No 21 : Poor

Ans to Q No 22 : One fortieth.

Ans to Q No 23 : Pilgrimage.

9.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very Short Questions (Make it Block)

Q 1 : What is monotheism?
Q 2 : What is Polytheism?
Q 3: What do you mean by Zakat?
Q 4 : What is Hajj?
Q 5 : What do you mean by Kalima?
Q 6 : What is Roza?
Q 7 : Who is the apostle of Islam?
Q 8 : What are the five times of prayer in Islam?

B) Short Questions (Answer in about 100-150 words)

Q 1 : Is Islam a monotheistic religion?
Q 2 : Discuss about the relationship between God and man according to Islam.
Q 3 : Write Short Notes on:
a) Hajj
b) Zakat
c) Namaaz
d) Roza

C) Long Questions (Answer in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: Explain the Islamic concept of discipline. What are the five pillars of Islam?
Q 2: What are the distinctive features of Islam? Explain in details.

UNIT 10: HINDUISM, GOD, MAN AND LIBERATION

UNIT STRUCTURE

10.1 Learning Objectives
10.2 Introduction
10.3 Sources of Hinduism
10.4 Characteristics of Hinduism
10.5 Hinduism and Law of Karma
10.6 Hinduism and Moksha
10.7 Let us Sum up
10.8 Further Reading
10.9 Answers to Check Your Progress
10.10 Model Questions

10.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the nature and characteristics of Hinduism
- describe the concept of Law of Karma in Hinduism
- discuss the concept of Moksha in Hinduism

10.2 INTRODUCTION

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. Therefore, Hinduism which is more a philosophy than religion consists in belief in an eternal indestructible divine Reality on which human being has to meditate on, live and act according to the eternal law of Nature. Upanishads are considered as the fountainhead of Hinduism. In Hinduism the philosophical perspective of life is more associated because the Sanskrit word 'darsana' or 'seeing' i.e., "see thyself" represents the divine truth of the elevated spiritual consciousness of the great seers. It is not merely an intellectual quest for the divine truth rather deeply grounded on direct perception of the 'Self'. References of sublime spiritual realm of life are found in the Isa Upanishad and for the first time it comes as:

'This entire cosmos, whatever is still or moving, is pervaded by the divine', contains the very essence of Hinduism.

In the Mundaka Udanishad, it is stated that the Upanishads are the vehicles of spiritual realization. We find a verse in this Upanishad citing the role of the Upanishads as:

"Having taken as a bow the great weapon of the Upanishads, one should fix on it the arrow sharpened by constant meditation; drawing it with a mind filled with That (Brahman), penetrate, O handsome youth, the Imperishable as the target."

Furthermore, there is a geographical interpretation of the growth of Hindu thought, its religion and civilization. It can be stated that the Sanskrit word "Sindhu" refers to the river "Indus". Geographically recalling, the word Hinduism is related with the great river 'Sindhu'. On the banks of the river 'Sindhu', the Aryan Rishis used to live. When the Persian and the Greek invaders settled near north-west of India, the first challenge that came to these people is the river 'Sindhu' and its pronunciation. Instead of pronouncing the sound 'S' the Persian invaders pronounced it as 'H', and then onwards, the river 'Sindhu' was called by them as Hindu. These invaders called the people who lived to the east of the river 'Sindhu' as Hindus. Gradually Hinduism became more popularly known as an Aryan-dharma of Hindus. The vast spectrum of faith, culture, literature, religion, custom, rites, rituals and ceremonies that flourished acquired the generic name Hinduism. As Hinduism has never been made but grown with the development of human culture and civilization so it is considered as the 'Sanatana Dharma'. This 'eternal religion' (Sanatana Dharma) represents revealed faith/knowledge of different preceptors or seers and sages. Hinduism is called Sanatana Dharma because it is a religion which comes down to people through eternity. Unlike many other religions Hinduism claims no definite founder and furthermore no definite and particular religious text. The reason behind this is that Hinduism is more a philosophy than a religion. Following this observation it can be revealed that Hinduism is assisted by various stages of human culture and civilization. In this context we can refer to the words of Sir Charles Eliot: "Hinduism has not been made, but has grown. It is jungle, not a building." Again K.M. Sen says in the book Hinduism, "Hinduism is more like a tree that has grown gradually than like a building that has been erected by some great architect at some definite point in time. It contains within itself the influences of many cultures and the body of Hindu thought thus offers as much variety as the Indian nation itself." The collective wisdom of the sages never reflected strict dogmas rather it inspired the deep rooted philosophy of humanism. The problem of human existence inspired the Vedic sages and through their spiritual insight they were able to take a critical leap and established the philosophy of 'Manava Dharma'. The 'Religion of Man', is the basic tenet that underlies Hinduism and this has become the integral ethos of Hinduism as embedded in the teachings of the Bhagavad-Gita. Therefore a pragmatic definition of Hinduism is more cordially follows as:

"The ancient religion, called Sanatana Dharma, founded on the Vedas, which was followed by the people who inhabited the territory of the Punjab and its eastern regions"; and the descendants of those people who profess that religion are "Hindus".

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Mention the literal meaning of the word 'darsana'.

.....

.....

Q 2: Why Hinduism is considered as the 'Sanatana Dharma'?

.....

.....

Q 3: State whether the following statements are true or false

a) In Hinduism the words 'Tat tvam asi'—'that thou art', means that the Atman is essentially Brahman.

b) The 'Religion of Man', is not the fundamental tenet of Hinduism.

10.3 SOURCES OF HINDUISM

Let us here ponder on an important issue related with the sources of Hinduism. So to understand on the issue related with the sources of Hinduism, we can say that the philosophy, beliefs, practices, customs and traditions of Hinduism are derived from numerous sources. Inspite of its numerous sources, the Vedas, the Brahmanas and the Upanishads constitute the core sources of Hinduism. So let us examine the fundamental sources of Hinduism and their importance in the growth and development of Hinduism.

Broadly speaking the ritual and spiritual knowledge of Hinduism are derived from three sources namely the Seers, sectarian works of the Vedas and the Upanishads and literary sources like the two great epics the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, the Bhagavad Gita, the Puranas and so and so forth. To be more analytical the Vedas are undoubtedly the most indisputable sources of Hindu belief system. The Vedas are considered as eternal because the Vedas are considered as beginning less (Anadi) and the code of Hinduism starts with the Vedas. The Upanishads embodied in themselves the essential philosophical principles of Hinduism and are often known as the Vedanta. In the Upanishads we find the 'universal principles of Truth' and because of its uniqueness for the quest of eternal Truth, the Upanishads have sustained the changes of Time, aggressiveness of science and materialism. The sustainable strength of the Upanishads is made possible only because of the universal attitude towards the eternal Truth.

The Seers and the Rishis for a long time played a significant role in promoting the knowledge of Hinduism. They brought to light the secret teachings in the principal texts of Hinduism. You have to remember that the Seers and the Rishis are the god-head or teacher traditions of ancient classical Hindu society. They represent the speculative attitude of Darsana or the oriental philosophy. The Seers and 'the Rishis are not the authors of what they transmitted to their disciples. They were merely the spokesmen of the divine message which they received through meditation or revelation. The words are the words of God; the Rishis merely communicated them to their disciples, according to their individual realizations. In addition to the teacher traditions, Hinduism also witnessed the profound rise of ascetic movement. Ordinarily speaking, asceticism is a philosophical way of life-skill which characterizes an individual life to keep oneself abstained from various worldly pleasures for pursuing spiritual goals. Theistic tradition in India is influenced fundamentally by asceticism and encouraged renunciation sensual desires and material possessions of life. This ascetic movement in India inspired the sacred texts of Hinduism. Consequently in due course of time the theology and spiritual philosophy was enriched by this ascetic movement. In this context reference can be made to the major Indian religions like Buddhism and Jainism. In ancient India, asceticism became the essence of Hinduism

because it propounded the doctrine that to attain salvation or freedom, an individual must attain purity both mentally and physically. Again our knowledge of Hinduism also comes from Hindu sects like Shaivism, Vaishnavism, Shaktism and Tantra. Though these sects have their independent development yet as they became integrated into the Vedic tradition so they have contributed richly to the philosophical speculation of Hinduism.

To follow on the growth and development of Hinduism we can once again highlight that Hinduism exclusively does not rely only on scriptures but it enriches its inspiration from various literary sources. Along with the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Puranas we have the sutra literature, important commentaries (bhashyas), law books or Dharmashastras. Hinduism as a philosophy of life orientation depends more thoroughly on the works of various schools of philosophy (Darshanas). It flourishes itself more emphatically depending on the literary and secular works such as those of Kalidasa, the philosophy of Shankara, Ramanuja, Madhava and many others. To be very specific in this context, we can refer here very keenly that traditionally, the Smritis, the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita and the Brahmasutra are considered as the three most important sources to corroborate the philosophy of Hinduism. In fact the Bhagavad Gita is described as 'the divine commentary on the Vedanta' because it represents the quintessence of the Vedanta. It is true that in Hinduism we do not find any definite founder. There is no definite or exclusive text. In Hinduism we find people beholding various beliefs. For instance, a person believing in many gods i.e. a polytheist can be a thoroughgoing Hindu or have faith in Hinduism. On the other hand, a person believing in one and only one God, i.e. a monist can be a staunch Hindu and interestingly enough even an atheist who does not believe in the existence of a personal God can too be a strict believer of Hinduism. Therefore Sir Charles Eliot says very rightly that Hinduism is like a jungle and not a building. Thus it is quite impossible

In conclusion we can say that though Hinduism draws its inspiration from numerous sources, the sacred texts such as the Vedas can be considered as the fundamental sources of its beliefs and practices.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 4: What are the sources of the spiritual knowledge in Hinduism?

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.....

Q 5: Why the Upanishads play an important role in the development of Hinduism?

.....

.....

Q 6: Name two religious sects of Hinduism which support asceticism.

.....

.....

10.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF HINDUISM

The basic features of Hinduism are very difficult to mention because of its diversities in beliefs, practices and its diversified philosophical sources yet there are certain common features which bind the religious and philosophical thoughts of Hinduism. The features are as follows.

1. **Hinduism embodies the universal experiences of great Sages and Rishis at different times and culture.**

   Hinduism sustains the odds and values of all culture and civilization because of its universal and impersonal nature of development. Hinduism is considered as revealed religion because there is no creator. As we all know therefore that Hinduism never popularized the exclusiveness of the religious interpretation of one single Prophet. In Hindu religion 'Truth is universal'. It advocates that this Truth if urged can be realized by every individual. In this process of realization, Hindu religion has never universalized any experience of Truth rather emphatically states that diverse experiences of Truth is the strength for the quest of Truth. This reminds us of the words of Sri Ramakrishna that every spiritual experience of Truth which is eternal leads to God. His words are on spiritual experience: "as many views, so many are the paths".

   Again the Vedas and the Upanishads are said to be the fundamental sources of Hinduism and the words of these sacred texts are the revealed truths of spiritualism of Rishis of ancient India. Upanishads are therefore considered as the illuminating (revealed) research experiences of our Rishis on different issues of life orientations. The Rishis shared very thoroughly their super-sensuous revealed knowledge amongst their disciple generation after generation and the Seers remarkably demonstrated their spiritual experiences at the strength of agreement on fundamental problems and arrived at fundamental and non-debatable conclusions. Hinduism reveals the realization of the 'Ultimate Reality' and unlike many other sectarian religions Hinduism never allows mere faith on religious dogmas alone. Bernard writes in 'Hindu Philosophy' that Hinduism is a matter of realization. The principles of Hinduism withstand the debate of reasoning and verification of cognitive mind. Therefore, 'Each of the Upanishads gives reason as it proceeds step by step, and it is because of this logical foundation, that numerous Rishis meditating individually, could arrive at certain agreed propositions which have been gathered as the 'essence of Hinduism' in this work'.

2. **Hinduism is intertwined with Hindu religion**

   Philosophical speculation and inward religious consciousness is intertwined with each other within the peripheral dimension of Hinduism. As you have already come to know that the religious scriptures of different Hindu religions have accepted the authority of the Sruti, the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Puranas. It is perhaps of this essential feature, we find the spirit of catholicity and elasticity in Hinduism and in various Hindu religions. Hinduism as such makes no distinction between 'Atmanam Viddi' (i.e. 'know thyself') and the religious practices of Hindu religion also blend with it thoroughly. Hence there is no difference between 'Universal

Truth of Hinduism and Dogmas of religious consciousness of various cults like Sakta, Vaishnava and many others'. You can feel here the underlying essential unity of these undivided aspects of Hinduism only if you can ascertain the 'essential doctrines of Hinduism'.

We can logically justify the fact of this essential unity of Hinduism only when we conclude that 'it is the same Vedic religion which has evolved, through the ages, into various cults'. The religious thinkers are concerned more with the pertinent principles of life like morality, salvation, doctrine of karma, life after death etc.,etc., and acceptance of diverse ways for higher speculations of life. Hinduism therefore is not a spiritual code but also a social code and it retains that Hinduism is the oldest living religion. It is because of this reason Hinduism uniquely claim the epithet 'sanatana' or eternal. This epithet follows because Hinduism has no beginning nor it has no end and in it we find a binding force of 'Universal Principles'.

3. Hinduism follows the principle of union with the Absolute of the finite existence.

The essential teaching of Upanishad advocates the divinity of the self. The finite self is the manifestation of the Absolute. In the Isha-Upanashad, it is stated: "Oh God! Take me there where lies the source of everlasting universe, which is indestructible, where immortality resigns supreme and make me immortal". The most fundamental postulate of Hinduism is the concept of 'the all- pervasive Brahman'. The Upanisadic view supports this explanation by the cardinal concept as that all that exists is a manifestation of the divine. This philosophy of unified-force theory of Hinduism supports the scientists who desperately probe into the theory that 'whatever exists is really the same energy'. The post-Einsteinian scientists, recognized that exist may appear as matter or energy or as a particle or as a wave, it is essentially the same energy. So, in this context we can refer to this interpretation of science to the spiritual counterpart regarding the concept of the all-pervasive Brahman of the Upanishads. The all-pervasive philosophy of Hinduism follows as: 'The greatest realization is to see the Brahman everywhere, wherever you look above or below, to the right or to the left, within or without. This is the first important concept of Vedanta i.e. the all-pervasive Brahman, the essence of monotheism.

Therefore you will understand that in Hinduism along with its counter-part, i.e. Hindu religion advocates that Brahman resides within each individual consciousness and this individual consciousness is the Atman or the spiritual self and is not ultimately separated from the Brahman. Flowing from this we find the phrase of the Upanishads that 'amrtasya putrah (children of immortality). It is the greatest sin to call ourselves as sinner because Hinduism never supports the concept of sin. Hindu religion upholds the spiritual reflection of life existence. There is no conception of any unseen or hidden heaven rather it accepts the fact that we are the children of immortality. We are the manifested power of purity, wisdom, bliss and light. The spiritual existence is within our consciousness.

To realize this spiritual unified-force the key-note of yoga stands here and thus the whole of Vedanta teaching resolves around the idea that is directed towards

bringing 'the union between the all-pervading Brahman without and the immortal Atman within. 'Atman is immortal', is the essence of Bhagavad Gita. Interestingly enough, the immortality of the soul clearly indicates that the doctrine of Rebirth is only a corollary of the Hindu theory of creation. 'It is an eternal process in cycles, never having a beginning nor end'. It is also believed that the doctrine of Rebirth is a logical offshoot of the Hindu theory of Creation. Here it is considered that if the world creation is in a process of constant evolution and degeneration then every existence must be an integrated part in the eternal process. The process of rebirth must continue aided by spiritual elevation unless and until every existence merges into the eternal creation. Therefore in the Chandogya Upanishad, it is taught 'Tat tvam asi'— 'that thou art' which means the Atman is essentially the Brahman. Thus to quote: 'The individual soul, as we shall see, is a participant of this Eternity, emerging out of the Infinite and ultimate merging into the Infinite'. The realization of 'Unity in diversity' is the most fundamental spiritual discovery of Hinduism.

4. Hinduism never represents mere faith on spirituality but encourages pragmatism in social life.

The essential unity of the Atman with the Brahman is one of the fundamental tenets of Hinduism. This identical nature of existence in this world of material existence justifies that the supreme goal of life lies in spiritual realization. The realization of endless and eternal nature of Atman brings a new dimension in the life of human sufferings, old age and death. Karmic accountability of human life here is justified as a moral law of conservation of energy. Again the law of karma demands sufficiently that every individual has to take responsibility of one's own action. Therefore the famous saying follows: 'As you sow so shall you reap'. Again the Newton principle: 'Every action has its equal and opposite reaction'. Therefore, Hindu religion logically supports the concept of causality, the law of karma and human destiny.

5. Human life is a means of higher end

Hinduism firmly believes in the essential feature of moksha or liberation in human life. Moksha is defined as attainment of freedom from the cycle of birth and death. To actualize human life through individual actions for higher ends, Hindu religion supports the possibility of three paths of yoga. It beholds that liberation from the cycle of birth and death, is possible through by adopting the path of knowledge, the path of disinterested action, the path of devotion or the path of control of human psyche. When the individual life aims for higher end, that is moksha, the soul becomes free from all worldly sufferings. In this state of human existence (Moksha), the individual soul realizes its own limitations created by one's own ignorance of the blissful nature of the self. The blissful nature of the Self is realized through any of the Yoga followed by the individual. Spirituality surpasses over the physical world and makes it more meaningful. In this higher state of human mind, the surplus is realized as in the words of Rabindranath Tagore. This is the Religion of Man. The Bhagavad Gita repeatedly enjoins service to mankind while advocating the philosophy of nishkam karma and this is the threshold of the philosophy of humanism. In fact Upanishads teaches that every individual is the manifestation

of the ultimate reality and therefore to give service to the human society is to realize the ultimate reality. This reminds us of the practical Vedanta of Vivekananda where he propagates before the global world the action oriented slogan: "Jiva is Siva". That human life has a higher end makes Hindu religion more pragmatic and worldly and enhance the secular nature of this religion.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 7: Why Hinduism is intertwined with Hindu religion?

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Q 8: How does Hinduism explain monotheism?

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Q 9: What is the meaning of the term moksha in Hinduism?

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10.5 HINDUISM AND LAW OF KARMA

In Hinduism the law of causation forms an integral part of Hindu philosophy and Hindu religion. The law of cause and effect is coined as 'Karma'. The Hindu doctrine of rebirth and law of karma constitute the doctrine of freedom and perseverance. The doctrine of law of karma illuminates the hope of an individual to improve the moments of one's living experiences carried through his thoughts, words and deeds. As you have come to know that the law of karma opens the door of inspiration supported by the law of causation. Hinduism supports the Law of Karma from the aspect of moral law of causation. The saying justifies that 'As you sow so you reap'. This makes you to understand that every action that we do reap its own result. Therefore every individual has to take the responsibility of one's own action. We have to take the decision of performing right action as it will yield good consequence. Otherwise there will be adharma or demerits in the social order. Every wrong action performed will yield inevitably bad result. The accountability of result yield from every action finally resides in the soul in a subtle form of energy.

In Hinduism it is concluded that performance of any prescribed duty yields merit (punya) or virtue (dharma) in the soul. Again it is stated that violation of the performance of any forbidden duty yields demerit (papa) or vice (adharma) in the soul itself. Dharma and adharma both are taken into consideration as unseen agencies (adrsta) which result in bearing the condition of future life. Dharma produces happiness and adharma produces unhappiness or sufferings in future life. The two unseen agencies (adrsta) of individual karma i.e. (dharma and adharma) actually constitute the predisposing causes of happiness and sufferings while external situations and material objects boost up the two unseen (adrsta) agencies. There is no question of escaping the law of karma. The fruits of moral action or immoral action have to be reaped either in this life or in the future life. Hence you

will always find that Hinduism supports the theory of law of karma in association to the theory of rebirth. The theory of law of karma cannot be logically explained without the law of rebirth. Hence it is understood that meta-psychosis which is also known as transmigration of the soul is a corollary of the law of karma.

It is often believed that karma is associated with action or work or deed. Law of karma in Hinduism is also believed to be the spiritual principle of cause and effect and in this spiritual principle the intent of the individual as well as the action of the individual creates the future result of the action. Good motive of the action and good action result into good karma and simultaneously contribute to future happiness. On the other hand bad motive of the action and therefore bad action result into unhappiness in future. As Hinduism supports the principle of rebirth so the law of karma is a corollary of the principle of rebirth. Interestingly enough, the fundamental difference between the Semitic religions like Islam, Christianity, and Hinduism is that in Islam and Christianity the individual commit sin against the law of God where as in Hinduism the concept of sin does not arise as it preaches that the individual has to take the responsibility of one's own action. The Semitic religions propound the theory of creation so sin is justified while not abiding the moral law giver i.e. God. Thus the concept of heaven and hell take an important problem in Islam and Christianity. Hinduism on the other hand propounds the theory of manifestation where the jivatma is accepted as the manifestation of Brahman itself. Hence it is stated that the soul is eternal and therefore cannot be perished. In this context, the concept of heaven and hell find less justification in Hinduism.

Ancient India teaches the philosophy that karma is synonymous to sacrificial or ritual acts of the Vedic cult. It encouraged that 'Karmakanda' refers to performance of ritualism while sacrificial ceremonies performed by the individual refer to be a part of social responsibility. Hence performance of sacrificial ceremonies became an integral part of moral obligation of an individual. Gradually the fact of karmic accountability of an individual spontaneously became associated with every intention of human action and thus their consequences.

In the Bhagavad Gita it is stated: "The self-controlled person, moving among objects, with his senses free from attachment and malevolence and brought under his own control, attains tranquility." (II.64)

Thus, you will find interesting to know that the theory of karma has a similarity with the Newton's law of motion. Newtonian principle states that 'every action produces an equal and opposite reaction.' This justifies that whenever we do an action either mentally or physically we create a cause of an action and this cause of an action finally bears the fruit of the action. This cyclic order of cause of an action and thus its bearing the fruit of consequence leads to the concept of samsara and the law of birth and death. Therefore Hinduism propounds that the 'karma in the present affects one's future as well as the nature and quality of future lives— one's samsara'.

10.6 CONCEPT OF GOD AND MAN IN HINDUISM

Hinduism believes in the principle that 'God exists'. Faith on the existence of the Supreme Being is the essential and comprehensive analysis of all Upanishads. Existence

of God is accepted as self-evident. This is the simple theistic proposition in most religions of the world. But in Hinduism this simple proposition is the foundation-stone of spiritualism and to be more emphatic it is more than mere theism. Hinduism which is more a philosophy than a religion, as already been stated, can withstand all inscrutable and unquestioned mysteries of Nature while analyzing comprehensively this principle that 'God exists'. You should always remember here that the existence of God as the first and necessary axiom distinguishes Hinduism from Buddhism and Jainism. Buddhism and Jainism being non-Vedic or heterodox system of Hinduism do not find their faiths on the existence of God (Supreme Being) as the First Cause. Hinduism accepts that the first cause which is the Universal Soul i.e. the Supreme Being is manifested in and through every form of existence. This is the thrust of spiritualism that Hinduism beholds while encouraging the philosophy of monotheism.

Thus, the concept of God is very comprehensive and mystic. Often controversies arises in the mind of the critics that whether Hindus believe in Personal or Impersonal God, whether Hindu religion believes in monotheism or polytheism or even atheism but there is no confusion or dispute to the question in the Hindu scriptures that there exists the Supreme Conscious Spirit. This Spirit or Soul is called as 'Brahman'. This 'elan-vital spiritual Supra Consciousness is eternal, one, absolute and the emancipated alone'. Hinduism allows pantheism because it advocates that 'God is in every existence'. This is the monotheistic attitude of Hindu religion stating that Brahman permeates through the entire creation through eternity.

Thus Hinduism makes Nature only a part and parcel of the Infinite Cosmic propeller of the Universe. Here the material effect of nature is made limited to the First cause of the universe i.e. God. This is the true significance of 'Pantheism'. Thus Nature is neither blind nor Nature is the first cause of this universe. The seers made deep speculation to the question that: 'what is the source of all material existence?' and logically concluded through meditation the existence of an unseen and unknown factor which is none else than the First cause. This First Cause is coined as 'God' in Hindu religion. God therefore is considered as the Creator, Preserver and ultimately Destroyer of the Universe.

Thus in Mundaka Upanishad (1.i, 3) it is stated:

When all is known, something yet remains and hence arises the query—

"What is the thing, O Sir, by knowing which
We may know all that is to be known?"

Again the reply to this question is stated in Chandogya Upanishad (VI, I,3) as:

"That knowledge,— the knowledge of the Supreme Being—
Through which what was unheard becomes heard,
What was unthought of becomes comprehended,
What was unknown becomes known."

It may be added here that Hindu religion in general accepted the universal form of deities in a triad of three gods. They are namely, Brahma, Visnu and Mahesvara or Siva. These gods represent respectively god of creation, god of preservation, and god of destruction. This is the concept of trinity in Hinduism. The concept of trinity is the symbolic expression of the Impersonal Supreme Consciousness or the Supreme Being. God thus represents the only power that subsists in an all changing, perishable Universe. God

represents the master of Nature and thus the Regulator of all its forces. Thus, Hindu religion concludes that matter on its own has no power of creation and as such the power of creation is attributed to Divine Conscious Power and it is called Brahman. This reminds us of Herbert Spencer who concludes 'that the power which manifests throughout the Universe is a conscious power'. Thus from the perspective of 'Impersonal Being Conscious Existence' the Seers call it as Brahman on the other hand from the perspective of 'Personal Being Conscious Existence' a theist calls it as the Supreme God. Henceforth, the Absolute Reality (Brahman) is both Impersonal and Personal. The Impersonal Brahman takes the role of a Personal God to fulfill the purpose of creation, preservation and destruction. Thus, in Hinduism, polytheism logically merges into monotheism. You must remember here that 'the Impersonal Brahman and the Personal Iswara are not separate entities. Out of the formless Brahman emerges the Almighty Creator, and yet Brahman remains as full as before'. Noss explains in this reference as "Brahman-Atman, the impersonal ultimate reality, achieves a religiously significant threefold manifestation or Trimurti through the three personal deities who represent the divine functions of creation, destruction and preservation respectively."

In fact to many of your surprising queries that whom does the Hindus worship? Again it is a common understanding that there are 33 crores of gods and goddess in Hinduism. The simple reply to this naive understanding is: 'The Hindus worship a number of deities, and yet believe that God is one'. From the Vedic Cult, the Hindus worship many gods and goddesses. These Gods are the personifications of Nature. Natural phenomena were represented through the personification of gods and goddess. The most popular amongst the gods representing the natural phenomena are Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agni etc. At the same time in the Vedic era itself the seers realized that the different deities are the manifestation of the Absolute Supreme Reality. Therefore the Vedas conclude that the same reality is called by various names (Ekam sadvipra bahudha vadanti). Maxmuller observes that this tendency of the Vedic culture of polytheism piercing towards monotheism symbolizes the character of henotheism.

God is revealed in the hearts of the Hindus as 'Antaryami'. God is the spiritual indweller of mystic feelings. God is the substratum of all divine values. God is thus omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient. God is Holy. God is Wisdom. God is Bliss. God has the dual condition of cit (consciousness) and acit (unconsciousness) in Himself. God is therefore called as the Purusottama in the Bhagavad Gita. The quintessence of Hinduism anchors in the glory: "To Attain God, You Must Be God-like yourself".

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 10 : What is the core essence of Hinduism?

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Q 11 : Why Hinduism accepts the concept of Trinity as a symbolic representative of the Impersonal God?

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Q 12 : Fill in the blanks :

a) In Hinduism Gods are regarded as the personifications of …….

b) God is revealed in the hearts of the Hindus as ……...

10.6 HINDUISM AND MOKSHA

Hinduism believes that the physical death of an individual is not an end of life. The immortal soul of man transmigrates from the past life to a new life and this is the concept of rebirth in Hinduism. The soul has to be reborn according to one's past action. Bhagavad Gita says in this context: "Just as a person casts off worn-out garments and puts on others that are new even so does the embodied souls cast off worn-out bodies and take on others that are new." If you remember that the doctrine of rebirth is fundamentally related with the doctrine of karma. The law of karma in Hinduism gives rise to a basic postulate of the attainment of moksha and it is the goal of human life in Hinduism. Moksha is that fundamental principle of life which explains that human life is the means for a higher end. Moksha in this becomes the end of human life and law of karma becomes the means because it is our karmic accountability which makes the life liberated. It is disassociated human karma which allows liberation from the process of transmigration of the soul i.e. from the process of continuous birth and death.

You have already come to know that it is association with human karmic accountability which leads to human sufferings in life. Moksha i.e. freedom from the cycle of birth and death refers 'to let loose, or let go'. In Hindu faith it is stated that the Jiva (empirical self) in its liberated state reveals its condition of being divine i.e. So'ham, 'I am already that Brahman itself' and as such the Jiva (empirical self) realizes consciously the divine qualities of wisdom, purity, tolerance, kaivalya and nirvana. This conscious awareness of the pure self (the Divine self) brings an end in the cycle of repeated death and rebirth (reincarnation) in the Jiva. Therefore Moksha is called Mukti (freedom) by the Yogis. Here you should remember that the literal meaning of the word 'Yoga' is union i.e. 'spiritual union of the individual soul with the Universal Soul and is used in this sense in the Vedanta'. Yoga is also defined as the cessation of the modification of chitta. So it can be said that in the state of salvation or mukti (Moksha) the chitta is free from all different types of mental modifications. Hence Yoga is also popularly known as 'Raja Yoga'. Ordinarily speaking the Jiva is associated within the realm of the physical law of nature (Samsara) and thereby allows modifications in the Chitta and consequently there arises different kinds of sufferings in the life of the individuals. The individual self in the process of bhava-chakra (cycle of birth and death) subjects itself to bondage. On the other hand when there is that conscious inner urge to free oneself from the cycle of birth and death all mental modifications are arrested. Here the individual realizes pure consciousness in the Chitta and this is the life of a Yogi.

In the Bhagavad Gita this spiritual union is possible through different processes. They are namely, through the process of right knowledge (jnana), or devotion (bhakti), or right action (desire-less karma), or through raja yoga. According to Hindu faith, purity, self-control, truthfulness, ahimsa, tolerance and compassion for all living existence are very much fundamental to lead a spiritual life. Hence it is acknowledged that self-realization is the keynote or the best means to achieve moksa or freedom in the life of the individual.

In addition to these four means of spiritual activities there are four purusharthas in the Hindu philosophy of attaining moksa. On this issues related with ethics and morality, in Hinduism we have the different sources like the philosophical scriptures, the Puranas, the two great epics, like Ramayana and the Mahabharata as well as the Dharmashastras. The four purusharthas that constitute the supreme ends of human life actually form the social system of Indian culture. Hinduism shapes the culture of Indian society with a definite value system with the purpose of cultivating the total transformation of the life of an individual. Thus we find the four purusharthas as viz. desire for happiness (kama), wealth (artha), virtue (dharma), and liberation (moksha). Desire for happiness encourages action (karma). Any moral standard which explains the right and wrong of individual actions from the practical standpoint never overlooks the necessity of satisfaction of worldly desires and therefore the consequences of happiness. To be more emphatic on the issue of the necessity of satisfaction of worldly desires there must be a proper rule or means to attain happiness. The second end is wealth. Wealth is very important to uplift the society. Wealth allows virtue in human attitude towards the social outlook of 'lokasamgraha' or 'well-being of the world'. Wealth or artha can be also used in the context of an individual skill in life. It is through individual skill in life one can perform activities for social welfare. A skilled individual can be moral in performing the desired activity because artha or skill provides confidence in the life of an individual. The third end is virtue which refers to dharma or the standard for morality. It is virtue or dharma which regulates social life. In Hinduism it is understood that happiness is superior to wealth on one hand and on the other virtue is superior to happiness and wealth. Virtue is an end in itself as Hinduism advocates the philosophy that every jiva is the manifestation of the Brahman itself. Divinity of the self allows that morality is an end in itself and therefore purusharthas become the means to attain a blissful life in the worldly life. In Hinduism we find that virtue or moral standard is a value of the conscience of the individual. Virtue beholds the intrinsic value of the conscience. In Bhagavad Gita you will find that it is the question of 'ought' which is accepted as paradigm for moral standard. The reply for the question: 'What ought I to do to follow the moral standard?' the reply is: ' I should do that which will pursue for 'lokasamgraha' or 'well-being of the world'. You should remember that ''lokasamgraha' or 'well-being of the world' does not support utilitarianism i.e. greatest good for the greatest number because virtue or moral issues is related with dharma in Hinduism. In hedonism, we know that utilitarianism supports pleasure as an end of moral standard. But in Hinduism, 'lokasamgraha' or 'well-being of the world' is above human pleasure as it supports Dharma as that value which binds human social existence. Dharma or virtue induces bliss or contentment in human life. Therefore the last stage is moksha or freedom. This is salvation. Salvation is mukti from the empirical bondage. Empirical bondage leads to sufferings as in this state of mind the individual hankers for individual self-vested interest. While in the liberated state the individual performs every activity for 'lokasamgraha' or 'well-being of the world' and thus attains bliss in the 'Being-Existence'. Thus Hinduism advocates that to attain liberation is the only goal or the highest end of individual life. Man realizes the spiritual existence of the 'Self', i.e. realizes of Sat-Chit-Ananda is possible in the state of liberation. Jiva thus consequently gets free from the bondage of life after death.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 13: What are four purusharthas in the Hindu philosophy?

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Q 14: How does Hinduism explain the theory of karma?

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Q 15: What is the meaning of 'lokasamgraha' in Bhagavad Gita?

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10.7 LET US SUM UP

- The core of Hinduism consists of holistic nature of the Vedas, the Upanishads and the scriptures including the two great epics.
- 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.
- Geographically recalling, the word Hinduism is related with the great river 'Sindhu'.
- Hinduism as a philosophy of life orientation depends more thoroughly on the works of various schools of philosophy (Darshanas)
- In fact the Bhagavad Gita is described as 'the divine commentary on the Vedanta' because it represents the quintessence of the Vedanta
- In Hinduism we find different sources like the philosophical scriptures, the Puranas, the two great epics, like Ramayana and the Mahabharata as well as the Dharmashastras.
- Moksha i.e. freedom from the cycle of birth and death refers 'to let loose, or let go'. In Hindu faith it is stated that the Jiva (empirical self) in its liberated state reveals its condition of being divine i.e. So'ham, 'I am already that Brahman itself' and as such the Jiva (empirical self) realizes consciously the divine qualities of wisdom, purity, tolerance, kaivalya and nirvana.
- Divinity of the self allows that morality is an end in itself and therefore purusharthas become the means to attain a blissful life in the worldly life. In Hinduism we find that virtue or moral standard is a value of the conscience of the individual. Virtue beholds the intrinsic value of the conscience.

10.8 FURTHER READING

1) Brahma, N.K. (2007). *The Fundamentals of Religion*. Prentice Hall of India, Pvt. Limited, New Delhi .

2) Chatterji, Pritibhushan (1971) *Studies in Comparative Religion*. Das Gupta & Co. Pvt. Limited, Calcutta.
3) Madan, T.N. (1991) *Oxford in India Readings in Sociology and Social anthropology*.
4) Sinha, J.N.(2006) *Outlines Of Indian Philosophy*. New Central Book Agency (P) LTD. Calcutta Reprinted.

10.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q No 1 : The literal meaning of the word 'darsana' means to see i.e., "see thyself". It represents the divine truth of the elevated spiritual consciousness of the great seers. It is not merely an intellectual quest for the divine truth rather deeply grounded on direct perception of the 'Self'.

Answer to Q No 2 : Hinduism is called as the 'Sanatana Dharama' because it has never been made but grown with the development of human culture and civilization This 'eternal religion' (Sanatana Dharma) represents revealed faith or knowledge of different preceptors or seers and sages. Hinduism is called Sanatana Dharma because it is a religion which comes down to people through eternity.

Answer to Q No 3 : a) Yes b) No

Answer to Q No 4 : In Hinduism spiritual knowledge is derived from three sources namely the Seers, sectarian works of the Vedas and the Upanishads. It is also derived from the literary sources like the two great epics namely the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. The Bhagavad Gita and the Puranas are considered as fundamental sources of Hinduism.

Answer to Q No 5 : The Upanishads embodied in themselves the essential philosophical principles of Hinduism and are often known as the Vedanta. The Upanishads play an important role in the development of Hinduism because we find that all the Upanishads try to explore and analyse the 'universal principles of Truth'. It is because of its uniqueness for the quest of eternal Truth, the Upanishads have sustained the changes of Time, aggressiveness of science and materialism along with Hinduism. The Upanishads are therefore nerve of Hindu philosophy.

Answer to Q No 6 : Buddhism and Jainism

Answer to Q. No. 7 : Hinduism is more a philosophy than religion because the philosophical speculation of Hinduism constitutes the fundamental backdrop of the inward religious consciousness of Hindu religion. But ultimately both philosophy and religion are intertwined with each other quite comfortably and within the dimension of reason and understanding in Hinduism. Moreover the religious scriptures of different Hindu religions have accepted the authority of the Sruti, the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Puranas which are also the sources of Hinduism. It is perhaps of this essential feature, we find the spirit of catholicity and elasticity in Hinduism and in various Hindu religions.

Answer to Q. No. 8 : The most fundamental postulate of Hinduism is the concept of 'the all- pervasive Brahman'. Herein lies the essence of monotheism in Hinduism.

Monotheism has developed in Hinduism fundamentally along with the essential teaching of the Upanishads. The Upanishads advocate the divinity of the self. The finite self is the manifestation of the Absolute itself. Monotheism reveals in Hinduism because in Hinduism, it is conceived that Brahman resides within each individual consciousness and this individual consciousness is the Atman or the spiritual self and is not ultimately separated from the Brahman. Thus from this we find the phrase of the Upanishads that 'amrtasya putrah' i.e. children of immortality.

Answer to Q. No. 9 : Moksha is defined as attainment of freedom from the cycle of birth and death. When the individual life aims for higher end, that is moksha, the soul becomes free from all worldly sufferings. In this state of human existence (Moksha), the individual soul realizes its own limitations created by one's own ignorance of the blissful nature of the self.

Ans. to Q. No. 10 : Hinduism believes in the principle that God exists. Existence of God is accepted as self-evident. Existence of God is the first and necessary axiom in Hinduism and it is the Universal Soul or the Supreme Being. The Supreme Being is manifested in and through every form of existence. This is the core essence of Hinduism.

Ans. to Q. No. 11 : Hindu religion in general accepted the universal form of deities in a triad of three gods. They are namely, Brahma, Visnu and Mahesvara or Siva. These gods represent respectively god of creation, god of preservation and god of destruction. This is the concept of trinity in Hinduism. The concept of trinity is the symbolic expression of the Impersonal Supreme Consciousness or the Supreme Being. Thus Hinduism accepts the concept of Trinity as a symbolic representative of the Impersonal God.

Ans. to Q. No. 12 : a) Nature b) Antaryami

Answer to Q. No. 13 : The four purusharthas in Hinduism are viz. desire for happiness (kama), wealth (artha), virtue (dharma), and liberation (moksha).

Answer to Q. No. 14: In Hinduism the law of causation forms an integral part of Hindu philosophy and Hindu religion. The law of cause and effect is coined as 'Karma'. The Hindu doctrine of rebirth and law of karma constitute the doctrine of freedom and perseverance. The doctrine of law of karma illuminates the hope of an individual to improve the moments of one's living experiences carried through his thoughts, words and deeds.

Answer to Q. No. 15: In Bhagavad Gita the question of 'ought' is accepted as paradigm for moral standard. The reply for the question: 'What ought I to do to follow the moral standard?' the reply is: ' I should do that which will pursue for 'lokasamgraha' or 'well-being of the world'. Therefore the Bhagavad Gita states that ''lokasamgraha' or 'well-being of the world' does not support utilitarianism i.e. greatest good for the greatest number because virtue or moral issues is related with dharma in Hinduism. In Hinduism, 'lokasamgraha' or 'well-being of the world' is above human pleasure because it supports Dharma as that value which binds human social existence.

10.10 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very short questions

Q 1: Write the meaning of 'Tat tvam asi'.
Q 2: Mention the river out of which the word 'Hindu' has been evolved.
Q 3: Mention one of the characteristics of Hinduism.
Q 4: What is the essence of Hinduism?
Q 5: What is meant by lokasangraha?
Q 6: What are the four purusharthas?
Q 7: What is pantheism?
Q 8: What is trinity?
Q 9: Write the meaning of 'Ekam Sadvprabahudha Vadanti'.
Q 10: State the meaning of 'Antaryami'.
Q 11: Name some deities of Hinduism.

B. Short questions (Answer in about 100-150 words)

Q 1: Why Hinduism is called as Sanatan? Briefly explain
Q 2: Write a note on the concept of moksha in Hinduism.
Q 3: Write a note on the doctrine of law of karma in Hinduism.
Q 4: Explain briefly the concept of lokasangraha.

C. Long questions (Answer in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: Discuss the characteristics of Hinduism.
Q 2: How do you understand that Hinduism is more a philosophy than religion?
Q 3: How does Hinduism explain the Law of Karma?
Q 4: How does Hinduism explain the concept of rebirth?
Q 5: Discuss the concept of liberation in Hinduism.

UNIT 11 : THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

UNIT STRUCTURE

11.1 Learning Objectives
11.2 Introduction
11.3 What is Evil?
11.4 The Basic Problem
11.5 The Existence of Evil
11.6 "Evil": Different Views
11.7 Why do Evil and Suffering Exist?
11.8 Let us Sum up
11.9 Further Reading
11.10 Answers to Check Your Progress
11.11 Model Questions

11.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the concept of evil
- discuss the existence of Evil
- describe evil from different viewpoints
- explain why Evil does and Sufferings exist.

11.2 INTRODUCTION

"Both good and evil belong to the relative world, to phenomena"-Swami Vivekananda. Throughout the ages the problem of good and evil has been discussed by philosophers and religious teachers of both the East and the West, and many and varied have been the solutions offered. The two oppositional forces, evil and good, are at war with each other. We find this conflict everywhere in the universe, within us and outside us. The two forces are so intermixed that it is impossible to separate them. Man's life is a mixture of good and evil. Good and evil are correlative facts. Therefore any attempt to understand evil by itself apart from the idea of good is an impossible matter.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Both good and evil belong to the relative world, to phenomena"-Who said this?

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11.3 WHAT IS EVIL?

Both good and evil are found to be very prominent in Christianity. God had created man good, but he turned to the flesh and became subject to evil and sin. The first man's original sin was transmitted to all men-his descendants. All the forces of evil and sin came to be personified in Satan. Thus in traditional Christianity, two beings seem to be functioning-God, the force of all good, and the Devil, the source of all evil.

The Vedanta philosophy declares that God or the Supreme Being is unaffected by evil and stands above relative good which is the correlative of evil. Both relative good and relative evil have a common origin. They are two-fold manifestations of the same cosmic power, universal energy on the plane of phenomena.

According to Plato, the world of pure, unchanging ideas is the world of good. The world of sense, the world of change is evil.

The Sophists held that "Man is the measure of himself", and so each man could frame his own code of good and evil-a theory which is undoubtedly most dangerous to follow in life.

Leibniz considered evil to be due to the imperfections that are inherent in the construction of the finite elements of the universe.

Bosanquet says, "There is nothing in evil which cannot be absorbed in good and contributory to it, it springs from the same source as good and value."

According to Philip and Alexandrian, God was perfect purity and the source of all good. Matter was the source of all evil. Spinoza says that evils are due to our narrow outlook on things, that evil appears as such only because we look at things from the standpoint of a particular interest, but disappears into nothingness when we enlarge our outlook and learn to look at things from the standpoint of the whole or God.

According to Hegel evils are only irrational elements tending to become good or rational, because Reality which is rational through and through must see that the irrationality or evil is rationalised. Both Spinoza and Hegel particularly denied the reality of evil.

LET US KNOW

- Plato: Greek philosopher who drew a strict distinction between appearance and reality, developed the theory of forms as an account of immutable truth, and argued that only the wisest members of a society should be trusted to rule.
- Sophists: Pre-Socratic philosophers who offered to teach young Athenians how to use logic and rhetoric to defeat opponents in any controversy.
- Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz(1646-1716):German philosopher, mathematician , and polymath. Some of his books are- Discourse of Metaphysics (1685), Theodicy(1710), Monadology(1713) etc.
- Bernard Bosanquet(1848-1923): British philosopher who defended a modified version of Hegel's absolute idealism in Logic, or the Morphology of Knowledge (1888). According to Bosanquet, all contradictions are merely apparent and are wholly harmonised as part of the Absolute, a process said to account for the possibility of judgements about beauty in his History of Aesthetics(1892)

- Benedict de Spinoza(1632-1677) : Portuguese-Dutch Jewish philosopher who developed a monistic account of the universe as a single infinite substance (God or Nature) whose essential features flow with logical necessity and include, as modes, every finite being.
- George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel(1770-1831): German philosopher who employed a dialectical logic(moving from thesis to antithesis to synthesis) and its corollary analysis of historical inevitability, in support of an idealism in which human culture is properly seen as a manifestation of the self-consciousness of the Absolute.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 2 : State whether the following statements are True or False

a) Only good is found to be very prominent in Christianity. (T/F)

b) The Vedanta philosophy declares that God or the Supreme Being is unaffected by evil and stands above relative good which is the correlative of evil. (T/F)

c) According to Plato, the world of pure, unchanging ideas is the world of good. (T/F)

Q 3 : Fill in the blanks

a) The Sophists held that "Man is the …… of himself".

b) ……considered evil to be due to the imperfections that are inherent in the construction of the finitely elements of the universe.

Q 4 : What is Bosanquet's view on Evil?

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Q 5 : What is Spinoza's view on Evil?

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Q 6 : What is Hegel's view on Evil?

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11.4 THE BASIC PROBLEM

It is believed that the world is created by God. It is natural to ask how evil entered the world if it has been created by a benevolent power. If evil was present before the world was created then God is limited by its presence. If God is all-wise and benevolent why should such a God allow evils, both physical and moral, to happen in His creation? It may be that although He is absolutely good and wise, yet He is limited in power to prevent evils or it may be that He is all-powerful, all-wise and all good, yet He has instituted evils into His world only to teach mankind to be morally good by way of warning.

If God is infinitely good how shall we explain all the pain and evil, all the sin and sorrow and suffering and all the virtue or sin of anybody. He does not punish the wicked or reward the virtuous. Our intelligence being covered, as it were, with the cloud of ignorance

and relatively deluded as we are, we imagine, on account of our imperfect understanding, that God creates good or evil that His creation is good or evil, that He punishes or rewards

There are many of other questions, e.g., Will there always be evil? Is my sickness due to my sin? Does God heal everybody who has faith? Is demon possession another name for psychiatric disorder? These are entirely legitimate and important matters, but they are not what are at stake here. We wish to know whether the existence of evil disproves the existence of God or whether the existence of evil makes it unreasonable or implausible to disbelieve in God.

Rather than attempt to define 'evil' in terms of some theological theory, it seems better to define it ostensively, by indicating that to which the word refers. It refers to physical pain, mental suffering, and moral wickedness. The last is one of the causes of the first two, for an enormous amount of human pain arises from people's inhumanity. As a challenge to theism, the problem of evil has traditionally been posed in the form of a dilemma: if God perfectly loves, God must wish to abolish all evil; and if God is all-powerful, God must be able to abolish all evil. But evil exists; therefore God cannot be both omnipotent and perfect loving.

From above discussions we have come to know, "The problem of evil" labels a unique problem that arises in the context of theism. Essentially, it is the problem of explaining how evil can exist if God exists. We can formulate the problem most economically as an inconsistent triad. (An inconsistent triad is a set of three statements, the truth of any two of which implies the falsity of the third.) The inconsistent triad relevant here can be formulated as follows:

i) God is all-powerful;
ii) God is all-good;
iii) Evil exists.

Evil is understood here to mean the intrinsically regrettable-anything that is in itself negative, anything that the world would be better off without. Physical pain and suffering are generally acknowledged to be examples of evil in this sense. It seems quite obvious, then, why many philosophers think (i), (ii) and (iii) form an inconsistent triad (i) implies that God could prevent any instance of evil; (ii) implies that God would want to prevent any instance of evil; so if (i) and (ii) are true, (iii) should be false.

There are two other possibilities. Suppose (i) and (iii) are true-that is, suppose that, despite that existence of an all-powerful God, evil exists. It then looks as if (ii) is false-that is, it looks as if it is false that God wants to prevent evil. Finally, suppose (ii) and (iii) are true-that is, that is, that evil exists despite God wanting to prevent it. It then looks as if God cannot prevent evil, which means that (i) is false.

An inconsistent triad is a set of three statements, the truth of any two of which implies the falsity of the third.



ACTIVITY

- How would you describe, in your own words, what the "problem of evil" is?

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 7: Who created the world?

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Q 8: Fill in the blanks:

a) It is natural to ask how evil entered the world if it has been created by a ……power.

b) There are many of other questions, e.g., Will there always be ……? Is my sickness due to my ……..? Does God ……. everybody who has faith?

c) As a challenge to theism, the problem of evil has traditionally been posed in the form of a ……..

Q 9: What is the inconsistent triad?

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11.5 THE EXISTENCE OF EVIL

Some philosophers have indeed held that above mentioned (iii) is false. Many complicated and subtle arguments have been advanced over the centuries to "explain away" the apparent existence of evil. Is it possible that something like pain should turn out not to be evil? What argument could possibly show that? It is sometimes argued either that pain serves a function, or that pain is necessary (and thus turns out not to be evil). How should this approach be evaluated?

First, even if pain serves a function (alerting organisms to negative states of their bodies), this does mean that the pain itself is not intrinsically regrettable. True, we might be inclined to tolerate something that is in itself evil if it does us some good, but an evil we tolerate in this manner is not transformed into something good. And although nature might not have been able to do so, God (being both omniscient and omnipotent) could presumably have devised a warning system that did not involve pain.

Second, even if pain is necessary, this does mean that pain is not an evil; all it means is that pain is a necessary evil. Most of us do think some pain is a necessary evil. In this spirit, I allow the dentist to cause me pain because I believe the pain is necessary for my long-term dental health (which in turn means, among other things, a future with less pain). Humans of good will try to eliminate pain where they can, though obviously much pain remains. Whether there is any pain God could not eliminate is a difficult question, and one not answered in the same way by all philosophers.

ACTIVITY

- What answer would you give to someone who raises "the problem of evil?"

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11.6 EVIL : DIFFERENT VIEWS

There is no gain saying the fact that evil and suffering do exist in this world and they do on a sufficiently large scale; that is one of the main reasons for the existence of religion, ethics or state. This fact leads to some important questions: Why do the evil and suffering exist? Is the world all suffering or all evil or is there any place for good in it also? Who is responsible for this? What can be the measures for eradicating or controlling the evils? Theologians and political philosophers have given theoretical bases for different moral codes advocated by them that vary from universal love to some lunatic doctrines of racial superiority, nationalism, caste divisions, etc. A brief review of some of them is necessary for drawing the final conclusions.

Moksa: (Sanskrit) liberation from the cycle of existence (samsara).

Hindu Thought:

Hindu thinkers have ignored the problem of evil and suffering, for the world is unreal and consequently the existence of evil should not be of much concern. The proper course for the human soul is to seek *Moksa,* Liberation or union with God by renouncing and discarding the vain show of appearance called the world. Since the world is only a dream, the evil in the world cannot be of a more enduring substance. So a man of religion should not be worried about evil. Suffering in the world is a hard fact; nobody can deny. Opinions differ regarding their causes and consequently their remedies.

Buddhism :

In Buddhism the very existence is considered to be an evil; life means sorrow and the only escape from sorrow is to escape from life. There is no God; there exists only an impersonal and inexorable Law of *Karma* which attaches fitting consequences to a merit and demerit. When a disciple ceases to desire he escapes and attains *Nirvana.* Life is thus evil and suffering.

LET US KNOW

Nirvana: According to Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy in Buddhism, the perfect or beatific state, characterized by the extinction of desires and passions, and the transcending of the separate existence of the self. Free from bondage.

Islam :

In Islam we find a counterpart of Satan in the fallen angel Iblis, although his position is a bit different from that of Satan. Iblis simply refuse to obey God when God commanded all the angels to worship man as the highest creation. Iblis dared to refuse but said that he so loved God that he could not bow down before any other creature, even though he was the best creation of God. So Iblis was a devil who worshiped God and therefore it is not an operative principle of Evil. The evil doer of the Quran is not the man who believes in Evil but the man who does not believe in God. So the dualism of God and Satan establishes one fact that the Semitic religions believe in principle of evil.

Sâmkhya :

This dualism is found in certain philosophic systems of India also, as **Sâmkhya**, which hold spirit and Prakṛti *(Mâyâ)* to be separate eternal entities, the love of *Mâyâ* resulting in Evil and that of the spirit in good, each having no control over the other.

Semitic religion :

The Semitic religions believe in the principle of evil, which is represented by Satan. The presence of this negative, defiling and diabolic principle is considered to be as eternal as God. The good and Evil exist side by side, each supported by supreme power, God in case of the former and the Satan in case of latter. It was Satan, according to Christian mythology, who through a serpent made Eve eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge, which resulted in all kinds of evils and sufferings in the world. Zoroastrianism believes in two different Gods: Ahura Mazdah also known as Ormuzd of good and Ahriman of evil.

LET US KNOW

St. Augustine: Theologian and philosopher. Augustine of Hippo was the first to develop theodicy. He rejected the idea that evil exists in itself, instead regarding it as a corruption of goodness, caused by humanity's abuse of free will. He believed in the existence of a physical hell as a punishment for sin, but argued that those who choose to accept the salvation of Jesus Christ will go to heaven.

The Irenanean Theodicy :

Even from before the time of Augustine another response to the problem of evil had already been present within the developing Christian tradition. This has basis in the thought of the early Greek-speaking Fathers of the Church, perhaps the most important of whom was St. Irenaeus. He distinguished two stages of the creation of the human race. In the first stage human beings were brought into existence as intelligent animals endowed with the capacity for immense moral and spiritual development. In the second stage, human beings through their free will make themselves into the divine likeness.

LET US KNOW

- **Theodicy :** theodicy in its most common form, attempts to answer the question why a good God permits the manifestation of evil.
- **Irenaean Theodicy :** this is a Christian theodicy designed to respond to the problem of evil. As such, it defends the probability of an omnipotent and omnibenevolent God in the face of evidence of evil in the world.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 10 : Fill in the blanks:

a) Hindu thinkers have ignored the problem of …….. and ……, for the world is unreal and consequently the existence of evil should not be of much concern.

b) In Islam we find a counterpart of ……. in the angel ……., although his position is a bit different from that of Satan.

c) **Sâmkhya**, which hold ……..... and *Prakrti (Mâyâ)* to be separate eternal entities,

Q.11: State whether the following statements are True or False.

a) The Semitic religions believe in the principle of evil, which is represented by Satan.(T/F)

b) Zoroastrianism believes in two different Gods: Ahura Mazdah also known as Ormuzd of good and Ahriman of evil.(T/F)

c) Schopenhauer, a French philosopher.(T/F)

d) Thus Augustine could say, "All evil is either sin or the punishment for sin" (T/F)

11.7 WHY DO EVIL AND SUFFERING EXIST?

The answer lies in the constitution of man. Man consists of five senses and Ego; lust, anger, avarice, attachment and pride are a part of his nature. Besides these, man is gifted with intellect, mind and spirit. With the help of intellect and guidance of spirit he can judge whether a certain thing is good or bad. He has been endowed with free will and he can avoid the evil if he so likes. So the nature has thrown the whole responsibility of action on him; suffering is his own creation. The suffering ends when the individual achieves union with God by pulling down the wall between the not-Self and Self. Man took the responsibility on himself when Eve ate the fruit of the tree of knowledge.

Most of the degenerative diseases man suffers from are due to the fact that the civilized human beings do not live in harmony with the Divine Nature. They love to intensify their physical selfhood and separateness through gluttony, excitement, craving, over stimulation, chronic anxiety over money etc. along with all these alternatives there is another choice available — the desire to unite with God. So it is the wrong use of intellect and the free that leads to suffering. Those who fall prey to these wrong motives suffer; others do not.

This brings us to the need of Ethics and sound basis of society. Neither natural science, nor philosophical intellectual speculation can rescue man from suffering. The world is not illusion to sleep over human suffering. Something must be done to alleviate the suffering of common man, especially the suffering for which an individual cannot be held responsible. The social evils have to be fought tooth and nail. A religion, closing eyes over such ills in society, cannot remain a living religion; it loses its right to be a religion. It must establish some socio-ethical values compatible with its teaching and methods to enforce them.

11.8 LET US SUM UP

We have discussed in this unit the problem of evil. The most important points are:

- Man's life is a mixture of good and evil. Good and evil are correlative facts.
- Both good and evil are found to be very prominent in Christianity.

- Vedanta philosophy declares that God or the Supreme Being is unaffected by evil and stands above relative good which is the correlative of evil. Both Spinoza and Hegel particularly denied the reality of evil.
- There is a problem of explaining how evil can exist if God exists.
- Hindu thinkers have ignored the problem of evil and suffering. The proper course for the human soul is to seek *Moksa.* Suffering in the world is a hard fact; nobody can deny.
- In Buddhism the very existence is considered to be an evil; life means sorrow and the only escape from sorrow is to escape from life. Life is thus evil and suffering.
- The evildoer of the Quran is not the man who believes in Evil but the man who does not believe in God.
- The dualism of God and Satan establishes one fact that the Semitic religions believe in principle of evil.
- The Semitic religions believe in the principle of evil, which is represented by Satan.
- Schopenhauer, calls the world a will and therefore it must be a world of suffering.
- The main traditional Christian response to the problem of evil was formulated by **St. Augustine (354-430 A.D)**.
- According to Augustine , "All evil is either sin or the punishment for sin"
- Man consists of five senses and Ego; lust, anger, avarice, attachment and pride are a part of his nature.

11.9 FURTHER READING

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5) John, Hick. (1990). *Classical and Contemporary Readings in the Philosophy of Religion*, 3rd Edition, Prentice Hall, New Jersey 07632
6) Tiwari, N, Kedar. (1992). *Comparative Religion*. Motilal Banarasidass, Delhi
7) Mahapatra, A, R. (1985). *Philosophy of Religion*: *An Approach to World Religion*. Sterling Publishers, New Delhi
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9) Cahn, Steven, M and Shatz, Devid (eds),(1982).*Contemporay Philosophy of Religion*. New York: Oxford University Press.
10) James, William. (1992). *Introduction to Philosophy*. New York: McGraw Hill's College Core Books

11.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK UR PROGRESS

Ans. to Q No 1 : Swami Vivekananda

Ans. to Q No 2 : (a) False b) True c) True

Ans. to Q No 3 : (a) Measure b) Leibnitz

Ans. to Q No 4 : According to Bosanquet **"**There is nothing in evil which cannot be absorbed in good and contributory to it, it springs from the same source as good and value."

Ans to Q No 5 : According to Spinoza , evils are due to our narrow outlook on things, that evil appears as such only because we look at things from the standpoint of a particular interest, but disappears into nothingness when we enlarge our outlook and learn to look at things from the standpoint of the whole or God.

Ans to Q No 6 : According to Hegel evils are only irrational elements tending to become good or rational, because Reality which is rational through and through must see that the irrationality or evil is rationalised. Both Spinoza and Hegel particularly denied the reality of evil.

Ans to Q No 7 : God

Ans to Q No 8 : a) Benevolent b) Evil, sin, heal c) dilemma

Ans to Q No 9 : An inconsistent triad is a set of three statements, the truth of any two of which implies the falsity of the third. The inconsistent triad relevant here can be formulated as follows:

i) God is all-powerful;
ii) God is all-good;
iii) Evil exists.

Evil is understood here to mean the intrinsically regrettable-anything that is in itself negative, anything that the world would be better off without. Physical pain and suffering are generally acknowledged to be examples of evil in this sense. It seems quite obvious, then, why many philosophers think (i), (ii) and (iii) form an inconsistent triad (i) implies that God could prevent any instance of evil; (ii) implies that God would want to prevent any instance of evil; so if (i) and (ii) are true, (iii) should be false.

There are two other possibilities. Suppose (i) and (iii) are true-that is, suppose that, despite that existence of an all-powerful God, evil exists. It then looks as if (ii) is false-that is, it looks as if it is false that God wants to prevent evil. Finally, suppose (ii) and (iii) are true-that is, that evil exists despite God wanting to prevent it. It then looks as if God cannot prevent evil, which means that (i) is false.

Ans to Q No 10: a) Evil, suffering b) Satan, Iblis c) Spirit

Ans to Q No 11: a) True b) True c) False d) True

11.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very short questions

Q 1 : What is the problem of evil?

Q 2 : Who is Plato?
Q 3 : Write the name of two German philosophers.
Q 4 : Which one is the only dualistic system of Indian Philosophy?

B) Short questions (Answer in about 100-150 words)
Q 1: Write short note on:
a) Hindu thought on the problem of evil
b) The Augustinian Theodicy
Q 2 : What is the view of Buddhism about the problem of evil?
Q 3 : Explain briefly the concept of evil.

C) Long Questions (Answer in about 300-500 words)
Q 1 : Can an omnipotent being do everything? If so, what can't an omnipotent being do?
Q 2 : Explain philosophical beliefs about the origin of evil and the role of human free will.
Q 3 : Explain the theodicy of Augustine.
Q 4 : "The existence of natural evil proves that there is no God"-Discuss.
Q 5 : Explain the Irenaean theodicy.
Q 6 : Why do evil and suffering exist? Discuss.

UNIT 12: PROOFS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD: CAUSAL AND TELEOLOGICAL

UNIT STRUCTURE

12.1 Learning Objectives
12.2 Introduction
12.3 The Causal Argument/ The First Cause/ Cosmological Argument
  12.3.1 The First Cause
  12.3.2 Aristotle's First Cause Argument
  12.3.3 Russell's View
  12.3.4 The Argument from Contingency/ Thomas Aquinas's View
  12.3.5 Thomist's View
  12.3.6 Some Steps of Cosmological Argument
  12.3.7 Criticism of the Causal Argument
12.4 The Teleological Argument for The Existence of God
  12.4.1 Plato's View
  12.4.2 Kant's View
  12.4.3 Henry More's View and others View.
  12.4.4 13.4.4 F.R. Tennant's View
  12.4.5 Criticism of Teleological Proofs for the Existence of God
12.5 Let us Sum up
12.6 Further Reading
12.7 Answers to Check Your Progress
12.8 Model Questions

12.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to

- explain Causal proofs for the existence of God.
- discuss Aristotle's First Cause Argument.
- describe Russell's View.
- discuss The Argument from Contingency/ Thomas Aquinas's view.
- describe Thomist's view
- explain Some Steps of Cosmological argument
- discuss critically the cosmological argument.
- explain Teleological proofs for the existence of God.
- discuss Plato's view on teleology proof
- discuss Kant's View on teleological proof
- discuss Henry More's View on teleological proof
- explain F.R. Tennant's View.
- discuss critically the teleological argument.

12.2 INTRODUCTION

The notion of God has close relation with religion. Generally we think that religion always includes the concept of God. But along with belief in God religion is concerned with prayer, ritual, customs and other matters. A belief of God does not by itself constitute a religion. Religion includes much more concepts besides it. For example, Buddhism and Jainism are considered as a religion though they do not believe in God.

However, we cannot avoid the concept of God in religious field. Most of us believe in God who is considered as a supernatural being. He is beyond the totality of natural processes. He is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent. He has another characteristic that is He is benevolent. Regarding the belief in God all systems are called theism. On the other hand who does not belief in the existence of God is called atheism. It is seen that except few systems every religion accepts the existence of God. They strongly believe that there is a God who is the creator, maintainer and destroyer of this world. He has some supernatural power and so, he is finite.

Philosophers have devised many proofs for the existence of God. In philosophy, we evaluate these proofs by the same standards of logic and rationality that we apply to any other arguments. Thus, the beliefs in God need some proofs for the existence of it. There are various arguments put forwarded by various philosophers in this context. These arguments are,

1) Cosmological Argument/ Causal Argument/The First Cause
2) Ontological Argument
3) Teleological Argument/ Design Argument
4) Moral Argument

LET US KNOW

- Omnipresence: The capacity of God to be presents everywhere at once
- Omniscient: The property of knowing everything.
- Omnipotent: The word omnipotence derives from the Latin term “Omni Potents” , meaning “ All-powerful”

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: What are the traditional proofs for the existence of God?

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12.3 THE CAUSAL ARGUMENT/ THE FIRST CAUSE/ COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

In its elementary form the Cosmological argument was first formulated by Plato. The cosmological argument is one of the traditional arguments for the existence of God. The argument is deductive and based on the world is an event, or effect; therefore it must

have had a cause, outside itself, sufficient to account for its existence. In the widest sense of the term, any theistic argument that proceeds from the world to God can be describe as cosmological, including the design argument. Its premises are that all natural things are dependent for their existence on something else; the totality of dependent beings must then itself depend upon a non-dependent, or necessary existent, being, which is God.

Cosmology : The study of the origin and structure of the universe.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 2 : What is the first cause, according to Aquinas?

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12.3.1 The First Cause

Those who believe that God is the first cause of the universe must determine the nature of that first cause. There must be a cause of the series of causes that we experience. Is God the efficient or the material cause? Perhaps He is both efficient and material cause of the universe.

The label cosmological argument really applies to a family of related arguments, all of which begin with observed (or otherwise obvious) features of the universe, or cosmos, and try to show that the only way of explaining these features is by postulating the existence of God. Motion, cause and effect, contingency are the features most commonly used in this type of argument. Here in condensed form, one sample of cosmological argument:

1) Things move;
   They don't move themselves;
   Their movers don't move themselves;
   This series of movers cannot be finite;
   Therefore, there must be a first unmoved mover, whom we call God.

2) Most things are effects;
   Their causes are in turn effects;
   The cause/ effect series cannot be finite;
   Therefore, there must be a first uncaused cause, whom we call God.

These arguments have generated many thousands of pages of commentary, friendly and unfriendly, supportive and critical. It is probably safe to say that few contemporary philosophers accept these arguments. It claims to prove the existence of God from a certain character of things and events, that is, they have dependent origination, conditional or contingent existence. For example, I am not the cause of my own existence. My existence is caused by or is dependent on something outside of me. My birth depends on my parents and my parents' birth is dependent on their parents and we may go as far as possible, we cannot find in this unending causal chain any satisfactory explanation of my birth. It is the

demand of the causal principle that we posit a being as cause who is not dependent on any other existence and is sufficient in itself, that is, God.

This argument is further strengthening. It is pointed out that we may admit that the events in the universe have causal explanation in other events in the universe, but what is the universe itself. The causal principle demands of us to accept God as the cause of the total chain of events called universe. It is clear this argument rests on causal principle, i. e., the series of cause and effect must have a cause outside the series that is itself uncaused, i. e. God

LET US KNOW

Cosmos: (Greek, kosmos): The whole world, especially conceived as ordered and law-governed, whether by destiny, fate, justice, divine command, or rational necessity.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3 : Fill in the blanks :

a) It is clear this argument rests on causal principle, i. e., the series of cause and effect must have a cause outside the series that is itself uncaused, i. e. …….

b) Those who believe that God is the first cause of the universe must determine the nature of that .....

12.3.2 Aristotle's First Cause Argument :

In the Aristotelian – Thomistic tradition, as represented by Catholic theologians the cosmological argument for the existence of God has been given considerable emphasis. We must, it is affirm, differentiate between the accidental and the essential features of reality, or between the temporary objects of experience and those that are permanent. Every event or change pre-supposes a cause. Logically, we must go back to an uncaused, self-existent cause or to a self-existent Being. God is thus immanent in the principle. God is the condition of the orderly development of the universe, as well as its permanent source or ground.

The cosmological argument was first clearly put forward by Aristotle in the west. Aristotle gave the conception of the unmoved mover. The first cause of creation is the 'First Mover' or the Prime Mover, according to Aristotle. He distinguishes between actuality and potentiality. On the basis of this distinction Aristotle came to the conclusion that something actual is logically prior to whatever is potential. The fact of change must imply the existence of something actual, something purely actual without any mixture of potentiality. According to Aristotle, God is conceived as pure actuality. To Aristotle first cause argument is known as cosmological because according to him everything that happens has a cause, and this cause in turn has a cause, and so on in a series that must be infinite and that infinite cause is known as first cause.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 4 : What is the first cause of creation according to Aristotle?

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Q 5 : State whether the following statements are true or false:

a) The cosmological argument was first clearly put forward by Aristotle in the west.(T/F)

b) Aristotle distinguishes between actuality and potentiality.(T/F)

12.3.3 Russell's View :

The greatest philosopher, Bertrand Russell, makes the point clear by an instance. Every one of us has a mother. But it is meaningless to ask who is the mother of the mankind or totality of men. The totality of all men is not a man about whom it is meaningful to ask what the cause of it is. Since the universe is the name for totality of things and events, it is meaningless to ask the cause of it. But it is meaningful to ask the cause of the existence of God, for God is an entity. Russell tells us that we can say that every human being has a parent, but certainly we cannot say that humanity too has a parent. Hence Russell holds that every event has a cause, but the totality need not have any. Some theists, therefore, try to get out of this situation. They hold that God is not an entity, not a being, he is being of beings. He is the ground of all beings.

LET US KNOW

Russell : (1872-1970): English mathematician and philosopher whose work ranged widely, including attention to formal logic and the philosophy of mathematics, epistemology and metaphysics, and vigorous commitment to unpopular political causes.

12.3.4 The Argument from Contingency/ Thomas Aquinas's View:

The assumption of the cosmological argument from contingency is that existence is prior to essence or idea. The assertion of Aquinas in this context is that the existence of God is not implied by God's essence, but that God's essence is the same as his existence. The causal argument for the existence of God was put forwarded by Thomas Aquinas. According to him there are some general features of the world around us and there could not be world with these particular characteristics unless there were also the ultimate realities, which we call God. Aquinas thinks that if we don't recognize the beginning in series of events, we cannot explain the presence of things in the world.. Aquinas thinks that an infinite series is just a long series. But a series however long it may be is not an infinite series. To deny God is only to deny that there is any first number in the series

which is not itself an effect of earlier cause. In an infinite series, no event is denied cause, what is denied is that it is caused by something which itself is not an effect. The causal argument is based on his second notion that is known as first cause argument. According to Thomas Aquinas every happens or events has a cause and this cause also based on other cause. Thus, there are links of various events to cause, cause-to cause and so on. Aquinas mentioned five ways of proving divine existence. These were,

1) From the fact of change to a prime mover,
2) From the causation to a First Cause.
3) From contingent beings to a Necessary Being.
4) From degrees of value to Absolute Value.
5) From the evidences of purposiveness in nature to a Devine Designer.

Aquinas said that these series causation must have a starting point. According to him this starting point of cause or the first cause is none but God. Aquinas third notion contingency of the world which also known as the cosmological argument formulates the causal arguments in a different way. According to Aquinas everything in the world about us contingent. It is true of each cause that it might not have existed at all or might have existed differently. The proof of this is that there was a time when it did not exist. According to him everything depends on its previous factors and everything points beyond itself to other things. He believes that if we look back considering contingent relation then we will find there would have been a time when nothing existed. Since, there are things in existence there must therefore, be something that is not contingent and this is God. The argument of Aquinas can be more simply put into the following step:

1) All the things of the world are contingent, which is one by one each of each of them at one time can pass away.
2) If there were a complete void at any one time, then even now there should have been a void, for out of nothing, nothing comes.
3) In the finite series of time, all things, one by one, at one time should have ceased to exist. Therefore, at one time, by this time, there should have been nothing. Hence, there should have been a complete void already by this time.
4) But there is something. This something, therefore, is based on something, which is not contingent, i. e., it is a Being, which at no time can cease to be the infinite series of time.
5) This something, which contains the ground of its own existence, is a necessary being. It is this necessary being which is at the basis of all contingent things and which does not allow things in the infinite series of time to pass into nothing.
6) This necessary Being is called God.

LET US KNOW

Thomas Aquinas: Italian Dominican Philosopher and theologician.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 6 : What are Aquinas' five ways of proving divine existence?

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12.3.5 Thomist's View :

The followers of Aquinas who are known as Thomist reformed the above mention view of Aquinas. They considered the series of causes as an endless and eternally inconclusive regress of explanations. According to them if fact A is made intelligible by its relation to B, C and D and if each of these is in turn rendered intelligible by other facts, at the back of the complex there must be a reality which is self explanatory. This reality constitutes the ultimate explanation of the whole. According to them such reality is God. If God does not exist, then the universe is a mere unintelligible brute fact.

Thomist compares the relationship of world and God to a watch. According to them though a watch consists of different parts, its interlocking wheels gets movement from the spring. So, in order to be a world of contingent realities, there must be non-contingent realities, there must be a non-contingent ground for their existence. Only a self-existent reality containing in itself the source of its own being can constitute an ultimate ground of the existence of anything else. According to Thomists such an ultimate ground is the "necessary being" which is called as God.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 7 : Fill in the blanks :

a) Thomist compares the relationship of world and God to a ……...

b) According to Thomists such an ultimate ground is the "……." which is called as God.

12.3.6 Some Steps of Cosmological Argument:

Philosophers considered that though there are series of causes of God is beyond it. He created the universe out of nothing and thus caused the first event. After that all events follows. Thus, the series of events reaching into the past comes to a stop with God. According to followers of the causal arguments God is root cause of universe. He is omnipotent and so he can create it. Today there is an important neo –Thomist group of thinkers who hold that there are valid forms of the cosmological argument; some of most important writings from this point of view are listed in note.

Cosmological arguments have the following steps:

1) Every event has a cause, and no event in this world would be without cause.
2) Events keep on happening. The present event A is caused by previous event B, and B in turns by C, C in turns by D , and so on.
3) Quite obviously the causal series is interminable. But in order to understand the whole series of causes and effect, we have to posit a first cause , which in its turn does not imply its further cause.
4) This First Cause, which produces the whole series of causes and effects, is the Mover only and cannot be in turn moved by anything else. This Prime Mover may be called God.
5) Hence, the world of causal series requires God to explain it. Thus God exists as its own cause and in turn as the cause of the world.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 8: Fill in the blanks:

a) Every ……. has a ……, and no event in this world would be without cause.
b) Events keep on ……..

12.3.7 Criticism of the Causal Argument

The casual argument is criticised in following ways,

1) If we accept that everything has a cause, then God cannot remain being uncaused. **Hume** and his followers ask the following questions –If every event must have a cause then what is the cause of the so- called first cause? We may well assumed that casual chain is simply beginning less.
2) Causality or our knowledge of causes lies entirely with the realm of spatio temporal things, processes and events. If God is the cause of this universe He must be limited to spatio temporal relation. But we considered him as beyond all these factors.
3) Every event has a particular cause. The universe is the collection of various events. Therefore, one God cannot concern with all events.
4) God is not the first member of a casual series but the reason why there is any series at all.
5) It is difficult to relate god with the finite casual series. If God is the first cause then He is under the finite casual series. This means that God being an effect must have a cause. If He is beyond the casual chains then it is impossible to find any relation between Him and His creation.
6) The famous British empiricist, **Hume**, hold that both the cause and effect are limited. If it is true, then it leads to the conclusion that God is also limited.
7) **Kant'**s objection is more formidable. Causality being a category of the phenomena, cannot take us beyond the phenomena. And within phenomena, the concept of God remains. So it implies the finite regress.

8) We know that there are two causes-material and efficient which are necessary for the production of things. In the case of pot, the potter is efficient and the earth is the material cause, according to Aristotle. if we say that God is efficient or instrumental cause of the universe , then it would have been impossible for Him to create without the help of the material cause or matter.
9) The theists admit that science in its study of events in the universe has discovered no first cause, which is not an effect. But they argue that our understanding is not limited to our empirical experience. We have a prior reason in us, which tells us that everything has a cause and therefore, the world must have a cause, otherwise the world remains unintelligible. We point out to the theists as to why do they stop short at God. Why do they not ask for the cause of God. And if they assert that God is without a cause , why should they hesitate to accept that the world is without a cause.
10) Aquinas thinks that an infinite series is just a long series. But a series however long it may be, is not an infinite series.
11) The cosmological argument reduces God simply to an efficient cause. As a result the relation between God and the world is turned to an external, mechanical relationship. Such a God who is only externally related to the universe does not ultimately satisfy the religious consciousness.
12) Some philosophers point out that this argument assumes without proof that causal monism, rather than causal pluralism is the true view of causal series.

Even though this argument is not sound yet it's historical significance cannot be denied.

The cosmological argument is fallacious. But let us assume that its true. Even then it does not prove the existence of God as defined. God is defined to be not only uncaused cause of the world of existence, or necessary being, but also all good and all knowing. A God who lacked goodness will not be the God whom theists worship, or Brahman which lacked positive value character of anand would not be the Brahman in whom the Vedantin seeks his absorption

LET US KNOW

Hume :(1711-76) David Hume was a Scottish philosopher, historian, economist, and essayist, who is best known today for his highly influential system of radical philosophical empiricism, scepticism and naturalism.

Kant : (1724-1804): German philosopher who revolutionised modern philosophy, in an effort to counter the sceptical arguments of Hume and provide a firm basis for human knowledge and morality. Kant used transcendental arguments to show that human beings apply synthetic a priori judgements as the preconditions for any possible experience.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 9 : Who are the critics of Cosmological argument?

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12.4 THE TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

The teleological argument of the existence of God is also known as the argument from design in the world. This argument attempts to arrive at the conclusion that God exists by help of empirical proofs. Accordingly, the world is understood as consisting of various contingent realities which are not self sufficient in nature and refer to something beyond them as these are means toward some end or objective. Thus it appears to common sense that behind this world, there is a purpose for which world is created. For this purpose the world is designed or organized in a different way. Therefore, if there is a purpose then there must be a purposer or designer of the world. The teleological argument is a philosophical device of systematically organizing this common sense belief as logically justifiable as an attempt at rationalizing this belief as a legitimate evidence for the reality of design and to postulate an intelligent designer-someone who 'engineered in' all the purposiveness we see in nature.

Telos : *Telos* is the Greek word for Goal, purpose, or end.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 10 : What is the other name of teleological argument?

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12.4.1 Plato's View

Naturally this form of the argument, the so called teleological or the design argument, is one of the oldest devices for justifying belief in God. Perhaps it has its earliest roots in the thought of **Plato**, who argued that the physical universe is unintelligible apart from mind. According to Plato the designer of the world could never be the first cause, it has a conditional and a borrowed reality and its incompleteness and imperfections are revealing of something, which is the true reality. This argument may take many forms, establishing sovereignty of a divine creator as both the immanent and the transcendent cause of the world, or in the form of dualism of maker and the made, understanding creation out of void or zero or out of preexisting materials giving them form or shape in accordance with a plan. The main contention of the teleological argument is that the universe is not mere aggregate of events but it is a meaningful as an organized whole, in which there is order, harmony and discipline. For the believer this leads to justification of

faith in an intelligent designer who has created the universe with strong conviction that the supreme cosmic designer can only be God and nothing else.

LET US KNOW

Plato: (427-347 BCE) Greek philosopher who drew a strict distinction between appearance and reality, develop the theory of forms as an account of immutable truth, and argued that only the wisest members of a society should be trusted to rule.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 11 : State whether the following statements are true or false:

a) Perhaps it has its earliest roots in the thought of **Plato**, who argued that the physical universe is unintelligible apart from mind. (T/F)

b) Naturally this form of the argument, the so called teleological or the design argument, is one of the oldest devices for justifying belief in God. (T/F)

12.4.2 Kant's View

Among all the traditional theistic proofs, the design (or teleological) argument is, as **Kant** acknowledges it, the oldest, the clearest, and the most accordant with the common reason of mankind, even though he remained a severe critic of all the proofs for God's existence, including the argument from design. Earlier thinkers often borrowed examples of such purposiveness, or 'good design,' from astronomy. From the nineteenth century onward, the most popular examples could come from biology. Using biological organisms as our example, we can try reformulating the teleological argument as follows: Organisms have features that are purposive; Purposive features must be the result of design; Organisms don't design themselves; and are not designed by humans; Therefore, there is a nonhuman designer, whom we call God.

The teleological argument refers to some features of the universe which are unique and this uniqueness and novelty and complexity in organisms and things rules out any human, who is also made or caused, becoming the designer or the maker of this vast universe. Therefore there must be a divine and a non-human designer. Just as we can infer the nature of the changes in the earth's crust during the past million of years on the basis of geological evidence, in a similar way we can infer the existence and nature of a designer on the basis of certain features of the universe in general. The teleological argument further justifies the fact that the universe is product of designer, as the making of the universe requires a being with intelligence and enough power to shape the materials of the universe in accordance with a plan. The order and the progress in the universe disclose an immanent intelligence and purpose. Let us take, for example, the long process of development leading to the human brain and the mind of man. The process has produced minds that began to understand the world, and it has produced thought

and understanding. How could this occur unless the course of evolution is intelligently directed? That proofs that there must be a supreme being who finally guides the course of evolution. That Supreme Being is called God.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 12 : Fill in the blanks :

a) The order and the progress in the universe disclose an immanent intelligence and ……..……..

b) That proofs that there must be a supreme being who finally guides the course of evolution. That Supreme Being is called ..……...

12.4.3 Henry More's View and Others

There is also other ways of presenting the argument in various forms, with reference to findings in sciences and life sciences. Now, we do find in the world things, like human eye, in which parts are so shaped that they work together to give us sight. From this, we can infer that there must be intelligent cause of the construction of the eye. Let us hear **Henry More**: Now why have we three joints in our legs and arms as also our fingers but that it was much better than having two or four? And why are our fore-teeth sharp like chisels to cut but our inward teeth broad to grind (instead of) the fore-teeth broad and the other sharp? Again, why are the teeth so luckily placed or rather why there are not teeth in other bones as well as in jawbones? But the reason is that nothing is done foolishly or in vain; that is, there is a divine providence that orders all things.

This type of argument has lost its value as the theory of evolution could explain to us why we have the most convenient number of joints in our fingers and why our teeth are in the jawbones. Mutation and Natural Selection explain the adjustment of parts to each other for the purpose of survival. It is true that Darwin's theory is not the complete explanation of the teleological order, it tells us only how some cases develop from other cases. If we think of the structure of the universe on the pattern of a living being like a tree or an animal, instead of on the pattern of a machine, we have no reason to posit a God. A tree in a jungle is not made like a watch. The whole process is purposive but instinctive, with no need of any intelligence or design behind this great show, all is as mechanical and arbitrary as anything chaotic could be.

Further, if there are beneficent adjustments in the universe, say grass for the lamb, there are evil maladjustments too, for there is wolf for the lamb, too. Let us look at the destructiveness in the animal world, where one species is out to destroy the other. There is cruelty and injustice in the jungle where the innocent animals live in terror or suffer death at the hands of strong and forceful animals. Man is heir to diseases, which are not due to his intemperance. No reasoning can wash clean the tragic deaths and sufferings in the human world due to natural calamities like flood, earthquakes, epidemics etc. If there are beautiful cases of

valuable adjustments, there are tragic facts of maladjustments, too, and hence it is illegitimate to infer from facts in the world that it is a creation by a *perfectly good God.*

In general the mere struggle for life supports and sustains the higher life forms and all sub serve ultimately to conscious existence. Insects and worms are the victims of small birds; reptiles of still higher and larger birds; the smaller fish of the greater or of the marine mammalian; the carnivorous animals remain the prey of the feline order. Finally, it is in the chase of these, or in conflict with them, that man learns his first arts, and wins his place at the head of all terrestrial races. This is how Martineau concludes that the design-argument is not based on mere resemblance in nature to the human contrivance, but on the special character of this resemblance.

Because of these critical points many philosophers have attempted to offer certain refined versions of the teleological argument. The most impressive twentieth-century restatement of the design argument is that of **Richard Swinburne** in *The Existence of God* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), offering a complex argument based upon Bayes's theorem in probability logic.

12.4.4 F.R. Tennant's View

In the modern period a distinguished philosopher of religion **F. R. Tennant** has offered an influential version of the teleological argument. In his book *Philosophical Theology* Tennant has mention six kinds of adaptation. The whole universe may be considered as a system of adaptations. The basic kinds of adaptations are according to F. R. Tennant, are as follows:

1) The intelligibility of the world. The world and the human mind are so related that we can learn more and more without limit.
2) The adaptation of living organizes to their environments.
3) The ways in which the inorganic world is conducive to the emergence and maintenance of life. Life is possible only certain kind of chemical processes go on, etc.
4) The aesthetic value of nature. Nature is not only suited to penetration by the intellect. It is also constitute so as to awaken valuable aesthetic responses in man.
5) The ways in which the world ministers to the moral life of men. For example, through being forced to learn something about the uniformities in natural operation, men are forced to develop their intelligence, a prerequisite to moral developments. Moral virtues are acquired in the course of having to cope with the hardship one's natural environment.
6) The overall progressiveness of the evolutionary process.

Having mentioned these six basic types of adaptations Tennant points out that none of them establishes the theistic hypothesis conclusively. But the most reasonable course of things would be to accept the theistic hypothesis as highly probable.

Perhaps the major problem facing the design argument as thus reformulated centers upon the concept of probability that it involves. Tennant's conclusion is that in view of the various considerations which he presents, it is much more probable that there is a God than that there is not. It has often been pointed out that the statistical concept of probability, which is used in the sciences, cannot be applied to the unique case of the universe as a whole in order to be warranted in saying that the probability of our universe being God-produced. When the argument takes this form, it is no longer subject to competition from scientific explanations of the same facts. If our basic datum is a certain configuration of the universe as a whole, science can, by the nature of the case offer no explanation.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 13: Who is the author of *Philosophical Theology?*

.....

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Q 14: What are the basic kinds of adaptations are according to F. R. Tennant?

.....

.....

12.4.5 Criticism of teleological proofs for the existence of God

Apart from this there are some objections raised against this argument: The design argument conceives the relation between God and the world in the manner of the relation between a human being and a machine. Both human being and machine are objective phenomena and they are temporary, finite and limited. In the same manner if God is the designer like the watchmaker there. He is also limited by the world. The watchmaker prepared the watch out of the pre-existing materials; is it applicable in the same way to God? Kant pointed out that the design argument proves the existence of a contriver or an architect of the worlds, not its creator and this designer, as the architect, unlike the creative author, is constrained by the world, which does not keep room for divine freedom.

To overcome these difficulties teleology has been conceived as immanent and not as transcendent. It is not that God remains outside the materials supplied to Him. He is not the outward contriver but the indwelling shaper of things according to some definite plan and design. But there are some general criticisms against such reformulations:

1) That the teleological argument does not prove the existence of a necessary being, a first cause, or even a creator of the universe out of nothing; at best, it could only give evidence that the universe is the product of design which requires a designer; if He exists He should be called 'God'. Traditionally, we give the name 'God' to a spontaneous creator than an artificial maker.
2) The word 'order' is not very clear, as it is a relative term. The object, which seems orderly to one person, will not be the same to another. Nor is it clear

that universe is orderly in any specific sense. In the world there are lots of disorders, disharmonies and disasters. In nature all things are not properly arranged or designed. The order or purpose is not the result of design. Here the defender of teleological argument would reply that the design or order of plants and animals is not the same as in case of watch or house. The order and design of the Divine designer is not relative but absolute.

3) According to Hume we cannot repose perfect confidence in reasoning by analogy. There is a wide difference between the universes on the one hand, and the finite things like machines, houses etc. on the other. The analogy between the world and human architect, such as a watch or a house, is rather weak. The universe is not like a vast machine.

4) Even if we could validly infer a divine designer of the world, we would still not be entitled to postulate the wise God and intelligent God. Besides, from a finite world we can never infer an infinite creator.

12.5 LET US SUM UP

- There are cosmological, ontological, teleological and moral arguments for the existence of God.
- First cause of creation is the 'First Mover' or the Prime Mover, according to Aristotle.
- Aquinas mentioned five ways of proving divine existence. These were, (a) From the fact of change to a prime mover. (b) From the causation to a First Cause. (c) From contingent beings to a Necessary Being. (d)From degrees of value to Absolute Value. (e) From the evidences of purposiveness in nature to a Devine Designer.
- Thomist compares the relationship of world and God to a Watch.
- According to Thomists such an ultimate ground is the "necessary being" which is called as God.
- Every event has a cause, and no event in this world would be without cause.
- Events keep on happening. The present event A is caused by previous event B , and B in turns by C, C in turns by D , and so on.
- Quite obviously the causal series is interminable. But in order to understand the whole series of causes and effect, we have to posit a first cause , which in its turn does not imply its further cause.
- This First Cause, which produces the whole series of causes and effects, is the Mover only and cannot be in turn moved by anything else. This Prime Mover may be called God.
- Hence, the world of causal series requires God to explain it. Thus God exists as its own cause and in turn as the cause of the world.
- Hume and Kant are the two critics of Cosmological Argument.
- The teleological argument of the existence of God is also known as the argument from design in the world.

- Perhaps it has its earliest roots in the thought of **Plato**, who argued that the physical universe is unintelligible apart from mind.
- There are some basic kinds of adaptations are according to F. R. Tennant.

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12.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans. to Q No 1: Arguments are,

1) Cosmological Argument/ Causal Argument/The First Cause

2) Ontological Argument

3) Teleological Argument/ Design Argument

4) Moral Argument

Ans. to Q No 2: God

Ans. to Q No 3: a) God

b) First cause.

Ans. to Q No 4: The first cause of creation is the 'First Mover' or the Prime Mover, according to Aristotle.

Ans. to Q No 5 : a) T b) T

Ans. to Q No 6: Aquinas mentioned five ways of proving divine existence. These were,

1) From the fact of change to a prime mover.
2) From the causation to a First Cause.
3) From contingent beings to a Necessary Being.
4) From degrees of value to Absolute Value.
5) From the evidences of purposiveness in nature to a Devine Designer.

Ans. to Q No 7: a) watch.

b) necessary being.

Ans. to Q No 8: a) event, cause

b) happening.

Ans. to Q No 9: Hume and Kant.

Ans. to Q No 10: Design Argument

Ans. to Q No 11 : a) T

b) T

Ans. to Q No 12 : a) Purpose

b) God

Ans. to Q No 13 : F.R. Tennant

Ans. to Q No 14 : The basic kinds of adaptations are according to F. R. Tennant, are as follows:

1) The intelligibility of the world. The world and the human mind are so related that we can learn more and more without limit.
2) The adaptation of living organizes to their environments.
3) The ways in which the inorganic world is conducive to the emergence and maintenance of life. Life is possible only certain kind of chemical processes go on, etc.
4) The aesthetic value of nature. Nature is not only suited to penetration by the intellect. It is also constitute so as to awaken valuable aesthetic responses in man.
5) The ways in which the world ministers to the moral life of men. For example, through being forced to learn something about the uniformities in natural operation, men are forced to develop their intelligence, a prerequisite to moral developments. Moral virtues are acquired in the course of having to cope with the hardship one's natural environment.
6) The overall progressiveness of the evolutionary process.

12.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very Short Question

Q 1: Who is the founder of cosmological argument?
Q 2: what is the first cause, according to Aquinas?
Q 3: Who are the supporters of cosmological proof for the existence of God ?
Q 4: Who are the supporters of teleological proof for the existence of God ?
Q 5: Who are the critics of cosmological proof for the existence of God ?
Q 6: Who are the critics of teleological proof for the existence of God ?
Q 7: Who mentioned teleological argument in ancient Greek ?

B) Short Questions (Answer in about 100-150 words)

Q 1: What does Aquinas meant by Prime Mover?
Q 2: What is Aquinas's view about First Cause Argument?
Q 3: Why did Aquinas say God is necessary and categorical being?
Q 4: What is the main theme of teleological Argument?
Q 5: What is Martineau's view on teleological argument?
Q 6: How does Hume complain against teleological argument?

C) Long Questions (Answer in a 300-500 about words)

Q 1: What are the traditional arguments for the existence of God? Discuss.
Q 2: Explain and examine the cosmological argument for the existence of God.
Q 3: Discuss the causal argument for the existence of God. Is it satisfactory?
Q 4: Explain critically the teleological proof for the existence of God.
Q 5: Explain and examine the cosmological argument for the existence of God.
Q 6: How does F.R. Tennet advocate teleological argument?
Q 7: Critically discuss the teleological argument for the existence of God.

UNIT 13 : PROOFS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD: ONTOLOGICAL AND MORAL ARGUMENT

UNIT STRUCTURE

13.1 Learning Objectives
13.2 Introduction
13.3 Ontological Argument
  13.3.1 St. Anselm's View
  13.3.2 Descarte's view
  13.3.3 Criticism of the Ontological Argument
13.4 The Moral Argument for the Existence of God
  13.4.1 Kant's View
  13.4.2 Indian Conception God (Moral Argument)
  13.4.3 Three General Approaches of Moral Argument
  13.4.4 Criticism of the Moral Argument
13.5 Let us Sum Up
13.6 Further Reading
13.7 Answers to Check Your Progress
13.8 Model Questions

13.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to

- explain ontological proofs for the existence of God.
- discuss St. Anselm's View.
- explain Descarte's view.
- discuss critically ontological argument.
- explain the moral argument for the existence of God.
- discuss Kant's view.
- discuss Indian Conception God (Moral Argument)
- discuss critically moral argument.

13.2 INTRODUCTION

For hundreds of years philosophers, scientists and theologians have been bringing forward arguments either to show that there is such a being as God or to deny His existence entirely. This is one of the problems in the philosophy of religion, because belief in God has always occupied a central position in religious faith and practice. We need at this point to make clear the close relation between the ideas of God, the nature of God and the types of arguments for His existence. One can have the ideas and nature of God only when one observes the relation of God and the world, religions of the world and the arguments for the existence of God.

Here we shall present certain traditional theistic arguments for the belief and existence of God.

13.3 ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

The ontological argument attempts to prove the existence of God from the ideas or human experience. This argument was first put forth by St. Anselm, a medieval philosopher. The supporters of this argument are St. Anselm, Rene Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Hegel etc.

13.3.1 St. Anselm's View

Anselm said that we have an idea of perfect being, and that this is what we mean by God. The argument proceeds as follows:

"God is a being that which no greater can be conceived"

Now we have the idea of such a thing. But existence is necessary to the concept of such a being. If he didn't exist, he would not be as great as if did exist, and by definition he is the greatest being that can be conceived. Therefore, such a being exists. It is clear that by 'greater' Anselm means more perfect, and the highest and supreme. Instead of describing God as the most perfect being that there is, Anselm describes God as the being who is so perfect that no more perfect can even be conceived. In this ontological argument Anselm pointed out that the most perfect conceivable being must exist in reality as well as in the mind. He said that the God is necessary existence, so it is impossible to conceive of Him not existing. For something can be thought to exist that cannot be thought not to exist.

The sample version here is similar to that given by St. Anselm.

The concept of God is of a being no greater than which can be conceived;

But a being which exists is greater than a being which is merely conceived;

If God did not exist, God would not be a being no greater than which can be conceived;

Therefore, God exists.

We may sum up Anselm's ontological argument into the following points-

Firstly, being God an object of worship must be the highest or greater than whom nothing can be conceived.

Secondly, Existence is a state of the highest perfection that can be conceived as a predicate or a quality like omnipotence, omniscience.

Lastly, God is a necessary existence, which is enclosed in the idea of a being greater than which nothing can be conceived. We cannot ever be thought of the non-existence of God. To think God as non-existent is to lead self-contradiction. Therefore, God must exist.

LET US KNOW

St. Anselm: (1033/4-1109) Medieval philosopher and theologian. His two principal theological treatises are the Monologion and the Proslogion. The former contains versions of the "cosmological argument and argument from the existence of goodness to the existence of a supreme good. The latter contains the famous "ontological argument for the existence of God. Anselm also wrote many dialogues concerned with particular problems in logic and theology.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Who first put forth ontological argument?

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Q 2: Who are the supporters of ontological argument?

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Q 3: Who is the writer of the book 'Proslogion'?

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Q 4: "God is a being that which no greater can be conceived" who is the propounder of this view?

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13.3.2 Descartes' View

Descartes made some changes in this argument. He said that God must be the cause of this idea of an all perfect Being. Perfection means to him the attributes, power, goodness, knowledge and also existence. Hence anything less than God cannot be the cause of such an idea, which according to Descartes, is an innate idea.

Descartes tried to hold by saying that from the notion of God one can deduce His existence. Descartes deduce the existence of God from His perfection; the idea of God is that of a perfect being, is an innate idea which is clear and distinct that cannot be doubted. The idea of God is clear and distinct "innate in me".

According to Descartes, while one can have a clear and distinct idea of numbers or figures similarly, one can have an idea of God and as Descartes sees it, the idea of God is the idea of supremely perfect being which also can be seen to have an actual and eternal existence, So, God exists.

According to Descartes, just as 'the angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles' follows from the definition of a triangle similarly, the existence of God follows from the very idea of Him. We cannot conceive God without existence, then it follows that existence is inseparable as of Him, therefore, He exists.

Descartes notifies us that one can think of a will not to exist, but one cannot even think of God as non-existent. For Descartes, the existence of God, reality of God and unchangeability of God etc. can occur from the idea of God. Therefore, undoubtedly God Exists.

We may sum up Descartes ontological argument into the following steps-

a. The idea of God is a perfect Being.
b. That lacks no positive qualities.
c. Existence is a positive quality.
d. Thus, God lacks no existence. God exists.

LET US KNOW

Descartes, Rene (1596-1650) French philosopher. Descartes's efforts to achieve certainty in the face of scepticism mark the origins of modern epistemology.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 5: "Descartes supports ontological argument for the existence of God" is it true?

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Q 6: What is Descartes ontological Argument?

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13.3.3 Criticism of the Ontological Argument

The ontological argument for the existence of God i.e. the existence of God deduces from the idea of God has been criticized by many philosophers, like St. Thomas Aquinas, Kant, Ayer and others. Among the critics, Kant is remarkable. But his opinion against of both Anselm and Descartes is not reasonable, argued by Hegel and others. Criticisms are as follows:

1. Kant made seven criticisms to this argument. According to him we cannot reduce the reality of anything from mere idea of it. But if a thing is to exist it must be given in experience. This ontological argument ignores the proper distinction between thought and existence. Kant points out that from the idea of one hundred dollars in my mind I cannot prove their existence in my pocket. In the same way, we have the idea of God in our mind, it does not follow that, therefore, God really exists.
2. Gaunilon, a monk of France, claimed that Anselm's reasoning would lead to absurd conclusions if it is applied in other fields. He set up a parallel ontological argument for the most perfect island. He spoke of the most perfect conceivable island, but his argument could be rephrased in terms of the latter idea. Given the idea of such an island, by using Anselm's principle we can argue that unless it exists in reality it cannot be the most perfect conceivable island.

Similarly, if God does not exist in reality, it cannot be conceived as the perfect Being.

3. If existence is a 'perfection' and God is most perfect, then God's existence must be granted. But existence is not an attribute or quality. In order to have an attribute a thing must exist first. But his existence cannot be proved from his perfection.
4. Descartes' ontological argument claims that existence must be included among the defining predicates of God, just as the fact that the internal angles are equal to two right angles, which are necessary characteristics of a triangle. But Kant replies that the subject, with its predicates actually exists. What is analytically true is that if there is a triangle, it must have three angles and if there is an infinitely perfect being he must have existence. As Kant says, "To posit a triangle, and yet to reject its three angles, is self-contradictory; but there is no self-contradiction in rejecting the triangle together with its three angles. The same holds true of the concept of an absolutely necessary being." (Kant, J., Critique of Pure Reason, tr. K.N. Smith, chap.3,Sec. 4.)
5. The definition of God describes one's concept of God, but we cannot prove the actual existence of any such being. We can utter the term like table, cow, house, etc. which implies all these things actually exist in the world. Similarly if we say 'Unicorn' or Unicorn exists, or gold mountain exists, it does not ascertain its existence. Because in fact unicorn and Gold Mountain are negative existential statements, so they do not exist. Similarly God is negative existential statement and does not exist.

LET US KNOW

- Kant: (1724-1804): German philosopher who revolutionised modern philosophy, in an effort to counter the sceptical arguments of Hume and provide a firm basis for human knowledge and morality. Kant used transcendental arguments to show that human beings apply synthetic a priori judgements as the preconditions for any possible experience.
- Hegel, Georg W.(1770-1831): German philosopher who employed a dialectical logic (moving from thesis to antithesis to synthesis) and its corollary analysis of historical inevitability, in support of an idealism in which human culture is properly seen as a manifestation of the self-conscious of the Absolute.
- Thomas Aquinas: Italian Dominican Philosopher and theologician.
- AYER (1910-1989): English philosopher. After studying with numbers of the Vienna circle, Ayer published Language, Truth and Logic(1936), an excellent statement of the central views of logical positivism, including the use of verifiability as a criterion of meaning, the rejection of metaphysics and theology as meaningless and emotivist ethical theory. His later works include Foundations of Empirical Knowledge(1940), The Problem of Knowledge(1956), Logical Positivism(1966) and The Central Questions of Philosophy(1972)

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 7: Who are the critics of ontological argument?

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13.4 THE MORAL ARGUMENT FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

The moral argument for belief in God is based on man's moral nature and religious experience. This moral argument begins with Kant, who in his *Critique of Practical Reason* argued that the existence of God is a postulate of the practical or moral reason. In the critical philosophy of Kant the moral argument occupies a very significant position. Kant severely criticised all arguments except the moral one. According to Kant God must exist if the moral order is to be intelligible. Thus, in Kant's philosophy this argument has a very special status.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 8 : Who is the author of *Critique of Practical Reason?*

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13.4.1 Kant's View

According to Kant the existence of God is a postulate, or presupposition of the moral life. Kant, in his theory of complete good, points out that it is impossible to conceive anything at all in the world, or even out of it, which can be taken as good without qualification, except 'goodwill'. In short, it is our duty to promote the highest good, the *summum bonum.* For him, the existence of God is a priori of morality. Our moral consciousness demands that the virtuous must be rewarded with happiness. But the virtuous are hardly ever happy. Kant, for that reason argues that there must be a Supreme Being or God who will reward the virtuous with happiness in the next world. We can make ourselves virtuous, but we cannot make ourselves happy, because happiness depends upon outward favourable conditions which are beyond our control. But God can make the virtuous happy in the next life, because He is the controller of the kingdom of spirits and nature.

Summum bonum : Latin phrase meaning 'highest good'.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 9 : Fill in the blanks :

a) According to Kant the existence of God is a ……, or …….. of the moral life.

b) It is our duty to promote the highest good, the ……..

13.4.2 Indian Conception of God (Moral Argument)

Nyaya : One of the six orthodox Hindu schools. The Nyaya school concentrates upon our knowledge of reality.

According to *Nyaya* system religious actions produce merits and wrong actions produce demerits. Merits and demerits reside in the soul. These merits and demerits are called *adrishta*, which is unconscious. Hence it requires some conscious agency to govern it. The individual soul cannot be this agency because the souls are unconscious of the merits and demerits. God who is omniscient is the moral Governor, the Governor of the *adrishta.* He rewards the virtuous with happiness and punishes the vicious with pain and suffering. Therefore it implies that there is God.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 10: "According to Nyaya system religious actions produce merits and wrong actions produce demerits." Is it true?

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Q 11: "merits and demerits are called *adrishta*, which is unconscious" Is it true?

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.....

13.4.3 Three general approaches of Moral Argument

The moral argument for belief in God is based on man's moral nature and his sense of values. The argument has been stated from a number of points of view. We shall mention very briefly three general approaches which have been developed in philosophical literature.

1. One form of this argument is based on man's moral nature and his sense of obligation, or sense of duty. If man were merely an aspect of nature a command to obey nature's ways or to depart from them would be meaningless. The sense of duty at one time may even lead man to deny the will to live. Man's sense of duty implies a God as its source and the guarantor of the significance of the moral life.
2. We may proceed to another version of the moral argument. Moral goodness and happiness should go together in a reasonable and just world. The man who is morally good should be happy and the man who is morally bad should be unhappy. But as a matter of fact there is no such correlation. Therefore, there must be a God who will ultimately uphold all the moral values and will ultimately make the good man finally happy.
3. The third version of the moral argument is one of the most popular versions of it. This version of the moral argument is ultimately based on the notion of objectivity of values. Man and his values are part of the process of nature. They are not subjective. They have objective existence of their own. Man's moral standard develops within the process of evaluation. They are in fact

expressions of the process of evolution. They are an aid to the survival and enrichment of life. In arguing that our activities of appreciation are responses to an intrinsic meaning and value established that this order is no less real than the physical order.

The moral argument is generally accepted as the strongest argument offered to establish the existence of God. Kant said that God must exist if the moral order is to be intelligible.

13.4.4 Criticism of the Moral Argument

1. Moral life of a person does not necessarily depend on the existence of God as Kant has argued. The pre-supposition made by Kant that the good actions should be rewarded with good results will not hold good at all times. There is no necessary connection between highest good and 'God'.
2. Kant's summum bonum is possible and for its possibility God must exist as a moral and omnipotent Being. But what does 'possible' mean in this contest? It may merely mean 'logically possible'. But in fact Kant's argument demands that when we affirm the summum bonum to be possible we are affirming is to be factually (and not merely logically) possible
3. According to moral argument the moral laws presuppose a law-giver, which cannot prove the existence of God, since we know that natural laws do not presuppose a law giver. If at all a law is necessary for us, then he may be a finite being like us; not necessarily He is God. All such conceptions of God as the natural law-giver or moral law-giver are rejected by scientists and thinkers.
4. Moral laws and values can prevail only in the world of moral order. In the world order we cannot expect moral or immoral activities. But we observe that gradually people are disregarding moral values and moral laws. So also if there is moral order created by God, then how are there are evil and disorder?
5. The religious experience, miracles, prayers, worship and grace are purely psychological and man-made. They do not guarantee the truth of the factual world. It may be some form of a hypnotism or magic which does not prove the existence of God.

13.5 LET US SUM UP

- The supporters of ontological argument are St. Anselm, Rene Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Hegel etc.
- Anselm said that we have an idea of perfect being, and that this is what we mean by God.
- For Descartes, the existence of God, reality of God and unchangeability of God etc. can occurs from the idea of God. Therefore, undoubtedly God Exists.
- Ontological argument is criticized by many philosophers, like St. Thomas Aquinas, Kant, Ayer and others.

- The moral argument for belief in God is based on man's moral nature and religious experience.
- According to Kant the existence of God is a postulate, or presupposition of the moral life.
- According to *Nyaya* system religious actions produce merits and wrong actions produce demerits.
- Merits and demerits are called *adrishta*, which is unconscious

13.6 FURTHER READING

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13.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1 : St. Anselm.

Ans to Q No 2 : The supporters of ontological argument are St. Anselm, Rene Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Hegel etc.

Ans to Q No 3 : St. Anselm

Ans to Q No 4 : St. Anselm

Ans to Q No 5 : True.

Ans to Q No 6 : We may sum up Descartes ontological argument into the following steps-

a) The idea of God is a perfect Being.

b) That lacks no positive qualities.

c) Existence is a positive quality.

d) Thus God's lacks no existence. God exists.

Ans to Q No 7 : Ontological argument is criticized by many philosophers, like St. Thomas Aquinas, Kant, Ayer and others.

Ans to Q No 8 : Kant

Ans to Q No 9 : a) Postulate, presupposition.

b) Summum Bonum

Ans to Q No 10 : True.

Ans to Q No 11 : True.

13.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Question

Q 1: God is a being than whom nothing greater can be conceived" This is the view of teleological/ontological/ cosmological argument.

Q 2 : Name two supporters of ontological argument.

Q 3: Name two critics of ontological argument

Q 4: Who was regarded as the propounder of the ontological argument for the existence of God?

Q 5: Write the name of two critics of the moral argument.

B) Short Questions (Answer in about 100-150 words)

Q 1: Discuss two defects of ontological argument.

Q 2: Write short notes on:

a) Ontological argument

b) Moral argument

c) *adrishta*,

C) Long Questions (Answer in about 300- 500 words)

Q 1: What are the traditional arguments for the existence of God? Discuss.

Q 2: What are the traditional arguments for the existence of God? Discuss.

Q 3: What is ontological argument for the existence of God? Examine.

Q 4: What is the moral argument of Kant? Is it satisfactory argument for the existence of God?

Q 5: What is the view of Kant for the existence of God? Discuss.

Q 6: What is the satisfactory proof for the existence of God? Explain and Examine.

UNIT 14 : THE SYMBOLIC NATURE OF RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE

UNIT STRUCTURE

14.1 Learning Objectives
14.2 Introduction
14.3 The problem of Religious Language
14.4 Various Approaches to the Problem of Religious Language
14.5 Symbolic Nature of Religious Language
14.6 Let us Sum up
14.7 Further Reading
14.8 Answers to Check Your Progress
14.8 Model Questions

14.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the meaning of religious language
- discuss the problem of religious language
- explain various approaches to this problem
- describe the view of religious language as symbolic in nature.

14.2 INTRODUCTION

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. Human transactions of emotions, feelings and the like in every field whether social, political, economic, moral, cultural or religious are possible through language. Religion is an indispensable part of human being. Almost every man existing on the globe entertains particular kind of religious beliefs and practices. Language has been an indispensable medium for human transactions in religious matters. So far as religious language is concerned, it refers to the statements or claims made about God or gods. It is generally the language used with regard to religious practices such as prayer, worship, thanksgiving, confession, ritual, preaching, instruction, exhortation and so on and so forth. However, one important point to be mentioned here is that there is no specific language reserved for religious purpose. In other words, religious language is not something different and distinct from other languages. Every human being has an idea about God in one way or the other and everyone has expressed this idea through language understandable to him. In short, what we term as 'religious language' is nothing other than the ways of our expressing the Divine.

14.3 THE PROBLEM OF RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE

It has already been mentioned that whenever we make any claim about God or statements about God or describe God, we do not use any specific language that is primarily reserved for it; we do the same through the use of our ordinary day-to-day language. We use the same language to describe God, to talk about God which we use to refer to finite, corporeal, temporal creatures of the world. God is generally conceived as infinite, incorporeal and timeless being. In such a situation, ordinary secular language that we use to describe finite creatures might not adequately describe God. This is the problem of religious language arising from the difficulty in accurately describing God. This is the problem of how and whether God can be meaningfully spoken about at all. When we say that "God is good" and "Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi is good" then a difficulty arises with regard to whether the attribute 'goodness' which is generally attributed to finite creatures has the same meaning when applied to God. In other words, whether God is good in the same sense in which prime minister Narendra Modi is good. This difficulty led us to determine the degree that attributes used for finite beings can be used for God and what these attributes mean when they describe God. The ambiguity in meaning regarding the terms predicated of God is the problem of describing or speaking about or naming God.

14.4 VARIOUS APPROACHES TO THE PROBLEM OF RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE

Language has always been a concern of philosophers. Philosophers have always shown an intense interest in language more specifically with regard to the problem of meaning and reference. So far as religious language is concerned, it has also been a major concern for philosophers. The key issues of philosophers with regard to religious language are—how we can speak meaningfully about God? To what does the word God refer if anything? And does it need to refer in order to be meaningful? What creates the problem of religious language is our very attempt to describe something that is radically different from those about which we normally use language.

There are various approaches or solutions to the problem of religious language which may be classified into two groups. According to one, religious statements or statements about God do not have any meaning, they assert nothing while according to the other, religious statements have meaning, and that is, we can speak meaningfully about God. Under the first group, we may bring the name of the empiricist philosopher David Hume. He has brought up one of the clearest objections to religious language. He refuses to allot any meaning to God-talks. In the empirical counterpart of Hume, belief in God is conceived as nothing more than sophistry and illusion. Hume, being a thorough going empiricist, limits human knowledge to experience and consequently, brings the requirement that claims about reality must be verified by evidence or experience. Since talks about God cannot be thus verified, therefore, they are devoid of meaning. Next to Hume comes A. J. Ayer as well as his logical positivist movement. Ayer holds that a statement in order to hold any meaning must be possible to verify its truth or falsity by means of empirical evidence. In logical positivist counterpart, empirical verification is the

only criterion of determining the truth or falsity of any statement. So far as religious statements are concerned, Ayer points out that they cannot be verified as either true or false and hence, meaningless since only those statements are meaningful which have the ability to be judged as true or false. Thus, the first group has tried to solve the problem of religious language by concluding that statements about God have no meaning.

So far as the second group is concerned, philosophers and theologians belonging this group assert that religious statements have meaning and accordingly, they have shown ways of describing God in human terms. Within this group, first comes the view that whatever we predicate of God is to be interpreted equivocally. In other words, when terms are used to describe God and His attributes, those terms are equivocal, that is, completely different with respect to what they mean in reference to God and what they mean in reference to finite creatures. For example, when we say that "God is good" and "Hari is good", then according to this view, God is not good in the same sense in which Hari is good. God's goodness is completely different from the goodness of a finite creature like Hari. However, inspite of this tremendous difference in kind, human beings can speak about God through negation. In other words, human beings can refer to God through what God is not. Jewish philosopher Maimonides is the most famous proponent of this view. He asserts that positive descriptions of God are misleading and they should be avoided. For example, saying "God is love" will make people think of human love which has faults like jealousy and inconsistencies. Therefore, describing God in positive terms cannot give accurate description of God. Hence, Maimonides proposed that statements about God must be taken negatively, for example, "God lives" should be taken as "God does not lack vitality". The second view proposed that God-talks is to be interpreted univocally. In other words, when terms are used to describe God and His attributes, those terms are univocal, that is, exactly in the same sense with respect to what they mean in reference to God and what they mean in reference to finite creatures. Therefore, for this view, God's goodness and Hari's goodness is the same. God is good in the same sense in which Hari is good. Next comes the view which holds that God-talk is to be interpreted neither equivocally (with completely different sense) nor univocally (with exactly the same sense), but analogically. St. Thomas Aquinas is the exponent of this view. According to him, when the word 'good' is applied to God and to Hari, then God's goodness is not to be interpreted as completely different from the goodness of Hari nor is to be interpreted as completely similar with Hari's goodness. God is good in an analogous sense to Hari's goodness. In other words, 'good' applied to both God and to Hari would signify the same thing, but in different modes, that is, when 'good' is applied to Hari, it picks out a property of Hari, but while applying to God, it refers to the unity that is God's essence and not to an individual property. 'Good' belongs properly to God and more so to God than to creatures since any goodness that could be found in a creature is derived from God as the creator. We could say "Hari is good" and also say "God is good". Here, 'good' is included in God's essence in a higher mode and to a greater degree than the property 'goodness' belongs to Hari. Thus, terms used analogously are not entirely different or entirely similar; rather they signify the same thing in different modes.

Next comes the view in which the main theme of the present unit consists. This view holds that religious language is symbolic in nature, that is, religious language is to be

interpreted symbolically, not literally. The present unit is going to deal with this view elaborately in the following section.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: What is religious language?

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Q 2: What is the problem of religious language?

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Q 3 : Why does Ayer deny meaning to religious language?

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Q 4 : What is Thomas Aquinas' approach to religious language?

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14.5 THE SYMBOLIC NATURE OF RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE

The doctrine of religious language as symbolic is associated with Paul Johannes Tillich (1886-1965), the German Lutheran theologian. He is widely regarded as one of the most influential theologians of the 20th century. While dealing with the problem of religious language, that is, with the problem of how we can speak meaningfully about God, Tillich holds that we can speak about God symbolically. In other words, according to him, religious statements have symbolic meaning; they are not to be interpreted literally. Whenever we make any statement about God such as "God is good", here we must not treat 'good' in its literal sense, that is, not in its usual or exact or original meaning, but in symbolic sense. We can use language symbolically while speaking about God.

While going to discuss the nature of religious language, Tillich first deals with the meaning of symbol and he does it by showing its difference from sign. Signs and symbols are similar in the sense that both refer to something other than themselves, that is, they mean something else. However, there is a crucial difference between the two. Tillich maintains that so far as the signs are concerned, they do not participate in what they symbolize. For example, the traffic lights 'red' means 'stop' while 'green' means 'go'. Apart from this, they have no other effect. A sign signifies that to which it points by arbitrary convention or agreement.

In contrast to a sign, a symbol, according to Tillich points out the participates in the meanings and powers of that to which it points. Symbols are powerful and they actually take part in the power and meaning of what they symbolize. For example, a flag not only represents a nation, but also participates in the power and dignity of the nation that it represents. Similarly, cross '+' is the symbol of Christianity; it does not only represent Christianity, but also immediately reminds the Christians the sacrifice Jesus has made on the cross for them. Moreover, it reminds them of their beliefs about God and His plane for

the salvation of mankind. Hence, according to Tillich, symbols communicate much more powerfully with that symbolized. Because of this inner connection with the reality symbolized, symbols are not arbitrarily instituted like conventional signs. In his book "Dynamics of Faith", Tillich wrote that symbols grow out of the individual or collective unconscious and consequently have their own span of life and their decay and death. A symbol cannot be invented except when the unconscious of a group accepts the symbol. On the other hand, when the relation between this inner situation of the group with a symbol disappears that symbol dies. According to Tillich, a symbol performs four functions- i)symbols point to something other than themselves, ii) symbols participate in that to which they refer, iii) symbols open up levels of reality which otherwise are closed to us and iv) symbols unlock dimensions and levels of our soul corresponding to the new aspects of the world that it reveals.

Having outlined these functions of symbol, Tillich has opined that religious language operates as a symbol. Religious language is a symbolic way of pointing towards the ultimate reality or God. Tillich calls God "Being-in-itself" which is that upon which everything else depends for its being. Tillich believes that we can have knowledge of this Being through symbols which direct us to it. Tillich argues that since a symbol points to a meaning beyond itself, therefore, symbolism is the best possible way to express transcendent religious beliefs. Tillich insists that human language cannot be used univocally or literally while speaking about the ultimate. He argues that since our terms can only be derived from finite human experience, therefore, they cannot be adequate in relation to God; when they are used theologically, their meaning is always partially "negated by that to which they point". Therefore, the only way of expressing the ultimate is through symbols. People always use the language of symbols while discussing religious matters. In the words of Tillich, "Whatever we say about that which concerns us ultimately, whether or not we call it God, has a symbolic meaning. It points beyond itself while participating in that to which it points. In no other way can faith express itself adequately. The language of faith is the language of symbols." (Dynamic of Faith, p-42)

Thus, in the counterpart of Paul Tillich, whatever we say about God or the ultimate reality is non-literal symbolic in nature. However, Tillich also recognizes that there is one and only literal, non-symbolic statement that can be made about God. This statement is— "God is Being-itself". Beyond this, all religious claims that we make about God such as "God is powerful", "God is good", "God is eternal", "God is the creator", "God loves His creatures" etc. are all symbolic.

Although God-talks have their root in human experience, yet they are ultimately used in a different way from their secular use. They are same yet different. Tillich calls it symbolism. He believes that religious language is non-cognitive and symbolic and symbols are the best way to confer meaning in God-talks.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 5: What is the nature of religious language according to Paul Tillich?

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Q 6: What is the similarity between symbol and sign?

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14.6 LET US SUM UP

- Religious language refers to statements or claims made about God or gods. It may be regarded as talks about God or the ways of describing God.
- Whenever we describe God or talks about God, we do not use any specific language primarily reserved for this purpose; rather we use the ordinary secular language.
- The problem of religious language is the problem of how we can accurately describe or speak about God. This is the problem of how and whether God can be meaningfully spoken about at all.
- There are various approaches to the problem of religious language which may be regarded as various attempts to solve this problem. One group tries to solve the problem by denying any meaning to religious statements as for them, religious statements cannot be verified as either true or false by means of experience. This group includes primarily empiricist David Hume and logical positivist A. J. Ayer.
- On the other hand, there are philosophers and theologians who sought to solve the problem by assigning meaning to religious statements and accordingly shown ways of describing God. Some of them assert that God-talks have meaning and this meaning is completely different (equivocal) from its meaning in secular use. That is, whenever we say something about God in human terms such as “God is good”, here the meaning of God’s goodness is completely different from human goodness.
- Again, some others assert that God-talks have entertained exactly the same meaning (univocal) as its secular use hold. That is, whenever we say something about God in human terms such as “God is good”, here the meaning of God’s goodness is completely identical with human goodness.
- Again, according to another approach taken by Thomas Aquinas, religious statements or God-talks are to be interpreted neither equivocally nor univocally, but analogically. That is, whenever we attribute goodness to both God and human being, then they are neither entirely different nor entirely similar. They signify the same thing in different modes.
- While dealing with the problem of religious language, Paul Tillich asserts that religious statements have symbolic meaning; they are not to be interpreted literally, that is, not in its usual or exact or original meaning, but in symbolic sense.

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14.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: Religious language is talk about God or statements or claims made about God. It is way of describing God.

Ans to Q No 2: The problem of religious language is the problem of how and whether God can be meaningfully spoken about.

Ans to Q No 3: According to Ayer, only that statement is meaningful which is able to be verified either as true or false by means of experience. Since religious statements cannot be thus verified, therefore, they are devoid of meaning.

Ans to Q No 4: According to Thomas Aquinas, religious statements are to be interpreted analogically, that is, they refer to the same meaning in different degrees.

Ans to Q No 5: According to Paul Tillich, religious language is symbolic in nature; they are not to be interpreted literally.

Ans to Q No 6: The similarity between sign and symbol is that both of them point to something other than themselves.

14.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very Short Question

Q 1: What is religious language?
Q 2: What is problem of religious language?
Q 3: Do we use any specific language for religious language?
Q 4: Why the problem of religious language arises?
Q 5: What is David Hume's response to religious language?
Q 6: What is Ayer's approach to religious language?
Q 7: What does it mean when we say that religious language is equivocal?
Q 8: What does it mean when we say that religious language is univocal?
Q 9: What is Thomas Aquinas' solution to the problem of religious language?
Q 10: What is the difference between sign and symbol?
Q 11: What is the only non-symbolic literal statement about God according to Paul Tillich?

B. Short Questions (Answer in about 100-150 words)

Q 1: Why does the problem of religious language arise? Briefly explain.
Q 2: Write a note on sign and symbol with example.
Q 3: How does Paul Tillich distinguish between sign and symbol?
Q 4: What are the functions of symbol outlined by Paul Tillich?

A. Long Questions (Answer in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: Give an account of the problem of religious language.

Q 2: How do philosophers deal with the problem of religious language?

Q 3: “Religious language is symbolic in nature”. Explain after Paul Tillich.

UNIT 15 : RELIGIONS TOLERANCE

UNIT STRUCTURE

15.1 Learning Objectives
15.2 Introduction
15.3 Rise and Development of Religious Tolerance in the West.
15.4 Tolerance in some of the main Religions of the world.
  15.4.1 Tolerance and Christianity
  15.4.2 Tolerance and Islam
15.5 Let us Sum up
15.6 Further Reading
15.7 Answers to Check Your Progress
15.8 Model Questions

15.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- explain religious tolerance and its nature
- discuss the rise and development of religious tolerance in the West
- define tolerance in some of the main religions of the world
- discuss tolerance and Christianity
- explain tolerance and Islam
- analyse the concept of tolerance in Indian culture and in Hinduism

15.2 INTRODUCTION

Religious tolerance is the condition of accepting or permitting others' religious belief and practices which disagree with one's own. The concept of religious tolerance can be understood clearly only with reference to religious intolerance. When any religion claims that it possesses the whole truth and also the only right method of contemplating and worshipping the Almighty, then it becomes naturally intolerant of other creeds and modes of religious practices. They try to impose their views on others either by persuading them towards a willful acceptance or even by use of force. That all must be forced into mosque or chapel or temple to join in a public worship betray an instance of intolerant attitude. It occurs not only between Judaism and Christianity, Christianity and Islam, Islam and Hinduism or between polytheism and monotheism but may also be amongst different trends of the polytheistic Hinduism or also between different methodologies of the same monotheistic trends. Tolerance leads to cooperation in a spirit of freedom and understanding while intolerance leads to conflict in an atmosphere of fear, suspicion and jealousy.

15.3 RISE AND DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGIONS TOLERANCE IN THE WEST

The central problem of toleration itself in western history was for centuries the problem of religious toleration. Although the birth of religious tolerance in Western Europe dates back to the Renaissance in the 15th century, it is learnt that during its early period also many Christian Fathers advocated toleration, though, may be, it was only on principle. The bigotry which appeared among the fathers of the 4th century was not allowed to prevail without protest. Many persons condemned persecution and even denounced it as an atrocious crime as it went so far as killing.

During the period of Renaissance and Reformation the spirit of Doubt and liberal ideas paved way for culture of religions tolerance. ***Castellio***, a Frenchman argued that "if the end of Christianity be the diffusion of a spirit of beneficence, persecution must be its extreme antithesis, and that if persecution can be the essential element of a religion, that religion must be curse to mankind. "

The Christian Reformation which led to diverse version of Christianity caused the need for tolerance. But the parallel authoritarian approaches of the Protestant Leaders like Luther and Calvin indirectly led to intolerance. Again, we see that the rise of Counter Reformation created the darkest era of intolerance as the west was soon to witness the horrors of the Thirty-Year War (1618-1648). This filled the pages of history with information of religious persecution and mass destruction.

Religious intolerance was always opposed by the large-minded persons. For instance, we may speak of ***John Robinson*** who drew up a covenant for the Pilgrim Fathers who founded New England. The first instrument of this covenant conferred equal religious rights on every member of the commonwealth. Then a charter from Charles I granted toleration to Roman Catholics as well as to Protestants. Its first law runs as follows:

"No person professing to believe in Jesus Christ shall be in any way molested or discountenanced for his or her religion, or in the free exercise thereof."

Again, we find that opposing the persecution of the ***Presbyterians*** Cromwell ordered the 'triers' not to molest godly men who preached the gospel, whatever their ***ecclesiastical principles*** might be, and he gave the Jews a legal footing in England. During the time of Cromwell, ***Jeremy Taylor*** developed a theory of toleration. He held that diversity of belief is necessary.

Spinoza the monist, by realizing the truth that the imposition of belief on a people leads to strife, argued for toleration with respect to all beliefs, political as well as religious. He said that the state was to provide its citizens the security to hold any opinion or belief.

The horrors of the *Crusades* fighting for the sake of saving souls consequently led to the passing of the act of toleration in 1689. Of course, it did not grant complete religious liberty. The same causes prepared Western Europe mentally and emotionally to listen to the philosophy of tolerance preached by John Locke. Locke the empiricist was also the father of British democracy and the humanistic conception of the dignity and rights of man as such. His *letter concerning toleration* (in Latin) was published in 1689. In these letters Locke clearly expressed his view that intolerant or persecuting acts like depriving persons of their estates, maiming them with corporal punishments, starving them in prisons etc.

are “more contrary to the glory of God, to the purity of the Church and to the salvation of souls than any conscientious dissent from ecclesiastical decision, or separation from public worship whilst accompanied with innocence of life.” According to Locke, such cruel acts of moral vices and wickedness of intolerance are known by all to be diametrically opposite to the profession of Christianity. Toleration of those that differ from others in matters of religion is in conformity with and agreeable to the gospel of Christianity.

Voltaire and Rousseau expressed views for cultivation of toleration and strived for ‘rejection of intolerance’.

Francis Guizot advanced the thesis (*History of Civilization* in Europe, 1828) that tolerance is an essential element in Christianity, and that periods of intolerance are perversions there of.

But in spite of such teachings of the broad - minded persons tolerance fails to flourish. There are some persons who frankly oppose tolerance. For instance, ***Donosco Cortes*** (1809-1853) in his **Essay on Catholicism, Liberalism and Socialism** attacked some of the preachers of toleration. To him, toleration is simply a false ideal. He says, “Man is of course fallible; but the Church is infallible, its dogma is the truth. Those who deny it are in error, and error cannot be tolerated.”

Tolerance fails to grow for some other reasons also. A man of principle cannot tolerate a contradictory creed also due to the fact that ‘virtue’ cannot tolerate ‘vice’. But we may say that intolerance is rooted only on partial knowledge of the scriptures. For instance, the Hebrew Bible says: “Thou shalt have no other gods but me”. It also says that God is transcendent, above all, and is eternal. That is why the Jews condemn as impious all who, with perishable materials, try to bring the Lord into human shape. No image can be put at the temple. So they become intolerant of the idol worshippers. This intolerance is caused by partial knowledge. For, they forget the teaching of their scripture that one should not have hate in one’s heart for one’s brother or one’s neighbour. The same scripture teaches that “If a man said, I love God and hate his brother he is a liar.”

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: What is religious tolerance?

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Q 2: Name two Protestants who had embraces intolerance attitude?

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Q 3: Who is the author of the book, “Essay on Catholicism, Liberalism and Socialism”.

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Q 4: Whether the following statements are true or false:

a) Voltaire and Rousseau have tried to remove intolerance.

b) According to Francis Guizot tolerance is one of the most important elements of Christianity.

c) Hebrew Bible says: “Thou shalt have no other gods but me”.

15.4 TOLERANCE IN SOME OF THE MAIN RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

The major religions of the world namely, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism etc. have put forward their views regarding the concept of tolerance. Let us discuss these views are:

15.4.1 Tolerance and Christianity

The early fathers of the Christian Church themselves were cruelly persecuted by the Romans. Naturally, they were in favour of religious tolerance. But when Christianity became the state religion them the persecutors of the earlier days became the persecuted. Nevertheless, there were many Christians who preached for religious toleration. St. Angustine advocated that the death penalty for heresy was wrong. But there were many Christians who opposed toleration. They argued that God is offended by heretical practices and is likely to inflict disasters on the whole community as a punishment. Heresy is a crime and crime cannot be tolerated. To tolerate an erring man is to leave him in a state of sin to face eternal damnation in the life to come. So punishment is necessary to reform the erring soul.

The nature of tolerance in Christianity can be studied from the history of its two sects - the Catholics or the traditionalists and the Protestants or the reformists. According to the Catholics the Church and Pope are the divine authority but according to the Protestants the mediation of Church is not needed for one's salvation and 'priesthood of all believers' is to be accepted within the Church. Naturally, one set fails to tolerate the practices of the other. Again, there are differences in faiths and practices even amongst the different divisions of the Catholics like that of the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodoxy. These differences lead to rivalries resulting in lack of mutual tolerance amongst them.

Similarly, there are also many sub-sects amongst the Protestants like the Lutherians, Calvinists, Presbytarians, Anglicians, Congregationalists and so on.

Thus, the history of Christianity is replete with instances of oppositions not only its basic opposition with the earlier religion of Judaism but also its opposition with itself. Its sub-sects show intolerant activities resulting in persecution and crusades.

However it is true that Christianity could preach peace and devotion only due to its inherent tolerating attitude. We meet advocates of toleration in different phases of the development of Christianity during the periods like early, mediaeval as well as that of Renaissance and Reformation.

15.4.2 Tolerance and Islam

The concept of toleration may be considered in Islam or Mohammedanism in two aspects, toleration for non-Muslim and toleration within Islam.

There are such sayings attributed to Mohammed which would show his religion to be the most tolerant. Mohammed said, “Difference of opinion in my community is a manifestation of divine mercy”. Again, there is also the injunction, “Let there be no compulsion in religion.”

The recognition of rival religious systems as possessing a divine revelation gave to Islam from the outset a theological basis for toleration for the non-Muslims. Judaism and Christianity were recognized as primitive faiths taught by a series of prophets. Mohammed permitted the Jews in Medina to practice their own faiths. When the Arab rule was extended into Persia, it was averred that Mohammed had given directions that the Zoroastrians were to be treated exactly like “people of the book”.

The Quran condemns idolatry severely and so it seems that its followers do not tolerate idol-worshippers. But by paying ‘jizyah’ the idol-worshippers were able to retain their own practices. In the reign of Harun, Muslim law had granted the privilege of paying ‘jizyah’ to idolaters, the worshippers of idols, fire, and stones and thus gave them a place among the tolerated class.

History witnesses that during the later Mohammedan conquests in India, there was a considerable destruction of Hindu temples. But it is also a fact that many Mohammedan rulers respected the state endowments granted by the former Hindu rulers to religious foundations. It was seen in the case of the temple of Brahmanabad in the province of Sind, where Mohammedan rule was first established in India. Again, we see that in the 16th century the Mohammedan government of Bengal raised the large sum of £100,000 a year by licensing the worship of Jagannath in Orissa (w.w. Hunter, *A Statistical Account of Bengal* xvii (London 1877) p 190). Even Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan made grants of money to the monastery of Sringeri.

15.4.3 Tolerance in Indian Culture and In Hinduism

India is recognized as the home of toleration from the ancient days. It is justly proud of its long tradition of religions tolerance as she is hospitable to the foreigners. Jews and Christians, Parsee, Armenians have survived and flourished for centuries in India.

The history of Hinduism, the main religion of India, speaks of its embracing the various regional and ethnic religious traditions within its fold. Mahatma Gandhi says, “Hinduism is not an exclusive religion. In it there is room for the worship of all the prophets of the world... Hinduism tells everyone to worship God according to his own faith or ‘dharma’ and so it lives at peace with all the religions’, (M. K. Gandhi, *Young India* (October 26, 1921).

Hinduism includes so many trends believing in one supreme deity alone, a couple of deities, five deities or plurality of gods or none at all and it is due to or the Vedic dictum “The same Reality is spoken of differently by different names” or “All the pluralities are the different manifestations of the same reality”.

The ancient period saw the growth of Aryan culture which absorbed many new elements and changed itself in the process. Classical Hindu Culture means

ancient Aryan Culture and the term 'Aryan' gradually began to possess a cultural or religious connotation rather than a racial one. Though the cultural solidarity of Hinduism was always maintained yet it was not uniform throughout the length and breadth of the country. The Aryan and non-Aryan elements combined in different proportions to form the Hinduism of today. This speaks of its tolerant attitude.

According to Hinduism, 'dharma' means the right course of conduct within its social framework. The goal of 'dharma' also is conceived differently like merging of the individual in the Absolute or the union of the soul with a personal God or as the dissolution of the personality in an indescribable state, or as the complete separation of spirit and matter.

'Varnashrame dharma' gave ample scope for the growth of the same Hindu Dharma through various methods amongst different categories of individuals. Hence, there was 'religious tolerance' which did not mean 'religious equality'.

Within the fold of Hinduism itself there are some people who are to carry out for the dirtiest and menial tasks. They are generally treated as untouchables. But Mahatma Gandhi who preached religious tolerance to the greatest extent called these people 'Harijans' or people of God.

In the monotheistic religions of the west we see that a man is either saved or damned, either a believer or a heathen. Jehovah said, "Thou shalt have no other Gods but me". In Christianity and Islam also the same idea prevails. In Hinduism Lord Krishna says in the *Gita*, "Whatever God you may worship, I answer the prayer". Some such basic thoughts gave the spirit of tolerance to Hinduism. This led to the rise of the bhakti tradition of Saint Sankaradeva or Caitanya Deva where we find cultivation of love and respect for all religions. Ramakrishna says, "All religions are one." In this statement we find the liberal tendency of Hinduism.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 5 : What are the two different types of Christianity associated with the concept of tolerance?

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Q 6 : What are differences between Catholics and Protestants?

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Q 7 : What are the different sub-sections found under Protestants?

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Q 8 : Whether the following statements are true or false

a) Judaism and Christianity can be regarded to be the two primitive faith created by their saints.

b) Hinduism tells everyone to worship God according to his own faith or 'dharma'.

c) Ramakrishna says that all the religions are one.

15.5 LET US SUM UP

- This unit shows that religious tolerance is a most important concept which needs to be emphasized in discourse of religion.
- It is quite obvious that religious intolerance causes problems like fanatism, fundamentalism etc. These problems not only terrorize people, but also distort mutual understanding among people of different religions.
- The concept of religious tolerance reminds us that the main objective of all religions is salvation or moksa. That is why this concept paves the way for the study of religion from the approach of comparative religion.
- The concept of religious tolerance gives us the clue that although all religions take different paths to achieve the main objectives of religions, still the essence or destiny behind all religions is same.
- Religious tolerance is the condition of accepting or permitting others' religious belief and practices which might disagree with one's own.
- Tolerance leads to cooperation in a spirit of freedom and understanding while intolerance leads to conflict in an atmosphere of fear, suspicion and jealousy.
- Voltair and Rousseau expressed their views for cultivation of toleration and they strived for 'rejection of intolerance'
- Francis Guizot advanced the thesis (*History of Civilization* in Europe, 1828) that tolerance is an essential element in Christianity.
- The nature of tolerance in Christianity can be studied from the history of its two sects - the Catholics or the traditionalists and the Protestants or the reformists.
- There are also many sub-sects amongst the Protestants like the Lutherans, Calvinists, Presbyterians, Anglicans, Congregationalists and so on.
- According to Hinduism 'dharma' means the right course of conduct within its social framework.

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15.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1 : Religious tolerance is the condition of accepting or permitting others' religious belief and practices which may disagree with one's own.

Ans to Q No 2: Martin Luther and Calvin

Ans to Q No 3 : Donosco Cortes

Ans to Q No 4 : a) True b) True c) True

Ans to Q No 5 : The Catholics or the traditionalists and the Protestants or the reformists.

Ans to Q No 6 : According to Catholics, the church and the Pope are divine authority. But according to the Protestants, the mediation of church is not needed for one's salvation. That is why, they are called reformists.

Ans to Q No 7 : Lutherans, Calvinists, Presbyterians, Anglicans and Congregationalists.

Ans to Q No 8 : a) True b) True c) True

15.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very Short Questions

Q 1: According to whom, tolerance is the essential element of Christianity?
Q 2: Who is the author of the Essay on Catholicism?
Q 3: Mention some names who frankly oppose the concept of tolerance.
Q 4: Who says- "tolerance is a false ideal"?
Q 5: Who says "All religions are one"?

B. Short questions (Answer in about 100-150 words)

Q 1: Write short notes on:
a) Tolerance
b) Tolerance in Christianity
c) Tolerance in Islam
d) Tolerance in Indian Culture.
Q 2: How does Christianity explain the concept of tolerance? Briefly explain.
Q 3: How does Islam explain the concept of tolerance? Explain in brief.

C. Long Questions

Q 1: What is religious tolerance? How was the concept of religious tolerance developed in the west? Discuss
Q 2: How do you discuss the concept of religious tolerance in Christianity? Explain
Q 3: Do you find the concept of 'tolerance' in Islam? Explain
Q 4: Explain the concept of tolerance in Indian culture and in Hinduism.

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