

Q) What is meant by Religion? Also, Highlight the importance of Deen in human life.

Ans:-

Outline:

1) Introduction

2) What is religion?

i) Concept and the necessity of Religion

3) Concept of Deen

4) Necessity of Deen

5) Importance of Deen in human life

i) Deen provides a comprehensive code of life

ii) Deen provides a clear path

iii) Deen leads from darkness to light

iv) Deen differentiates right from wrong

v) Deen as a guard against evil

vi) Deen acts as a balancing force

vii) Deen gives clear message to mankind

viii) Deen induces piety

ix) Deen sets the ground for a just and peaceful world.

x) Deen is a spiritual cure for modern man.

6) Conclusion

Ideas of H.A.R Gibbs & Will Durant

1) Introduction:-

Man is, by his nature, a religious being - This underscores that he is always in search for a spiritual or metaphysical answer to his question regarding different ontological and epistemological aspects of life. It is through the agency of religion that man satisfies his hunger and gains directions regarding his life and existence - Religion, however, is limited in its scope - It offers only a set of rituals, beliefs and dogmas - Contrastingly, Deen (Divine religion) is a vast concept - It offers one answer to the hundred problems and quest that a man has from his birth to death (which about his life hereafter).

2) What is religion?

According to Sir E.B. Taylor:-

"Religion means the belief in spiritual beings."

This definition largely sums up the scope of religion which is concerned with the relation between God and his creations. Religion is concerned with individual lives of humans only.

Oxford university defines religion as

"A united system of beliefs and practices."

In the view of sociologist, Emile Durkheim, Religion is:-

"To practice certain faiths relating to God."

Talking about the contents of religion, Dr Israr Ahmad points out that it consists of three factors:-

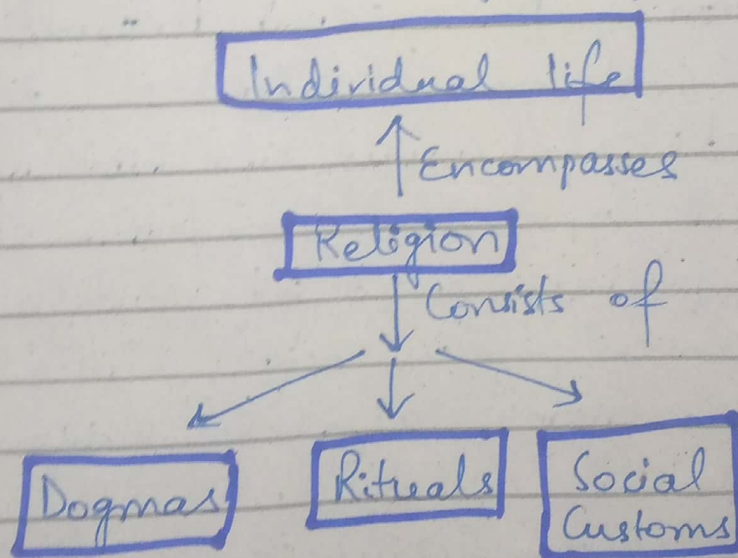
- i) Faiths — Aqayad
- ii) Rituals — Ibbadat
- iii) Social Functions — Tehwaar

"Religion" comes from a Latin word 'religio' or 'religare' meaning "to follow" or "subjugate".

In the contextual sense, it means "a way of life" or "subjugation to a supernatural deity".

i) Concept and the necessity of religion:-

The definitions of religion stated above clearly indicate that religion is limited to certain set of dogmas that a human believes in. Then, there are a set of rituals that he/she observes as an effort to please his creator and to get his blessings. Lastly there are certain social customs or events that he/she observes as a larger collective effort to get the blessings of his Creator.



The necessity of religion is highlighted by the following functions:-

- i) It offers satisfactory answers to ~~human~~ the questions of human existence, "life" and death.
- ii) It teaches peace, harmony and peaceful co-existence.

- iii) It directs human thoughts towards good and controls evil.
- iv) It offers incentive for humans helping other humans and humanity at large.
- v) It encourages man for research and investigation.
- vi) It teaches equality and dignity.
- vii) It creates spirit of brotherhood.
- viii) It purifies human soul.

3) Concept of Deen:

Unlike the concept envisaged under religion, Deen is a broader term that not only includes spiritual aspects of human life but mundane/ secular aspects of life too. It not only provides a belief system but also covers every social, political, legal and economic aspect of human life.

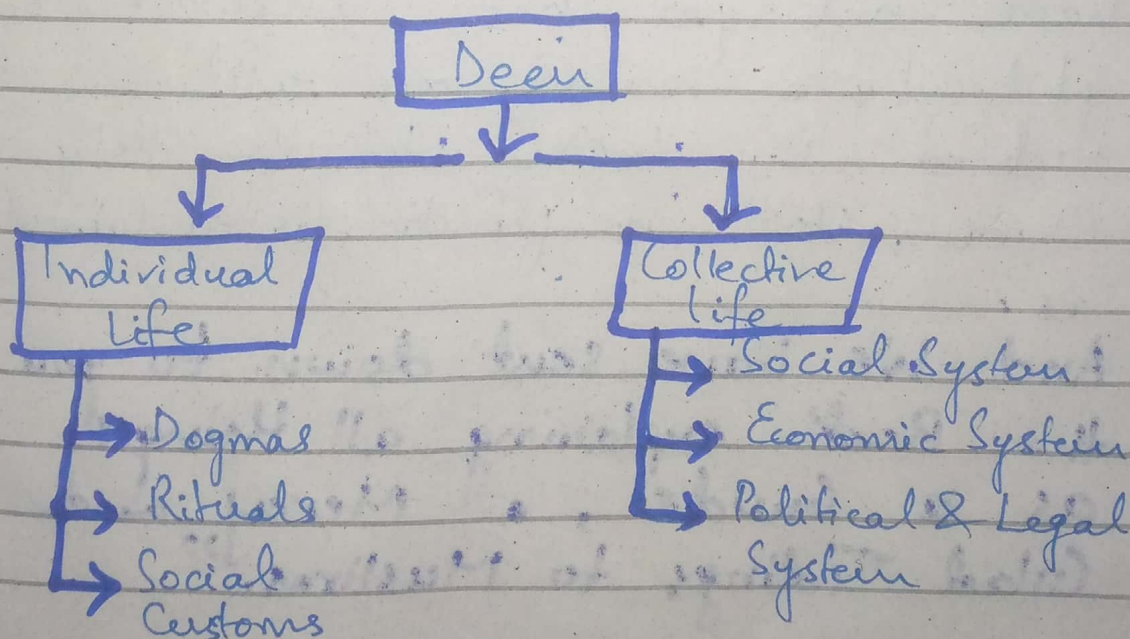
When the term Islam is used for Deen, it implies that Allah alone is worshipped and that every aspect of human life is led according to His commandments -

"Deen" is an arabic which means "to attain a dominion status"

In the contextual sense of Islam, Deen means a complete code of life. The realm of Shariah, takes this definition to the next level, adding that Deen means:

- To admit the sovereignty of Allah.
- To follow His commandments
- To follow His rules (Hudood Ullahi)
- To believe in reward and punishment system.

Dr Israr Ahmad defines Deen as an amalgam of 6 components as depicted below.



4) Necessity of Deen

Although human beings have been endowed with certain superior intellectual abilities that no

no other creation possesses, yet there are certain epistemological, cosmological and ontological questions which are beyond their intellect.

The divine religion, Deen, provides ~~st~~ satisfactory answers to all of these mundane questions.

Moreover, Deen provides a sound basis to the civilization because the society that is based on divine revelations is bound to be strong and resistant to the schemes of evil.

The questions that have not yet been answered by philosophy or science are easily tackled by Deen. In the Holy Quran, its very function is explained as:

"And We have sent down to you the Book explaining all things, as a Guide, a Mercy and Glad Tidings to Muslims."

Deen comprehensively explains the purpose of mankind on earth by providing clear indications about the social, personal, political, economic and religious life of mankind.

In Surah - al - Hadeed, Allah says:-

“He is the One who sends to His servants manifest signs, that He leads you from the depths of darkness into light.”

5) Importance of Deen in Human Life

Deen has important functions when it comes to maintaining a successful human life.

i) Deen provides a comprehensive code of Life

The book of Deen, Holy Quran is the harbinger of wisdom and knowledge that provides a complete code of life:-

“Yasin, by the Quran, full of wisdom.”

ii) Deen provides a clear path

Deen lights a clear path for its followers - It reveals “سِرَاطِ الْمُسْتَقِيمِ” the straight path for mankind to follow and succeed.

iii) Deen leads from darkness to light

In a world full of darkness spread by evil forces (Taghoot), deen is the ultimate light that sets right from wrong; light from ~~wrong~~ dark and vice from virtue.

iv) Deen differentiates right from wrong

Deen lays the framework that set right and wrong apart. It leaves nothing to be decided under unclear criteria.

In this regard, Quran is mentioned as the judgement between right and wrong

(**Surah Al-Baqrah**)

v) Deen as a guard against evil.

In Surah Al-Zuher, Allah explicitly reveals that He has made his signs clear so that the man could protect himself from evil -

vi) Deen as a balancing force

In a world filled with extremist tendencies, Deen is the balance which provides the right balance to human life.

One of the specialities of Quran is being "**Meezan**"

vii) Deen gives a clear message to mankind.

Religions around the world have been debating their teachings, calling some outdated and exchanging some with the new ones but, Deen has always been clear

viii) Deen induces piety in this regard. When Deen sets the standard to be piety (Taqwah), it nullifies all other criteria of goodness and

Success - It clarifies that no material possession can lead to salvation in the after life except for moral and spiritual ennoblement.

ix) Deen sets the ground for a just and peaceful society.

This is a vital function of Deen and this is something that many religions have failed at. But Islam executes this function seamlessly: "We have sent down to you the book in truth that you might judge b/w men..."

x) Deen is a spiritual cure for modern man.

Deen in today's world is what is keeping the modern man rooted to his origin and preventing him from straying in the wrong path.

6) Conclusion:

Professor H. A. R. Gibbs, while highlighting the excellence of Islam as a Deen, notes.

"Within the western world Islam still maintains the balance between exaggerated opposites."

This highlights how Islam as a Deen has been maintaining a balance in the chaotic modern world. In his book, The History of Civilization, Will Durant also notes the same when he notices

that Islam has been the most prominent element in our modern society and has contributed effectively to every realm of human life - All of which punctuate the perfection of Islam as a Deen.