

# Din and Religion

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Q) What is the difference between Din and Religion? Describe the importance of Din in human life with arguments.

## 1) Introduction:

The world we live in has two modes of believing and worshipping the Creator of the universe: Din and Religion. Although the two terms, "Din" and "Religion", are often used interchangeably, there is a huge difference between them. This is because, compared to religion which adopts a narrow approach and is merely constrained within the bounds of man's relationship with God, Din governs both the relationship between man and God, and the relationship between man and his counterparts. Due to this, Din plays a very crucial role in human life, ensuring the prosperity and success of man in both, this world (dunya), as well as the Hereafter. Moreover, while many consider Islam, Buddhism, Christianity, etc. to fall under the same category of "religion", Islam is wholly distinct from them and is a "Din". This is best elucidated

by Zamir Khan, who asserts that:

"When the term Deen is used for Islam, it obviously means a ~~system~~ ~~of~~ ~~life~~ where Almighty Allah is worshipped and obeyed, not just in a narrow religious sense, but in a manner that includes all aspects of human life."

(Zamin Khan, Islam: A Deen Not Mere Religion, 2014).

## 2) The Difference Between Din and Religion:

According to Sir E. B. Tylor, an anthropologist of the 19th Century, the term "religion" means:

"The belief in spiritual beings"

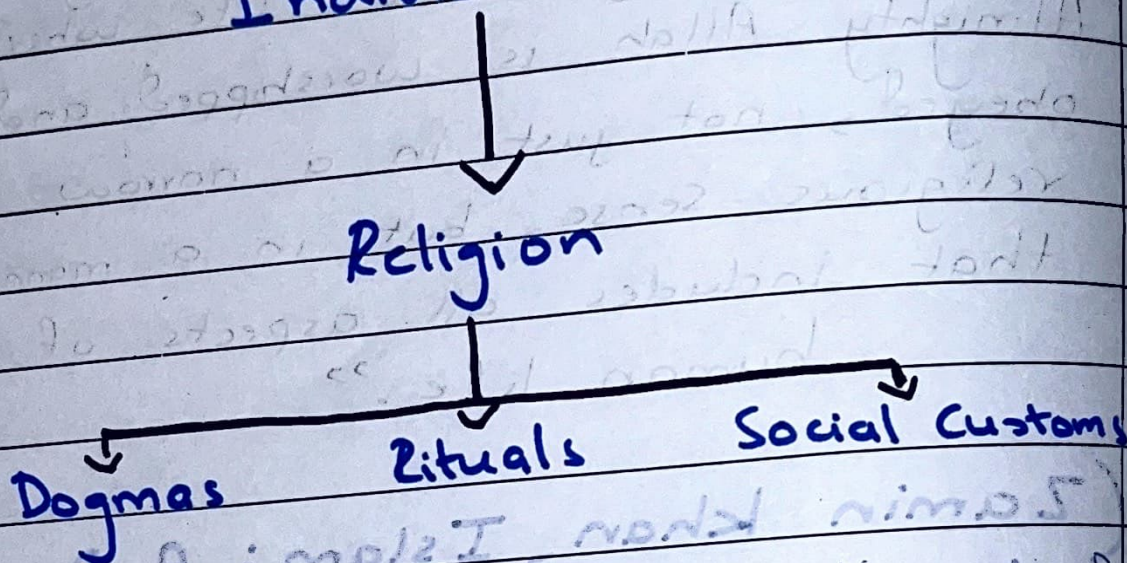
(Sir E. B. Tylor)

The above definition reveals how religion is construed in a narrow fashion, with its scope being merely limited to spirituality - a set of dogmas, social customs to celebrate ~~irreligious~~.

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days and religious rituals. Religion, thus, merely deals with one's individual life as the following diagram illustrates:

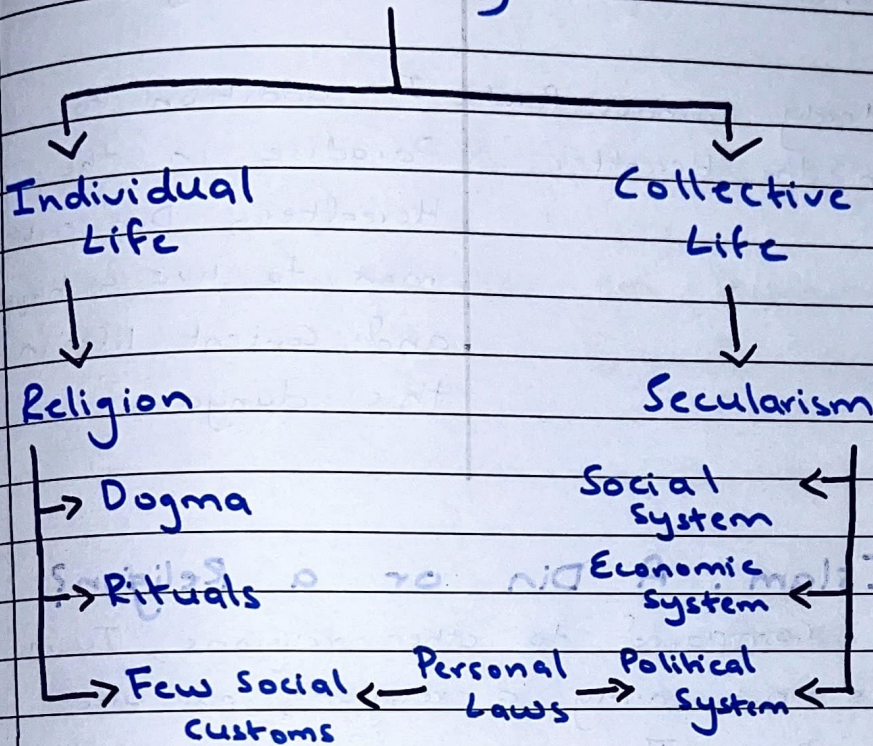
## Individual Life



On the other hand, the word "Din" carries several meanings: honour, subordination, and justice.

In contrast with religion, Din covers all aspects of human life, and <sup>not only</sup> provides guidance to mankind in <sup>both</sup> individual and collective affairs; ~~but also~~ offers This is perfectly illustrated by the following diagram:

# Deen (Entire Code of Life)



The following table further highlights the key differences between religion and Din:

	Religion	Din
1)	Man's relationship with God	Man's relationship with God and humans
2)	Private affairs	All domains of human life
3)	No objective criterion to distinguish between right and wrong	Proper criterion to determine right and wrong
4)	Does not support innovation	Promotes reason which supports innovation

5) Induces a perpetual sense of fear (Māks) Makes man brave and courageous

6) Merely promises Paradise in the Hereafter In addition to Paradise in the Hereafter, Din enables man to live a happy and content life in this dunya

### 2a) Islam: A Din or a Religion?

Compared to other religions, Islam is not merely a religion, but also a Din. The reason for this is that Islamic principles are not merely applicable to one's personal life, but also in the social, political, and economic domains. This is evidenced from the fact that under Islam, one must not only fulfil 'Hagoog ul Allah' (duties owed to Allah), but also Hagoog ul ibad (duties owed to mankind). For this reason, Islam is often referred to as 'Din al Haq' which means the true way of life. Allah (SWT), thus, right rightfully states:

”وَمَنْ يَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ“

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“And whoever seeks a Din other than Islam, it will not be accepted from him”

(Al-Quran, 3: 85)

### 3) Importance of Din in Human Life:

Din carries great significance in the lives of humans, as explained below:

#### 3a) Perfect Source of Guidance for All Aspects of Human Life:

As Din covers all aspects of human life, it helps individuals address all kinds of challenges. This is best explained by the glorious Quran, which asserts that:

“We have explained things in various ways in this Quran in order that they may receive admonition.”

(Al-Quran, 17: 45)

#### 3b) Sets the Criterion for Right and Wrong:

The Din of Allah (SWT), Islam, clearly distinguishes between what

is right and wrong. Allah, thus, states:

“The month of Ramadan (2:185: that in which) the Quran was revealed, a guidance for men and clear proofs of the guidance and the distinction.”

(Al-Quran, 2:185)

Due to this, man is able to easily distinguish between right and wrong, which helps him maintain distance from Satanic forces.

### 3c) Leads Mankind from Darkness to Light:

By following the right path, man emerges out of the ignorance of darkness, and lives a life of goodness and piety (taqwa). The Glorious Quran testifies this by asserting:

“[This is] a Book We (2:129: revealed) to you that you may bring forth men, by their Lord's permission, from utter darkness into light.”

(Al-Quran, 14:1)

### 3d) Din is a Source of Wisdom, Knowledge, and Innovation:

As the Book of Din (Quran) is a Message of Allah Almighty, it serves as the perfect source of wisdom, knowledge, and innovation.

The Noble Quran, for instance, stipulates:

"Yasin, by the Quran full of wisdom"

(Al-Quran, 36:1-2)

The perfect example of this is the life of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) who was guided by the Glorious Quran and lived a life of wisdom, knowledge, and innovation.

### 3e) Din: Helps Man Attain Spiritual Perfection:

The Din of Allah Almighty, Islam, helps man attain the zenith of spiritual perfection, as it makes him closer to Allah. In this regard, Allah (SWT) states:

"Those who believe and whose hearts find comfort in the remembrance of



Allah: Surely in their  
:remembrance of Allah do  
hearts find comfort."

(Al-Quran, 13: 28)

### 3f) Din Promotes Justice and Equality in Society:

By laying down guidance for all spheres of human existence, the Noble Quran ensures that justice and equality prevail in society. Therefore, the Holy Quran provides that:

“إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ”

“God commands justice and fair dealing.”

(Al-Quran, 16: 90)

### 4) Conclusion:

As the above discussion suggests, there is a profound difference between religion and Din. The former merely makes provisions concerning man's relationship with God, whilst the latter, covering a broader scope, ensures that man is not only worshipping the Exalted Lord, Allah

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Almighty, but is also fair and just towards his counterparts. In fact, this is the very essence of Islam, helping man achieve success in this dunya, as well as in the Hereafter. Therefore, one must acknowledge the vast difference between Din and religion, and must whole-heartedly submit to the Din of Allah Almighty, Islam.