

"Explain the importance of Deen in human life. Differentiate between Deen and religion."

Introduction: Deen and religion are the two distinctive aspects according to their belief systems, the concept of God, nature of practices etc. Deen encompasses the holistic approach to human life including morals, ethics, social conduct, beliefs and worships. However, religion is only focused upon personal beliefs and institutionalized frameworks, that are dependent on cultural and historical contexts. Thus, deen being comprehensive in approach, provides the obligatory and guiding framework in all aspects of human life.

Concept of Deen and religion:-

→ The concept of Deen:-

- (i) **Literal meaning:-** The word Deen is derived from an Arabic word 'd-y-n' which literally means "to attain supremacy or to accept the dominion status". The word Deen holistically approaches all the aspects of human life.
 - (ii) **Contextual meaning:-** Contextually, the word Deen stands for the "complete code of human life". It provides moral, ethical, social, administrative, judicial and political frameworks for guidance in human life.
- According to Dr. Israr Ahmad:- "Deen is a combination

of 5 things i.e. faiths, worships, beliefs, social systems, justice and political systems.

→ According to Shariah:- Deen encompasses:-

- (i) To admit the sovereignty of Allah
- (ii) To follow his commandments
- (iii) To fulfill his rules/laws
- (iv) To believe in reward/punishment.

→ The concept of religion:-

- (i) literal meaning:- The word religion is derived from Latin word "religio" means "to subjugate". It refers to the "subjugation of a person to any supernatural power, deity or god".
- (ii) contextual meaning:- contextually,
 - (i) The way of life- that only focus on personal beliefs and worships
 - (ii) To find one's own roots

According to Edward Taylor: "To believe in spiritualism is religion"

According to Emile Durkheim: "To practice certain faith, is religion".

Thus religion only covers the human-centric framework of his own belief, faith, rituals and relation with god.

Difference between Deen and Religion:-

- (i) Scope:-

→ Deen encompasses the holistic approach of life.

It provides guidelines for faiths, beliefs, worships, ethics, morality and social conduct. It also focuses on different political, legal, administrative systems as given by Allah and Prophet (PBUH).

→ Religion only focuses on personal beliefs, rituals, institutionalized and diverse perspectives regarding certain belief e.g. act of reincarnation, belief of karma.

(ii) Practices of worship :-

→ Deen focuses on holistic approach of actions linked with beliefs. It focuses on the fulfillment of different worships e.g. Salah, Zakat, Saum; along with the firm belief in the one, who made them obligatory.

→ Religion focuses on diverse perspectives within a single religious framework. These diverse view points can depend on historical and cultural contexts.

(iii) Relation with God :-

→ Religion keeps a focus on the relation of a person to its God. It does not focus on other individuals rights / one's duties or acts of community engagement.

- Deen, however, focuses on relation of a person with God and other individuals also. Thus, it provides a pathway to promote social justice and community well being.

(iv) Unification and plurality:-

- Religion provides a pluralistic framework of beliefs, despite all the individuals belong to the same religious group.
- Deen, provides a unified approach, as all the faiths, beliefs, commandments, worships are derived from a single source.

(v) Crux :-

- Deen focuses on "complete code of life" as it provides a clearcut approach to all aspects of human life" e.g Islam. As Allah said:-

"Today I have perfected for you your Deen and I completed my favour upon you and I have chosen for you Islam as your Deen" (5:3)

- Religion, however focuses on the "creation of man" as its framework only revolves around one's personality. e.g hinduism, atheism, judaism.

Importance of deen in human life:-

→ Deen, being the complete code of life, encompasses all aspects of human life, from individual to collective. Thus, it can be said as a "holistic framework".

→ Individual importance:-

i) **Satisfaction of soul**: Deen provides the satisfaction to a person's soul, as it provides the clear guidelines for all the human life aspect. By following, the commandments of Allah, a person gets satisfaction of soul through spiritual fulfillment.

"Surely, in Allah's remembrance, are hearts set at peace"

ii) **Prevents hopelessness**: Deen^{Islam} saves a person from getting hopeless. As Allah has promised in the Quran.

"Surely with hardship comes ease" (94:5)
So, a person though stuck in a whirlpool of difficulties, always stay hopeful of the good time.

iii) **Purpose of life**: Islam provides a purpose to life and prevents a person from getting distracted. Comparing with the west, although they are much politically and economically

advanced, but lack a purpose in life except materialistic gains. Thus, the suicide rates are much higher in the west.

(iv) **Guidance:** Islam provides guidance in all facets of human life from political, social, economic, legal, judicial to administrative systems. In every matter, a person gets a go-through path by following Allah's commandments.

(v) **Ethics and morality:** - Islam provides a guiding framework for ethics and morality also. A person can distinguish between right and wrong by following the rules of Allah. The concept of halal and haram can also be called as a framework of morality divinely ordained.

→ **Collective importance:-**

(i) **Social justice and community engagement:-**
Islam encourages the aim of community well being and socio-economic equality. Islam has provided us with the guidelines to stay responsible about others' rights and duties, moral fulfillment and helping others for their well being. An act of charity (Zakat) is an outstanding example.

Hadith: "The best of the people is the one

who is beneficial to others"

(ii) Rights and duties:- Islam also stays cognizant of not only the rights of Allah and duties of a person, but also the rights and duties of one person towards another. Thus, Islam promotes mutual trust and brotherhood among the people.

(iii) Dual accountability:- Islam provides the framework of dual accountability also. A person, who has committed some crime, is dual responsible to the authority in this world and also to Allah Almighty on the day of Judgement. He would be deserving to punishment according to the laws of both worlds.

Conclusion:- Islam, being a universal deen, thus provides guiding principles for the person in all aspects of his life and also in this world and hereafter. Also, the concept of deen is much different in its nature and scope, from the religious framework. Thus following the ultimate deen, i.e. Islam ensures success in this world and hereafter.