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Q: Differentiate between Deen and Religion. Describe the importance of deen in human life:

INTRODUCTION:

Deen and religion are two different terminologies which are often confused. In reality, religion is a subset of deen. Religion mainly focuses on individual salvation while Deen holds strong roots at both individual and social level. It shapes the society as a unifying force by establishing systems based on welfare. Alongside, it guides people in every aspect of life. "Islam", for instance, is an exemplary Deen which is guiding and unifying its believers individually and collectively.

I- Difference between Deen and Religion

Deen	Religion
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1- Origin

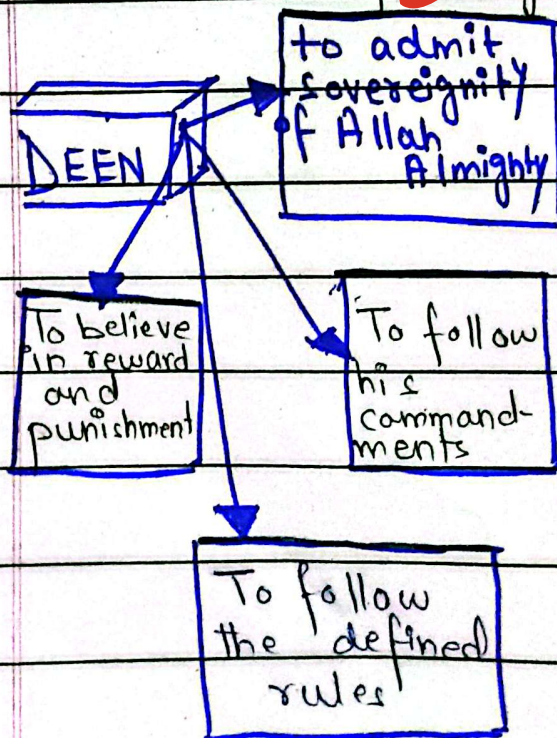
Deen is an 'Arabic word' which means 'to attain supremacy'

Religion is a 'Latin word' which means 'to subjugate'

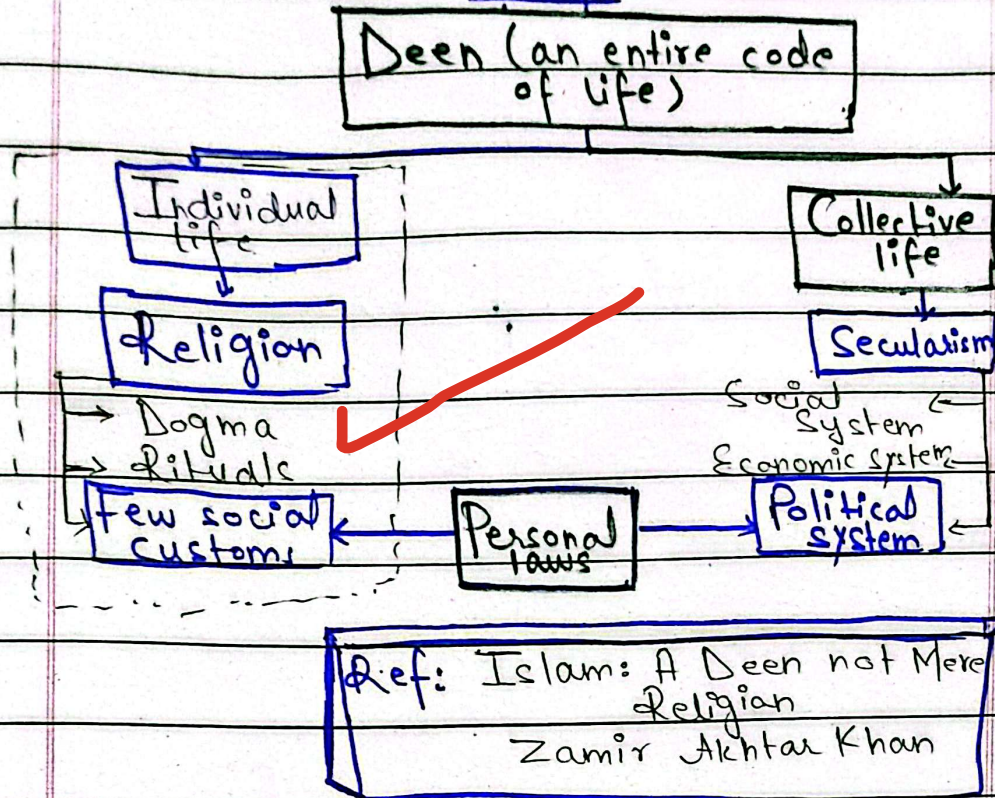
2- Definition

Contentually, it is defined as code of life. In Islamic Shariah, deen is defined as collection of 4 things:

Contentually, it is defined as way of life or to find own roots. Emile Durkheim, a famous sociologist, define religion as to practice certain faiths related to God.



3- Scope



Deen

Religion.

4- Source

The source of deen is divine revelation.

For examples following

ayah from Surah

Al-maida indicate the

divine nature of Islam.

اليوم اكملت لكم دينكم و

اتممت عليكم نعمتي ورضيت لكم الاسلام ديناً

"Today, I have perfected

Your faith for you, comp-

leted my favor upon you

and chosen Islam as

Your way.

The religions are created by man either

as a separate entity or

as a sect within a

deen. For example,

'Buddhism' is a

religion established

by Gautam Buddha

around 2500 years ago

The sects of Islam

are the religions within Deen.

5- Philosophy

The philosophy of Deen is societal transformation by spiritual, moral and social reforms.

For instance, from individual moral guidance to charter and governance of Medina, Islam is a practical Deen.

The philosophy of Religion is based on individual salvation rather than societal reforms.

The culture of 'Pop' and 'nun' in Christianity is more inclined towards personal salvation.

6- Sources of Worship and Social Functions

The worships and social functions in Deen are divine. Worships like Zakat, Salah and Hajj, and social functions like Eid festives and Nama-z-e-Janaza are divine.

The worships and social functions are man-made in a Religion. From Holi in Hinduism to Christmas in Christianity, all are man-made.

7- Modern Implications

Deen is a timeless code which can guide in modern crisis. For example, Islam devices

Due to its narrow scope, religion is unable to provide contemporary solutions.

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a system of Zakat and interest-free banking to overcome modern economic crisis. for countries like Pakistan

Buddhism provides strong moral framework but lack social framework. So, its follower states like Thailand and Sri Lanka does not have faith driven governments to solve problems like economic crisis.

II- Importance of Deen at Individual Level:

1- Deen: A solution to Identity Crisis

In the modern world, identity crisis and lack of purpose is a prevailing issue for youth. Deen provides a clear answer and logical purpose of being in this world. In Islam, the clear answer of identity is "From Allah, For Allah and To Allah." Alongside, the purpose of humanity is stated in Surah Al-Zariyat as follows:

وما خلقت الجن والانس الا ليعبدون (51:56)

"I did not create jinn and mankind

except to worship me."

2- Moral Compass and Character Builder

Deen serves as a moral compass for an individual which lead to build a righteous character. For instance, Islam performs the character building of an individual by applying sanctions on moral values preservation like theft, adultery etc.

It helps in binding to virtues like truthfulness, honesty etc by practical example of Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H). A hadith in Musnad Ahmad describes it as follows:

انما بعثت لائم صالح الا للاق

"Verily, I have sent to perfect righteous character."

3- Spiritual Fulfillment and Mental Stability

A deen offers the attitude of gratitude and resilience in its followers which provides them spiritual fulfillment and mental stability at times of

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clarity. While, the swayers of religion face depression and anxiety,deen like Islam anchors the personality in hardships.

Allah^{Almighty} describes this phenomenon in

Surah AlTalag as follows:

... ومن يتوكل على الله فهو حسبه (65:3)

"And whoever put their trust in Allah, then he 'alone' is sufficient for them."

4- Balanced World view

In the modern world, the extremes of escapism and materialism are a new normal. Deen like Islam serves as an anchor which balances the view between gaining worldly goods and attaining virtues of 'akhirah'. This phenomenon is explained in Surah Al-Qasas as follows:

وَابْتَغِ فِيمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ ۚ وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيبَكَ
مِنَ الدُّنْيَا (28:77)

"Rather; seek the 'reward' of the Hereafter by means of what Allah has granted you, without forgetting ^{your} share in this world."

III Importance of Deen at Collective Level:

1- Social Equality and Brotherhood:

Deen knits the social fabric with the fibers of equality and brotherhood. Islam, for instance, balances the roles of genders by rights and duties and connects the followers by the ties of brotherhood, ~~called~~ 'ummah'. It promotes globalization over nationalism and racism. As per last sermon of Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H).

"All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over non-Arab nor has a non-Arab; also a white has no superiority over black nor has a black."

2- Upholding Justice to Establish Deterrence

A deen ensures the peace and well-being of a society by upholding justice and rule of law. Islam is often accused of practicing strict punishments like ~~hand cutting and stoning~~. But, the concept behind is to build deterrence against crimes. 'The Classical School of Criminology' by Cesare Beccaria

reinforced this concept of deterrence to preserve society. The rule of law is described in Surah al-Nisa as follows

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا مِمَّنْ يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ أُولُو الْأَرْحَامِ الَّذِينَ هُمْ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْكُمْ عَلَى الْأَرْحَامِ ...

"O believers! stand firm for justice as witnesses for Allah even if it is against yourselves, your parents or close relatives."

3- Political Ethics and Good Governance:

Deen is responsible for the political guidance of its followers. The political system of Islam is based on good governance to establish a welfare estate. "Khilafat" is mentioned as a responsibility not a status by Islam."

Welfare estate of Madina and pious Caliphates is a case study.

Following is the extract of a letter of Hazrat Umar (R.A) to Abu Musa (R.A), governor of a province:

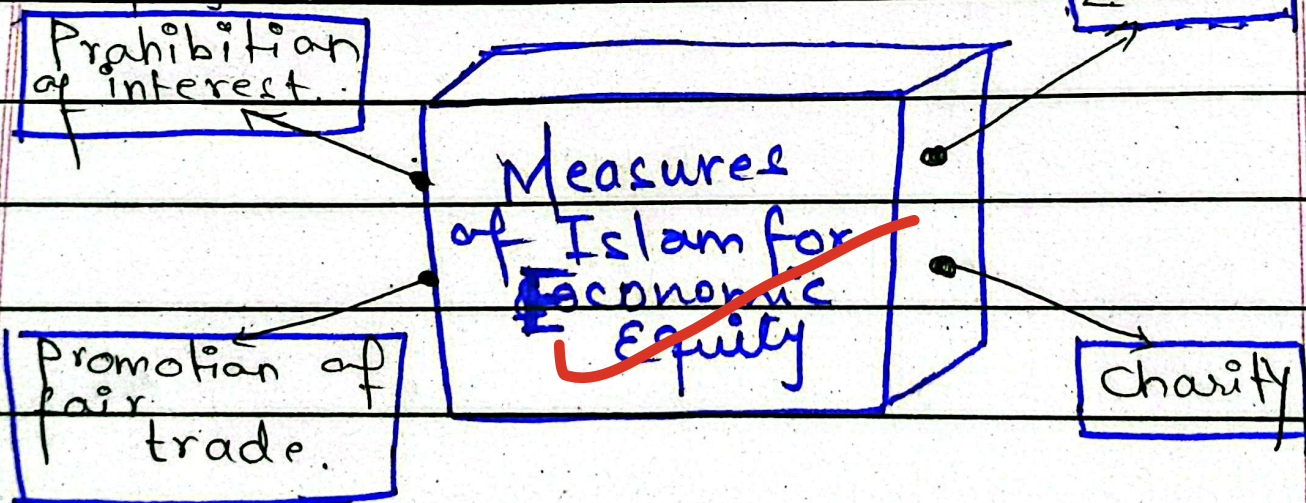
"The best of men in authority is he under whom people prosper and the worst of them is he under whom people encounters hardships"

Ref: The Islamic Welfare state and its Role in Economy by Dr. M. Umar Chapra

4- Economic Equity and Social Welfare

Deen provides a comprehensive framework for economic equity in society.

As a deen, Islam emphasizes the regulation of money in society by different means to establish the dignity of ~~poor~~ and bridge the gap for social welfare. Jihad of first caliph against zakat deniers indicate the importance of social equity.



Conclusion:

Religion is found as a subset of Deen by dealing with the individuals, while deen serves as a comprehensive guide in every aspect of life. The spiritual fulfillment, character building and balancing world view by deen at individual level describes its importance. While, at collective level, it brings social equality, rule of law, political ethics and economic equity. Islam serves as an exemplary deen by addressing all the areas of human life