



INDRA GANDHI NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY

MA Philosophy (MAPY)
Assignments
(First Year)
(JULY SESSION-2017)

PROGRAMME..... SERIAL REF NO :.....
ENROLMENT NO [grid] COURSED CODE :
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Assignment – 6

MPYE 005: World Religions

Notes:

- i) Answer all five questions
- ii) All questions carry equal marks
- iii) For every question, refer to the texts and write down the assignment-responses in your own words.
- iv) Answers to question no.1 and 2 should be in about **500 words** each

1. Discuss the eightfold path that Buddhism suggests as a way of overcoming suffering. 20

OR

Explain in detail each of the articles of faith in Islam. 20

Answer: Buddhism is a path of practice and spiritual development leading to Insight into the true nature of reality. Buddhist practices like [meditation](#) are means of changing yourself in order to develop the qualities of awareness, kindness, and wisdom. The experience developed within the Buddhist tradition over thousands of years has created an incomparable resource for all those who wish to follow a path — a path which ultimately culminates in Enlightenment or Buddhahood. An enlightened being sees the nature of reality absolutely clearly, just as it is, and lives fully and naturally in accordance with that vision. This is the goal of the Buddhist spiritual life, representing the end of suffering for anyone who attains it.

Because Buddhism does not include the idea of worshipping a creator god, some people do not see it as a religion in the normal, Western sense. The basic tenets of Buddhist teaching are straightforward and practical: nothing is fixed or permanent; actions have consequences; change is possible. So Buddhism addresses itself to all people irrespective of race, nationality, caste, sexuality, or gender. It teaches practical methods which enable people to realise and use its teachings in order to transform their experience, to be fully responsible for their lives.

THE NOBLE EIGHT-FOLD PATH:

1. Right Views.
The true understanding of the four noble truths.
2. Right Intent.
Right aspiration is the true desire to free oneself from attachment, ignorance, and hatefulness. [These first two are referred to as *prajñā*, or wisdom.]
3. Right Speech.
Right speech involves abstaining from lying, gossiping, or hurtful talk.
4. Right Conduct.
Right action involves abstaining from hurtful behaviours, such as killing, stealing, and careless sex.
5. Right livelihood.
Right livelihood means making your living in such a way as to avoid dishonesty and hurting others, including animals. [The above three are referred to as *shila*, or morality.]
6. Right Effort.
Right effort is a matter of exerting oneself in regulating the content of one's mind: bad qualities should be abandoned and prevented from arising again; good qualities should be enacted and nurtured.

7. Right Mindfulness.

Right mindfulness is the focusing of one's attention on one's body, feelings, thoughts, and consciousness in such a way as to overcome craving, hatred, and ignorance.

8. Right Concentration.

Right concentration is meditating in such a way as to progressively realize a true understanding of imperfection, impermanence, and non-separateness.

The Theravada tradition of Buddhism teaches that everyone must individually seek salvation through their own efforts. To attain nirvana, one must relinquish earthly desires and live a monastic life. The Mahayana tradition teaches that salvation comes through the grace of bodhisattvas. Bodhisattvas defer their own enlightenment to help others, thus enabling many more living beings to attain salvation.

Buddhist universalism is best represented by the Mahayana tradition, which embraces the well-being of all sentient life.

The meaning of the term *nirvana*, literally "the blowing out" of existence, is not entirely clear. Nirvana is not a place like heaven, but rather an eternal state of being. It is the state in which the law of karma and the rebirth cycle come to an end - though Buddhist conceptions of personal (non-)identity make these notions problematic. Nirvana is the end of suffering; a state where there are no desires, and individual consciousness comes to an end. Attaining nirvana is to relinquish clinging, hatred, and ignorance. Its achievement entails full acceptance of imperfection, impermanence, and interconnectedness. Sometimes "nirvana" is used to refer either to Buddhist heaven or complete nothingness, but most Buddhists would not understand the term in this way.

2. Write a detailed essay on the Hindu ethics. 20

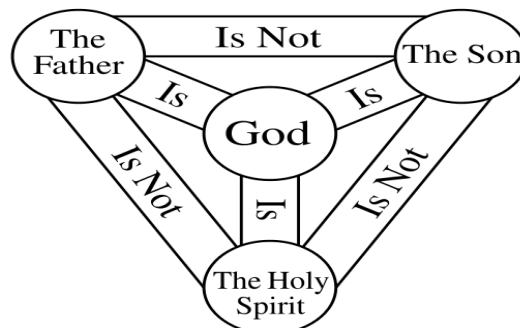
OR

Make brief notes on the core beliefs of Christianity. 20

The term *Christianity* seems to imply a religious system in the same way that Islam and Buddhism are religious systems. Within religious systems are core beliefs, along with codes, rules, and standards that must be mastered in order to achieve a desired end. Christianity does not fit that definition and therefore the term can be slightly misleading.

Jesus did not come into the world to start another religion. There were already plenty of religions (see [Acts 17:22–23](#)), including Judaism, which had begun as a relationship with Almighty God ([Leviticus 20:12](#)) but had deteriorated into another religious system on par with idol worship ([Matthew 15:8](#)). Jesus came to bear witness to the truth ([John 18:37](#)), to seek and to save the lost—those separated from God by their sin ([Luke 19:10](#))—and to “give his life as a ransom for many” ([Mark 10:32](#)). With that said, those who follow Christ do share some core beliefs.

Biblically speaking, [Christians](#) are those who are forgiven of their sins and who have entered a personal relationship with Almighty God through faith in Jesus Christ ([Ephesians 2:8–9](#); [Romans 10:9–10](#)). In order to become a Christian, a person must fully accept as part of his or her own personal worldview the following core beliefs:



- Jesus is the Son of God and is equal with God ([John 1:1, 49](#); [Luke 22:70](#); [Mark 3:11](#); [Philippians 2:5–11](#))
- Jesus was born of a virgin ([Matthew 1:18](#); [Luke 1:26–35](#))
- Jesus lived a perfect, sinless life ([Hebrews 4:15](#); [John 8:29](#))
- Jesus was crucified to pay the penalty for our sins ([Matthew 26:28](#); [1 Corinthians 15:2–4](#))
- Jesus rose from the dead ([Luke 24:46](#); [Mark 16:6](#))
- We are saved by the grace of God; that is, we cannot add to or take away from Christ’s finished work on the cross as full payment for our sin ([Ephesians 2:8–9](#))

It could be argued that belief in the [inerrancy of God’s Word](#) is also a core belief of Christianity because, if the Bible’s veracity is suspect, then all we know about God is in doubt. Saving faith is inextricably linked to the Word of God: “Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ” ([Romans 10:17](#)).

But the mental acceptance of the above points of doctrine is only the framework around which salvation occurs. [Faith](#) is more than intellectual assent, and mentally agreeing with the core beliefs of Christianity does not equal entrance into God’s kingdom. Even Satan and the demons know certain things about God ([James 2:19](#)). We can mentally agree with facts without making those facts the centerpiece of our lives.

Can a person be saved without holding to the core beliefs of Christianity? No. But along with accepting as true those core beliefs must be a spiritual transformation. Jesus said that in order to inherit eternal life one must be “born again” ([John 3:3](#)). To be [born again](#) is a work of the Holy Spirit in the heart of a repentant sinner. Just as a mother in labor does all the work in bringing forth a new life, so the Holy Spirit does the work in transforming a sinner into a new creature ([2 Corinthians 5:17](#)). This process begins when God draws a heart through conviction of sin and hope of forgiveness ([John 6:44](#)). When we surrender to God and repent of our sin ([Acts 2:38](#)), God applies the blood of His own Son to our account and cancels the debt we owe Him ([Colossians 2:14](#)). By this act of transference, God pronounces us “not guilty”; that is, He [justifies](#) us ([Romans 4:5](#)). Salvation is a divine exchange: Jesus becomes our sin so that we can become His perfection ([2 Corinthians 5:21](#)). This is [the gospel](#) at the very core of Christianity.

3. Answer *any two* of the following questions in about *250 words* each:

a) Give brief descriptions of the animate and inanimate substances discussed in Jainism. 10

Dravyas or substances according to Jain philosophy are eternal entities which have certain, unalterable qualities and in which the accidental, alterable conditions (Paryaya) of different type can be developed. Substances are divided into two groups: animate (Jiva) and inanimate (Ajiva). Jain Philosophy further states that the universe is made up of six substances or dravyas and they are the fundamental constituents of the universe.

Jiva or Soul

The foremost Dravya or substance in Jain Philosophy is the [Jiva](#). Souls are uncreated, imperishable, immaterial, knowing, active and acceptable entities and are present in endlessly great or endless numbers. Every soul is an individual entity, independent of the others, but can get in touch with other souls and substances. Every soul as such is from nature in possession of perfect knowledge, perfect belief and perfect moral behaviour; it has unlimited energy and unending bliss, complete incorporeity and has equality of position with all other souls. Its movement is directed straight upwards.

Inborn qualities of soul appear in it when it is independent of all the alien influx. This is the case only for a very small number of existing souls. Most of the souls cannot develop their natural qualities, because they are made completely or partially ineffective by an alien element which does not belong to them.

Ajiva or the Inanimate

There are five substances besides the soul, and these too are eternal and imperishable, the only difference being that they are inanimate. They are: space, the media of movement and rest, time and matter.

Akasa or Space

Space is the receptacle of all things, but it is not contained in anything. Its only assignment is to offer place. Different from all other substances, it is not only in the world, outside of it in the non-world (Aloka). It contains of an unending amount of points (pradesa).

Dharma and Adharma

Dharma and Adharma is a sort of ether. They are the media of movement and rest. This is to be understood in the sense that they themselves do not cause motion and obstruction, but create preconditions for them. Dharma is, therefore, compared with water which is a precondition that a fish swims, and Adharma with ground whose existence enables a wanderer to put himself to rest. They occupy the whole world-space and they have endlessly many space points. The presumption of two special substances Dharma and Adharma is a characteristic speciality of Jainism since these two words do not appear in [Sanskrit language](#) in this special meaning, the researchers dealing for the first time with Jaina-philosophy did not understanding their meaning and explained them as virtue and vice, this, of course, does not make any sense.

Kala or Time

Time occasions the changes taking place in other substances; it makes new what is old and old what is new Just like the stone which a potter lays under his disc enables its movement only by its mere presence, with out causing it, time also supports by its being there the changes to which the substances are subject. In the highest sense, it is continuity without any beginning, end or parts. But seen from the point of view of common experience, it consists of endlessly many moments of which one is present, and others belong either to the past or the future. Since it does not possess any space points (Pradesa) in contrast to all other substance, it is not counted among substances (dravya) by many Jaina- philosophers. Others consider it as a substances, it teach that its countless atoms like the jewels lying on a heap, rest next to one another in each of the single point of the world-space without ever being mixed with one another. In any case it is not an "astikaya", i.e. it does not belong to the class of entities which occupy countable, uncountable or endlessly many space points, like Jiva and the other four inanimate substances.

Pudgala, Material Object

The matter consists of an endless variety of quite tiny atoms which cannot be perceived by senses and which cannot be further divided (Paramanu). While all other substances are formless, every atom has a definite smell, a definite colour and two definite varieties of touch.

The smell of the atom is either good or bad, the taste bitter, pungent, astringent, sour or sweet (the salty taste is considered as a variety of the sweet). The colour: black, blue (green) red, yellow or white. The touch: heavy, light, soft, rough, cold, warm, sticky or dry.

b) Make a detailed exposition of the doctrine of dependent origination. 10

c) Write a short essay on the guru tradition in Sikhism. 10

Sikhism was established by ten god-inspired prophet-teachers called Gurus over the period from 1469 to 1708. Each Guru added to and reinforced the message taught by the previous, resulting in the creation of Sikhism. Their names were **Guru Nanak Dev**, **Guru Angad Dev**, **Guru Amar Das**, **Guru Ram Das**, **Guru Arjan Dev**, **Guru Hargobind**, **Guru Har Rai**, **Guru Harkrishan**, **Guru Tegh Bahadur**, **Guru Gobind Singh**.

1. **Guru Nanak Dev (1469-1539)** was born in Talwandi, now known as Nankana Sahib, a place in Punjab state in Pakistan, not far from border with India.

He was the first Guru of the Sikhs and the founder of the religion. He preached the equality of all humans, saying that all people are the children of one God. Guru Nanak travelled extensively throughout India and other countries spreading his message.

There are 947 hymns (*banis*) from Guru Nanak Dev included in the Sikh holy book, the Guru Granth Sahib.

2. **Guru Angad Dev (1504-1552)** compiled the biography of Guru Nanak Dev, known as the *Janam Sakhi* and was instrumental in spreading his teachings.

He introduced Gurmukhi script and encouraged people to learn Punjabi. He started a school at Khadur Sahib to teach children through the *Gurmukhi* alphabet.

In addition to compiling the hymns of Guru Nanak Dev, there are 63 of his own hymns included in Guru Granth Sahib.

3. **Guru Amar Das (1479-1574)** further institutionalised the free communal kitchen called the *langar* found in all Sikh Gurdwaras (Sikh places of worship).

He not only preached the equality of people, but also tried to foster the idea of women's equality. He tried to liberate women from the practices of *purdah* (wearing a veil) and preached strongly against the practice of sati (the burning of a wife on her husband's funeral pyre).

There are 869 hymns from Guru Amar Das included in Guru Granth Sahib.

4. **Guru Ram Das (1534-1581)** spread Sikhism in North India and founded the city of Amritsar in 1574. He was also instrumental to the structural organisation of Sikh society.

Guru Ram Das stressed the importance of kirtan (hymn singing), which remains an important part of Sikh worship. There are 638 hymns from him included in Guru Granth Sahib, and the *Lawan* – a four-stanza hymn composed by Guru Ram Das – forms the centre of the standard Sikh marriage ceremony, known as the *Anand Karaj* (Meaning “ceremony of bliss”).

5. **Guru Arjan Dev (1563-1606)** compiled the Guru Granth Sahib in 1604. He was also the first Sikh Guru to be martyred. His offence was not amending the holy book to reflect the views of Emperor Jahangir, ruler of the Mughal Empire. Guru Arjan Dev was made to sit on a scorching iron plate whilst having boiling sand poured over his body. He withstood and tolerated the pain, whilst chanting hymns. The fifth Guru was also responsible for building the Golden Temple at Amritsar and starting the practice of *daswandh* (tithe) i.e. contributing one tenth of one's earnings for community purposes. He was author of *Sukhmani Sahib* bani (the Prayer of Peace) and 2312 hymns from him are included in Guru Granth Sahib.

6. **Guru Hargobind (1595-1644)** transformed the Sikhs by introducing martial arts and weapons for the defence of the masses. He used to wear two swords – one signifying *Miri* (secular power) and the other *Piri* (spiritual power).

He fought four battles with the Mughal rulers over their attempts to forcibly convert people to Islam.

He was responsible for the building of the *Akal Takht* in Amritsar in 1608, and also – less directly – for the Sikh commemoration of Diwali. He was imprisoned in the fort of Gwalior for one year.

When he was released, he also insisted on the release of 52 fellow prisoners, who happened to be Rajput kings. It is to mark this event that Sikhs celebrate Diwali, known to Sikhs as *bandi chod divas*.

7. **Guru Har Rai (1630-1661)** was the grandson of Guru Hargobind, and continued his military traditions. In turn, he made his own son, Guru Harkrishan, the next – and eighth – Guru of the Sikhs, when he was only five years old.

Guru Har Rai devoted himself to the strengthening of the Sikh religion, defending the integrity of Guru Granth Sahib by refusing to modify its words.

8. **Guru Harkrishan (1656-1664)** died in childhood – of smallpox – aged only eight. In tragic irony, he himself was responsible for curing the sick during an epidemic of the disease in Delhi.

The Gurdwara Bangla Sahib in New Delhi was constructed in his memory. Before he died, he nominated his granduncle, Guru Tegh Bahadur as the next Sikh Guru.

9. **Guru Tegh Bahadur (1621-1675)** was another Sikh martyr who died at the hands of a Mughal ruler. He laid down his life upholding the right to religious freedom.

The Gurdwara *Sis Ganj* in Chandani Chowk, New Delhi, is located at the site of his martyrdom, and the Gurdwara *Rakab Ganj Sahib* in the same city can be found at the site of his cremation. Guru Tegh Bahadur is also noted for the foundation of the city of Anandpur Sahib.

10. **Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708)** was the last of the ten Sikh Gurus. He was responsible for many things, including core elements of the Sikh religion.

For example, he instructed the Sikhs to keep the Five Symbols (the five ‘K’s), and to use the names ‘Singh’ and ‘Kaur’, depending on their gender.

He is the author of several hymns recited daily by Sikhs (Jaap Sahib and Chaupai). He wrote his autobiography (the Bichitra Natak) and compiled the 1428 page Dasam Granth Sahib.

In 1699, Guru Gobind Singh baptised the Sikhs and created the Khalsa (the ‘Pure’) community of Sikhs. The Khalsa consists of Sikhs who have been baptised and who dedicate themselves to living by the high standards of the Sikh Gurus at all times.

Guru Gobind Singh’s legacy to the religion was completed by his instruction that Sikhs should follow *Guru Granth Sahib* as the Guru after him.

d) Discuss Confucianism as a religion of virtues. 10

4. Answer **any four** of the following in about **150 words** each:

a) What are the basic principles of Jewish faith? 5

Answer: The closest that anyone has ever come to creating a widely-accepted list of Jewish beliefs is [Rambam](#)'s thirteen principles of faith. These principles, which Rambam thought were the minimum requirements of Jewish belief, are:

1. [G-d](#) exists
2. G-d is one and unique
3. G-d is incorporeal
4. G-d is eternal
5. [Prayer](#) is to be directed to G-d alone and to no other
6. The words of the [prophets](#) are true
7. [Moses](#)' prophecies are true, and Moses was the greatest of the prophets

8. The [Written Torah](#) (first 5 books of the Bible) and [Oral Torah](#) (teachings now contained in the [Talmud](#) and other writings) were given to Moses
9. There will be no other Torah
10. G-d knows the thoughts and deeds of men
11. G-d will reward the good and punish the wicked
12. The [Messiah](#) will come
13. The [dead](#) will be [resurrected](#)

As you can see, these are very basic and general principles. Yet as basic as these principles are, the necessity of believing each one of these has been disputed at one time or another, and the liberal [movements](#) of Judaism dispute many of these principles.

Unlike many other religions, Judaism does not focus much on abstract cosmological concepts. Although Jews have certainly considered the [nature of G-d](#), [man](#), the universe, [life](#) and the [afterlife](#) at great length (see [Kabbalah and Jewish Mysticism](#)), there is no mandated, official, definitive belief on these subjects, outside of the very general concepts discussed above. There is substantial room for personal opinion on all of these matters, because as I said before, Judaism is more concerned about actions than beliefs.

Judaism focuses on relationships: the relationship between G-d and mankind, between G-d and the [Jewish people](#), between the Jewish people and the [land of Israel](#), and between human beings. Our scriptures tell the story of the development of these relationships, from the time of creation, through the creation of the relationship between G-d and [Abraham](#), to the creation of the relationship between G-d and the Jewish people, and forward. The scriptures also specify the mutual obligations created by these relationships, although various movements of Judaism disagree about the nature of these obligations. Some say they are absolute, unchanging laws from G-d (Orthodox); some say they are laws from G-d that change and evolve over time (Conservative); some say that they are guidelines that you can choose whether or not to follow (Reform, Reconstructionist). For more on these distinctions, see [Movements of Judaism](#).

b) What is the concept of liberation (Moksa) in Jainism? 5

Answer: The ultimate purpose of all life and activity in Jainism is to realize the free and blissful state of our true being. True philosophy should result in removing all bondage (karma) in the process of purifying the soul.

The central theme of Jainism considers religion as a science of ethical practice. The conduct of the present life should be aimed to attain total freedom from which there is no return to the birth and death cycle. Every soul can attain liberation and supreme spiritual state by realizing its intrinsic purity and perfection.

Jainism lays down a definitive course of practical moral discipline, contemplation of the highest truth, and reorientation of life in light of these for attaining ultimate reality or truth.

The principle features of Jainism are:

- Religious tolerance
- Ethical purity
- Harmony between self and one's environment
- Spiritual contentment

Jainism prescribes a path to liberation (Moksha), consists of the following trinity (ratna traya):

- Right perception (Samyak darsana)
- Right knowledge (Samyak jnana)
- Right conduct (Samyak charitrya)

Right perception creates an awareness of reality or truth, right knowledge impels the person to proper action, and proper conduct leads him to the attainment of the total freedom. They must coexist in a person if one is to make any progress on the path of liberation.

c) What was the vedic concept of God? 5

Answer: God according to the vedas is the entire universe itself, and this universe extends into the infinity well beyond the physical universe which we see, feel and live in- in the form of stars, planets, galaxies and intergalactic stuff, all of which that was created during the big bang. The physical universe which we live in is a temporary phenomenon created in big bang and which has an end, and exists within the real universe which is nothing but God. So in other words, we all live inside the God, and we are a part of the God itself!

*That which makes the tongue speak, but which cannot be spoken by the tongue...
That which makes the mind think, but which cannot be thought by the mind...
That which makes the eyes see, but which cannot be seen by the eyes...
If you understand the meaning of I neither know nor don't know, then you understand God.
Those who know that God cannot be known, truly know God. — Upanishads*

God according to the vedas is attributeless(**Nirguna**), opinionless(**Nirvikara**), formless(**Nirakara**) and infinite/timeless(**Ananta**) supreme consciousness(**sacchidananda**). Now, how can a opinionless god punish or reward people? How can a formless god be seen? How can a infinite God be measured? How can an attributeless God be defined? Which is why the vedic texts describe God as **Neti, Neti** meaning Not this, Not that. Neither this, nor that. You can only define God as what it is not, not as what it is. The key here is to observe that God is referred to as 'it', not as some 'he' or 'she'.

d) Briefly describe **the concept of God in Sikhism**. 5

Answer: Sikhism teaches uncompromising monotheism. In the *Moolmantra*, Nanak describes God as “By the Grace of the Sole One, Self-existent and Immanent, the Creator Person, without Fear or Unconditioned, Without enmity or Uncontradicted, the Timeless One, Un-incarnated, Self-created and Enlightener.” (AG1). Sikh Gurus repeatedly assert the monotheistic character of God by saying, ‘God is the one, the only one, the one without a second’. Though the understanding of God in Sikhism is strictly monotheistic, it accepts two aspects of God i.e., the *nirguna* and the *saguna*. God (*Parameshur*) in his *nirguna* aspect is beyond all attributes including *sat* (truth), *akal* (beyond time), and *ajuni* (not becoming). In the *saguna* aspect, God is attributed qualities like *Sabd* (word), *Nam* (personality), and Guru (enlightener). God is the creator of the universe, and the origin, existence and survival of the universe depend on the all-powerful will (*hukam*) of God.

God created the world without the support of any other factor like *prakrti*, and the creator and the created world are different in their nature. God is uncreated and unchanging, whereas the created world though not unreal is changing and limited. God existed even before creation in His transcendent nature, but through the act of creation he became immanent, “In the region of Truth, God creates perpetually, watches His Creation with a Benevolent eye.” (AG 8). God in His transcendent nature cannot be explained in empirical terms, because God is beyond time and space; “When here was no form in sight, how could there be good or bad actions? When God was in the Self-Absorbed state, there could be no enmity or conflict.

- e) How do you understand Zakat (religious tax)? 5
f) Describe the Zoroastrian understanding of God. 5

Zoroastrianism is an ancient Aryan religion that originated in Persia more than 2500 years ago. Though it has relatively few adherents, less than one hundred and thirty thousand in the whole world, it is one of the oldest religions. Zoroaster was the founder of Zoroastrianism, also commonly known as Parsi-ism. It is also known as the religion of fire worshippers and Magianism.

Parsi Scriptures consist of Dasatir and Vesta or Zend-Avesta. Dasatir is further divided into two parts: Khurda Dasatir and Kalan Dasatir.

Avesta is further divided into Khurda Avesta and Kalan Avesta also known as Zend or Maha-Zend.

The religious scriptures of the Parsis are found in two languages: Pahlawi (Pahlawi script resembles the present Persian script) and Zendi. Besides these two scripts, some religious literature is found in cuneiform writing.

Some Parsis consider the Zend Avesta to be more authentic than the Dasatir while the others consider Dasatir to be more authentic.

CONCEPT OF GOD IN ZOROASTRIANISM:

God in Zoroastrianism is known as 'Ahura Mazda'. 'Ahura' means 'the Lord' or 'The Master' and 'Mazda' means 'the Wise'; hence 'Ahura Mazda' means 'the Wise Lord' or 'the Wise God'. Ahura Mazda stands for God, in a strictly monotheistic sense.

Qualities of God according to the Dasatir:

According to the Dasatir, Ahura Mazda has the following qualities:

- He is One.
- He is without an origin or end.
- He has no father or mother, wife or son.
- He is without a body or form.
- Nothing resembles Him.
- Neither the eye can behold Him, nor the power of thinking can conceive him.
- He is above all that you can imagine.
- He is nearer to you than your own self.

Thus, in Zoroastrianism too, we find a concept of an eternal, omnipotent God. Several verses of Yasna praise the Lord as a Bountiful Creator.

5. Write short notes on *any five* of the following in about *100 words* each:

a) Aranyakas 4

The Aranyakas (Sanskrit आरण्यक āraṇyaka) are part of the Hindu śruti; these religious scriptures are sometimes argued to be part of either the Brahmanas or Upanishads. The name translates to "the forest books", meaning, treatises for hermits or sadhus living in the wilderness. This contrasts with the ghyasutras, treatises intended for domestic life. Their language is early Classical Sanskrit, and together with the bulk of the Upanishads, the Aranyakas form the basis of Vedanta, roughly dating to a few centuries on either side of the beginning of the Common Era.

The Aranyakas discuss philosophy and sacrifice. They are believed to have originated with the various mystical ascetic groups that developed in post-Vedic India. The Aranyakas constitute a more philosophical and mystical interpretation of the themes presented in the Vedas, as opposed to the Brahmanas, which were primarily concerned with the proper performance of ritual. Like the Upanishads, the Aranyakas may have initially constituted a secret or hidden teaching, not in the sense of being forbidden or restricted, but rather being both a non-obvious expansion on the themes of the Vedas and a teaching that was primarily conveyed individually from teacher to student.

The Aranyakas are associated with and named after individual Vedic shakhas.

- * Aitareya Aranyaka
- * Taittiriya Aranyaka
- * Katha Aranyaka
- * Kaushitaki Aranyaka

b) Rita 4

Rita, Sanskrit **ṛta** (“truth” or “order”), in Indian religion and philosophy, the cosmic order mentioned in the [Vedas](#), the ancient [sacred](#) scriptures of India. As [Hinduism](#) developed from the ancient [Vedic religion](#), the concept of *rita* led to the doctrines of [dharma](#) (duty) and [karma](#) (accumulated effects of good and bad actions). *Rita* is the physical order of the universe, the order of the sacrifice, and the [moral](#) law of the world. Because of *rita*, the sun and moon pursue their daily journeys across the sky, and the seasons proceed in regular movement. Vedic religion features the belief that *rita* was guarded by [Varuna](#), the god-sovereign, who was assisted by [Mitra](#), the god of honour, and that the proper performance of sacrifices to the gods was necessary to guarantee its continuance. Violation (*anrita*) of the established order by incorrect or improper behaviour, even if unintentional, [constituted](#) sin and required careful expiation.

c) Kabbalah 4

d) Khalsa 4

The word "Khalsa" means "pure", Khalsa's are Sikhs which have undergone the sacred Amrit Ceremony initiated by the 10th Sikh Guru, Guru Gobind Singh. The Khalsa order was initially created on Baisakhi Day March 30 1699, with Guru Gobind Singh baptizing 5 Sikhs and then in turn asking the five Khalsa's to baptize him. Following this the Guru personally baptized thousands of men and women into the Khalsa order. The Khalsa baptism ceremony is undertaken as part of ones own personal spiritual evolution when the initiate is ready to fully live up to the high expectations of Guru Gobind Singh. All Sikhs are expected to be Khalsa or be working towards that objective.

The Khalsa baptism ceremony involves drinking of Amrit (sugar water stirred with a dagger) in the presence of 5 Khalsa Sikhs as well as the Guru Granth Sahib. The initiate is instructed in the following; (a) You shall never remove any hair from any part of thy body, (b) You shall not use tobacco, alcohol or any other intoxicants, (c) You shall not eat the meat of an animal slaughtered the Muslim way, (d) You shall not commit adultery. The initiate is required to wear the physical symbols of a Khalsa at all times as well as follow the Khalsa Code of Conduct.

e) Nididhyasanam 4

Spiritual Education or Brahma Vidya is essentially an education that transports us from the present state (whatever it is) to the ONLY state that we need to be in (The Reality). And this process of Education involves basically three steps viz., Shravanam (Listening that is to hear with attention), Mananam (Continuous Reflection) and Nidhidhyasanam (Deeper Contemplation or Meditation) that should ultimately lead to Saakshatkaaram (Realising or Actualizing the Truth). These steps apply to any process of Education specifically to spiritual education without which Realization that every soul is craving/yearning for

Nidhidhyaasanam which means deeply meditating on the meaning of what we have heard and reflected. It does not involve thinking because all thinking is done in the previous step Mananam, now it is ONLY contemplating deeply on the essence so that it is digested thoroughly and becomes a part of our system. This in some way completes the learning but education is yet to be complete.

f) Covenant 4

A covenant is a sacred agreement between God and a person or group of people. God sets specific conditions, and He promises to bless us as we obey those conditions. When we choose not to keep covenants, we cannot receive the blessings, and in some instances we suffer a penalty as a consequence of our disobedience.

All the saving ordinances of the priesthood are accompanied by covenants. For example, we make a covenant when we are baptized, and we renew that covenant each time we partake of the sacrament (see [Mosiah 18:8-10](#); [D&C 20:37, 77, 79](#)). Those who have received the Melchizedek Priesthood have entered into the oath and covenant of the priesthood (see [D&C 84:33-44](#)). The temple endowment and the sealing (marriage) ordinance also include sacred covenants. Covenants mark the path back to God.

g) Incarnation 4

h) Hajj 4

The Hajj is one of the five pillars of Islam, and all able-bodied Muslims are required to perform it once in their lifetime. The Hajj is seen as a chance to wipe clean past sins and start fresh. Many seek to deepen their faith on the Hajj, with women taking on the Islamic hair covering known as "hijab" upon returning from the pilgrimage. Despite the physical challenges of the hajj, many people rely on canes or crutches and insist on walking the routes. Those who cannot afford the Hajj are sometimes financed by charities or community leaders. Others save their entire lives to make the journey. A few even walk thousands of miles by foot to Saudi Arabia, taking months to arrive.