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MAINS TEST SERIES 2025

TEST-3

PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

Question Paper Specific Instructions

1. There are **FIVE** Questions printed in **ENGLISH**.
2. All Questions are **Compulsory**.
3. The number of marks carried by a question/ part is indicated against it.
4. Word limit in questions, wherever specified, should be adhered to.
5. Any page or portion of the page left blank in the Question-cum-Answer Booklet must be clearly struck off.

QNo.	Marks Obtained	QNo.	Marks Obtained	QNo.	Marks Obtained	QNo.	Marks Obtained
1(a)		2(d)		5(a)			
1(b)		2(e)		5(b)			
1(c)		3(a)		5(c)			
1(d)		3(b)					
1(e)		3(c)					
2(a)		4(a)					
2(b)		4(b)					
2(c)		4(c)					
Signature				TOTAL			

3h 8m

Name

KIRTAN BHATT

Rollno

Subject

P. O. R.

Date

July 3rd 2025

Module

Philosophy MTS

checked



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FEEDBACK

- Largely, a decent attempt
- can further enrich by adding more linkers and ESS

Do not write anything on the margin



- (a) "The cosmological proof presupposes the ontological, and therefore contains no more than what the latter contains, only under another name" Evaluate this position of Immanuel Kant. (10 Marks)

(Don't write anything in this area)

The forisaid statement can be understood in the context of Kantian critique of cosmological a posteriori proofs of God as "a priori in disguise".

Cosmological proofs (St. Thomas Aquinas)

- ① Argument from motion — God is the unmoved mover who set the Universe into motion (similar to Nyaya's vyakhanat)
- ② Argument from cause — God is the uncaused cause of the Universe (Nyaya's Karyat)
- ③ Argument from contingency — the finite material universe is contingent upon the infinite God. (Similar to Nyaya's Dharmadeh)

Crux of ontological argument



Kantian critique

- An a posteriori proof is a priori in disguise as one never perceives an uncaused cause or unmoved mover.
- These proofs presuppose the existence of God, leading to circularity.
- Presumes unconditional existence of God (what is the substratum of God?)
 - infinite regress
- "Causality only applies to phenomena & not noumena, to which God belongs.

Other criticisms

- ① Russell → no need to accept God just to avoid infinite regress (infinite chain in maths)
- ② Whitehead's process theology
 - God is himself in motion.
- Kant instead used moral argument to accept God as a psychological booster and postulate of morality.

(Don't write anything in this area)



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(b) "If God had the foreknowledge of all human actions, then why the all-powerful and the benevolent one is not preventing humans from involving in immoral deeds?" Analyse this question in context of debate between a theist and an atheist. (10 Marks)

(Don't write anything in this area)

Theistic traditions accept a personal omniscient god with divine foreknowledge of all our actions.

If God has foreknowledge of our actions, we lack freewill as freedom of choice means there should be a possibility of going against God's foreknowledge.

Challenges due to divine foreknowledge

→ If God knows everything, he would have known about original sin also.

→ God had fore-knowledge of our immoral actions → why did God create imperfect beings who would cause moral evil?

→ It is logically contradictory to say that



God created immoral beings in his own image

Theist response

(Don't write anything in this area)

→ Aquinas said that God is beyond human timeline and sees past, present, future all at once.

→ God has foreknowledge of all possible options and their consequences & lets us choose among them.

→ Ramanuja - God is Antaryamin and yet has endowed us with free will.

→ Augustine says that God works in mysterious ways beyond human intellect.

Thus, a theist always takes a leap of faith and trusts God's wisdom, whereas an atheist is always doubting God.

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1(c) Discuss the necessity for the concept of immortality in the theological context.

(10 Marks)

(Don't write anything in this area)

Concept of immortality of soul is accepted by Plato, Abrahamic traditions, Jainism, Vedanta, etc. for moral, metaphysical, epistemological reasons.

Necessity of immortality

- Indian schools accept an immortal soul to explain law of karma, cornerstone of religious morality.
- An immortal soul is necessary to reap fruits of its actions.
- It is also accepted to explain liberation and incentivize a moral life.
- Incentive of an eternal afterlife with God.
- (e.g.) heaven in Christianity, Vaikuntha in Vaishnavism, Siddhashila in Jainism.



- Plato and Kant accept soul as the synthesizing subject for immortal knowledge.
- Kant accepts it also as a psychological booster & postulate of morality.
- Advaita Vedanta accepts immortal soul on mystical grounds to realize oneness with Brahman.

Comparative view

- Nairatmyavada in Buddhism denies an immortal soul as a bundle of changing perceptions, like flume.
- Law of Karma is explained through Karmic impressions.
- Canaka's Dehatmarada treats soul & body to be identical.

(Don't write anything in this area)



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(d) Analyse how the concept of liberation is understood in Samkhya philosophy.

(10 Marks)

(Don't write anything in this area)

Samkhya dualism accepts two ultimate realities Prakriti X Purusha.

Prakriti evolves into the material universe for the sake of Purusha, and needs him to appreciate its performance (Darshanartham).

Purusha needs Prakriti to attain liberation (Kaivalyartham).

Bondage

→ Purusha gets bonded due to mistaken self-identification as an evolute of Prakriti.

→ Thus, root cause of bondage is Avirreka (lack of discriminatory knowledge)

→ 3 types of bondage

- Adhyatmika (natural causes)
- Adhibhautika (super-natural causes)
- Adhidamika



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Liberation

- Purusha gets liberated upon attainment of Viveka-jnana through Jnanamarga (Samkhya denies Karmamarga as way to liberation).
- Liberation is complete cessation of suffering (negative definition)
- Both Jivanmukti & Videhamukti are accepted.
- Just like a blind man & lame man cooperate to escape a forest, Prakriti helps Purusha get liberated.

(Don't write anything in this area)

Critique

- Why would an inert Purusha fall into bondage or strive for liberation?
- Simile of blind man & lame man unsatisfactory as both have same goal, but Prakriti & Purusha have opposite aim.
- Negative definition of liberation discourages its pursuit.

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Correct its pursuit
more comparisons



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1(c) Make a comparative study of Wittgenstein's approach towards the nature of religious language in *Tractatus* and *Philosophical Investigations* (10 Marks)

(Don't write anything in this area)

Religious language is language used in a religious context, e.g. in scriptures & sermons.

Early & later Wittgenstein differed significantly in his approach towards religious language.

Early Wittgenstein

→ Non-cognitivist view of religious language - religious language is neither analytical nor factual and thus meaningless.

→ It is beyond verification theory as it can neither be validated nor falsified.

→ It is not based on true justified belief rather on accepted belief.

→ Knowledge is gained through inductive & deductive methods, but religious statements are derived from neither of them.



Later Wittgenstein

(Don't write anything in this area)

→ Through his theory of language games, Wittgenstein concluded that religious language is meaningful from a theist's point of view.

→ Language is like a soccer game where players operate under certain rules. For a believer, religious language gives true knowledge in a religious context.

→ It leads to action and gives meaning to the theist.

Thus, later Wittgenstein overturned his earlier position on religious language.

You are addressing here
but still there
is scope for
enrichment



2(a) Discuss about the role of God in Nyaya philosophy.

(10 Marks)

(Don't write anything in this area)

Nyaya philosophy accepts a creator God and gives 9 arguments for the existence of God.

Role of God

→ Efficient cause of the Universe.

↳ "Karyat" — God is the prime ^{cause} mover of the universe.

↳ "Ayijanet" — God is the prime mover who set the world in motion.

→ God is the substratum of the finite universe (Dhrtyadeh) ⇒ all worldly things are contingent upon God.

→ God is the cause of divine injunctions of the Vedas (Vakya).

→ God is the one who brings coherence



between a word & its meaning (Padat).

→ God enables us to perceive numerically perfect concepts (Samkhyasat)

→ God's divine will causes the atoms to combine into dyads, triads & compound elements.

→ God helps a believer to attain Tattva-jnana & attain liberation.

Jaina criticism

→ Circular argument as Vedic authority is derived from God. A God is sought to be proved through Vedas.

→ Creation implies purpose but a perfect being needs no purpose.

→ Creation implies physical form like potter's limbs but God is said to be formless.

(Don't write anything in this area)



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2(b) In the context of discussions regarding nature of religious language, distinguish between sign and symbol from the perspective of Paul Tillich. (10 Marks)

(Don't write anything in this area)

Religious language refers to statements used in a religious context, e.g. sermons and scriptures.

Paul Tillich subscribes to quasi-cognitivist view on religious language, i.e. religious statements are analogical & symbolic.

e.g. "God is good" is not the same as "humans are good", but analogical to it.

Sign & Symbol

→ Both sign & symbol point to something beyond them, but unlike a sign, a symbol participates in which it points to.

→ e.g. a flag participates in the idea of nationalism.



→ A sign can be arbitrary, but a symbol is born from the collective unconscious of people.

(e.g) universality of swastika symbol.

→ A symbol has 4 defining characteristics:

↳ 1) It points to something beyond.

↳ 2) It participates in what it points to.

↳ 3) It opens up dimensions of reality hitherto unknown.

↳ 4) It opens up dimensions of one's soul.

→ Hence, just like a piece of music or art, a symbol signifies something much larger.

As God belongs to the noumena and cannot be expressed through finite intellect, only symbolic language can communicate about God.

(Don't write anything in this area)



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2(c) "Religious experiences are just like the subjective aesthetic experiences; one need not be too sceptic about them by applying reason, just explore them".
Comment. (10 Marks)

(Don't write anything in this area)

Religious experiences involve transcendental and suprasensory experiences, e.g. communication with a deity or experience of oneness with the cosmos.

No need to be too sceptic

→ Just like an artistic or musical experience, religious experiences are noetic in nature and give us insights into a deeper truth.

→ Just like an experience of nature can be awe-inspiring, religious experiences and experience of the "Numinous" as defined by Rudolf Otto can make us realize our finitude.

(e.g.) Sight of Vishwaroopa to Arjuna.



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→ Just like a painting is Indescribable in terms of language, mystical experiences help us realize the limits of language.

(Don't write anything in this area)

→ Though transient in nature, they can result in lasting attitudinal shifts and positive transformation (e.g) Ramakrishna Paramhansa

However, limiting reason too much can result in obscurantism and moral relativism.

It can worsen stereotypes and pseudo-science in a society, reducing its scientific temper.

In a modern society, religious experiences can have personal spiritual value, but cannot be treated as objective on a wider societal level.



2(d) Can one completely involve in religious activities by accepting God as a postulated psychological booster than as a concretely existing entity?

(10 Marks)

(Don't write anything in this area)

Kant limited pure reason to make room for faith and placed God in the noumenal realm. He didn't deny God unlike Hume & accepted him as a psychological booster and postulate for morality.

Possible to involve in religious activities

- One can accept God & a religious life to satisfy one's emotive aspects and to inculcate a sense of purpose in life.
- Accepting God as a psychological booster & performing one's duties as divine commands is compatible to religious morality.
- One can accept God for practical purposes as it makes social life in a religious



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society easier.

→ Kant also accepted an eternal soul and concept of rebirth to explain morality as the highest good which cannot be attained in a single life.

Not possible

→ A true theist has unwavering faith in God's existence.

→ For him, God is all pervading, omniscient, omnipotent and absolutely real for all purposes.

→ Religious morality is directly derived from divine scriptures and not from deontology.

Thus, Kant's notion is more grounded in pragmatism rather than theism.

(Don't write anything in this area)



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2(e) How far the blasphemy laws in religions are analogous with the laws created by modern states, that too democratic ones, which curtail the freedom of speech and expression of individuals? (10 Marks)

Theocratic states have blasphemy laws to punish any scandalizing speech against God, e.g. Sharia law prohibits speech against Allah.

(Don't write anything in this area)

Not analogous to laws of modern states

→ Blasphemy laws are derived from scriptures, whereas modern laws have secular origin.

→ Blasphemy laws often have disproportionate retribution, while modern laws are more lenient.

(e.g.) death penalty for blasphemy in many Islamic countries.

→ Blasphemy laws are rigid and not open for reform, whereas democratic laws can be reinterpreted.



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(e.g.) SC's recent verdict to decriminalize sedition.

→ Blanket application of blasphemy laws is often the case, while modern laws must pass constitutional safeguards.

(e.g.) Test of reasonableness and rational nexus to curtail Art. 19(1)(a) in India.

→ Blasphemy laws are rooted in fear, while democratic laws are based on rights & duties.

However, modern liberals and free speech absolutists treat restrictions on free speech as instruments of state control.

They argue that just like religion controls us through language, restriction on free speech controls us by curtailing our creative freedom.

(Don't write anything in this area)



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3(a) Does the presence of various kinds of evils deny out the logical possibility of God and teleology in this world and establish that everything is governed by scientific and impersonal mechanisms? (20 Marks)

(Don't write anything in this area)

Problem of evil refers to the challenge of reconciling an infinitely benevolent God with presence of suffering in the world.

Hume popularized it as follows:

- i) Is God able to prevent evil but not willing? $\Rightarrow$ then he is malvolent
- ii) Is he willing but not able? $\Rightarrow$ he is impotent.
- iii) Is he both willing & able? $\Rightarrow$ then why evil exists?
- iv) Is he neither willing nor able? $\Rightarrow$ then why call him God?

Theist response — evil doesn't deny possibility of God & teleology

① Instrumentalist theodicy (Hick, Leibniz)



→ Evil is necessary to realize the goodness and importance of God.

→ Aquinas argues that natural evil leads to spiritual growth and God created the best possible world.

→ Evil leads to character building and people overcome selfish interests during disasters.

→ Leibniz treated fall of Adam as a happy sin leading to incarnation of God as Jesus amongst us.

Critique.

→ Evil can also lead to amplification of vices.

(e.g.) suicides and wars.

→ Evil outweighs good during wars &

(Don't write anything in this area)



disasters & leads to disproportionate suffering
(e.g. world wars)

→ A benevolent God could have come up with better ways to make us understand his goodness.

② Freemillist theodicy (Augustine, Platinga)

→ Both moral & natural evil are results of misuse of freewill.

→ Disasters occur due to immoral societal actions, (e.g.) The Great Flood.

→ Evil is necessary to restore justice.

Critique

→ Even Innocents suffer during ~~in~~ natural disasters & wars.

→ Illogical to say that an omnipotent God created imperfect humans.

(Don't write anything in this area)



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→ If humans are created in God's image, how can they be corrupt?

→ Modern science explains natural evil in mechanistic terms & not teleologically.

Ultimately, problem of evil arises due to anthropocentric fallacy - evil is not good or bad in itself, but only from a human perspective.

For a theist, it remains a bitter pill he can't swallow.

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10

(Don't write anything in this area)



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3(b) A staunch theist will be always considered as a moral individual in the religious context; but need not necessarily so from other perspectives. Analyse this statement. (15 Marks)

(Don't write anything in this area)

The foresaid statement reflects the religious relation between religion & morality.

A staunch theist - always moral in religious context

→ Religious morality is derived from scriptural injunctions. Thus, a theist is always religiously moral.

(e.g.) following the 10 commandments.

→ In religious context, divine command transcends secular morality & even law.

→ Faith alone is sufficient to wash one's sins.

(e.g.) Bhakti traditions believe that highest Bhakti can wash all the sins of this life & past lives.



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→ Right & wrong are relative to God. ~~Any act in the name of God is considered to be moral.~~

(e.g.) Notion of Jihad against infidels.

Not necessarily moral from other perspectives

→ Religious violence can never be acceptable in a modern constitutional morality.

→ Discrimination against individuals & groups violates modern values of equality.

(e.g.) Varna system, gender-based discrimination.

→ A staunch theist who ignores his worldly duties can be considered as immoral by society.

(e.g.) when someone abandons his family to become a monk.

(Don't write anything in this area)



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→ Religious morality often puts disproportionate constraints on individual freedom.
(e.g.) Burka, prohibition of non-veg food.

(Don't write anything in this area)

A theist can also be moral from other perspectives

→ If religion is restricted to private sphere, religious & social morality can be reconciled.

→ Progressive reinterpretation and reform in one's religion can create a holistic morality.

(e.g.) Gandhiji interpreted Vedas as promoters of equality.

Ultimately, both religion & secular morality are concerned with human welfare. They can be reconciled by a progressive theist.



3(c) Critically examine whether the creator God can be treated as THE Absolute.

(15 Marks)

(Don't write anything in this area)

Theological systems accept a personal God as the creator of the Universe. Book of Genesis notes that only a creator God can inspire awe & devotion.

Creator God cannot be treated as the Absolute

- Creation implies a sense of purpose - how can an infinitely perfect God lack anything & need a purpose?
- Jaina's critique of Nyaya notion of God says that creation implies physical manifestation, like a potter creating a pot with his limbs, but God should be formless.
- Also, God needs matter for the process of creation, limiting his omnipotence.



- It also leads to the Problem of Evil
 - how can an omnipotent benevolent God create a world full of sufferings?
- Shankara's and Spinoza's notion of impersonal God says that ascribing any qualities on God puts limitations on him. S is P implies that S is devoid of P.
- Samkhya argues that there is no need of a creator God. The universe is an evolute of Prakriti.

How it can be reconciled with the Absolute

- Nyaya-Vaisishikas argue that only God's will is sufficient to set the atoms in motion. There is no need for a physical form of God.
- Ramanuja says that the Universe is

(Don't write anything in this area)



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God's Lila and God has no purpose for creation.

→ Islamic theology says that God didn't create the world out of purpose, but he created humans to worship him.

→ Ramanuja further says that God is both immanent & transcendent - thus, he is both material & efficient cause of the Universe.

William James argues that only a creator God can be an object of worship and anything short of this is no religion at all.

(Don't write anything in this area)



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4(a) "Truth is the basis of all religions. The proof of one religion is the proof of all. For each in its essence teaches the same goal – selflessness, love, renunciation, realization." Examine this view of Swami Vivekananda. (20 Marks)

(Don't write anything in this area)

Foresaid quote of Swami Vivekananda reflects his belief in religious pluralism, as also seen in Bhagvad Gita, which says that all religious streams ultimately lead to the same ocean.

Each religion in its essence teaches the same goal

- Religious pluralism accepts that there is some truth to all religions.
- All religions are concerned with human welfare and alleviation of suffering.
- Hick's Pluralistic Hypothesis also states that all religions are a finite response to the Real based on their cultural & historical context.

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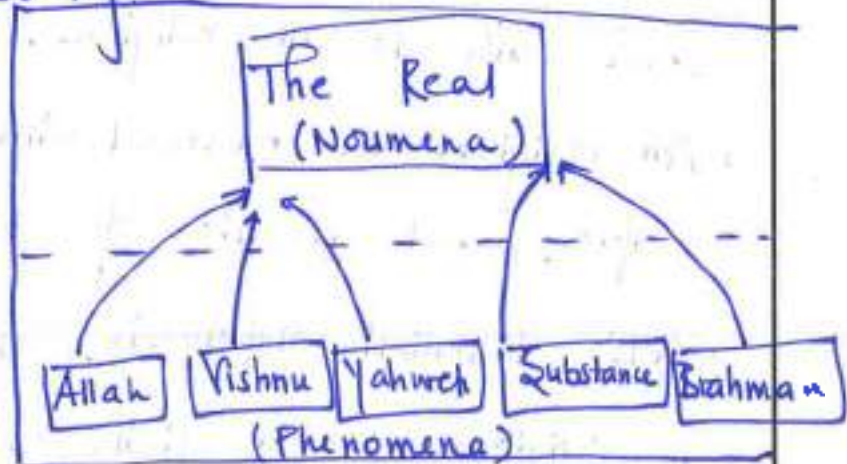


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- We can never experience or know the Real through finite intellect. Hence, we try to describe it as per our understanding.
- Kant also said that we can never know the Noumena directly, but only experience it partly through Phenomena.
- All conceptions of God like Vishnu, Jesus, Yahweh, Allah, Brahman are on an equal footing

→ Wittgenstein through his duck-rabbit analogy tries to explain it as:



⇒ A culture with a lot of rabbits but no ducks will interpret an ambiguous picture

(Don't write anything in this area)



as that of a rabbit, while a culture with a lot of ducks will see it as a duck.

(Don't write anything in this area)

However, religious fundamentalists and absolutists argue that there can be logically only one Absolute.

Even if there are multiple ways to it, one of them must be superior.

Acknowledging all religions as equal ends in moral relativism and ambiguity.

But this view can worsen religious conflicts and communal divides.

How religious pluralism & problem of Absolute truth can be reconciled

- Restricting religion to the private sphere.
- Tolerance of others' beliefs, even if one



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considers them to be wrong.

→ Interfaith dialogue can help find common grounds among various religions

(e.g.) Ibadat Khana of Akbar.

→ Integration and assimilation of various traditions into an organic whole.

(e.g.) Bhakti-Sufi syncreticism.

→ Precedence to constitutional morality and treating one's nation as the Supreme.

Though Swami Vivekananda's quote reflects an admirable aspiration of a pluralistic society, it remains a utopia in today's polarized world.

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4(b) Critically examine Plato's arguments for establishing the immortality of soul.

(15 Marks)

(Don't write anything in this area)

Plato believed that the soul is immortal and resides in a transcendental world of ideas in unembodied state.

Soul has the knowledge of "The Good", highest form, prior to birth, but falls into bondage due to ignorance.

Arguments for immortality of soul

- Soul is the non-physical essence of a person.
- It is not material and hence can't disintegrate when the body disintegrates.
- It is simple and indivisible and thus it cannot be destroyed.
- Soul is the synthesizing subject for

USE KEY FROM PAPER 1 FOR DS



the knowledge of ideas, which are eternal.
→ It is a kind of spiritual energy which cannot be destroyed.

(Don't write anything in this area)

Critical estimate

- Plato presupposes the existence of an eternal self to prove his argument, leading to circular fallacy.
- He fails to explain why the soul with the knowledge of the good ever falls into bondage?
- Carvaka's Dehatmarada treats the soul & the sense of identity as identical to the body.
- ⇒ Also, his Bhutachaitanyavada considers consciousness to be a product of matter.



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→ Hume and later Buddhists treat soul as a bundle of changeable perceptions.

⇒ "When I look deep inside me, I can neither find an idea nor an impression of a self".

— Hume.

⇒ Nagaoena treats soul as Panchaskandha

— a bundle of Rupa (form), Samjna (perception), Vijnana (consciousness), Vedana (feelings), Samskara (disposition).

However, Kant also accepts soul as an ethical & epistemological necessity — a synthesizing subject that enables self-consciousness and helps us act as moral agents.

(Don't write anything in this area)



4(c) Elucidate the major tenets of Deism in the context of philosophical discussions regarding God-World relationship. (15 Marks)

(Don't write anything in this area)

Deism was a result of scientific revolutions in the Renaissance and Enlightenment period, subscribed by the likes of Newton, Kepler, & Copernicus.

Major Tenets

① God & world are distinct from one another.

② God established laws of nature and then

moved away.

→ no scope for divine providence.

③ It gives primacy to reason and rejects revelation & miracles.





④ However, it accepts God as the light of reason and the highest Good.

⑤ It gives primacy to rational morality based on secular values.

(Don't write anything in this area)

Critical estimate

① God becomes like an absentee landlord who can never inspire devotion.

② Problem of evil - how can a benevolent God not intervene in the world to prevent suffering?

③ Rejection of revelations and miracles leads to negation of the Bible.

⇒ Matthew Tindal treated Jesus as an ethical teacher & not God.

④ For a theist, reason is always secondary to faith ("save of faith")



Deist response

- It accepts a creator God - can inspire devotion.
- It accepts God as the light of reason & ultimate good.
- It gives scope for occasionalism - God intervenes sometimes to set the world in order.

Gradually, deism gave way to naturalism, agnosticism, & atheism in late medieval Europe.

(Don't write anything in this area)

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5(a) Science can be antithetical to the notion of faith, but religion is not necessarily against reason, yet both of them can be the means for the progress of humanity. In this context, analyse how reason and faith needs to be reconciled to make the best out of religion and science. (20 Marks)

(Don't write anything in this area)

Faith is the unwavering belief in a religious doctrine, whereas science based on reason tries to make sense of things based on logic and empirical observations.

Science can be antithetical to faith

→ Science accepts knowledge derived from inductive & deductive methods as valid knowledge, while faith is based on "accepted belief" rather than justified belief.

→ Science is constantly evolving and has room for self-correction, while faith is rigid.



→ Science can never accept revelation & miracles, but whole religious systems are based on revealed scriptures (e.g. Vedas, Quran).

→ Science explains cosmology mechanically, while religion has a teleological notion of Universe.

Religion not necessarily opposed to reason

- Religion uses reason in multiple ways :
- ⇒ to make religious experience permanent
 - ⇒ to interpret scriptures.
 - ⇒ to explain contradictions in scriptures (hermeneutics).
 - ⇒ for proselytization and spreading one's message.

→ Deist scientists like Newton & Kepler

(Don't write anything in this area)



gave primary to reason and yet had a strong faith in God.

→ Pascal used reason to reaffirm his faith in God ("Prudent Wager").

→ Similarly, Descartes & Anselm sought to prove God using reason. (idea of the most perfect being).

How both can be reconciled for the progress of humanity

→ Science can be a "great purifier" of religion. It can bring reform to religion as per evolving societal needs.

(e.g.) Pope Francis accepted Big Bang and theory of evolution.

→ Science can be useful for practical and material pursuits, whereas religion

(Don't write anything in this area)



can give spiritual stability to life and
give us a sense of purpose.

→ Science can never answer why one
should act morally ~~when~~ not in
one's best interest ⇒ religion can help
us act as moral agents.

→ Scientific temper can lead to economic
progress, but faith ~~enables~~ people
to come together as a community.

→ Religious festivals and traditions satisfy
our emotive & cultural needs and
give us a sense of identity.

Thus, when restricted ~~then~~ to their
respective spheres, both science &
religion have intrinsic value for
humanity.

(Don't
write
anything
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10



S(b) Make a comparative study of the concept of liberation in *Advaita* and *Visistadvaita*. Which one is closer to the spirit of *Bhagavad Gita*? (15 Marks)

(Don't write anything in this area)

Concept of liberation in *Advaita* & *Visistadvaita* is rooted in their respective worldviews, namely Pantheism and Panentheism.

Liberation in Advaita

- Shankara says that Jiva's apparent bondage is a result of Avidya (ignorance).
- Brahman, the supreme reality, gets projected as the empirical world (Adhyasa) and Jiva mistakes itself to be distinct from Brahman.
- liberation occurs when Jiva realizes its true self as equ identical to Brahman (Brahmajnana).



→ Shankara says that Jnana leads to liberation, but on the Vyavaharika level, Bhakti also has value and a stepping stone to Jnana.

→ The Jiva attains eternal bliss upon realizing its essential nature as Satchitananda.

Liberation in Visistadvaita

→ Ramanuja also treats ignorance as the root cause of soul's bondage.

→ However, he gives primacy to Bhakti over Jnana.

→ Grace of God is essential to elevate ordinary Bhakti to highest Bhakti.

→ An enlightened guru can also guide a person to attain liberation.

(Don't write anything in this area)



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→ The soul upon liberation realizes that it is a part of God and also enjoys eternal bliss but it is nowhere comparable to God's bliss.

→ Unlike Shankara who accepts both Jivanmukti & Videhamukti, Ramanuja only accepts Videhamukti.

Bhagavad Gita also accepts both Bhakti and Jnana as ^{paths to liberation} ~~paths~~ however, Sri Krishna says that Bhakti is easier for the most people.

Also, Krishna's Vishwaroopa is closer to Ramanuja's panentheism. Thus, it can be said that Vishishtadvaita's notion of liberation is closer to Gita.

(Don't write anything in this area)



5(c) How far can we treat Buddhism as a religion, given the fact that it is not in consonance with the definition of God-centric religions? (15 Marks)

(Don't write anything in this area)

Western theists like William James argue that anything short of theism is no religion at all. Thus, Buddhism is only an ethical system as per this definition.

Why Buddhism is not a religion in conventional sense

① No creator God is accepted. Book of Genesis says that only a creator God can inspire awe & devotion.

② Rejection of immortal soul - accepted by God-centric religions to incentivize a moral life.
↑ religious

③ Morality is not derived from God or



divine injunctions.

④ No scope for Grace of God or divine intervention.

⑤ Cosmology based on mechanistic notion of Pratityasamutpada.

(Don't write anything in this area)

However, it can be considered a religion

① If religion is defined as "religare" — a sense of fraternity.

② Dharma in Indian traditions refers to duty & righteousness.

③ Buddhism has authoritative scriptures like Tipitaka & Avadanas.

④ Mahayana tradition worships Bodhisatvas and has scope for deification of Buddha.



⑤ It has religious symbols and a distinction between the sacred & profane (e.g. Stupas)

(Don't write anything in this area)

⑥ It has rituals & festivals and an institutional structure (Sangha) comparable to other religions.

⑦ It has a theory of bondage & liberation which has reward & punishment mechanisms based on law of Karma.

⇒ Also, there is a clearly laid path to liberation (Ashtangamarga).

As per Paul Tillich, religion is the ultimate concern of man to determine his ultimate destiny. Buddhism very well fits in this definition.



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MAINS TEST SERIES 2025

TEST 3

PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

(Don't
write
anything
in this
area)

- 1(a) "The cosmological proof presupposes the ontological, and therefore contains no more than what the latter contains, only under another name" Evaluate this position of Immanuel Kant. *critique of cosm. proof* (10 Marks)
- 1(b) "If God had the foreknowledge of all human actions, then why the all-powerful and the benevolent one is not preventing humans from involving in immoral deeds?" Analyse this question in context of debate between a theist and an atheist. *immortal soul* (10 Marks)
- 1(c) Discuss the necessity for the concept of immortality in the theological context. (10 Marks)
- 1(d) Analyse how the concept of liberation is understood in *Sankhya* philosophy. (10 Marks)
- 1(e) Make a comparative study of Wittgenstein's approach towards the nature of religious language in *Tractatus* and *Philosophical Investigations*. (10 Marks)
- 2(a) Discuss about the role of God in *Nyaya* philosophy. (10 Marks)
- 2(b) In the context of discussions regarding nature of religious language, distinguish between *sign* and *symbol* from the perspective of Paul Tillich. (10 Marks)
- 2(c) "Religious experiences are just like the subjective aesthetic experiences; one need not be too sceptic about them by applying reason. just explore them". Comment. (10 Marks)
- 2(d) Can one completely involve in religious activities by accepting God as a postulated psychological booster than as a concretely existing entity? (10 Marks)
- 2(e) How far the blasphemy laws in religions are analogous with the laws created by modern states, that too democratic ones, which curtail the freedom of speech and expression of individuals? (10 Marks)
- 3(a) Does the presence of various kinds of evils deny out the logical possibility of God and teleology in this world and establish that everything is governed by scientific and impersonal mechanisms? (20 Marks)
- 3(b) A staunch theist will be always considered as a moral individual in the religious context; but need not necessarily so from other perspectives. Analyse this statement. (15 Marks)



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- 3(c) Critically examine whether the creator God can be treated as **THE Absolute**.
(15 Marks)
- 4(a) "Truth is the basis of all religions. The proof of one religion is the proof of all, for each in its essence teaches the same goal – selflessness, love, renunciation, realization." Examine this view of Swami Vivekananda.
(20 Marks)
- 4(b) Critically examine Plato's arguments for establishing the immortality of soul.
(15 Marks)
- 4(c) Elucidate the major tenets of Deism in the context of philosophical discussions regarding God-World relationship.
(15 Marks)
- 5(a) Science can be antithetical to the notion of faith, but religion is not necessarily against reason, yet both of them can be the means for the progress of humanity. In this context, analyse how reason and faith needs to be reconciled to make the best out of religion and science.
(20 Marks)
- 5(b) Make a comparative study of the concept of liberation in *Advaita* and *Visistadvaita*. Which one is closer to the spirit of *Bhagavad Gita*?
(15 Marks)
- 5(c) How far can we treat Buddhism as a religion, given the fact that it is not in consonance with the definition of God centric religions?
(15 Marks)

(Don't
write
anything
in this
area)