



# basic education

Department:  
Basic Education  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

## **NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE**

**GRADE 12**

**RELIGION STUDIES P2**

**FEBRUARY/MARCH 2013**

**MEMORANDUM**

**MARKS: 150**

**This memorandum consists of 17 pages.**

**QUESTION 1****1.1 Promotion of peace between religions**

- All religious communities adopted the Constitution and all had to work according to it.
- The Constitution established South Africa as a secular state, with no state religion.
- It forbids discrimination on the basis of religious beliefs.
- Religious observance may be conducted at state institutions.
- In 1997 President Nelson called on religious communities to work together to build a free and just South Africa.
- There is generally harmony and freedom of association amongst the religions.
- Respect and tolerance for different rituals, practices, beliefs among the various religions is taking place.
- Freedom of expression encourages mutual communication between religions without fear.
- Freedom of opinion gives a platform to religions to pronounce on matters of state or social issues.
- As recognition of South Africa's progress towards religious tolerance the World Parliament of Religions was convened in Cape Town in 1999.

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**1.2 Steps to promote interreligious harmony**

- People of various faiths come together to help others, and also to debate issues of importance and to find common stand.
- Unity is seen across religions.
- Religious organisations offer services that are 'open', to set an example of accessibility to all.
- AIDS patients are cared for and supported often in prayer, by members representing different faiths.
- Representatives from South African religions and other followers march to Parliament to deliver memorandum on issues affecting the communities.
- Life Line was established to provide counselling those in need. Trainers commit their shifts to their 'Supreme Being'.
- Multi-faith services are organised where services are held to celebrate an aspect of human rights
- When Parliament is opened, various political and religious leaders 'commit' themselves to a 'Greater Deity'.
- Public holiday celebration e.g. a rally on Freedom Day might be addressed by an Imam, a Rabbi, a Guru and a Priest.
- Progress made in interfaith dialogue can be more productive for religious leaders to consider emotionally divisive issues, than for them to be debated in political contexts.

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**1.3 Factors that make interreligious dialogue difficult**

- Lack of co-operation amongst different religious groups.
- Some groups will not engage in interfaith dialogue, either because they believe such encounters are not permitted by their faith or because they hold severe prejudice towards other faith groups.

- Interfaith dialogue and other forms of religious peacemaking may open old wounds.
- Different religious groups are stuck in the history of religious conflict.(i.e. they cannot overcome past prejudices)
- Throughout history thousands of people have lost their lives because of their religious beliefs.
- When religion is used as a tool for political gain.
- Economic interests can manipulate dialogue among religions to gain control of scarce resources.
- Territorial conflict that uses religion to stir up emotions.
- Religious groups that separate themselves from matters/issues of the community.
- Incorporating religion into peacemaking efforts is sensitive, it is important to proceed carefully.

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## 1.4

**Two organisations that promote interreligious dialogue***The World's Parliament of Religions*

- Representatives came from all over the world, from both Western and Eastern religions.
- It's been held every five to six years in different cities.
- The 1993 Parliament issued a document called 'Towards a Global Ethic'.
- The 1999 Parliament in Cape Town had representation from nearly all of the world's religions.
- The organisation's focus is on religions commitment to addressing global challenges.
- E.g. war/religious conflict, drug trade, poverty, global warming, etc.
- Interreligious bodies more readily complete their commitments, because of their strong belief.

*The World Conference of Religions for Peace (WCPR)*

- It was formed in 1970.
- It was made up of leaders from all religions.
- Its common goal is peace.
- It believes that its inter-religious relationships are the best way to bring people of different races, classes and cultures together, for a common goal.
- Their focus areas are:
  - Conflict and reconciliation.
  - Children and families.
  - Disarmament and security
  - Human rights and responsibility.
  - Peace and education.
- They meet every five years.

*Inter Faith Action for Peace in Africa (IFAPA)*

- IFAPA focuses on support for Africa.
- Their efforts were mainly in Sudan.

- This interfaith coalition has the following aims:
  - Promote interfaith cooperation.
  - Create common space for religions to work together.
  - Bring about acceptance and mutual respect towards each other.
  - Recognise unity in diversity.

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**[50]****QUESTION 2****2.1 Role of religious TEACHING in ONE religion****2.1.1** *[Christianity is given as an example.]***The nature of divinity**

- Christians believe in the existence of a supreme and divine being known as God.
- God manifests Himself as three persons. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, known as the Holy Trinity.
- God the Father is regarded as creator of the universe.
- God the Son is regarded as saviour and liberator of humanity.
- God the Holy Spirit as counsellor of Christians and advocate for their cause.
- God the Father sent his Son, Jesus, into the world.
- After ascending into heaven, the Son sent the Holy Spirit.
- The Holy Spirit in turn sent the Church into the world to continue God's missionary work.

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**2.1.2 The nature of humanity**

- God created humanity according to the creation story in Genesis.
- The creation of humanity is seen as the climax of the manifestation of God's glory.
- Unlike the animals humans were formed in the likeness of God and were infused with the breath of God.
- Human beings therefore reflect the characteristics, the attributes and even the personality of God.
- Humans have intellect and free will, but animals have instincts and live in accordance with the laws and commands of nature, over which they have no control.
- God created Adam and Eve and placed them in the garden.
- They enjoyed the company of animals and God's regular visits to the garden.
- Following the model of the Holy Trinity of communication, humanity should have a relationship of mutual respect and love.
- Humans should be a community.
- Individuals have to look after one another and protect one another.
- No person should dominate or exploit any other.

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**2.1.3 The place and responsibility of human beings in the world**

- After creating Adam and Eve, God instructed them to look after the Garden of Eden and the whole of creation.
- God specifically instructed them to rule and have dominion over everything in the world.
- This did not mean they could exploit the world and abuse its natural resources.
- As co-creators with God, humans are God's representatives in the world.
- They are stewards of God's world.
- They are accountable to God for whatever they do with God's creation.
- The world is finite and exhaustible and what is in it can be used up if we overuse it and are reckless.
- The earth is the only known planet in the universe on which life exists.
- This means that environmental and ecological concerns are our responsibility.
- We have to do something about pollution and global warming for the sake of future generations.

**NOTE:** *Any other religion discussed by the candidate must be credited.*

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**2.2 Hermeneutics of interpreting normative sources**

- In Religion Studies hermeneutics means the interpretation of (sacred) texts.
- Hermeneutics involves looking at a spiritual text in its context and considering all these factors:
  - What type of writing is it?
  - When was it written?
  - Who wrote it?
  - Who was it written for?
  - What were the circumstances at the time it was written?
- We should all use the same principles when interpreting texts, no matter what our normative source is.
  - Grammar and historical context.
  - Clearest meaning.
  - Plan, purpose and context.
  - Meaning of words.
  - Figurative language.
  - Other sacred texts.
- Over time each religion has developed its own ways of interpreting and re-interpreting its normative sources.
- Two broad hermeneutical approaches occurring in all religions are the conservative and the progressive approaches.
  - Both conservative and progressive hermeneutics can be applied more strictly or more loosely.

- Generally the conservative style of interpretation insists on a strict adherence to the words of the normative source, no matter how old it is or how different the circumstances of the time in which it was written were to the circumstances of today.
- The progressive style of interpretation is generally just as serious about being loyal to the original normative source as the conservative approach is.
- However, it is also serious about the historical differences between the time of the source and the present, realises that simply repeating the old message of the source is not enough.
- In hermeneutics, the word 'text' does not only refer to something that is written down, it is also about interpreting oral texts.
- Sacred texts do not contain teachings that remain the same throughout time; this is because the way in which texts are understood or interpreted will always change.
- In the same way as cultures and societies change over time, so do interpretations of religious texts.
- Hermeneutical principles are not just about the text, they are also about the reader.
  - This is because, in hermeneutics, the role of the reader is to first place texts into their historical and cultural contexts.
  - Secondly, the reader interprets them in a way that their message is understood and has meaning in the present time and place.
  - So, through the act of interpretation, the reader has the power to change the meaning of the sacred text to suit the needs of a particular society and culture.

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### QUESTION 3

#### 3.1 Normative Sources in ONE religion

##### 3.1.1 Contemporary inspiration African Traditional Religion (ATR)

- The term 'contemporary inspiration' refers to inspiration that still takes place in our day.
- ATR does not have a founder.
- Immediate contact with the dimension beyond everyday life lies at the root of African Traditional Religion.
- When the first generation of humans died, they joined the Supreme Being in the spiritual world and become the first ancestors.
- People communicate with their ancestors, even today, and receive messages from them.
- Mediums and diviners specialise in communicating with the ancestors and spirits.
- Such mediums go through a process of 'death and rebirth' during their training
- In this process the personality is terminated and the medium or diviner receives a new personality, dedicated to the supernatural forces.

- Priests are also very important intermediaries between the divinity and human beings.
- This priestly function usually rests with the head of the family.
- Sometimes there is a prophetic role which rests upon a person who has been inspired or may feel possessed by such a power, usually mediums or diviners.
- We do not know the names of all the inspired figures, such as early African Traditional religious leaders.

### Middle Eastern Religions

- Inspiration is an extremely important normative source in many religions.
- It refers originally to the breath (power, knowledge) of an extraordinary being or power.
- It may be said to be the true origin of all religions.
- There are many religious figures who have inspired many generations of followers.
- Examples of figures who have inspired generations are Abraham, Moses, Jesus Christ, Muhammad and Baha'u'llah.
- All the above figures have felt that they have had special direct and immediate access to a dimension of being, understanding or power that is beyond everyday experience.
- The inspiration of these figures is accepted by their followers as having been direct and immediate, without other go-betweens such as books or other people.
- Instead, these figures are believed to have stood face-to-face with God, and have received their messages straight from God.
- In the Abrahamic faiths they believe that their prophets received divine inspiration which was written down as their holy scriptures.

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### 3.1.2 **Oral tradition**

#### African Traditional Religion ATR

- African religion is the indigenous religion of Africans; it has been handed down from generation to generation by the forefathers.
- Africans have made it theirs by living it and practising it.
- It is a religion that originated from the people's environment and on their soil.
- It is neither preached to them nor imported by them.
- Africans are not converted into it. Each person is born into it, lives it, practises it, and makes it their own.
- The original inspiration is often spread first by oral tradition, i.e. the original message is passed on from one person to another, and from generation to the next by word of mouth.

Middle Eastern religions

- The oral tradition, in passing on normative sources, has played a very important role in all major religions through the ages.
- In Middle Eastern religions, the original inspiration is often spread first by oral tradition.
- This means that the original message is passed on from one person to another and from one generation to the next, by word of mouth.
- In terms of the long history of humankind, writing is a fairly recent invention.
- Before that, religious traditions were carried by word of mouth only.
- Such traditions changed and developed and adapted over time, but this takes nothing away from the remarkable phenomenon of oral tradition as a normative source of prime importance throughout religious history.
- In Christianity the doctrine of the apostles came to them in oral form from Jesus.
- In one sense the entire Christian message is based on oral tradition and is only augmented by using the written revelation of the Old Testament.

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3.1.3 **Sacred texts**African Traditional Religion (ATR)

- African Traditional Religion has no sacred texts, religion is written in the minds and actions of the people.
- All its beliefs and teachings are passed down in two ways: through the spoken word or through ritual actions.
- In most African religions, morals, values and knowledge are communicated through the telling of stories known as proverbs.
- ATR focuses on ritual participation and observance rather than on text, as a sacred authority.
- It is based on a daily practical routine of showing respect to the elderly, siblings, nature and oneself.
- Practitioners of ATR know that one has to consult the clan regarding action she/he intends to take, rather than consult a 'book'.
- In ATR there are attempts to write down some basic beliefs of the religion.

Middle Eastern Religions

- Writing entered the religious scene roughly 4000 years ago.
- Writing has played a very important role in many religions.
- Middle Eastern religions have developed Sacred Text when writing began.
- Oral tradition can run parallel to written traditions.
- In religions of the Book (Judaism, Christianity and Islam), sacred texts play a key role in teachings.



- As Prophet Muhammad was illiterate, he shared the revelations orally with his followers, who wrote them down.
- The text containing the revelations is known as the Qur'an.
- This book is regarded as the supreme scripture of Islam.
- It is regarded as the word of God.
- The Qur'an cannot be separated from the language in which it was revealed (Arabic)
- Jews speak of a written and an oral law, both of which were received by Moses on Mount Sinai and transferred down the generations until the present day.
- The oral law, which explains the Torah, was only written down around 200 CE.
- The oral Torah was transmitted from one generation to the next until it was committed to writing in a work known as the *Mishnah*, meaning 'teaching'.
- The Christian Bible consists of the Old and the New Testaments.
- These scriptures were declared authoritative by their various faith communities through the ages to become the Christian Holy Scriptures.
- Different lists of books (we call such lists 'canons') originated from the scriptures.
- Every canon is authoritative and precious to the Christians of its own tradition, even though it may differ from the canon of another tradition.
- The term 'Bible' originates from a Greek word, which means 'book'.
- For Christians the Bible is a book of faith, therefore Christians call the Bible the word of God.

**[NOTE:** *An explanation of normative sources of any other religion must be credited.*]

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### 3.2 Hermeneutic interpretation of ONE text

**[NOTE:** *The learner must be credited for any interpretation which applies hermeneutical principles and supports the core teachings of the particular religion.*]

#### 3.2.1 Buddhism

- In this verse, the Buddha teaches that there is a solution to the problem of human suffering.
- The word 'way' in the first line suggests that to put an end to the 'craving' that causes humans to suffer is to follow a certain path.
- The Buddha outlines eight steps that will lead to freedom from 'craving'.
- The purpose is to get rid of desire, which goes with becoming completely unselfish.
- So 'right speech' means to speak in ways that do not enflame your desire and that encourage you to become less selfish.

- The eightfold Path should not be seen as similar to the Ten Commandments in Christianity.
- It is not just a list of rules to live by.
- It is a series of steps that follow on from each other.
- The eightfold Path is a spiritual journey.
- In any journey, you have to follow a certain path in order to get to where you want to be.

### 3.2.2 **Judaism**

- This extract shows that although God is sometimes described as having human qualities (anthropomorphic features), God is so different.
- In seeming contradiction to this, God is transcendental or totally 'other' (transcendentalism).
- He is actually beyond the understanding of humans.
- Anthropomorphic language is a way for humans to try and understand God but does not actually describe the nature of God.
- This is because God is unlike anything in the universe and therefore any human language or concept will never be able to describe God.
- He is a God with human qualities (thoughts).
- Even though human beings have their plans God has a final plan for man, as the creator.
- Man's thoughts are limited and operate at a certain level as compared to God's thoughts.
- God is in everything (immanentism): This is a relatively new feature and is followed particularly by mystics (believe that one can experience God through direct experience).
- God is the God of all creation (universalism).

### 3.2.3 **Christianity**

- Jesus' 'Sermon on the Mount' reflects a variety of ideas that influence Christians' understanding of their conduct in social and communal life.
- The sermon illustrates how the relationship between the children of God and their loving Father becomes an intimate loving relationship.
- Like the Ten Commandments, this sermon intends to structure and organise the relationship between God and his people.
- The 'blessings' form part of the introduction to the sermon.
- The blessing formula is a typical expression, which belongs to Biblical wisdom literature.
- It assumes the so called retribution principle where good deeds are blessed while wicked deeds are punished.
- Each blessing is a motivation to convince people about how to behave correctly in order to receive God's blessings.
- Like Moses receiving the law on Mount Sinai, Jesus goes up to the mountainside to teach his 'new law'.
- The mountain stresses the relationship between the mountain of Moses and the mountain that Jesus ascends here to teach.

- Jesus is portrayed as a rabbi or teacher of all the people; and not only his disciples.
- The retribution principle in the blessings spells out the basic belief of Jesus' followers, namely justice.
- Justice has two aspects: to have the right attitude before God and to do the right things.
- The right attitude is spelled out by the first blessing, to show dependence upon God.
- The 'poor in spirit' are those who know their place before God.

#### 3.2.4 **Hinduism**

- Release or liberation (Moksha) is the key message.
- The first paragraph of this extract teaches that everyone has a soul or 'Self' that lives in the body.
- The grip of pleasure and pain refers to the cycle of birth and rebirth.
- This cycle keeps the immortal soul trapped in the mortal body.
- According to Hindu belief, if the whole universe is made up of one 'Self' (Brahman), all humans must also have only one 'Self' or soul.
- The aim of every Hindu is to free the 'Self' from the cycle of rebirth so that it can become one with Brahman.
- The second paragraph explains what the true nature of the soul is by comparing it to natural elements.
- Just as wind and thunder do not have a physical form or 'body', neither does the soul.
- The true nature of the person's soul can only be experienced when it is released from the cycle of rebirth.
- Once the soul is no longer trapped in the body, it is free to become one with the 'highest light', which is Brahman.
- 'Deep serenity' in other words, true happiness, is experienced when a person has wisdom and understanding of Brahman.

#### 3.2.5 **Islam**

- This sura (verse) of the Qur'an teaches that Islam is completely monotheistic.
- Muslims believe that there is only one true God.
- This God is referred to as 'Allah'
- The word 'Allah' in Arabic has no plural, no gender and no diminutive.
- Words referring to God start with a capital letter. (One, Only etc).
- This shows that these qualities apply solely to God.
- 'Begetteth not, nor is He begotten' indicate that God was not created.
- It also means that He did not 'father' any being.
- God has always existed, and will continue to do so. (i.e. God is not limited by time and space).
- The last line teaches that nothing compares to God. (He is unique in His attributes)

**3.2.6 Baha'i**

- Baha'i teachings state that all religions are part of God's divine plan.
- In the first paragraph, Baha'u'llah teaches that the 'mighty systems' all come from God.
- God is the 'Source' of all religion.
- God sent many messengers throughout history.
- Each messenger preached according to the needs of his time. (varying requirements of the ages)
- This is the reason why religions have some differences.
- However, there are more common teachings across religions than there are differences.
- This is borne out by there being one 'tree'
- For the Baha'i, there is only one religion.
- All religions of the world are 'fruits' of the same tree.

**3.2.7 African Traditional Religion**

- This poem expresses deep love for the God Creator. (Qamata)
- Qamata is the supernatural power that created the universe and all in it.
- The Creator loves all of creation.
- This love extends even to sinners.
- It was Qamata's love that made all humans equal.
- However, humans started judging one another, each feeling superior to others.
- Some people feel that they have exclusive contact with the spiritual world, whereas Qamata is accessible to all.
- Qamata is omnipresent.
- Qamata is constant, as Qamata has spoken to both ancestors as well as all of humanity.
- Qamata cannot be comprehended by the human brain.
- However, humans make images of Qamata, without knowledge of the Being.
- They also conclude that Qamata is male, when there is no such claim by Qamata. Qamata is neither male nor female.
- Humans limit the qualities of Qamata to their own human attributes. This is an insult to the Creator.
- Religion is often used to oppress people, when in fact all humans are created equal.

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**QUESTION 4****4.1 Causes of the problem**

*[The social problem discussed is poverty].*

- People who are categorised as poor are unable to meet their family's basic needs for food, shelter, clothing and medical care.
- In South Africa the many people fall into this category.
- Women and children are particularly likely to be vulnerable to poverty.

- South Africa is one of the countries where there is unequal distribution of wealth.
  - This is partly caused by the legacy of apartheid.
  - These apartheid laws were overturned and, since 1994, the democratic government has put in place many new policies to try to undo the inequality created by apartheid.
  - It is easy for people to become trapped in a cycle of poverty.
  - If a family is poor, the children are likely to receive poor-quality education, which in turn leads to these children finding it difficult to get a good job.
  - Social and economic problems also manifest themselves in the following ways:
    - Teenage pregnancy.
    - The number of unemployed youth is increasing.
    - HIV and Aids is common among teenage mothers.
    - Poverty makes girls susceptible to abuse.
    - They are forced to abusive relationship.
    - Poverty weakens family structure and support, leaving young people vulnerable to negative influences.
    - Substance abuse (drugs and alcohol) is resorted to by most young people.
    - This causes a financial strain on the economy.
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#### 4.2 TWO religions' solution

*[Hinduism and Judaism are discussed as examples]*

##### Hinduism

- In Hinduism a person's suffering is usually blamed on karma as they are seen to be paying the price in this life for the evil deeds they committed in their previous life.
- Some Hindus sometimes use this argument as a reason for their indifference to the poor.
- In spite of this, Hindus do give charity throughout the year and also during the times of certain festivals.
- He who gives liberally goes straight to the gods; on the high ridge of heaven he stands exalted. (Rig Veda 1.125.5.)
- Let the rich man satisfy the one who seeks help. (Rig Veda 10.11)

##### Judaism

- In the Jewish faith charity is encouraged.
- In the Jewish homes there are collection boxes where adults and children are encouraged to deposit money before spending on themselves.
- And what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humble with your God? (Micah 6:8.)
- Blessed is he who considers the poor; the Lord delivers him in the day of trouble. (Psalms 41:2.)
- The poor person must be looked after according to the needs he or she was accustomed to having satisfied before becoming poor, including individual wants or lacks.

**[NOTE:** *Discussion of any other two religions will be credited. A maximum of 10 marks is allocated per religion]*

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**4.3 FIVE practical steps by religious organisations**

- The problem can be tackled at a national, provincial and local level.
- The National government can pass policies which address poverty.
- The government can work with different religious bodies to fight poverty.
- It can support poverty alleviation programs.
- It can allocate funds to train people to acquire skills that can make them to be self supporting or to be employable.
- The religious communities can also work with Non-Governmental Organisations to fight poverty.
- The faith communities can work with the business people to establish community projects to help the poor.

*[NOTE: Discussion of HIV and AIDS, or unemployment must be credited]*

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**QUESTION 5****5.1 Response of ONE religion to the theory of evolution**Christianity

- Many Christians resolve the conflict by suggesting that the Bible should be interpreted symbolically and not literally.
- They say there is no conflict between science and religion as long as one sees science to be uncovering the laws that God set in motion to create the universe.
- They reject the ideas that the world came into existence over billions of years, and that humans might have evolved from ape-like forms.
- They believe that there was a single great flood and that humanity had to restart after the flood.
- Whereas scientists believe there may have been localised floods but no great flood.
- Some Christians argue that certain aspects of creation are too complex to have happened by natural selection. Only God could have created these things.

Buddhism

- Buddhism and the theory of evolution are in agreement.
- It does not have an account of creation.
- Buddhists do not mind what scientists say about how the universe and people came into being.
- Buddhists believe that all life involves constant transformation and evolution.
- Buddhists believed in evolution long before western scientists did.
- Buddhists believe in the continuity of all living beings.
- They have no problem with the idea that human beings may have evolved from more primitive, ape-like forms.

Hinduism

- Hindus have no problem with evolution because they believe that the universe is based on evolution.
- Hindus believe that they have a more advanced theory of evolution than the scientific theory, which is limited because it only sees as far as the physical.

- Hindus believe that Hinduism provides a more comprehensive and 'truer' view of evolution because it includes the spiritual.
- Hindus believe that you have control over both spiritual and physical evolution, whereas scientists see evolution as a process that happens by chance.
- If you live a good life you will gradually evolve through many rebirths until you are physically and spiritually advanced.
- Ultimately you will achieve liberation from the physical and become one with God.

*[NOTE: Discussion on responses by any other religion to the theory of evolution must be credited.]*

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## 5.2 5.2.1 **Beliefs about creation**

### Christianity

- According to Christianity in the beginning there was nothing but chaos.
- The book of Genesis says God created the world and the universe in six days and rested on the seventh day.
- The world was perfect after the Holy Trinity had finished with the creation.
- Human, marine, animal and plant life all belong to God.

### Buddhism

- The world is just one of millions of worlds.
- In each of these worlds a Buddha will rediscover the true nature of beings
- Buddhism flourishes for thousands of years and then it slowly dies out.
- Another man will try to understand why people suffer and he becomes the next Buddha.
- Each cycle has a Buddha.

### Hinduism

- There are many different gods and goddess in the in the universe.
- These gods and goddess are the manifestations of the same divine power.
- Brahman is not a supreme being or a deity.
- Brahman or the 'World Soul' is the divine power that makes up the entire universe.
- Time is cyclical.
- This means that the universe did not have a sudden start or beginning nor it will have a sudden end.
- The universe is without beginning and without end, going through recurrent phases of manifestations and dissolution.

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## 5.2.2 **How human beings made their appearance**

### Christianity.

- According to scripture, man was created in God's own likeness.
- Human beings reflect the characteristics, the attributes and even the personality of God.

- In the Christian view no person should dominate or exploit any other.
- God created man and woman to be companions.
- The first humans were Adam and Eve, whom God had fashioned out of clay.
- They disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden, and were banished to Earth.
- Humans should be a community, serving God and living by His laws.
- Individuals should look and protect one another.
- Human beings are the highest form of God's creation.

### Buddhism

- Human beings are part of reality and have no special status.
- Human beings are blessed with immortal souls that set them apart from other creatures.
- They may be reborn as animals as a punishment.
- Humans sit in the middle of creation.
- Above them are gods and the animals are below human status.
- You have to be born as humans to attain nirvana.

### Hinduism

- Hinduism teaches that all human beings have immortal soul (atman).
- An immortal soul is trapped in the body by an ongoing cycle of birth, death and rebirth.
- Unlike the body, this soul never dies and can never change because it is the true nature of a person.
- The soul is part of the great divine power.
- The soul is separated from Brahman by the physical body and a person's ignorance of the truth that atman is one and the same as Brahman.

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**[NOTE: Discussion of any other religion must be credited. Any other relevant details must be credited.]**

5.3

5.3.1

### **Big bang theory**

- Currently, the most popular scientific theory of the universe is the so-called big bang theory.
- Before the big bang it was not known what existed.
- After the big bang the universe appeared and filled out to an enormous size.
- It appeared about 15 billion years ago.
- Small temperature differences in the initial explosion led to varying densities throughout the universe.
- These eventually formed into clusters throughout the universe.
- Huge spaces separated from these clusters.
- They formed vast collections of stars that we call galaxies.



- Some galaxies condensed into a combination of stars and planets called solar systems.
- Our earth is one of the solar systems.
- This is where the evolution of life takes place.
- Again the theory dispels the existence of a divine being.
- It only provides scientific (factual) explanation of the structure and composition of the universe.

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### 5.3.2 **Contradiction between religion and big bang theory**

#### No, there is no contradiction

##### *[Hinduism is used as an example]*

- To Hindus the universe is the creator.
- Hinduism does not contradict the big bang theory
- The Creator has existed and will exist for all time.
- The Creator has no limitations and therefore is not a 'he' or 'she' or anything else.
- The creator is simply the creator The Creator exists in either active or passive state.
- The passive state is a state of rest when nothing happens.
- After a very long time the creator becomes active. This is when parts of the universe look different from other parts, and creation begins.
- Humans are a product of creation.

#### Yes, there is a contradiction.

##### *[Middle Eastern Religions as an example]*

- The scriptures of the Middle Eastern Religions – Judaism, Christianity and Islam are said to be inspired by God or to be the direct word of God.
- They share a common view of creation.
- There is one omnipotent, omniscient, perfect creator.
- He created human beings as the centrepiece of creation.
- Creation took six days; it started by separating light from darkness.
- All matter was made from nothing
- There were only two humans to start with, who had been made from clay.
- Their names are given as Adam and Eve.

(10)

**[50]****TOTAL: 150**