

CSS 2026 · SOLVED PAPER

FEDERAL PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
Competitive Examination-2026 for
Recruitment to Posts in BS-17

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF MAJOR RELIGIONS (For Non-Muslims)

Complete Paper · Fully Solved · Bilingual (English & Urdu)

With Detailed CSS-Style Explanations

- ✓ All 20 MCQs (Part-I) with full explanations
- ✓ All 8 Essay Questions of Part-II answered in full
- ✓ Original English and Urdu text preserved as in the official paper
- ✓ Ideal for CSS / PMS aspirants & revision

About This Solved Paper

Exam	Competitive Examination-2026 for Recruitment to Posts in BS-17 under the Federal Government
Paper	Comparative Study of Major Religions (For Non-Muslims)
Time Allowed	Three Hours
Part-I (MCQs)	Maximum 30 Minutes · Maximum Marks: 20 · 20 Compulsory MCQs
Part-II	Maximum Marks: 80 · Attempt ONLY FOUR of the eight questions (all carry equal marks) — all eight are solved here for complete preparation

Note: As per FPSC instructions, candidates must attempt **only FOUR** questions from Part-II in the actual examination. For the benefit of complete preparation and revision, this solved edition provides model answers to **all eight** Part-II questions, plus short notes on all three topics listed in Q.No.8, along with the full Part-I answer key and explanations.

How to use this booklet: Each MCQ is reproduced exactly as in the original paper (English and Urdu), followed by the correct option and a detailed explanation written in the analytical style expected in the CSS examination. Each Part-II question is followed by a structured, exam-oriented model answer.

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PART-I — Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) · Compulsory · 20 Marks

Quick Answer Key — Part-I (MCQs)

1. B

2. B

3. D

4. B

5. A

6. A

7. C

8. B

9. A

10. C

11. C

12. B

13. A

14. B

15. C

16. A

17. B

18. B

19. B

20. A

Q.1

Which of the following scholars is most widely recognized as playing a foundational role in establishing the scientific and comparative study of religion in the 19th century?

مندرجہ ذیل میں سے کون سے عالم کو انیسویں صدی میں مذہب کے سائنسی اور تقابلی مطالعے کے قیام میں بنیادی کردار ادا کرنے والا تسلیم کیا جاتا ہے؟

(A) Friedrich
Schleiermacher

(A) فریڈرک شلائر ماخر

(B) Max Müller ✓

(B) میکس مولر

(C) Émile Durkheim

(C) ایمیل دورکھیم

(D) None of these

(D) ان میں سے کوئی نہیں

Correct Answer: (B) Max Müller

Explanation

Max Müller (1823–1900), a German-born philologist who worked mainly in Britain, is widely regarded as the founder of the comparative and scientific study of religion. His famous dictum, "He who knows one, knows none," captured his conviction that religions must be studied comparatively rather than in isolation. His editorship of the fifty-volume "Sacred Books of the East" series made primary religious texts of Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Confucianism, and Islam available to Western scholarship for the first time, laying the philological and comparative foundation for what later became Religious Studies as an academic discipline. Schleiermacher (option A) is important for theology and the notion of religious "feeling," but he worked within Christian theology rather than founding comparative religion. Durkheim (option C) came later and approached religion sociologically, focusing on its social function rather than comparative textual study.

Which feature is understood as a central characteristic of Brahmanism in early Indian religious tradition?

ابتدائی بھارتی مذہبی روایت میں برہمن ازم کی کون سی خصوصیت ایک مرکزی پہلو کے طور پر سمجھی جاتی ہے؟

(A) Exclusive rejection of the Vedas as a source of authority

(A) ویدوں کو اقتدار کے منبع کے طور پر یکسر رد کرنا

(B) Emphasis on ritual sacrifice (yajña) supervised by Brahmin priests ✓

(B) برہمن پجاریوں کی نگرانی میں رسمی قربانی پر زور دینا

(C) Complete denial of the role of priesthood in religious life

(C) مذہبی زندگی میں پجاری طبقے کے کردار کو مکمل طور پر انکار کرنا

(D) None of these

(D) ان میں سے کوئی نہیں

Correct Answer: (B) Emphasis on ritual sacrifice (yajña) supervised by Brahmin priests

Explanation

Brahmanism, the religious system of the Vedic and post-Vedic period that later evolved into classical Hinduism, was centred on elaborate ritual sacrifice (yajña) performed strictly according to Vedic prescription and conducted only by qualified Brahmin priests. The Vedas were treated as revealed (shruti) and supremely authoritative, and correct performance of sacrificial ritual was believed to sustain cosmic order (rita) and secure the favour of the gods. Far from rejecting Vedic authority or denying the priesthood, Brahmanism placed the Brahmin priestly class at the very apex of the social and ritual order, which is precisely why it later drew criticism from reform and renunciant movements such as Buddhism and Jainism.

Q.3

Which Hindu god is traditionally associated with the preservation of the universe within the classical Trimurti?

کلاسیکی ترمورتی (Trimurti) میں کون سا ہندو دیوتا روایتی طور پر کائنات کے تحفظ سے منسلک سمجھا جاتا ہے؟

(A) Brahma

(A) برہما

(B) Shiva

(B) شیو

(C) Krishna

(C) کرشنا

(D) None of these ✓

(D) ان میں سے کوئی نہیں

Correct Answer: (D) None of these

Explanation

The classical Hindu Trimurti ("three forms") consists of Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver, and Shiva the Destroyer/Transformer. Preservation of the universe is the specific function of Vishnu — none of the three names offered in options (A)–(C) is Vishnu. Brahma is the creator, not the preserver, so option A is incorrect; Shiva is the destroyer/regenerator, not the preserver, so option B is incorrect; and Krishna, though revered as an avatar (incarnation) of Vishnu, is not himself one of the three deities that make up the Trimurti — the Trimurti is a triad of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, not their avatars. Since the deity actually responsible for preservation (Vishnu) does not appear among the given choices, the correct response is (D) None of these. This is a good example of why CSS candidates must read MCQs on comparative religion very literally: a plausible-looking option (Krishna, being linked to Vishnu) can still be technically wrong.

According to the classical understanding of Karma Marga, which principle is essential for ensuring that action does not create binding karma?

کرما مارگ (Marga Karma) کی کلاسیکی تفہیم کے مطابق کون سا اصول اس بات کو یقینی بنانے کے لیے ضروری ہے کہ اعمال بندھن پیدا کرنے والا کرما پیدا نہ کریں؟

(A) Performing rituals only during specific lunar phases

(A) صرف مخصوص قمری مراحل میں رسومات انجام دینا

(B) Acting without personal desire for the fruits of one's actions ✓

(B) اپنے اعمال کے پھل کی ذاتی خواہش کے بغیر عمل کرنا

(C) Renouncing all forms of physical work

(C) ہر قسم کے جسمانی کام کو ترک کرنا

(D) None of these

(D) ان میں سے کوئی نہیں

Correct Answer: (B) Acting without personal desire for the fruits of one's actions

Explanation

Karma Marga, the "path of action," is one of the three classical Hindu paths to liberation (moksha) alongside Jnana Marga (path of knowledge) and Bhakti Marga (path of devotion). Its central teaching, articulated most famously in the Bhagavad Gita, is the doctrine of nishkama karma — action performed without attachment to, or personal desire for, its fruits ("karmanye vadhikaraste, ma phaleshu kadachana"). When action is performed selflessly, as duty (dharma) and without craving results, it does not generate the binding karmic residue that ties the soul to the cycle of rebirth (samsara). This is distinct from renouncing action altogether (option C), which the Gita explicitly discourages; Karma Marga is a path of engaged, selfless action in the world, not withdrawal from it.

Q.5

One major source of tension between Brahmanism and early Buddhism was:

برہمن ازم اور ابتدائی بدھ مت کے درمیان ایک بڑی کشمکش کا سبب کیا تھا؟

(A) The rejection of Vedic authority and caste hierarchy by Buddhism ✓

(A) بدھ مت کی طرف سے ویدک اقتدار اور ذات پات کی درجہ بندی کو رد کرنا

(B) Buddhism's insistence on performing elaborate Vedic sacrifices

(B) بدھ مت کا مفصل ویدک قربانیوں کے انعقاد پر اصرار

(C) Brahmanism's focus on meditation and renunciation, which contradicted Buddhist rituals

(C) برہمن ازم کا مراقبہ اور زہد پر زور دینا، جو بدھ مت کی رسومات سے متصادم تھا

(D) None of these

(D) ان میں سے کوئی نہیں

Correct Answer: (A) The rejection of Vedic authority and caste hierarchy by Buddhism

Explanation

Early Buddhism arose in the sixth century BCE partly as a reform (shramana) movement against Brahmanical orthodoxy. The Buddha rejected the ultimate authority of the Vedas, denied that elaborate priest-conducted sacrifices could secure liberation, and rejected the rigid varna (caste) hierarchy that placed Brahmins at the top by birth. Instead, the Buddhist sangha admitted members regardless of caste and taught that spiritual progress depended on ethical conduct and insight rather than ritual purity or birth. Options B and C

reverse the actual historical relationship — it was Brahmanism, not Buddhism, that emphasised Vedic sacrifice, while renunciation and meditation were hallmarks of the Buddhist (and broader shramana) response to it.

Q.6

Which of the following is true about the early life of Gautama Buddha?

گوتم بدھ کی ابتدائی زندگی کے بارے میں درج ذیل میں سے کون سا بیان درست ہے؟

(A) He was born into a warrior caste family in Kapilavastu. ✓

(A) وہ کپیل واستو میں ایک جنگجو ذات کے خاندان میں پیدا ہوئے۔

(B) He spent his early life as a wandering ascetic without any royal upbringing.

(B) انہوں نے اپنی ابتدائی زندگی ایک بے ٹکٹا ہوا زاہد بن کر گزاری، بغیر کسی شاہی پرورش کے۔

(C) He was born in Varanasi and immediately renounced worldly life.

(C) وہ وارانسی میں پیدا ہوئے اور فوراً دنیوی زندگی ترک کر دی۔

(D) None of these

(D) ان میں سے کوئی نہیں

Correct Answer: (A) He was born into a warrior caste family in Kapilavastu.

Explanation

Siddhartha Gautama was born around 563 BCE in Lumbini near Kapilavastu, into the Shakya clan, a Kshatriya (warrior/ruling) caste family; his father Suddhodana was the chief of the Shakya republic. He was raised amid royal comfort, married Yashodhara, and had a son, Rahula, before renouncing palace life at about age twenty-nine after witnessing the "Four Sights" (an old man, a sick man, a corpse, and an ascetic). Option B is incorrect because his early life was marked precisely by royal upbringing, not wandering asceticism; asceticism came only after the Great Renunciation. Option C is incorrect because he was born in Lumbini/Kapilavastu, not Varanasi, and did not renounce the world "immediately" at birth.

Q.7

Which statement best captures the essence of the Four Noble Truths?

چار نوبل سچائیوں (Truths Noble Four) کا جوہر سب سے بہتر کس بیان میں بیان کیا گیا ہے؟

(A) Life is inherently pleasurable and free from moral responsibility

(A) زندگی بذاتِ خود خوشگوار ہے اور اس میں اخلاقی ذمہ داری نہیں ہے

(B) Only external rituals and sacrifices can remove suffering

(B) صرف بیرونی رسومات اور قربانیاں دکھ کو دور کر سکتی ہیں

(C) Suffering is a fundamental aspect of existence, and ethical living and mindfulness can overcome it ✓

(C) دکھ وجود کا ایک بنیادی پہلو ہے، اور اخلاقی زندگی اور ذہنی ہوشیاری کے ذریعے اسے دور کیا جا سکتا ہے

(D) None of these

(D) ان میں سے کوئی نہیں

Correct Answer: (C) Suffering is a fundamental aspect of existence, and ethical living and mindfulness can overcome it

Explanation

The Four Noble Truths (Chattari Ariyasaccani) are the doctrinal core of the Buddha's first sermon at Sarnath: (1) life is characterised by dukkha (suffering/unsatisfactoriness); (2) suffering arises from tanha (craving/attachment); (3) the cessation of suffering (nirvana) is possible; and (4) the Noble Eightfold Path — comprising right view, intention, speech, action, livelihood, effort, mindfulness and concentration — is the way to end suffering. This teaching neither denies moral responsibility (option A)

nor relies on external ritual (option B); rather, it locates the cause of suffering in the mind and its remedy in ethical conduct (sila), mental discipline (samadhi), and wisdom (panna), making option C the accurate summary.

Q.8

Which ritual is central to the celebration of Pesach?

عید فصح (Pesach) کی تقریب میں کون سی رسم مرکزی حیثیت رکھتی ہے؟

(A) Lighting the menorah for eight nights

(A) آٹھ راتوں تک شمع دان (Menorah) روشن کرنا

(B) Holding a Seder meal with symbolic foods and recounting the Exodus story ✓

(B) علامتی کھانوں کے ساتھ سیدر (Seder) کی دعوت منعقد کرنا اور خروج کی کہانی سنانا

(C) Fasting for 25 hours without food or drink

(C) ۲۵ گھنٹے تک بغیر خوراک یا پانی کے روزہ رکھنا

(D) None of these

(D) ان میں سے کوئی نہیں

Correct Answer: (B) Holding a Seder meal with symbolic foods and recounting the Exodus story

Explanation

Pesach (Passover) commemorates the Exodus — the liberation of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. Its central ritual is the Seder, a structured ceremonial meal held on the first night(s) of the festival, during which the Haggadah is read aloud, retelling the story of the Exodus, and symbolic foods are eaten from the Seder plate: matzah (unleavened bread, recalling the haste of departure), maror (bitter herbs, recalling the bitterness of slavery), charoset, karpas, and a roasted shank bone. Lighting the menorah for eight nights (option A) is the ritual of Hanukkah, not Pesach, while a 25-hour fast without food or drink (option C) describes Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.

Q.9

Which principle underlies the observance of Sabbath in Judaism according to classical Jewish law?

کلاسیکی یہودی قانون کے مطابق سبت (Sabbath) کی پابندی کی بنیاد
کون سا اصول ہے؟

(A) Observing a day of rest to imitate God's cessation of creation and sanctify time ✓

(A) خدا کی تخلیق کے اختتام کی تقلید کرنے اور وقت کو مقدس بنانے کے لیے آرام کا دن منانا

(B) Refraining from work as an expression of human freedom from divine authority

(B) خدا کے اختیار سے انسانی آزادی کے اظہار کے طور پر کام سے اجتناب

(C) Fasting and performing exclusively sacrificial rituals to earn divine favor

(C) صرف روزہ اور قربانی کی رسومات انجام دے کر الہی رضا حاصل کرنا

(D) None of these

(D) ان میں سے کوئی نہیں

Correct Answer: (A) Observing a day of rest to imitate God's cessation of creation and sanctify time

Explanation

The Sabbath (Shabbat) is rooted in the Genesis creation narrative, in which God rests on the seventh day after six days of creation (Genesis 2:2-3), and in the Fourth Commandment (Exodus 20:8-11), which commands Israel to "remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy" precisely because God rested on that day. Classical halakhah (Jewish law) therefore frames Sabbath observance — abstention from thirty-nine categories of creative labour (melakhah) — as an act of imitatio Dei (imitating God) that sanctifies time itself, not as an

assertion of freedom from divine authority (option B, which inverts the theology) nor as a fast or sacrificial rite (option C, which describes Yom Kippur-type observance, not Shabbat, which is in fact meant to be joyous and includes festive meals).

Q.10

Which of the following best describes the main focus of Kabbalah in Jewish tradition?

مندرجہ ذیل میں سے کون سا بیان یہودی روایت میں کبالہ (Kabbalah) کے بنیادی مرکز کی بہترین وضاحت کرتا ہے؟

(A) Strict legal interpretations of the Torah and Halakhic rulings

(A) تورات کی سخت قانونی تعبیرات اور ہلاخائی احکام

(B) Political and social organization of Jewish communities in medieval Europe

(B) وسطی دور کے یورپ میں یہودی برادریوں کی سیاسی اور سماجی تنظیم

(C) Mystical exploration of God, creation, and the hidden aspects of the universe ✓

(C) خدا، کائنات اور کائنات کے پوشیدہ پہلوؤں کی صوفیانہ تحقیق

(D) None of these

(D) ان میں سے کوئی نہیں

Correct Answer: (C) Mystical exploration of God, creation, and the hidden aspects of the universe

Explanation

Kabbalah is the esoteric-mystical tradition of Judaism, concerned with the hidden (nistar) dimensions of God's nature, the process of creation, and the structure of the cosmos. Central concepts include the Ein Sof (the infinite, unknowable aspect of God), the ten Sefirot (divine emanations through which God interacts with creation), and practices of contemplative and mystical ascent aimed at experiencing divine unity. This is fundamentally different from Halakhic legal exegesis (option A, the domain of Talmudic and rabbinic law) and from the socio-political organisation of Jewish communities (option B), which belongs to social history rather than mystical theology.

Q.11

What is the primary purpose of Advent in the Christian liturgical calendar?

عیسائی مذہبی کیلنڈر میں ایڈوینٹ (Advent) کا بنیادی مقصد کیا ہے؟

(A) To commemorate the resurrection of Jesus Christ

(A) حضرت عیسیٰ کی دوبارہ آمد کی یاد منانا

(B) To mark the beginning of the Easter season

(B) ایسٹر کے موسم کے آغاز کی علامت

(C) To prepare spiritually for the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ at Christmas ✓

(C) کرسمس پر حضرت عیسیٰ کی ولادت کی خوشی کے لیے روحانی تیاری کرنا

(D) None of these

(D) ان میں سے کوئی نہیں

Correct Answer: (C) To prepare spiritually for the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ at Christmas

Explanation

Advent (from Latin *adventus*, "coming") is the four-week liturgical season in Western Christianity that precedes Christmas, beginning on the Sunday nearest 30 November. It is a season of spiritual preparation, penitence, and hopeful anticipation for the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus Christ on 25 December, and secondarily anticipates the future "second coming" of Christ, but its immediate liturgical purpose is preparatory, not celebratory of the resurrection (which is Easter, option A/B) nor the start of the Easter season (Easter has its own preparatory season, Lent).

Who are the Anglicans?

اینگلیکنز (Anglicans) کون ہیں؟

(A) Followers of the Orthodox Church in Eastern Europe

(A) مشرقی یورپ میں آرتھوڈوکس کلیسا کے پیروکار

(B) Members of the Church of England and churches in communion with it worldwide ✓

(B) چرچ آف انگلینڈ کے اراکین اور دنیا بھر میں اس کے ساتھ وابستہ کلیسائیں

(C) Members of the Roman Catholic Church in England only

(C) صرف انگلینڈ میں رومن کیتھولک چرچ کے اراکین

(D) None of these

(D) ان میں سے کوئی نہیں

Correct Answer: (B) Members of the Church of England and churches in communion with it worldwide

Explanation

Anglicans are members of the Church of England and of the wider Anglican Communion, the family of national and regional churches around the world that trace their origin to the Church of England and remain in

communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Anglican tradition emerged from the English Reformation in the sixteenth century (notably under Henry VIII and later consolidated under Elizabeth I) and represents a distinct via media between Roman Catholicism and continental Protestantism. It is therefore neither Eastern Orthodox (option A) nor confined to, or part of, the Roman Catholic Church (option C) — the English Reformation was precisely a break from Roman authority.

Q.13

Why do Shariah rulings vary despite being based on the same Qur'an and Hadith?

اگرچہ شریعت کے احکام ایک ہی قرآن اور حدیث پر مبنی ہیں، اس کے باوجود ان میں فرق کیوں پایا جاتا ہے؟

(A) Because jurists apply ijtiḥad, adapt to contexts, and prioritize principles differently across madhāhib ✓

(A) کیونکہ فقہاء اجتہاد کرتے ہیں، مقامی سیاق و سباق کے مطابق تطبیق کرتے ہیں، اور مختلف مذاہب میں اصولوں کو مختلف ترجیح دیتے ہیں

(B) Because the texts themselves are different

(B) کیونکہ متون خود مختلف ہیں

(C) Because differences are only symbolic with no practical impact

(C) کیونکہ اختلافات صرف علامتی ہیں اور عملی اثر نہیں رکھتے

(D) None of these

(D) ان میں سے کوئی نہیں

Correct Answer: (A) Because jurists apply ijtiḥad, adapt to contexts, and prioritize principles differently across madhahib

Explanation

The four major Sunni schools of law (madhahib) — Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali — along with Shi'a jurisprudential traditions such as Ja'fari fiqh, all draw upon the same foundational sources: the Qur'an and the Hadith. Variation among them arises from differences in methodology (usul al-fiqh): the relative weight given to analogical reasoning (qiyas), juristic preference (istihsan), local custom ('urf), consensus (ijma'), and the scholarly exercise of independent legal reasoning (ijtiḥad) by qualified jurists responding to different social and historical contexts. The texts themselves are not different (ruling out option B), and the resulting differences carry real practical consequences for worship, family law, and commercial dealings, not merely symbolic ones (ruling out option C).

Why does the Qur'an stress belief in previous holy scriptures?

قرآن کیوں سابقہ مقدس صحائف پر ایمان لانے پر زور دیتا ہے؟

(A) Because Muslims must follow all previous laws

(A) کیونکہ مسلمانوں کو تمام سابقہ قوانین پر عمل کرنا ضروری ہے

(B) Because recognizing earlier revelations affirms continuity of God's message, validates Prophethood...

(B) کیونکہ سابقہ وحیوں کو تسلیم کرنے سے خدا کے پیغام کی تسلسل کی توثیق ہوتی ہے اور نبوت کی صداقت ثابت ہوتی ہے

✓

(C) Because only historical knowledge is emphasized, not faith

(C) کیونکہ صرف تاریخی علم پر زور دیا جاتا ہے، ایمان پر نہیں

(D) None of these

(D) ان میں سے کوئی نہیں

Correct Answer: (B) Because recognizing earlier revelations affirms continuity of God's message, validates Prophethood...

Explanation

The Qur'an repeatedly instructs believers to affirm faith in the earlier scriptures — the Suhuf of Ibrahim, the Tawrat (Torah) given to Musa, the Zabur (Psalms) given to Dawud, and the Injil (Gospel) given to Isa — as part of the sixth article of Iman (belief in the books of God). This affirmation serves a doctrinal purpose: it establishes that all the prophets, from Adam to Muhammad (peace be upon them), delivered a single, continuous message of Tawhid (the oneness of God), and that Muhammad's prophethood is the culmination and confirmation of that same prophetic chain rather than an entirely new or unrelated religion. It does not mean Muslims are bound to follow the specific legal codes (Shari'ah) of earlier communities, which have been abrogated/completed by the final revelation (ruling out option A), and it is a matter of faith ('aqidah), not mere historical curiosity (ruling out option C).

Which broad intellectual development is most widely accepted as creating the conceptual conditions for treating religion as an object of neutral, scholarly investigation rather than as a domain of exclusively revealed truth?

وہ کون سی وسیع فکری پیش رفت ہے جسے عام طور پر اس امر کا بنیادی محرک قرار دیا جاتا ہے کہ مذہب کو محض وحی پر مبنی حقائق کا میدان سمجھنے کے بجائے ایک غیر جانب دار اور علمی تحقیق کے موضوع کے طور پر مطالعے کے قابل تصور کیا جانے لگا؟

(A) The Protestant

Reformation's emphasis on individual access to scripture

(A) مذہب میں فرد کی براہ راست متنی رسائی پر زور دینے والی پروٹسٹنٹ اصلاح

(B) The rise of early modern nation-states and their administrative bureaucracies

(B) ابتدائی جدید قومی ریاستوں اور ان کے انتظامی ڈھانچوں کا ظہور

(C) The Enlightenment reorientation toward human reason, cross-cultural comparison, and the view that religious beliefs could be examined like other human phenomena ✓

(C) عصرِ تنویر میں انسانی عقل، بین الثقافتی تقابل اور مذہبی عقائد کو دیگر انسانی مظاہر کی طرح قابل تحقیق تصور کرنے کی فکری تبدیلی

(D) None of these

(D) ان میں سے کوئی نہیں

Correct Answer: (C) The Enlightenment reorientation toward human reason, cross-cultural comparison, and the view that religious beliefs could be examined like other human phenomena

Explanation

The Enlightenment (17th–18th centuries) is widely credited as the pivotal intellectual shift that made a neutral, comparative, scholarly study of religion possible. Enlightenment thinkers championed human reason and empirical inquiry over unquestioned revealed authority, encouraged cross-cultural comparison as European exploration and colonial contact exposed scholars to non-Christian religious traditions, and promoted the idea that religious phenomena — myths, rituals, institutions — could be studied as natural human phenomena subject to historical and rational analysis, rather than accepted only as revealed truth. This created the epistemological

space in which comparative religion and later Religious Studies as an academic discipline (distinct from confessional theology) could emerge in the 19th century. The Reformation (option A) primarily reshaped Christian doctrine and biblical access within Christianity itself, and the rise of nation-states (option B) is a political rather than epistemological development.

Q.16

Which of the following best defines the Tripitaka in Buddhism?

مندرجہ ذیل میں سے 'تری پٹاکا' (Tripitaka) کی بہترین تعریف کون سی ہے؟

(A) The threefold collection of Buddha's teachings, monastic rules, and philosophical analyses ✓

(A) بدھ کی تعلیمات، خانقاہی قواعد اور فلسفیانہ مباحث پر مشتمل تین حصوں کا مجموعہ

(B) A philosophical treatise written by later Buddhist kings

(B) بدھ مت کے بعد کے بادشاہوں کی تحریر کردہ ایک فلسفیانہ تصنیف

(C) A devotional hymn book used in Mahayana rituals

(C) مہایان رسومات میں استعمال ہونے والی ایک عقیدتی حمد کی کتاب

Correct Answer: (A) The threefold collection of Buddha's teachings, monastic rules, and philosophical analyses

Explanation

The Tripitaka (Pali: Tipitaka), literally the "Three Baskets," is the canonical scripture of Buddhism, especially authoritative in the Theravada tradition. It comprises three collections: the Vinaya Pitaka (rules of monastic discipline for monks and nuns), the Sutta Pitaka (discourses and sermons attributed to the Buddha), and the Abhidhamma Pitaka (systematic philosophical and psychological analysis of Buddhist doctrine). It was compiled from oral tradition through a series of Buddhist councils and eventually committed to writing (notably in Pali in Sri Lanka around the 1st century BCE). It is not the work of later kings (option B) nor a devotional hymnal (option C, which would be closer to something like the Mahayana sutras used liturgically, but that is not what defines the Tripitaka).

Which event is considered pivotal in prompting Buddha to leave his palace life?

کون سا واقعہ گوتم بدھ کو محل کی زندگی ترک کرنے پر مجبور کرنے والا اہم لمحہ سمجھا جاتا ہے؟

(A) The study of Vedic scriptures under Brahmin teachers

(A) برہمن اساتذہ کے زیرِ تعلیم ویدک صحائف کا مطالعہ

(B) Witnessing old age, sickness, and death outside the palace ✓

(B) محل کے باہر بڑھاپا، بیماری اور موت کا مشاہدہ

(C) Being crowned king of Kapilavastu

(C) کپیل واستو کا بادشاہ بننا

(D) None of these

(D) ان میں سے کوئی نہیں

Correct Answer: (B) Witnessing old age, sickness, and death outside the palace

Explanation

According to traditional Buddhist biography, Prince Siddhartha had been shielded within the palace from the harsher realities of life. On successive chariot rides outside the palace walls, he encountered what are known as the "Four Sights": an old man, a sick man, a

corpse, and finally a wandering ascetic who had found peace despite these realities. The first three sights confronted him with the universality of suffering, old age, and death (impermanence), while the fourth suggested that renunciation offered a path beyond it. This experience directly precipitated his "Great Renunciation" — leaving his palace, wife, and infant son to seek liberation from suffering. He was never in fact crowned king (option C, since he renounced the throne before succeeding his father), and while he later engaged with various teachers, Vedic study under Brahmins (option A) was not the pivotal trigger for his departure.

Q.18

What is the primary focus of the Four Noble Truths in Buddhism?

بدھ مت میں چار نوبل سچائیوں (Truths Noble Four) کا بنیادی مرکز کیا ہے؟

(A) Establishing social hierarchy and caste duties

(A) سماجی درجہ بندی اور ذات کے فرائض قائم کرنا

(B) Understanding the nature of suffering, its cause, cessation, and the path to liberation ✓

(B) دکھ کی نوعیت، اس کی وجوہات، اس کا خاتمہ اور نجات کے راستے کو سمجھنا

(C) Prescribing ritual sacrifices to achieve spiritual merit

(C) روحانی نیکی حاصل کرنے کے لیے رسمی قربانیاں تجویز کرنا

(D) None of these

(D) ان میں سے کوئی نہیں

Correct Answer: (B) Understanding the nature of suffering, its cause, cessation, and the path to liberation

Explanation

As already outlined in Q.7, the Four Noble Truths (dukkha, samudaya, nirodha, magga) together provide a diagnostic and therapeutic framework for the human condition: they identify the existence and universality of suffering, trace it to a specific cause (craving/attachment rooted in ignorance), affirm that its cessation is achievable, and lay out the Noble Eightfold Path as the practical means to that end. This soteriological, almost clinical structure — problem, cause, cure, and treatment plan — is the doctrinal heart of Buddhism, and has nothing to do with prescribing caste duties (a Hindu/Brahmanical, not Buddhist,

concern, and one the Buddha explicitly rejected) or with ritual sacrifice, which the Buddha considered ineffective for liberation.

Q.19

Which of the following best describes the significance of Pesach (Passover) in Judaism?

ذیل میں سے کون سا بیان یہودیت میں عید فصح (پاس اوور) کی اہمیت کی سب سے مناسب وضاحت کرتا ہے؟

(A) It commemorates the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai

(A) یہ طور سینا پر تورات کے عطا کیے جانے کی یادگار ہے۔

(B) It celebrates the liberation of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt ✓

(B) یہ بنی اسرائیل کی مصر کی غلامی سے نجات کا جشن ہے۔

(C) It marks the beginning of the Jewish New Year

(C) یہ یہودی سال نو کے آغاز کی علامت ہے۔

(D) None of these

(D) ان میں سے کوئی نہیں۔

Correct Answer: (B) It celebrates the liberation of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt

Explanation

Pesach/Passover commemorates the Exodus narrative recorded in the Book of Exodus: the liberation of the Israelites from centuries of slavery under Pharaoh in Egypt, marked by the ten plagues and the final "passing over" of Israelite homes marked with lamb's blood during the final plague (the death of the firstborn), followed by the hurried departure from Egypt. This is distinct from Shavuot, which commemorates the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai (ruling out option A), and from Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year (ruling out option C). Passover is therefore fundamentally a festival of liberation and national memory.

Q.20

Which text is most closely associated with the teachings of Kabbalah?

مندرجہ ذیل میں سے کون سا متن تعلیماتِ کبالہ (Kabbalah) کے ساتھ سب سے قریبی طور پر وابستہ ہے؟

(A) Zohar ✓

(A) زوہر

(B) Talmud

(B) تلمود

(C) Mishnah

(C) مشنا

Correct Answer: **(A) Zohar**

Explanation

The Zohar ("Book of Splendour"), traditionally attributed to the 2nd-century sage Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai but generally dated by scholars to 13th-century Spain (associated with Moses de León), is the foundational and most authoritative text of Kabbalistic mysticism. It offers a mystical commentary on the Torah, elaborating concepts such as the Sefirot and the hidden, esoteric structure of divine reality. The Talmud (option B) and Mishnah (option C) are, by contrast, the central texts of rabbinic legal (Halakhic) tradition, recording legal debate and interpretation rather than mystical theology, so while foundational to Judaism generally, they are not the texts most closely identified with Kabbalah specifically.

PART-II — Detailed Questions · 80 Marks (Attempt any FOUR in the actual exam)

Q.No. 2 (20 Marks)

How did the intellectual shifts of the Enlightenment and the rise of modern scientific inquiry contribute to the emergence of the study of religion as an independent academic discipline? Critically analyze the key factors that separated it from theology.

عصرِ تنویر (Enlightenment) کے فکری رجحانات اور جدید سائنسی تحقیق کے عروج نے مذہب کے مطالعے کو ایک آزاد علمی مضمون کے طور پر ابھرنے میں کس طرح کردار ادا کیا؟ اسے الٰہیات (Theology) سے جدا کرنے والے کلیدی عوامل کا تنقیدی جائزہ پیش کریں۔

Introduction

The academic Study of Religion (Religious Studies) emerged in the 19th century as a discipline distinct from Theology, and its intellectual roots lie squarely in the Enlightenment (17th-18th centuries) and the rise of modern scientific method. Where Theology begins from faith commitments internal to one tradition, Religious Studies aspires to a

neutral, comparative, and empirical examination of religion as a universal human phenomenon. **Key Enlightenment Factors**

1. Primacy of Reason over Revelation: Enlightenment philosophers (Locke, Hume, Kant, Voltaire) insisted that claims to truth — including religious claims — should be subject to rational scrutiny rather than accepted purely on the authority of revelation or ecclesiastical tradition. This opened religion itself to critical, rather than confessional, examination.

2. Deism and Natural Religion: Enlightenment deists argued for a "natural religion" discoverable by reason, common to all humanity, beneath the particular doctrines of individual faiths. This comparative impulse — looking for what religions share — is a direct ancestor of comparative religious studies.

3. Historical-Critical Method: Biblical criticism, developing from figures like Spinoza and later German scholars, began treating scripture as a historical and literary document produced by human authors in particular contexts, rather than solely as the inerrant word of God — a method later extended to all sacred texts.

4. Colonial Encounter and Cross-Cultural Comparison: European exploration, trade, and colonial administration brought sustained contact with Hindu, Buddhist, Confucian, and Islamic traditions. Philological access to Sanskrit, Avestan, and other classical languages (crucial to Max Müller's work) enabled systematic comparison across traditions for the first time.

5. Rise of Empirical Science: The success of the natural sciences created a template — observation, classification,

comparison, theory-building — that scholars like E. B. Tylor, James Frazer, and later Émile Durkheim and Max Weber applied to religious phenomena, treating rituals, myths, and institutions as data to be explained rather than truths to be affirmed or denied. **Key Factors Separating Religious Studies from Theology**

- **Standpoint:** Theology is confessional and normative, operating from within a faith commitment to elucidate and defend that faith's truth claims. Religious Studies is descriptive and (ideally) non-confessional, "bracketing" the question of ultimate truth to focus on how religion functions, developed, and is experienced.
- **Method:** Theology relies on scriptural exegesis, doctrine, and reasoned reflection within a tradition. Religious Studies draws on historical-critical, sociological, anthropological, psychological, and comparative methods.
- **Scope:** Theology typically studies one tradition in depth from the inside. Religious Studies compares many traditions from an external, cross-cultural vantage point.
- **Institutional Location:** Theology developed within seminaries and church-affiliated faculties; Religious Studies developed within secular universities, especially from the later 19th century (e.g., the first chair of comparative religion at the Collège de France, 1880). **Critical Analysis**

While this separation is analytically useful, critics (e.g., scholars in the "critical religion" school) note that claims to complete scholarly "neutrality" are themselves historically contingent — the very category of "religion" as a universal genus was itself shaped by Protestant and Enlightenment assumptions, and Western scholars often unconsciously measured other traditions against a Christian, text and belief

centred template. Nonetheless, the discipline's commitment to comparison, empirical grounding, and methodological pluralism remains its defining and valuable legacy.

Conclusion

The Enlightenment's elevation of reason, its comparative and historical-critical impulses, and the empirical ethos of modern science together created the conceptual space in which religion could be examined as a human, historical phenomenon rather than solely as revealed truth — giving birth to Religious Studies as a discipline distinct from, though historically indebted to, Theology.

Q.No. 3 (20 Marks)

How did 19th century Hindu reform movements reinterpret traditional beliefs in response to colonial and Enlightenment influences? Critically assess their impact on modern Hindu identity.

۱۹ویں صدی کی ہندو اصلاحی تحریکوں نے نوآبادیاتی اور روشن خیالی کے اثرات کے جواب میں روایتی عقائد کی کس طرح نئی تعبیر پیش کی؟ ان کے جدید ہندو شناخت پر اثرات کا تنقیدی تجزیہ پیش کریں۔

Introduction

The 19th century witnessed a wave of Hindu reform movements that reinterpreted classical Hindu belief and practice in dialogue with, and often in response to, British

colonial rule, Christian missionary criticism, and Enlightenment ideals of rationalism, individual dignity, and social progress. These movements substantially reshaped what would become "modern Hinduism." **Major Reform**

Movements

1. Brahmo Samaj (Raja Ram Mohan Roy, 1828): Roy, deeply influenced by Enlightenment rationalism, Unitarian Christianity, and Islamic monotheism, sought to strip Hinduism of what he saw as later corruptions — idol worship, caste rigidity, and social evils such as sati (widow immolation), which he campaigned to abolish (achieved by law in 1829). He reinterpreted the Upanishads as teaching a rational, monotheistic core beneath ritualistic accretion.

2. Arya Samaj (Swami Dayananda Saraswati, 1875): Dayananda called for a return to the authority of the Vedas alone, rejecting idol worship, caste-by-birth, and child marriage, while also asserting Hindu civilizational pride against missionary critique — his slogan "Back to the Vedas" combined reformist rationalism with religious nationalism.

3. Ramakrishna Mission (Swami Vivekananda, 1897): Building on his guru Ramakrishna's mystical universalism, Vivekananda presented Vedanta as a rational, universal spiritual philosophy compatible with modern science, famously representing Hinduism at the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago and asserting its equal standing among world religions.

4. Theosophical Society influence and other movements (e.g., Prarthana Samaj in Maharashtra) similarly worked to reconcile Hindu tradition with rational and reformist sensibilities, and to combat social evils like untouchability. **Reinterpretation of Traditional Beliefs**

These reformers commonly: (a) emphasised the philosophical monotheism of the Upanishads over popular polytheistic and image-based worship; (b) reframed caste as a later social distortion rather than an essential religious doctrine; (c) championed the education and dignity of women, opposing sati, child marriage, and purdah; (d) presented Hindu philosophy as rationally defensible and even scientifically compatible, directly countering missionary claims that Hinduism was superstitious or degenerate; and (e) constructed a more unified, textually-anchored "Hinduism" out of what had been a highly diverse and regionally varied set of traditions.

Impact on Modern Hindu Identity — Critical Assessment

Positive contributions: These movements catalysed significant social reform (anti-sati legislation, widow remarriage, opposition to untouchability), promoted mass education, and gave Hindus a confident, modern idiom in which to defend their tradition on the global stage, contributing to cultural self-respect during colonial subjugation.

Critical limitations: Critics argue that reform movements often reflected an urban, upper-caste, Sanskrit-literate Brahminical perspective, and in "purifying" Hinduism toward a text-centred monotheism they sometimes marginalised folk, tribal, and Dravidian devotional traditions that did not fit this model. Scholars (e.g., Romila Thapar) have also argued that this period effectively constructed a more homogenised, quasi-"Semitic" model of Hinduism — with a canon, core doctrine, and organisational structures resembling reformed Christianity — partly in reaction to colonial and missionary categories, a process sometimes called the "Hinduization" or

"Semiticization" of Hindu tradition. Additionally, the fusion of religious reform with cultural/religious nationalism (especially in Arya Samaj) laid groundwork that would later feed into more assertive, and at times exclusionary, forms of Hindu nationalism in the 20th century. **Conclusion**

19th-century Hindu reform movements represent a creative and consequential encounter between an ancient religious tradition and colonial modernity: they modernised Hindu self-understanding, drove important social reforms, and shaped a confident global Hindu identity, but also imposed a particular, partly Brahminical and partly reactive, template on an internally diverse tradition — a legacy that continues to inform debates about Hindu identity today.

Q.No. 4 (20 Marks)

What are the main doctrinal and practical differences between Theravāda and Mahāyāna Buddhism? Critically analyze how these differences shape the religious life of their followers.

تعیار اویدا اور مہایانہ بدھ مت کے درمیان بنیادی عقائد اور عملی اختلافات کیا ہیں؟ تجزیہ کریں کہ یہ اختلافات اپنے پیروکاروں کی مذہبی زندگی کو کس طرح متاثر کرتے ہیں۔

Introduction

Buddhism split historically into two major branches — Theravāda ("Teaching of the Elders"), dominant in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia (Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos), and Mahāyāna ("Great Vehicle"), dominant in East Asia (China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam) and, in its Vajrayāna form, in Tibet. Though sharing the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path, they differ significantly in doctrine, scripture, and practice. **Doctrinal Differences**

1. The Ideal Practitioner: Theravāda upholds the Arhat — one who achieves personal liberation (nirvana) through disciplined practice, chiefly within monastic life — as the model practitioner. Mahāyāna instead elevates the Bodhisattva ideal — one who postpones final nirvana and vows to work compassionately for the liberation of all sentient beings.

2. Nature of the Buddha: Theravāda regards the historical Buddha, Gautama, as a supremely enlightened teacher, essentially a man who achieved awakening — not a god to be worshipped. Mahāyāna develops a more elaborate cosmology (the Trikaya or "three bodies" doctrine) in which Buddhahood is a universal principle manifesting in countless celestial Buddhas and Bodhisattvas (e.g., Amitabha, Avalokiteshvara), who can be venerated and appealed to for grace/compassion.

3. Scripture: Theravāda's canon is the Pali Tripitaka, considered closed and authoritative. Mahāyāna accepts the earlier sutras but adds a large body of additional Mahāyāna sutras (e.g., the Lotus Sutra, Heart Sutra, Diamond Sutra), composed later and claiming deeper or more advanced

teaching.

4. Philosophy of Emptiness: Mahāyāna developed the philosophy of śūnyatā (emptiness) associated with Nagarjuna's Madhyamaka school, teaching that all phenomena, including the self, lack inherent independent existence — a metaphysical elaboration beyond Theravāda's more psychological analysis of no-self (anatta).

5. Path to Liberation: Theravāda emphasises individual effort, monastic discipline (vinaya), and meditation as the primary path — liberation is largely self-achieved. Mahāyāna emphasises compassion (karuna) alongside wisdom (prajna), the accumulation of merit transferable to others, and, in devotional forms (e.g., Pure Land Buddhism), reliance on the grace of a celestial Buddha such as Amitabha for rebirth in a Pure Land. **Practical/Ritual Differences**

Theravāda religious life centres on the monastery (sangha), textual study, vipassana (insight) meditation, alms-giving to monks, and observance of precepts, with relatively austere ritual. Mahāyāna religious life is more devotionally and ritually elaborate, incorporating veneration of Bodhisattva images, chanting of sutras and mantras, elaborate liturgies, and — in Vajrayāna — tantric ritual, visualization, and guru-disciple initiation. **Impact on Religious Life of Followers**

For Theravāda lay Buddhists, religious life often centres on supporting the monastic community (dana/almsgiving) and accumulating merit, with full-time meditative and monastic discipline seen as the "fast track" to liberation, largely undertaken by monks rather than laypeople. For Mahāyāna followers, the Bodhisattva ideal makes compassionate action in ordinary life itself a valid spiritual path, and devotional practices — prayer to Bodhisattvas, chanting, pilgrimage

offer accessible avenues of practice for laypeople, sometimes described as more "this-worldly" and communally oriented (e.g., Pure Land Buddhism's promise of rebirth through faith and devotion, appealing to those unable to pursue rigorous monastic discipline). **Critical Analysis**

The Theravāda/Mahāyāna distinction, while doctrinally real, is not always a sharp practical line — actual practice in many Buddhist societies blends elements (e.g., merit-making, veneration of images, ancestor rites) across both traditions. Some scholars caution against viewing Mahāyāna as simply a "later, more devotional" development or Theravāda as "purer" or more "original," noting both traditions have evolved historically and adapted to local cultures in their own ways. **Conclusion**

The Theravāda–Mahāyāna divergence reflects two coherent, historically developed responses to the same core Buddhist problem of suffering — one emphasising individual monastic discipline toward personal liberation, the other emphasising universal compassion, expanded cosmology, and accessible devotional paths — each shaping distinct rhythms of religious life for millions of followers across Asia.

What were the causes and consequences of the destruction of Jerusalem for the Jewish people? Critically analyze its impact on religious, social, and political life.

یہودی عوام کے لیے یروشلم کے تباہ ہونے کی وجوہات اور نتائج کیا تھے؟ اس کے مذہبی، سماجی اور سیاسی زندگی پر اثرات کا تنقیدی جائزہ پیش کریں۔

Introduction

Jerusalem and its Temple were destroyed twice in Jewish history — by the Neo-Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar II in 586 BCE (First Temple) and by the Romans under Titus in 70 CE (Second Temple), following the Jewish revolt (66–73 CE). The second destruction in particular proved civilizationally transformative and is the primary focus of most CSS-level analysis, though both are relevant. **Causes**

First Destruction (586 BCE): The Kingdom of Judah, caught between the imperial ambitions of Egypt and Babylon, rebelled against Babylonian vassalage; Nebuchadnezzar besieged and razed Jerusalem, destroyed Solomon's Temple, and exiled much of the population to Babylon (the "Babylonian Captivity").

Second Destruction (70 CE): Rising Jewish discontent with Roman rule — heavy taxation, religious insensitivity of some governors, and messianic/nationalist fervor — culminated in the First Jewish-Roman War (66–73 CE). After a prolonged

Temple and much of Jerusalem; the failed Bar Kokhba revolt (132–135 CE) later led Hadrian to raze remaining Jewish structures, rename the city Aelia Capitolina, and formally bar Jews from it. **Consequences**

Religious Impact: With the Temple gone, the sacrificial cult that had been central to biblical Judaism became impossible. Judaism underwent a profound transformation from a Temple-and-priest-centred religion to a text-and-prayer-centred one: the synagogue replaced the Temple as the local centre of worship, prayer and study replaced sacrifice, and rabbinic authority replaced priestly (Kohanic) authority. This period saw the rise of Rabbinic Judaism, the compilation of the Mishnah (c. 200 CE) and later the Talmud, systematising Jewish law and practice for a Temple-less existence. Theologically, the destruction was interpreted by many as divine punishment for communal sin, reinforcing themes of repentance, exile, and future messianic restoration that remain embedded in Jewish liturgy (e.g., the fast of Tisha B'Av mourning both destructions).

Social Impact: Mass displacement and exile scattered Jewish communities across the Mediterranean and Near East, accelerating the Jewish Diaspora. Communities had to develop portable, text-based forms of religious and communal organisation (synagogue, study house, communal law) that did not depend on geographic proximity to Jerusalem, enabling Jewish identity and practice to survive and adapt across radically different host societies for the next two millennia.

Political Impact: Jewish national sovereignty in the land of Israel was effectively ended for centuries; Jerusalem's political and administrative import for Jews collapsed, while it

acquired growing symbolic and eschatological significance (the hope of return and rebuilding, embedded in prayers such as "next year in Jerusalem"). The loss of a Temple and priestly hierarchy also removed a key locus of internal Jewish political authority, indirectly strengthening the rabbinate as an alternative leadership structure that persisted through the medieval period into modernity. **Critical Analysis**

The destruction(s) of Jerusalem illustrate how catastrophic political and military events can catalyse deep religious innovation rather than simple decline: rather than causing Judaism's disappearance (as happened to many other ancient Near Eastern religions that lost their central cultic sites), the crisis produced Rabbinic Judaism's remarkably resilient, adaptable religious model. At the same time, the trauma of exile and destruction became a permanent feature of Jewish collective memory and theology, shaping attitudes toward suffering, chosenness, and messianic hope, and — much later — feeding into the modern Zionist movement's drive to re-establish Jewish sovereignty in the land, including Jerusalem. **Conclusion**

The destruction of Jerusalem, especially in 70 CE, was a civilizational rupture that ended Temple-centred Judaism but simultaneously birthed a resilient, text- and community-centred Rabbinic Judaism, reshaping Jewish religious practice, dispersing Jewish communities globally, and embedding themes of exile and return that continue to shape Jewish religious and political consciousness to this day.

What are the key features of modern theological trends in Christianity, such as Liberal Theology and Neo-Orthodoxy? Critically evaluate their impact on traditional beliefs and practices.

عیسائیت میں جدید الہیاتی رجحانات جیسے لبرل تھیولوجی اور نیو آرٹھوڈوکسی کی اہم خصوصیات کیا ہیں؟ روایتی عقائد اور عملی رسوم پر ان کے اثرات کا تنقیدی جائزہ پیش کریں۔

Introduction

Modern Christian theology has been shaped by several major movements responding to the Enlightenment, historical-critical biblical scholarship, and the crises of the modern world — most significantly Liberal Theology and its later corrective, Neo-Orthodoxy, alongside related trends such as Fundamentalism, Liberation Theology, and Process Theology.

Liberal Theology

Emerging in 19th-century Germany (Friedrich Schleiermacher, Albrecht Ritschl, Adolf von Harnack), Liberal Theology sought to reconcile Christian faith with Enlightenment reason, modern science, and historical-critical biblical scholarship.

Key features: (1) Emphasis on religious experience/feeling (Schleiermacher's "feeling of absolute dependence") over rigid doctrinal propositions; (2) openness to biblical criticism, treating scripture as a historically conditioned human

document rather than verbally inerrant; (3) a this-worldly emphasis on ethics and the "historical Jesus" as moral teacher, sometimes de-emphasising supernatural elements (miracles, literal resurrection) in favour of Jesus's ethical example and the "Kingdom of God" as a moral-social ideal; (4) confidence in human moral and social progress, resonant with Enlightenment optimism. **Neo-Orthodoxy**

Emerging in the early-to-mid 20th century, chiefly associated with Karl Barth (and also Emil Brunner, Reinhold Niebuhr), Neo-Orthodoxy arose as a critical reaction against Liberal Theology, whose optimistic view of human progress was severely shaken by the catastrophe of the First World War.

Key features: (1) Reassertion of the transcendence and "otherness" of God against liberal theology's tendency to reduce God to human experience or feeling; (2) renewed emphasis on divine revelation (especially through Christ and Scripture) as the ground of theology, rather than autonomous human reason or experience; (3) a more sober, "realist" view of human sinfulness and limitation, against liberal optimism about progress (seen strikingly in Niebuhr's "Christian realism"); (4) retrieval of classical Reformation themes (grace, sin, the sovereignty of God) while still engaging critically and non-fundamentalistically with modern biblical scholarship — hence "neo" rather than simple return to old orthodoxy. **Critical Impact on Traditional Beliefs and Practices**

Liberal Theology's impact: It opened mainline Protestant churches to historical-critical scholarship, social-gospel activism (addressing poverty, labour conditions, and social reform as core to Christian mission), and greater theological openness to other religions and modern science. **Critics**

(including Neo-Orthodox theologians themselves) charged it with reducing Christianity to generalised ethical humanism, undermining doctrines central to historic Christian faith (the divinity of Christ, bodily resurrection, atonement), and being naively optimistic about human nature — a critique that seemed vindicated by the violence of the 20th century.

Neo-Orthodoxy's impact: It reinvigorated confessional Protestant theology (especially through Barth's monumental "Church Dogmatics") without retreating into anti-modern fundamentalism, influencing ecumenical Protestantism and post-war theological discourse broadly; Niebuhr's realism shaped mid-century Christian social and political ethics considerably. However, critics note Neo-Orthodoxy could remain theologically abstract and was less engaged with liberation and justice movements than later Liberation Theology, and its dialectical, revelation-centred method has sometimes been seen as resistant to further critical scrutiny.

Broader Consequences

Together, these trends illustrate the ongoing modern Christian struggle to balance faithfulness to tradition against engagement with modern reason, science, and historical crisis — a tension that continues in contemporary debates between progressive/liberal and conservative/evangelical Christianity, and that has spurred further movements (Liberation Theology's focus on the poor and social justice; Process Theology's revision of divine attributes; Evangelical and Fundamentalist reassertions of biblical inerrancy) that can each be read as further responses along this same liberal-orthodox spectrum. **Conclusion**

Liberal Theology and Neo-Orthodoxy represent two major, contrasting modern attempts to make Christian faith

intellectually credible and spiritually relevant in the face of Enlightenment rationalism and 20th-century crisis respectively — the former stressing human experience, reason, and progress, the latter reasserting divine transcendence, revelation, and a more sober anthropology — and both have left lasting, if contested, imprints on contemporary Christian belief and practice.

Q.No. 7 (20 Marks)

How do the Quran and Hadith define and guide social justice? Critically analyse their relevance in addressing contemporary social and economic issues.

قرآن اور حدیث سماجی انصاف (Justice Social) کو کس طرح متعین اور رہنمائی کرتے ہیں؟ معاصر سماجی اور اقتصادی مسائل کے حل میں ان کی مطابقت اور اہمیت کا تنقیدی تجزیہ کریں۔

Introduction

Social justice ('adl and ihsan) occupies a central place in Islamic teaching, grounded extensively in both the Qur'an and Hadith, which together provide a comprehensive framework addressing economic equity, human dignity, and social welfare. **Qur'anic Foundations of Social Justice**

1. 'Adl (Justice) as a Divine Command: The Qur'an commands: "Indeed, Allah orders justice and good conduct..."

(16:90), making justice a foundational religious obligation, not merely a social preference, and demands justice even against one's own interest or kin (4:135).

2. Economic Justice — Zakat and Prohibition of Riba:

Zakat (obligatory almsgiving, one of the Five Pillars) institutionalises wealth redistribution from the wealthy to the needy, orphans, and specified categories (9:60). The prohibition of riba (usury/interest, 2:275–279) aims to prevent exploitative accumulation of wealth and protect debtors from crushing interest burdens.

3. Rights of the Vulnerable: The Qur'an repeatedly emphasises care for orphans, the poor, travellers, and the needy (e.g., 2:177, 107:1–3), and condemns hoarding of wealth without circulation (9:34) and the exploitation of orphans' property (4:10).

4. Equality of Human Dignity: The Qur'an declares the fundamental equality of humankind regardless of race or tribe, stating that the noblest among people are the most righteous, not the wealthiest or most powerful (49:13).

Hadith Foundations

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) reinforced these principles practically: he declared that "None of you truly believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself," instituted fair market regulations condemning fraud and hoarding, insisted on prompt and fair payment of wages ("Give the labourer his wages before his sweat dries"), and in his Farewell Sermon emphasised the sanctity of life, property, and the equality of all believers regardless of ethnicity, explicitly condemning racial and tribal superiority.

Contemporary Relevance — Critical Analysis

Economic Issues: Zakat based redistribution and the

prohibition of *riba* remain the theological basis for the modern Islamic finance industry and Zakat/Waqf-based social welfare systems in many Muslim-majority states, offering an alternative ethical framework to purely interest-based capitalism, though critics note that in practice institutional Zakat collection and disbursement in many countries remains inconsistent, under-collected relative to potential, and Islamic finance instruments are sometimes criticised as replicating conventional finance in substance while differing mainly in form (e.g., some *murabaha* structures).

Social Issues: Qur'anic emphasis on human dignity and equality provides strong textual grounding for contemporary advocacy against racism, classism, and the mistreatment of the poor, migrants, and minorities, and can be mobilised in support of human rights discourse framed in Islamic terms. However, translating these broad ethical principles into concrete modern policy (labour law, taxation systems, welfare state design) requires substantial jurisprudential (*fiqh*) elaboration (*ijtihad*) suited to contemporary economic complexity, which scholars and states continue to debate — leading to a range of practical models across the Muslim world, from state-run Zakat systems to purely voluntary charity.

Gender and Social Structure: Some contemporary critics and reformist Muslim scholars argue that historical juristic interpretation of certain Qur'anic and Hadith texts (e.g., relating to inheritance, testimony, or family law) requires renewed *ijtihad* to fully realise the Qur'an's underlying justice principles in changed modern social conditions — an ongoing and contested conversation within Islamic scholarship itself.

Conclusion

The Qur'an and Hadith provide a rich, textually explicit and practically demonstrated framework for social justice — encompassing economic redistribution, protection of the vulnerable, and fundamental human equality — that remains a living resource for addressing contemporary social and economic problems, even as its full contemporary application continues to require careful, context-sensitive juristic interpretation.

Q.No. 8 — Short Notes (write any TWO in the actual exam; all three solved here)

Short Note (a)

Importance of the Academic Study of Religion

مذہب کے علمی مطالعے کی اہمیت

The academic study of religion (Religious Studies) is significant for several reasons. **First**, it fosters interfaith understanding and tolerance by helping people understand the beliefs, values, and practices of traditions other than their own — an increasingly vital skill in religiously plural, globalised societies. **Second**, it contributes to conflict resolution and peacebuilding, since a substantial proportion

of contemporary social and political conflict has a religious dimension that policymakers, diplomats, and civil society actors need to understand accurately rather than through stereotype. **Third**, it enriches historical and cultural understanding, since religion has been, and remains, one of the primary shaping forces of art, literature, law, ethics, and political institutions across civilizations. **Fourth**, comparative study helps scholars and believers alike identify shared ethical and existential concerns across traditions (suffering, justice, the sacred, the meaning of life) while also appreciating genuine differences, avoiding both naive relativism and uncritical exclusivism. **Finally**, from a policy perspective, in a country like Pakistan and in the modern civil service more broadly, informed understanding of comparative religion assists officers in the sensitive management of minority rights, religious freedom, and social harmony. Academic study, using historical-critical, sociological, and comparative methods, thus complements (without replacing) theological study by offering an external, systematic, and cross-cultural vantage point on humanity's religious life.

Short Note (b)

Jñāna Mārga (Path of Knowledge)

جنا نا مارگ

Jñāna Mārga, the "path of knowledge," is one of the three classical Hindu paths (margas) to liberation (moksha) described especially in the Upanishads and systematised in Advaita Vedanta philosophy (notably by Adi Shankaracharya), alongside Karma Marga (path of action) and Bhakti Marga (path of devotion). It holds that ultimate liberation is achieved through direct, experiential knowledge (jñāna) of the true nature of reality — specifically, the realisation that the individual self (Atman) is identical with the ultimate, universal reality (Brahman), summarised in the Upanishadic dictum "Tat Tvam Asi" ("That Thou Art"). According to this path, human bondage to the cycle of birth and rebirth (samsara) results fundamentally from avidya (ignorance) — the mistaken perception of the self as separate and limited — rather than from bad deeds alone; liberation is therefore attained by dispelling this ignorance through sustained philosophical inquiry, scriptural study (especially of the Upanishads), reflection (manana), and meditative contemplation (nididhyasana) under a qualified teacher (guru), rather than through ritual action or devotional worship. Jñāna Marga is traditionally regarded as the most demanding and intellectually rigorous of the three paths, historically associated with renunciant (sannyasi) life, and is considered especially suited to those with a contemplative, philosophical temperament.

Jihad in Islam

اسلام میں جہاد

Jihad, from the Arabic root meaning "to strive" or "to struggle," refers in Islamic teaching to the struggle to live according to God's will and to defend and promote the faith. Classical Islamic scholarship traditionally distinguishes several dimensions of jihad. **Jihad al-Nafs (or "Greater Jihad")** refers to the internal, spiritual struggle against one's own base desires, ego, and moral weaknesses — striving for self-discipline, patience, honesty, and closeness to God — and is regarded by many scholars, based on a well-known hadith tradition, as the more demanding and consequential form of jihad. **Jihad through speech and pen** involves striving to spread the message of Islam, promote justice, and speak truth, including opposing wrongdoing through preaching, education, and writing. **Jihad through wealth** involves spending one's resources in the path of God, including charity and support for righteous causes. **Jihad al-Qital (armed/military jihad)**, often termed the "lesser jihad," refers to legitimate armed struggle, which classical Islamic jurisprudence circumscribes strictly: it is permitted only in self-defence or in response to oppression and aggression, must be authorised by legitimate authority, and is governed by strict ethical rules (e.g., prohibitions on harming non-combatants, destroying crops, or violating treaties), derived from Qur'anic verses (e.g., 2:190, "fight in

the way of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress") and the Prophet's practice. It is important, particularly in contemporary public discourse, to distinguish this classical, jurisprudentially regulated concept from the illegitimate use of the term by extremist groups to justify indiscriminate violence, which mainstream Islamic scholarship across schools of thought explicitly rejects as a distortion of the concept.