

Religions of the Ancient World

DBQ

This task is based on the accompanying documents. Some of these documents have been edited for the purpose of this task. This task is designed to test your ability to work with historic documents. As you analyze the documents, take into account both the source of the document and the author's point of view

➤ Historical Context

Religions and philosophies that developed in ancient times have had a great impact on the lives of their followers.

➤ Directions

The following question is based on the accompanying documents. As you analyze the documents, take into account both the source of the document and the author's point of view. Be sure to:

1. Carefully read the document-based question. Consider what you already know about the topic. How would you answer the question if you had no documents to examine?
2. Now, read each document carefully, underlining key phrases and words that address the document-based question. You may also wish to make notes. Answer the questions which follow each document.
3. Based on your own knowledge and on the information found in the documents, formulate a thesis that directly answers the question.
4. Organize supportive and relevant information into a brief outline.
5. Write a well-organized essay proving your thesis. The essay should be logically presented and should include information both from the documents and from your own knowledge outside the documents.

Document 1: The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20.1)

1. I am The Lord your God
2. You shall have no other gods to rival me
3. You shall not misuse the name of The Lord your God
4. Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy
5. Honor your father and your mother
6. You shall not kill
7. You shall not commit adultery
8. You shall not steal
9. You shall not give false evidence against your neighbor
10. You shall not covet

Q: To which religion(s) does this apply?

Q: How does a person follow the moral code of this religion?

Document 2: The following is an excerpt from the Quran (Surah 92 The Night al Lail).

“The Night”

In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

By the night, when she lets fall her darkness, and by the radiant day!

By Him that created the male and the female, your endeavors have different ends!

For him that gives in charity and guards himself against evil and believes in goodness, We shall smooth the path of salvation: but for him that neither gives nor takes and disbelieves in goodness, We shall smooth the path of affliction. When he breathes his last, his riches will not avail him.

It is for Us to give guidance. Ours is the life of this world, Ours the life to come. I warn you, then, of the blazing fire, in which none shall burn save the hardened sinner, who denies the truth and gives no heed. But the good man who purifies himself by almsgiving shall keep away from it: and so shall he that does good works for the sake of the Most High, not in recompense for a favor. Such men shall be content.

Q: What two attributes of Allah are identified in the opening line of “The Night”?

Q: How will Allah punish those who deny the truth?

Document 3: The following is an excerpt from the Mahabharata, an Ancient Indian Epic from about 400 B.C.

Enjoy the pleasure
bestowed on you,

and bear the pain
bestowed on you,

wait patiently for
what time brings,

as does the farmer
with the fruit.

Let us overcome
the angry man
with gentleness,

the evil man
with goodness

the miser
with generosity

the liar
with truth

Q: List two lessons “The Mahabharata” teaches about Hindu life.

Q: What characteristics of an advanced civilization did ancient Ghana possess?

Document 4: The following is a quotation attributed to Confucius, a Chinese teacher in ancient China who lived around 551 BC – 479 BC:

“In his (the leader) personal conduct,
He was respectful.
In his serving of his superiors
He was reverent.
In his nourishing the people
He was kind.
In governing the people
He was righteous.”

Q: According to Confucius, how should a leader behave?

Document 5: The following is an excerpt from the essay, “On the Nature of Man,” which was written by Zong Mi. He was a leading Buddhist scholar during the Tang dynasty in the early ninth century C.E.

“Confucius, Laozi, and the Buddha were perfect sages. They established their teachings according to the demands of the age and the needs of various beings. They differ in their approaches in that they encourage the perfection of good deeds, punish wicked ones, and reward good ones; all three teachings lead to the creation of an orderly society and for this they must be observed with respect.

Q: According to Zong Mi, why should Confucius, Laozi, and Buddha be respected?

Document 6: The following is the 4 Noble truths taken from a Chinese Buddhist canon text.

1. The Nature of Suffering (Dukkha):
"This is the noble truth of suffering: birth is suffering, aging is suffering, illness is suffering, death is suffering; sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair are suffering; union with what is displeasing is suffering; separation from what is pleasing is suffering; not to get what one wants is suffering; in brief, the five aggregates subject to clinging are suffering."
2. Suffering's Origin (Samudaya):
"This is the noble truth of the origin of suffering: it is this craving which leads to renewed existence, accompanied by delight and lust, seeking delight here and there, that is, craving for sensual pleasures, craving for existence, craving for extermination."
3. Suffering's Cessation (Nirodha):
"This is the noble truth of the cessation of suffering: it is the remainderless fading away and cessation of that same craving, the giving up and relinquishing of it, freedom from it, nonreliance on it."
4. The Way (Mārga) Leading to the Cessation of Suffering:
"This is the noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering: it is the Noble Eightfold Path; that is, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration."

Q: According to the 4 Noble truths what is the cause of suffering and how does one end it?

Document 7: The following depicts the origins of the Hindu Caste system. The four major castes emerged from Purusha (the first human being). Purusha is identified with the creator god Brahma.

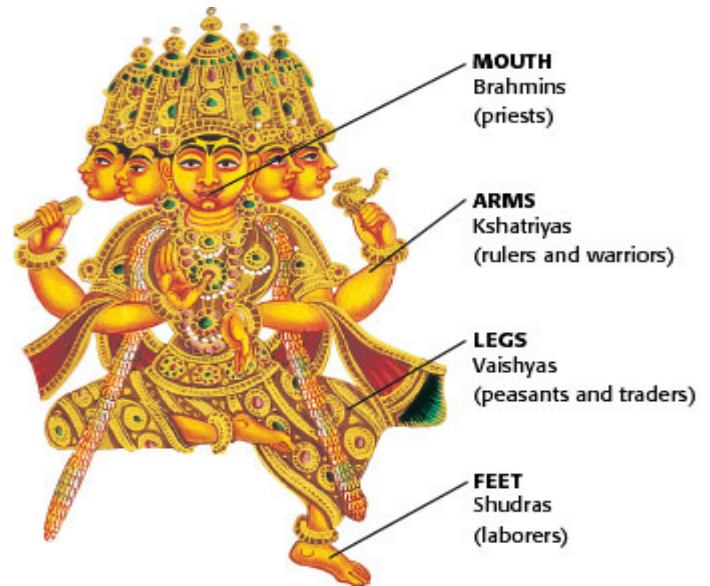
The Brahmins: The priestly class, born from the mouth of Brahma.

The Kshatriyas: Warriors and rulers, senators, presidents, majors, born from the chest of Brahma

The Vaisyas: Farmers, merchants, lawyers, doctors.

The Sudras: Unskilled workers. Born from the feet of Brahma.

Other sub-castes: Up to 3,000 sub-castes, with the untouchables at the bottom.



Q: What group makes up the Sudras class?

Q: Why might the caste of Brahmins be associated with the mouth?

Document 8: As part of the Islam religion, all true Muslims must perform 5 duties, called the Five Pillars of Faith.

The Five Pillars of Faith

Once a Muslim, each member must carry out five essential duties, called The Five Pillars of Faith. They are listed below:

1. **Shahadat** - A Muslim must acknowledge that "There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his Prophet"
2. **Salat** - A Muslim must pray five times daily facing Mecca: at dawn, at noon, in the midafternoon, at dusk, and after dark.
3. **Zakaat** or almsgiving - Each Muslim give charity and help the needy. Must pay a zagat to the government.
4. **Sawm** - A Muslim must fast for the month of **Ramadan**. During the fasting month, one must refrain from eating, drinking, smoking, and sexual intercourse from dawn until sunset.
5. **Hajj** - A Muslim must make a pilgrimage to **Mecca**. Every adult Muslim who is physically and financially able to do so must make this pilgrimage at least once in his or her lifetime.

Q: What duties does each Muslim have according to the 5 pillars?

Document 9: The following is an excerpt from the New Testament of the Christian Bible.

1 And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:
2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,
3 Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
4 Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.
5 Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.
6 Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.
7 Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.
8 Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God.
9 Blessed *are* the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.
10 Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
11 Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.
12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

-Matthew 5

Q: What happens to those Christians who are merciful?

Document 10: The following is an excerpt from Genesis 17 of the Old Testament.

2 And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.
3 And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying,
4 As for me, behold, my covenant *is* with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.
5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.
6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.
7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.
8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

-Genesis 17

Q: What did God give to Abraham and his descendants?

ESSAY – NEXT PAGE

HOW DOES RELIGION AFFECT THE LIVES OF ITS FOLLOWERS?

- **Task:** Using information from the documents and your knowledge of world history write an essay in which you:
- **Explain the basic beliefs of at least 3 of the following religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, Christianity, Daoism, or Confucianism.**
 - **Explain how those beliefs impact the lives of their followers.**
 - **Use at least 5 documents in your response**

Be sure to include specific historical details. Your essay must also include additional information from your knowledge of world history.