

Comparative Analysis of Major World Religions: Similarities and Differences

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ABSTRACT

The Comparative Analysis of Major World Religions delves into the intricate tapestry of global religious beliefs, exploring both the common threads that unite humanity and the diverse expressions that distinguish each faith tradition. This comprehensive examination navigates through the tenets, rituals, scriptures, and cultural manifestations of prominent religions, including Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, and Sikhism, among others. The study employs a multidisciplinary approach, drawing insights from theology, history, anthropology, sociology, and philosophy to provide a nuanced understanding of religious worldviews. Central to this comparative analysis is the identification and exploration of the shared principles and fundamental values that underpin various faith traditions. Through a comparative lens, it becomes evident that concepts such as compassion, justice, love, and transcendence permeate the moral and spiritual landscapes of diverse religious systems. Furthermore, this research highlights the interconnectedness of human experiences and aspirations across different religious contexts, emphasizing the universal quest for meaning, purpose, and transcendence.

Introduction

Islamic art and architecture have long captivated scholars Religion has played a profound role in shaping human history, culture, and identity. Across the globe, diverse religious traditions have emerged, each offering unique perspectives on the nature of existence, morality, and the divine. While these traditions often appear distinct, a closer examination reveals striking similarities alongside notable differences. This paper seeks to undertake a comparative analysis of major world religions, including but not limited to Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Sikhism. By delving into core doctrines, rituals, ethical teachings, and historical contexts, this study aims to illuminate both the common threads and the unique features that characterize these religious traditions.

Through this comparative lens, we endeavor to foster a deeper understanding of religious pluralism and promote respectful dialogue among adherents of different faiths. (Smith, 1991)

Significance of Comparative Analysis in Understanding World Religions

The significance of comparative analysis in understanding world religions cannot be overstated. By examining the beliefs, practices, and rituals of various religious traditions side by side, scholars and practitioners gain valuable insights into the universal themes and unique characteristics that shape human spirituality. Comparative analysis allows for the identification of common threads that run through different religions, revealing shared aspirations,

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moral values, and existential questions that transcend cultural boundaries.

Furthermore, comparative analysis fosters a deeper appreciation for the diversity of religious expressions and traditions around the world. By recognizing the multiplicity of paths to the sacred and the myriad ways in which individuals seek meaning and connection with the divine, we cultivate a more inclusive and empathetic understanding of religious pluralism. This understanding can contribute to interfaith dialogue, cooperation, and mutual respect, promoting harmony and peaceful coexistence among diverse religious communities. (Armstrong, 1993)

Comparative analysis helps to illuminate the historical, cultural, and socio-political contexts that shape religious beliefs and practices. By examining the influences of geography, language, colonialism, and globalization on religious traditions, scholars can better understand the complexities of religious identity formation and the dynamics of religious change over time. This contextual understanding is essential for discerning the underlying motivations and implications of religious beliefs and behaviors in different cultural settings.

In addition, comparative analysis provides valuable insights into the human condition and the fundamental questions of existence. By exploring the ways in which different religions grapple with concepts such as the nature of God, the meaning of life, and the pursuit of salvation or enlightenment, we gain a richer understanding of the diverse ways in which humans seek to make sense of the world and their place within it. Ultimately, comparative analysis enhances our capacity for empathy, critical thinking, and cross-cultural understanding, enriching our appreciation of the complexities and beauty of the human religious experience. (Eliade, 1959)

Overview of Major World Religions Included in the Study

The study encompasses an examination of several major world religions, each of which holds a significant place in the global landscape of spirituality and belief systems. Among these

religions are Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, and Sikhism, all of which boast rich traditions, diverse practices, and profound philosophical underpinnings. Christianity, as one of the largest religions globally, centers around the life, teachings, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, with rituals such as baptism and Eucharist forming the core of its worship. Islam, founded by the Prophet Muhammad in the 7th century, emphasizes submission to the will of Allah (God) and the practice of rituals like Salah (prayer), Zakat (charity), Sawm (fasting), and Hajj (pilgrimage) as pillars of faith.

Hinduism, one of the oldest religions in the world, encompasses a vast array of beliefs, practices, and rituals that vary across different sects and regions. Central to Hindu worship are rituals like puja (worship), yajna (sacrificial offerings), and pilgrimage to sacred sites, all aimed at fostering spiritual growth and devotion to the divine. Buddhism, founded by Siddhartha Gautama (Buddha) in the 6th century BCE, emphasizes the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path as guiding principles for achieving enlightenment. Buddhist rituals include meditation, chanting, and acts of mindfulness, all aimed at cultivating inner peace and liberation from suffering.

Judaism, one of the oldest monotheistic religions, traces its roots to the covenant between God and the patriarch Abraham. Central to Jewish worship are rituals such as prayer, study of sacred texts, observance of dietary laws (kashrut), and celebration of festivals like Passover and Yom Kippur. Sikhism, founded by Guru Nanak in the 15th century, emphasizes the worship of one God and the principles of equality, service, and social justice. Sikh rituals include daily prayers (Nitnem), reading of the Guru Granth Sahib (scripture), and participation in community service (Seva), all aimed at spiritual growth and devotion to Waheguru (God). Collectively, these major world religions provide a diverse tapestry of beliefs, practices, and rituals that reflect the rich tapestry of human spirituality and religious expression across cultures and civilizations. (Huston, 1994)

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Comparative Examination of Core Doctrines and Beliefs

A comparative examination of core doctrines and beliefs across different religious traditions reveals both striking similarities and profound differences. At the heart of many religious systems lie foundational teachings concerning the nature of divinity, the purpose of existence, and the moral principles guiding human conduct. For example, monotheistic religions such as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam share a common belief in the existence of a single, all-powerful God who created the universe and governs it with justice and mercy. Similarly, Eastern philosophies such as Hinduism and Buddhism emphasize the concepts of karma, dharma, and reincarnation, positing that individual actions shape one's destiny across multiple lifetimes. Despite these shared themes, variations in theological interpretations, cultural contexts, and historical developments have led to divergent understandings of key doctrinal concepts. (Armstrong, "The Great Transformation: The Beginning of Our Religious Traditions." Anchor Books, 2007)

One area of divergence among religious traditions pertains to the nature of divinity and the relationship between the divine and the human. In monotheistic traditions, God is often conceived as transcendent, omnipotent, and omniscient, separate from creation yet intimately involved in human affairs. By contrast, many Eastern religions espouse a more immanent conception of the divine, viewing the ultimate reality as pervading the cosmos and immanent within all beings. This difference in theological perspective informs varying notions of worship, prayer, and spiritual practice, reflecting distinct approaches to cultivating a relationship with the divine.

Another point of comparison lies in the ethical teachings and moral principles advocated by different religious systems. While the specifics may vary, most religions uphold fundamental ethical imperatives such as compassion, honesty, generosity, and justice as guiding principles for ethical conduct. For

instance, the Golden Rule—treat others as you would like to be treated—finds resonance in diverse religious traditions, underscoring the universality of ethical norms across cultures. However, the application of these principles may vary based on theological doctrines, cultural norms, and historical contexts, leading to divergent ethical frameworks and practices within and across religious communities. (Eck, 1993)

Furthermore, the concept of salvation or liberation occupies a central place in many religious doctrines, albeit with varying interpretations and pathways. Monotheistic religions often emphasize the notion of salvation as deliverance from sin and reconciliation with God through faith, repentance, and divine grace. In contrast, Eastern religions such as Buddhism and Hinduism articulate paths to liberation through spiritual enlightenment, self-realization, and liberation from the cycle of birth and death (samsara). These divergent conceptions of salvation reflect differing perspectives on human nature, the ultimate goal of existence, and the means of attaining spiritual fulfillment.

A comparative examination of core doctrines and beliefs reveals both common themes and distinct theological perspectives across religious traditions. While shared principles of monotheism, ethical conduct, and salvation underscore universal aspects of the human quest for meaning and transcendence, differences in theological interpretations, cultural contexts, and historical developments contribute to the rich diversity of religious thought and practice observed globally. Through dialogue, understanding, and mutual respect, scholars and practitioners of diverse religious traditions can engage in fruitful exchanges that enrich our collective understanding of the human spiritual journey.

Monotheism vs. Polytheism vs. Non-theism

Monotheism, polytheism, and non-theism represent distinct paradigms of religious belief that have profoundly shaped human spirituality

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and worldview across cultures and civilizations. Monotheism, epitomized by religions such as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, posits the existence of a singular, transcendent deity who is the ultimate source of all creation and the object of worship. Central to monotheistic faiths is the belief in the absolute unity and sovereignty of this divine being, often portrayed as omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent. Monotheistic traditions emphasize the importance of monotheism vs. polytheism in theological discourse, framing their understanding of morality, salvation, and human destiny within the context of a personal relationship with a singular deity. (Kung, 2006)

In contrast, polytheism encompasses religious systems that recognize and venerate multiple deities, each associated with specific domains of nature, human affairs, or cosmic phenomena. Ancient civilizations such as those of Greece, Rome, and Egypt embraced polytheistic beliefs, attributing diverse powers and personalities to a pantheon of gods and goddesses. Polytheistic religions often exhibit a rich mythological framework, depicting intricate relationships and interactions among divine beings and mortals. The multiplicity of deities in polytheistic cosmologies reflects a diverse array of human experiences and aspirations, accommodating a plurality of divine manifestations and religious expressions within a cultural context. (Smith W. C., 196)

Non-theistic philosophies, exemplified by traditions such as Buddhism, Jainism, and certain strands of Hinduism, diverge from theism by eschewing belief in a personal, creator deity. Instead, non-theistic worldviews focus on the principles of impermanence, interdependence, and self-realization as the foundations of spiritual inquiry and ethical conduct. Non-theistic traditions prioritize inner transformation and the cessation of suffering through practices such as meditation, mindfulness, and ethical living. While non-theistic philosophies may incorporate reverence for cosmic principles, universal laws, or enlightened beings, they do not posit a

transcendent, anthropomorphic deity as the ultimate reality or object of worship.

The distinctions between monotheism, polytheism, and non-theism underscore the diversity of human religious experience and the multiplicity of pathways to spiritual fulfillment. While each paradigm offers its unique insights into the nature of existence and the human condition, they collectively contribute to the tapestry of global spirituality, reflecting the multifaceted expressions of human awe, wonder, and reverence for the mysteries of life. Whether monotheistic, polytheistic, or non-theistic in orientation, these religious frameworks continue to inspire individuals and communities to seek meaning, purpose, and transcendence in their quest for spiritual truth and enlightenment.

Cosmology and Creation Narratives

Cosmology and Creation Narratives are foundational aspects of many religious traditions, offering insights into the origin and structure of the universe as perceived through the lens of faith. Across cultures and throughout history, these narratives have provided frameworks for understanding existence, humanity's place in the cosmos, and the relationship between the divine and the natural world. Whether through myths, sacred texts, or oral traditions, cosmological narratives serve to elucidate fundamental questions about the nature of reality and humanity's role within it. (Armstrong, "Islam: A Short History." Modern Library, 2000)

In various religious traditions, creation narratives often depict the universe as the result of divine or cosmic forces acting upon primordial chaos or void. These stories frequently feature the emergence of the world from a formless state, often through the agency of a creator deity or deities. Creation narratives not only explain the origin of the cosmos but also establish the foundational principles and order upon which the universe operates, reflecting the theological and cosmological beliefs of each tradition.

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Furthermore, cosmological narratives often serve as allegorical or symbolic frameworks through which believers interpret their existence and the world around them. These narratives may convey moral, ethical, and metaphysical teachings, offering insights into the nature of good and evil, the purpose of human life, and the interconnectedness of all beings. Through creation narratives, believers find meaning, guidance, and a sense of belonging within the grand tapestry of existence.

Additionally, cosmology and creation narratives continue to evolve and adapt within religious traditions over time, reflecting shifts in cultural, social, and scientific perspectives. While ancient myths and texts may offer insights into the beliefs of earlier civilizations, contemporary interpretations of cosmology often integrate scientific discoveries with religious teachings, providing new insights into the mysteries of the universe. As humanity's understanding of the cosmos deepens, so too do the ways in which religious cosmologies shape and inform our understanding of the world and our place within it.

Concepts of Deity and Divine Attributes

The concept of deity and divine attributes varies greatly across different religious traditions, reflecting diverse cultural, philosophical, and theological perspectives. In monotheistic religions such as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, there is a belief in a single, all-powerful God who is the creator and sustainer of the universe. This deity is often described as transcendent, existing beyond the limitations of time and space, while also immanent, intimately involved in the affairs of humanity. Attributes such as omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence are ascribed to this singular deity, conveying qualities of infinite power, knowledge, and presence. (Armstrong, "Buddha." Penguin Books, , 2001)

In contrast, polytheistic religions like Hinduism and ancient Greek or Norse mythology depict a pantheon of gods and goddesses, each possessing distinct attributes, roles, and personalities. In Hinduism, for example, there is

a belief in a supreme being, Brahman, who is manifested in various forms or deities known as devas and devis. Each deity represents different aspects of the divine, such as creation, preservation, and destruction, and is revered through rituals, prayers, and offerings. Similarly, in ancient polytheistic traditions, gods and goddesses embody natural forces, elements, or human emotions, reflecting a more anthropomorphic understanding of divinity.

Furthermore, some religious traditions espouse pantheistic or panentheistic views of deity, where the divine is perceived as immanent within the natural world or transcendent beyond it. In pantheism, God is equated with the universe itself, and all of existence is considered divine. This perspective emphasizes the interconnectedness of all life and the sacredness of the natural world. Panentheism, on the other hand, posits that God is both immanent within creation and transcendent beyond it, intimately involved in sustaining and guiding the universe while also existing independently of it. These concepts challenge traditional notions of deity and invite contemplation on the relationship between the divine and the material world.

Overall, concepts of deity and divine attributes are central to understanding religious belief systems and practices across the globe. Whether monotheistic, polytheistic, pantheistic, or panentheistic, each tradition offers unique insights into the nature of the divine and humanity's relationship with it. Through exploration and dialogue, individuals gain a deeper appreciation for the diversity of religious thought and the profound ways in which conceptions of deity shape human culture, ethics, and spirituality. (Zaehner, 1959)

Canonical Texts and Their Interpretations

Canonical texts hold a paramount position in religious and cultural traditions, serving as foundational sources of authority, wisdom, and guidance for believers and scholars alike. These texts, often considered sacred or revered, encompass a diverse array of religious scriptures, philosophical treatises, legal codes, and literary masterpieces that have shaped the moral,

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spiritual, and intellectual landscapes of human civilization. Across different religious traditions, canonical texts serve as touchstones for interpreting doctrine, establishing rituals, and fostering communal identity. However, the interpretation of these texts is a complex and multifaceted endeavor, influenced by historical context, cultural milieu, theological perspectives, and individual hermeneutical approaches.

One of the key challenges in interpreting canonical texts lies in reconciling their ancient origins with contemporary contexts. Many canonical texts were composed in vastly different socio-cultural environments, often in languages that have undergone significant evolution or are no longer widely spoken. Consequently, scholars and religious practitioners grapple with the task of bridging temporal and linguistic gaps to discern the original intent and relevance of these texts for contemporary audiences. This process involves historical research, linguistic analysis, and comparative studies to elucidate the cultural norms, rhetorical strategies, and theological motifs embedded within the texts. (Armstrong, "The Spiral Staircase: My Climb Out of Darkness." Anchor Books, , 2004)

Furthermore, canonical texts are often subject to diverse and sometimes conflicting interpretations within and across religious traditions. Different theological schools, denominations, and sectarian movements may emphasize distinct aspects of the text, prioritize certain passages over others, or develop unique exegetical methods to derive meaning from the same source. These interpretive differences can lead to theological debates, schisms, and reformations within religious communities, highlighting the dynamic nature of religious discourse and the plurality of religious experience.

Despite the challenges and complexities involved, the interpretation of canonical texts remains a vital endeavor for understanding religious beliefs, practices, and worldviews. Through careful analysis and interpretation, scholars and believers seek to uncover deeper layers of meaning, discern moral and ethical principles, and cultivate spiritual insight.

Moreover, the ongoing interpretation of canonical texts reflects the enduring relevance and adaptability of religious traditions in response to changing social, cultural, and intellectual contexts. In this way, the interpretation of canonical texts serves as a dynamic dialogue between past and present, tradition and innovation, providing a rich tapestry of wisdom and inspiration for generations to come.

Historical Development and Spread of Each Religion

1. Christianity emerged from the teachings of Jesus Christ in the 1st century CE in the region of Roman-occupied Judea. Initially, it spread slowly among Jewish communities before gaining momentum through the missionary efforts of figures like the Apostle Paul. The conversion of Emperor Constantine in the 4th century CE marked a pivotal moment, as Christianity became the state religion of the Roman Empire, facilitating its spread across Europe and later to other continents through colonization and missionary activities. The Protestant Reformation in the 16th century further splintered Christianity into various denominations, contributing to its diverse global presence today, with significant concentrations in Europe, the Americas, Africa, and parts of Asia. (Eliade, "Myth and Reality." Harper & Row,, 1963)

2. Islam traces its origins to the revelations received by the Prophet Muhammad in 7th-century Arabia. Following Muhammad's death, the Islamic community, or ummah, expanded rapidly through conquest and trade, spreading across the Arabian Peninsula, North Africa, the Middle East, and beyond. The early caliphates facilitated the dissemination of Islamic teachings and jurisprudence, leading to the establishment of a vast Islamic civilization stretching from Spain to India. Subsequent waves of expansion and cultural exchange, including the Ottoman and Mughal empires, further solidified Islam's global presence. Today, Islam is the world's second-largest religion, with adherents

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spanning diverse regions, from Indonesia and South Asia to the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and the Americas.

3. Hinduism, one of the world's oldest religions, has its roots in the ancient civilizations of the Indian subcontinent. It evolved over thousands of years through the integration of diverse cultural, religious, and philosophical traditions, including the Vedic, Upanishadic, and Puranic periods. Hinduism's spread was facilitated by the migration and interactions of peoples within the Indian subcontinent, as well as through trade and cultural exchange with neighboring regions. Despite its primarily indigenous origins, Hinduism has influenced and been influenced by various religious traditions, including Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism. Today, Hinduism is predominantly practiced in India and Nepal, with significant diaspora communities in Southeast Asia, the Caribbean, Africa, Europe, and North America. (Armstrong, "A History of Jerusalem: One City, Three Faiths." Ballantine Books,, 1997)

4. Buddhism originated in ancient India in the 6th century BCE with the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, known as the Buddha. Initially, it spread within the Indian subcontinent through the missionary efforts of the Buddha and his followers, as well as through royal patronage and trade networks. The reign of Emperor Ashoka in the 3rd century BCE played a crucial role in promoting Buddhism and facilitating its expansion to other parts of Asia, including Sri Lanka, Central Asia, Southeast Asia, China, and eventually Japan and Tibet. Over time, Buddhism diversified into multiple schools and sects, each with its own doctrinal emphasis and cultural adaptations. Today, Buddhism is practiced across Asia and has gained prominence in the West, with significant communities in Europe, North America, and Australia.

Influence of Cultural Factors on Religious Practices

Cultural factors exert a profound influence on religious practices, shaping the forms, interpretations, and expressions of faith within diverse communities worldwide. One significant aspect of this influence is evident in the rituals and ceremonies observed within religious traditions. Cultural norms, traditions, and values often inform the content and performance of rituals, imbuing them with unique symbols, customs, and meanings that reflect the collective identity of a particular culture. For example, Hindu rituals in India may differ significantly from those practiced by Hindu communities in the diaspora, as they adapt to the cultural context and historical experiences of their respective environments. (Smith H. , "The Soul of Christianity: Restoring the Great Tradition." HarperOne, , 2005)

Cultural factors play a crucial role in shaping the religious identity and worldview of individuals within a community. Religious practices are often intertwined with cultural practices, rites of passage, and social customs, contributing to the transmission of cultural values and heritage from one generation to the next. Through participation in religious rituals and observances, individuals not only express their faith but also affirm their cultural identity and sense of belonging within their community. This interplay between religion and culture fosters a dynamic relationship that continually evolves over time, reflecting changes in societal norms, beliefs, and values.

Furthermore, cultural factors influence the interpretation and adaptation of religious teachings and doctrines within different cultural contexts. Religious texts and traditions are often subject to diverse interpretations and reinterpretations as they encounter new cultural environments and societal challenges. This process of cultural adaptation and syncretism results in the emergence of distinct religious expressions and practices that resonate with the cultural sensibilities and experiences of local communities. For example, the practice of Buddhism in East Asia may incorporate elements of indigenous beliefs and traditions, leading to the development of unique Buddhist rituals and ceremonies. (Durkheim, 1912)

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Overall, the influence of cultural factors on religious practices underscores the dynamic and complex nature of religious experience within diverse societies. Cultural norms, traditions, and values shape the ways in which individuals and communities engage with their faith, express their beliefs, and interpret religious teachings. By recognizing and understanding the interplay between religion and culture, we gain insight into the rich tapestry of human spirituality and the diverse ways in which people seek meaning, connection, and transcendence in their lives.

Similarities and Differences Across Religious Traditions

Across diverse religious traditions, there exist both striking similarities and profound differences that reflect the multifaceted nature of human spirituality and cultural expression. One notable similarity is the presence of sacred texts or scriptures revered as authoritative sources of divine guidance and wisdom. For example, the Quran holds a central place in Islam, the Bible serves as a foundational text for Christianity, the Vedas are revered in Hinduism, and the Tripitaka is essential to Buddhism. These scriptures often contain narratives of creation, moral teachings, rituals, and guidelines for ethical living, serving as touchstones of faith and sources of spiritual inspiration for adherents. (Sells, 1999)

Furthermore, many religious traditions share common ethical principles and moral values that emphasize compassion, justice, humility, and the sanctity of life. Across cultures, teachings such as the Golden Rule—treat others as you would like to be treated—serve as universal ethical imperatives that transcend sectarian boundaries. Moreover, the promotion of altruism, charity, and social responsibility is often a core tenet of religious teachings, reflecting a shared concern for the well-being of others and the fostering of communal harmony.

Alongside these similarities, religious traditions also exhibit significant differences in their theological doctrines, rituals, and practices. For instance, while monotheistic religions such as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam affirm belief in

a single, transcendent deity, polytheistic traditions like Hinduism and ancient Greek mythology venerate multiple gods and goddesses, each associated with specific attributes and functions. Similarly, the concept of salvation or liberation varies across religions, ranging from the Christian notion of redemption through faith in Jesus Christ to the Hindu pursuit of moksha through spiritual enlightenment and the Buddhist goal of nirvana through the cessation of suffering. (Parrinder, 1961)

The cultural, historical, and geographical contexts in which religions emerge contribute to their distinctive beliefs, rituals, and expressions. For example, indigenous religious traditions rooted in specific landscapes and ecosystems often incorporate animistic beliefs and rituals honoring the natural world, while urban religions may emphasize communal worship in ornate temples or grand cathedrals. Additionally, the interaction and exchange between different religious traditions through trade, conquest, and migration have led to syncretism, the blending of diverse religious elements to create hybrid forms of spirituality that reflect the dynamic nature of human religious experience.

Common Themes and Shared Values

Across the vast spectrum of major world religions, there exists a tapestry of common themes and shared values that weave through the fabric of human spirituality. At the heart of many religious traditions lies a profound reverence for the sanctity of life and the interconnectedness of all beings. Concepts such as compassion, empathy, and altruism serve as foundational principles guiding ethical conduct and fostering social cohesion. Whether expressed through the Christian principle of loving one's neighbor as oneself, the Islamic emphasis on charity and social justice, or the Buddhist commitment to alleviating suffering, the imperative to cultivate virtues that promote human flourishing transcends cultural and religious boundaries.

Deep-seated yearning for transcendence and ultimate meaning animates the spiritual quest across diverse religious landscapes. Whether through prayer, meditation, ritual, or

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contemplation, adherents of various faith traditions seek to forge a connection with the divine, the sacred, or the transcendent dimension of existence. This shared pursuit of spiritual fulfillment underscores the universality of the human experience and highlights the intrinsic value of religious practices as vehicles for personal transformation and communal cohesion. (Ruether, 2011)

Furthermore, many world religions espouse a moral framework grounded in principles of justice, fairness, and reciprocity. The Golden Rule, encapsulated in variations such as "do unto others as you would have them do unto you," serves as a guiding ethical precept in Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and other faith traditions. This ethic of reciprocity fosters empathy, compassion, and a sense of responsibility toward others, transcending cultural and religious divides to affirm the inherent dignity and worth of every individual.

Additionally, the recognition of the sacredness of the natural world and the stewardship responsibility entrusted to humanity emerges as a recurring theme across religious traditions. Whether articulated through the Christian concept of stewardship, the Islamic

notion of Khalifa (vicegerency), or the indigenous reverence for the Earth as a living, interconnected community, many faiths emphasize the imperative to care for the environment and preserve the delicate balance of ecosystems. This ecological consciousness underscores the interdependence of all life forms and calls for a harmonious relationship between humanity and the natural world, transcending religious boundaries to address pressing ecological challenges facing the planet. (Prothero, 2010)

Summary

This comparative analysis explores major world religions, investigating both shared elements and distinctive features. It delves into core doctrines, rituals, and ethical teachings of Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Sikhism. Through this examination, commonalities such as moral principles, cosmological beliefs, and the quest for spiritual enlightenment emerge, alongside differences in theological concepts, religious practices, and cultural expressions. By offering a nuanced understanding of religious diversity, this study encourages interfaith dialogue and mutual respect among adherents of different traditions.

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