

Religion: Anti-Christ, 1 John 2:18, 22; False Religions of False Teachers: Pantheism, Polytheism, Deism, Hinduism, Islam: Shari'ah Law Defined7) Anti-Christ.

1 John 2:18 - Students, it is the last favorable time [to execute the Christian way of life] and just as you have heard that the antichrist will come [the Beast-Dictator of the Tribulation] even now [the Church Age] many antichrists have come. Therefore we have come to realize that it is the last favorable time.

1 John 2:22 - What sort of a person is the liar? No one else but someone who denies that Jesus is the Christ! This same one is the antichrist: the person who repudiates both the Father and the Son.

8) False religions of false teachers:

a. Pantheism. The view that the universe is to be identified with God, i.e., that there is only one reality, alternately describable as "God" or "nature." Pantheism is clearly incompatible with the Christian view of creation and of the creature-Creator distinction so fundamental to Christian theology. In the tradition of Western culture, (Baruch) Spinoza \spa-nō'-za\ is the classic exponent of pantheism, but it is capable of a great diversity of expression.¹

b. Polytheism. The belief in many gods. The various historic types or traditions of polytheism have given rise to many different forms of supernatural powers, gods, and demons, who typically have to be worshipped or, if malevolent, warded off with appropriate rituals.²

c. Deism. An unorthodox religious attitude that found expression especially among a group of English writers beginning with Edward Herbert in the first half of the 17th century and ending with Henry St. John, 1st Viscount Bolingbroke, in the middle of the 18th century.

In general, deism refers to what can be called natural religion, the acceptance of a certain body of religious knowledge that is inborn in every person or that can be acquired by the use of reason, as opposed to knowledge acquired through either revelation or the teaching of any church.³

¹ Paul Helm, "Pantheism," in *The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*, rev. ed., gen ed., J. D. Douglas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), 745.

² *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica: Micropaedia*, 15th ed. (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1979), 8:103.

³ *Ibid.*, 3:439.

- d. Hindu. Satan's smorgasbord. It incorporates all forms of belief and worship without requiring the selection or elimination of any. God is said to transcend verbal definition. Consequently, all theology is simply a human attempt to define the infinite. As a result of this ambiguousness, there is no official definition of Hinduism. *Webster's* tries:

The dominant religion of India that emphasizes dharma \der'-ma\ with its resulting ritual and social observances and often mystical contemplation and ascetic practices.⁴

The ultimate reality is called Brahma and all things emanate from it. Brahma is the creator god of the Hindu sacred triad that includes Shiva \shi'-va\ and Vishnu \vish'-nü\.

Basic doctrine includes the transmigration of souls, i.e., reincarnation. Karma is the force that determines the conditions into which a soul is reborn. This process of rebirth is called *Samsara* \sam-sär'-a\, the indefinitely repeated cycle of birth, misery, and death.

It has given rise to an acquiescence that may verge upon fatalism—the belief that any misfortune is the effect of *karman*, of one's deeds, and so one's own doing—and to the conviction that the course of world history is conditioned by the collective *karman*.

NOTE: Karma is a gross example of human viewpoint that tries to explain the problems that are common to the devil's world: fallen people in a fallen environment with no biblical problem-solving devices. Here are some of the principles that karma is incapable of comprehending:

1. Poor decisions from a position of weakness limit future options and produce misery; good decisions from a position of strength broaden future options and produce happiness.
2. No confidence and courage leads to fatalism.
3. Guilt results from every mistake followed by fear of expected karma.
4. Failure to understand laws of divine establishment results in divine justice on heathen societies.
5. Collective divine discipline is imposed on client nations that are degenerate.
6. Pivot power always trumps political power.
7. Misery is inevitable for those who reject Christ.
8. The source of misery is not karma but rather divine judgment for rejection of Christ.

⁴ *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed., s.v.: "Hinduism."

Hinduism sees within man the seed of Brahman. To the extent that man is attached to worldly objects he is thus removed from salvation and eternal peace. Salvation is accomplished through the maintenance of certain rituals, meditation, ethical conduct, and devotion to Brahman.

Of the major religions, the ones with a text believed to be divine revelation are Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism and to some degree Confucianism.

Another characteristic of Hindu belief is recognition of the Veda \vā'-da\, the most ancient body of religious literature, as an absolute authority revealing fundamental and unassailable truth. At the same time, however, its content—i.e., the Eternal Reality as Word—has long been practically unknown, so that even though it is venerated from a distance by every traditional Hindu and even though those Indians who reject its authority (such as Buddhists and Jains \jīns\ are regarded as unfaithful to their tradition, it is, in fact, hardly drawn upon at all, not even for edification.⁵

e. Islam. The word in Arabic means “submission” and that to the will of Allah. This will is made known through the Qur’an which, it is asserted, was revealed to Muhammad by the angel Gabriel who is claimed to have said to him, “You are the Messenger of God.”

Muhammad is said to follow a long line of earlier prophets, namely Adam, Noah, Moses, and Jesus.

All prophets are human and never a part of divinity: they are simply recipients of revelation from God. Muhammad is accepted as the last prophet in this series and its greatest member, for in him all messages of earlier prophets were consummated. He had no miracles except the Qur’an, the like of which no human can produce.

The confession of faith is *As-Shahadah* \as shā-hād'-ä\ which means “The Declaration”: “There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is his prophet.”⁶ This profession of faith is the first of the Five Pillars of Islam, the other four being: *salat*, the five daily prayers; *zakat*, almsgiving; *sawm*, fasting during Ramadan; and *hajj*, a pilgrimage to Mecca.

Islam unites both religious and secular life as one: the mosque is the state and the state is the mosque.

This union of mosque and state is held together by Islamic Law called Shari‘ah:

⁵ “Hinduism,” in *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica: Macropaedia*, 15th ed. (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1979), 8:889.

⁶ Muhammad does not qualify as a prophet. See Deuteronomy 18:15; Isaiah 40:3 compared with John 1:23.

Shari'ah (Arabic: Road to a Watering Place; hence, the path to God), the most fundamental religious concept of Islam, namely its law, systemized during the 8th and 9th centuries A.D. Since no distinction was made between religious and secular law, the Shari'ah concerned itself with the total religious, political, social, domestic, and private life of those who profess Islam.

Shari'ah differs fundamentally from Western law in that it is not, in theory, man-made, but grounded in divine revelation; to the orthodox Muslim, revelation ended with the death of Muhammad, leaving the Shari'ah virtually immutable.⁷

⁷ *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica: Micropaedia*, 15th ed. (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1979), 9:115.