

World Religions and the Natural World

World Religions · Answer Key · 18 Questions

1. In Jainism, what is the primary ethical principle that dictates extreme non-violence towards all living beings, including insects and plants?

- A) Satya (Truth)
- B) Ahimsa (Non-violence)**
- C) Asteya (Non-stealing)
- D) Brahmacharya (Chastity)

2. Which sacred text in Hinduism describes the cow as a symbol of prosperity and is considered highly revered, with its slaughter forbidden?

- A) Upanishads
- B) Bhagavad Gita
- C) Vedas**
- D) Puranas

3. In Buddhism, the concept of 'dependent origination' (Pratityasamutpada) emphasizes the interconnectedness of all phenomena, including the natural world. Which animal is often used as a symbol for the Buddha's enlightenment and the cycle of rebirth?

- A) Lion
- B) Elephant
- C) Peacock
- D) Lotus flower**

4. In Sikhism, which of the following is a core belief related to nature, emphasizing the divine presence in all creations?

- A) The Earth is a temporary illusion.
- B) God is found exclusively in temples.
- C) All of creation is a manifestation of the Divine.**
- D) Animals are to be exploited for human progress.

5. The concept of 'Tikkun Olam' (repairing the world) in Judaism often extends to environmental stewardship, advocating for responsible use of natural resources. Which biblical passage is frequently cited in this context?

- A) Genesis 1:28 (Be fruitful and multiply)
- B) Exodus 20:8 (Remember the Sabbath day)
- C) Deuteronomy 22:6 (Do not take the mother bird with her young)**
- D) Leviticus 19:18 (Love your neighbor)

6. Indigenous Australian religions often incorporate animistic beliefs, where natural elements and animals are considered to possess spirits. What is the 'Dreaming' or 'Dreamtime' in these traditions?

- A) A period of deep sleep experienced by elders.
- B) The creation period and the ongoing spiritual force connecting all things.**
- C) A time for hunting and gathering.
- D) A mythical place where ancestors rest permanently.

7. In Zoroastrianism, which element is considered particularly sacred and is associated with purity, requiring careful protection from pollution?

- A) Earth
- B) Water
- C) Air
- D) Fire**

8. Shinto, the indigenous religion of Japan, emphasizes the reverence for 'kami,' which are spirits or deities. These kami are often associated with:

- A) Abstract philosophical concepts.
- B) Specific natural phenomena and landscapes.**
- C) Human rulers and emperors only.
- D) Ancient historical battles.

9. In Rastafarianism, the concept of 'Ital' refers to a natural and wholesome way of life. This often includes dietary practices that:

- A) Emphasize the consumption of processed foods.
- B) Avoid meat and processed ingredients, focusing on natural foods.**
- C) Include the hunting of endangered species.
- D) Are based on religious fasting on Tuesdays.

10. The Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam) generally acknowledge a divine creation of the natural world. In Islam, the Quran often refers to signs of God's power in:

- A) Human technological advancements.
- B) Natural phenomena like the stars, rain, and animals.**
- C) The study of artificial intelligence.
- D) The construction of grand buildings.

11. Christianity, particularly in certain denominations, has developed theological perspectives on environmental care. The concept of 'creation care' argues that humans have a mandate from God to:

- A) Dominate and exploit all natural resources.
- B) Subdue nature for human benefit without restraint.
- C) Be stewards and caretakers of God's creation.**
- D) Ignore the natural world as separate from the spiritual realm.

12. In Bahá'í Faith, what is a key teaching regarding humanity's relationship with the natural world?

- A) Humans are inherently separate from and superior to nature.
- B) Nature is to be controlled and manipulated for human convenience.
- C) The natural world is a divine creation that should be respected and protected.**
- D) Animals exist solely for human consumption and experimentation.

13. Certain Indigenous American spiritual traditions view animals as having sacred roles. For example, the eagle is often revered in Plains tribes as a messenger and symbol of:

- A) Deception and trickery.
- B) Courage, wisdom, and a connection to the Great Spirit.**
- C) Greed and materialism.
- D) Isolation and loneliness.

14. The Sufi tradition within Islam often uses nature metaphors to describe spiritual states. Which natural element is commonly used to symbolize the soul's journey and purification?

- A) Stone
- B) Desert sand
- C) Water**
- D) Metal

15. In Theravada Buddhism, the emphasis on mindfulness extends to one's interaction with the environment. This often leads to practices that promote:

- A) Extensive deforestation for development.
- B) Minimal impact and respect for all life.**
- C) The exploitation of natural resources for profit.
- D) The creation of large artificial landscapes.

16. The Hare Krishna movement (ISKCON), a branch of Hinduism, advocates for a vegetarian diet. What is the primary religious reason behind this practice?

A) To prove their physical strength.

B) To uphold the principle of non-violence (ahimsa) towards animals.

C) To reduce food expenses significantly.

D) To imitate the eating habits of ancient sages.

17. Taoism, originating in China, emphasizes living in harmony with the Tao, the fundamental principle of the universe. This often translates to an appreciation for:

A) Aggressive human intervention in nature.

B) The natural flow and cycles of the cosmos and its elements.

C) The construction of massive technological infrastructure.

D) The dominance of human will over natural processes.

18. The concept of 'purity' is significant in many religions. In Hinduism, which natural element is often considered inherently pure and used in rituals?

A) Mud

B) Smoke

C) Water

D) Ash