

The first period of AP WORLD HISTORY (to 600BCE) mentions the following about RELIGION:

1. Early states were often led by a ruler whose source of power was believed to be divine or had divine support

One example of this divinity held in one ruler comes from the Chinese dynasty of the Zhou (1046-256 BCE). Below, Yin instructs a new King how to be a good ruler and maintain the MANDATE OF HEAVEN (The *Mandate of Heaven* claimed that a higher power, namely the "Heavens" that controlled all of the happenings in the universe, had wanted the Zhou to overthrow the Shang because, despite the Shang originally coming to power in favor of the Heavens, the unjust and oppressive ways they ruled caused them to lose favor with Heaven. Read the excerpt below and answer the questions.)

In the twelfth month of the first year...I Yin made sacrifices to the former king, and presented the newly crowned young king before the shrine of his grandfather...I Yin then clearly described all the positive qualities and characteristics that made the young king's grandfather a great king.

He said, "Oh! In the olden times the former kings of the first dynasty (Shang Dynasty) earnestly tried to be the best people they could be, and so Heaven didn't send any disasters. The gods of the hills and rivers were peaceful, and the birds and beasts, the fishes and tortoises, all enjoyed their lives according to their nature. But the descendants of those kings did not follow their example, and great Heaven sent down disasters.

"Our king of the Zhou brilliantly displayed his wisdom. In place of oppression he ruled with generosity and kindness, and millions of people gave him their love...He tried to find wise men, who would be helpful to you, his descendant and heir to the throne. He created the laws and punishments, and warned those who were in positions of authority about people's evil ways..."

"The ways of Heaven are certain: On the person who does good, it sends down all blessings, and on the evil-doer it sends down all miseries. If you are good ruler, all of the regions of the empire will be happy and rejoice. If you are a bad ruler, this will bring dishonor to your ancestors and will ruin the empire."

1. What is the *Mandate of Heaven*?

2. How will the new King rule with Divine support?

3. Why did the SHANG fall?

2. New religious beliefs developed in this period continued to have strong influences in later periods.

EXAMPLES INCLUDE: *Vedic Religion, Hebrew Monotheism, Zoroastrianism*

From the Upanishads (Hindu Holy text)...

...A goldsmith takes an old ornament and fashions it into a new and more beautiful one. In the same way the soul as it leaves one body, looks for a new body which is more beautiful.

The soul is divine. But through ignorance people often identify the soul with the mind, the senses and the emotions. Some people even identify the soul with the elements of earth, water, air, space and fire.

As people act, so they become. If their actions are good, they become good; if their actions are bad, they become bad. Good deeds purify those who perform them; bad deeds pollute those who perform them.

Thus we may say that we are what we desire. Our will springs from our desires; our actions spring from our will; and what we are, springs from our actions. We may conclude, therefore, that the state of our desires at the time of death determines our next life; we return to earth in order to satisfy those desires.

What tenet of Hinduism does this describe?

From the Torah (בְּרֵאשִׁית, first book of the Torah)...

The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.[a] I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you

What does this story tell you about the Hebrews?

From the second book of the Torah (שְׁמוֹת):

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| 1. I am the Lord your god | 6. You shall not kill/murder |
| 2. You shall have no other gods before me | 7. You shall not commit adultery |
| 3. Do not take the name of the Lord in vain | 8. You shall not steal |
| 4. Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy | 9. You shall not bear false witness |
| 5. Honor your father and mother | 10. You shall not covet your neighbor's belongings |

What do the first two commandments tell you about Judaism?

From the Avesta (Zoroastrian Holy Text)...

"I praise good thoughts, good words, and good deeds and those that are to be thought, spoken, and done. I do accept all good thoughts, good words, and good deeds. I do renounce all evil thoughts, evil words, and evil deeds."

What key religious concept is echoed above?

"I announce (and) carry out for the creator Ahura Mazda, the radiant and glorious, the greatest and the best, the most beautiful, the most firm, the wisest, and the one of all whose body is the most perfect, who attains His ends the most infallibly, because of his Asha, to him who disposes our minds aright, who sends His joy-creating grace afar; who made us, and has fashioned us, and who has nourished and protected us, who is the most bounteous Spirit!"

How is Ahura Mazda similar to the Hebrew God?