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GRADE 12 2022

Religion Studies

RELIGION IN AREAS OF CONFLICT
SELF STUDY GUIDE
BOOK 3

basic education
Department: Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Second Chance Matric Support Programme

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1. Introduction

The declaration of COVID-19 as a global pandemic by the World Health Organisation in 2020, led to the disruption of effective teaching and learning in all schools across South Africa.

Many learners, across all grades, spent less time in class due to the phased-in reopening of schools, as well as rotational attendance and alternative timetables that were implemented across provinces, to comply with social distancing rules. This led to severe teaching and learning time losses. Consequently, the majority of schools were not able to complete all the relevant content prescribed in Grade 10-12 in accordance with the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement.

In order to mitigate and intervene against the negative impact of COVID-19, as part of the Recovery Learning Plan for Grades 10-12, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) worked in collaboration with Subject Specialists from various Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) to develop this Self-Study Guide for learners in Grade 12.

The content in this study guide is critical towards laying a strong foundation to improve your performance in this subject.

The main aims of this study guide is to:

- Assist learners to improve their performance, by revising and consolidating their understanding of the topic;
- Close existing content gaps in this topic; and
- Improve and strengthen understanding of the content prescribed for this topic.

This study-guide is meant as a self-study guide for learners and therefore should be used as a revision resource to consolidate learning at the end of a particular topic taught in class.

Learners are encouraged to complete the exercises and activities to test their understanding and to expose themselves to high quality assessment.

This study guide can also be used by study groups and peer learning groups, to prepare for the final NSC examination in this subject.

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2. HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE

This study guide covers 9 of the topics that pose the most challenges in the examinations. Please also note the remaining topics that are set out in the CAPS. This Self-Study Guide includes the following topics:

1. History and present dynamics of inter-religious relationships in South African, African and international communities
2. Religion in areas of recent conflict in South Africa, Africa, and the world
3. Analysis of secular worldviews with reference to the definition of religion and universal dimensions of religion: atheism, agnosticism, humanism, and materialism
4. Religion and the natural sciences
5. Religious freedom, human rights, and responsibilities
6. Normative Sources
7. Internal Differentiation
8. Central Teachings
9. Social Issues

This is a Self-Study Guide that is designed to explain the concepts and content that is examinable in Religion Studies Paper 1 and Paper 2. It also provides explanations of the common action/command verbs used in the Question Papers and how to use these to analyse and understand what you are required to do to respond to a question. It also provides quick tips on how to approach specific content in an exam situation in order to save time.

The booklets have been designed to provide simplified notes and a variety of questions sourced from various past question papers. Instead of providing responses for all questions, the Self Study Guides assist with the analysis and interpretation of questions. This is to ensure that learners focus on studying the content instead of the questions. Learners are also reminded that the same content may be tested in different ways. Therefore, it is important to understand the command verbs and to have both conceptual and content knowledge.

A second package of the Self Study Guide labelled the Revision Package focuses on subject specific key concepts as examined over a period of 6 years and sourced from past Question Papers. There are 12 sets of questions/activities and Marking Guidelines provided to guide you and assist with revision and exam preparation. You are expected to answer these questions without looking at the responses. You may do a self-assessment after you have completed answering the questions.

Additional to this Self Study Guide learners are expected to:

1. Know current affairs or topical issues in the media that are relevant to Religion Studies
2. Use of past NSC papers – (Thutong and past papers on your internet search engine)
3. Use the 2021 Examination Guidelines (Thutong – Religion Studies Exam Guideline)
4. Use various textbooks, newspapers and other sources such as internet

Lastly, Religion Studies is designed to test critical thinking, application of knowledge and provision of advice or solutions from a religious perspective. Therefore, a good grounding in the prescribed knowledge, skills and values in Religion Studies is essential.

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RELIGION IN AREAS OF CONFLICT

3. Background

Since the beginning of time, mankind had been caught up in countless conflicts. Some conflicts arise as a result of scarcity of resources or over territory. Other conflicts are a result of differences between people, groups or nations. African conflicts are caused by a variety of factors, such as ethnicity, race, resources and religion. Conflict develops from objective factors, subjective factors and trigger factors:

1. **Objective factors** are factors such as **fighting for control over territory or resources.**
2. **Subjective factors** can be factors such as **religion, ethnicity or language**
3. **Trigger factors** are factors that may be used to mobilise people to participate in conflict, such as **religion, ethnicity[1] and identity**

To classify a conflict as a religious conflict is a complex task. Academics like Hoffman and Gurr are of the opinion that many conflicts which are classified as religious conflicts are not actually religious conflicts. They base their argument on the fact that in many cases, the root causes of conflict are either political or economic factors.

In this section we examine the role of religion in areas of conflict. We examine whether religion ***causes*** conflict, or whether it ***resolves*** conflict, and the extent to which religion is involved in conflict. Conflicts should be studied in all THREE geographical regions stipulated i.e South Africa, Africa and the world. 'Recent conflict' means conflicts in, say, the last 50 years. It is therefore important to practise analysis of conflict in different countries, and to develop certain generic skills which can be applied to ANY conflict situation.

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Identify an area of recent conflict
2. Analyse the conflict
3. State the role of religion in the conflict
4. Discuss whether religion is part of the problem or the solution
5. Evaluate whether religion can play a role in the prevention of conflict.

[1] A social group that shares a common culture (tribal, religious, language, cultural origin, etc.

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3.1 Key Concepts

KEY CONCEPT	MEANING
Conflict	a serious disagreement or argument, typically over a long period.
Religious Conflict	a situation in which religious adherents are involved in a serious disagreement or argument with another religious group. The main cause of religious conflict is rejection and intolerance of different religious views. The nature of the conflict can range from verbal disagreements to more serious conflict leading to violence and armed conflicts (also called religious wars).
An Insider perspective **(Grade 10)**	is a viewpoint from an individual within a place/ community/religion, who has first-hand experience of the norms, values and events.
An outsider perspective **(Grade 10)**	is a viewpoint of someone who is not from the certain place/ community/ religion. He/she has little or no experience of that place/religion/culture or event.
Bias **(Grade 10)**	showing prejudice for or against one person or group, especially in a way considered to be unfair.
Neutrality (Grade 10)	the ability to analyse the situation without taking sides.
Religious dialogue (Grade 10)	means the exchange of ideas or opinions on a particular religious issue. The goal of dialogue is to settle any disagreements in a peaceful an amicable way.
Zionism	a movement for (originally) the re-establishment and (now) the development and protection of a Jewish nation in what is now Israel.
Non partisan	not biased, neutral
Religious extremism	The desire to impose, by coercion, one's religious beliefs on others. Extremist ideology implies a certainty in the righteousness of the cause.
Religious fundamentalism	Belief in the strict, literal interpretation of scripture in a religion. It also includes a rejection of alternative views.
Inter-religious conflict	Conflict between two or more different religions.
Intra-religious conflict	Conflict between branches of the same religion.
Objective	Unbiased view. Based on evidence /facts.
Subjective	Based on personal views

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3.2 REVISION: GRADE 10 AND 11

3.2.1 Important principles of research in religion studies

In the analysis of any **conflict**[2] situation, it is essential to maintain a **NEUTRAL PERSPECTIVE.** While it is natural to have a bias in matters that involve one's own religious values, one must maintain neutrality in analysis of religious conflict.

It is also important to use neutral, unbiased references and websites, as religious or political sources will portray issues from a particular viewpoint. It is advisable to use more than just one source.

3.2.2 Religious conflict and the state

How a state (government) responds to religious conflict, depends largely on the status it attaches to religion. Initially, political and religious control were united under a single leadership: the ruler was both political and religious head. However, as a result of ongoing religious wars in 16th and 17th century Europe, there were moves to separate religion and the state Hence the birth of the secular state. (Refer to the chapter on SECULARISM AS A WORLD VIEW)

Conflict will be influenced by the relationship that exists between the state and religions within that state. With a **state religion**, one particular religious organisation is recognised and supported by the state. This means that even though the state and religion are separated, that specific organisation influences law-making, and enjoys special status in the eyes of the state. When one religion is endorsed in this way, it may lead to varying degrees of dissatisfaction and intolerance by non-state religions. The state may well ignore religious persecution of minority/non state religions. In the worst case scenario, the state may even support the persecution of the non-state religion.

Example: During the 16th century life was hard for Muslims and Jews during the Catholic Inquisition in Europe. However, it was also hard for the new reformist group of Protestants within the Christian religion. This was because they did not adhere to the official Roman Catholic views.

[2]Conflict synonyms: disunity, division, friction, infighting, schism, strife, variance, war.

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3.2.3 Religious conflict and the Secular State

1. With a **secular state**[3] the government officially stays neutral in matters of religion, and does not support any specific religion. The powers of state and religion remain separate. This creates an environment of **inclusivism**[4]. Because all religions are seen as equal in a secular state, there is little or no discrimination on the basis of religion. Those who are religious and non-religious can live without being persecuted or discriminated against.

Examples:

2. South Africa
3. New Zealand
4. United States

In the Bill of Rights of the South African Constitution, freedom of religion is guaranteed. Different religions do co-exist, with cordial inter-religious relationships.. There is no state religion that can dominate other religions. This freedom of religion includes the freedom of religious observance and conscience in public schools.
The human rights culture in South Africa creates an environment where hate speech is not tolerated. There is swift action whenever there is an occurrence of intolerance, **prejudice**[5] and hate speech. This prevents differences of belief escalating into violence.

3.2.4 Religious conflict and the religious state

A religious state is one which is under the control of a religion. There are hardly any such states today. The Vatican is but one example of a religious state.

However, many countries have religions endorsed by the state (state religion). In such cases, the state is not secular, but it is not necessarily controlled by the religion. The degree to which a state enforces compliance with the state religion can vary considerably. It is comparatively high in Saudi Arabia, and minimal in England and Denmark.

[3]The secular state is a state which guarantees individual and corporate freedom of religion.
[4]Inclusivism states that other religions are valid.
[5]Prejudice is an assumption or an opinion about someone simply based on that person's membership to a particular group.

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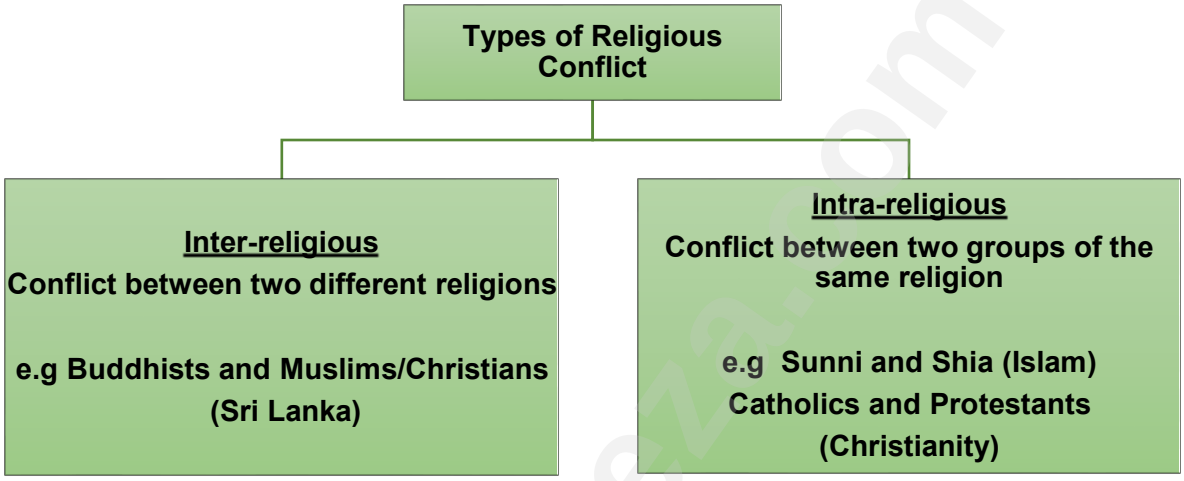
3.3 Types of Religious Conflict

Religious conflict can be divided into two distinct categories, namely *inter-religious* and *intra-religious* conflict. When examples are studied and activities are attempted, it is important to understand the type of conflict that is involved.



3.3.1 Inter-religious Conflict

Inter-religious conflicts occur between two or more different religions. They are characterised by religious hatred and **intolerance**[6]. Religious intolerance happens when a person or group deny people from another group or religion the right to freely practise their beliefs. Where there is a majority religion in a country, they might dominate government, and pass laws favouring their religion and marginalising other religions. The minority religions might feel **discriminated**[7] against and conflict starts, often leading to armed conflict (religious wars). Inter-religious conflict is often fuelled by fundamentalists[8] that believe in religious **exclusivity**[9]. These conflicts take the form of disagreements, oppression of minority religions and even violent armed conflicts.

Examples:

1. Israel-Palestine conflict (Islam/Christianity and Judaism);
2. The Balkans[10], after the break-up of the Soviet Union (Christian Serbians and Muslim Croatians);
3. Myanmar/ Burma (Buddhist and Muslim).

---

[6]Intolerance is unwillingness to let other people act in a different way or hold different opinions from you. Disrespecting other people's beliefs, practices and philosophies.
[7]Religious discrimination is treating a person or group differently because of their particular beliefs.
[8]A person who believes in the strict, literal interpretation of scripture in a religion. All other views are rejected.
[9]Exclusivity view asserts that only one way of belief is true and the others are wrong.
[10]a geographic area in Southeast Europe. They include Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro,etc.

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3.3.2 Intra-religious Conflict

Intra-religious conflict refers to conflict that occurs within different branches of the same religion. These conflicts are rooted in the differences in practices, beliefs and doctrines. The conflict arises when religious fundamentalists disagree with the doctrine of another group within the same religion.

Examples:

1. Northern Ireland (Christianity – Catholic and Protestant);
2. Uganda Christianity – Pentecostal groups.
3. Syria (Islam – Alawite[11] and Sunni Muslims); groups)

Note that even though the conflict in Syria started as a political conflict, it soon evolved into a religious conflict. Those supporting the state (Assad government) are predominantly Alawite Muslims. Those in the resistance movement are mostly Sunni Muslims.
There are, however, several contributing factors. This war is also referred to as a "war by proxy" (fighting through representatives): the Assad government is supported by Russia, while the resistance (initially) was supported by the United States.

This is by far the worst war in modern Syrian history with over 550,000 people believed to be dead and twelve million people displaced.
https://nationalinterest.org/blog/middle-east-watch/how-did-syrian-civil-war-become-proxy-war-80716

[11] Muslim group aligned to Shias in their beliefs.

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3.4 Historical overview of religious conflict

Hundreds of years ago, human societies were largely **homogenous**[12]. There was therefore little or no religious conflict. However, with global migration (movement of people), different cultures and religions came into contact with one another. Sometimes this interaction was characterized by mutual respect; e.g. migration of Muslim refugees to Abyssinia (current Ethiopia) in the year 613CE. At other times it resulted in intolerance, and even suppression of one religion by another. (Christian missionaries among the native Australian inhabitants. -Aborigines).

As the world becomes more **cosmopolitan**[13], with a mix of racial, cultural and religious groups, the possibility of religious conflict increases. However, what appears to be religious conflict is often **exacerbated**[14]by other contributing factors, such as political, ethnic, economical or cultural factors.

Even the longest religious war, the Crusades, was fuelled by other factors, such as:

1. **The Byzantine Emperor** - to regain lost territory and defeat a threatening rival state. (Power, **Imperialism**[15])
2. **The Pope** - to strengthen the papacy in **Italy** and achieve ascendancy as head of the Christian church. (Politics)
3. **Merchants** - to monopolise important trading centres currently under Muslim control and earn money shipping crusaders to the Middle East. (Economics)
4. **Knights** - to defend **Christianity** (its believers and holy places), follow the principles of chivalry and gain material wealth in this life and special favour in the next one. (Economics; Power; Influence)

Source: https://www.worldhistory.org/article/1249/the-crusades-causes--goals/

[12]Homogenous is to be of the same kind; alike.
[13]Cosmopolitan is the inclusion of people from many different countries. Synonyms: multicultural, diverse.
[14]Exacerbated synonyms: worsened, aggravated, intensified.
[15] Imperialism is a policy of extending a country's power and influence through colonization, use of military force, or other means.

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3.5 Religious conflicts in different parts of the world

Religion is supposed to represent our highest ideals and hopes, Religion is supposed to inspire us to seek peace and to live in harmony with others. In some instances, it drives people to shameful or disgraceful behavior. Sometimes Religion is part of the problem and sometimes it is part of the solution (Top Class, Shuter and Shuters).

For Grade 12 purposes you need to have insight into religious conflicts in

1. South Africa,
2. Africa and
3. globally (the world):

3.5.1 Religious conflict in South Africa

There has been no serious inter-religious conflict in South Africa. However, there have been several iincidents of intra –religious conflict.

South Africa is spared the spectacle of religious conflict. There are several measures that have been put in place to prevent religious conflict in South Africa. This has been achieved by:

1. promoting religious freedom and religious tolerance.
2. promoting freedom of opinion and belief.
3. encouraging freedom of expression.
4. encouraging cultural, religious and linguistic practices.
5. promoting tolerance and appreciation of diversity.
6. recognizing religious holidays
7. Many religions are now being officially involved in peace-making processes.

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There has however been intra-religious squabbles (quarrel or disagreements) within South African churches, some of which have contributed towards a split or even bloody skirmishes between the adherents of the same faith. **It is important to note that the religious conflicts in South Africa have not been to the same extent as those in other parts of the world.** Two examples are provided, namely the Shembe Church, and the International Pentecostal Holiness Church (IPHC) in Zuurbekom, Western Johannesburg.

Nazareth Baptist, commonly known as Shembe Church:

No end in sight for battle of Shembe Church Leadership (The Star News, 3 Feb. 2021)
The Nazareth Baptist Church, also known as *iBandla lamaNazaretha or Shembe Church* was founded by Isaiah Shembe in 1910. Hence it is also known as Shembe Church. They honour Isaiah Shembe as their prophet sent by God to restore the teachings of Moses and Jesus. They use leopard skin as part of their uniform. Some of the members use synthetic leopard skin (clothe). They observe Sabbath, avoid pork, smoking and pre-marital sex. They have approximately 6,7 million members mostly in Johannesburg and KwaZulu Natal (KZN).

The conflict started after the 1976 death of Johannes Galilee Shembe. It divided into two groups. The larger group was led by Bishop Amos Shembe until his death in 1995, while the smaller group was led by Rev. Londa Shembe. As of 2009, it was divided into three factions in KZN and one in Gauteng. In 2011 the conflict was filed in the High Court of KwaZulu Natal. In 2016, a ruling was made that Vela Shembe was the legitimate leader of the Nazareth Baptist Church. However, Mduduzi Shembe, the son of the late Bishop Amos Shembe ignored the court ruling and remains a de facto (illegitimate) leader.

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International Pentecostal Holiness Church (IPHC)

in Zuurbekom, Western Johannesburg

Source: International Pentecostal Holiness Church South Africa Logo - Bing images

On July 11, 2020, a group of armed men stormed the IPHC headquarters in Zuurbekom in the early hours of the morning and five people were killed.

Police said that four men were found shot and burnt to death in a car while a fifth man, a security guard, was also fatally shot in his car while he was apparently attending to this complaint.
Police recovered 68 firearms, which included 17 rifles, 24 shotguns and 27 pistols.
The attack prompted the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities (CRL) to start an intervention process in order to find a solution. The commission found that the problems at the church were caused by lack of a clear succession plan.

The killing is believed to have been sparked by divisions in the church over who the rightful leader of one of the country's biggest churches is.
The IPHC, mostly known as the "Modise church", has been involved in an ugly succession battle since the death of its leader Glayton Modise in 2016. Three factions are now claiming the right to the leadership – the Jerusalema faction led by Michael Sandlana, the Leonard Modise faction which is at the headquarters in Zuurbekom and the Tshepiso faction.
The Leonard faction blamed the Jerusalema faction for the attack.
IPHC was founded by the late Reverend Frederick Samuel Modise in 1962, who was succeeded by his son Glayton Modise in 1998. The dispute over who should succeed him after his death is currently before the courts.

Adapted:https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/2022-01-12-case-against-42-people-accused-of-killing-five-people-at-iphc-struck-off-the-roll/

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3.5.2 Religious conflict in Africa

It is important to note that there are many conflicts with a religious undertone in Africa, Sudan is provided as one example of such a conflict in Africa.

Conflict in Sudan and South Sudan:

The north of Sudan comprises mainly Arabic-speaking tribes. A number of tribes, some of whom are animists, while others are Christian, live in the Darfur region and the south. The conflict in Sudan has lasted more than a hundred years. The main factor contributing to the conflict seems to be economical. The economy of the north is better developed than that of the south. The Fur and Masalit tribes are farmers, while the Arabs are mostly nomads. This has led to conflict over grazing. Then the discovery of oil in the south (Heglig fields) has led to factional conflicts, as well as a greater effort by Khartoum to exert political control over the south.

Religion plays only a minor role in the conflict, and therefore this is not a religious war. No attempt has been made by one religion to convert another.When Khartoum imposed Sharia law on the whole country, it resulted in an armed uprising against the government. The Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) was formed and led the attacks against the government. However, the SPLA soon split into different factions, and turned on each other. These splits were mainly along tribal lines and not religious lines. Muslims also enlisted in the SPLA. Even after South Sudan was established as an independent state in 2011, fighting still continued.

The conflict in Sudan is known as the longest running civil war in history. The imposition of Sharia law was therefore not the cause of the conflict. There was also evidence of infighting in the SPLA soon after it was formed. There are numerous other divisions (economic, cultural and tribal), which have continued even after the establishment of South Sudan.

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Some key points about religious conflicts

Note that not all religious conflicts are based on religious causes or the efforts of one religion to convert the other. Religion may be used as a driving force to gain:

1. Political power;
2. Natural resources;
3. Territory, or
4. Other

You may be given a question that wants to determine the extent to which religion contributed towards the conflict. An example about Sudan is provided. Your response could indicate that religion played a minor or major role in the conflict, but you will have to substantiate/provide reasons for your response.

E.g.: To what extent has religion contributed to the conflict in Sudan?

Religion plays only a minor role in the conflict, and therefore this is not a religious war. No attempt is made by one religion to convert another.

The main divisions in this country are ethnic and cultural.
Religion does not seem to be the main source of conflict although it is always perceived.
Two broad groupings can be found in Darfur, namely:

1. Arab tribes called Baggara and many African tribes.
2. The African groups include the Fur, the Masalit and the Zaghawa.

Another set of divisions relates to issues of culture. Most people in the area are Sunni Muslims. There are also Christians and animists. For many centuries, nomads and farmers tried to coexist, but when food became scarce, competition for scarce resources led to conflict. The oil resources of the Heglig fields are also a major factor in the conflict.
Darfur was also the center of the slave trade in Northeast Africa.

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3.5.3 Religous conflict globally

Research shows that religious conflict globally is on the increase.The conflict occurs in so-called democratic countries, whose constitutions guarantee religious freedom, as well in countries that have a state religion. Violence and discrimination against religious groups by governments and rival faiths have reached new highs in all regions of the world.
Below is a snapshot of some global conflicts that involve religion.

Location	Who is fighting?	Why?	Current situation?
Civil War in Sudan	Sudanese government's and its mercenaries against the SPLA in the western region and its non-Arab population.	Religious intolerance and economic factors	South Sudan became an independent state in 2011. Tribal and political conflict continue.
Kashmir	Separatists against the Indian government	Political and religious freedom.	Ongoing human rights violations, as verified by Amnesty International and UN reports.
Ethiopia	Tigray and Ethiopian government.	Independence from central government. Economic reasons.	Ongoing human rights violations.
Yemen	Shiá Houthis against government and Sunni Arab states.	Political, economic and religious(?)	Mass starvation. Peace treaties collapsed.
Myanmar	Rohingya Muslims persecuted by Buddhists	Religious intolerance, economic reasons.	Over 500000 refugees displaced. Lawsuit against Myanmar in International Court of Justice.
Palestine -Israel	Palestinians against the Israeli regime	A mix of religious, cultural, economic and political aspirations.	Ongoing. Many treaties were signed, but all failed. Numerous UN resolutions against Israeli occupation.
Northern Ireland	Protestants against Catholics	Political reasons	Truce/peace

https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/2b1bf8de178943f39da0f91ccace79cc

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Global conflicts – Northern Ireland

A summary of the conflicts in Northern Ireland and the middle East will be provided. Please note once more that these are examples of global religious conflicts. There are many others.

Northern Ireland conflict

"The Northern Ireland conflict, more familiarly called the Troubles, is one of the longest and most entangled confrontations in recent history. For nearly four decades now it has embittered relations between and within the communities living there and spoiled relations between the Republic of Ireland and Great Britain, while also causing severe strains within the latter. For three decades it escalated, punctuated by periodic bloody clashes followed by somewhat calmer periods of tension, during which violence of all sorts, robberies, kidnappings, serious injuries and deaths were all too common.
Gordon Gillespie, historian

It was a complex conflict with multiple armed and political actors. It included an armed insurgency against the state by elements of the Catholic or nationalist population, principally waged by the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA), though it also included other republican factions, with the aim of creating a united independent Ireland.

Arrayed against the IRA were a range of state forces –the Royal Ulster Constabulary or RUC, the regular British Army and a locally recruited Army unit, the Ulster Defense Regiment (UDR).

The Northern Ireland conflict had elements of insurgency, inter-communal violence and at times approached civil war

Another angle of the conflict was sectarian or communal violence between the majority unionist or loyalist Protestant population and the minority Catholic or nationalist one. This was manifested in inter-communal rioting, house burning and expulsion of minorities from rival areas as well as lethal violence including shooting and bombing.

Arising from the loyalist community were a number of paramilitary groups, notably the Ulster Defense Association (UDA) and the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF). Loyalist violence's stated aim was to halt republican violence against the state but in practice their main target was Catholic civilians. Though not the principle focus of their campaign, republicans also killed significant numbers of Protestant civilians.

The IRA called a ceasefire in 1994, followed shortly afterwards by the loyalist groups, leading to multi-party talks about the future of Northern Ireland. The conflict was formally ended with the Belfast or Good Friday Agreement of 1998.

Source: The Northern Ireland Conflict 1968-1998 – An Overview – The Irish Story

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Israeli-Palestinian conflict

Within Israeli and Palestinian society, the above conflict has generated a wide variety of views and opinions. A hallmark of the conflict has been the level of violence witnessed for virtually its entire duration. Fighting has been conducted by regular armies, paramilitary groups, terror cells, and individuals. Casualties have not been restricted to the military, with a large number of civilian fatalities on both sides. There are prominent international actors involved in the conflict. A majority of Jews see the Palestinians' demand for an independent state as just, and think Israel can agree to the establishment of such a state. The majority of Palestinians and Israelis in the West Bank and Gaza Strip have expressed a preference for a two-state solution. Mutual distrust and significant disagreements are deep over basic issues, as is the reciprocal skepticism about the other side's commitment to upholding obligations in an eventual agreement.

The two parties currently engaged in direct negotiation are the Israeli government, led by Naftali Bennett, and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), headed by Mahmoud Abbas. The official negotiations are mediated by an international contingent known as the Quartet on the Middle East (the *Quartet*) represented by a special envoy, that consists of the United States, Russia, the European Union, and the United Nations. The Arab League is another important actor, which has proposed an alternative peace plan. Egypt, a founding member of the Arab League, has historically been a key participant. Jordan, having relinquished its claim to the West Bank in 1988 and holding a special role in the Muslim Holy shrines in Jerusalem, has also been a key participant.

Since 2006, the Palestinian side has been fractured by conflict between two major factions: Fatah, the traditionally dominant party, and it's later electoral challenger, Hamas, which also operates as a militant organization. After Hamas's electoral victory in 2006, the Quartet conditioned future foreign assistance to the Palestinian National Authority (PA) on the future government's commitment to non-violence, recognition of the State of Israel, and acceptance of previous agreements. Hamas rejected these demands, which resulted in the Quartet's suspension of its foreign assistance program, and the imposition of economic sanctions by the Israelis. A year later, following Hamas's seizure of the Gaza Strip in June 2007, the territory officially recognized as the PA was split between Fatah in the West Bank and Hamas in the Gaza Strip. The division of governance between the parties had effectively resulted in the collapse of bipartisan governance of the PA. However, in 2014, a Palestinian Unity Government, composed of both Fatah and Hamas, was formed. The latest round of peace negotiations began in July 2013 and was suspended in 2014.

In May 2021, amidst rising tensions, the 2021 Israel–Palestine crisis began with protests that escalated into rocket attacks from Gaza and airstrikes by Israel.

Source: Adapted from Israeli–Palestinian conflict - Wikipedia

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3.6 Religion as part of the solution - prevention of conflict and peace making

In order for religions to play an active role in the prevention of religious conflict the following factors must be present:

1. Respect for each other; tolerance for one another; displaying a high level of impartiality; understanding the value of compromise; support and cooperation by government.
2. There are some practical steps that religions can follow to resolve a conflict in order to reach a peaceful conclusion:
3. Religious leaders can mediate and have dialogue with all parties.
4. Religious leaders should command respect, and usually have contacts and connections in many parts of the world. These contacts can play a pivotal role in conflict resolution.
5. They must liaise with political parties to find a solution, as the conflict is not religious.
6. They have access to a network of people from other parts of the world that can assist in the resolution of the conflict.
7. Most religions teach peace and compassion. Therefore, members are willing to contribute materially and financially to the victims of conflict.
8. Religious leaders can call an inter-religious summit for dialogue on the conflict.
9. Dialogue means to talk and listen with respect so as to try and understand the problem and seek a solution.
10. The dialogue should lead to practical steps that can be taken on both sides, regardless of religion, towards alleviating the situation.
11. Religious organisations can use their religious conviction about peace in the world and the sacredness of life, to lead and model peaceful behaviour.

Sometimes religion cannot help to stop the conflict. Where conflict is fuelled by politics, economics or culture, religious intervention may be ineffective. During, as well as after the conflict, the role of religions includes mostly humanitarian work, aiming to assist those affected by the conflict to rebuild their lives. In this instance religions and religious organisations may play the following roles:

1. Religious organisations can co-operate to alleviate human suffering by addressing logistical issues such as shortage of food and medical supplies.
2. The African Union, the United Nations and many international aid agencies do try to protect and support civilians.
3. Organisations like the Islamic Relief Agency and the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development focus on practical support, such as medical supply, shelter for victims and the supply of food.

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3.7 Analysis of a religious conflict

When analysing situations of religious conflict there are certain steps that can assist in understanding the conflict in order to accurately analyse it. Here are the steps below:

STEP 1: Carefully read the source/s given.

As you read consider the following questions:

1. Who are the warring/fighting parties.
2. Why are they fighting.
3. Are there contributing factors.
4. When did it start.
5. What made it worse.
6. What has religion to do with it.
7. Which religions are involved, and to what extent.
8. Who has the upper hand, and why.
9. How will/did the conflict end.
10. Could this conflict have been avoided.

STEP 2: Compare the information given with what you already know.

1. Ask yourself **why the particular extract/s was/were chosen**.
2. Look for **emotive language and hate speech**. This usually **indicates bias**.
3. Scrutinise the source. Is it reliable/biased/subjective/objective.
4. Can the information be verified with other reliable sources.
5. Are there other hidden factors.

STEP 3: Apply your knowledge and skills

1. Draw your conclusions. Analyse the role of religion in the conflict.
2. Do you agree with the sources. Why?
3. Is there another view.
4. Is the conflict religious. Why, or why not?
5. How will it end.
6. How can religions prevent conflict.
7. Role of religious organisations in providing humanitarian support.

STEP 4 - Summarise your Findings

1. Give a brief conclusion about your findings.
2. Note that alternative answers are possible.
3. What is important is that you provide reasons for your particular conclusion.

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3.8 Practical examples of how to analyse sources

The purpose of this section is to provide practice on how to analyse religious conflict. Once the skills have been learned, they can be applied to any religious conflict. Example 1 teaches the steps for analysis, while Example 2 includes an exercise.

Example 1 Palestinian-Israeli

The following two articles explain the Palestinian-Israeli situation, but from different perspectives. Compare the two sources, and evaluate the credibility of each.

SOURCE A

1948–49: Israel's War of Independence and the Palestinian Nakbah

The conflict between Palestinian Arabs and **Zionist** (now Israeli) Jews is a modern phenomenon, dating to the end of the nineteenth century. Although the two groups have different religions (Palestinians include Muslims, Christians and Druze), religious differences are not the cause of the strife. The conflict began as a struggle over land. In 1917 the British issued the Balfour declaration, in which they supported the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine This was rejected by the Arabs.From the end of World War I until 1948, the area that both groups claimed was known internationally as Palestine. That a name was also used to designate a less well-defined "Holy Land" by the three monotheistic religions. Following the war of 1948–1949, this land was divided into three parts: the State of Israel, the West Bank (of the Jordan River) and the Gaza Strip.

In Israel, the war is remembered as its War of Independence. In the Arab world, it came to be known as the Nakbah (or Nakba; "**Catastrophe**") because of the large number of refugees and displaced persons resulting from the war.

Subsequently, Israel has been occupying more Palestinian land over the years. This is in violation of several UN resolutions condemning the occupation.
Adapted: https://teachmideast.org/articles/primer-arab-israeli-conflict/

[16]By applying the steps highlighted in **"HOW TO ANALYSE RELIGIOUS CONFLICT"**above, the following can be derived from Source A.

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1. *Parties involved are the Palestian Arabs (Islam, Christian and Druze) and Israeli Jews.*
2. *Other influencing factors include the land and political factors.*
3. *This conflict is made worse by the constant interference from outsider nations.*
4. *The source is NEUTRAL. It is a teaching resource.*
5. *Emotive language indicating bias is absent.*
6. *It starts with recent history, not at a convenient point which leaves out certain facts.*
7. *It rejects "religious conflict" with proof (Balfour Declaration, many religions among the Palestinians).*
8. *Both names of the war are given, embracing both perspectives. This shows fairness.*
9. *Many historical sources will be able to substantiate the information in this source.*

SOURCE B

Jewish Claim over Palestine

Israel came into existence on May 14, 1948. A war began the very next day between Israel and a group of Arab countries, which resented the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine. Jews treat territories around Jerusalem as their holy land and their ancestral home. They refer to ancient scripture claiming that the land was promised by God to their ancestor Abraham and his descendants.

The territory has a long history of struggle dating back to pre-historic period. Kings from Rome, Egypt and Iran were frequentinvaders.The constant invasions led to cultural clashes between the Jews and the new people, who dominated setting off a train of *outmigration

Jews, in the backdrop, were facing problems in parts of Europe. Zionist movement had been launched in the later part of the 19th century asking the Jews to return to their land, inhabited now by Arab Muslims.

Adapted fromhttps://www.indiatoday.in/world/story/jews-israel-palestine-homeland-conflict-1804620-202

*Outmigration means "leaving one place to settle in another.....

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Northern Ireland Conflict

By applying the steps highlighted in **"HOW TO ANALYSE RELIGIOUS CONFLICT"** above, the following can be derived from Source B

1. *The source is biased, as it supports only one party in the conflict. It is a newspaper that is pro-Israel (India and Isreal have entered into military and economic agreements).*
2. *Note the opening sentence. It ignores details of what happened before.*
3. *Religious claims of one party must be respected, but those of others are ignored.*
4. *Abraham was a common ancestor of Jews and Arabs. This is ignored in the article.*
5. *Jerusalem is a holy land to all three Abrahamic faiths. This is also ignored in the article.*

Example 2 : Northern Ireland

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SOURCE C

By Michael Hirst
BBC News

Published14 April 2021

Nearly 90 police officers have been hurt in Northern Ireland's worst street violence for years, after sporadic rioting in several towns and cities since the end of March. The governments in Belfast, London and Dublin have condemned the unrest, with the US calling for calm as police used water cannons for the first time in six years.

Eighteen people have been arrested and 15 charged after crowds of predominantly loyalist youths attacked lines of riot police officers and vehicles with bricks, fireworks and petrol bombs. Violence involving gangs of youths started on 29 March in an area of Londonderry that is loyalist - in favour of keeping Northern Ireland as part of the United Kingdom.

On the night of 7 April, the fighting spilled over a so-called peace wall in west Belfast that divides predominantly Protestant loyalist communities from predominantly Catholic nationalist communities who want to see a united Ireland. A gate that divides the two was smashed open and, during several hours of disorder, police officers and a press photographer were attacked and a bus was hijacked and burned.
The clashes raised concerns of escalating sectarian tensions.
Parts of Northern Ireland are still split along sectarian lines, 23 years after a peace deal largely ended Northern Ireland's Troubles - which lasted almost 30 years and cost the lives of more than 3,500 people.

While there are no clear indications the unrest is being orchestrated by an organised group, the violence has been concentrated in areas where criminal gangs linked to loyalist paramilitaries have significant influence.

Adapted from: https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-56664378

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By using the steps highlighted under "HOW TO ANALYSE RELIGIOUS CONFLICT" above, the following can be derived from the source (extract):

1. Parties involved are the **Protestant** loyalists and the **Catholic** nationalist communities. Both are **branches of Christianity**. This makes it an **intra-religious** conflict.
2. Other influencing factors include the fight for political control as well as economic factors.
3. This conflict was seemingly solved in 1998, but current political affairs have caused a renewed resurgence of this conflict.
4. Although religious beliefs are not the main driver of this conflict, the different sides of the conflict are from different groups within Christianity. This gives the notion that it is a religious conflict. The main driver is still political.
5. The article can be seen as mostly unbiased as no clear preferences are given to a specific side. There is also a lack of emotive language.
6. Also note the source of the article.

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3.9 ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 1

Read the article Source C in example 2 (Northern Ireland), and apply the analytical steps described earlier. Then answer the questions that follow.

1 Who are the parties involved in the conflict?

2 What are the reasons for the conflict?

3 What is the "peace wall?" Why was it built?

4 Note the use of the word "loyalists" in the article.

4.1 Refer to the text and explain who they are.

4.2 What do they want?

4.3 This word shows bias. Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer.

5 What can you say about the source of the article?

6 To what extent is religion involved in this conflict? Elaborate.

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ACTIVITY 2

Read the text below and answer the questions that follow:

Global Increase in Religious Violence

By Reuters

6:50PM 14 Jan 2014

Violence and discrimination against religious groups by governments and rival faiths have reached new highs in all regions of the world except the Americas, according to a new report by the Pew Research Centre.

Social hostility such as attacks on minority faiths or pressure to conform to certain norms was strong in one-third of the 198 countries and territories surveyed in 2012, especially in the Middle East and North Africa, it said on Tuesday.

Religious-related terrorism and sectarian violence occurred in one-fifth of those countries in that year, while states imposed legal limits on worship, preaching or religious attire in almost 30 percent of them, Pew said.

"Religious hostilities increased in every major region of the world except the Americas," Pew said in its report, the latest such survey in a series based on data back to 2007.

The Washington-based center, which is non-partisan and takes no policy position in its reports, gave no reason for the rises noted in hostility against Christians, Muslims, Jews and an "other" category including Sikhs, Bah'ais and atheists.

Hindus, Buddhists and folk religions saw lower levels of hostility and little change in the past six years, according to the report's extensive data.

1. What is meant by “discrimination against religious groups”?
2. Give TWO examples of the above.
3. “Governments and rival faiths” are responsible for religious violence. Explain how each of them can commit religious violence.
4. How are governments and rival faiths related?
5. Why do you think there is a substantial increase in religious violence? Give TWO reasons.
6. Why do you think there is less religious violence in
   6.1 North America
   6.1 South America?

7. What can religious organisations do to prevent religious violence?

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ANSWERS TO ACTIVITY 1

1. They are the Protestant “loyalists” and the Cathilic “unionists.” The loyalists want to remain under UK rule, while the unionists want to be united with Ireland.
2. The conflict is a combination of political, economic and religious factors. The Protestants identify with Protestant UK, while the Catholic unionists identify with Ireland which is 80% Catholic. One group resents being ruled by the other. In addition, there are recent economic pressures brought on by the Brexit deal: Ireland remains part of the EU, while the UK faces trade barriers. Many in Northern Ireland see economic advantages in joining Ireland.
3. This fence was built in suburb of Belfast to separate the Catholic and Protestant residential areas.
4. 4.1 They are mainly Protestant.

   4.2 They wish to remain a part of the United Kingdom (UK), and do not want to join Ireland.

   4.3 Yes. It implies that the Catholics are not loyal. This term is used from the perspective of the UK. In the eyes of those who want to join Ireland, they would be seen as disloyal to their cause.
5. The BBC is generally a trusted, credible source of news. This article acknowleges that criminal elements do exist among the loyalists who support the UK.
6. According to the article, there is no evidence of religious involvement in this incident. OR The community is still split along Catholic/Protestant lines, and the violence occurred mainly where loyalist paramilitary groups operate. Religion does play asignificant role in the conflict.

NOTE: Answers are open to interpretation and may vary depending on individual understanding and justification.

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ANSWERS TO ACTIVITY 2

1. It means that people belonging to certain religious groups are treated unfiarly/unjustly .

2. Laws enacted that put a religious group/s at a disadvantage.e.g

   2.1 The Myanmar government refused to recognise the Rohingya people as citizens, although they lived in the country for more than 500 years.

   2.2 France has banned the wearinf of any religious symbols in public.

3. Governments can enact legislation to benefit certain faiths or religious groups. This empowers and emboldens these groups, while such legislation makes other groups vulnerable to violence.Rival faiths can exert undue influence on governments, and thereby gain economic and political advantage, to the detriment of other faiths.

4. Governments use religious organisations to attract votes, and to further their political cause.Religious groups also use government to get special funding, recognition, protection , etc.

5. The following are some reasons:

   5.1 Mass migration as a result of wars and climate change
   5.2 Weak governments that cannot uphold law and order
   5.3 Religious extremism, where one religious group rejects all other belief systems
   5.4 Reporting and recording of the violence is more accurate (carried out by non partisan resaerch institutes.
   5.5 The definition now includes hate speech, intimidation, forced conversions, and of course physical harm.

6.1 There are strict immigration laws, and border control.
Human rights gropus are very vociferous, and speak out against all forms of discrimination, including religous discrimination.

6.2 It is economically unstable, and does not attract migration into the continent.

7. The entire continent is largely Catholic, so there is very little inter religous interaction.
They should be proactive, and have outreach programmes to build bridges between different religiious groups.
They should have a strong partnership with government/ representation in government.

Note that in open-ended questions, alternative answers are credited, provided that such answers are substantiated.

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9.Questions from past Exam papers (November 2021)

Below is an example from the 2021 QP indicating how Religion and Conflict was tested.

Read the extract below and answer the questions that follow.

UGANDA

In many ways, Uganda has started to become an African success story. It has turned the corner in the fight against HIV and Aids, and has a growing economy. However, it suffers a battle on its borders with Kenya and Sudan against a terror group calling itself the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). This group attacks civilians and kidnaps children to serve in its forces.
The Lord's Resistance Army started in the 1980s as a resistance movement against Ugandan government atrocities. The LRA is led by Joseph Kony, who sees himself as a Christian visionary. He aims to establish an independent state which will be governed according to the Ten Commandments. His other goal is to reinforce Acholi tribal dominance.
[Adapted from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lords_Resistance_Army

NSC Examination Nov 2021

1. Kony 'sees himself as a Christian visionary'. What does this mean?

2. To what extent is this a religious conflict? Give reasons for your answer.
3. How can religious organisations help in the conflict?
4. Explain the following concepts and give ONE relevant example of EACH:

   4.1 Intrareligious conflicts

   4.2 Interreligious conflicts

Note: Prior to 2021, the topic “”Religion in areas of Conflict” was in paper 2, where it was examined as an essay type question. Since it now forms part of Paper 1, it is examined as a contextual question. This is illustrated in the exemplar above.

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