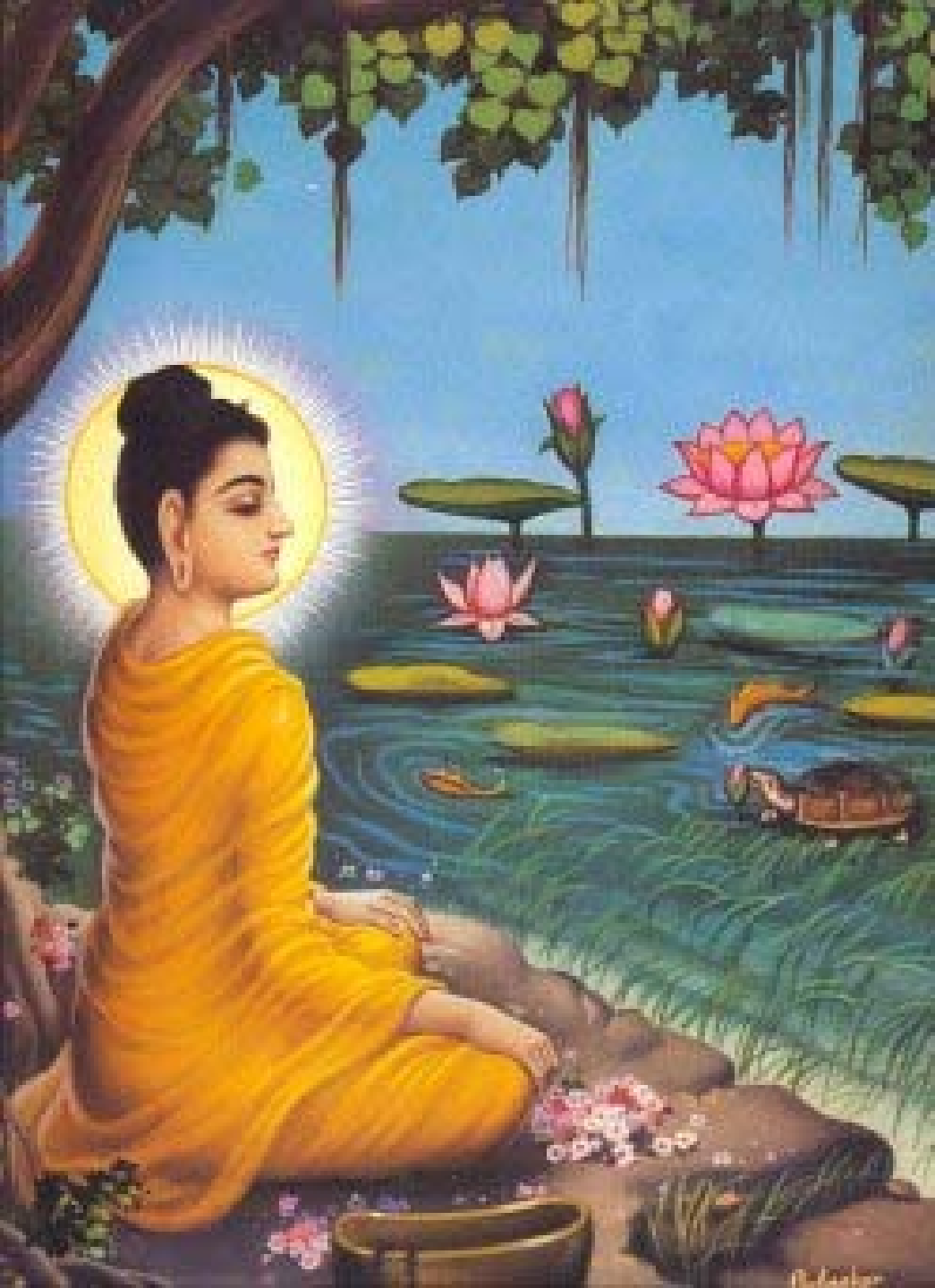


Religions are Experiential



Many religions begin with some individual's experience that leads him or her to develop a framework of answers for life's questions.

example: Moses and the burning bush

Many people join or stay in a religion because of their personal experiences.

example: Saul's experience on the road to Damascus

Faith

All human knowledge begins with faith.

Early on your knowledge of the world was based upon what your parents told, you didn't need proof that what they said was true, *you had **faith** in their word.*

When a science teacher told you that hydrogen and oxygen atoms bond together to form water you placed trust in her because you see her as an expert and because you have come to believe that she is honestly trying to share her knowledge with you, *you had **faith** in her words.*

Humans come to believe many things that they've never seen or heard because some trustworthy source tells them about it, for instance you have never been to India yet you can tell me that it is located in South Asia and borders on the Indian Ocean, you KNOW this because you have FAITH in geography books, maps, and any other source that has told you this fact.

Religions are
Experiential

Faith

Often your faith in some source (parent, teacher, author, etc.) is strengthened when you have some experience that confirms the things you have learned from that source. Or when that source proves its trustworthiness in some way.

Sometimes, however, we lose faith in a source because of some experience, a friend lies, something a parent said would happen never happens, or something a teacher says is disputed by some other more trusted source. All of these experiences can cause someone to question their faith in a source.

Religions are
Experiential

Faith

Faith in a religion is no different. Most people come to believe in some religion because of their experiences. Perhaps it started because they felt the love of a parent and the parent told them that God loves them in the same way. Perhaps a person's faith is strengthened when he feels as though a prayer has been answered. These types of experiences can lead a person to have faith in a particular religion and trust that if the religion was right about one thing it is right about other things.

Religions are
Experiential



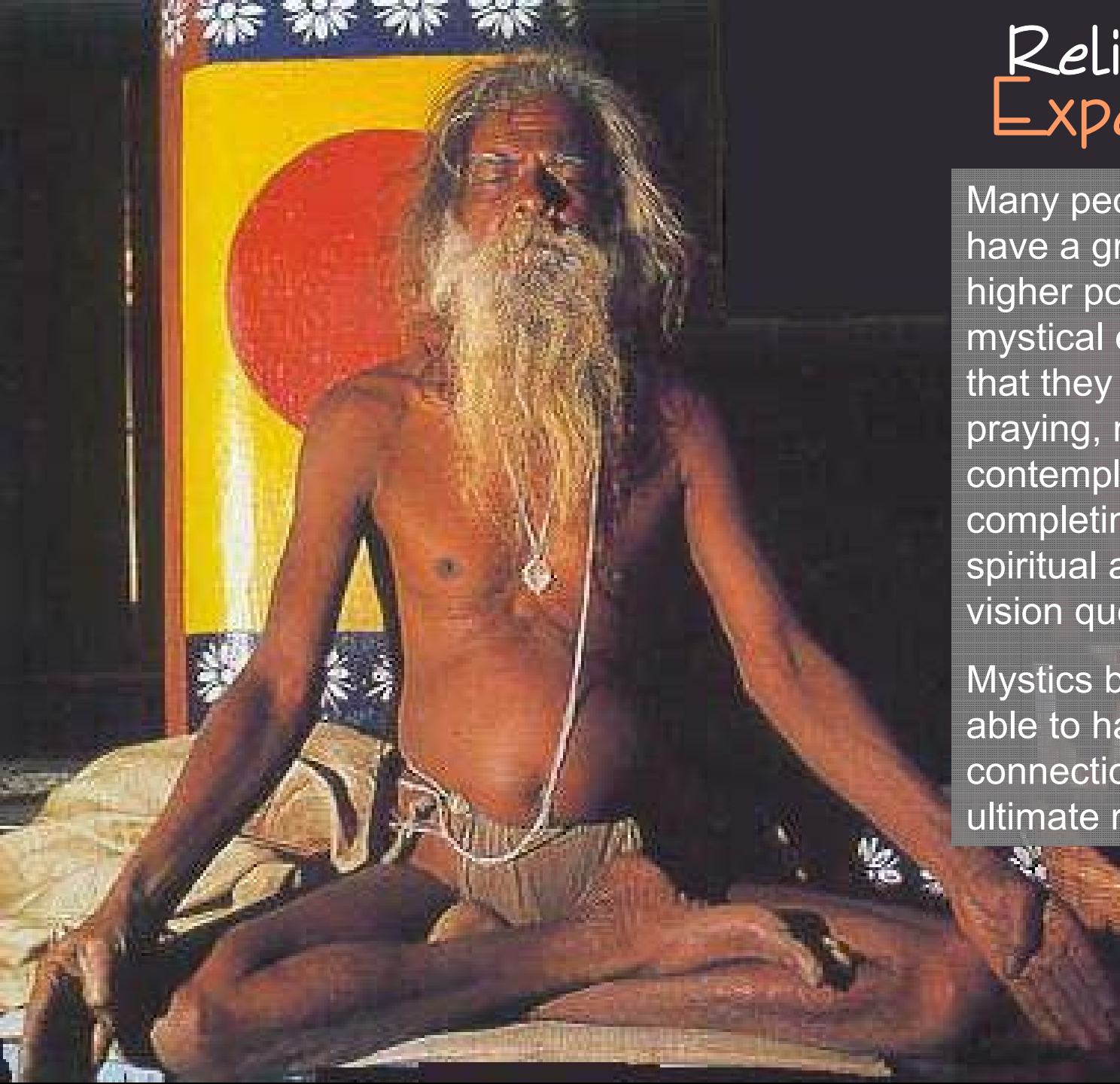
Religions are Experiential

Many monotheists (Christians, Jews, and Muslims) are supported in their faith because they have experiences that make them have a sense of wonder and awe or fear of God.

Religions are Experiential

Many people come to have a greater belief in a higher power because of mystical experiences that they have while praying, meditating, contemplating, or completing some intense spiritual activity like a vision quest.

Mystics believe that are able to have a direct connection to the ultimate reality.



Religions are Mythic

Myths are sacred stories that are passed on for the purpose of transmitting some knowledge about the nature of things or the proper way to live.

The term myth does NOT necessarily imply that the events in a story are false, rather it merely implies that a story uses the mythic genre to teach some truth.

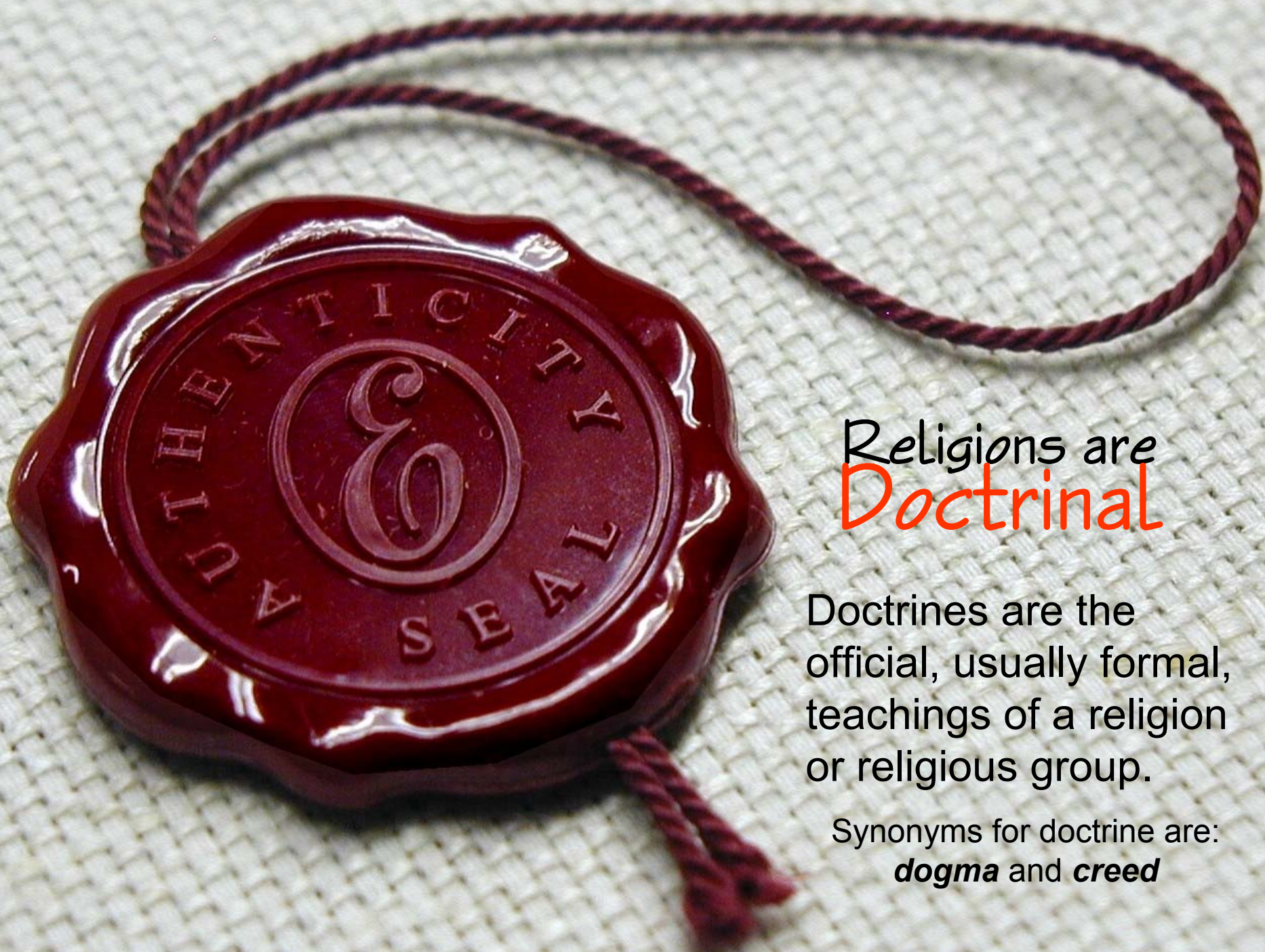
example: The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were used by the ancient Greeks to teach many things, especially concepts of how to behave properly and why the Greek people were superior to their “barbarian” and other neighbors.





Religions are Mythic

For instance, the story of Noah's Ark, regardless of whether the events are factual or fictional, teaches important lessons about honesty and right living, faithfulness, and God's desires for human beings.

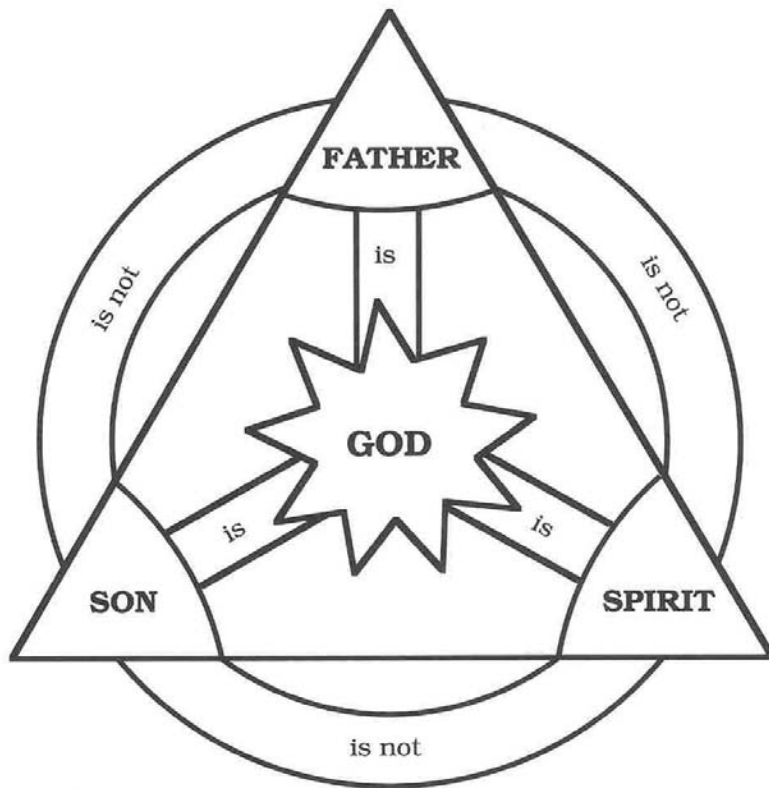


Religions are
Doctrinal

Doctrines are the official, usually formal, teachings of a religion or religious group.

Synonyms for doctrine are:
dogma and ***creed***

Religions are Doctrinal



An example of a Christian doctrinal statement is the Nicene Creed:

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, one in Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered, died, and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in fulfillment of the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come.

Religions are **Doctrinal**

An example of an Islamic doctrinal statement is the Shahadah (the two testimonies):

Arabic text:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

Pronunciation:

lā ilāhā illā-llāh;

muḥammadun rasūlu-llāhi

English translations:

There is no god but God; and
Muhammad is His messenger.



Religions are Doctrinal

*An example of a Jewish doctrinal statement is
Maimonides' 13 Principles of Faith:*

In his commentary on the Mishna (tractate Sanhedrin, chapter 10), Maimonides formulates his **13 principles of faith**. They summarised the basis premises of Jewish belief with regards to:

1. The existence of God
2. God's unity
3. God's spirituality and incorporeality
4. God's eternity
5. God alone should be the object of worship
6. Revelation through God's prophets
7. The preeminence of Moses among the prophets
8. God's law given on Mount Sinai
9. The immutability of the Torah as God's Law
10. God's foreknowledge of human actions
11. Reward of good and retribution of evil
12. The coming of the Jewish Messiah
13. The resurrection of the dead



Religions are **Doctrinal**

*An example of a Buddhist doctrine is the
Eightfold Path to Enlightenment:*

The Eight- Fold Path



Religions are Ethical

Religions usually provide their members with advice on how to behave or systems for choosing between right and wrong.

These teachings are sometimes called ***morals*** or ***morality***.



THE GOLDEN RULE



Hinduism

Everything you should do you will find in this;
Do nothing to others
That would hurt you if it were done to you.

MAHABHARATA 5:1517



Buddhism

Do not offend others
As you would not want to be offended.

UDANAVARGA 5:18



Taoism

The successes of your neighbor and their losses
Will be to you as if they were your own.

T'AI-SHANG KAN-YING PIEN



Confucianism

Is there any rule that one should follow all of one's life?
Yes! The rule of the gentle goodness;
That which we do not wish to be done to us, we do not do to others.

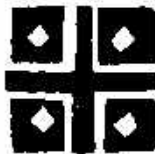
ANALECTAS 15:23



Judaism

That which you do not wish for yourself
You shall not wish for your neighbor.
This is the whole law; the rest is only commentary.

TALMUD SHABBAT 31^c



Christianity

In everything, do to others what
You would have them do to you.
For this sums up the law and the prophets.

MATTHEW 7:12



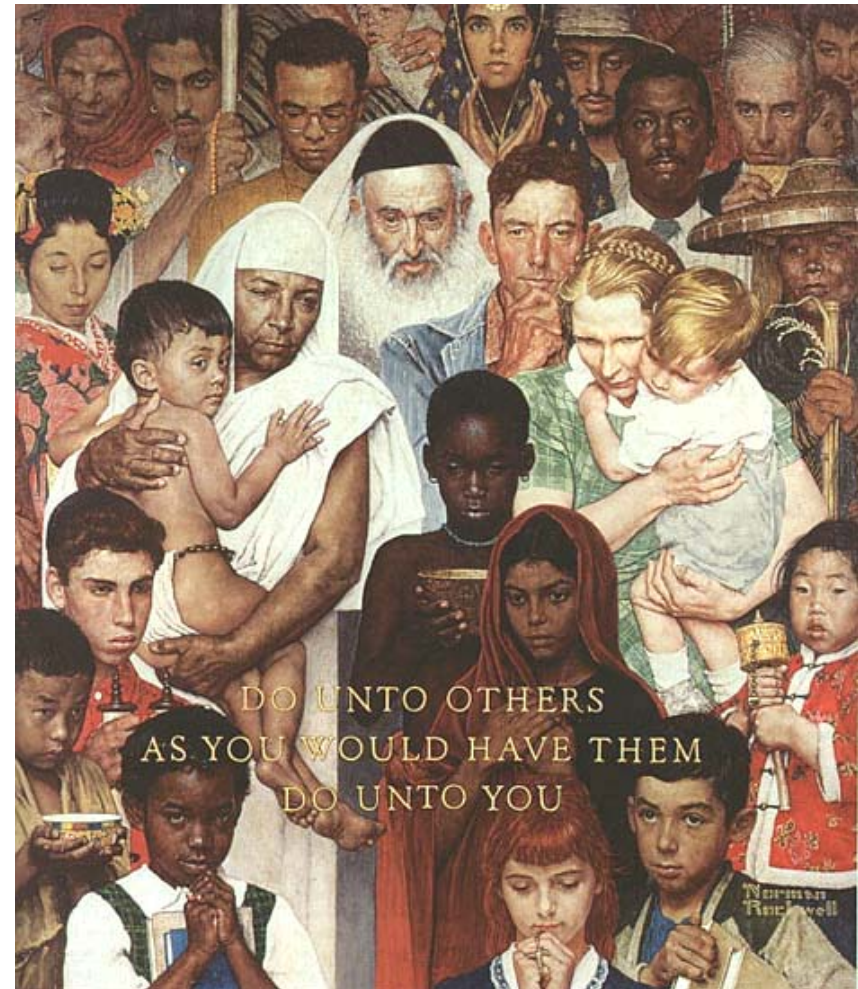
Islam

None of you shall be true believers
Unless you wish for your brother
The same that you wish for yourself.

SUNNATT

Religions are Ethical

The Golden Rule is an ethical principal found in many of the world's religions.



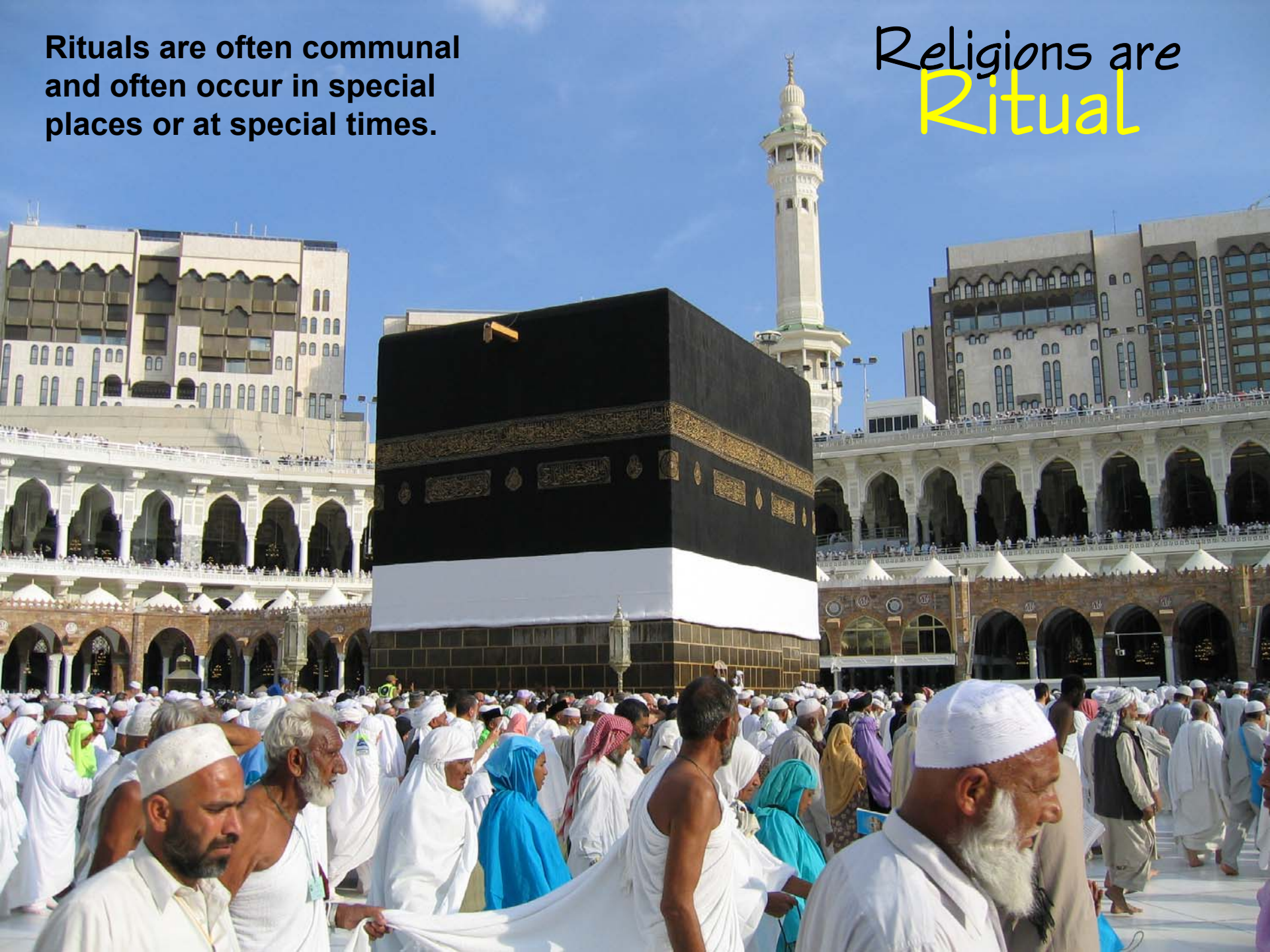
Religions are Ritual

Rituals are forms of worship that are often ceremonial. Many rituals are recreations of religious stories or myths. Rituals are often repeated regularly within a religion.



Rituals are often communal and often occur in special places or at special times.

Religions are
Ritual





Religions are
Ritual

Rituals can also be performed by individuals or be done in private.

Rituals can be connected with the ordinary activities of life.

Religions are
Ritual





Religions are
Social

Religions provide a sense of community or belonging.

Religions are *Social*

Religions provide leadership
and group structure.



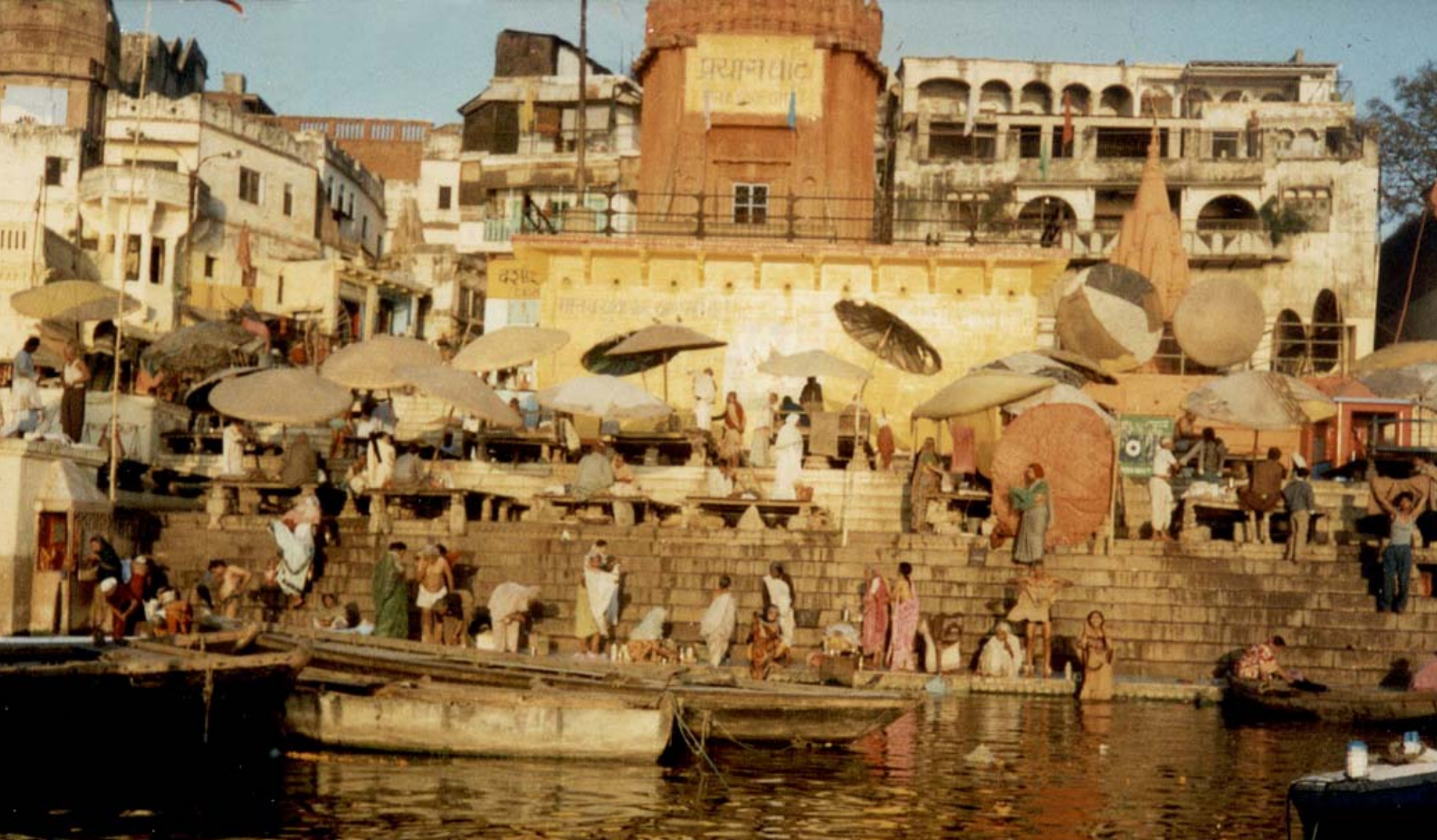


Religions are Material

Religions typically have elements of the material world associated with them: buildings, art work, tools for prayer, clothing, types of food, mountains, cities, rivers, etc.

Religions are
Material





Religions are
Material

Religions are
Material



Religions are Material

