

God, Man and Water: A Comparative Study of Islam and Hinduism

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Abstract:

This paper discusses the relationship of God, man and water from the perspectives of Islam, representing the Abrahamic religions, and Hinduism, representing the non-Abrahamic ones. Based on Lynn White's thesis, this paper finds that by projecting god, man and water as ingredients of the same entity, Hinduism sanctify water an equal status of god. This paper agrees that Islam believes in separate existence of God and that water is subservient to man. However, such a relationship of God, man and water in Islam is accompanied by well-defined approach towards water. Such an approach sanctifies spiritual value to water and preaches water conservation and just apportionment of the natural resource.

Keywords: *God; Hinduism; man; Islam; water conservation*

Introduction

The Cold War tussle between USA and USSR preoccupied the world academia with the questions of "high politics" like arms races, alliances, and proxy wars. Different environmental issues received little or no attention and were treated as matters of "low politics." However, the end of the Cold War brought environment in the limelight of international and national politics. Many renowned scholars of the world devoted their time to bring environment into politics and academic debates through their writings. One of such scholars was Robert Kaplan who wrote a famous article that appeared in Atlantic Affairs in 1994. The article stated that "It is time to understand The Environment for what it is: the national-security issue of the early twenty-first century. The political and strategic impact of surging populations, spreading disease, deforestation and soil erosion, water depletion, air pollution, and, possibly, rising sea levels in critical, overcrowded regions like the Nile Delta and Bangladesh—developments that will prompt mass migrations and, in turn, incite group conflicts—will be the core foreign-policy challenge from which most others will ultimately emanate, arousing the public and uniting assorted interests left over from the Cold War. In the twenty-first century water will be in

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dangerously short supply in such diverse locales as Saudi Arabia, Central Asia, and the southwestern United States.”¹

However, Kaplan was not the first scholar who addressed environment in his writings. Many before him had tried to analyze environmental issues and establish a causal relationship of different factors with environmental crises. Lynn White was one such a scholar who established a causal relationship between religion and environmental crisis in his article, “The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis.” The article published in 1967, maintained that, “What people do about their ecology depends on what they think about themselves in relation to things around them. Human ecology is deeply conditioned by beliefs about our nature and destiny that is, by religion.” While establishing a causal relationship between Christianity and the ecological crises, he stated that, “Christianity, in absolute contrast to ancient paganism and Asia's religions (except, perhaps, Zoroastrianism), not only established a dualism of man and nature but also insisted that it is God's will that man exploit nature for his proper ends.”²

For White, ancient paganism was a guardian against the exploitation of the nature and Christianity, on the other hand, encouraged the exploitation of the nature. The logic he provided was that:

“In Antiquity every tree, every spring, every stream, every hill had its own genius loci, its guardian spirit. These spirits were accessible to men, but were very unlike men; centaurs, fauns.... Before one cut a tree, mined a mountain, or dammed a brook, it was important to placate the spirit in charge of that particular situation, and to keep it placated. By destroying pagan animism, Christianity made it possible to exploit nature in a mood of indifference to the feelings of natural objects. ...Man's effective monopoly on spirit in this world was confirmed, and the old inhibitions to the exploitation of nature crumbled.”³

By the implication of White's argument, Islam which also “established a dualism of man and nature” and believe human as the crown of God's creature and, thereby, empower man to “exploit nature in a mood of indifference” is also considered to be subjected to the same White's thesis, he established between Christianity and the ecological crises. Similarly, by White's thesis the non-Abrahamic religions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Taoism and

¹. Kaplan, Robert D. 1994. “The Coming Anarchy,” *Atlantic Monthly*, February, 45–76.

². White, Lynn Jr. 1967. “The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis,” *Science*, March 10, New Series 155 (3767): 1203-1207.

³. *ibid*

Shintoism which believe that God and the nature are in fact one thing and that nature is as God as man himself and, which places some sorts of spirits as guardian against exploitation safeguards mother nature against exploitation.

This research paper analyzes the same causal relationship of religion and environmental crisis from the perspective of White's thesis. However, this paper is delimited in two aspects. One, it has tried to analyze White's thesis only in the light of Islam, representing the Abrahamic religions, and Hinduism, representing the non-Abrahamic. Two, Islamic and Hindu teachings are juxtaposed not to the whole range of ecological ingredients but only to water.

This paper is divided into three sections. Section one discusses the role of water in spiritual cleansing. Section two discusses the conceptions of God, man and water and their mutual co-relationship. Section three discusses water conservation, water pollution and water apportionment from the perspective of Islam and Hinduism.

Water and spiritual cleansing

Water plays an important spiritual role in different religions of the world. In Abrahamic religions, prophets like Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses (The Prophet of Judaism), Jesus (The Prophet of Christianity) (Peace Be Upon Them All) and the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (ﷺ) all have a sacred affiliation with water. In non-Abrahamic religions like Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Taoism and Shintoism water too is considered sacred. Both Islam and Hinduism believe in water to be a source of physical and spiritual cleanliness and salvation.

Quran clarifies this point by stating that,

“...It is He who sends down water upon you from the sky with which to purify you...”¹

Similarly, the Hindu scripture Rig Vedh states that:

“The waters which are sent to the middle of the universe by king Varuna after checking the true and untrue (deeds) of human beings, the water who distills sweetness, full of light and is the great purifier, who is full of divine values, such water help me in this world and be received by me.”².

Water is an integral part of the daily religious duties of Muslim and Hindu believers. For instance, the daily five prayers of a Muslim cannot be performed without an ablution called *Wuḍū* (وضو). Quran has not only made ablution compulsory but elaborated its method as well as. Quran enjoins that:

¹. Al-Alfāl, 8:11.

². VII. 49. 3

“O you who believe! When you prepare for prayer wash your faces and your hands up to the elbows, and wipe your heads and wash your feet up to the ankles...”¹

The same is instructed by a saying of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) which is narrated by Abu Huraira (RTA) as,

"The prayer of a person who does not perform ablution is invalid, and the ablution of a person who does not mention the name of Allah is invalid."²

In Islam, the *Wuḍū* for a prayer is believed to wash the sins committed by different parts of the human body of the believer. Abu Huraira has narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) stated that:

“If a believer performs his ablutions and washes his face, any sin that he has watched with his eyes is washed away with water (or with the last drop of water), and if he washes his hands, any sins that his hands have committed will go away with water or with the last drop of water, and if he washes his feet, any sin committed by his feet is washed away with water or with the last drop of water, until he comes out purified of his sins.”³

It is because of such purifying quality of water that mosques are usually build around a water body or water supply is ensured through a pond or through taps with specific structures for ablutions.

Similarly, most of the renowned pilgrimage places of Hinduism are located on the bank of a stream, a river or where two rivers meet. Hindus temples are also located at the banks of water bodies, streams or rivers or a pond is built close to the temple so that the worshipper could wash their body parts before entering to worship in the temple. Specifically, a believer undergoes a cleansing practice believed to be mandatory before performing the morning prayer, the *Samdhya*. Before performing *Samdhya*, a Hindu believer forms a cup with both his hands, fill it with water, recites holy verses of Hindu religious scriptures and throws the water back into the stream. This process is called *Tarpana*. The believer then takes few sips from the water and performs the *Samdhya*. The benefits of *Samdhya* are stated as, “Evil doesn't go near him, who bathes daily and does not neglect the practice of *Samdhya*, just as snake does not go near Garuda, the chief of the feathered race”⁴

¹. Al-Māidah, 5:6

². Abu Dāwūd, Sullemān bin Ash'ath, *Al-Sunan*, (Al-Riyadh, Dār-us-Salām,2009) Book; Al-Tahārah, Hadith:101

³. Muslim bin Al-Hujjāj, *Al-Jāme Al-Sahīh* (Al-Riyadh, Dār-us-Salām,2000) Book; Al-Tahārah, Hadith:577

⁴. Karmapradipa 2.16, 17

Other occasions at which water becomes part of bodily and spiritual purification in Islam includes performing *Ghusl*, which involves the washing of the whole body, after sexual intercourse, or after a nightfall, or on the Friday before the Friday prayer, before Eid prayer and the final bath of a dead before the funeral. Interestingly, water plays an important role in a funeral in Hinduism too. A pitcher with a hole is filled with water and a son of the deceased places the pitcher on his back and the water ooze out of the hole and fall on the ground as the son revolves around the corpse which is placed on a pile of woods. The sprinkling of water is believed to restrict the soul of the deceased within the circle of the sprinkled water and not to let it escape in the shape of a ghost. The corpse is then put to fire and the ashes of the body of the deceased are cast into a holy river on or after the tenth day of the death.

God, man and water

In Abrahamic religions, water is believed to be a creature of God, whereas in most of the non-Abrahamic religions, water like all other ingredients of the nature is believed to be a part of God himself. Thus, the later concept of God doesn't "established a dualism of man and nature" but a part and parcel of one another whereas the former concept establishes separate existence of God, man and nature, including water. Being an Abrahamic religion, Islam also believes in a separate entity of God. It believes God exists independently of the rest of the creations; both living and non-living, both plants and animals, water and fire, which are believed to be created by God. Man too, like water, is believed to be a creation of God and is, thus, an independent entity away and separate from God. Thus, according to Quran and Hadith, God, man and water have independent existences.

Quran, which has used the Arabic word *ma'aa* (ماء) for water and which has referred to water more than 60 times at different chapters, states that water was the first ingredient of nature which were ever created by God. Allah says in Quran that:

“And His throne was over water—that He might try you, which of you is best in conduct.”¹

The same has been discussed by the holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) in one of a hadith which is reported by Imrān bin Hussain. Prophet of Allah Siad:

“Allah was and there was nothing prior to Him; His Throne was over water; then He created earth and the heavens, and has everything written in His Book.”²

¹. Hūd, 11:7

². Bukharī, Muhammad bin Ismāil, *Al-Jāme* (Al-Riyādh, Dār-us-Salām, 1999) Book: Al-Touhīd, Hadith:7418

It is evident from the mentioned Quranic verses and the sayings of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) that water is God's creation, not a part of God. The location of God's throne on water proves this point. Moreover, water, according to Quran, is believed to have been the source of the creation of all living beings. Allah says in Quran that:

“We made from water every living thing.”¹

In another chapter of Quran, Allah says that:

“Allah has created every moving (living) creature from water. Of them there are some that creep on their bellies, and some that walk on two legs, and some that walk on four. Allah creates what He wills. Verily Allah is Able to do all things.”²

Similarly, all vegetations are also created through water. Allah states in another of the chapter of Quran that,

“It is He who sendeth down rain from the skies: with it we produce vegetation of all kinds.”³

In the context of man being created from water, Quran says,

“It is He who has created man from water. Then has He established relationships of lineage and marriage: For thy Lord Has power (over all things)”⁴

All these Quranic verses show that water is a source of the creation of all other living beings including man. The verses also show that water is also a creation of God and not a part of it. Moreover, many of the verses of the Holy Quran have referred to water in the context of fountains, springs, rivers, seas, rain, clouds, and winds. These references to water are made as “signs” of God, either to prove His existence, His Benevolence, Mercy or His Anger and Punishment.

Hinduism, on the other hand, have a different view about God, man and water. It provides images of God in different creations of the universe. Even God, according to Hindu scriptures, could reveal himself in the shape of anything, from animals to humans and plants and other creations or even God could be a composite being of many of different components of the universe. One of the Hindu scriptures states the composite nature of God as:

¹. Al-Anbiā, 21:30

². Al-Noor, 24:45

³. Al-Anām, 6:99

⁴. Al-Furqān, 25:54

“In the kingdom, the rivers are the veins of the Cosmic Person, and the trees the hairs of his body. The air is his breathing, the hills and mountains are his piled bones and the passing ages his movements.”¹

Such a composite nature of God, man, water and other creatures could be witnessed in another of the verse of Bhagavad Gita which states that, “Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence and false ego - all together these eight constitute My separated material energies” (7.4.17) Such a non-independent existence of God could be seen in another of the verse of a according to which God is called to be “everything”. The verse states that:

“O Supreme Lord, You are actually the air, the earth, fire, sky and water. You are the objects of sense perception, the life airs, the five senses, the mind, consciousness and false ego. Indeed, You are everything, subtle and gross. The material elements and anything expressed, either by the words or by the mind, are nothing but You.”²

These verses from Hindu scriptures indicate that Hinduism doesn't believe in separate existence of God, man and water but takes them part of a composite structure. By making man and water part of God, Hinduism, makes water sacred.

According to some other scriptures of Hinduism like Rig Veda, such a sanctity of water is highlighted through a different perspective. The Rig Veda has attributed different gods to water and these gods of water are asked to be prayed. Out of these water gods, *Apas* is the most important one whose name is derived from the Vedic Sanskrit term *Ap (ap)* for “Water.” In addition to *Apas*, there are other gods as well who are attributed to waters with different duties related to waters like *Indra*, *Varun*, *Parjanya* etc. *Indra* is believed to be the liberator of waters, whereas *Varuna* is believed to be its regulator.³ A verse of Rig Veda refers to *Parjanya* as under:

“When Parjanya protects the earth with his waters i.e. irrigates the earth, then winds (for rains) are blown, lightening strikes, vegetation sprouts and grows, sky downpours the drops of water and the earth becomes capable for the welfare of the whole world.”⁴

¹ Narayan, R. 2003. *Ecological crisis and Hindu religious thought*. In: Ecology and Religion. Narayan, R. & Kumar, J. (eds). New Delhi: Deep & Deep Publications Ltd.

². Srimad Bhagavatam, 7.9.48

³ Saxena, Chandni. 2012. “The Concept of Water in Rig Veda” *International Journal of Social Science and Interdisciplinary Research* 1 (8).

⁴. V. 83.4

This verse indicates that *Parjanya* not only protect the earth with waters but water is also a source of the creation of vegetations.

Moreover, another dimension of Hinduism projecting the sanctity of water is that it believes in water as divinely and a source of protection. A verse of Rig Veda states that:

“The waters which are from heaven, and which flow after being dug, and even those that spring by themselves, the bright pure waters which lead to the sea, may those divine waters protect me here.”¹

Interestingly, Hinduism assigns special sanctity to many rivers in Indian subcontinent like the Ganges, Yamuna, Godavari, Sarasvati, Narmada, Sindhu and Kaveri. However, amongst all these rivers, Ganges is believed to be the sacred most one and bathing in its water is considered a religious duty in all Vedic scriptures. In addition to wash one’s sins, the water of the Ganges is believed to have many curing and health benefits. On the contrary, Islam believes the water of *Zam Zam* (زم زم) spring located in the holy city of Mecca in Arabia as sacred. The water of *Zam Zam* (زم زم) is taken by Muslim pilgrims from all over the world and are believed to have special curing and health benefits in addition to spiritual ones.

Man and Water

As pointed by Lynn White, preventing ecological crisis including water crises depends on how man see himself in relation to water. Thus, how a Muslim and a Hindu (for this paper) see himself in relation to water also effects water management practices. In Islam, as discussed in the preceding section, both man and water are believed to be God’s creation, and both belongs to God. Quran says,

“To God belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth.”²

However, according to Quran, man is the crown of God’s creature and everything in the universe including water is subservient to man. Man, is, thus, superior to other living and non-living creatures of God. Quran says that:

“Allah made subservient to you the sea ... that you may seek of His grace, and that you may give thanks. And He has made subservient to you whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth.”³

The subservient nature of water to man has been made clear by another verse of the Quran which reads as:

¹. VII.49.2

². Al-Nisā, 4:126

³. Al-Jāthiah, 45:12-13

“God is the One Who has created Heaven and Earth, and sends down water from the sky. He brings forth produce by means of it as sustenance for you. He has subjected ships to you so they may sail at sea by His command; and subjected rivers to you.”¹

Analyzed in the perspective of White’s thesis, such a subservience of water to man makes man scot free to exploit water for the benefit of mankind, with a “mood of indifference to” the consequences of such an unbridled exploitation. Hinduism, on the contrary, makes both man and water as the images of God, making both equally saintly and sacred. Neither water nor man is believed to be superior to the other and, thus, according to White’s argument, such a Hindu belief is more environment and water friendly. Moreover, the religious Hindu philosophy of “Non-violence” upon which not only stands the religion of Hinduism but inspires Jainism and Buddhism as well, also supports White’s argument. The philosophy of non-violence, as the preachers of Hinduism projects, implies non-injury to both the living and the non-living creations of nature. This non-violence is not limited only to humans or animals but to plants, air, water, land, hill and forest.

This paper agrees with the status Hinduism assigns to water as a saintly and godly commodity. However, this paper also argues that Islam also establishes a well-defined approach to water management the adherence to which could avert crises related to the quality and quantity issues of water. This Islamic approach to water management has the following features. One, water in Islam is believed to be a commonly owned commodity to which all the riparian states, communities or individuals have equal share. Narrated by Ibn Abbas (RTA), Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) is reported to have said that:

“Muslims are partners in three things: water, pasture and fire, and their price is unlawful.”²

On the contrary, Hinduism, water is not treated as a commonly owned commodity due to the caste system. As per original Hindu teachings, only the upper castes had access to water resources. This very fact makes Hinduism against common justice and the commonly practiced principles of water apportionment. It was under such a desire for justice in water apportionment that Dr. Ambedkar had to initiate a movement to get access for the lower castes to water

¹. Ibrāhīm, 14:32

². Ibn-e-Mājah, Muhammad bin Yazīd, *Al-Sunan* (Al-Riyādh, Dār-us-Salām, 1999) Chapters: Al-Rahūn, Hadith: 2472

resources. Some of the analysts find the Hindu caste system efficient in water conservation. One of such analysts argues that:

“The caste system regulated the occupations that individuals could undertake. Thus, an “ecological space” was created in ancient Hindu society which helped to reduce competition among various people for limited natural resources. A system of “resource partitioning” emerged whereby the primary users of natural resources did not worry about encroachment from other castes.”¹

Second, Islam stresses on equitable apportionment of water. According to a *hadith* narrated by Sahal bin Saad:

“A glass (full of milk or water) was brought to the Prophet who drank from it, while on his right side there was sitting a boy who was the youngest of those who were present and on his left side there were old men.” The Prophet asked: “O boy, will you allow me to give it (the rest of the drink) to the old men?” The boy said, “O Allah’s Apostle! I will not give preference to anyone over me to drink the rest of it from which you have drunk.” So, the Prophet gave it to him.²

In Islam, the person sitting to right is preferred in such distributions. This Hadith implies that Islam has strict rules for water apportionment. Another narrator Abdullah bin Az-Zubair (RTA) has narrated another hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) as:

An Ansari man quarreled with Az-Zubair in the presence of the Prophet about the Harra Canals which were used for irrigating the date-palms. The Ansari man said to Az-Zubair, “Let the water pass’ but Az-Zubair refused to do so. So, the case was brought before the Prophet who said to Az-Zubair, “O Zubair! Irrigate (your land) and then let the water pass to your neighbor.” On that the Ansari got angry and said to the Prophet, “Is it because he (i.e Zubair) is your aunt’s son?” On that the color of the face of Allah’s Apostle changed (because of anger) and he said, “O Zubair! Irrigate (your land) and then withhold the water till it reaches the walls between the pits round the trees (i.e. let the water go to the other’s land).”” Zubair said, “By Allah, I think that the following verse was revealed on this occasion”: “But no, by your Lord They can have No faith Until they make you judge in all disputes between them”³

¹ Gottlieb, Roger S. 1996. *This Sacred Earth: Religion, Nature, Environment*. Psychology Press

² Bukhārī, *Al-Jāme Al-ASahīh*, Book; Al-Musāqāt, Hadith No. 2351

³ *ibid*, Hadith No.2359

Third, Islam, no doubt, sees water as subservient to man and, thus, encourage man to exploit water for human ends. But at the same time, it also instructs its believers not to waste waters. Ibn Mājah has reported a hadith from Ibn Umar (RTA). The Hadith is as:

When the Prophet saw Saa'd (RTA) performing wudu he said: "What is this? You are wasting water." Saa'd replied: "Can there be waste while performing ablution?"

The Prophet replied: "Yes even if you perform it in a flowing river."¹

Fourth, Islam also forbids to pollute waters. Jabir (RTA) has reported that the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said that, "None of you should urinate in stagnant water and wash from it."²

Fifth, Islam associates water scarcity with the punishment of God. Quran instructs that, "and the dwellers of the Fire call to the dwellers of the paradise: pour on us some water."³

Another of the verse of the Quran ordains that:

"Say (O Muhammad) : Tell me ? if (all) your water were to sink away, who then can supply you with flowing water."⁴

Sixth, Islam, no doubt, considers man as the crown of all the creatures and encourages it to tap the natural resources, but at the same time, it also forbids its believers not to over-exploit the nature and disturb its balance. Unlike Christianity, Islam does not encourage mankind "to exploit nature in a mood of indifference to the feelings of natural objects" as White charged Christianity with. Allah has mentioned in Quran that He has created everything in proportion and a fine balance is maintained in the nature. Quran says:

"Verily, all things have We created in proportion and measure."⁵

In another chapter of Quran, Allah commands that,

"And the sky has He raised high, and has devised (for all things) a balance, so that you might never transgress the balance: weigh, therefore (your deeds) with equity, and do not upset the balance."⁶

Similar balance has been mentioned by Allah in the creation of water resources as well. Allah states that:

¹. Ibn-i-Mājah, Muhammad bin Yazīd, *Al-Sunan* Book: Al-Tahārah, Hadith:419

². *ibid*, Hadith: 344

³. Al-Aarāf, 7:50

⁴. Al-Mulk, 67:30

⁵. Al-Qamar, 54:49

⁶. Al-Rahmān, 55:6-9

“...And we send water from the sky in fixed measure...”¹

In other words, God has reminded humans that water is a limited resource and its over-exploitation could result in water scarcity. Allah has ordained at another occasion that:

“And We send down water from the sky according to [due] measure and We cause it to soak in the soil; and We certainly are able to drain it off.”²

Allah has repeatedly instructed humankind not to disturb this balance. Allah enjoins in Quran that,

“O Children of Adam!... Eat and drink: But waste not by excess, for God loveth not the wasters.”³

Interestingly, one finds certain similarities in the water management principles of Islam and Hinduism as well. In Hinduism too, water pollution is prohibited. One of a scripture of Hinduism states that:

“Do not poison (pollute) water and do not harm or cut the trees.”⁴

In another of the scriptures, the person who pollutes waters is warned of hell. The verse reads as,

“A person, who is engaged in killing creatures, polluting wells, and ponds and tanks, and destroying gardens, certainly goes to hell.”⁵

According to another of the scriptures, Hindu believers are ordained not to perform four acts near the holy waters of the Ganga:

“Remove excrement, brushing and gargling, removing cerumen from body, throwing hairs, dry garlands, playing in water, taking donations, performing sex, attachment with other sacred places, praising other holy places, washing clothes, throwing dirty clothes, thumping water and swimming.”⁶

Similarly, as in Islam, water scarcity is associated with punishment and annihilation in Hinduism too. One of the verses of Hindu scripture makes this point clear as:

“As the annihilation approaches there will be no rain on the earth for one hundred years. Drought will lead to famine and the starving populace will consume one another. Thus they will gradually be destroyed. The sun will then

¹. Al-Ghāfir, 40:30

². Al-Mo'minūn, 23:18

³. Al-Ā'rāf, 7:31

⁴. Yājūr Veda, 6.33

⁵. Padmapurana, Bhoomikhananda 96:7-8

⁶. Pravascitta Tatva 1.535

drink the water of the oceans, of the living bodies and of the earth itself. But the devastating sun will not give rain in return. Next the fire of annihilation will flare up from the mouth of Lord Sankarsana.”¹

Conclusion

Seen in the context of White’s thesis, Hinduism adopts a sacred approach towards water by making God, man and nature including water as mirror images of one another. It also inhibits over-exploitative behavior of its believers towards water by assigning different gods to water, its philosophy of non-violence and treating man, water and God as equals or the same things. Islam, on the contrary, believes in separate existence of God and nature, and places man superior to nature and water and encourages man to exploit water. However, Islam enjoins additional measures to keep in mind while exploiting water for the welfare of mankind. By highlighting the role of water in different Islamic spiritual practices, Islam asks its believers not to pollute and disturb the natural balance of the nature including water resources. It seeks water apportionment to be executed on the basis of justice and prohibits wastage of water.

However, despite holding such lofty approaches to water management by both Islam and Hinduism, the regions of South Asia, which is home to majority Hindus, and the Middle East, which is home to majority Muslims, are one of the most water scarce and water wars prone regions of the world.² The water crises and the subsequent potential water wars in these two regions could be avoided not only through the application of science and technology but through changing people perceptions towards water and water management. Lynn White had stressed this fact in his article by maintaining that, “What we do about ecology depends on our ideas of the man-nature relationship. More science and more technology are not going to get us out of the present ecologic crisis.” In order to get ourselves of the present ecological crisis in general and water crisis in particular, the change in peoples’ perception about water is the need of the hour. With religion playing a dominant role in the lives of Muslims and Hindus, the propagation of Islamic and Hindu teachings about the relationship of God, man and water could achieve such a change in people’s attitude towards water.

¹. Shatapatha Brahmana, 12.4.7-19

² Mehsud, Muhammad Imran and Tariq Anwar Khan. 2019. “Water War Thesis: Perspective From South Asia”, in *Journal of Political Studies*, Special Conference Issue (2019): 105-118.