Several mainstream religions in the world including, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism, Christianity and Islam were engaged in ethical reflections beginning from the late pre-historic period. Hindu philosophers accepted the authoritative testimony (Śabda) of the Veda (scriptures and other tradition as) as a valid means of knowledge (pramāṇa) in the areas of ritual praxis, religious wisdom, cosmology, and social ethics, whereas Buddhists and Jainas rejected the Veda’s authority, but developed their own theories. Christianity and Islam had engaged ethics and morality extensively and provided broader guidance to conduct an ethically acceptable life. Overall all religions contributed to the concept of ethical values and we can further evaluate how these historic and religions influence the contemporary perspectives on Applied Ethics issues.

Hindu Ethical Values:

Hindu Ethical values go back to ancient times with Aryan invasions of North India which were chronologically parallel to the Hellenic invasions of Greece (c. 2000-100). The Aryans were tall, fair people of Indo-European stock. These pastoral nomads had migrated
from the steppes of Eastern Europe, finally making their new home on
the upper branches of the Indus River in the Northwestern region of
India. The culture of these conquering tribes was in sharp contrast to
that of the declining Indus civilization. Not long after their occupation of
the land, the Aryans commenced their speculative activities which
issued in the formation of the *Vedas.*¹

The name ‘*Veda*’ (knowledge) stands for the *Mantras* and the
*Brāhmaṇās* compiled by ancient Indians. *Mantra* means a hymn
addressed to some god or goddess. The collection of the *mantras* is
called ‘*Samhitā.* There are four *Samhitas, Rk, Sama, Yajuh* and
*Atharva.* These are said to be compiled for the smooth performance of
the *Vedic* Sacrifices.

The *Brāhmaṇās,* unlike the *Mantras,* are written in prose. They are the
elaboration of the complicated ritualism of the *Vedas.* They deal with
the rules and regulations laid down for the performance of the rites and
the sacrifices. Their name ‘*Brāhmaṇā* ’ is derived from the word
‘*Brahman*’ which originally means a prayer. The appendages to these
*Brāhmaṇās* are called *Araṇyakās* mainly because they were composed
in the calmness of the forests. The *Araṇyakās* mark the transition from

the ritualistic to the philosophic thought. The concluding portions of the *Aranyakās* are called the *Upaniṣads*. The *Upaniṣads* are also known as ‘*Vedanta*’ or ‘the end of the *Veda*’. Firstly, because they are literally the concluding portion, the end of the *Vedas*, and secondly because they are the essence, the cream, the height, of the *Vedic* philosophy.²

**Ethical Values in *Mantras***:

The ancient Indian seers recognized a cosmic order which served as the foundation of their ethics which is called it *Ṛta*, a concept which Arthur Anthony Macdonel (1854-1930), an eminent historian and Sanskrit literature scholar has described as: “The highest flight of *Ṛg*-Vedic thought.”³

Originally *Ṛta* was a concept pertaining to the physical universe, denoting the Law of Nature operative in the movement of the planets, the success in of night and day, and the rotation of the seasons. As the principle of order in the universe, it endowed all of the natural phenomena with symmetry and aesthetic form. The beauty and uniformity of heaven and earth were looked upon as proceeding from their unalterable observance of cosmic law. Gradually the cosmic sense of *Ṛta* as Natural Law developed into the social sense of *Ṛta* as moral

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law. The nature of this development was crucial for the status of morality. It meant that virtue was given the same immanent position in the social world.⁴

The idea of *Rta* as Moral Law became a salient feature of *Vedic* thought. It is the sense of value based on this idea which accounts for the remarkable unity of thought among the poets. They are all agreed:

“A man should think on wealth, and strive to win it by adoration the path of Order, Counsel himself with his own mental insight, and grasp still nobler vigour with his spirit.”⁵

Exhortations of this kind are numerous. They point to the fact that *Rta* was the *summum bonum* around which the whole of *Vedic* religion and society was modeled. So great was its influence that in later time its principles were perpetuated through the characteristic Hindu concepts of *dharma* and the law of *karma*. The hymns not only present us with a universal standard of morality represented by *Rta*, they also lay down certain duties as the concrete manifestation of *Rta*. The first set of duties is religious, consisting of prayers and sacrifices to the gods. Without

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⁴ Cromwell Crawford, S., *The Evolution of Hindu Ethical Ideals*, p.3.
going into the specific nature of these duties, we shall enquire into their hearing on the moral life.  

The *Upaniṣads* are rightly regarded as the fountain-head of all Indian philosophy.

**Laws of Manu or "Māṇava Dharma Śāstra.**

The *Dharma Śāstra* of *Manu* is known as the *Manu-smriti* (An earlier opinion generally dated composition of the text any time between 200 BCE and 200 CE.) having 2,694 stanzas divided into 12 chapters. It deals with topics such as cosmogony, the definition of *dharma*, the sacraments, initiation and *Vedic* study, the eight forms of marriage, hospitality and funerary rites, dietary laws, pollution and purification, rules for women and wives, royal law, juridical matters, pious donations, rites of reparation, the doctrine of *karma*, the soul, and punishment in hell. Law in the juridical sense is thus completely embedded in religious law and practice. The framework is provided by the model of the four-class society or otherwise know as “*Chatur Varna*”.

The influence of the *Dharma Śāstras* of *Manu* has been enormous, as they provided Hindu society with the basis for its

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practical morality. But, for most of the Indian subcontinent, it is the commentaries on these texts (such as Medhatithi’s 9th-century commentary on Manu) and, even more, the local case law traditions arising out of the commentaries that have been the law. Second to Manu is Dharma Śāstra of Yajnavalkya; its 1,013 stanzas are distributed under the three headings of good conduct, law, and expiation. The Mitaksara, the commentary on it by Vijnaneshvara (11th century), has extended the influence of Yajnavalkya’s work. It is later than Manu, probably belonging to the early Gupta Period when there was a renaissance of Brahmanical culture.⁷

In Manu’s scheme, the three qualities had links to the three basic values in ancient Indian society: wealth or worldly success (artha), sensual or aesthetic pleasure (kāma), and righteousness (dharma). “Pleasure is said to be the mark of Darkness; Profit, of Vigor; and Law, of Goodness” (12.38). The one-to-one correspondence among the three qualities and three goals was complicated by the addition of the fourth goal, mokṣa, discussed below. When combined with the three qualities, varṇa (literally ‘color’) symbolically represented the social classes: Brahmans - white for purity, Kṣatriyās - red for passion and

⁷ Cromwell, Crawford, S., The Evolution of Hindu Ethical Ideals, p.77-78.
energy, *Vaiśyās* - yellow, for earth, and *Śūdrās* - black, for darkness and inertia. General *dharma* applied to all members of society in the form of universal virtues such as non-violence, truthfulness, abstention from anger, purification, self-control, not stealing, hospitality, gift-giving, and freedom from envy (Manu 10.63). Distinctive virtues, occupations, rituals, and obligations were specified for each class and caste (*jāti*, literally ‘birth’) and even for different regions, clans, guilds, and one’s historical age. These latter stipulations fall under the rubric of particular *dharma* (*svadharma*), which is relative to the psychological mixture produced by one’s class and one’s nature. The entire scheme is summarized in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*.

The ancient *Vedic* society had a structured social order where the *Brahmins* were esteemed as a highest and the most revered sect and assigned the holy task of acquiring ancient knowledge and learning. The teachers of each Vedic schools composed manuals in Sanskrit, known as ‘*sūtras*, pertaining to their respective schools for the guidance of their pupils, which were highly venerated by the *Brahmins* and memorized by each *Brahmin* student.

The most common of these were the ‘*Grihya-sūtras*’, dealing with domestic ceremonies, and the ‘*Dharma-sūtras*’, treating of the sacred
customs and laws. These extremely complicated bulks of ancient rules and regulations, customs, laws and rites were gradually enraged in scope, written aphoristically and set to musical cadence and systematically arranged to constitute the 'Dharma-Śāstras'. Of these the most ancient and most famous is the 'Laws of Manu', the 'Manava Dharma-Śāstra', a 'Dharma-sutra' belonging to the ancient Manava Vedic school.\(^8\)

**Individual and Social Ethics:**

The *Dharma Śāstras*, which embodied emerging cultural patterns, worked out the *varṇāśrama-dharma*, the new ethics of class (*varṇā*) and stages of life (*āśrama*). Echoing the Hymn to the Cosmic Man cited earlier, Manu endorsed the Veda’s divine-cosmic legitimation of the four classes (*varṇā*): “For the protection of the whole creation, that One of dazzling brilliance assigned separate activities for those born from the mouth, arms, thighs, and feet” (1.87); “The four social classes, the three worlds, and the four orders of life, the past, the present and the future - all these are individually established by the *Veda*” (12.97). The classes, with their respective characteristics, duties, and virtues, were not contingent social constructions, but rather were rooted in the nature

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\(^8\) Roy, S.B., *Indian Religions*, p.90
of things. Commencing at age five with the rite of initiation, “twice-born” males of the three highest classes entered the four stages of life: (a) the celibate life of the Vedic student (*brahmacārya*); (b) the householder married life (*gṛhastha*), which included performance of sacrifices and household duties; (c) withdrawal from society to live as a forest-dweller (*vānaprastha*); and, finally, (d) the life of a complete renouncer (*sārīyāsa*). The fourth stage involved total renunciation of household, fire, and thus of sacrifice and cooking. The present context does not permit a detailed consideration of the origins and complexities of the *āśrama* system.10 Classical Hindu social ethics organized normatively the increasing variety of choices in life. The earliest texts conceived the latter three *āśramas* as distinct ways of life, each one of which a twice-born male could enter after completion of the initial student-phase. Āpastamba *Dharmasūtra* 2.21.1 - 5, for example, recognized that each of the alternatives could lead to “peace” (*kṣema*). But by the beginning of the common era, the *Dharma Śāatrās* (*Manu* chs. 2 - 6) canonized the four as successive phases in an idealized sequence for the high-caste man. Yet, *Manu* valorized householders because they supported the others (*Manu* 3.77 - 78, 6.87 - 90). The householder’s life was the best for “anyone who desires undecaying heaven (*svarga*) and happiness (*sukha*) on earth” (3.78), a view shared
by the influential *Mahābhārata.* 11 In ancient *Brahmaṇical* society class-duties and life-stages did not answer all aspects of the question “how should I live?” Also significant was the cosmic law of karma, according to which each individual is propelled from one life to the next, determining both the objective circumstances of one’s life, i.e. birth and class, and the internal constituents of one’s own nature, a unique mixture of qualities and dispositional tendencies (*samskāra*) accumulated over countless incarnations. The early Upaniṣads state the principle clearly, echoed later by the *Bhagavad-Gītā*

**Message of the *Bhagavad-Gītā.***

If *Rama* (the mythological emperor of Hindus on the belief of Godly incarnation) was an embodiment of virtue supremely dedicated to *Dharma* in every action he performed, *Krṣṇa* (another mythological incarnation of Hindu God) was a teacher par excellence imparting supreme wisdom in every word he uttered. Both were so enchanting and charming to look upon, contemplate and meditate. Their captivating beauty is varied and limitless. With even a little sincerity
and imagination one can develop the awareness of their divinity followed by the thirst to drink the joy of transcendence.\textsuperscript{9}

*Bhagvad-Gītā* (Authoritative Hindu Scripture) literally means ‘The Lord’s Song’, i.e., the philosophical discourse of Lord Kṛṣṇa to persuade the reluctant *Arjuna* to fight. It is the most popular and sacred book of the Hindus and is contained in the *Bhiṣma-Parva* of the *Mahābhārata*.\textsuperscript{10}

The principal religious injunction that is quoted is the one attributed to Kṛṣṇa as stated in the *Bhagvad-Gītā* that a mortal should go about performing his duty without any expectation of its fruits. Most Indians see in this proclamation an argument for renunciation. But renunciation only means ‘to give up’ something, it does not imply that one should dutifully go about the function assigned but not expect the fruits in return. While the proclamation in the *Bhagvad-Gītā* amounts to saying ‘give (and obey) but do not expect anything in return’, renunciation simply means to give up whatever one has. This differentiation could be likened to hair splitting, but it is essential to realize that there is a difference between renunciation as is practiced

\textsuperscript{9} Ibid., p.31.
\textsuperscript{10} Chandradhar Sharma., *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy*, p.32.
by sages and hermits and the injunction in the *Bhagvad-Gītā* which is applicable to all human beings in the normal course of living. Thus, this message of the *Bhagvad-Gītā* which is meant to have a social appeal must have been relevant in the context of the then existing social structure.

The *Bhagvad-Gītā* is not meant for Arjuna alone whose vacillation in fighting these relatives in the *Mahābhārata* war is supposed to have been the reason why Kṛṣṇa recited the *Gītā*. Famous Indian renaissance fighter and Indian philosopher Mahatma Gandhi (1868-1949) calls it:

> “The universal mother whose door is wide open to anyone who knocks and a true votary of the *Gītā* does not know what disappointment is. He ever dwells in perennial joy and peace that passeth understanding. The *Gītā* deals with metaphysics, religion and ethics and has been rightly called the ‘Gospel of Humanity.”¹¹

But all this apart, it is inconceivable that a deeply philosophical document such as the *Bhagvad-Gītā* could have been recited on a battlefield, and that too just before the beginning of a battle. Even a person who has memorized the *Gītā* takes about two hours to recite it.

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If one applies human standards, then it would be unrealistic to presume that this text was recited on a battlefield. The *Bhagvad-Gītā* must have been composed in a quite corner by different persons possibly at different periods. It reflects doctrines that are necessary to sustain social structures that have existed in India in historic times. By representing it to have been recited by Lord Kṛṣṇa the messages of the *Bhagvad-Gītā* could be ensured of divine inviolability. The same can be said of all other religious texts like the Bible and the *Koran* if their message is interpreted in the context of the socio-economic set-up of the societies in which these texts were composed.

‘Kṛṣṇa knows every one’s innermost thoughts and he saw through the temporary infatuation of Arjuna. Gandhi further says:

“If a passenger going in a Scotch Express gets suddenly sick of traveling and jumps out of it, he is guilty of suicide. He has not learnt the futility of traveling or traveling by a railway train. Similarly was the case with Arjuna. Non-violent Kṛṣṇa could give Arjuna no other advice. But to say that the *Gītā* teaches violence or justifies war, because advice to kill was given on a particular occasion, is as wrong as to say that *himsā* is the law of life, because a certain amount of it is inevitable in daily life. To one who reads the spirit of the *Gītā*, it teaches the
secret of non-violence, the secret of realizing
the self through the physical body.”\textsuperscript{12}

The above injunction of carrying out duties without expecting the fruits of labour cannot be reconciled with Krṣṇa’s telling Arjuna that he need not face any dilemma while battling his relatives because if he wins the battle he would obtain the kingdom of earth but even if he loses and is killed he would still gain the kingdom of heaven. Thus Arjuna has to be motivated to fight by making him aware of the fruits of his deeds. This is one instance of a contradiction within a philosophy which in one way or the other commends performance of duties decreed upon us (by birth - in the context of the social structure that existed in ancient India). This is the interpretation when the message of the *Bhagvad-Gītā* is applied at the societal level and is viewed in one particular social context. There is another and more universal interpretation of the *Bhagvad-Gītā* when one applies its message at the individual and personal level.

**Buddhist Values:**

According to Buddhism, *Karma* is the energy which drives *Samsāra*, the cycle of suffering and rebirth for each being. Good, skillful (*Pali: kusala*) and bad, unskillful (*Pali: akusala*) actions produce

"seeds" in the mind which come to fruition either in this life or in a subsequent rebirth.\textsuperscript{13} The avoidance of unwholesome actions and the cultivation of positive actions is called Śīla (ethical conduct).

In Buddhism, \textit{Karma} specifically refers to those actions (of body, speech, and mind) that spring from mental intent (\textit{Pali} \textit{cetana}),\textsuperscript{14} and which bring about a consequence (or fruit, Sanskrit: \textit{phala}) or result (\textit{Pali} \textit{vipaka}). Every time a person acts there is some quality of intention at the base of the mind and it is that quality rather than the outward appearance of the action that determines its effect.

\textbf{The Four Noble Truths:}

According to the \textit{Pali Tipitaka}, the Four Noble Truths were the first teaching of \textit{Gautama Buddha} after attaining Nirvana. According to the Macmillan \textit{Encyclopedia of Buddhism}\textsuperscript{15} they are:

1. "The noble truth that is suffering"
2. "The noble truth that is the arising of suffering"
3. "The noble truth that is the end of suffering"
4. "The noble truth that is the way leading to the end of suffering"

\textsuperscript{13} Kasulis, T.P., \textit{Zen as a Social Ethics of Responsiveness}, p.33.
\textsuperscript{14} Harvey., \textit{Introduction to Buddhism}, p.40.
The Noble Eightfold Path:

The *Nagarjunikonda* Second Apsidal Temple Inscription says that the Path leading to the freedom from suffering is eight-fold (*athainga-mārga*).\(^{16}\)

*Dukkhe ñana* .... Understanding suffering

*Dukkhasamudaye ñana* .... Understanding its origin

1. Right view: *Dukkhanirodhe ñana*. I. *Samma ditthi* (*drsti*).

.... Understanding its cessation

*Dukkhanirodhagaminipatipadaya ñana* .... Understanding the way leading to its cessation

2. Right Resolute: *Samma sankappa* (*samkalpa*).

*Nekkhamma-sankappa* .... Intention of renunciation

*Abyapada-sankappa* .... Intention of good will

*Avihimsa-sankappa* .... Intention of harmlessness

3. Right speech: *Samma vaca* (*vak*).

*Musavada veramani* .... Abstaining from false speech

*Pisunaya vacaya veramani* .... Abstaining from slanderous speech

Pharusaya vacaya veramani .... Abstaining from harsh speech

Samphappalapa veramani .... Abstaining from idle chatter

4. Right Conduct: Samma kammanta(karman).

Panatipata veramani .... Abstaining from taking life

Adinnadana veramani .... Abstaining from stealing

Kamesu micchacara veramani .... Abstaining from sexual misconduct

5. Right livelihood: Samma ajiva (ajivana).

Miccha ajivam pahaya .... Giving up wrong livelihood,

Samma ajivena jivitam kappeti .... One earns one's living by a right form of livelihood

6. Right effort: Samma vayama (vyayama).

Samvarappadhana .... The effort to restrain defilements

Pahanappadhana .... The effort to abandon defilements

Bhavanappadhana .... The effort to develop wholesome states

Anurakkhanappadhana .... The effort to maintain wholesome states

7. Right mindedness: Samma sati (smrti).

Kayanupassana .... Mindful contemplation of the body

Vedananupassana .... Mindful contemplation of feelings

Cittanupassana .... Mindful contemplation of the mind
*Dhammanupassana* .... Mindful contemplation of phenomena

8. Right concentration: *Samma samadhi* (*samadhi*).

*Pathamajjhana* .... the first *Jhana*

*Dutiyajjhana* .... the second *Jhana*

*Tatiyajjhana* .... the third *Jhana*

*Catutthajjhana* .... the fourth *Jhana*

The *Dharmachakra* represents the Noble Eightfold Path. The Noble Eightfold Path, the fourth of the Buddha's Noble Truths, is the way to the cessation of suffering (*dukkha*). It has eight sections, each starting with the word *samyak* (Sanskrit, meaning *correctly, properly, or well*, frequently translated into English as *right*), and presented in three groups:

The practice of the Eightfold Path is understood in two ways, as requiring either simultaneous development (all eight items practiced in parallel), or as a progressive series of stages through which the practitioner moves, the culmination of one leading to the beginning of another. In the early sources (the four main *Nikayas*) the Eightfold Path
is not generally taught to laypeople, and it is little known in the Far East.¹⁷

**Buddhist Ethical Values:**

*Śīla* (Sanskrit) or *Śīla* (*Pali*) is usually translated into English as "virtuous behavior", "morality", "ethics" or "precept". It is an action committed through the body, speech, or mind, and involves an intentional effort. It is one of the *three practices* (*Śīla, samādhi, and panya*) and the second *paramita*. It refers to moral purity of thought, word, and deed. The four conditions of *Śīla* are chastity, calmness, quiet, and extinguishment.

*Śīla* is the foundation of *Samādhi Bhāvana* (Meditative cultivation) or mind cultivation. Keeping the precepts promotes not only the peace of mind of the cultivator, which is internal, but also peace in the community, which is external. According to the Law of *Karma*, keeping the precepts are meritorious and it acts as causes which would bring about peaceful and happy effects. Keeping these precepts keeps the cultivator from rebirth in the four woeful realms of existence.

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Śīla refers to overall principles of ethical behavior. There are several levels of Śīla, which correspond to "basic morality" (five precepts), "basic morality with asceticism" (eight precepts), "novice monkhood" (ten precepts) and "monkhood" (Vinaya or Patimokkha). Lay people generally undertake to live by the five precepts, which are common to all Buddhist schools. If they wish, they can choose to undertake the eight precepts, which add basic asceticism. The five precepts are training rules in order to live a better life in which one is happy, without worries, and can meditate well.

1. To refrain from taking life (non-violence towards sentient life forms)
2. To refrain from taking that which is not given (not committing theft)
3. To refrain from sensual (including sexual misconduct)
4. To refrain from lying (speaking truth always)
5. To refrain from intoxicants which lead to loss of mindfulness (specifically, drugs and alcohol)
The precepts are not formulated as imperatives, but as training rules that laypeople undertake voluntarily to facilitate practice. In Buddhist thought, the cultivation of dāna and ethical conduct will themselves refine consciousness to such a level that rebirth in one of the lower heavens is likely, even if there is no further Buddhist practice. There is nothing improper or un-Buddhist about limiting one's aims to this level of attainment. In the eight precepts, the third precept on sexual misconduct is made stricter, and becomes a precept of celibacy. The three additional precepts are:

6. To refrain from eating at the wrong time (only eat from sunrise to noon)

7. To refrain from dancing and playing music, wearing jewelry and cosmetics, attending shows and other performances

8. To refrain from using high or luxurious seats and bedding

**Jain Ethical Values:**

Jainism which has similar philosophical connotations as Buddhism is a religion without God. They are even called ‘nastikas’ or heretics. But Jainism in particular contexts is even more adherent to

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18 Peter Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhism*, p. 187.
spirituality and ethics when compared Buddhism. Therefore, Jainas are not atheistic in this sense. Denial of God does not necessarily mean atheism in Indian Philosophy. Though Jainism denies God, it does not deny godhead. Every liberated soul is a god. The Tirthankaras who were mortal beings like us, but obtained liberation through personal efforts, are always there to inspire us. There is no necessity of bringing in God to explain creation, for the world was never created. Production, destruction and permanence characterize all substances. Things have creation and dissolution because of their modes. Strictly speaking, there is no place for devotion in Jainism. The fire of asceticism must burn all emotions and desires to ashes. But the common Jaina due to the weakness of man has not been able to rise to this strict logic and has, under the influence of Brahmanism, deified the Tirthankaras, has built temples for them, had worshipped their idols, and had shown the same devotion to them as other Hindu orthodox people have shown to their gods.\(^\text{20}\)

Nonviolence (Ahimsa) is the keystone of the Jain code of ethics, which is a natural effect of rationalism. Jainas do not believe that any higher authority hands down a 'system of laws' or commandments.

Jainas are expected to study the scriptures and grasp the concepts of rational perception, rational knowledge and rational conduct. They should consider their own experiences and realize that passions such as anger, pride, deception and greed have a major adverse impact on their lives. It is observed that if an individual accepts success and failure, pleasure and pain, sickness and health, union and separation, victory and defeat as part of worldly existence, he/she has mild passions. This leads to contentment and peace of mind. Just as we wish to have good health and peace of mind, so do all other living beings. This is the basis of the virtue of nonviolence. Jainism believes that no overall good of individuals or society can arise from violence. Jainism teaches that untruth, stealing, taking more than one's fair share, immoderate pursuit of sensual pleasures and possessiveness are aspects of violence. All these involve passions, mental violence of self and of others.

Jain men and women of all ages undertake fasting on a regular basis and consider it the singular mark by which their community can be distinguished from that of the Brahmanical society. Remarkable still is the most holy Jain practice of sallekhana which permits certain advanced Jain mendicants to adopt total fasting as a legitimate way, in
fact the only permissible way of choosing death in the face of a terminal illness.  

The Jain emphasis on fasting invites an examination of their attitude to food and the reasons for their belief in the efficacy of fasting as a means of attaining *moksa*. Probably the Jain doctrine of the material (*paudgalika*) nature of *karma* capable of producing impure transformation (*vibhava-parinnama*) of the soul (*jīva*) is at the root of this belief. It is well known that in Jainism *karmic* bondage is seen as an accumulation of an extremely subtle form of floating `dust` which clings to the soul when the latter is overcome, moistened as it were, by desire and other passions. These desires (present in all soul from beginning less time) in their most subtle from are called *samjnas*, a term which may be tentatively translated as `instincts`.

The Jain texts enumerate four such *samjnas* universally found in all forms of life including the vegetable kingdom. Craving for food (*ahara-samjna*) is the most primary of these instincts. No other being than the liberated soul is exempt from it. This desire for food sets up competition between one living being and another which gives rise to the second instinct, namely that of fear (*bhaya-samjna*). The

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consumption of food sets the third and probably the most virulent of the instincts in motion, the desire for sex (*maithuna-samjna*) the gratification of which produces further desire for food. This, in turn, produces a craving to accumulate things for future use, the instinct called *parigraha-samjna*, which invariably goads the soul towards volitional harmful acts (*himsa*) inspired by attachment (*raaga*) and aversion (*dvesa*). The Jains therefore see the craving for food as the very root of all bondage, the uprooting of which is essential for the elimination of the other passions.22

**Christianity and Moral Values:**

Science defines ethics as “a set of moral principles, the study of morality.” Therefore, Christian Ethical values would be the principles, derived from the Christian faith, by which we act. While God’s Word may not cover every situation we face throughout our lives, its principles give us the standards by which we must carry ourselves in those situations where there are no explicit instructions. For example, the Bible does not say anything explicitly about the use of illegal drugs, yet based on the principles we learn through Scripture, we can know that it is wrong. St. Paul, while writing to the Colossians, says:

“If ye, then, be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify, therefore your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil desire, and covetousness (which is idolatry). For which things sake the wrath of God cometh on the sons of disobedience.”

For one thing, the Bible tells us that the body is a temple of the Holy Spirit and that we should honor God with it. Knowing what these drugs do to our bodies, the harm they cause to various organs, we know that by using them we would be destroying the temple of the Holy Spirit. That is certainly not honoring to God. The Bible also tells us that we are to follow the authorities that God Himself has put into place. Given the illegal nature of the drugs, by using them we are not submitting to the authorities, but rather, rebelling against them.

By using the principles we find in Scripture, Christians can determine their course of actions for any given situation. In some cases it will be simple, like the rules for Christian living we find in Colossians,

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chapter 3. In other cases, however, we need to do a little digging. The absolute best way to do that is to pray over God’s Word. The Holy Spirit indwells each believer, and part of His role is teaching us how to live:

“But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”

“As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit just as it has taught you, remain in him.”

So, when we pray over Scripture, the Spirit will guide us and teach us. He will show us the principle we need to stand on for any given situation. Most things we can simply see what the Bible says and follow the proper course based on that. In the cases where Scripture does not give explicit instructions for a given situation, we need to look for the principle behind it.

Again, in some of those cases it will be easy for followers as most of the moral principles Christians follow are sufficient for most situations. In the rare case where there is neither explicit Scripture nor seemingly clear principle, one has to rely on God. People are expected

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27 Ibid., I John. 2:27.
to pray over ‘His Word’ and open themselves to ‘His Spirit’. The Spirit will teach and guide people through the Bible to find the principle that helps to stand on so that people may walk and live as a Christian should.

Islam and Moral Values:

The word Islam means "submission to God". The Holy Quran describes Islam as an Arabic word *Deen* (way of life). The followers of Islam are called Muslims. The literal meaning of Muslim is "one who surrenders" or "submits" to the will of God. In order to understand Islam, the basic portrayal of belief in Quran must be considered. According to Quran, those who submit to one God are Muslims.

The essence of the fast is its moral and spiritual value, and the *Quran* and Tradition have laid special stress on this. It is not refraining from food that makes the breath of the faster so sweet; it is refraining from foul speech and abuse and evil words and deeds of all kinds, so much so that he does not even utter an offensive word by way of retaliation. Thus a fasting person undergoes not only a physical discipline by curbing his carnal desires, the craving for food and drink, and the sex appetite, but he is actually required to undergo a direct
moral discipline by avoiding all kinds of evil words an evil deeds. It is not only training on the physical side, which has a moral value; it is a direct training on the spiritual side as well. In the sight of God, as plainly stated in these traditions, the fast loses its value not only by taking food or drink but also by telling a lie, using foul language, acting unfaithfully, or doing an evil deed.

The moral value of the fasting discipline is further enhanced by laying stress on the doing of good to humanity in the month of Ramadhan. The devils are chained in his case because he curbs and conquers the lower passions, by exciting which the devil makes a man fall into evil. The doors of Hell are closed on him because he shuns all evil which is man's hell. The doors of Heaven are opened for him because he rises above physical desires and devotes himself to the service of humanity. There is another sense in which the doors of Heaven are opened to a fasting person in the month of Ramadhān. It is specially suited for spiritual advancement, for attaining nearness to God. Speaking of Ramadhān, the Qurān says:
"And when My servants question you about Me, tell them I am near. I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls to Me."^{28}

Fasting is considered as a moral discipline, for it is the training ground where man is taught the greatest moral lesson of his life, the lesson that he should be prepared to suffer the greatest adversity and undergo the hardest trial rather than indulge in that which is not permitted to him. That lesson is repeated from day to day for a whole month, and just as physical exercise strengthens man physically, moral exercise through fasting, the exercise of abstaining from everything that is not allowed, strengthens the moral side of his life. The idea that everything unlawful must be eschewed and that evil must be hated is thus developed through fasting. Another aspect of the moral development of man by this means is that he is thus taught to conquer his physical desires. He takes his food at regular intervals and that is no doubt a desirable rule of life, but fasting for one month in the year teaches him the higher lesson that, instead of being the slave of his appetites and desires, he should be their master, being able to change the course of his life if he wills it. Williams points out:

“The man who is able to rule his desires, to make them work as he likes, in whom will-power is so

developed that he can command himself, is the man who has attained to true moral greatness.”

The Five Pillars of Faith:

1. “The Confession” "La ilaha illa llah" "There is no God but God." The Shahada, (Testimony) Kalima There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is the Prophet of Allah.

2. Salat Prayer 5 times a day facing Mecca

3. Zakat Almsgiving

4. Fasting during the month of Ramadan, from sun-up till sundown.

5. Hajj Pilgrimage to Mecca once a lifetime

Given the above critical review of the religion and ethics we can conclude that strong foundations for ethics and ethical behavior are pre-established within each religion and the same can be evidenced in the related scriptures, preachings and authoritative documents. Such foundations provide a ethical framework that establishes the concepts right and wrong, praise and blame and moral duty of good conduct etc.,. While the applied ethical challenges that we encounter in the contemporary globalization are unique and not necessarily predicted within the old religious context - the ethical framework that was provided within the religion is relevant and more importantly sufficient to extrapolate the moral jurisprudence into solving the current day ethical challenges in the globalization.

29 Williams., The Vision of Islam, p. 126.