

GCSE Religious Studies Specification B Unit 2 *Religion and Life Issues*

Term	Definition
<i>abortion</i>	The deliberate termination (ending) of a pregnancy, usually before the foetus is 24 weeks old.
<i>Abortion Act (1967)</i>	The first law making abortion legal in England, Scotland and Wales.
<i>abuse</i>	Misuse of the world and the environment.
<i>acid rain</i>	Rain made acid by contamination through pollution in the atmosphere as the result of emissions from factories, vehicles, power-stations, etc.
<i>adoption</i>	The legal process where a person (child) is taken (adopted) into the family as a son or daughter.
<i>ageism</i>	Prejudice against someone because of their age, leading to discrimination.
<i>animal experiments</i>	Testing on animals, either for medical or cosmetic purposes, to ensure that the product is safe for use by humans.
<i>animal exports</i>	The selling of animals to other countries.
<i>animal rights</i>	The belief that animals have a dignity just as humans do and should be given care and protection.
<i>Assisi Declarations</i>	Statements about the need to protect animals and the environment made on behalf of the different major religions.
<i>awe</i>	A feeling of respect; insight into meaning greater than oneself.
<i>backbone</i>	Spinal column.
<i>big bang</i>	Scientific theory that the universe began with an enormous explosion.
<i>biodegradable</i>	Able to be broken down by bacteria in the environment.
<i>biological weapons</i>	Weapons that have living organisms or infective material that can lead to disease or death.
<i>birth</i>	Passing down the birth canal and living outside the mother.
<i>blessing</i>	The idea that God has favoured a couple with a child.
<i>brigade</i>	A uniformed religious youth organisation for young people.
<i>brotherhood</i>	People of the similar beliefs regard themselves like brothers.
<i>bull fighting</i>	Associated in particular with Spain, matadors fight bulls (and eventually kill them) to entertain the crowds.
<i>Carbon emissions</i>	Release of greenhouse gases, such as carbon monoxide from vehicles, into the atmosphere.
<i>carbon footprint</i>	A measure of the impact of greenhouse gases on the environment, measured in units of carbon dioxide (CO ₂).
<i>chemical weapons</i>	Weapons that use chemicals to poison, burn, paralyse humans and the natural environment.
<i>chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs)</i>	Chemicals in refrigerators, aerosols and air conditioners that destroy the ozone layer.
<i>class</i>	Social group or caste, position in society.
<i>climate change</i>	Changes to the climate, believed by some scientists to be irreparably damaging, that have been caused by human lifestyles.
<i>cloning</i>	The scientific method by which animals or plants can be created which have exactly the same genetic make up as the original, because the DNA of the original is used.
<i>colour</i>	Relating to the colour of a person's skin/ethnicity. Often used as a reason for unfairly judging others and making uniformed opinions about them.
<i>coming of age</i>	A young person's transition from adolescence to adulthood.

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<i>commitment</i>	A pledge, promise or affirmation of agreement.
<i>compassion</i>	A feeling of sympathy that makes one want to help.
<i>conception</i>	The moment the sperm fertilises the egg.
<i>confirmation</i>	A sacrament admitting a baptized person to full participation in the church.
<i>conflict</i>	Fighting, a state of discord or war.
<i>conscience</i>	The inner feeling that you are doing right or wrong.
<i>conscientious objectors</i>	People who object to fighting in a war because killing is against their conscience.
<i>conservation</i>	Looking after the environment and protecting animals.
<i>conventional weapons</i>	Weapons that do not contain biological, chemical or nuclear elements.
<i>creation</i>	Belief that God created the universe and everything in it.
<i>deforestation</i>	The cutting down of large amounts of forest, usually because of business needs.
<i>design</i>	The argument that God designed (made) the Universe because everything is so intricately made in its detail that it could not have happened by chance.
<i>destruction of crops</i>	Food crops destroyed by weather conditions.
<i>deterrent</i>	A way of discouraging an enemy attack by being able to retaliate.
<i>disability</i>	When a person has a mental or physical condition that limits movement or activities.
<i>disarmament</i>	When a country gets rid of its weapons.
<i>discrimination</i>	To act against someone on the basis of sex, race, religion, etc. Discrimination is usually seen as wrong.
<i>DNA</i>	Deoxyribonucleic acid that carries genetic information in a cell.
<i>droughts</i>	Long periods of abnormally low rainfall.
<i>duty</i>	A moral or legal obligation – an action that must be done.
<i>earth summits</i>	Meetings of international leaders aimed at reaching an agreement that will reduce environmental pollution and climate change.
<i>embryo</i>	Fertilised ovum at about 12–14 days when implanted into the wall of the womb.
<i>emissions</i>	A substance discharged into the air.
<i>empowerment</i>	An individual having the right to make their own choices and act on them.
<i>ensouled</i>	Receives a soul.
<i>equality</i>	That people should be given the same rights and opportunities regardless of sex, religion, race, etc.
<i>evolution (evolved)</i>	Theory that says living things change gradually over a long time.
<i>experience</i>	Something that happens to a person.
<i>extinction</i>	When all members of a species have died out and that species will never exist on Earth again.
<i>factory farming</i>	When animals are used for meat or dairy products, but are kept indoors in very small spaces.
<i>faith schools</i>	Schools run by a particular religion rather than by the state.
<i>famine</i>	Starvation owing to drastic, far-reaching food shortage.
<i>fertility</i>	Being able to conceive a child.
<i>foetus</i>	Fertilised ovum from eight weeks.
<i>fossil fuels</i>	A hydrocarbon used as a fuel, like natural gas, petroleum, and coal.

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<i>fostering</i>	The taking of a child from a different family into a family home and bringing them up with the rest of the new family.
<i>freedom of choice</i>	Being able to choose to do whatever you want.
<i>gender</i>	Another word for a person's sex, ie male, female.
<i>generation gap</i>	A difference between the views of young people and their parents.
<i>genetic modification</i>	Plants and animals that have had their natural make-up altered by scientists.
<i>Geneva Conventions</i>	Rules about war and the treatment of prisoners and civilians.
<i>gift</i>	The idea that a child is God's gift to humans.
<i>global warming</i>	The scientific concept that the world is getting warmer.
<i>greenhouse effect</i>	The trapping of heat from the sun in the lower atmosphere due to an increase in carbon dioxide, methane and other pollutants.
<i>groups</i>	People joining together.
<i>handicap</i>	A physical or mental disability.
<i>harmony</i>	Living in peace with others.
<i>holy war</i>	Fighting for a religious cause or God probably controlled by a religious leader.
<i>Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act (1990)</i>	The amendment to the Abortion Act 1967 that reduced time limit to 24 weeks.
<i>hunting</i>	The chasing of animals to kill them, which may be done for food, protection or human pleasure.
<i>individuals</i>	Persons acting on their own.
<i>influence of parents</i>	How values and opinions are passed to children.
<i>influence of the media</i>	Newspapers, television, films can reinforce or break down stereotypes.
<i>initiation</i>	Being entered formally into a religion.
<i>international action</i>	Action taken by groups of countries to help conserve the environment.
<i>Just War</i>	A war that the Christian Church defines as acceptable: this must fit certain criteria. The idea was developed by St Thomas Aquinas and the Roman Catholic Church.
<i>justice</i>	Bringing about what is right, fair, according to the law or making up for a wrong that has been committed.
<i>law</i>	Rules in a country that govern how people live.
<i>lifestyle</i>	The way people live that reflects their values and attitudes.
<i>marginalisation</i>	The social process of becoming or being isolated and left out.
<i>media</i>	The organisations which convey information to the public, especially television and the printed press.
<i>miracle of life</i>	The idea that life is wonderful, amazing or special.
<i>moral codes</i>	Moral rules by which a person decides to live.
<i>NATO</i>	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, an alliance formed to prevent war in Europe.
<i>natural disasters</i>	Disasters caused by nature, eg earthquakes, volcanoes.
<i>natural habitats</i>	The places where species of plants or animals live in the wild.
<i>natural resources</i>	Resources that are part of the environment, eg water, minerals, and which are used and often abused by humans.
<i>non-biodegradable</i>	Not able to be broken down by the environment.
<i>nuclear proliferation</i>	The increase in the number of states that have the potential to use nuclear weapons.

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<i>nuclear weapons</i>	Weapons that work by a nuclear reaction that devastate huge areas and kill large numbers of people.
<i>Ohito Declaration</i>	A statement of religious concern for the protection of the environment.
<i>oil spills</i>	Leaking of oil into the environment, usually the sea.
<i>origins of life</i>	How life began.
<i>ozone layer</i>	A layer of ozone in the upper atmosphere that absorbs most of the Sun's radiation; it is being destroyed by CFCs.
<i>pacifism</i>	The belief of people who refuse to take part in war and any other form of violence.
<i>peace</i>	An absence of war and conflict, which leads to happiness and harmony.
<i>peace keeping force</i>	Troops sent by a group of countries to act as a buffer between warring parties, or to keep the peace after hostilities cease.
<i>peer pressure</i>	Influence exerted by friends on each other.
<i>pesticides</i>	Substances (poison) used to destroy insects and pests that attack crops.
<i>pollution</i>	The contamination of something, especially the environment.
<i>positive discrimination</i>	Treating people more favourably because they have been discriminated against in the past.
<i>poverty</i>	Condition of being without money, food and other basic needs of life (being poor).
<i>prejudice</i>	Unfairly judging someone before the facts are known. Holding biased opinions about an individual or group.
<i>preservation</i>	Look after the environment and life in order to keep it safe.
<i>pressure groups</i>	Collections of people outside government who campaign for changes in society.
<i>Pro-choice</i>	Slogan used for the view that women should have the right to choose whether or not to have an abortion.
<i>Pro-life</i>	Slogan used for the view that supports the right to life of the foetus.
<i>proliferation</i>	Spreading to other countries and getting more numerous.
<i>Purpose of life</i>	The goal of life and the reason for living.
<i>Quakers</i>	Members of the Society of Friends, a Christian denomination.
<i>quality of Life</i>	A measure of fulfilment.
<i>race</i>	A group of people with the same ethnic background.
<i>racism</i>	Showing prejudice against someone because of their ethnic group or nationality.
<i>recycling</i>	Reusing old products to make new ones.
<i>Red Crescent</i>	A branch of the Red Cross in a Muslim country.
<i>Red Cross</i>	A humanitarian agency that helps people suffering from war or other disasters.
<i>refugees</i>	People who flee from their homes seeking safety elsewhere.
<i>relationships</i>	A relationship is an association among two or more people.
<i>religion</i>	A set of beliefs, values and practices usually based on the teaching of a spiritual leader.
<i>religious prejudice</i>	Prejudice based on religion or beliefs.
<i>responsibility</i>	The legal or moral duty which a person has and as a result may be blamed for it if it is not carried out.
<i>rights</i>	The legal or moral entitlements to do or not to do something.
<i>sacred</i>	Holy, precious because given by God.
<i>sanctity of life</i>	Life is sacred because it is God-given.

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<i>scapegoating</i>	Blaming certain groups for problems in society.
<i>secular</i>	Not religious.
<i>severe weather</i>	Extreme weather events such as hurricanes, tornadoes, etc.
<i>sexism</i>	Prejudice and discrimination based on a person's gender (usually a woman).
<i>society</i>	A grouping of people in a country.
<i>spirituality</i>	A sense of something which is outside normal human experience.
<i>stereotyping</i>	Having an over-simplified mental image of people and applying it to everyone in a group.
<i>stewardship</i>	The idea that believers have a duty to look after the environment on behalf of God.
<i>suffering</i>	Pain or distress.
<i>sustainable development</i>	Development which takes into consideration the impact on the natural world for future generations.
<i>terrorism</i>	When groups use violence, or the threat of violence, to achieve their aims, rather than using a democratic process. The violence is often indiscriminate and intended to create an atmosphere of fear.
<i>throwaway society</i>	A term referring to the wastefulness.
<i>tolerance</i>	Respecting the beliefs and practices of others.
<i>toxic chemicals</i>	Poisonous chemicals.
<i>United Nations (UN)</i>	An organisation set up at the end of World War II to prevent war and encourage peace by discussing problems between countries.
<i>unwanted children</i>	Unplanned pregnancies.
<i>upbringing</i>	A person's rearing and education during childhood.
<i>value of the individual</i>	The importance of every human being.
<i>vegan</i>	A person who will not use any animal product.
<i>vegetarianism</i>	The belief held by people that do not eat meat.
<i>viable</i>	The point at which a foetus could survive if it were to be born.
<i>victims of prejudice</i>	People who have experienced prejudice or discrimination against themselves.
<i>victims of war</i>	People who are harmed or suffer as a result of war.
<i>vivisection</i>	The cutting up of animals for scientific experiments.
<i>'War on Terror'</i>	Action taken after 9/11 to tighten security, prevent future attacks and destroy terrorist organisations.
<i>weapons of mass destruction (WMD)</i>	Weapons that can kill large number of people and/or cause great damage.
<i>wonder</i>	Marvelling at the complexity and beauty of the universe.
<i>worship</i>	Ceremony or prayers showing love and devotion to a deity, an idol or sacred object.
<i>zoos</i>	Places in which wild animals are kept to display to the public.

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Buddhism	
Term	Definition
<i>anatta</i>	No self, no soul; the Universal Truth that the soul is insubstantial; that people change over their lives; denial of a real or permanent self.
<i>anicca (anitya)</i>	Impermanence, instability, not permanent, etc.
<i>Buddha</i>	1. Historically the Buddha – the enlightened one. 2. An awakened or enlightened person.
<i>dhamma (dharma)</i>	Universal law; ultimate truth; the teachings of Buddha.
<i>Dhammapada</i>	A scripture of the Pali Canon with 426 verses.
<i>dukkha</i>	Suffering, imperfection, illness; also means dissatisfaction. Suffering; ill; everything leads to suffering; unsatisfactoriness.
<i>the Eightfold Path</i>	The way to wisdom and mental training and the way of morality.
<i>the Five Moral Precepts</i>	To not kill any living being, refrain from stealing, refrain from wrongful sexual activity, refrain from lying, refrain from taking drugs and alcohol that cloud the mind.
<i>The Four Noble Truths</i>	Dukkha, Samudaya, Nirodha, Magga (suffering, the cause of suffering, the end of suffering, the path to the end of suffering).
<i>kamma (karma)</i>	Literally 'action'. Deliberate actions that affect the believer's circumstances in this and future lives; cause and effect.
<i>magga (marga)</i>	Path. 'The Middle Way' which leads to freedom from suffering (The Fourth Noble Truth).
<i>mantras</i>	Prayers/chants such as Om Mani Oadme Hun.
<i>metta</i>	Loving kindness. A pure love, which is not possessive and which does not seek to gain.
<i>nibbana (nirvana)</i>	To reach a state of perfect peace where the individual experiences liberation from the cycle of birth, death and rebirth.
<i>niroda (nirodha)</i>	The end of suffering is to get rid of desire and craving (the Third Noble Truth).
<i>samatha</i>	Meditation; a state of calmness.
<i>samsara</i>	The circle of births, death and re-birth, which can be transcended by following the Eightfold Path.
<i>Sangha</i>	The community or assembly, of monks, nuns, lay men and lay women, depending on the form of Buddhism practised.
<i>Siddattha Gotama</i>	The name of the historical Buddha.
<i>sutta (sutra)</i>	The word of the Buddha.
<i>tanha (trishna)</i>	Desire, which causes suffering. The attempt to grasp at the things we enjoy.
<i>the Three Marks of Existence</i>	Anicca, Anatta, Dukkha.
<i>the Three Refuges</i>	Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha.
<i>Tipitaka</i>	A collection of texts, the Vinaya, Sutta and Abhidamma. Literally means Three Baskets or Pali Canon.
<i>vinaya</i>	The rules of discipline of Buddhist monastic life.
<i>vipassana (vipashyana)</i>	Insight into the nature of things; meditation.

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Christianity	
Term	Definition
<i>Bible</i>	Sacred book for Christians containing both the Old and New Testaments.
<i>Confirmation</i>	The sacrament in which the faith of the believer is 'confirmed' or strengthened by the Holy Spirit. Those being confirmed personally confirm their acceptance of the promises made by others at their baptism. Different dioceses celebrate confirmation at different ages.
<i>creator</i>	God is the creator of the earth and of life.
<i>eternal life</i>	Everlasting life after death.
<i>guide</i>	Christians believe that the Holy Spirit guides them in their lives so that they can do what is right.
<i>Holy Spirit</i>	The third person of the Holy Trinity who descended like a dove on Jesus at his baptism. Christians believe that the Holy Spirit is present and inspires them.
<i>Jesus</i>	1 st century Jewish teacher and holy man, believed by Christians to be the Son of God.
<i>monotheism</i>	Belief in one God.
<i>Resurrection</i>	When Jesus rose from the dead on Easter Day. An event recorded in all four gospels and the central belief of Christianity.
<i>salvation</i>	Saving the soul, deliverance from sin and admission to heaven brought about by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.
<i>sustainer</i>	God sustains the Universe and ensures that it continues.
<i>Trinity</i>	The belief that there are three persons in the One God. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are separate, but are also one being.

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Hinduism	
Term	Definition
<i>ahimsa (ahinsa)</i>	Not killing. Respect for life, not being violent.
<i>atman (atma)</i>	Self. Can refer to the body, mind or soul depending on context. Usually the inner, or real, self.
<i>Bhagavad Gita</i>	The Song of the Lord, sung by Krishna and part of the Mahabharata. Considered an Upanishad. Most famous and popular Hindu scripture.
<i>Brahma</i>	Hindu deity responsible for creative power.
<i>Brahman</i>	The ultimate reality from which everything comes and into which everything will return.
<i>dharma</i>	Religion. The right conduct and laws which uphold order and harmony in society.
<i>Four Aims of Life</i>	Dharma, Artha, Karma, Moksha.
<i>karma</i>	Action. The law of cause and effect.
<i>mandir</i>	A Hindu temple.
<i>mantra</i>	A short prayer/chant repeated as an aid to meditation.
<i>moksha (moksa)</i>	Final freedom from the cycle of life and death.
<i>murti</i>	Image or deity used as a focus of worship and offerings.
<i>puja</i>	1. Paying respect to a deity as an honoured guest. 2. Ways to worship in the home or temple.
<i>reincarnation</i>	Being reborn again in another form.
<i>samsara (sansara)</i>	The world, where the cycle of birth, death and rebirth takes place.
<i>triad of Gods</i>	Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva – also known as the Trimurti. They represent and control the three functions of creation, preservation and destruction.
<i>yoga</i>	1. A union of the soul with the deity and the process taken to reach this. 2. A form of self-discipline and meditation.

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Islam	
Term	Definition
<i>akhirah</i>	Everlasting life after death.
<i>Allah</i>	The Islamic name for God.
<i>Five Pillars of Islam</i>	Shahadah, Salah, Sawm, Zakah and Hajj.
<i>Hadith</i>	Words and actions of the Prophet Muhammad. A major source of Islamic Law.
<i>Iblis (Ibis)</i>	The tempter – also known as Shaytan.
<i>Jahannam</i>	Muslim word for hell.
<i>Khalifa(h)</i>	Stewardship. The idea that believers have a duty to look after the environment on behalf of God.
<i>Makkah (Mecca)</i>	The city where Muhammad was born. The spiritual centre of Islam. It is in Saudi Arabia.
<i>monotheism</i>	Belief in one God.
<i>Muhammad</i>	The last and greatest of the prophets of Allah.
<i>Muslim</i>	One who has submitted to the will of Allah and has accepted Islam.
<i>Qur'an</i>	The Holy Book revealed to the Prophet Muhammad by the angel Jibril. Allah's final revelation to humankind.
<i>salah (salat)</i>	Prayer with and worship of Allah, performed under the conditions set by the Prophet Muhammad – five times a day. The second pillar of Islam.
<i>sawm</i>	Fasting from dawn to dusk during Ramadan; sex and smoking are banned when the believer is engaged in this. The fourth pillar of Islam.
<i>shahadah</i>	Muslim declaration of faith. The first pillar of Islam.
<i>Shari'ah</i>	Islamic law based directly upon the Qur'an and the Sunnah.
<i>surah</i>	A division (chapter) of the Qur'an. There are 114 in all.
<i>tawhid</i>	The oneness and unity of Allah.
<i>ummah</i>	All Muslims are regarded as part of a brotherhood; the nation of Islam.
<i>zakah (zakat)</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Purification of wealth by giving to the poor. 2. An act of obligatory worship for Muslims.

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Judaism	
Term	Definition
<i>Bar Mitzvah</i>	Celebration of a boy coming of age at 13. Literally “Son of the Commandment”.
<i>Bat Mitzvah</i>	Celebration of a girl coming of age at 12, in reform synagogues. Literally “Daughter of Commandment”.
<i>the Covenant</i>	God’s agreement to look after the Jews as his chosen people, subject to Israel’s obedience.
<i>creator</i>	God is the creator of the earth and of life.
<i>kashrut</i>	Laws relating to having a Kosher lifestyle, eg keeping the food laws.
<i>kosher</i>	Foods which meet the Jewish laws.
<i>monotheism</i>	Belief in one God.
<i>redeemer</i>	One who redeems and saves from the consequences of sin. Often used to describe God.
<i>repentance</i>	Saying sorry and trying to change ones behaviour so as to not do the same again.
<i>sustainer</i>	God sustains the Universe and ensures that it continues.
<i>synagogue</i>	Jewish place of worship.
<i>Tenakh (Tanakh)</i>	The 24 books of the Jewish Bible. Jewish scriptures – Torah (Law), Neviim (Writings) and Ketuvim (Prophets).
<i>Torah</i>	1. The five books of Moses and first section of the Tenakh – the law. 2. The whole of Jewish teaching.
<i>trefah</i>	Forbidden food – means ‘torn’.

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Sikhism	
Term	Definition
<i>5Ks</i>	Symbols of Sikhism: Kachera, Kangha, Kara, Kesh, Kirpan. Not all Sikhs interpret these symbols in exactly the same way.
<i>granthi</i>	A reader and explainer of the Guru Granth Sahib and a person who officiates at ceremonies.
<i>gurdwara</i>	The Sikh place of worship. 'Literally' the doorway to the Gurus.
<i>Guru Granth Sahib</i>	Collection of Sikh scriptures, collated by Guru Arjan and Guru Gobind Singh.
<i>Ikongkar</i>	Belief that 'God is One' – from the Mool Mantar.
<i>kachera</i>	The traditional underwear or shorts, symbolising moral purity. One of the 5Ks.
<i>kangha (kanga)</i>	A comb that is worn in the hair, symbolising self-discipline. One of the 5Ks.
<i>kara</i>	A steel band that is worn on the right wrist, symbolising the oneness of God and Khalsa. One of the 5Ks.
<i>kesh</i>	Uncut hair, symbolising the fight for spiritual justice. One of the 5Ks.
<i>khalsa</i>	The Sikh community founded by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699 C.E. Literally 'the community of the poor'.
<i>kirpan</i>	A sword, symbolising the fight for spiritual justice. One of the 5Ks.
<i>kurahit</i>	Things which are not allowed – prohibitions.
<i>langar</i>	The dining hall of the gurdwara and the food served there. Literally 'Guru's' kitchen.
<i>monotheism</i>	Belief in one God.
<i>Mool Mantar (Mul Mantra)</i>	The statement of belief set out at the beginning of the Guru Granth Sahib.
<i>Rehat (Reht) Maryada</i>	The Sikh code of discipline covering religious rites and ethical observances.
<i>sewa</i>	Selfless service for the Sikh community and gurdwara, also directed at all of humanity. Often refers to voluntary work or work offered to God.
<i>The Ten Gurus</i>	The ten human Gurus, who were messengers of God.
<i>Waheguru</i>	'Wonderful Lord'; a name for God.

