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Pi's Religious faith and hope for survival in the novel "Life of Pi"

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ABSTRACT

This paper intends the religious faith in life of pi. Pi Patel is born as a Hindu and deep rooted in Hinduism and then he express his wish to became a Christian then he passionate towards the Muslim prayers. After the witness of Muslim prayer, pi embraces the Muslim religion and proclaims the union of the gods of Hinduism and Islam. His simultaneous practice of Hinduism, Christianity and Islam, pi realizes the one theme that binds the three together is Love. Martel presents to the reader a gripping case for religious faith in his fresh outlook on religion.

Key words: Gripping, religious faith, life boat, rituals, symbolism.

Yann Martel life of Pi is an account of a boy, a tiger, and the vast Pacific Ocean. Born to an Indian family, Piscine Molitor Patel ("Pi" for short) was raised in his father's zoo in Pondicherry. Later, because of India's political unrest, Pi's family decides to move to Canada in a cargo ship, long with cages full of zoo animals. The ship, however, sinks, leaving Pi and the tiger Richard parker on the Pacific Ocean in a lifeboat. After a series of events at sea for 227 days, the boat finally washes ashore on a Mexican beach, where villagers rescue Pi and Richard Parker. Pi's story is a unique, high-seas adventure with many underlying themes. At its core is the idea of religious faith. As a practitioner of Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam, Pi is a remarkably religious youth. He has a sophisticated perspective of the world and finds consolation in both zoology and religion. With only a 450-pound Bengal tiger named Richard parker and a throng of sharks to keep him company in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, Pi must rely on his own faith and devotion to God to retain

his hope of survival and self-preservation. Pi's story investigates faith and love of God through the lens of a physical world depicted as wondrous, brutal, and deeply mystifying. The life of Pie presents a gripping and credible case for religious faith because of embracing of major religions, Pi's encounters with animals as religious symbols, and Pi's religious faith and will to live at sea.

Pi Patel has strong religious conviction, as evident in his simultaneous practice of Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam.

As a baby, Pi experiences a Hindu rituals and deep rooted in his Hindu faith. Throughout the novel, Pi addresses the symbolism and meaning of religion.

He believes the Gods of Hinduism to be the components of the universe. Pi considers the Hindu Gods as the path that allows humans to touch their souls. His deep faith is also shown through his various references to the Hindu Gods and their stories.

Although a devout Hindu follower, Pi does not halt his religious pursuit with Hinduism alone. During a vacation to Munnar, Pi notices three religious houses crowning the top of three hills.

It is this persistent curiosity that ultimately leads to Pi's desire to become a Christian. Before the departure from Munnar, Pi express his wish to become a Christian to father martin. Father Martin replies, whoever meets Christ in good faith is a Christian.

Hardly a year after Pi embraces Christianity and follows the Islam. In a Muslim quarter near his father's zoo, Pi meets a Muslim bread seller. After a short introduction, the baker Satish Kumar leads Pi into his house to show him how to make his specialty breads. While inside, both hear the nasal call of the muezzin, the Muslim crier, from the mosque. In response to this call to prayer, Mr. Kumar excuses himself to retrieve a prayer carpet from the next room. Pi then witnesses the Muslim prays by muttering Arabic and bowing four times. The image of Muslim prayer instills itself into the mind of Pi, who describes the prayer as "quick, necessary, physical, muttered, and striking."

Pi sees Islam as a loving union between God and follower. He also finds the Muslim place of worship, the mosque, very appealing for its "open construction, to God and to breeze."(P: 61) in addition, Pi claims to feel deep religious contact in the passion of Muslim Prayer. Under the leadership of hafiz, one who knows the Quran the holy book of Islam, by heart. Pi prays and practices dhikr, the recitation of the ninety-nine revealed names of God.

From witnessing Muslim prayer, Pi embraces the Muslim religion and proclaims the union of the Gods of Hinduism and Islam.

Pi's belief in the union between religious is a manifestation of his dedication to loving God. He claims that "presence of God is the finest of rewards". Underneath the formality and difference in the three religions, Pi realizes the one theme that binds the three together: love. The significance of Pi's devotion to God is exemplified in the novel when he loses everything and must rely on this faith to live.

The 450 pound Bengal tiger named Richard parker is also evidence of animals as religious symbols. The marvelous body of Richard parker can be seen as both an image of God and a sign of the brutality of the world. When Pi beholds Richard parker aboard the lifeboat, he describes the body of Richard parker as a "display of mighty art."

Along with Pi's embracing of major religious and the animals as religious symbols, the heart of the novel centers around Pi's religious faith and will to live at sea. Stranded in the middle of the Pacific Ocean with only 450-pound Bengal tiger and a throng of sharks to keep him company, Pi clings to his love for God and partly relies on religious rituals to prevent despair and the feeling of isolation and starvation.

Pi is in constant prayer for consolation and he prays for hope and the strength to fight hopelessness. The first time that Pi must kill a fish, he weeps over the deceased soul. Pi relates how keeping himself busy was the key to his survival. He creates a routine that involves inspecting the lifeboat, fishing, taking care of Richard parker, and, especially, praying.

In his iron will, Pi breaks lifelong bonds to survive at sea. He breaks the bond of a vegetarian and breaks his vow not to kill another being. To overcome starvation and preserve his life, Pi must choose the way of a carnivore by surviving on sea life. Pi learns how to fish to feed both himself and Richard Parker. Soon, Pi feeds from Dorado fish, sea turtles, crabs, barnacles, and other manner of seafood.

Pi's survival centralizes his love for his life as a virtue and asserts the power of faith to overcome apparent impossibilities. In the midst of unremitting suffering, Pi turns to God. In his account of his survival at sea, Pi provokes religious faith by his dedication to religious rituals and fighting will to live at sea.

The story of Pi Patel is an astounding story of courage and endurance in the face of seemingly impossible odds. Throughout the novel, the themes of religious faith remains at the heart of the novel. With Richard Parker aboard the lifeboat and the empty vastness of the Pacific Ocean, Pi must rely on his own faith and commitment to God to

preserve his hope of survival. Pi's embracing of major religious inspires religious sentiment and draws out the promise of faith. Pi's encounters with animals as religious symbols echoes the image of God and the deep spiritual meaning of suffering and love in a world filled with brutality and doubt. Finally, Pi's religious faith and will to live at sea presents a brave account of a youth clinging to the edges of life by loving God and retaining the seeds of hope in his heart. The Life of Pi is a story that presents a gripping and credible case for religious faith.

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