

SOME WORLD RELIGION BASICS

Taken from Eerdman's handbook to "The World's Religions", page 386, by William B. Eerdman, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; and <http://www.adherents.com/index.html#GroupNameIndex>, Research supported by East Haven University

	Buddhism	Christianity	Hinduism	Islam	Judaism
Its Beginnings	Reform Movement of Sorts ... Came Out of Hinduism ... Missionary Growth	Missionary Growth	Cultural Evolvement	Aggressive Growth	The Oldest Ethical Monotheist Religion ... The Chosen People
Approx. Date Began	5th Century BCE	34 BCE	5,000 Years Ago ... Officially Named in 1200 CE (name is Persian, meaning "Indian")	610 CE (though takes its roots from Abraham)	Consolidated in Early 6th Century BCE (though takes its roots from Abraham & Moses) ... Approximately 3,000 Years Ago
Area of Origin	Northeast India	Palestine: Judea	India	Mecca	Canaan (when Abraham migrated from Ur of the Chaldees)
Central Figure	Buddha (Siddharta Gautama)	Jesus the Christ	No Founder	Muhammad	Moses
Approx. Dates Figure Lived	563 to 483 BCE	4 to 37 BCE	N/A	570 to 632 CE	1200 BCE
Textural Basis	Buddha Teachings (written down from memory after his death)	Bible (Old Testament, first 5 books from Jewish Torah & remainder from writings of followers, & New Testament, taken from writings of followers)	Shankara Teachings & Vedas (developed many years after religion began)	Qur`an (written down as revealed ... only text in original form)	Torah (teachings memorized & written down later)
Today's Place of Worship	Temple	Church	Temple	Mosque	Synagogue
1900 Adherents # World Pop. %	127,000,000 7.8%	560,000,000 35%	203,000,000 12.5%	200,000,000 12.5%	12,000,000 0.8%
2000 Adherents # World Pop. %	359,000,000 6%	2,100,000,000 33.5%	860,000,000 14.3%	1,300,000,000 20%	18,000,000 0.24% (from 1998 – 2000 stats not available)