

# Major World Religions at a Glance

	Hinduism	Buddhism	Judaism	Islam	Christianity
<b>God/god(s)</b>	One Supreme reality (Brahman) manifested in many gods (impersonal)	Varies. No God or many gods. Buddha taught that nothing is permanent	One God (personal) - Yahweh	One God (Allah)	One personal God, triune in nature - Father, Son and Holy Spirit
<b>What gives life meaning</b>	Gain release from cycle of rebirth, or at least a better rebirth.	Purpose is to avoid suffering and gain enlightenment and release from cycle of rebirth, or at least attain a better rebirth by gaining merit.	Obey God's commandments, live ethically. Focus is more on this life than the next.	Submitting to the will of Allah.	Living in a right relationship with God through His Son Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit.
<b>Which moral standards to live by</b>	Certain forms of yoga, meditation, devotion to god or goddess, karma according to one's dharma (assigned role or purpose in life)	Meditation, mantras, good works, selfless labor and devotion to others, live according to the "Four Noble Truths" and the "Eightfold Path," etc.	Circumcision at birth, bar/bat mitzvah at adulthood, synagogue attendance, no pork or other non-kosher foods, holidays related to historical events	5 Pillars: Faith, Prayer, Alms, Pilgrimage, Fasting. Also mosque services, no alcohol or pork, etc.	Jesus' teachings (e.g. Sermon on the Mount, Great Commandment), other Biblical teaching, living out your faith in how you relate to other people
<b>Our spiritual need and how that's met</b>	Humans are divine but ignorant - we're in bondage to ignorance and illusion. We gain release from our cycle of rebirth through our knowledge of inner divinity.	Humans are non-substantial (no soul) and ignorant. Nirvana attained through letting go of desire, "Eightfold Path" of wisdom and conduct, and rigorous discipline.	Humans are created in the image of God but sinful. Right living is characterized by prayer, repentance, and following God's commands & law.	Humans must submit to the will of Allah.	Humans are created in the image of God, but are fallen and sinful. Salvation is through faith in Christ & His work on the cross alone.
<b>Jesus</b>	Varies. Some Hindus believe Jesus was an avatar, a manifestation of one of the many gods who <i>appeared</i> to be human.	Beliefs about Jesus vary. Many believe that Jesus was an enlightened teacher and spiritual master along with Buddha.	Not the Messiah	Great prophet	Son of God, fully God and fully man
<b>How life will end (afterlife)</b>	Reincarnation until we realize our divine identity	Reincarnation until enlightenment. Afterlife is impersonal nirvana.	Not historically stressed. Beliefs vary from no afterlife, to afterlife including heaven or separation from God.	Paradise or Hell	Eternal heaven or hell
<b>Scriptures/ authoritative texts</b>	Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, etc.	Sutras - words and teaching of Buddha. Also others depending on Buddhist sect.	Bible - Old Testament (Tanakh), Talmud	Qur'an	Bible - Old and New Testaments

## Contributing Sources

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