

Free essay on world religions

[Religion](#), [Buddhism](#)



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Buddhism

The religion was established in the sixth century before Christ. It was founded by Siddhartha Gautama, an Indian who was born in the North eastern part of India. He had tried the religious practices of the day that included extreme fasting, exposure to pain, meditations and engaging in philosophy but he did not find enlightenment. He had left his wife and children for spiritual quests to live in the jungle. He glanced at a river under a tree and he found a new path, which is known as Buddhism. He became an enlightened being who was free from love of asceticism and fleshly desires. He renounced asceticism and penance and was eager to share his new religion. He told sixty of his disciples to go and preach in the area on the new path.

After the death of Gautama, the disciples met to establish the rules of operation for the new order. The meeting was held in a cave at Rajagriha. Later, the Kings of the empires that controlled India such as Chandragupta and Bindusara adopted Buddhism. The religion spread to other regions in the world such as Syria, Egypt and Cyrene. At the time of Christ the religion had

spread to China, Korea and Japan. The Buddha did not find any spiritual satisfaction by following the practices of Hinduism under the Brahmanic system. Secondly, the Buddha did not believe in the worship of any god or Supreme Being as the Hindu believed. He also believed in a spiritual existence free from asceticism which is another important part of Hinduism.

Jainism.

This religion was founded by a man known as Vardhamana or Mahavira who lived in the

same period as Gautama. He was born in the valleys of the Ganges near Vaisali. He became an ascetic when he was thirty years and practiced asceticism till he was seventy one years of age. He retained the Hindu practices of asceticism, Karma and transmigration. Although he did not forbid the worship of the gods the way the Buddha did, he was sceptical of the gods and their worship is not mentioned in the practices of Jainism. The Jainist priests take five oaths which are not to kill any living beings, tell lies, steal and indulge in sexual pleasures and to renounce all attachments. They believe that one attains deliverance from rebirth by having knowledge of the right relationship between spirit and non-spirit, by believing the Master, observance of the sacred writings and adherence to the five vows (Barton, pg 177). The religion came up as a result of Vardhamana not finding fulfilment in the Hinduism practices at that time.

Sikhism

This religion was formed by Guru Nanak Dev who was a religious leader. He was born in the village of Talwandi. Later, after he had gotten married, he

went to bathe in a river and did not return until after three days. He came with a new religion for which he immediately started preaching in the regions near his home. It is an amicable religion that believes in religious tolerance. All human beings are deemed to be equal. This is in conflict with Hinduism which believes in the caste social system. The Sikhs believe in the existence and worship of a single God as the creator of the universe. They also believe in Karma and reincarnation. The Sikhs have no problem with the Hindu practices though they are different from theirs.

Works Cited

Barton, Aaron George. The religions of the world. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 2010. Print.