

# World Religions

## Religions of India

Ross Arnold, Summer 2015

# World Religion Lectures

- August 21 – *Introduction: A Universal Human Experience*
- August 28 – *Hinduism*
- September 4 – *Judaism*
- **September 11 – *Religions of India (Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism)***
- September 18 – *Religions of China & Japan (Taoism, Confucianism, Shinto, etc.)*
- September 25 – *Christianity*
- October 2 – *Islam*
- October 9 – *Animism, New Age, Atheism, Secularism*

# Today's World Religions by Date of Founding

	<u>Pop. (000s)</u>	<u>% of World</u>	<u>Founded (c.)</u>	<u>Where</u>
Hinduism	1,100,000	12.65%	4000-2500BC	Indus Valley
Judaism	14,000	0.20%	2000 BC	Palestine
Buddhism	488,000	5.29%	560-490 BC	India
Chinese Trad. <sup>1</sup>	394,000	5.54%	500 BC	China
Shinto	4,000	0.06%	500 BC	Japan
Jainism	4,200	0.06%	500 BC	India
Christianity	2,200,000	29.52%	30 AD	Palestine
Islam	1,600,000	21.09%	622 AD	Arabia
Sikhism	28,000	0.32%	1499 AD	India
Bah'aism	7,300	0.10%	1863 AD	Persia
Other <sup>2</sup>	690,000	9.70%		
Non-relig. <sup>3</sup>	1,100,000	15.46%		

<sup>1</sup> Includes Confucianism, Taoism, Shamanism

<sup>2</sup> Includes all other smaller religious affiliations identified

<sup>3</sup> Includes secular, non-religious, agnostic and atheist

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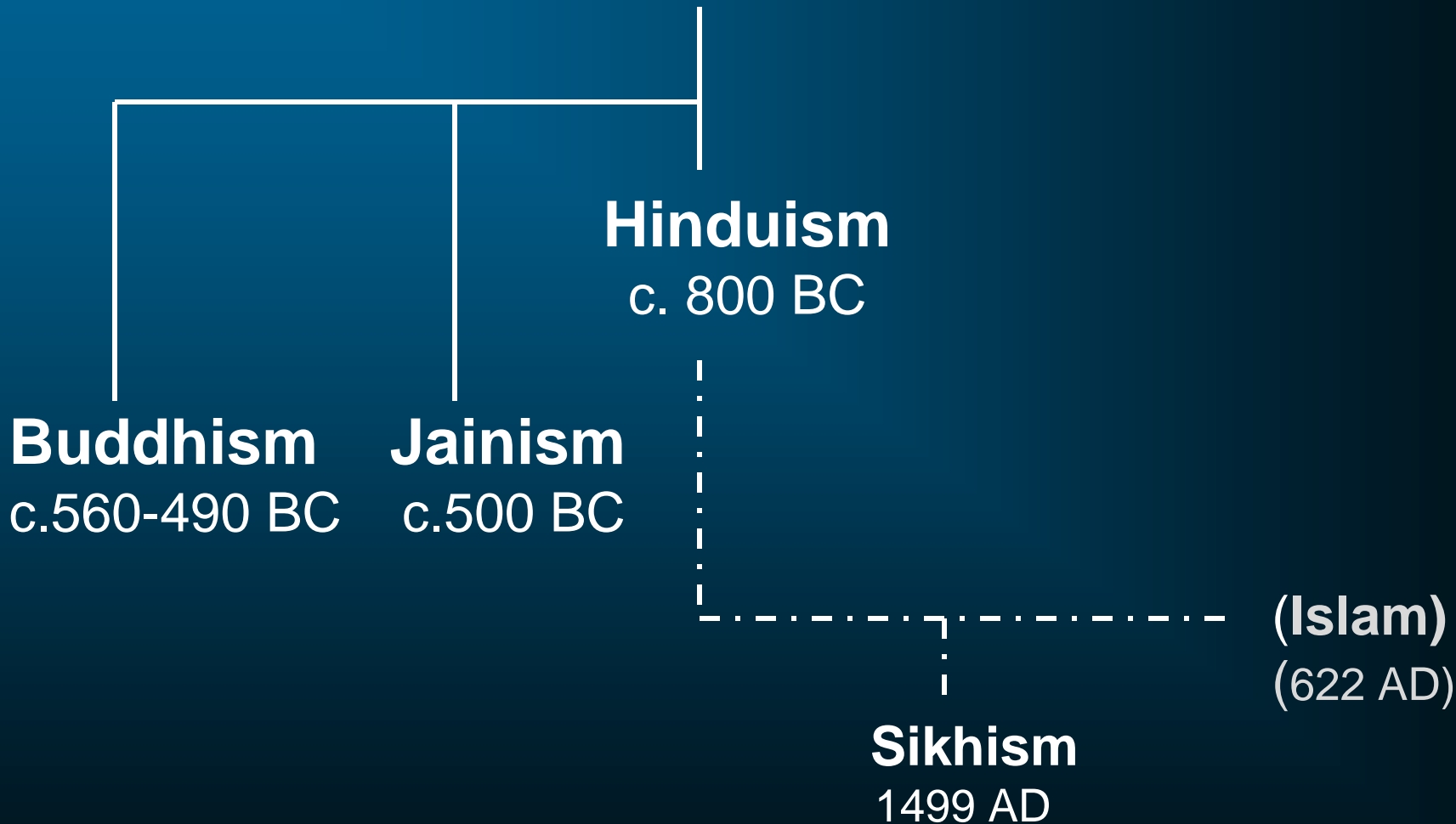
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# Development of Indian Religions

## Early-Middle Vedic Period

c. 1750 BC-850 BC





# Buddhism

c. 560-490 BC

- **Founder:** Siddhartha Gautama, “The Buddha” (“Enlightened One” of “Awakened One”)
- **Major Traditions:** Theravada, Mahayana (also Zen, Pure Land, Nichiren, Tibetan/Vajrayana, etc.)
- **Locations:** Thailand, China, Burma, Japan, East Asia, (global).



# Buddhism – The Four Noble Truths

1. **The Truth of *Dukkha*** – all of life is suffering;
2. **The Truth of the Origin of *Dukkha*** – craving and clinging to pleasure and aversion to what is not pleasurable are the cause of all suffering and of *samsara*;
3. **The Truth of the Cessation of *Dukkha*** – putting an end to craving and clinging ends suffering, so rebirth, dissatisfaction, and redeath no longer arise;
4. **The Truth of the Path Of Liberation from *Dukkha*** – by following the Noble Eightfold Path.

# **Buddhism – The Noble Eightfold Path** (or “Middle Way”)

- 1. Right View** – accepting the Four Noble Truths.
- 2. Right Intention** – right thoughts/aspirations.
- 3. Right Speech** – no falsehood, abuse, chatter.
- 4. Right Action** – moral, causing no harm.
- 5. Right Livelihood** – no working with weapons, degradation, meat, intoxicants, poisons.
- 6. Right Effort** – discipline thought, word & deed.
- 7. Right Mindfulness** – being alert to all that affects us.
- 8. Right Concentration** – right meditation.



# Jainism

c. 500 BC

- **Founder:** Mahavira (last of 24 *tirthankaras*, or “spiritual teachers”)
- **Major Traditions:** Shvetambaras; Digambaras (“sky-clad” ascetics)
- **Locations:** Almost entirely in India.
- **Holy Writings:**

# The Five Vows of Jainism

1. **Ahiṃsā** – nonviolence or non-injury.
2. **Satya** – truth; to always speak the truth.
3. **Asteya** – not stealing; do not take anything that is not willingly offered.
4. **Brahmacharya** – chastity for laymen and celibacy for Jain monks and nuns.
5. **Aparigraha** – non-possessiveness; non-materialism; non-attachment to objects, places and people.

# The Practices of Jainism

- 1. Fasting** – regularly, especially during festivals.
- 2. Meditation** – or *samayika*, the goal of which is to achieve perfect calmness and an understanding of self, and shedding of one's passions.
- 3. Monasticism** – greatly encouraged and respected, Jain monasticism is extremely austere and ascetic, with monks and nuns having no homes or possessions, living only on whatever people offer them.



# Sikhism

1499 AD

- **Founder:** Guru Nanak, first of Eleven Gurus.  
(Ten human gurus, 1469-1708)
- Major Traditions:
- Locations:
- **Holy Writings:** Guru Granth Sahib

# Underlying Values of Sikhism

- **Equality:** All humans are equal before God – No discrimination is allowed.
- **Personal right:** Every person has a right to life but this is restricted and has certain duties – simple living is essential.
- **Actions count:** Salvation is obtained by one's actions – good deeds, remembrance of God.
- **Living a family life:** To provide and nurture children for the perpetual benefit of creation.
- **Sharing:** It is encouraged to share and give to charity ten percent of one's net earnings.
- **Accept God's will:** Recognize happy events and miserable events as the will of God.
- **The four truths of life:** Truth, contentment, contemplation and Naam (in the name of God).

# Beliefs of Sikhism

1. There is an all-pervading spirit – “God.”
2. Liberation (salvation) comes as spiritual union with the divine.
3. The physical world is an illusion.
4. The supreme purpose of human life is reconnection with the divine.
5. Singing of the glories of the Supreme One is the most effective form of divine communion.
6. Remembrance of the Divine Name – *Naam*.
7. Service & charitable action are required.
8. Justice and equality are paramount.
9. Respecting the authority of the Ten Gurus.

# The “Five Ks” of Sikhism (“Kakkars” or “Items”)

1. ***Kesh***: uncut hair
2. ***Kangha***: a wooden comb
3. ***Kara***: a metal bracelet
4. ***Kachera***: a specific style of cotton undergarments
5. ***Kirpan***: a strapped curved sword

