

# WORLD RELIGIONS



## HINDUISM



## BUDDHISM



## ISLAM



## ANIMISM



## ATHEISM

	HINDUISM	BUDDHISM	ISLAM	ANIMISM	ATHEISM
<b>God/Supreme Being</b>	Many gods, who are forms of one Supreme Reality (Brahman).	Generally, non-theistic. Emphasizes individual enlightenment.	One personal God (Arabic, "Allah") who is Creator and Lord. No Trinity.	No real sense of deity. Spirits and powers are pervasive in the world.	God doesn't exist according to atheists; agnostics say it's impossible to know if God exists.
<b>Jesus Christ</b>	One of many spiritual teachers. Neither atoned for sin nor rose from the dead.	Will accept him as a gifted spiritual teacher, but not divine.	Born of a virgin, sinless. Neither God nor God's Son, but a great prophet.	No reference to or role for Jesus.	Merely a man and maybe even respected, but in no sense divine.
<b>Foundational Texts/Sources of Authority</b>	The Vedas, including the Samhitas, Brahmana, Aranyakas, and the Upanishads (containing the Bhagavad Gita).	Pali Canon ("Three Baskets"), Mahvastu, Sutras, and Tantras.	The Qur'an, often interpreted in light of traditions from Muhammad's life and teachings (the Hadith).	Largely based on local traditions and teachings.	No authoritative written texts. Science, reason, and/or personal autonomy are the sources of authority.
<b>Human Nature</b>	The human spirit lives in a physical body, which dies and is reborn until reunited with Brahman.	No enduring self or soul. Persons are aggregates of matter, feeling, awareness, etc.	Born pure, humans are weak, prone to corruption. Must answer to Allah on the day of judgment.	Like other beings in the world, each human has a unique spirit.	Many secular humanists view mankind as basically good, though this belief isn't necessary to be an atheist or an agnostic.
<b>Basic Human Problem</b>	The individual is trapped in the cycle of reincarnation, ignorant of its potential.	Attachment to things in the world results in suffering and disappointment.	Disobedience of responsible human beings to the law of Allah.	At the mercy of the powers, which can be angered or placated.	A lack of education, a bad social or physical environment, or a failure to consider the good of others in our decisions.
<b>Solution to the Basic Human Problem</b>	Liberation from reincarnation and realization of oneness with Brahman through good works, meditation, or devotion.	Suffering defeated by eliminating wrong desire through following the "Eight-Fold Path."	Humans must submit to the will of Allah as expressed in the Qur'an and Islamic law.	Through magic and ritual, with reliance on specially gifted persons, the animist seeks to influence the powers for good.	Become educated, change social/physical environment, consider the good of others in decisions, or embrace the ultimate vanity of life.
<b>Life After Death</b>	The individual will be reincarnated or reborn until achieving liberation.	Achievement of Nirvana, in which suffering ceases and no illusion of self remains.	Paradise for faithful believers and punishment for nonbelievers, unfaithful Muslims, and apostates.	No real awareness of the afterlife. Focus is upon overcoming the powers present in the world.	There is no life after death for atheists. An agnostic may hold that it's impossible to know if there is life after death.

This chart has been borrowed and adapted from Dr. George Martin.

