

The Non-Christian Religions

by

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DEDICATION

This book is lovingly dedicated to my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who commanded “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

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COURSEWORK FOR
BI 511 COMPARATIVE RELIGIONS I
An Assignment Presented to the
Faculty of Louisiana Baptist University
In Partial Fulfillment of the
Masters of Theological Studies April, 2012
Assignment

TEXT: *Handbook of Today's Religions* by Josh McDowell, and Don Stewart, (San Bernardino, CA: Campus Crusade for Christ Publishers, 1983) ISBN: 8407-3501-4

COURSE OBJECTIVE: The purpose of this course is to introduce the student to some of the hundreds of religious sects, denominations, and cults that profess to teach truth, many of which are diametrically opposed to Biblical Christianity.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- (1) All students are to read the introduction and all the chapters of the textbook for understanding, marking listings, Scriptures, and information you might wish to locate quickly for future reference and for preparing an analysis of these religious systems and their teachings.
- (2) In Part I, prepare an analysis or summarization of the information in each chapter in paragraph form, at least 2 full pages in length. If the chapter discusses a particular cult, group, or denomination, be sure to describe its historical origin, its characteristics and teachings, how it compares with other groups, and how it differs from orthodox Christian beliefs and practices. This analysis is intended to be a quick reference or teaching guide for your future ministry, and will be graded from that viewpoint.
- (3) After completing the above assignments forward the complete course to the address given below.

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This book was published in lieu of normal graded credit.

PREFACE

Non-Christian religions are 'cunningly devised fables' and many of them are not even that cunning. They have their roots in a knowledge of the truth which was taken from Noah's kin after the world flood. Man then scattered across our globe after the tower of Babel recorded in Genesis 11. They took with them certain grains of truth. Starting with a premise that the Bible is true and not man-made makes the study of these false religions insightful and intriguing. This is an introductory coverage of Indian Hinduism and its 3 reformations, Jainism, Buddhism, and Sikhism; then Oriental Confucianism, Taoism, Shintoism; Persian Zoroastrianism, non-Biblical Judaism, and finally Islam. All that a Christian needs to know about each of these false religions is presented herein in digest form. A compassionate and eyeopening digest.

The Non Christian Religions - Hinduism

The greatest asset of Hinduism is equally its greatest liability. Hinduism encompasses all the religions of the world in their philosophical world view. In this world view religions are analogous to perspectives one gets when viewing a garden statue through a large and high picket fence which surrounds the spacious garden. Each view gives a perspective of the whole, none gives the whole picture. Some spaces through which one peeks gives no view of the statue at all. Some give a very narrow perspective of it. It is advantageous to get several perspectives. There are views which have not yet been entertained and there are those who will never leave their well rehearsed view and clear perspective. But it is still just their perspective. Such a world view may be their greatest asset but it is likewise their greatest liability. When the “Only Begotten Son of God” comes into his creation with the message; “I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man cometh to the Father but by me,” the Hindu mind dismisses it as just another narrow perspective. He may listen to it intently and explore its premise delightfully but it is just a narrow perspective which he is including in his bigger picture. He is not about to accept that his bigger picture is wrong and this narrow perspective taught by some Jewish Rabbi called Jesus Christ is right. Such an all encompassing world view is enabling and empowering, blinding and restricting. This very, very broad view of the world makes Hinduism very undefinable as a religion. It absorbs so many religious perspectives that it is essentially undelineated for its own perspective. There are, however, a few characteristics which cause its distinction.

All the various Sects of Hinduism believe in an eternal three in one God: '*Brahma*', the creator; '*Vishnu*' the preserver; and '*Shiva*', the destroyer. Such insight followed them from their survival of the flood in Noah's seed and the Tower of Babel, which sent them toward the land now known as India. They submit to fate, and hold to a Caste System. They have a 'law of *karma*' wherein good must come from good and from evil must come evil. They hold to 'reincarnation' wherein virtuous living can rise you to a higher state in a chain of re-births, and eventually to a '*Nirvana*' wherein a final stage emancipates the soul from this chain of re-births. '*Yoga*', or the discipline an individual exercises over the body and emotions, is a tenant of Hinduism and finding and following a 'Law of Moral Order' called '*Dharma*' which brings individuals to the final state called '*Nervance*'. The Hindu writings originate 850 years after the flood, about the time Moses led Israel from Egypt in 1492 B.C. And continue in their writing until the time Mohammed framed up his Islamic faith in 500 A.D.

Their writings consist of 'what is heard' or '*Sruti*' referring to the eternal truths of religion written by 'seers' into the record of truth known as '*Vedas*'. (meaning: wisdom or knowledge) There is an entire collection of *Verda* but each has three parts: 1) the '*mantras*' consisting of hymns praising the gods, 2) the '*brahmanas*' for practicing ritual rights, and 3) the '*panishads*' containing the teachings on religious truth or doctrine. The writings also include 'what is remembered' or '*smriti*' which is the secondary authority of Hinduism. The '*smriti*' include the, '*upanishads*' or speculative treatises of 800-600 B.C., two epic tales of India, called the '*Ramayana*', supposedly authored by the incarnation of the god *Vishnu*, but layered with folklore added through the centuries, and the '*Mahab harata*'

composed of 100,000 verses compiled from 400 B.C. to 400 A.D.

The most sacred and best known Hindu writing is the '*Bhagavad Gita*'. This most read of all Indian works was actually added to the '*Mahabharata*' in the first century. Imagine its diabolical addition just when the Christ secured the tremendous victory over Satan, this is no coincidence. "These two epic stories, the *Geniayana* and the *Mahabharata*, depict characters who have become ideals for the people of India in terms of moral and social behavior!"¹

The God of Hinduism

The God of the universe is the uncaused cause, the "I – AM" that reveals himself to man, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, the alpha and omega. Again that truth was carried by all generations after the world flood, i.e. from Shem, Ham and Japheth into all generations of the world. This uncaused cause, this Almighty God, was revered by their fathers but rejected and rebelled against in the generations that followed. Certain qualities of this knowledge of the Almighty and the world flood which judged all of His creation are retained in Hinduism. 'Brahman' the eternal Three – in – one God illustrates this root of truth found in Hinduism. The trinity in Brahman is *Brahma*, the creator; *Bishnu*, the Preserver, and *Shiva* the Destroyer. Their Supreme Reality, or this god head, is "one and undifferentiated, static and dynamic, ultimate reality without anything inside or outside." He is thus, "he whom speech can not express." He is thus an impersonal "philosophic concept of past ages" to be meditated upon.

1 Josh McDowell & Don Stewart , *Handbook of Today's Religions*, Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville TN, p 284.

What these Indians carried away from Noah and the knowledge he had about God is herein obvious. In the generations after the world flood God more fully revealed Himself through Abraham from the line of Shem, Noah's first of three sons. But from Noah's other two sons there also sprung up great nations. These nations were scattered over the earth in perfect accord with Genesis chapter 11 and Hinduism, springing up from the nations of the east, carried this insightful knowledge of the trinity in its development. In God's creation the knowledge of liquid water, frozen water and vaporous water is one of many, many simplistic illustrations of a trinity, One substance and three forms is a common recurrence, (for a more thorough compilation of these evidences reference Dr. Grady's book, "Given by Inspiration" page 87 where he goes on and on ad-infinitum. God declares through the psalmist, "*The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.*" (Ps.19:1-3) Much evidence of the Godhead can indeed be derived from acute observation of His Creation, but Hinduism's intricate but finite description of an infinite triune Godhead is more likely an intrinsic knowledge passed down from Noah's personal relationship with God, than something from the eastern nations keen observance of God's creation alone. Either way, further exploration of their source data for such a triune God could prove intriguing and insightful.

That Hinduism captures a unified Godhead, made up of Creator, Preserver and Destroyer, is indeed a remarkable parallel to Jehovah God's revelation of Himself to the line of Shem. Jehovah God is Father, Son, and Spirit, even as we are body, soul, and spirit. The miss classification of the third

aspect of this trinity as a Destroyer, when God classifies it as a Comforter, is clearly a Hindu connection back to the flood. That God would repent that he had created man and destroy them in a flood is a very insight from Noah himself, an insight that brought the classification 'Destroyer' into Hinduism. The earliest traces of a written Hinduism came about 850 years after the flood, only a few generations from that world re-defining event.

It is interesting that when God successfully sent his only begotten Son to bruise Satan's head, providing the supreme sacrifice which could redeem mankind, Satan had to change all his tactics. This change in Satan's whole demeanor shows up in every false religion to the extent that Satan had an influence in that religion. Hinduism underwent some major changes in the first century: The *Bhagavad Gita*, the most sacred and mystical, epic tale of Hinduism was written during this first century A.D. In it the warrior *Arjuna* asks *Krishna*, the 8th avatar² of *Vishnu*, "How can he kill his blood relatives in battle?" The short answer in the epic tale is that *Arjuna* put his devotion to *Vishnu* above his own personal desires. This allows him to achieve 'salvation' and still kill his relatives in battle. Thus the poem allows Hindus who can identify with *Arjuna* in their own situations, to find hope through devotion. Previously 'salvation' was achievable through the way of works, or the way of knowledge. Now one can achieve 'salvation' through the way of devotion.

This addition to the means of 'salvation', added

2 av·a·tar (from The American Heritage Dictionary) n. 1. The incarnation of a Hindu deity, especially Vishnu, in human or animal form. 2. An embodiment, as of a quality or concept; an archetype: the very avatar of cunning. 3. A temporary manifestation or aspect of a continuing entity: occultism in its present avatar.

during Satan's recoil from his bruised head, constitutes a significant change in Hinduism. This change may or may not be significantly related to the tactical change of Satan that occurred at that time. It would be interesting to further explore their relationship. It is amazing when considering this new means of Hindu hope and 'salvation' that it is inclusive for their whole caste system. Now even the lowest caste, whose duty it was to serve the upper caste, could muster up enough devotion to have a hope in Hinduism.

Hindu Practices

Some Hindu practices have gained notoriety. Their caste system, *yoga* and *karma* and the holy cow will be examined in this effort.³ Hinduism is the founder of the ancient Caste System. The Caste System has its root in Hindu's '*Manu*' the first created man, who procreating the human race via various body parts as *Brahma*, the Hindu god, determined. From *Manu*'s head came 'the best and most holy people'. Out of his hands came 'the rulers and warriors'. Craftsmen came from his legs, and all other people came from his feet and were created to serve the upper caste. God recorded in his creation account, which was revealed to and recorded for us only through the line of Seth, that woman was created from a rib in Adam's side. The Hindu's version of this incident, after being passed down, hatched some folklore wherein nothing was made from the side of *Manu*. *Manu* is a parallel to the Hebrew's Bible account of Adam, wherein woman is divinely described as a helpmeet (meet, not mate, meet being a help *appropriate* for man) was made from the side of Adam. For the Hindu their Caste System is just as divinely

3 Josh McDowell & Don Stewart , *Handbook of Today's Religions*, Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville TN, p 289.

ordered. In their mind, the intention of the caste system, with these four various created classes, is that no one class is greater or lesser than the other, just different than the other. Different in talent, in character and purpose. However, human nature, being loathe with selfish pride and rebellion, wars against the idealized Hindu caste system and the whole system quickly gets ugly. Indeed it has become so distorted and expanded that 'ugly' is a kind description of the Hindu caste system. The demeaning and exalting attributes of the caste system make it a wholly untenable social system that is a black eye of Hinduism. Its appeal to the depraved nature and prideful heart of man, and its roots into the very core of Hinduism will, however, keep that black eye unless it undergoes major reformation. It did not, Hinduism has had this prominent black eye for 4000 years now.

Karma and Yoga.

Both Hindu *karma* and Hindu *yoga* are concepts that have come into vogue in our society, and both have to do with Hindu 'salvation'. There is really no such thing as Hindu 'salvation'. In the strictest sense of the word, there is no 'salvation' without a 'saviour'. A saviour being another entity involved in ones rescue. This is essential in the term 'salvation' and that 'other entity' would be called your 'saviour' and he provides 'salvation'. Hinduism has none of that. It has no saviour nor salvation. Given that, and being careful to use the word 'salvation' very loosely in this context, Hindu's achieve 'salvation' (without any saviour per se) by performing righteous acts, and thereby moving towards liberation from the cycle of successive births and deaths involved in their concept of reincarnation. It is thereby not necessary to achieve any specific level of righteousness, just to do a little better than you did in your

last life and ergo show progression and improvement.

“In Hinduism, one's present state of existence is determined by his performance in previous lifetimes. The law of *karma* is the law of moral consequence, or the effect of any action upon the performer in a past, a present, or even a future existence. As one performs righteous acts, he moves towards liberation from the cycle of successive births and deaths.

“Contra wise, if ones deeds are evil, he will move further from liberation. The determining factor is ones *karma*, (meaning literally 'action'). The cycle of births and deaths and rebirths could be endless. The goal of the Hindu is to achieve enough good *karma* to remove himself from the cycle of rebirths and achieve eternal bliss.”⁴

Thus doing prescribed ceremonies, duties and religious rites religiously adds favorable *karma* to ones merit. This is called “*karma marga*” or “the way of works”. There is some challenge or conflict in doing *karma* for it must be done unselfishly and in sincerity, but it can be done with emotional detachment and in an intellectual void.⁵ Go figure!

Karma marga, or the way of works combines with both '*jnana marga*, 'the way of knowledge' and the recently added (1st Century A.D.) , “*bhakti marga*” 'the way of devotion', to make it possible to be reborn as a *Brahmin* on his way toward liberation from the wheel of *karma*. Recall that *Brahmanism* is the highest of the Caste System, being part of the caste of 'the best and most holy people'.

4 Ibid., McDowell & Stewart, p 289.

5 Ibid., McDowell & Stewart, p 290.

Yoga adds *karma* to your merit. It is the Hindu path of union with the divine, wherein physical, spiritual or mental exercise is used to promote one's journey to this union. Thus *yoga* exercise groups, and talk of ones '*karma*,' which have permeated our society, is an entryway of advancing Hindu 'salvation' efforts and their reincarnation system of belief.

Yoga and talk of *karma* should not be engaged in ignorantly by a born again Christian. We have a Saviour because we could not save ourselves nor add to our *karma* in any way, and needed another means, a perfect sacrifice, to pay our debt off. We have a Saviour who said, "*I am the way, the truth and the life, no man cometh to the Father but by me.*" We have a triune God who said that all our '*karma*' is as filthy rags. A Christian can not participate in the development of '*karma* through '*yoga*', and be a witness for the Lord Jesus Christ who saved them. Indeed a blood bought, born again witness of the saving grace of the Lord, dare not brush shoulders with this Hindu practice without declaring the words of his Lord who said, "*I an the resurrection and the life, he that believeth on me, though he were dead yet shall he live, and he that liveth and believeth on me shall never die.*" Or at the least declaring:

"That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (John 3:15-18)

To rub shoulders with someone who is trying to generate *karma* via *yoga* (in an attempt to be reincarnated into a higher order) and to be silent about the Lord Jesus Christ who saved you from such Tom-Foolery is indeed a sin.

The Sacred Cow

From the earliest records Hinduism has identified the Cow, (i.e. the female bovine⁶, kine⁷, of the genus *Bos*) with the entire visible universe. There is no logical or fictitious, folklored or fabled reason for this abnormal reverence for the Cow. There are characteristics of the cow that exemplify it above other animals. It provides life giving milk like a surrogate mother. It continues to give without asking anything in return. Its strength is used to pull the plow. Its manure makes ground fertile for growing food.... or as their sacred writings, the *Atharva Veda* puts it: “Food from thine entrails was produced, and from thy belly came the plants.” The Cow, being a very versatile and useful animal on the farm, even if it be the most versatile and useful, would not logically or naturally be exalted to a place of worship, or even to a symbol of ones creator. But alas in Hinduism it has been so exalted. The Hindu sacred writings describe the cow as the perfect sacrifice for “The Cow is Heaven, the Cow is Earth, the Cow is *Vishnu*, Lord of Life,....He who hath given a Cow unto the Brahmans (Supreme Reality)

6 bo-vine (from The American Heritage Dictionary) adj. 1. Of, relating to, or resembling a ruminant mammal of the genus *Bos*, such as an ox, cow, or buffalo. 2. Sluggish, dull, and stolid. --bo-vine n. An animal of the genus *Bos*. [Late Latin *bov^onus*, from Latin *b^ovis*, cow.]

7 kine (from The American Heritage Dictionary) n. Archaic. A plural of cow. [Middle English *kyn*, from Old English *c^ona*, genitive pl. of *c^o*, cow. See COW.]

winneth all the worlds. For right is firmly set in her, devotion, and religious zeal. Both Gods and mortal men depend for life and being on the Cow. She hath become their universe; all that the Sun surveys is she”⁸

One can only imagine how the tribes and nations of India left Noah's decaying Ark, scattered from the tower of Babel and ended up with such an inexplicable reverence for the Cow. God does reveal through the line of Seth; that man has this propensity. Romans the first chapter declares:

“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.” (Rom 1:21-25)

Hindu's Reformations

Every false religion will give rise to reforms. Jesus, the Christ of God said: *“Pure religion and undefiled before God is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”* (James 1:27) Hinduism was not pure, and gave rise to three

8 Athar va Veda X:10

major reforms, Jainism, Buddhism, and Sikhism.

Each false religion's reformation will rise because of a reformer who leads a band to protest the more brazen hypocrisies of their root religions false hoods. Jesus put it: *“Woe unto you, scribes and pharisees, hypocrites! For ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.... and have omitted the weightier matters of the law... within are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness ... ye blind guides which strain at a gnat and swallow a camel.”* (Matt 23) Mahavira, Siddhartha Gautama, called Buddha, and Nanak each gave the cry against Hinduism's hypocrisy. Each gathered a band of protesting reformers and formed Jainism, Buddhism, and Sikhism respectively.

No religious reformer nor reformation succeeds. Every reformation addresses a few of the most brazen falsehoods of a religion but leaves the core of the false religion false. Indeed a reformation religion is the more steeped in the baseline falsehood, having only the roughest edges pared back to make the false religion the more subtle in its falsity.⁹ Ergo Jesus would not reform Judaism but must need replace it:

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel,

9 The author is an avid student of the Roman Catholic reformation and wishes here to reiterate this statement. Bring to mind Henry VIII and Anglicanism or Episcopal, Martin Luther and Lutheranism, John Calvin and Presbyterians and the Wesley Brothers and Methodism with these in mind rehearse this profound statement “No religious reformer nor reformation succeeds. Every reformation addresses a few of the most brazen falsehoods of a religion but leaves the core of the false religion false. Indeed a reformation religion is the more steeped in the baseline falsehood, having only the roughest edges pared back to make the false religion the more subtle in its falsity.”

and with the house of Judah: (Jer 31:31) For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: ... In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away. (Heb 8:8,13) But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire. (Heb 12:22-29) Christianity is not a religion it is a relationship, Jesus was not a reformer, he was the Christ.

Reformations of religions are initiated when a

particular falsehood has become so brazen that it clashes with the rational mind of thinking man. Reformations are ultimately initiated by a charismatic or pious or scholarly leader. And reformations never bring a reversal of a religions core of falsehood, only a moderate, or more often, miniscule change of direction. Again a reformation never brings a return to Bible truth, only a minor course correction with a continuation of the systematic core of falsehood. Every reformation should provoke in us a systematic overview of the core of falsehood. In Catholicism it did not, and in 500 B.C. in Hinduism it did not.

Non Christian Religions - Jainism

The reformer that instigated the first offspring from Hinduism was named *Mahavira*. The name became synonymous with 'a great man.' The term Jain is from Hindu '*jaina*' and means 'victor', or 'he conquers'.¹⁰ In 566 B.C. *Mahavira* was more than just this honorific title. The grievances which he had with Hinduism were not nailed to a temple door but can be clearly discerned by the new direction of Jainism. The caste system resulting from reincarnation beliefs within Hinduism is obviously a lightning rod for grievances. *Mahavira* was born into the inferior 'rulers and warriors' (made from *Manu*'s hands) caste system, one step removed from the best and superior 'most holy people' (made from *Manu*'s head) caste system. But in the Hindu conception of regeneration and rebirth the soul did not possess real individuality. It is bizarre and confusing but souls that die and pass into eternity do not remain individualized in eternity. The expression 'loose your own soul' should indeed come to mind here.

The Hindu caste system had also solidified into a system where the highest order of the priesthood had become dominant in society and all others were inferior. The doctrine of *karma* had become a very rigid law of causation in the moral sphere and for *Mahavira* this rigid restrictive rule had become to absolute. He sought for a more practical application of the doctrine of *karma* and a more democratic application for the worth of all individuals. During Hinduism's early development, in what is called its *Verdic* and *Brahmanic* period, Hinduism began a departure from its concept of a single triune godhead and became inclusive to polytheism. The confusion and contortion of

¹⁰ American Heritage Dictionary, under "jain".

this polytheism is demonstrated in one hymn of *Verdic* literature that suggests as many as 3,333 various other gods may exist. The resulting complexity and importance of animal sacrifices grew exponentially and the ruling, and domineering priest led caste system enjoyed and exploited its growth.

Traditionally the man named *Mahavira* was the second son of a ruler (*rajah*) and lived luxuriously: He was married with one daughter while entertaining these fore mentioned grievances with Hindu's caste system and its emerging polytheism. When he was 30 years of age his parents died and his discontent drove him to a very ascetic¹¹ lifestyle. He purposed in a pledge of self denial not to care for his body and not to speak for a period of 12 years. He wandered naked through India for those 12 years until at age 42 he received 'enlightenment'. McDowell cites *The Sacred Books of The East* as recording "During the thirteenth year, in a squatting position... exposing himself to the heat of the sun ... with knees high and head low, in deep meditation, in the midst of abstract meditation he reached *nirvana*, the complete and full, unobstructed, infinite absolute."¹²

Jainism thus founded by the enlightened Mahavira, was framed by over 14,000 monastic monks who rejected worship of any supreme being, embraced a very ascetic lifestyle, and espoused such non-violence as to forbid the taking of any life, even at the lowest level. (insects and

11 as-cet-ic (from American Heritage Dictionary) n. 1. A person who renounces material comforts and leads a life of austere self-discipline, especially as an act of religious devotion. --as-cet-ic adj. 1. Leading a life of self-discipline and self-denial, especially for spiritual improvement. See Synonyms at severe. 2. Pertaining to or characteristic of an ascetic; self-denying and austere: an ascetic existence.

12 Ibid., McDowell & Stewart, p 246.

plants) Jainism's obvious consequence was strict vegetarianism since its quintessence of wisdom was to not kill anything, ... like really ANYTHING! Its departure from Hinduism is marked by this austere recognition of, and conflict with, the physical, material world. Wherein Hinduism would overcome evil in an unreal illusioned world, by intellectual knowledge and a mystical re-absorption into the infinite, Jainism found evil in a real material world and found escape from that evil in an ascetic lifestyle of extreme self denial. This desire for freedom of the soul from worldly attachments formed in the monks "Five Great Vows", which included renunciation of:

- 1) killing living things,
- 2) lying,
- 3) greed,
- 4) sexual pleasure, and
- 5) worldly attachments.

Where Hinduism's emphasis was on enhancing the intellectual, Jainism's emphasis was on repressing the physical, thus releasing the soul in *nirvana* by asceticism. We shall see Buddhism's emphasis, to be examined next, was the repressing of all emotional desires, thus releasing the soul in *nirvana* with a passionless peace.

Consider these 3 proposed solutions. First what is the dilemma that they strive to resolve? It is a shortfall in man for which some grand effort on his part must be brought to bear to correct this failure or fault. Man inherently knows, deep inside, that he has a fault and failure which will have an effect on an afterlife. God reveals this succinctly with a verse "As it is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment." (Heb 9:27) Hinduism has first a moral failure worded in their caste system which contradicts a well known clause that "All men are created

equal.”¹³ It has been noted that this moral deprivation of Hinduism initiated reformations. But the reformations had their major realization in their modifying how man makes up for his shortfall before entering into an afterlife. Ergo Hinduism places a concerted effort in the repair and enhancement of the intellectual. The first major reform, Jainism, strives to repair mans fault, failure and shortfall by living an extremely ascetic life here, expecting that such effort will produce an improved afterlife. Buddhism, which will be examined as another reform of Hinduism, contends that mans fault, failure, and shortfall will be repaired by eliminating our cravings, desires, and emotions. All these are attempts to repair broken man and prepare him for a better afterlife.

Systematically reformations never repair the basic error of an approach, they refine the methods. Looking at the systematic error of Hinduism and its refined carry-over into the reformations is enlightening. Man has a shortfall sure enough. Hinduism approaches this failure with a faulty philosophy and that systematic fault carries directly into its reformations.

Jainism, derived from the term *to victor* or *to conquer*, is thus a 4th century B.C. sect of Hinduism which po-pos the caste system and exalts asceticism to attain a successful reincarnation from the dead. Like those in Hinduism Jainists need to hear the words of the Christ Jesus

13 The Declaration of Independence is a statement adopted by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776 and it begins with what has become called the best known sentence in the English language which states “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

who said *“I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.”* (John 14:25-26) Jehovah God the creator has revealed this through His Word, given to mankind only through the line of Shem, and not otherwise revealed or communicated to this Hindu line of Ham. It needs communicated that there is eternal life for the human soul and this eternal life is not attained through any reincarnation; nor through intellectual meditation on asceticism or suppression of desire; it is attained by belief on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.” (John 3:16-19)

The systematic fallacy in Hinduism, and all its sects, is the concept that eternal life is found in reincarnation, attained by merit in *yoga* to make *karma*. Somebody needs to tell them nay.

Non Christian Religions - Buddhism

In the fifth century B.C.¹⁴ the disillusionment with Hinduism and its extremely complex caste system had reached epic proportions. The two surviving sects from this troublesome period had charismatic reformers, one was the Buddha. Siddhartha Gautama was his name, and his life was surrounded by fanciful stories. His history was mostly lost to mythical legend, but he became the Buddha who was fed up with Hindu's belief in an endless cycle of births, deaths, and rebirths. Buddha means "enlightened one." Like Mahavira, the founder of Jainism, the Buddha was from the ruler class, one caste division below "the best and most holy people" who were by legend created from the head of the first created man who was named Manu.

There is a fanciful story about Buddha's father's obsession to keep Siddhartha at home surrounded with wealth and pleasure. He wanted that Siddhartha would succeed him as the king, but his son eventually made his excursion into the world. "The sights he was there exposed to", the mythical story continues, "the sickness and death, begging monks and down cast princes caused a deep dissatisfaction with the 'truths' taught in the Hindu Scriptures."¹⁵ Like his contemporary, Mahavira, who would found Jainism based on such, the Buddha tried an extreme ascetic lifestyle, but for him asceticism gave no comfort, peace or satisfaction. Siddhartha, the legend goes, settled his disillusionment with Hinduism and their caste system, with deep meditations. By this deep meditation he

14 Ibid., McDowell & Stewart, pp 304-324.

15 McDowell & Stewart use 'Scripture' to refer to 'sacred writings' when a Christian with convictions about inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture, under constant attack by Satan, will not so loosely apply that title to what pagans have written.

supposedly reached the 'highest state of God consciousness' known as *nirvana*. The truths that he learned by setting under a fig tree for seven days, the fig tree being supposed 'the tree of wisdom', were to now be imparted to the world. Siddhartha had become the enlightened one, his *nirvana* made him the Buddha.

The Buddha, as it were, was to force reformations onto Hinduism because he had jumped a class of the caste system without a death and rebirth. He began teaching five monks who had been his companions. His main thrust was that *nirvana*, the highest degree of God consciousness, could be gained by taking a 'Middle Path.' This path was nestled between the two extremes of life that he had experienced. To join oneself with passion and luxury, the ingredient of his upbringing, was useless. "It was 'low', vulgar, common, ignoble, and useless" according to his own wording in his early 'Sermon at Benares.'¹⁶ And to join oneself with asceticism with self torture, 'which is painful, ignoble, and useless', is to practice the opposite extreme. (Even in mythical legend his time spent in this opposite extreme was minimal, but evidently very unpleasant.) *Nirvana*, the Buddha contended, could be reached only by the middle road.

Buddhism describes a 'Middle Road' with "Four Nobel Truths" and "The Eight Fold Path." Before examining this methodology for achieving some abstract undefined and negative *nirvana*, one should openly consider the systematic dilemma that faces Buddhism. The Buddha is going to make sweeping reformation to Hinduism. He is intent on changing some of its glaring inconsistencies but he has no basis for truth in making these reformations.

16 Ibid., McDowell & Stewart, p 306.

Hinduism, and its offspring (perhaps 'off shoots' is the better term for these 'reformations') is missing a core concept in this universe. Mankind has a Creator, that Creator has been wronged by man, and man must be reconciled to his Creator in order to have a peaceful life here and the immortality which has always occupied man's consciousness. Hinduism, as it walked away from the tower of Babel with a consciousness of the world flood as the judgment of an offended Creator, carried with it some kernel of God's truth. Its sacrificial system and even its idea of reincarnation bear witness of this kernel of knowledge.

The Buddha is now poised to reform those vague kernels which recognize a concept of an offended creator and an available immortality. His disintegration of the ugly caste system likewise must disintegrate any auspices for reincarnation and all concept of immortality that reincarnation may include. The very best that his 'Middle Road' and 'Eight fold Path' could ever attain is a self gratifying 'peace' and a higher consciousness available in this life only. Only an insignificant consideration of *karma* and transmigration is left in Buddhism. This is the systematic error and genuine shortfall of the Buddhist religion. It is a very internalized religion with no recognition of a creator or supernatural being, and no consideration of mans sin against his super natural creator.

The Buddha's reformation and resulting world view is best visualized in his dying declaration. Therein he instructs a young monk:

“So, Amanda, you must be your own lamps, be your own refuge. Take refuge in nothing outside yourselves. Hold firm to the truth as a lamp and a refuge, and do not look for refuge to anything besides yourselves. A monk becomes his own lamp

and refuge by continually looking on his body, feelings, perceptions, moods, and ideas in such a manner that he conquers the cravings and depressions of ordinary men and is always strenuous, self-possessed, and collected in mind. Whoever among my monks does this, either now or when I am dead, if he is anxious to learn, will reach the summit”.¹⁷

The 'Middle Road' between the extremes of rich luxury and ascetic depravity is thus defined in the Buddha's “Four Noble Truths and Eightfold Path.” The 'Four Noble Truths' in digest are:

- 1) suffering exists;
- 2) the craving desire for pleasure, happiness and prosperity is the cause of all sufferings;
- 3) giving up all cravings makes one free of all sufferings; and
- 4) one is set free of all pain and suffering by following Buddha's eight fold path.

It is a bit of a mystery why one would follow a systematically flawed religion beyond such an illogical and unfounded assertion of the 'four truths,' but millions do. The Eightfold Path in digest are:

- 1) accept the four noble truths;
- 2) renounce the pleasures of the senses;
- 3) don't lie or slander; 4) do not destroy ANY living creature;
- 5) get an honest job and earn a living;
- 6) strive heroically to prevent those evil qualities (i.e. lusts and cravings) from arising in you;

17 Ibid., McDowell & Stewart, pp 306-307.

7) stay free of desire and sorrow; and

8) when you have abandoned all sensuous pleasure and all evil qualities, all joy, all sorrow, you must now enter four degrees of meditation. Buddhism in heart is a monk like existence void of all emotion, joy, and pleasure! How very sad.

Consider the lacking rational in this reformation of Hinduism via Jainism/Buddhism/Sikhism, consider the lack of systematic logic in its pretense and objectives, and consider its systematic deficiency in answering the base questions of life. Questions asked of any religion are: 1) Where did I come from? 2) Why am I here? 3) Where am I going? 4) How do I get there? It is a testimony to the depravity of man that the reformation to Hinduism, called Buddhism, broke out of India, seeped through the Himalaya mountains, and spread across the face of Asia reaching all the way to the island of Japan. It did. It is a testimony of the Love of God for his creation that the Revealed Word of God so succinctly answers these four questions in the 66 books of the Holy Bible, which also makes such journey.

Where did I come from? Uni-verse literally means One - Spoken – Word and the Bible tells us that the tirune God spoke into existence the whole universe in a 6 day act of creation wherein on the sixth day he created man in His image and for His fellowship. *“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.”* (Gen 1:26)

Why am I here? We are created for God's purpose and for God's glory. *“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all*

things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” (Rev 4:11)

Where am I going? We were created to live forever and we will; we are not mortal but immortal; man is body, soul, and spirit, and will live and answer to his Creator after the physical death of the body. *“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.”* (Heb 9:27)

There is a second death of the spirit and the soul that one must avoid. *“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of **the second death**. (Re 2:11)... Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such **the second death** hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. (Re 20:6) ... And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. **This is the second death**. (Re 20:14) ... But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is **the second death**.”* (Re 21:8)

How do I get there? As it is my role as a Baptist Preacher of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to share with every creature that glorious good news that *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.... He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. (John 3:16-18, 36) ... Wherefore, as by one*

man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (Rom 5:12)... As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; (Rom 3:10, 23)... For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Rom 6:23).. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (Rom 5:8) That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. ... For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” (Rom 10:9-10, 13)

Any religion of man must wrestle with these systematic questions of life: Where did I come from? Why am I here? Where am I going? and How do I get there? While the Holy Bible answers these directly, Buddhism is lost in unrealistic vagary and speculation.

The 'Theravada' Buddhism that sprang from Siddhartha Gautama in India became very popular when it seeped through the mountain passes of the Himalayas into China and Japan where it morphed some and became 'Mahayana' Buddhism. The table below shows some of the changes Buddhism underwent in the sweep across Asia:

Theravada Buddhism	Mahayana Buddhism
Man as an individual	Man as involved with others
Man is on his own in the universe (emancipation by self-effort)	Man is not alone (salvation is by unmerited favor)
Key Virtue: Wisdom	Key Virtue: <i>Karma</i> , compassion
Religion: a full time job	Religion: relevant to life in the world (for laymen as well as a monk)
Ideal: the Arhat	Ideal: the Bodhisattva
Buddha: a saint	Buddha: a savior
Eschews metaphysics	Elaborates metaphysics
Eschews ritual	Includes ritual
Confines prayer to meditation	Includes petitionary prayer
Conservative	Liberal ¹⁸

Table Comparing Theravada Buddhism with Mahayana Buddhism¹⁹

Zen Buddhism came from Japan to be widely known in the west. Zen is simply the Japanese word for meditation. There was also a little known mystical sect of Japanese Buddhism born of Nichiren Shashu in the 13th century A.D. Born during Japan's civil war and unrest Nichiren Shashu's Buddhism developed a proselytizing method and 'missionary effort' to convert the world to their 'one true faith.' These will use militant force conversion when necessary. Its target is world domination, but such sects and such tactics should be very rare given the vague, internalized principles embraced by Buddhists.

18 Huston Smith, *The Religions of Man*, New York: Harper and Row, 1958, p. 138

19 Ibid., McDowell & Stewart, pp 308-309.

In 1951 there was an agreed upon and published Buddhist creed and catechism. Therein 14 fundamental Buddhistic beliefs were published. They are in digest:²⁰

1. Show tolerance, forbearance and brotherly love.
2. The universe was evolved not created.
3. Our truths are natural truths.
4. Siddhartha Gautama of India in 500 B.C., was the real Buddha.
5. Ignorance produces desire, unsatisfied desire necessitates rebirth, rebirth is the cause of sorrow: eliminate sorrow and rebirth by extinguishing desire and ignorance.
6. Ignorance fosters repeated rebirths, stop the cycle, destroy ignorance.
7. A persevering practice of an all embracing altruism in conduct can disperse ignorance.
8. Nirvana is achieved by meditation after the desire to live has been extinguished.
9. Ignorance is dispelled and sorrow removed by knowledge of the Four Noble Truths.
10. Right meditation leads to spiritual enlightenment.
11. Buddha's essence is to cease from all sin; get virtue; purify the heart.
12. Natural causation known as *karma* subjects the universe.
13. To attain good *karma*:
 1. kill not,
 2. steal not,
 3. indulge in no forbidden sexual pleasure,
 4. lie not, and
 5. intoxicate not.

20 Ibid., McDowell & Stewart, pp 311-312.

14. Buddhism discourages superstitious credulity; believe no sage, no book, no tradition unless it accord with reason.

The last of these Buddhistic beliefs is interesting because the Buddha's Four Noble Truths and Eightfold Steps do not accord with logic or reason. Such is the plight of the Buddhist monk.

Non Christian Religions - Sikhism

Sikhism is one more reformation of Hinduism that is significant for some analysis. In the 15th century A.D. Islam's ruthless and violent god, Allah, was set quite at odds with Hindu's non militant *Brahma*. This harsh contrast caused one inquiring student of the village of Talwandi in the Punjab province of India to ask "What is the true name of God?" His answer supposedly came at age 33 when in a vision God offered him a cup of nectar and told him "I am with thee. I have made thee happy, and also those who shall take thy name. Go and repeat Mine, and cause others to do likewise. Abide uncontaminated by the world. Practice repetition of my Name, charity, ablutions, worship, and meditation ... My name is God, the primal *Brahma*. And thou are the divine Guru."²¹

Sikhism is less of a reformation of Hinduism and more a reconciliation or harmonization of Hinduism with Islam. Consider the challenge of such a reconciliation. Hinduism uniting with Islam is a union of pacifism with militant activism; a union of reincarnation and endless rebirths in a caste system with self martyrdom to achieve a blessing of 'heaven' with Allah; a union of the triune *Brahma* mixed with polytheism and a sacrificial appeasement of many gods to a unified god called Allah, whose wrath is only appeased by repetitive praying 7 times a day. Nanak did indeed have a conflict in his mind and unifying this conflict from a vision he had, brought about a new religion called Sikhism.

Nanak, who was told in his vision, "Thou are the divine Guru," appointed Lihina, a rope maker, as his successor. Lihina, who changed his name to Anged,

21 Ibid., McDowell & Stewart, p 400.

meaning bodyguard, appointed his successor and his successor his, and his, his. When the tenth successor died, in 1708 A.D., the Sikhs turned their loyalty to a collection of writings called the '*Granth Sahib*' as their primary written authority. It is a strange conglomeration of certain Hindu ideas and certain Islamic ideas mixed with interpretation which rejects the whole of each. Sikhism indeed makes for a strange theology.

A unique problem in Sikhism is found in their written record that some might call their 'scripture', (A term this author holds sacred for the writings of Jehovah God.) the Sikhs call it the '*Granth Salib*.' It is composed in six different languages and several dialects. There are but a handful of scholars who could read it and it is thus unavailable to those who would do extensive study in its precepts. The theology is thus a riddled mystery interwoven into a book of mystery.

Sikhism did attempt to leave the polytheism of Hinduism and contrive a solid monotheism. "There is but one god, whose name is true, creator, devoid of fear and enmity, immortal, unborn, self existent, great and bountiful. The 'True One' was in the beginning."²² Although this description of their god begins to approach the Bible's description of the true God who reveals himself, as the eternal self-existent one, it stays deceitfully short, surrounded in an abstract principle of philosophy of god being only impersonal truth and reality. Sikhism has no personal Creator and Father, ergo it is lost in a philosophical abstractness.

Sikhs carried some characteristics of Hinduism into

22 Ibid., McDowell & Stewart, p 402, quoting M.A. McAliffe, *Sikh Religion: Its Gurus, Sacred Writings, and Authors*, London, Oxford University Press, 1909, p 35.

their belief system. They each have a theoretical belief in a supreme unity, while practically having a great variety of designations for deity, to include theistic pantheism, where god is present in everything. What 'salvation' may exist is found by faith in the grace of god with some *karma*, *yoga*, and transmigration of souls mixed in for good measure. Sikhs do divorce themselves from Hindu polytheism holding rather to some form of monotheistic pantheism, and they divorce themselves from the Hindu's pilgrimages, ritualism and hermit asceticism. They reject the Hindu holy writings, preferring their own, also rejecting the Hindu degradation of women, infanticide and vegetarianism.²³

Sikhs hold to some Islamic concepts as well. Their concept of god includes his being a supreme personal being with a sovereignty of a supreme absolute ruler. There is a certain mercilessness mixed with his arbitrariness. "Salvation," as it is, if it is, requires submission to this god. Worship is through repetition of the name of the deity. Great importance is in repeating prescribed prayers, a devotion to the founder, and an extreme reverence for sacred writings, even to the point of daily repetition by all followers. In Sikhism, as in Islam, there is a series of subsequent leaders prescribing a powerful militaristic 'church'²⁴ state. Both stress unity, despite multiple sects and both vehemently

23 Ibid., McDowell & Stewart, p 403.

24 The word Church is actually derived and used from a Latin word which means belonging to the Lord, or by extension the house belonging to the Lord, or the people belonging to the Lord or the things belonging to the Lord. The Greek word *ecclesia* was used for the unified, organized, independent, autonomous, called out, assembled body of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. The word Church is only used in this context because the Roman Catholic misuse of the term taught us to understand what a 'church state' really is.

denounce idolatry while advancing a central shrine concept, in Amritsar for Sikhs, and Mecca for Islam.

Despite all this common ground with Islam, Sikhism founders were not so ruthless or violent as Islamic Muslims. Their deity is not so violent and their sacred 'scriptures' are ascribed to as many as 37 teachers, while Islam holds to only one author, Mohammed. Sikhs also have no fasting prescribed nor do they recognize a decisive judgment day, while Muslims fast in Ramadan and seek a final judgment day.

Molding together two false religions yields a conglomerated quagmire of both. Although it defies all logic and reason loyalists to Sikhism are loyalists indeed.

Non Christian Religions - Confucianism

Confucianism is a religion of optimistic humanism which begs the question, How and why should and could, such a religion spring up and sweep across a nation so very rapidly? A twofold answer involves the Himalaya mountains and the barbarous nature of mankind.

When Shem, Ham, and Japheth began the re-population of the world destroyed in the world flood, the line of Shem, who was particularly chosen to receive special revelation from Jehovah God, the Creator, (and destroyer) was asked the question 'Will you go back and worship the gods of your fathers before the flood?' (Joshua 24) Knowledge of false gods were thus present in the descendants of Noah, and there were other false gods conceived by those from the line of Ham through Canaan, and the line of Japheth. Man has a built in drive to acknowledge both his own immortality and a super natural existence of one mightier than himself. As man spread out from the tower of Babel recorded in Genesis 11 some of them (most likely the majority being the descendents of Ham) spread to present day India, and from there a few noble adventurers tenaciously discovered passes through the Himalaya mountain ranges to populate present day China and the regions beyond. Such a crossing of Himalaya Mountain ranges is harrowing, ennobling and life changing, but it is also relatively isolating. The nations which crossed that mountainous divide took with them, through 1,800 years of development, a knowledge of their immortality, a knowledge of their triune Creator, and a knowledge of their shortfall for pleasing that Creator. Hinduism captured all three of these concepts but Confucianism so ignored these

three tenants of knowledge, that it is want, by some, to even be called a religion.

When Confucius came on the scene in the principality of Lu, in 550 B.C., 1,800 years after the world flood, China was in a period of warring states. The dire need of social reform was more discernible than its dire need of religious reform. Sudden and viscous raids of cavalry subdue whole territories and slaughtered and behead women, children and aged captives. “We read of mass slaughters of 60,000, 80,000, 82,000, and even 400,000. There are accounts of the conquered being thrown into boiling caldrons and their relatives forced to drink the human soup”²⁵ This grotesque display of the inhumanity of man across the face of China is the back drop for a surging Confucianism grasping at optimistic humanism. The nations separated from the revelation of Jehovah God, given only to the line of Shem, were faced with a depravity of man which cried out for such a rethinking of a societies humanity, and inhumanity. Confucianism was thus primed to thrive in China. It did.

Confucius expressed very little thought of creation or the existence of God or the actuality of an afterlife. Thus Confucianism contains so little consideration of the basic questions of religion; i.e. Where did I come from? Why am I here? Where am I going? And How do I get there?, that some have considered it more of a moral code than a bona-fide religion. The Bible outlines the course of 'evolution' of mans religion with six steps down. Man starts on a top step, knowing God then begins a progression away from that knowledge including these steps; 1) they glorified him not as God, 2) they are not thankful, 3) they become vain in their

25 Ibid., McDowell & Stewart, p 326, cited from Houston Smith, *The Religions of Man*, New York: Harper and Row, 1965, p 166.

imagination, 4) their foolish heart is darkened, 5) they profess themselves to be wise as they become fools, and 6) they change the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man, and birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things.²⁶ The final result of man's 'evolution' is that they change the truth of God into a lie, and worship and serve the creature more than the Creator. Although Confucianism operates on the lowest rung of this depravity of a man, and makes no effort to move subjects back toward the truth about their Creator, it must still be considered a religion as it operates as a humanism of sorts, wallowing around on the bottom step exalting the creature (man) above the Creator, Jehovah God.

It is interesting to note here that it is possible to use this downward stairway in reverse and ascend back up to a knowledge of God where man began. To do so one would 1) Recognize God, in effect change back to recognizing the glory of the incorruptible God instead of exalting man or an image made like corruptible man, and birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things; 2) Profess oneself to be a child and only a fool before God and ask him to make you wise; 3) One's foolish heart must be enlightened by Jehovah God, if one seeks him He can be found; 4) Focus one's imagination on God alone, as Jesus put it Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind; 5) Be forever thankful to the Lord God; And lastly 6) Glorify God with every avenue of your life. These six reversed steps can bring one back into a full knowledge of, and fellowship with, Jehovah God their Creator. But one must recognize that in step 3, when the foolish heart is to be enlightened, it can only be enlightened when one accepts Jesus Christ, the

26 Cf Rom 1:19-25

Only Begotten Son of God as Lord and Saviour as He commanded. One's heart will not and can not be enlightened by Him, if they reject the work of His Only Begotten Son. It is a good model for coming back to a knowledge of Jehovah God, it backtracks the pathway that man took away from God. Confucianism has six steps as well but these are not them.

The six doctrinal principles of Confucianism find their basis in the five classics of Confucianism, which we have today, and an entrenched concept of *Filial Piety*, found in China long before Confucius. “*The Classic of Filial Piety*” clarifies “The service of love and reverence to parents when alive, and those of grief and sorrow to them when dead - these completely discharge the fundamental duty of living men²⁷”

The many sayings of Confucius that are prevalent today do not detract from nor add content to the six basic principles of this religion. The Five Classics do not per se contain the unique teachings of Confucius, being rather an anthology of works which he taught from.²⁸ The six doctrinal principles of Confucianism are thus a condensation and summary of the whole religion and are presented in digest here;

1) The golden rule (i.e. do not do anything to others that you would not have them do to you.) is the highest virtue capturing the idea of humaneness, goodness, and benevolence or 'man-to-manness.'

2) A 'gentle man' with true and superior manhood, will practice a) Humanity, b) magnanimity²⁹ c) Sincerity, d)

27 Maz Mueller, ed. Sacred Books of the East, Krishna press, 1879-1910, Vol III, p 448, from McDowell, p 330.

28 Ibid., McDowell & Stewart, p 330.

29 mag·nan·i·mous (from American Heritage Dictionary) adj. 1.

Diligence and e) Graciousness.

3) Everyone must act his proper part and society will be properly ordered, i.e. a king should act like a king, a gentleman – like a gentleman, etc. (Notice here in Confucianism there is a slight flavor of Hinduism's caste system.)

4) The power needed to rule must come from an inner might of virtue and inspirational example rather than from a physical might.

5) Propriety, reverence, courtesy and ritual, or the ideal standard of conduct, teaches us to establish the proper status of the spirits of the universe, king and minister, ruler and ruled, elder and junior, man and woman, parent and children etc. And

6) Music, Poetry and Art are 'acts of peace' that symbolize virtue that should be manifest throughout society. “He who rejected the arts of peace was rejecting the virtuous ways of man and heaven.”³⁰

As a religion of optimistic humanism Confucianism has had a tremendous spread across Asia and a tremendous impact correcting the deplorable inhumanity prevalent in China. During the Han Dynasty (206 B.C. - 20 A.D.) it was China's state religion and then was made the basic discipline for teaching of government officials. Eventually sacrifices were ordered for Confucius and temples and shrines to him were erected. Thus worshiping the man more than the Creator, a powerful religion which rejects the truths of God's Holy Word was created.

Courageously noble in mind and heart. 2. Generous in forgiving; eschewing resentment or revenge; unselfish.
30 Ibid., McDowell & Stewart, p 332.

Non Christian Religions - Taoism

Tao is a philosophy about a 'way' or 'path' that “if you know you do not say, and if you say you do not know.” Ergo the Tao that can be understood is not the real Tao and thus the way, Tao, that can be named is not the real name, Tao. That was purposely unclear but 'Tao' means 'way or path.' While Confucianism was thought to be such a pragmatic, humanistic, teaching of moral code that it might not qualify as a “religion”, per se, Taoism is such an impragmatic, mystical, enigmatic philosophy that it is amazing that it ever came to be called a religion. It was most adept at thriving only in the philosophical halls of the idle scholarly minds of China. Although “the cosmic Tao is invisible, inaudible, unnameable, undiscussable and inexpressible³¹” in the second century after Satan was defeated by the Christ, Emperor Huan ordered a temple built in honor of Lao-tzu, the philosophies supposed founder. Although offerings were being made to him, Taoism was not recognized as a formal religion until about the seventh century. Prior to that Tao as an abstract puzzling philosophy, which was the preoccupation of intellectuals and students of the esoteric.

Like the invisible inexpressible doctrine of Taoism (pronounced “Dowism”) so to Lao-tzu, its founder, is equally shadowy, invisible, and inexpressible. Little or nothing of his actual existence is verifiable. Confucius, his contemporary, was supposed to have had some interactions and intense disagreements with Lao-tzu. These are as much speculated philosophical collisions as documented actual exchanges. If Lao-tzu actually existed, it is speculated in fable that he took three days to write his whole philosophy

31 Ibid., McDowell & Stewart, p 392.

in a 5,500 word book called “The Tao Te King”.

As instruction on the art of government “The Tao Te King” teaches that the less the government, the better, and that a ruler should lead by non-action.³² In this election year of 2012, the USA has not grasped the first point but has extended the second to unprecedented levels of incompetence. No leader in China followed this contradictory foolishness as their leadership guide but a philosophical side of the inane instruction seemed to teach individuals how to endure life through the terrible calamities swallowing the social order of China of that day. Its low-key approach encouraged one to stay in the background and live life with no ambitions. It seemed to gain a grass roots popularity. If there is a usable principle in Taoism it calls for the avoidance of all aggressiveness by doing only that which is natural and spontaneous. Live passively, avoid all forms of stress and violence and thus commune with nature. Thus it is speculated that life will flow better with the invisible, inaudible, unnameable, undiscussable, inexpressible Tao or path.

Taoism boasts an understanding of a natural balance between light and dark, sun and earth, summer and winter, good and bad, male and female, active and passive, life and death, positive and negative. This concept of yin and yang is prevalent in other religions as well. Confucianism accepted this idea that all things balance out. In Taoism it is used to explain the ebb and flow in both man and nature wherein to blend with this cycle of the universe without stress or effort is to become one with the Tao and find fulfillment.³³ But this Tao remains invisible and unexplainable except to those who know and they, of course, won't say. This

32 Ibid., McDowell & Stewart, p 340.

33 Ibid., McDowell & Stewart, p 343.

understanding and merging with the mysterious enigmatic Tao was to result in a natural cycle which is believed to explain the rise and fall of dynasties as well as the change of day to night and the change back to day again. The promise of harmony in an inharmonious, inhumane period of Chinese society is what caused Taoism to take hold and develop in its puzzling, mystical, philosophy of life. It reminds me of “The Emperor Had No Clothes”, the satirical book of the 17th century that pretends only the wise and worthy can see and comprehend the invisible.

“Although Taoism may have run its course in China, it is a very real threat in the West. With the hippie generation the United States saw the advent of the “tune out, drop out” mentality, a mentality completely suited to Taoist philosophy.

“We can rest assured, however, that even though the Tao may have a temporary appeal, it ultimately cannot fulfill its disciples. The impersonal Tao is in stark contrast to the personal loving God of Christianity, who is both willing and able to meet the deepest needs we all have.”³⁴

Taoism as a philosophy will have this appeal in our society as long as there are intellectuals and students of the esoteric who seek some abstract philosophy which will cause them to blend into the natural cycle of the universe. The appeal is not practical, nor for the practical, but the superstitious line that “those who know won't say, and those who say don't know,” will always appeal to man's vanity. Taoism should be comprehended on that level, with little

34 Ibid., McDowell & Stewart, p 347.

effort exerted in understanding its vain and frivolous philosophy.

Non Christian Religions - Shintoism

In Chinese and Japanese “The way of the gods” is said *Shen tao*, and the national religion of Japan is thought one of the world's oldest religions. It is called Shintoism. Rather than exhibiting itself as a system of beliefs like most of the worlds religions, Shintoism is basically, and singularly, a reverent loyalty to the familiar, i.e. familiar ways of life, familiar places, familiar people etc. It has no organized body of doctrine, nor a unified systematized code of behavior, but holds, for the Japanese masses, a love of country that is a matter of the heart first and any sketchy doctrinal substance second.

Shintoism is strictly a Japanese religion if it is indeed a religion at all. It is reverent loyalty to the familiar Japanese culture. From prehistoric times this reverence for Japan developed a love of their land which made the islands of Japan the first divine creation. The divine origin of their land goes hand in hand with Shintoism³⁵. There is in Shintoism a powerful sense of the presence of gods and spirits in nature and Amaterasu, the Spirit of the Sun, it is believed, created Japan and sent her son down to rule it for her. He was the origin of the imperial line of the Japanese emperors. Shintoism is thus a polytheistic religion rooted deep in the ancient history of Japan.

In the 6th century A.D., with the rise of Buddhism, Sintoism began to be rejected. After that Shintoism began combining with Buddhism and Confucianism. Shintoism by itself declined considerably in this compromise.

In 1811 Emperor Meiji established Shintoism as the official religion of Japan in place of Buddhism. This was a

35 Ibid., McDowell & Stewart, p 349.

Shintoism conglomerated with Buddhism and Confucianism and Buddhism was allowed to continue. Total religious liberty was granted shortly thereafter. After the defeat of WWII Shintoism was abolished as the religion of the Japanese people.

Shinto, with no founder, no sacred writings, and no authoritative set of beliefs, produced great diversity in its shrines and worship. Japan being the Country of the gods and Japan's inhabitants being the descendants of the gods may be abolished as the state religion, but much of it is still ingrained in the heart of the Japanese people.

Non Christian Religions - Zoroastrianism

Zoroastrianism is a unique pre-Christ religion because it originates at the feet of the Tower of Babel recorded in Genesis 11. When all the world spoke a common language they said, “*Go to let us build a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.*”(Gen 11:4). God threw a wrench into the intent of rebellious man and indeed scattered them around the world. All the religions of the world have their root in a seed-line knowledge of the flood and this scattering of nations because of man's attempt to be like god. Before Buddha of China there was Zoroaster of Persia, present day Iran. Zoroaster grew up not 500 miles East of that Biblical tower of Babel and equally close to Ur of the Chaldea. Recall that Ur was the home of the children of Eber, descendent of Noah's son, Shem. He fathered those who spoke Hebrew and one famous Hebrew was named Abram. Hebrew is patronymic for the descendants of Eber and means (or it came to mean) 'one come from beyond'. It developed this meaning because Abram left the land of his ancestry and came to a new land. Zoroaster came along a couple hundred years after the Hebrew named Abraham. He was a Persian, son of a camel merchant and took a keen interest in religion as they then worshiped many gods. Zoroaster had an excellent education, a compassionate nature, and a propensity for pondering the mysteries of life. He was destined to break through the Persian polytheism and through his religious quest to bring back an ancient truth of monotheism.

As the speculative account goes, Zoroaster turned 30

years of age and received 'enlightenment' through a vision on the banks of the Daitya River. Therein a personage called "good thought" took him into the presence of the wise lord, '*Ahura-Mazda*'. This "All-seeing", "All-knowing", "Most Mighty", "Creator", the Father of Justice and Father of "Good Thought" was the most bountiful spirit, and was to teach Zoroaster "true religion".

Zoroaster's god was father to some personage that supposedly led Zoroaster into god's promise. The Bible believer might look at these attributes of Zoroaster's god, and consider this a remarkable reflection of the Jehovah God, the God that Noah, Shem, Ham and Japheth knew. Surely their descendants talked about God in Persian, in Farsi, and in Hebrew. But there was a powerful distinction for Zoroaster's "true religion", in that Zoroaster supposed two primal spirits which were co-equal and twins, one Good and one Evil. The first spirit was the god of light and wisdom, the evil twin was the prince of darkness. The first exemplified right and justice, the second falsehood; the good mind vs the evil mind, power and love vs cowardice and pretense, health and immortality vs misery and annihilation. The Bible parallels are so striking that the infidel even considers that the Hebrews copied the Zoroasters when they devised "a man made book" called the Bible. That is what infidels consider truth.

The Bible believer, however, knows the truth, and ponders only how Zoroaster came back and landed so close to the truths that his ancestor, Noah, knew so well. Zoroaster was at least 700 years or 17 generations removed from the flood. (a 40 year generation is used here due to 400 years constituting 10 Biblical generations from Noah to Abraham.) Not only did Zoroaster come up with reasonable descriptions of God and Satan, he understood that pursuing

one would bring life and the other death. He understood that one yielded “Best Thought” forever (Paradise), and the other “Worst Existence“ forever (Hell), and that the one 'good primal spirit', would in the end triumph over the evil one. Zoroaster also knew that in the end there would be punishment for the wicked and reward for the righteous. How would Zoroaster come out of Persian polytheism and principles to come so close to these truths? Did God himself reveal them to him by the River Daitya? Did Satan? It seems most reasonable that Zoroaster carried these truths inside of himself, as explained in Romans 1. Surely he discerned them from creation as explained in Psalm 19. Also, being only 17 generations removed from Noah, Zoroaster had heard descriptions of this God and God's opposer and enemy, Satan.

One should not call the Zoroastrianism text, 'Scripture', (as does McDowell continually) it is just a text, perhaps a sacred text. It is amazing that in the most archaic dialect of their sacred text, are found 5 hymns called the “Gathas.” These stress the Lord ship of the only supreme God, exhort righteous living, and express the ultimate triumph of good over evil. Again these also stress a punishment for the wicked and a reward for the righteous. Supposing that Zoroaster had no contact or influence from Abraham and his descendants, who had these truths revealed to them, (this is a reasonable assumption), it is amazing that Zoroastrianism could reach back through 17 generations and access these truths that Noah knew.

Again we need to emphasize a couple things about the record of “true religion” which Zoroaster began to preach. Consider that he never came to the exact truth God revealed to the descendants of Shem. God is the Almighty God without equal and without twin. Consider that God revealed

to Noah that a redeemer and messiah (Hebrew) would be sent to save man from his helpless estate, and although Zoroaster got hints about a son of the almighty God, the more detailed accounting of this coming messiah was revealed only to the Hebrews via the written Word of God (which we call “Scripture”). Lastly consider that Zoroastrianism never grew to any significant size, but it got close enough to the truth that it has survived through over 3000 years of history and has done that existence parallel with the revealed truth of the Holy Bible. Again the infidel thinks that the Bible is not Holy and has its roots in fable and Zoroastrianism. The believer knows that Zoroastrianism has its roots in the truth that their ancestry knew from the feet of the Biblical Noah. Noah knew the Jehovah God that reveals himself to man. And God chose to do just that after the flood and after the tower of Babel. He did it with the written Hebrew in Holy Scripture. Zoroasterites, although they are very few in number, need to come to the whole truth and receive the Messiah, the Christ as their Lord and Saviour.

Non Christian Religions - Judaism

To call Judaism a non-Christian religion is to misrepresent the very root and meaning of the word Christ. Catholicism is more non-Christian than Judaism could ever be. Her popes and priests, penance and purgatory have no place whatsoever in the Bible, while the Jew occupies and provided every page of our precious old book. The Bible distinguishes three advantages of the Jew, "What advantage then hath the Jew? Or what profit is there in circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God." Indeed all 66 books, 39 Old Testament and 27 New Testament were penned by 40 Jewish authors; all 1,189 chapters, 929 Old Testament and 260 New Testament, were assembled by Jews; all 31,101 verses, 23,114 Old Testament and 7,957 New Testament, were spoken as these Jews, Holy Men of God, were moved by the Holy Ghost. Indeed unto them were committed the oracles of God. Secondly through them we trace the chosen seed that brought the Christ into this world. "O ye seed of Abraham his servant, ye children of Jacob his chosen." (Ps. 105:6) "But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend." Indeed this chosen seed line would deliver God's chosen, God's anointed, God's Messiah, to be born in The City of David called Bethlehem.

Thirdly, Israel was elect and chosen to show the whole world that "the LORD our God is one LORD" (Deut. 6:4) and that the world's polytheism was idolatry. In Mark 12:29 Jesus called this the first of all commandments, and through Israel this message of monotheism was manifest to the world. God says to the prophet Isaiah "Ye ..." ("Ye" is plural, God is not just talking to Isaiah but to all of Israel about her calling. In the King James English any 2nd person pronoun

starting with 'Y' is plural, like ye or you-all, any starting with 'T' , like thee and thou, is singular. The nominative tense (subject) is thou, the dative tense (object) is thee, just like your mother taught you not to say, “me want to play” because of the first person singular nominative is properly “I.” There is likewise this difference in the plural use of 'Ye' vs 'You'. This clarity is lost in all modernist bibles that insisted that the 'Thee's and 'Thou's be removed for the dumbing down of America.) ... *Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God found, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no Saviour. I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, that I am God.*”(Isa. 43:10-12)

These three purposes of “Judaism” certainly bleed into each other, i.e. their being this witness is somewhat accomplished by their delivering the oracles of God and by their presentation of the manifestation of God to the world. But certainly 'Christianity' is inept and hollow without all of Biblical Judaism standing with it. Understanding Biblical Judaism with every feast and holy day, every sacrifice and tabernacle furnishing is intended to provide Christianity the vivid portrayal of their Christ and so, as such a precursor, Judaism can not herein be examined as a non-Christian Religion. However Judaism, as much as it is extra Biblical, should herein be examined as such. And so it shall.

Extra Biblical Judaism should not be explored without first a good and complete background of Biblical Judaism. Such an examination of Biblical Judaism must entail everything that Israel was and went through in accomplishment of the three purposes previously identified.

This should include their historical failing, captivities and restorations as portrayed in the whole Old Testament. It should include their rejections of Jesus Christ as their Messiah, as portrayed in the New Testament, as well as their future restoration and promised Kingdom age, as portrayed in both Testaments and in the Revelation of Jesus Christ. The latter of these understandings, concerning their restoration, is vehemently denied by Catholic doctrine and teachings, and just as vehemently denied by Protestants, by John Calvin and his 'Institutes', and by covenant Theology where ever it may be found. (Even, unfortunately, in some Baptist circles that should know better.) These wholly Biblical characteristics of Judaism are thus left for another paper at another time.

Since Judaism departed from Biblical Judaism it may be examined as a non-Christian religion. It is still of keen interest. There is one non-Biblical feast day added, and a series of teachings that they have undertaken. Careful examination of these can accomplish three things for a believer. First, and perhaps foremost it should enliven, embolden and enlighten our witness towards God's chosen people, the Jews. Second, it causes us to consider more clearly the exactness and accuracy of God's revealed Word. Every piece of extra Biblical history of these people, whether it be as horrid as their 1492 expulsion from Spain or their World War II Holocaust, or as miraculous as their 1948 re-establishment as a nation in their land or even the June 1967 Six Day War, every detail points to the accuracy and fidelity of the Bible, God's Holy Word. Thirdly, such an examination and study of extra Biblical Judaism should tantalize the believer as he watches for the fulfillment of prophecies about the restoration of Israel. They will look upon him whom they have pierced and he will sit on the

Throne of David in the hills of Zion exactly as Psalm chapter 2 reported it. For a Christian the study of Judaism should be more in depth than will be found in this introductory work.

The only Jewish feast that is not sourced from the Bible is that of Hanukkah . The feast is based upon the likely historical but certainly non Scriptural accounts given in the apocryphal³⁶ book of Maccabees. Therein Antiachus IV Epephanes in 167B.C., established Greek gods for a state religion. He desecrated the temple, slaughtered a pig in the Jewish Holy of Holies, and abolished the Jewish religion in the Holy Land. Maccabees documents the heroic acts of the Maccabees family to reestablish temple worship after one Judas Maccabees staged the over throwing revolt against Antiachus. When the temple was cleansed and rededicated there was only enough oil in the Menorah to burn the sacred temple candlestick for one day. Because of the providence of God and his blessing of the judicious cleansing and re-dedication of the temple, the Menorah miraculously burned for the full eight days and nights of the dedication. Hanukkah, also known as the festival of lights, is the feast commemorating this miraculous re-dedication. It starts the 25th day of their month Kislev and continues for eight days and nights. Strangely, because of its proximity to Christmas and a Bible believers utilization of all its other holy days, Hanukkah is the most familiar holiday associated with Judaism. It is the one not based on the Bible.

Modern Judaism is divided into three groups; Orthodox, Conservative and Reformed. These groups all hold in some decree to Moses Maimonide's 12th century A.D. general

36 a-poc-ry-phal (from American Heritage Dictionary) adj. 1. Of questionable authorship or authenticity. 2. Erroneous; fictitious: ... 3. Apocryphal. ... Of or having to do with the Apocrypha.

creed as expressed in 13 basic beliefs. These are stated below:

1. I believe with perfect faith that the Creator, blessed be His Name, is the Creator and Guide of everything that has been created, and He alone has made, does make, and will make all things.
2. I believe with perfect faith that the Creator, blessed be His Name, is One, and that there is no unity in any manner like unto His, and that He alone is our God, who was, and is, and will be.
3. I believe with perfect faith that the Creator, blessed be His Name, is not a body, and that He is free from all the properties of matter, and that He has not any form whatever.
4. I believe with perfect faith that the Creator, blessed be His name, is the first and the last.
5. I believe with perfect faith that to the Creator, blessed be His Name, and to Him alone, it is right to pray, and that it is not right to pray to any being besides Him.
6. I believe with perfect faith that all the words of the prophets are true.
7. I believe with perfect faith that the prophecy of Moses, our teacher, peace be unto him, was true, and that he was the chief of the prophets, both of those who preceded and of those who followed him.
8. I believe with perfect faith that the whole *Torah*, now in our possession, is the same that was given to Moses, our teacher, peace be unto him.
9. I believe with perfect faith that this Torah will not be changed, and that there will never be any other Law from the Creator, blessed be His Name.
10. I believe with perfect faith that the Creator, blessed

be His Name, knows every deed of the children of men, and all their thoughts, as it is said. It is He that fashioned the hearts of them all, that gives heed to all their works.

11. I believe with perfect faith that the Creator, blessed be His Name, rewards those that keep His commandments and punishes those that transgress them.

12. I believe with perfect faith in the coming of the Messiah, and, though he tarry, I will wait daily for his coming.

13. I believe with perfect faith that there will be a revival of the dead at the time when it shall please the Creator, blessed be His Name, and exalted be His Fame for ever and ever. For Thy Salvation I hope, O Lord.³⁷

Although the three modern branches of Judaism hold loosely to these beliefs it should be clarified that there is another 'branch' not generally associated with Judaism, those called Messianic Jews. The Messianic Jew is a Jew that has accepted that the Lord Jesus was indeed the Messiah.

Although the Messianic Jew will refuse, usually vehemently refuse, the Greek and Gentile name of 'Christian', that is indeed what they are. Don't be upset with their refusal, rather understand it and explore it. Recall that their Hebrew Bible says in Acts 11:26 that the disciples were called 'Messianic' first in Antioch. Understand also that just as any 'Christian denomination' is made up of radical unbelievers, misled unbelievers, misled believers and radical believers, those calling themselves Messianic Jews can be equally categorized. There are Messianic Jews who are genuine believers. These may be more conversant about their acceptance of the 'Christ' (Greek for the Hebrew Messiah) but will still refuse the Gentile tarnished name of Christian.

37 Ibid., McDowell & Stewart, pp 367-368.

i.e. “Are you a Christian?”, “No, I am a Messianic Jew.” It is still incumbent on the witness to determine, in such an exchange, if the questioned one is a genuine born-again believer or no.

A reasonable next query might be “Wow, does that mean you are a genuine born-again, blood bought believer in the Lord Jesus as your Messiah and Saviour?” Such a query will in general excite a positive response from a genuine believer and a negative one from an unbeliever. Be sensitive and be compassionate, as well as passionate, recalling that conversion from Judaism to Messianic will often cause their ostracism from family and community. Be aware that the question, “Are you a Christian?” can illicit a positive response from a Roman Catholic, a Charismatic, an American, and an agnostic. So to is the classification Messianic Jew. It could mean most anything.

Orthodox Judaism

Orthodoxy in Judaism captures a widely diversified nuance of belief and practice. All have a general acceptance of Divine Law in its written and Oral forms as immutable and binding. The authority of Rabbis, who use the Talmud, or the library of oral law and tradition consisting of *Mishnah* (general oral law) and *Gemara* (commentary on the Mishnah), and the other traditional sources is respected as they interpret and administer Jewish Law. Orthodox Judaism adheres to the inspiration of what we call The Old Testament, with more particular emphases and authority given to the Torah (Law) (or The Pentateuch.)

Conservative Judaism

Somewhere between the more strict Orthodox Jew and the horribly liberal Reformed Jew stands the Conservative

Jew. In 1918 the Conservative movement made this announcement:

“We hold that Jewish people are, and of right ought to be, at home in all lands. Israel, like every other religious communion, has the right to live and assert its message in any part of the world. We are opposed to the idea that Palestine should be considered the home-land of the Jews. Jews in America are part of the American nation.

“The ideal of the Jew is not the establishment of a Jewish state-not the reassertion of Jewish nationality which has long been outgrown. We believe that our survival as a people is dependent upon the assertion and the maintenance of our historic religious role and not upon the acceptance of Palestine as a home-land of the Jewish people. The mission of the Jew is to witness to God all over the world.”³⁸

Such middle ground between Orthodoxy and liberal Judaism is occupied by the widely diverse group called conservative Judaism.

Reformed Judaism

The genius who outlined and founded Reform Judaism is Abraham Geiger (1810-1874). Since science (so called) can offer no proof of Revelation, Geiger, considering himself a scientist, rejected all the revealed law of Judaism, ergo rejecting all Jewish doctrine and all hope for a return to the land. What remains in Reform Judaism is only a sense of Jewish kinship, a Torah that provides only loose ethical

38 Ibid., McDowell & Stewart, p 371

guidance, and the Hebrew language for a culture and race. It is only this cultural and racial heritage, with no spiritual ingredients that produces and molds a religious life for Reformed Judaism. This religious life enables the Jew to lecture ethics to the world. One can expect, then “little consensus on doctrinal or religious belief in Reform Judaism³⁹.” It should not be surprising that Reformed Judaism even houses atheists quite comfortably.

Judaism's Messiah

Judaism has never settled on a definition of Messiah nor the concept of Messiah-ship. That the messiah would be a personal, spiritual saviour was never perceived in Judaism. Such a perception would have, and will today, enabled an acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah. The coming of Messiah has meant the coming of special messengers. It has meant the deliverance of Israel from her oppressors. It has meant the institution of peace and freedom. Today the coming of Messiah generally means the hope of a messianic age characterized by truth and justice. There is no hope or expectations of a personal Messiah. Any idea of such has been completely abandoned by Judaism. When they say they are looking for the coming of their Messiah, it is an age and not a person.

39 Ibid., McDowell & Stewart, p 362.

Non Christian Religions - Islam

Islam is not a religion nor is it a cult. It is a complete system with religious, legal, political, economic and military components. To gain a foothold and eventual overthrow and installation of their whole system, the Muslim's pretend to be a religion and demand their "religious rights" in the country that allows freedom of religion. This misrepresentation begins the "Islamization" of a country.⁴⁰

A paper entitled "The Bible on Islam's Muslims", previously published by the author is presented here in its entirety.

The Bible And Islam's Muslims

The center of Muslim life is their confession of faith, the shahadah: "I bear witness that there is no god but God, and Muhammad is the prophet of God." Islam is an Arab religion intent on making the world submit to Arab control. Islam means "submission" (as well as containing the idea of peace), and Muslim means "one who submits to the majesty and will of God." When Muhammad, born around A.D. 570, first began to proclaim the new faith 1,400 years ago in Mecca his intent was to unify the Arab world into a united mono-theism. His intent was to pull his people out of their pagan polytheism and worship of the moon god, Allah.

"These idolaters associated partners with God and worshiped female deities who were believed to be daughters of God. But Muhammad's monotheism was so severe that no room was left for Christian affirmation of the divinity of Jesus Christ. The Christianity that Muhammad rejected was

40 Peter Hammond, *Slavery, Terrorism and Islam*, Christian Liberty Books, Capetown South Africa

largely heretical Roman Catholicism, as he says, it was worshipping both Jesus, as God's Son, and Mary as God's Mother, in addition to worshipping God (Qur'an surah 5:119) Muhammad firmly denounced such believers as guilty of the greatest of all sins, *shirk* (associating partners with God.) To this day Islam stresses the indivisible unity of God."⁴¹

A once common illustration for Muslims is that of mankind being on a journey. They came across a beautiful oasis. Some of mankind stayed and lived there but most moved on until they came across an even grander oasis. Again some stayed but most moved on until they came to the grandest most beautiful oasis of all. Thus the Jews stopped at the monotheistic Justice of God, the Christians at the refreshing love of God and the Muslim completing the journey and arriving at the balanced monotheistic just and loving God they call Allah.

Islam is a missionary religion contending that Jews, "the people of the book" (Qur'an chapter of repentance 9:29), and the Christians, "nearest among (Muslims) in love" (Qur'an surah 5:85) are on the right path but have not evolved to the right oasis yet. All people are permitted and expected to convert to Islam, but none are permitted to leave Islam for another faith. Christian converts from Islam can face disinheritance, the loss of their children, imprisonment, banishment from their country or even death. They are considered not only traitors to their faith but also to their country. Thus while Jesus set aside Peter's sword, saying "all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." (Matt 26:52) Muhammad, Islam's "Seal of the Prophets" embraces the sword. Jihad means "striving in the cause of God". Muslims are taught by Muhammad that wrong can be

41 Donald S. Tingle, *Islam and Christianity*, 1985.

addressed with the sword, as a first resort. Secondly, if it is impossible to use the sword effectively, Muslims can use their words in the fight against evil. If even speech is too dangerous, they can resist silently in their hearts. But armed struggle in the fight against evil is the viable and preferred option, first and foremost against the pagans (Qur'an surah 9:5) certainly against the "people of the book" (Jews) (Qur'an chapter of repentance 9:29) until they pay a "poll-tax". Explicitly Muslims prefer the sword against Christianity because it seeks to "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel." and being a religion for all people is a rite Muslims hold as theirs only, their final oasis. Conversion to Islam can be forcibly attained through the sword of their god for Allah. Muslims intend to bring America under Islamic law, they have previously used words, presently their swords are showing.

Robert A. Morey, author of "Islamic Invasion" writes in a 1996 article:

“The religion of Islam was thus born out of Arab cultural imperialism and is rooted in a racist attitude that all things Arab are good while all things non-Arab are evil. Until this is understood, the true nature of Islam cannot be grasped.

“This is why Western dress, food, movies, hairstyles, etc., are zealously denounced by the Mullahs and Imams as Satanic. Such things as blue jeans are not really condemned because they are immoral but because they are not Arab.

“The truthfulness of this observation is easily demonstrated by Islam's demand that one bow in prayer in the direction of Arabia (Mecca) and make a pilgrimage to Arabia (Mecca). The religion of Islam is Arabian paganism and culture raised to divine law

and imposed upon conquered nations.

“Nations such as Egypt, Turkey, Lebanon, etc. who had the misfortune of having Islam forced upon them by the sword, need to break free from Arab imperialism in order to regain their own identity and culture. Until they throw off the shackles of Islam, they cannot become free societies where human rights are honored.

“How can this be done? The oppressed masses must return to their Christian heritage which was stolen from them by wave after wave of Arab armies. Why would anyone entering the 21st century want to continue to believe in a foreign religion that was forced upon his ancestors many centuries ago by violence, slavery, oppression and unjust taxes? It is time to break free from the darkness and ignorance of Islam and enter into the freedom and light of Christianity.”⁴²

Can you lead a Muslim to saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ? The Muslim has rejected Jesus Christ as the Son of God. The paganism of Roman Catholicism, which deified Mary and began praying to "holy Mary mother of God" horrified Muhammad in 600 A.D., (as it does me in 2001). He taught that Jesus was virgin born (Qur'an surah 3:47) but just a creation of God that never died but was transformed up to heaven. Teaching that he will return when the world is Islamic. Muslims believe that Judas Iscariot's visage was transformed into Jesus' and they crucified the wrong man, deceiving even Peter and John. In their mind, for God to be the Father of Jesus, he would have to have sex,

42 Robert A. Morey, 1996 article: "Islamic Invasion"

God would never do that and has no son. This leaves Muslims with no bridge between God and man. Like Job who said *"For He is not a man, as I am, that I should answer Him, and we should come together in judgment. Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both. Let Him take His rod away from me, and let not His fear terrify me: Then would I speak, and not fear Him; but it is not so with me."* (Job 9:32-35) Indeed Jesus Christ, Immanuel, God in the Flesh, the Son of God, is just such a 'daysman' and is the only bridge between man and God. If one comes to believe that, and to call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, they will be converted from what they were, even if that be Muslim, and be saved from their sin and receive eternal life. A converted Muslim will lay down the sword of Allah. Some born-again converts have said it is coming out of the blackness and darkness of Satan's Islamic realm into the glorious light of Jesus Christ. Others have said it is coming from the love and worship of the Majestic God of Islam into the realization that God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten son. Either reaction requires the realization that Muhammad was wrong and that Jesus Christ is the final prophet, the final priest and the final King for all mankind and that He alone can save his people from their sins. Christianity is not a religion, not a philosophy, not a world changing movement, it is the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Believe and be saved, reject Him and you are condemned already. (John 3)

Origins of Islam and Its Sects

The origin of Islam is always enlightening and foreboding. While false religions generally have an illusive founder who orchestrates the structure of the religion or reformation, the documentation and framing up of the philosophy occurs in the generations which follow. Islam

was not so founded. Islam is the work of only one charismatic individual. Muhammad, who wrote words which were “written on his heart”, words he saw in visions and words he feared came to him because he was possessed by demons, or “Jinn”(spirits) as they were called. For 22 years these “spirits”pressed messages indelibly on his mind and he wrote the Qur'an (Koran), the authoritative holy writings of Islam. One sole author who received his words from spirits that possessed him, does not make for a sound religious system. Those of us who know the Saviour of man and 'try the spirits', whether they be the Holy Spirit of God or evil spirits that oppose Jehovah God, they know what spirits led Muhammad into his fits of writing.

At Muhammad's death in 632 A.D., Muslim's 'last and greatest of the prophets' had appointed no successor. He had founded a 'religion' with no distinctions between religion and government and it could not exist without a head to succeed Muhammad. Someone had to enforce the law, lead in war and guide in peace⁴³. The questions of who will be the spiritual and political leader, or '*Caliph*', would cause more division and blood shed in Islam than any other issue. From the very first three rival parties divide over this vacuum of leadership, and Islam has been sharply divided along these three lines throughout its history.

There were the 'Companions of the Prophet', believing in the eligibility of any qualified early believer to become their '*Caliph*'. Eventually these became called the Sufis, holding more to mysticism. There was the Aristocracy of Mecca, who believed the new leader must be only of the family of Umayya. These eventually came to be called the Sunnis, holding to traditions above all else. And there was the

43 Anderson, Sir Norman, *The Worlds Religions*, Grand Rapids, MI, William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co. 1976, 64.

'Legitimists' who believed only family of Muhammad would be suitable for successors, and that selection should be done by god without any elections. They considered 'Ale, the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet as the 'divinely appointed' successor. The 'Party for 'Ali' was called in Arabic '*Shi'a of Ali*' and these became the Shi'a sect.

Now there are multiple other sects and divergent groups, but understanding these three, the Sufis, the Sunnis and the Shi'a is most helpful in understanding the whole conglomerated socio-economic-political-religious-militant state of Islam.

The Sunnis

The largest and yet most diversified Sect of Islam is made up of the Sunnis. Sunnis recognize the first four leaders of Islam as Muhammad's rightful leaders. As Islam began control of the whole socio-economic-political-militant-religious system situations began to arise where the Qur'an was not sufficient, applicable, or appropriate to give injunctions. In such dilemma it was customary to look to the practice of Muhammad. In Arabic '*sunna*' means 'behavior or practice' and this sect became known as Sunnis. It became the 'practice' of the Sunnis to look to four schools in order to practice their socio-economic-political-militant-religious Muslim faith. They accepted the Qur'an (Koran) and the Sunna, or practice of the Prophet as expressed in the 'Hadith' (traditions); and they accepted the four bases of Islamic Law, called Shari'a Law. Shari'a Law, consisting of 1) The '*Qur'an*' (Koran), fit-full writings pressed indelibly on Muhammad's mind by spirits, 2) The '*Hadith*', the sacred sayings of Muhammad, handed down by oral tradition until finally transcribed; 3) The '*Ij'ma*' or consensus of the Muslim community and 4) The '*Q'yas*', or use of analogical reason. These four became the 'practice' of Sunnis and became

called the Sunna. Recall that, for Muslims, Shri'a Law is the final 'oasis of truth' for all of mankind, those refusing to convert to this 'oasis' are eventually to be killed, those wishing to depart from this 'oasis of truth' are likewise to be executed. When described as a 'peace loving religion' one must realize that peace for Islam only comes when the whole world is Islam.

The Shia

When Muhammad died the party, in Arabic, 'Shi'a', was insistent that only family should be successor to 'the last' and greatest of the prophets! The irony that a successor to 'the last' should cause such a violent rift in Islam's socio-economic-political-militant-religious fiber escapes Muslims. The most striking rift is found from the party, or Shi'a, who insisted that this "last and greatest Prophetness" must be hereditary. The Shi'ites do not accept the first three 'Claipha' (successors) that Sunnis accepted. The family that they insist should have been accepted as successor is Muhammad's son-in-law and cousin Ali. He was married to the Prophets only daughter 'Fatima'. Things got ugly, and still remain so for the Shi'ites, when tragedy befell the House of 'Ali. He was murdered by Mu'awiya who claimed he was the rightful heir. Then, when 'Ali's' two sons died the Shi'ites so brooded over these dark happenings that all Muslims somewhat, and somehow, feel a little bad for this radical Sect of Islam. They are still, however, a heretical group that have drawn censure from the majority because they are "guilty of resting their claims on false grounds and sinfully dividing Islam."⁴⁴

Because the Shi'ite's grievances go all the way back to the beginning, however, the Muslim world at large suppresses

44 Ibid., McDowell & Stewart, p 383.

its annoyances at them. They called these claims of a Muhammad family dynasty of leadership 'ghuluw', or exaggeration, rather than heresy.

Shi'ite's to this day staunchly claim that every legitimate leader of the Alids, beginning with 'Ali, was an 'imam:mahdi' or a divinely appointed, supernaturally guided, spiritual leader, endowed by Allah with special knowledge and insight. The division over this leadership issue is very significant and sets Islam into two major warring sects of Sunni and Shi'a.

The Sufis

The grass roots desire of Muslims is still a direct personal interaction and experience with the divine. Such a 'mystical' desire for a relationship with their creator has brought about 'mysticism' or in Arabic 'Sufism' and a sect of Islam called *Sufis*. Despite all the Islamic infighting about leadership and the sharp divide between Sunnis and Shi'a, or perhaps because of it, Sufis seek for honor and follow mystic clerics who promise to meet this need of a personal god. One can imagine the strife and tension initiated with the Shi'a legalist who demand a strict dynastical leadership model. One can imagine the strife and tension with the Sunni traditionalist who insisted that only the behavior, practice and written law of Muhammad was to guide their religious relationship. The Sufi's became a sect of millions of Muslims with a desire to feel their religion as a personal and emotional experience. Islam is a socio-economic-political-militant-religious system and the religious part is severely lacking. This lack shows up in the popular yearning for men who are separated from the worldly, dedicated to god, aesthetic and holy in character. Such popular yearning for mystic leadership has led to an enduring sect of Islam called the Sufis who are

more popularly known through their Dervish⁴⁵ Orders.

The Muslim-Islamic Threat

As a socio-economic-political-militant-religious system, Islam is a heredity of culture and society united in a religious system. Judaism is a socio-cultural-religious system. Unlike it, Muslim's do not, indeed can not, integrate into a society. Islam is a strong unified socio-economic-political-militant-religious entity which can not exist as a free religious expression without initiating its socio-economic-political attachments, which take over and wholly control a society. Islam's guiding controller of a society is its Shari'a Law and recall that Shari'a law is the four fold acceptance and implementation of 1) The '*Qur'an*' (Koran), fit-full writings pressed indelibly on Muhammad's mind by spirits, 2) The '*Hadith*', the sacred sayings of Muhammad, handed down by oral tradition until finally transcribed; 3) The '*Ij'ma*' or consensus of the Muslim community and 4) The '*Q'yas*', or use of analogical reason. The Islam faith is Shari'a law implemented in a whole society and Shari'a law implemented in a whole society is Islam. The outstanding ignorance of a nation accustomed to religious freedom is its thinking that this freedom can be equally offered to Muslims. Islam is not a religion, it is a socio-economic-political-militant-religious system. That ignorance has freedom loving Americans headed towards Shari'a law. God, Help us.

45 der-vish (from American Heritage Dictionary) n. 1. A member of any of various Muslim ascetic orders, some of which perform whirling dances and vigorous chanting as acts of ecstatic devotion. 2. One that possesses abundant, often frenzied energy:

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