

World Religions

Religious Studies | T. Nixon



Christianity



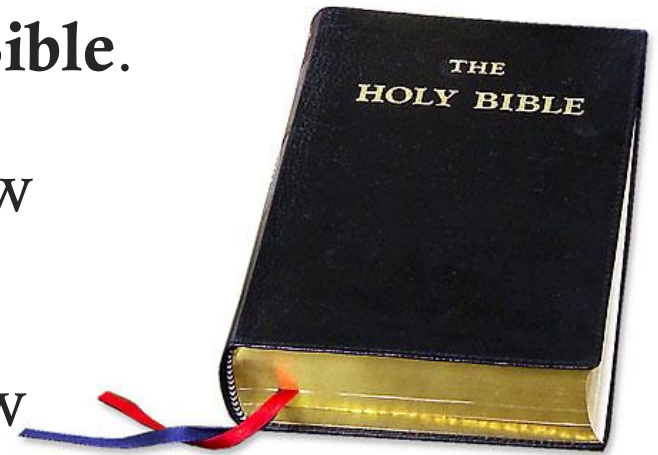
Christianity

- The largest religion in the world
- Over 2 billion followers
- 42 million people in Britain today describe themselves as Christian
- 6 million are actively practicing
- Christianity is focused on the life and teachings of **Jesus Christ** who Christians believe to be the Son of God.
- Jesus was born in Bethlehem in the Middle East over 2000 years ago



Christianity

- The Christian holy book is the **Bible**.
- It is divided into the Old and New Testaments.
- The New Testament explains how God sent his only son, Jesus Christ, to restore the broken relationship between people and God which had been caused by human wrong doing.



Christianity

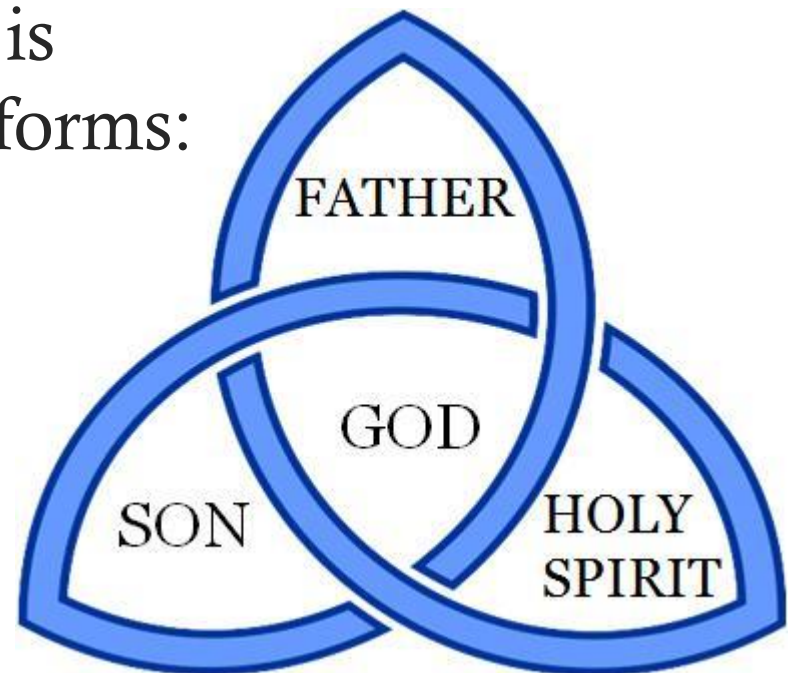
Guiding Belief

- In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets

Christianity

■ Christians believe that there is only **one God**, but that he is revealed in three different forms:

- God the Father
- God the Son
- The Holy Spirit



Christianity

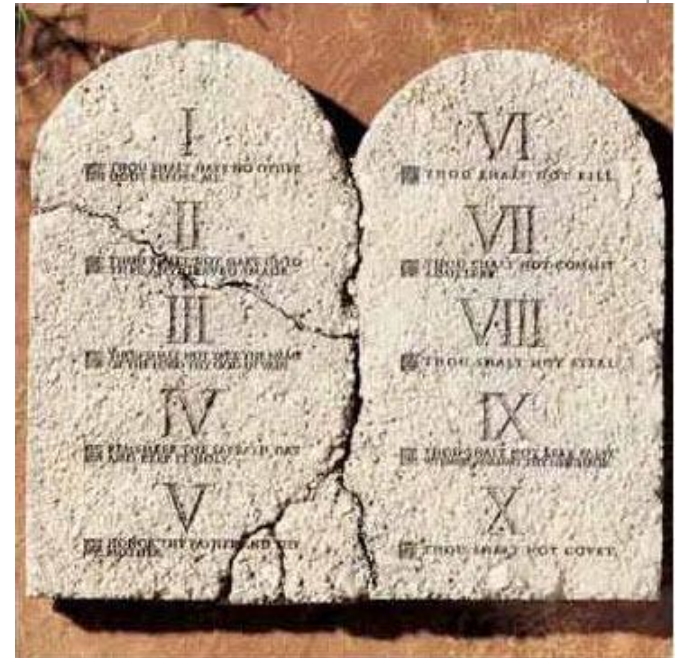
- Christians model themselves on the life and teachings of **Jesus Christ**.
- Jesus taught people to **love God** and **love thy neighbour**.
- Many Christians worship in **churches**.
- Some groups meet in homes and other buildings.
- 'Church' means the gathering of Christians as well as the building in which Christians worship.
- Their leaders are called priests or ministers.



Christianity

10 Commandments

1. You shall have no other gods before Me.
2. You shall not make idols
3. You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.
4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy
5. Honor your father and your mother
6. You shall not murder
7. You shall not commit adultery
8. You shall not steal
9. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor
10. You shall not covet

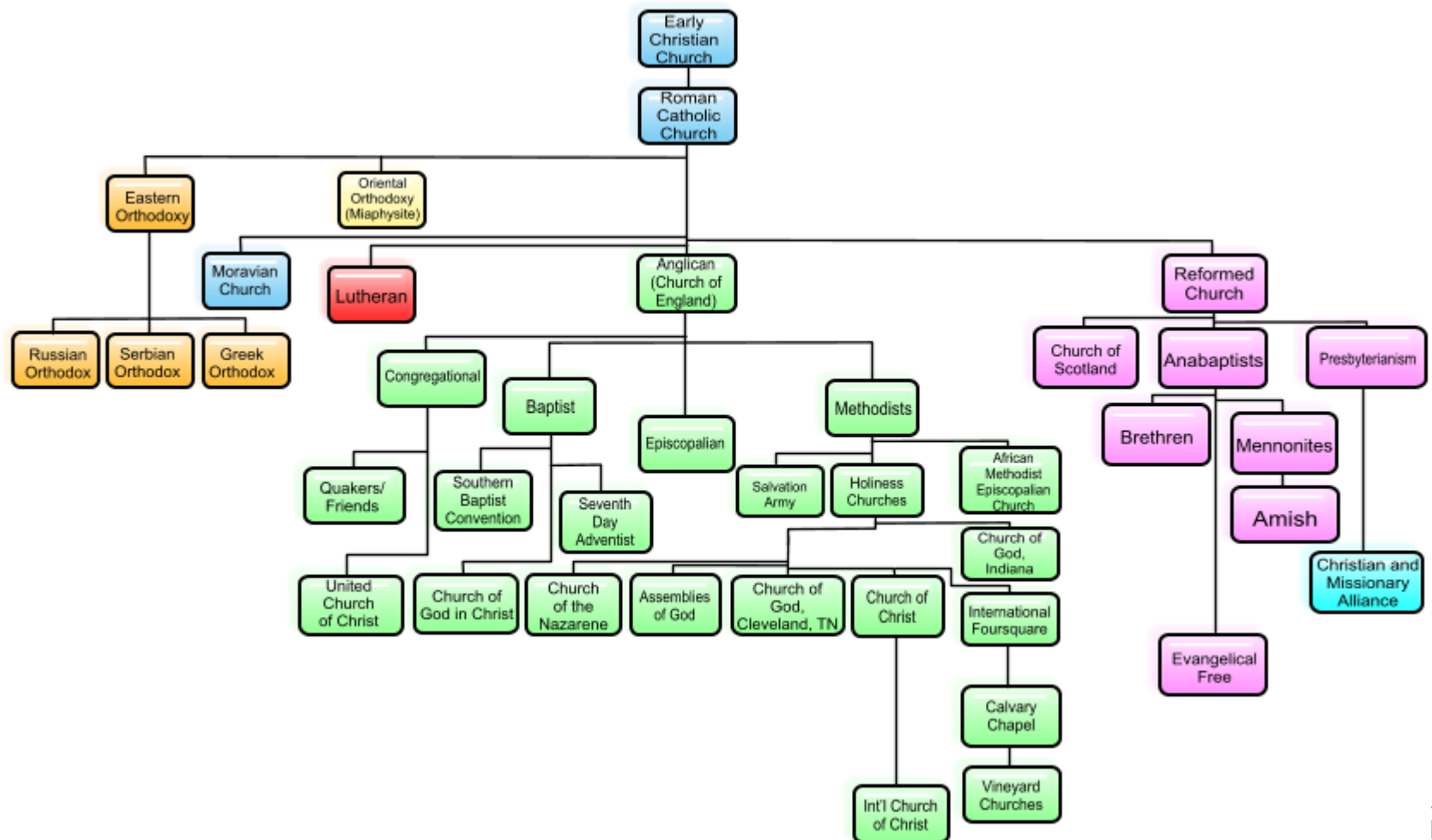


Christianity

- Different ways of understanding Christian teachings has led to groups of Christians worshipping in different ways.
- These denominations include the
 - Anglican (or the Church of England)
 - Roman Catholic Church
 - Eastern Orthodox Church
 - Pentecostal
 - Salvation Army
 - and many others



Christianity



Christianity

Rites of Passage

- **Baptism** - babies are baptised as a symbol of welcome and belonging to the family of the Church
- **Confirmation** - Confirmation is a ceremony in church in which the young person reconfirms the promises to follow Jesus that were made on their behalf at baptism

Holidays recognized:

- Lent
- Easter
- Christmas



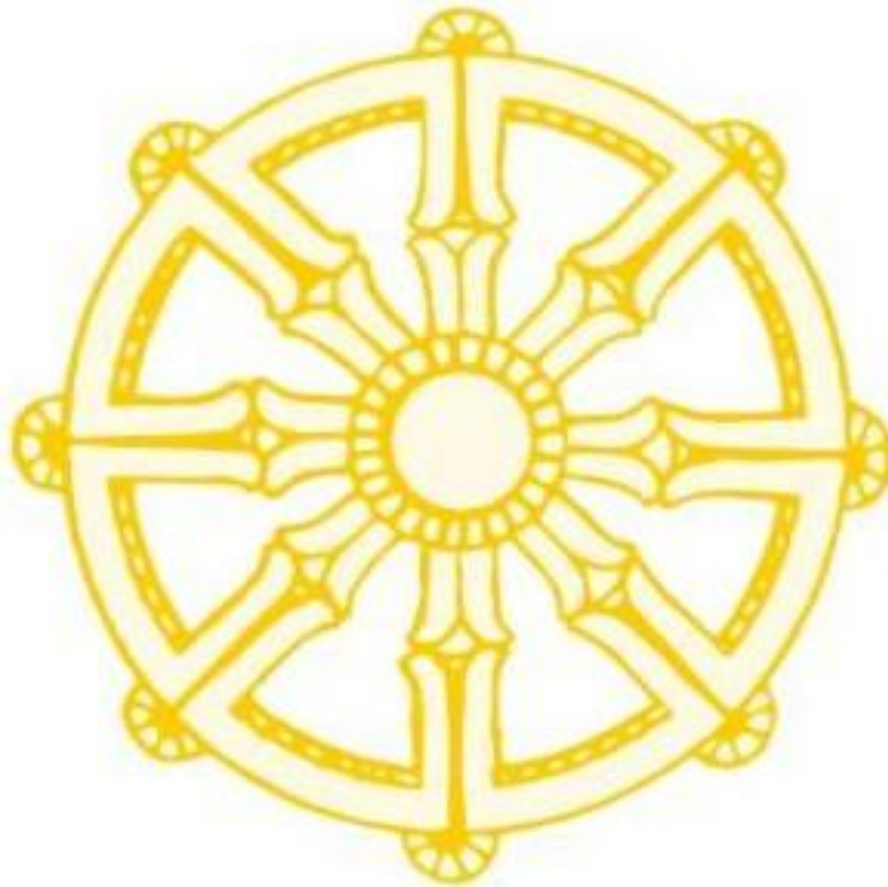
Christianity

Main Symbols

- **Cross** - the four points of a cross represent self, nature, wisdom, and higher power or being, and reminds us of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection
- **Dove** - symbol of the Holy Ghost, symbolizes the release of the soul in death and hope
- **Ichthus (Fish)** - Five Greek letters form the word “ixthus,” and those letters inside the fish form an acrostic which is a message that Christians clearly identified with.
 - The first letter represented the word Jesus.
 - The second letter represented the word Christ
 - The next two, God and Son
 - The final letter represented the word Savior.
 - This adds up to “Jesus Christ is God’s Son, the Savior.

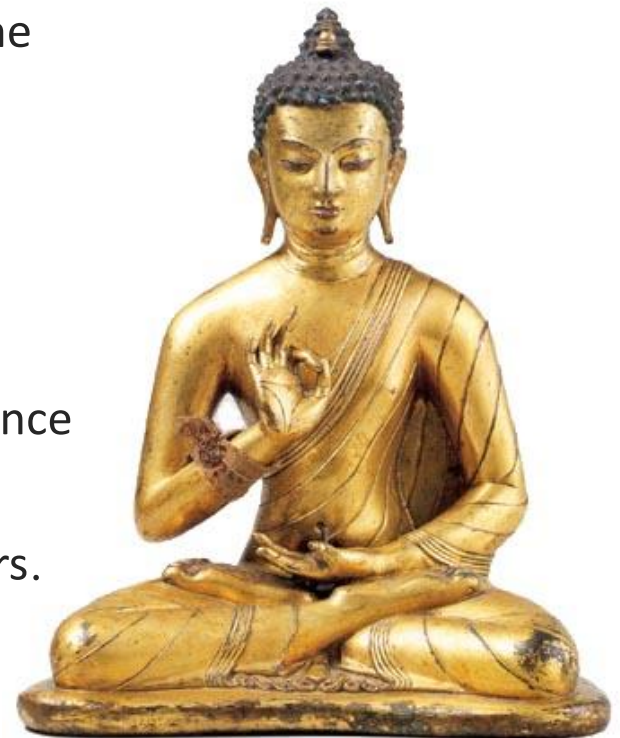


Buddhism



Buddhism

- Started in India over 2,500 years ago
- Has around 376 million followers throughout the world
- No supreme God or deity
- Essence of Buddhism: **The Attainment of Enlightenment**
- It points to a way of life that avoids self-indulgence and self-denial
- Buddha is not considered a 'god' by his followers.
- Buddha means 'enlightened'



Buddhism

Legend of Buddha

- **Siddhattha Gotama**, later to become the Buddha, lived in the 5th century BC and was a prince born into a rich family and easy life.
- When he saw the suffering of old age, sickness and death, he decided to renounce his life in the palace and live among the holy men of the day in search of truth and enlightenment.
- His search took him six years, but he became enlightened whilst meditating under a Bodhi tree.

Buddhism

Legend of Buddha continued...

- Following this he dedicated his life to spreading the teachings.
- He discovered that the answer lay in what have become known as the **Four Noble Truths**.
- Craving and desire keep people on the wheel – that is the cycle of birth and rebirth.
- It is only possible to escape this cycle by following the **Four Noble Truths**.



Buddhism

Beliefs

- The idea that **nothing stays the same** is central to Buddhism.
- Buddhists believe that loss and change are things to be accepted rather than causes of sadness.
- Buddhists think about their lives and how they can work towards gaining the perfect peace of Nirvana.
- They remember friends or relations who have recently died and reflect on the fact that death is a part of life for everyone.

Buddhism

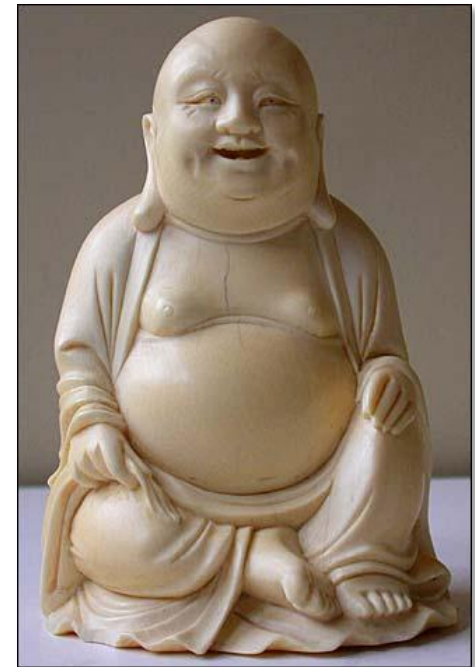
Guiding Belief

- Treat not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful

Buddhism

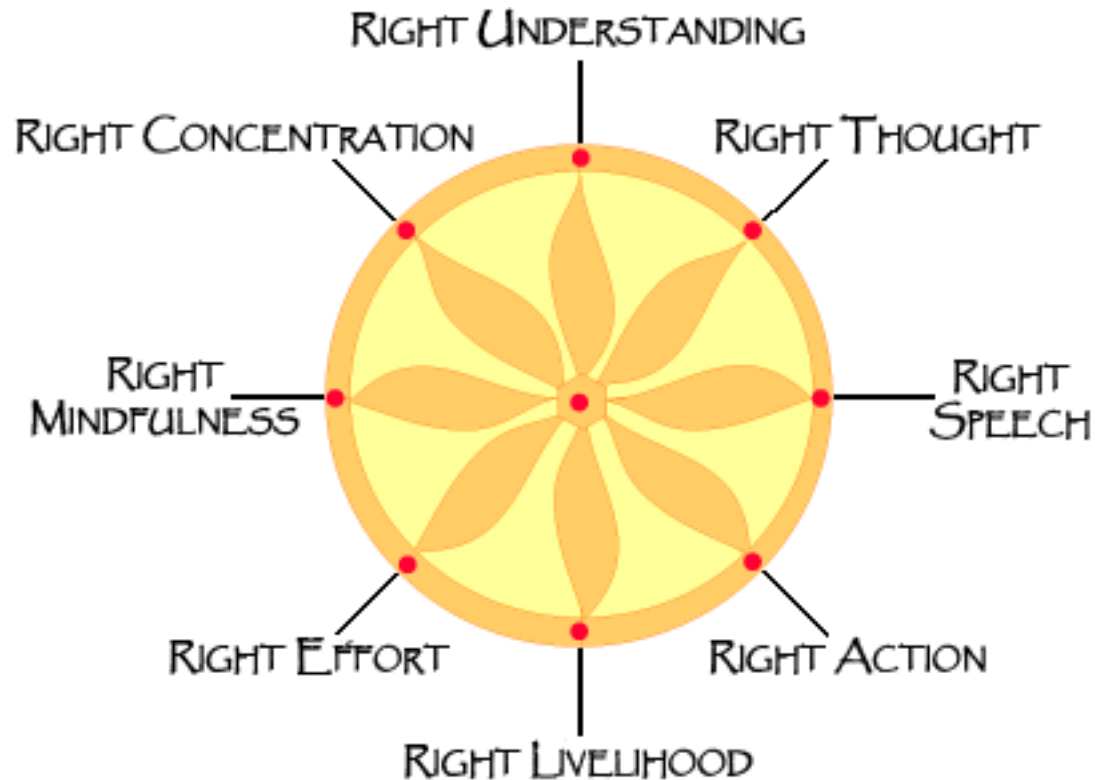
Four Noble Truths

- **Four Noble Truths** form the first part of the Buddha's teachings:
 - Human life is full of **Dukkha** – this a Sanskrit word which means 'that which is difficult to endure' (ie./ physical pain, feeling unhappy)
 - Reason for dukkha is people's selfishness and greed. People are never content with what they have, always wanting more.
 - There is always a way to end dukkha
 - The way to end dukkha is to live your life according to the '**Middle Way**', which is also known as the **Noble Eightfold Path**.



Buddhism

The Eightfold Path *(8 laws)*



Buddhism

Five Moral Precepts – All Buddhists

All Buddhists undertake to live by the **Five Moral Precepts** which means refraining from:

- Harming living things
- Taking what is not given
- Sexual misconduct
- Lying or gossip
- Taking intoxicating substances (ie./ drugs or drink)

Buddhism

Ten Moral Precepts - Monks

Buddhists monks undertake to live by the **Ten Moral Precepts** which includes the original five precepts, plus refraining from:

- Taking substantial food after midday (from noon to dawn)
- Dancing, singing and music
- Use of garlands, perfumes and personal adornment like jewellery
- Use of luxurious beds and sheets
- Accepting and holding money, gold or silver

Buddhism

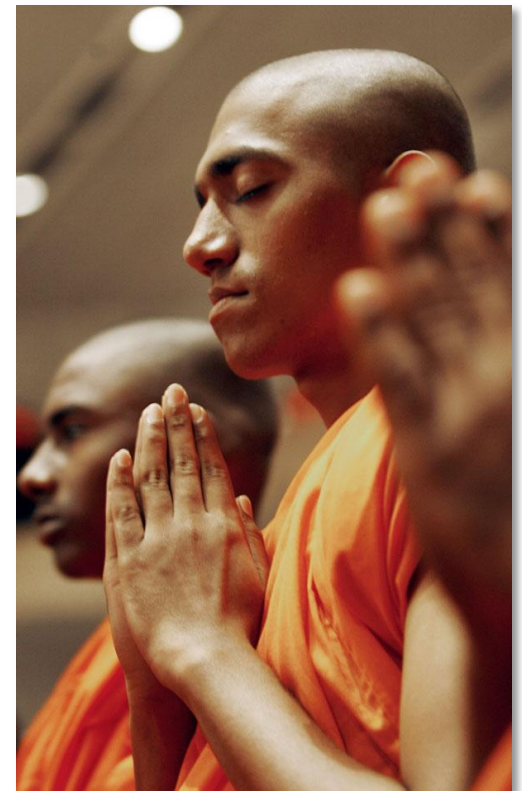
Nirvana

- Nirvana is believed to be the end of the cycle of death and rebirth.
- Buddhism teaches that Nirvana is reached when all want and suffering is gone.
- Nirvana is attained by meditating and following the guiding principles of Buddhism, in particular the Four Noble Truths which Buddha experienced whilst he meditated under the Bodhi tree:
 - Life is suffering
 - Suffering is due to having desires
 - Suffering can be ended when overcoming desires
 - The way to end suffering is through the Eightfold Path.

Buddhism

Living Like a Buddhist

- Buddhists follow the Buddha's example.
- When they meditate, Buddhists focus on awakening to truth as the Buddha did.
- In **temples**, people can make offerings of flowers and incense for the shrine and food for the monks.
- They may also have a shrine within the home.



Buddhism

Living Like a Buddhist

- When entering a **Temple**, Buddhists will take off their shoes, put their hands together and bow to the image of the Buddha.
- In their practice they may use prayer beads called **malas**.
- The main Buddhist festival of the year is **Wesak or Vesak**, the celebration of the Buddha's birth, enlightenment and death.



Buddhism

Main Symbols of Buddhism

- **Wheel of Life** (*Wheel of Dharma, or Dharmacakra*) - symbolizes the cycle of life and rebirth.
- **The Eightfold Path** is also symbolized as a wheel with eight spokes representing the eight laws.



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Buddhism

Main Symbols of Buddhism

- **Lotus Flower** - symbolizes purity and divine birth.
- The different colour lotus flowers have specific meanings:
 - **Red lotus** signifies the qualities of the heart
 - **Purple lotus** is the mystic lotus



Buddhism

Meditation

- Buddhists believe that meditation is crucial to understanding the cause of suffering (the first noble truth)
- It is a way to clear the mind of worries and fears, and to see that suffering is caused by wanting something we cannot have (the second noble truth).



Buddhism

Meditation continued...

- Being free from wanting, wishing and desiring anything is what Buddhism refers to as the cessation of suffering (the third noble truth).
- To live in this way is the fourth noble truth (the Eightfold Path).



Buddhism

Rites of Passage – Becoming a Buddhist Monk

- **Samenera:** In some Buddhist countries, sometime between the ages of 8 and 20, boys enter a monastery for a short time as a Samanera. They are treated as novices and help run the monastery.
- **Bhikkhu** (Buddhist monk) – is a long process of disciplinary training and education ceremony involving the **novice** (the name given to a person seeking to become a monk), the **abbot** (head of the monastery) and the **Sangha** (the community of monks).

Buddhism

Rites of Passage – Buddhist Monks

- Before initiation the **naag** must shave off all hair on the head and answer questions from the elder monks.
- If the answers are satisfactory, and none of the monks object, the naag is admitted to the Sangha and his religious training begins.
- All monks must observe altogether 227 rules which guide them in their everyday living.

Buddhism

Rites of Passage – Marriage

- Marriages are arranged by the parents of the couple.
- Parents are thought to know best since they have had more experience of life.
- Because marriages join families, the decision should be made by the families.
- Often the parents will ask astrologers (people who tell the future from the stars) to suggest which would be the best day for the wedding ceremony to be held.

Buddhism

Rites of Passage – Marriage

- There is no religious wedding ceremony in the temple or monastery; instead a simple ceremony takes place in the home.
- Buddhists often marry in Buddhist temples.
- Although monks are usually invited, they do not perform the ceremony.
- A male relative of the bride is usually in charge. There is also a civil ceremony.

Buddhism

Rites of Passage – Marriage

- The bride and groom exchange vows promising to honour and respect each other.
- The couple usually give each other rings, and the thumbs of their right hands are tied together.
- Sometimes, their wrists are tied together with a silk scarf, instead. This is a symbol that they are being 'joined' as husband and wife.
- At a later stage the bride and groom will visit the monastery to receive the monks' blessing and hear a sermon of the Buddha's teaching about married life.
- At the end of the ceremony, everyone shares a meal. The celebrations may go on for several days.

Hinduism



Hinduism

- **Hinduism** is the third largest world religion with about 900 million Hindus worldwide.
- The religion dates back over 4,000 years.
- Hinduism is made up of a variety of different religious beliefs and practices which originated near the river Indus in India.
- Hindu' comes from the word Indus.



Hinduism

Beliefs

- Central to Hinduism is the belief in a supreme God **Brahman**, the universal soul, which is found in everything
- Brahman is worshipped in a variety of forms, including Vishnu, Krishna, Rama, Shiva and several others



Hinduism

Beliefs continued...

- Hindus believe that life is a **cycle of birth, death, and rebirth**, governed by **Karma**
- Hindus believe that the soul passes through a cycle of lives and that the next life is dependent on how the previous life was lived.



Hinduism

Guiding Belief

- This is the sum of duty: do not do to others what would cause pain if done to you.

Hinduism

Karma

- **Law of Karma** - Hindus believe that every action has an effect and there is a cause for everything
- **Reincarnation** - It is believed that after someone dies, their soul lives on and starts a new life in another body - not necessarily a human one.
- In practice this means that, depending on how you have behaved in the previous life (generating good or bad Karma), you will be reborn into a better or worse life.
- The main aim for all Hindus is to break out of this cycle of birth and death.

Hinduism

Hindu Books

The main Hindu scriptures are:

- **Vedas**, a collection of hymns praising the Vedic gods. Veda means 'knowledge'
- **Ramayana**, long epic poems about Rama and Sita the Mahabharata, which includes the Bhagavad Gita
- **Puranas**, a collection of stories about the different incarnations and the lives of saints.

Hinduism

Place of Worship

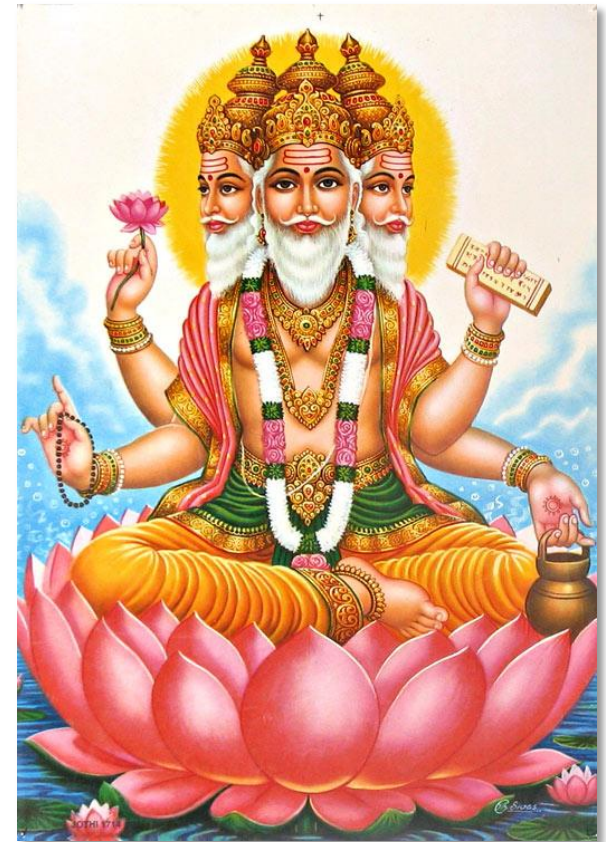
- Puja (worship) takes place in the Mandir (temple).
- Mandirs vary in size from small village shrines to large buildings, surrounded by walls.
- People can visit the Mandir at any time to pray and participate in the bhajans (religious songs).
- Hindus also worship at home and often have a special room with a shrine to particular gods.



Hinduism

Hindu Gods

- **Trinity:** Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva
- Hindus worship one main god called **Brahma**.
- **Vishnu** and **Shiva** are different representations of Brahma.
- Brahma is their creator; they believe he created the universe.



Hinduism

Hindu Gods continued...

- **Vishnu** is the Hindu god that helps preserve the universe and people.
- Hindus believe he has helped save his followers by appearing on earth through his *avatars*.
- His four arms symbolize the four corners of the world
- Incarnations – **Krishna** and **Rama**



Hinduism

Hindu Gods continued...

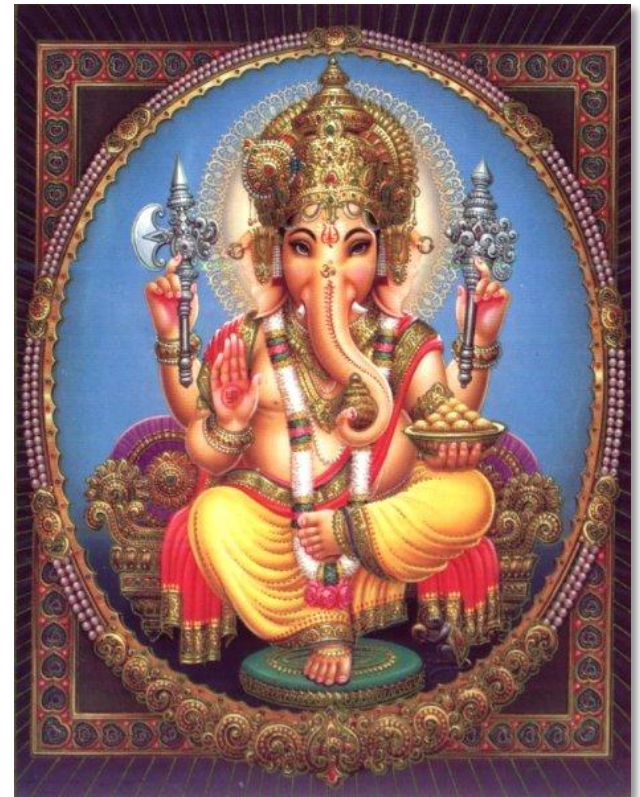
- **Shiva** is the Hindu god that destroys the universe. He completes the trinity of Hindu gods.
- Hindus believe that Shiva is the source of good and evil.



Hinduism

Hindu Gods continued...

- **Ganesha** is one of the best-known and most widely worshipped deities in the Hindu pantheon.
- Ganesha is widely revered as the Remover of Obstacles and more generally as the Lord of Beginnings and the Lord of Obstacles.
- Patron of arts and sciences, and the deva of intellect and wisdom.



Hinduism

Rites of Passage – Birth

- When a baby is born into a Hindu family it is often welcomed with a ceremony in which some honey is put in the child's mouth and the name of God is whispered in the child's ear.
- Ten to twelve days after the birth, the priest announces the baby's name and prayers are said.
- Ear-piercing and first haircut ceremonies are also considered highly significant.

Hinduism

Rites of Passage – Growing Up

- In some Hindu families the Sacred Thread ceremony is performed when a boy is growing up.
- He is given three strands of the sacred thread which represent three promises (vows) he makes to:
 - Respect the knowledge,
 - Respect his parents
 - Respect the society.

Hinduism

Rites of Passage – Marriage

- Hindu wedding ceremonies vary from region to region and often take several hours to complete.
- During the ceremony, marriage vows or promises are made around a sacred fire. The couple walk around the sacred fire four times.
- At the end of a Hindu wedding ceremony, the bride and groom take seven steps together around the sacred fire.
- For each step they share a promise or a hope. Each promise or hope is about something they believe is really important and will help them have a happy marriage.
- The couple are blessed by the elders and the priest.

Islam



Islam

- **Islam** is the second largest religion in the world with over 1 billion followers
- The word 'Islam' in Arabic means submission to the will of God.
- Followers of Islam are called **Muslims**.
- Muslims believe there is one true God **Allah** (the Arabic word for God)



Islam

- Muslims believe that Islam was **revealed** over 1400 years ago in Mecca, Arabia through a man called **Muhammad**.
- Muhammad is so revered that it is usual for Muslims to say 'Peace be Upon Him' whenever they mention his name.
- Muhammad is believed by Muslims to be the last prophet sent by God (Allah)
- According to Muslims God sent prophets to mankind to teach them how to live according to His law. Jesus (Isa), Moses (Musa) and Abraham (Ibrahim) are other respected prophets.



Islam

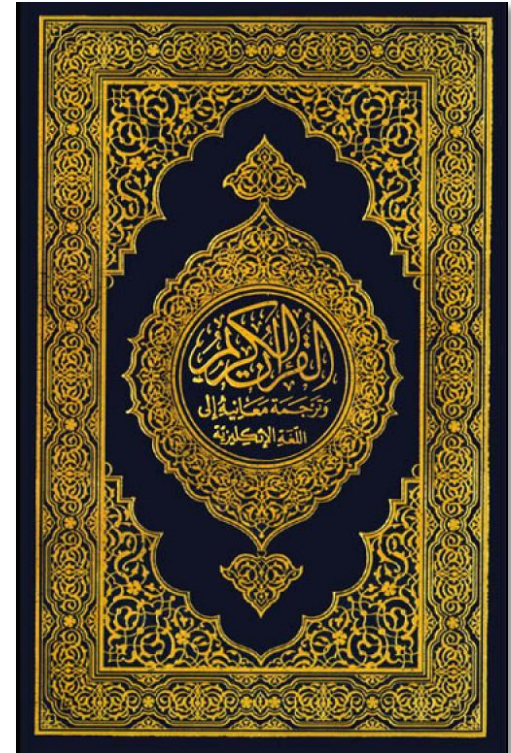
Guiding Belief

- Not one of you truly believes until you wish for others what you wish for yourself

Islam

Qur'an

- The Muslim holy book is called the **Qur'an**.
- Muslims believe this to be the word of Allah as dictated to Muhammad.
- They also have the **Sunnah**, which Muslims believe to be the practical example of Prophet Muhammad.



Islam

Place of Worship

- Muslims worship in a building called a **Mosque**.
- On Friday at noon, the most important of the weekly services is held.
- When Muslims pray, they must always face Makkah (Holiest City in Saudi Arabia).



Islam

Five Basic Pillars of Islam

The Five Pillars of Islam are an essential part of Muslim life.

These pillars are:

- **Declaration of Faith** (Shahada)
- **Praying** five times a day (Salat)
- Giving money to **Charity** (Zakah)
- **Fasting** (Sawm)
- **Pilgrimage** to Mecca (Makkah) at least once in a lifetime (Hajj)



Islam

Pillar #1: Shahada - Declaration of Faith

- **Shahada** is the name of the Islamic creed and a declaration of one's faith.
- It is the declaration of belief in the oneness of God and acceptance of Muhammad as God's prophet
- It is believing and saying the following words during prayer
“There is no god except Allah, Muhammad is the messenger of Allah”.

Islam

Pillar #2: Salat – Praying 5 times a Day

- All Muslims must pray five times a day, washing before they pray
- There are set prayers that must be said and when praying all Muslims must pray on a prayer mat and face the **Mecca** (or Makkah)
- **Mecca** is a place that is holy to all Muslims. It is so holy that no non-Muslim is allowed to enter.
- Praying five times a day expresses servitude as a human being in relation to Allah
- There are fixed movements during prayer which include kneeling with the forehead placed on the ground in front

Islam

Pillar #3: Zakat – Giving Money to Charity

- **Zakat** is a form of worship and self-purification. It is the third pillar of Islam where Muslims believe their wealth is “made pure”
- It is the compulsory giving of 2.5% of a person's wealth to charity every year. There are strict guidelines which govern how any money given as Zakat is used.

The purpose of this is to:

- Help the poor
- Help the giver to remember that everything comes from God (Allah) and is on loan - they do not own anything themselves
- Help the giver to obey Allah
- Help to free the person from the love of money and love of self.

Islam

Pillar #4: Sawm - Fasting

- Muslim people must not eat or drink food during the month of Ramadan (ninth month in Islamic calendar) during daylight hours

All adult Muslims must give up the following things during the hours of daylight:

- Food or drink of any sort
 - Smoking, including passive smoking
 - Sexual activity
-
- Muslims who are physically or mentally unwell may be excused some of these, as may those who are under twelve years old, the very old, those who are pregnant, breast-feeding, menstruating, or travelling.

Islam

Pillar #4: Sawm – Fasting continued...

- If an adult does not fast for the reasons above they should try to make up the fast at a later date, or make a donation to the poor instead and are also expected to do their best to avoid evil thoughts and deeds.

Good Reasons to Fast

- Obeying God
- Learning self-discipline
- Becoming spiritually stronger
- Appreciating God's gifts to us
- Sharing the sufferings of the poor and developing sympathy for them
- Realizing the value of charity and generosity
- Giving thanks for the Holy Qur'an, which was first revealed in the month of Ramadan
- Sharing fellowship with other Muslims

Islam

Pillar #5: Hajj - Pilgrimage

- It is the journey that every sane adult Muslim must undertake at least once in their lives if they can afford it and are physically able.
- It is a ritual that is designed to promote the bonds of Islamic brotherhood and sisterhood by showing that everyone is equal in the eyes of Allah.
- The Hajj makes Muslims feel real importance of life here on earth, and the afterlife, by stripping away all markers of social status, wealth, and pride. In the Hajj all are truly equal.

Islam

Rites of Passage - Birth

- When a baby is born, the Muslim call to prayer, known as the Adhan, ("God *is great, there is no God but Allah. Muhammad is the messenger of Allah. Come to prayer.*") is recited into the baby's right ear by the father.
- The baby is given a taste of something sweet, so parents may chew a piece of date and rub the juice along the baby's gums.
- It was a practice carried out by the **Prophet Muhammad** and is believed to help the digestive systems get started.

Islam

Rites of Passage – Birth

- After seven days the **Aqeeqah** ceremony is performed in which the baby's scalp is shaved of hair.
- This is to show that the child is the servant of Allah.
- Parents then weigh the hair and give the equivalent weight in silver to charity or distribute meat to the poor.
- Baby boys are circumcised (although this can be done at any time up until puberty).

Judaism



Judaism

- **Judaism** has about 13 million followers throughout the world, mostly in USA and Israel
- Judaism originated in the Middle East over 3500 years ago
- **Moses** was the main founder of Judaism, but Jews can trace their history back as far as Abraham.
- 6 million Jews were murdered in the Holocaust in an attempt to wipe out Judaism.



Judaism

Beliefs

- Jews believe that there is only one God.
- Jews believe they have a special agreement or **covenant** with God.
- In exchange for all the good that God has done for them, Jewish people keep God's laws and try to bring holiness into every aspect of their lives.
- **Hebrew** is the Biblical term for Israelite, and is the word used for the language of the Bible and of modern Israel.



Judaism

Beliefs and Practices

- Judaism is a faith of action and Jews believe that people should be judged not so much on what they believe as on the way they live their faith - by how much they contribute to the overall holiness of the world.
- A Jewish Religious leader is called a **Rabbi** (literally 'teacher')
- Jews worship in **Synagogues**



Judaism

Guiding Belief

- What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbour. This is the whole Torah; all the rest is commentary. Go and learn it.

Judaism

Shabbat (Sabbath)

- The most important day of the week is **Shabbat** (the Sabbath). It is the day on which Jews remember the seventh day of creation on which God rested.
- The family and community are very important within Jewish life. On Shabbat Jews stop working and make time for God and family life.
- Usually everyday activities are replaced by a 25 hour period of prayer, study, festive meals and song.
- Shabbat starts on Friday evening and ends at sunset on Saturday. Shabbat begins with the family sharing a meal.
- During Shabbat, services are held at the synagogue, often led by a Rabbi.

Judaism

Holy Book

- The most holy Jewish book is the **Torah** (the first five books of the Hebrew Bible)
- The Torah was revealed by God to **Moses** on Mount Sinai over 3,000 years ago.
- The Torah, together with the Talmud (commentary on the Torah), give the Jewish people rules for everyday life.
- Observing these rules is central to the Jewish religion.



Judaism

Jewish Symbols

- The emblem of the Jewish people is the Magen David (Shield of David), also known as the **Star of David**.

Jewish Celebrations

- Pesach (Passover)
- Rosh Hashanah (the New Year)
- Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement)
- Hanukkah (the Festival of Lights)



Judaism

Rites of Passage

- Some Jews believe that you are Jewish if your mother is Jewish or you convert according to the Orthodox tradition.
- Others believe that you are Jewish if either your mother or father is Jewish, or you convert according to the Progressive tradition.

Judaism

Rites of Passage - Birth

- **Brit Milah** (the Jewish words for 'Covenant of Circumcision') is celebrated when a baby boy is eight days old, although this can be postponed for medical reasons.
- This is when the baby is named.
- Girls are blessed and named the first time the parents attend the synagogue after the birth.
- Children are often given a name in the memory of a deceased loved one.

Judaism

Rites of Passage - Teens

- **Bar Mitzvah** (Son of the Commandment) is celebrated when a boy reaches the age of 13
- **Bat Mitzvah** (Daughter of the Commandment) and is celebrated when a girl reaches the age of 12.
- Both girls and boys promise to keep the Commandments.

Sikhism



Sikhism

- Sikhism was **founded** in the 16th century in the Punjab district of what is now India and Pakistan.
- It was founded by **Guru Nanak** and is based on his teachings, and those of the 9 Sikh gurus who followed him.
- There are approximately 20 million followers worldwide, most of whom live in the Punjab province of India.



Sikhism

Beliefs

- The community of men and women who have been initiated into the Sikh faith is known as the **Khalsa** (Community of the Pure)
- Sikhs believe in one God who guides and protects them.
- They believe that everyone is equal before God
- Sikhism stresses the importance of doing good actions rather than merely carrying out rituals



Sikhism

Beliefs

Sikhs believe that the way to lead a good life is to:

- Keep God in heart and mind at all times
- Live honestly and work hard
- Treat everyone equally
- Be generous to the less fortunate
- Serve others



Sikhism

Guiding Belief

- I am a stranger to no one; and no one is a stranger to me. Indeed, I am a friend to all.

Sikhism

Holy Book

- The Sikh scripture is a book called the **Guru Granth Sahib**
- The tenth Guru, **Guru Gobind Singh** declared that there would be no other living Gurus but instead Sikhs could look to their holy scriptures for guidance, so the holy book became the 'Guru' (teacher).
- The Guru Granth Sahib is a collection of teachings and writings by Guru Nanak and other Gurus as well as Sikh, Hindu and Muslim saints.
- These scriptures are written in Punjabi and are greatly respected by all Sikhs as the living word of God.

Sikhism

Holy Book

- The **Guru Granth Sahib** is kept on a raised platform under a canopy in the place of worship.
- Sikhs take off their shoes in the presence of the holy scriptures and also never turn their back on them.
- At every festival, they are read continuously from beginning to end, which takes about 48 hours.



Sikhism

Worship

- Any building where the Guru Granth Sahib is kept is a Sikh place of worship. It is called the **Gurdwara** ('Gateway to the Guru').
- Services are based on the writings in the Guru Granth Sahib, together with chants and prayers from the Gurus known as **Keertan**.
- The service is generally held on a Sunday and ends in a **langar** (shared meal).



Sikhism

The Five K's

In order to become a Sikh and join the Khalsa, people need to follow the **Five Ks**:

- **Kesh**: uncut hair as a mark of holiness and submission to God's will
- **Kangha**: a small wooden comb in the hair as a sign of cleanliness
- **Kara**: a steel bracelet, a reminder that they are connected to God
- **Kachhera**: short cotton underwear, more practical for daily life than the traditional ***dhoti*** worn in India
- **Kirpan**: a sword, for protection.

Sikhism

The Five K's – Kesh

- **Kesh** is hair.
- Sikhs promise not to cut their hair but let it grow as a symbol of their faith.
- Because during their lifetimes it will get very long they wear turbans to keep it tidy.
- They believe that this demonstrates their obedience to God.



Sikhism

The Five K's – Kangha

- The **Kangha** is a small wooden comb.
- It keeps the hair fixed in place, and is a symbol of cleanliness.
- Combing their hair reminds Sikhs that their lives should be tidy and organised.



Sikhism

The Five K's – Kara

- The **kara** is a steel bangle worn on the arm.
- It is a closed circle with no beginning and no end...as with God there is no beginning and no end.
- It is a reminder to behave well, keep faith and restrain from wrong doing.
- Wearing it will remind a sikh of his duties.



Sikhism

The Five K's

The Last two K's are a reminder that Sikhs are warriors and always fight for what is right!

- Kachera
- Kirpan



Sikhism

The Five K's - Kachera

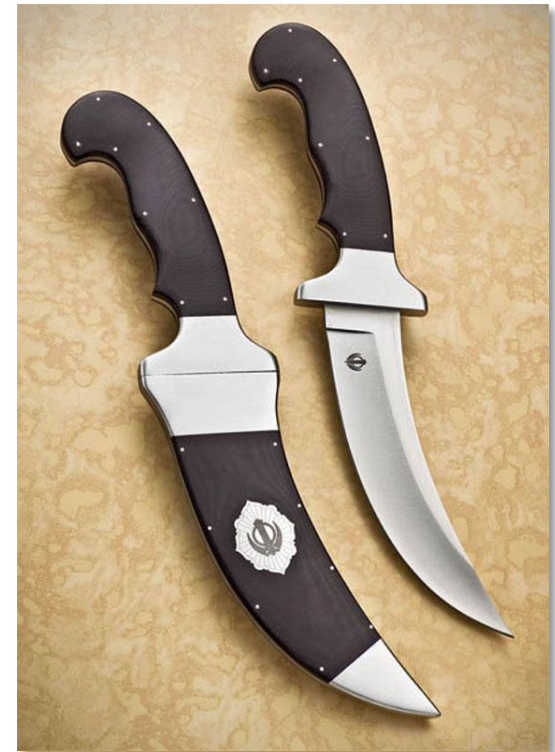
- **Kachera** are short trousers worn as underwear.
- They were more practical than the long, loose clothes most people in India wore at the time of Guru Gobind Singh.
- The Guru said they were a symbol that Sikhs were leaving old ideas behind, following new better ones.



Sikhism

The Five K's - Kirpan

- **Kirpan** – the warriors sword
- These days a tiny one is worn as a symbol of dignity and self respect.
- It demonstrates power and reminds Sikhs that they must fight a spiritual battle, defend the weak and oppressed, and uphold the truth.



Sikhism

Rites of Passage - Birth

- When a baby is born a special prayer is read and a drop of ***Amrit*** (holy water) is placed on the baby's tongue.
- At a ceremony at the Gurdwara, the name of the baby is chosen by opening the Guru Granth Sahib at random:
- The name must begin with the first letter of first word of the ***Hukamnama*** on the left hand side of the page.
- Singh ('Lion'), a reminder to be courageous, is added to boys' names while Kaur ('Princess'), to stress dignity, is added to girls' names.

Sikhism

Rites of Passage - Teens

- When a person is aged between 14 and 16, an initiation ceremony called the ***Dastaar Bandi*** (wearing of the first turban) takes place.
- Young Sikhs are now allowed to join the Khalsa, and must observe the Five Ks.
- A special solution of sugar and water, known as Amrit, is prepared in an iron bowl whilst the five ***Banis*** (special prayers) are recited by five Sikhs in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib.
- During the ceremony the Amrit is blessed and sprinkled on the hair and eyes, a prayer is said and a meal is eaten together.

Native Spirituality



Native Spirituality

- Thousands of years of life and survival on the land are the foundation of the Inuit cosmology, and therefore, its spirituality.
- **Experience with the land** is the source of Inuit learning, healing, nourishment, propagation, and child rearing
- It is **the respectful relationship with the land and its species** that is the core of traditional Inuit spirituality



Native Spirituality

Beliefs

- “We don’t believe. We fear.”
- Traditional Inuit did not practice a religion; their lives were at the mercy of nature.
- They were non-religious but still spiritual and believed in the power of spirits, the land, the sky and dreams.



Native Spirituality

Beliefs

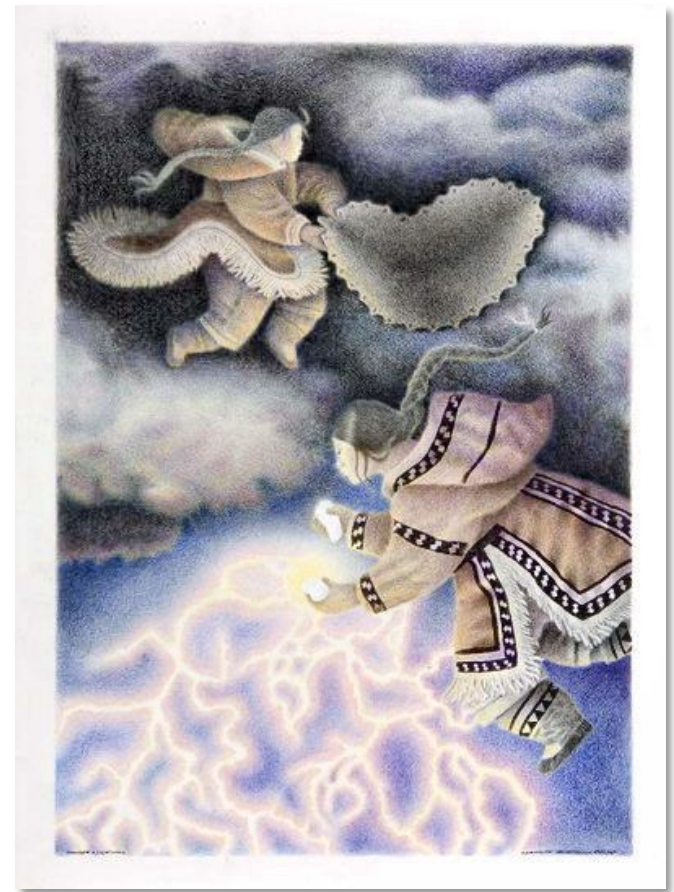
- Traditionally Inuit are a spiritual people, believing that everything has a spirit whether it be a person, animal, land, sky or ocean.
- However, they do not worship these spirits.
- Every person is believed to have a spirit. When Inuit die it is believed that their spirits live on.



Native Spirituality

Beliefs

- The believed that each created thing in the natural world has its own presence and purpose, reflecting the spirit of the Creator
- Primary purpose in life is to pursue spiritual growth, share their personal talents as part of the community and enjoy the gifts of the Creator
- To do this they must strive to live in harmony with the natural world



Native Spirituality

Guiding Belief

- We are as much alive as we keep the earth alive.

Native Spirituality

Earth and Sky

- Traditionally Inuit had a great respect for and connection to the earth (**Nuna**) and the sky (**Sila**).
- Both the land and the sky determined daily survival which explains why they are the foundations of traditional Inuit spirituality and the traditional way of life.
- Due to the unpredictability of the weather, the Inuit were always watching with the sky.
- Although never worshipped or regarded as a god or goddess, the Sila, for better or for worse, played a daily role in the lives of traditional Inuit people.



Native Spirituality

Ceremonies and Traditions

- Traditional Inuit spiritual activities and ceremonies were closely tied to their hunting and gathering lifestyle.
- These rituals and festivals established relationships with animals, the dead, helping spirits and breaches of taboo.
- They did not believe it was wrong to kill animals for necessity but that animals must be thanked or asked its permission



Native Spirituality

Symbols

- A basic symbol of many traditional Aboriginal peoples is the **circle**
- It represents the equality of all beings and constantly renewing rhythms of life.
- Birth and death are part of the circle of life, like day and night, summer and winter
- The hardships of nature – cold, hunger, injury, fear and struggle – are seen as part of rich human experience that make the soul grow strong and wise.



Native Spirituality

Shamans

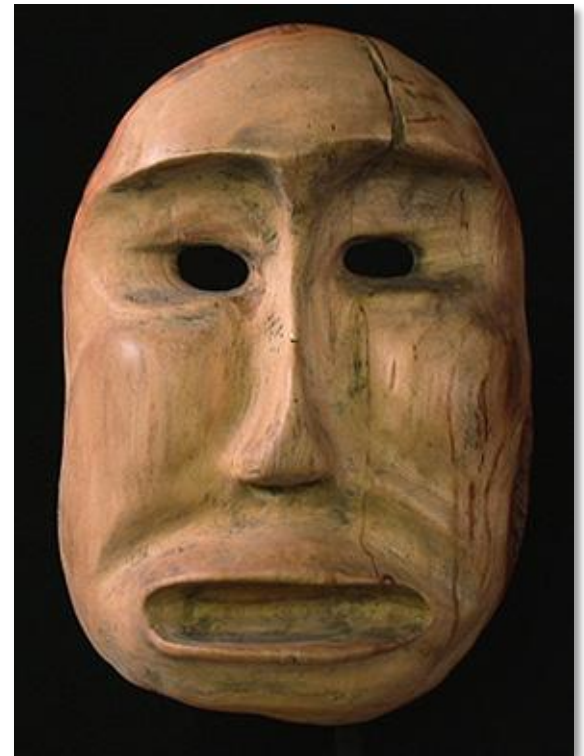
- **Shamanism** is an element of traditional Inuit spirituality that continues to embody the people's attachment to the land and the environment.
- **Shamans**, or *angagakkuit* in Inuktitut, are viewed as doctors, advisors and healers.
- These healers are men and women who were born with and skilled in the ability to vision, to see spirits.



Native Spirituality

Shamans

- These healers are men and women who were born with and skilled in the ability to vision, to see spirits.
- They foretold weather patterns and movements of game animals, cured illnesses and retrieved lost or stolen souls.
- Good and bad spirit helpers, known as *tuunngait*, assist Shaman in protecting and ensuring the health and welfare of their communities.



World Religions

Religious Studies | T. Nixon

