

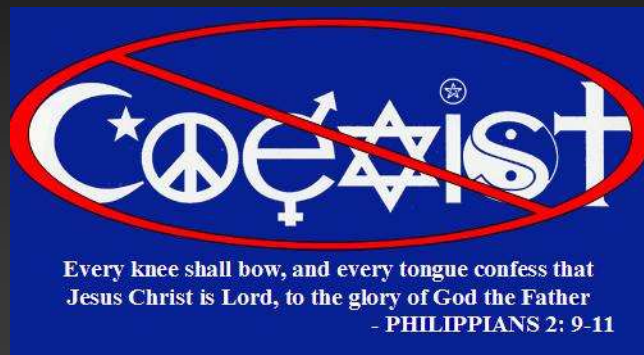
# Majoring in the Majors

Where Christianity Differs from Other Religions

Dr. R. Osei & Dr. D. Riggins

## Overview

- Christian Beliefs
- Judaism
- Islam
- Kemet
- Jehovah Witness
- Mormon
- Buhdism
- Hindu



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# Christianity

## Core Beliefs

- There is one being God who exist in 3 co-eternal persons in which all things were created.
- God created the world perfect and gave man the ability to choose to follow God or not. Man chose not to follow God and that man became the originator of sin in the world.
- The second co-eternal person of God took human flesh to Himself in order to undo what the first man did, by living a sinless life and being murdered on a cross, being buried for three days and resurrecting showing us the way to eternal life. This is the only way to God and eternal life is through the acceptance of Jesus (Yeshua) and His payment for our sins.

## SALVATION

- The free gift of God to anyone who believes
  - Not cheap (cost Jesus life)
- “For God so loved the world, that he **gave** his only Son, that whoever **believes** in him should not perish but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup>For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. <sup>18</sup>Whoever **believes** in him is not condemned, but whoever does not **believe** is condemned already, because he has not **believed** in the name of the only Son of God. **(John 3:16-18)**
- But to all who did **receive him**, who **believed** in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, **(John 1:12)**
- because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and **believe** in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup>For with the heart one **believes** and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. **(Romans 10:9-10)**
- For by grace you have been saved through **faith**. And this is not your own doing; it is the **gift of God**, <sup>9</sup>**not a result of works**, so that no one may boast. **(Ephesians 2:8-9)**



# JESUS

- THE Son of God (Title)
  - In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> **He was in the beginning with God.** (John 1:1-2)
  - In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. (Genesis 1:1)
- Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, though he was in the **form of God**, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> **but emptied himself**, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (Philippians 2:5-8)
- So the Jews said to him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?” <sup>58</sup> Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, **before Abraham was, I am.**” <sup>59</sup> So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple. (John 8:58-59)



## Christianity

### Core Beliefs

- The punishment for sin death physical and more importantly spiritual death.
- God has spoken to mankind through the Bible, a small library collection of 66 books.

# Judaism



## Judaism Core Beliefs

There are 13 fundamental principles associated with Jewish Faith:

- 1. God exists
- 2. God is singular and unique
- 3. The belief in God's non-corporeality
- 4. God is eternal
- 5. Worshipping is to be directed to the one and only God
- 6. God can see the thoughts of men
- 7. The prophets word are true
- 8. The original Torah was given handed to Moses
- 9. The Torah is unchangeable
- 10. The belief in God's omniscience and providence.
- 11. God will recognise the good and punish the evil
- 12. The belief in the arrival of the Messiah
- 13. The belief in the resurrection of the dead



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# Judaism

## Core Beliefs

### Hebrew Scriptures | Tanakh

Torah	Nevi'im	Nevi'im	Ketuvim
Genesis	Former Prophets	The Twelve	The Writings
Exodus	Joshua	Hosea	Psalms
Leviticus	Judges	Joel	Proverbs
Numbers	Samuels 1&2	Amos	Job
Deuteronomy	Kings 1&2	Obadiah	Songs of Solomom
		Jonah	Ruth
	<b>Latter Prophets</b>	Micah	Lamentations
	Isaiah	Nahum	Ecclesiastes
	Jeremiah	Habakkuk	Esther
	Ezekiel	Zephaniah	Daniel
		Haggai	Ezra
		Zechariah	Nehemiah
		Malachi	Chronicles 1&2



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# Judaism

## Core Beliefs

The Mishnah is a written gathering of the Oral Law and represents the main laws and principles of the Torah in an oral context. It is divided in to six topic areas: Prayer and agriculture, Festivals, Women, Civil Law, Rituals and Purity. The Mishnah represents the laws and origins in an oral context it has been passed down through many generations, even after many years reckless history, dates back to the destruction of the temple in (AD 70) and finishes with a message that conveys the future coming of The Messiah.

The Talmud is composed of the Mishnah and the Gemara and morally improved stories, Bible interpretations, and about apprises us of the lives, views and perspectives of religious figures and people such as rabbis.



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# Islam



## Islam

### Core Beliefs

#### Muhammad

- Visited by Angel Gabriel in 610 C.E. at age forty; visits continued for twenty years
- After Muhammad's death, his words were memorized and written down as the Quran
- Quran regarded as absolute, uncorrupted word of God
- Discovery of paper and printing speeds the spread of the Quran

# Islam

## Core Beliefs

- Islam means “submission” in Arabic
- Story of Muhammad’s life, words, and deeds (*hadith*) are basis of Islam
- Teachings of Quran and of Muhammad’s life are fulfilled in the life of a community (the *umma*)
- Combination of religion and government makes Islam similar to empires
- Muslim means one who submits
- Become a Muslim by saying there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is his messenger (must be said in Arabic)

# Islam

## Core Beliefs

1. **Every person was created a Muslim:** *Quran 2:213*
2. **God has no Son:** *Quran 17:43*
3. **There is no Trinity:** *Quran 4:171*
4. **Jesus did not die:** *Quran 4:156-158*
5. **Law of Abrogation:** *Quran 2:106*

# Kemetic Spirituality



## Kemetic Spirituality Core Beliefs

<http://www.kemetireform.org/Kemetic-resources.htm>

### **Core Principles of Kemetic Reform:**

The many Gods and Goddesses, or Notjeru, of ancient Egypt continue to exist and are beginning a renaissance. They are calling to those of us who have a spiritual connection to Them.

The Egyptian concept of *Ma'at* - truth, justice, and order - gives us a moral framework and a code to live by. Living in accord with *Ma'at* does the Gods' work and guides us in making our world a better place.

Egyptian spirituality transcends race, gender, age, orientation or disability. All are equal in the eyes of Ra.

By celebrating the Gods, we can enrich our lives; by celebrating Their festivals, we can foster a sense of community and inclusion for those who have none.



# Kemetic Spirituality

## Core Beliefs

### ***Core Beliefs of Kemetic Reform:***

The Notjeru, or Gods and Goddesses, are directly accessible to all Their worshippers for prayer, thanksgiving and intercession, and they need no earthly representative. The Notjeru are loving and forgiving. Our job is not so much to 'submit' to them as it is to heed Their guidance and improve ourselves.

The physical world in which we live was created by the Notjeru at the First Time; it is not inherently evil, nor should it be shunned. True growth only comes about when both the physical and spiritual worlds are embraced as equal parts of our human experience.

Humanity is not 'born in sin' and will not face an apocalyptic judgement. Our purpose in living is to be of benefit to others as well as ourselves, continue the good deeds begun at the First Time, and leave a legacy for future generations.

Every person has free will and a voice, and everyone will have a chance to speak for themselves at their own personal Judgement in the Hall of Two Truths. The Gods hold everyone accountable to the same standard of *ma'at*, or Truth.

# Kemetic Spirituality

## Core Beliefs

### ***The Eight Ma'ats***

The ancient Egyptian collection of sacred texts known as the Book of the Dead contained 42 Declarations of Innocence that served to outline their sense of morality by stating misdeeds that a person had (hopefully!) not done. In Kemetic Reform tradition, the major themes found within those Declarations are condensed into Eight Ma'ats (eight being a powerful number, representing the primeval forces that brought about Creation). In prayer, we recite the Eight Ma'ats in a positive form; focusing not upon what we haven't done, but what we will do.

# Kemetic Spirituality

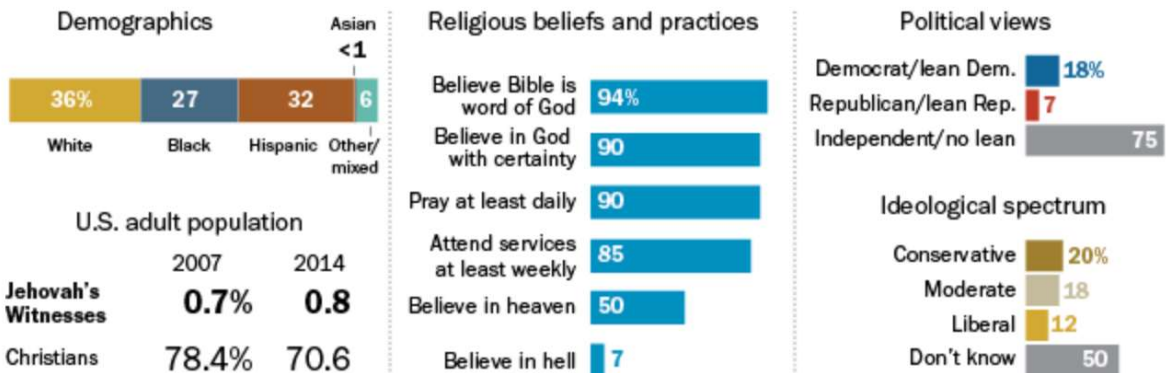
## Core Beliefs

### *Upholding the Eight Ma'ats:*

1. May we always act with gentility and compassion, for such is the First Ma'at.
  2. May we always offer charity and hospitality, for such is the Second Ma'at.
  3. May we always respect consent and fidelity, for such is the Third Ma'at.
  4. May we always avoid violence and promote wellness, for such is the Fourth Ma'at.
  5. May we always speak words of truth, for such is the Fifth Ma'at.
  6. May we always promote the public good, for such is the Sixth Ma'at.
  7. May we always act humbly and with temperance, for such is the Seventh Ma'at.
  8. May we always honor my Gods and respect others', for such is the Eighth Ma'at.
  9. May we uphold Ma'at like Djehuty, that we may witness Ra's perfection every day.
- In-un-ma'a."

## Jehovah's Witnesses

### 0.8%: Jehovah's Witnesses



## JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

- Jehovah's Witnesses identify as Christians, but their beliefs are different from other Christians in some ways.
- Yes. We are Christians for the following reasons:
  - We try to follow closely the teachings and behavior of Jesus Christ.—1 Peter 2:21.
  - We believe that Jesus is the key to salvation, that "there is not another name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must get saved."—Acts 4:12.
  - When people become Jehovah's Witnesses, they are baptized in the name of Jesus.—Matthew 28:18, 19.
  - We offer our prayers in Jesus' name.—John 15:16.
  - We believe that Jesus is the Head, or the one appointed to have authority, over every man.—1 Corinthians 11:3.
- However, in a number of ways, we are different from other religious groups that are called Christian. For example, we believe that the Bible teaches that Jesus is the Son of God, **not part of a Trinity**. (Mark 12:29) We do not believe that the soul is immortal, that there is any basis in Scripture for saying that God tortures people in an **everlasting hell**, or that those who take the lead in religious activities should have titles that elevate them above others.—Ecclesiastes 9:5; Ezekiel 18:4; Matthew 23:8-10.
- <https://www.jw.org/en/jehovahs-witnesses/faq/are-jehovahs-witnesses-christians/>



## JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

- Jehovah's Witnesses identify as Christians, but their beliefs are different from other Christians in some ways.
- Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Jesus is God's "only-begotten Son", and that his life began in heaven.[89]
- He is described as **God's first creation** and the "exact representation of God",[90] but is believed to be a separate entity and **not part** of a Trinity.
- Jesus is said to have been used by God in the creation of all other things.[91]
- Jehovah's Witnesses believe that the **Archangel Michael**, "the Word" of John 1:1, and wisdom personified in Proverbs 8 refer to Jesus in his pre-human existence and that he resumed these identities after his ascension to heaven following his death and resurrection.
- They also identify him with the "**rider of the white horse**" at Revelation 6 and 19.
- 89 Insight On The Scriptures volume 2, p. 52 Jesus Christ
- 90 Worship the Only True God, Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 2002, p. 184
- 91 "What Do the Scriptures Say About 'the Divinity of Christ'?", The Watchtower January 15, 1992 p. 20-23.



## MORMONISM - THE CHURCH OF THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS (LDS)

- LDS is the fourth largest church in the United States of America and the fastest growing.
- Mormons differ from traditional Christian groups in that they accept extra books in their canon. In addition to the King James Version of the Bible, they add the *Book of Mormon*, the *Doctrine and Covenants*, and the *Pearl of Great Price*.
- The *Doctrine and Covenants* is a compilation of the revelations given to the Priesthood, namely those given to **Joseph Smith**.
- The *Pearl of Great Price* contains “We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe the *Book of Mormon* to be the word of God”
- “as far as it is translated correctly” as blasphemous since it puts the importance on Joseph Smith’s revelations and interpretation of the Bible.
- *The Book of Mormon* is the most controversial addition to the canon. It is a supposed record of ancient groups in the Americas, and **begins with a family moving from Jerusalem**, shortly before its destruction, to the New World. The climax of the record is a visit of the **resurrected Jesus Christ in the Americas**. Although the records, inscribed on gold plates, were lost shortly after this in the fourth century, the burier of the book, Moroni, is said to have returned in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century as an angel in a revelation to Joseph Smith and led him to the plates. Smith then translated these into English as the *Book of Mormon*.
- <https://www.luthercollege.edu/university/academics/impetus/winter-2013-impetus/is-mormonism-christian>



## THE BOOK OF MORMON



## BUDDHISM

- Buddhism is a faith that was founded by **Siddhartha Gautama** (“the Buddha”) more than 2,500 years ago in India. With about 470 million followers, scholars consider Buddhism one of the major world religions. Its practice has historically been most prominent in East and Southeast Asia, but its influence is growing in the West.
- **God**
  - Buddhists do not talk about a Creator God. In Christianity, the concept of God looms large. In the Old Testament, God appears as a dispenser of Divine Justice, this is a concept largely absent in Buddhism
- **Prayer-Meditation**
  - Meditation and mindfulness are at the heart of Buddhism. Christianity places greater stress on prayer.
- **Grace / Personal Effort**
  - Buddhism places greater emphasis on **personal effort**, Christianity places greater emphasis on Grace.
- **The Divine Consciousness.** It is true the Buddha **did not talk about God**. He **felt** the Supreme Consciousness could never be expressed in words. But, Buddha **did talk about the infinite peace, infinite light and infinite bliss of nirvana** (enlightenment, pleasure, paradise, heaven).
- **Salvation and liberation**
  - Christianity emphasizes the concept of ‘salvation.’ Salvation comes through the acceptance of Jesus Christ as the savior. Buddhists have a different emphasis, they believe that **an individual has to work for his personal liberation** – a discipline that may take several lifetimes.
- **Reincarnation**
  - Buddhism emphasizes the **endless cycle of birth and rebirth** and the idea of reincarnation. Christianity teaches we have one life and one chance.
- Buddhists embrace the concepts of **karma** (the law of cause and effect) **Similarities**
  - Founded by a spiritual Master who accepted disciples. Taught through the use of simple parables.
  - The Five Precepts of Buddhism (abstention from killing, lying, stealing, sexual immorality, intoxicants that cloud the mind) Both religions stress ethical living, compassion/love to other people.
  - Both taught to overcome the forces of hate through the power of love. The Buddha ‘hatred cannot be overcome by hatred.’ The Christ ‘Love your enemy’
- <https://www.history.com/topics/religion/buddhism>
- <https://www.biographyonline.net/spiritual/buddhism/differences-buddhism-christianity.html>



## HINDUISM

- Hinduism is the world’s oldest religion, according to many scholars, with roots and customs dating back more than 4,000 years. Today, with about 900 million followers, Hinduism is the third-largest religion behind Christianity and Islam. Roughly 95 percent of the world’s Hindus live in India. Because the religion has no specific founder, it’s difficult to trace its origins and history. Hinduism is unique in that it’s not a single religion but a compilation of many traditions and philosophies.
- Hinduism **embraces many religious ideas**. For this reason, it’s sometimes referred to as a “way of life” or a “family of religions,” as opposed to a single, organized religion.
- Most forms of Hinduism are henotheistic, which means they worship a single deity, known as “**Brahman**,” but still recognize other gods and goddesses. **Followers believe there are multiple paths to reaching their god.**
- Hindus believe in the doctrines of samsara (the continuous cycle of life, death, and reincarnation) and karma (the universal law of cause and effect).
- One of the key thoughts of Hinduism is “atman,” or the belief in soul. This philosophy holds that living creatures have a soul, and they’re all part of the supreme soul. The goal is to achieve “moksha,” or salvation, which ends the cycle of rebirths to become part of the absolute soul.
- One fundamental principle of the religion is the idea that people’s actions and thoughts directly determine their current life and future lives.
- Hindus strive to achieve dharma, which is a code of living that emphasizes good conduct and morality.
- Hindus revere all living creatures and consider the cow a sacred animal.
- Food is an important part of life for Hindus. Most don’t eat beef or pork, and many are vegetarians.
- <https://www.history.com/topics/religion/hinduism>
- Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. **No one comes to the Father except through me. John 14:6**
- “Enter by the **narrow gate**. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. <sup>14</sup>For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few. **Matthew 7:13-14**

