

The World's Religions.

by

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Confucianism .
 Brahmanism .
 Buddhism
 Zoroaster
 Egyptian Religion .
 Grecian Religion .
 Religion of Rome .
 Judaism .
 Mohammedanism .

Confucius is the greatest religious leader among the Chinese. A religious leader and the people who follow him, are so closely connected that it is almost impossible to understand the one without knowing of the other. The Chinese have a great regard for scholarship. Their political officers are given as a reward of literary merit. To them what is gray with age becomes religion. The emperor is father and must rule with parental affection. The power of the government is mostly with the literary class. Scholars must know the whole of the sacred book besides being well read in history; and must know the entire system of Confucius. Here knowledge is the road to power and success. The people are industrious and happy.

Confucius' birth dates 551 B.C. Contemporary history contains the return of the Jews to Babylon and the invasion of Persia into Greece. Confucius' family, that is his descendants, now number over forty thousand. It has been stated by scholars

of authority that he ^{had} greater influence as a writer than any other man that ever lived, except the writers of the Bible. He belongs to that class of men that have devoted their whole lives, to the elevation of humanity. His ancestors were eminent statesmen. He was a studious boy and married at the age of nineteen. He had an only son from which his great family of descendants sprang. At first he attempts to reform the abuses of society. In trying to enforce his upright ideas of gov't, the King gets tired of his advice. Confucius then turns to the common people and with his ten disciples and devoted followers his last days are spent on The Sacred Book.

Confucius did not deny or doubt a Supreme being. His prayers were directed to an unknown, sacred, mysterious power behind and above all things. Confucius was a philosopher.

He says at fifteen, I longed for wisdom, at thirty my mind was fixed in pursuit of it, at forty I saw clearly some things, at fifty I clearly understood the rule given by teachers, and at seventy the desire of my heart no longer transgressed the law.

Brahmanism.

This religion no difficult study has its home in India the land of the mysterious, it has no founder it is simply a world of ideas lacking unity. The Hindoo's collection of the sacred books is an acute philosophy. Strains for sin is made by bathing in the Ganges or by repeating texts from the Vedas. The collection of the Vedas was made long before writing was introduced. Some writers say that Brahmanism was montheistic, and others that it was a worship of many gods. A good man was he who withdrew

from the world into the region of abstract thought. There that of god was there is nothing but God, there is nothing without god. Their religion tends to idolatry and many of their idols were very grotesque. The Vedas is the oldest book in Hindu literature. The hymns celebrate the gods and call them in turn supreme. The forms of nature become moral beings. Prayer is made to Brahma the final God, who became, creator of all things, by the power of prayer. Brahmanism after a long struggle finally triumphs in India in 1400. This religion has many festivals.

Buddhism.

There is a striking resemblance in many respects between Buddhism and Romanism. First in the celibacy of the Buddhists, and its monastic life. It has its

string of beads, and prayers are unchanted. It has the image of the virgin, the Queen of Heaven. In it we find the cross and its services with double choir. It practices religious abstinence and uses holy water. 12

Buddhism is five hundred years older than Christianity. Its rock cut temples and monasteries are very ancient. Its monks take vows of celibacy, poverty and obedience. It is far too ancient to have been copied from the Roman catholic Christians. Buddhism teaches individual salvation on personal character. It is a religion of humanity as well as devotion. It is estimated that it has 300,000 followers. It is the popular religion of China, the state religion of the Roman Empire, Japan, and nearly the whole eastern Asia.

The founder of Buddhism is
 supposed to be Sideratha
 after wards called Buddha. He
 was a young man of excellent
 qualities of mind and body
 and highly accomplished. To
 the sorrow of his friends he became
 a hermit, leaving the palace of
 home in search for truth,
 and eternal law. At the age
 of twenty, he began fasting
 and doing penance for six years.
 He visits the Brahmanism but finds
 no peace in this belief. While alone
 in hermitage he has a conviction
 of knowledge. Not having moved
 for a day and a night, under
 a tree, with his face eastward
 he receives a knowledge of the
 science which is to save
 mankind. Its commandments
 are do not kill, steal, commit
 adultery, lie or become intoxicated.
 So a religion of humanity is
 appears to all classes. It teaches

and practices unbounded charity for souls. There is no God but Buddha who becomes god by entering the Nirvana.

Zoroaster or the religion of the Persians. They have no altar but worship on the mountain top. The Zind Avesta gives an account of the religion, Zoroaster its leader was pure, and good in thoughts. He says I worship and adore the creator of all things full of all light. I repent of all sins. Avesta is the hymn book. It is not certain if it is monotheism or dualism.

Egyptians - Herodotus says, the Egyptians were most exceedingly attentive to the gods. Their religion was so closely attached to all matters of every day life that it became an instinct. Fasting was practiced and prayers were offered for the dead. Oxen and other animals were sacrificed

as incense to the gods. According
 to the ritual one can obtain separation
 from sin by an open faced denial.
 The body is animal was the central
 idea. Each animal represented
 some divine thought, and since
 animals were worshipped they
 can not be permitted to be killed.
 It has been called a sacred nation
 for the gods grow in gardens.
 Gods of Greece.

The Greeks borrowed many
 of their names from their gods
 from the Egyptians. Their
 gods were men and women on
 a larger scale. This religion has
 no one founder or restorer, no
 priestly cast or sacred book.
 Its religious works are the works
 of Hesiod and Homer.

Religion of Rome. The Romans
 men void of imagination and
 humor. Its religion must serve
 the state. Although the religion

was polytheistic, it had one
 Jupiter or Optimus Maximus.
 Gods multiplied so that it became
 almost impossible to know which
 god to call upon. The pontiff had
 to create new gods.

Jewish Religion -

Abraham was the first
 character in this religion. We have
 but few facts concerning his life.
 He had supreme faith in a God
 which was almighty yet willing
 to be Abraham's protector.

The Second Jewish leader was Moses
 a man of genius, inspiration, and
 knowledge. He was a stern law
 giver. His language an "eye for
 an eye and a tooth for a tooth";
 "ye shall neither vex the stranger
 nor oppress him". God is holy, law
 is holy. The law of Moses is "The
 Lord our God is one God." "I am God
 there is no other beside me". The
 writings of Moses compose the
 Pentateuch. This was also used

as a constitution to the Jewish
 form of Government. In David
 we reach the climax of Jewish
 history: He was a brave soldier,
 captain, adventurer, artist, poet,
 musician, and a man of profound
 religious experience. He sings his
 joys and sorrows into poetry.
 The Psalms, his writings teach
 musical devotion and the
 Eternity of God. He is a creator of
 all things and is a God of love and
 kindness.

The next character is Solomon
 wiser than any man. His great
 work was the building the temple
 of Jerusalem. He was a voluminous
 writer. His songs describe a king's
 youth. The proverbs are the mature
 thoughts of a wise eye, and in his
 Ecclesiastes are the doubts and despair
 of a sceptical youth. Following
 Solomon came the prophets, who
 foretold, and reproved kings
 Jesus was the fulfillment of these

prophecies. Judaism prepared the way for Christianity which followed.

Mohammedanism and Islam.

Dr. Samuel Johnson says there are two objects of curiosity in the world, the Christian Religion and Mohammedanism. This is the religion which has threatened Christianity. Its author founded a religion, formed a people, and established a empire.

The doctrine of Mohammedanism teaches a unity and supremacy of God. The Koran or Bible teaches eternal deities and predestination. Its prophets are Adam, Noah, Moses, Jesus, Mahomet. All non-believers go into eternal fire. The Moslem is judged by actions. If he goes to heaven he finds seventy two black eyed beauties awaiting him. and guards marble palaces and music. Stress is laid on prayer, abstinence, fasting and alms giving. and pilgrimages to Mecca.

The Turks are the most zealous
 Muslims. Friday is the day set apart
 for the Sabbath. In their mosques
 prayers and sermons are read
 and no one is allowed to be absent.
 The Caliph is the chief pontiff.
 Perfect silence attends all worship.
 They recognize God as the only
 Ruler in nature. Man is passing
 and impatient. God is an
 unchanging, unvarying, eternal, jealous,
 but man should claim some
 praise. He delights in making
 all creatures feel that they are
 his slaves. Paradise and
 Hell are independent of his love.
 The Koran repudiates all change
 and advancement and progress.

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