

How did the Various Religions Originate?



Today a number of religions are prevalent in the world. It is difficult to say which was the first one to start. However, the story of their origin is very interesting. From the beginning of civilization man had been worshipping many powers that could protect him from different threats in day-to-day life. For this purpose, he selected some powerful or ideal objects for worshipping. A particular spiritual power or ideal was first called a 'sect' and later on a 'religion'. Now the question is how the various major religions of the world originated?

Hinduism is not a codified religion and its origin cannot be attributed to any one person or deity. It is basically a way of life coming down from the original Aryan settlers in the Indus Valley. Buddhism started around 2500 years ago as a result of Gautama Buddha's teachings.

The principal religions in the world today are Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Shinto, Islam, Judaism and Christianity. There are more than 3000 million followers of these major religions. They constitute three-fourth of the world's total population. Approximate number of the followers of different religions is as follows: Christianity 1000 million; Hinduism 520 million; Islam 520 million; Buddhism 230 million. Confucianism 275 million; Taoism 30 million; Shinto 36 million; Judaism 15 million.

Confucianism was founded by the followers of Saint Confucius. The Tao religion originated from the book — Tao te Ching written by Lao-tzu in the sixth century B.C. The Shinto religion is the ancient religion of Japan. Similarly, the Muslim religion (Islam) was

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started by prophet Mohammed. Likewise all other religions were started by different prophets.

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