

## **BUDDHISM**

Authority: Siddhartha Gautama (566-486 B.C.), also known as Buddha, the Jataka tales, and the Dharma. Some Buddhists accept the current Dalai Lama as their spiritual leader.

God: There is no Supreme Being. There are different types of gods but none of them created the universe or man.

Jesus Christ: Jesus was a great person.

Man: Karma rules over man but through living right and a series of rebirths, man can purify himself.

Salvation: Salvation is reaching Nirvana, the cessation of suffering.

Heaven: If someone is a good Buddhist, he will go to a Buddhist heaven, but this is not permanent. There may be up to 33 levels of heaven in Buddhism.

Hell: If someone is not a good Buddhist, he will go to a Buddhist hell. There may be up to 33 levels of hell in Buddhism.

Second Coming: Some Buddhists believe that Jesus Christ will return as Maitreya the Buddha.

## **CHRISTIAN SCIENCE**

Authority: The Bible as interpreted by Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy in her book, *Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures*. Her book is the voice of Truth.

God: God is Divine Principle or Divine Mind.

Jesus Christ: Jesus is a man who lived at a certain period in history. Christ is the spiritual idea or ideal of God.

Man: Man has no body and has never sinned.

Salvation: Sin does not exist so man needs to be saved only from false beliefs.

Heaven: Harmony, a state of mind, not an actual place.

Hell: Mental torture for those with a guilty conscience who continue to transgress God's commandments, not an actual place of judgment.

Second Coming: The discovery of the Christian Science religion by Mrs. Eddy.

## **CONFUCIANISM**

Authority: Confucius (551-479 B.C.) and his writings.

God: Some believe in a Supreme Being; some believe in ancestor worship, or believe in spirits and souls.

Jesus Christ: Not applicable.

Man: Man is not perfect but he can eliminate evil through moral education.

Salvation: Man can attain salvation by being a good, moral person and doing good works.

Heaven: Not applicable.

Hell: Not applicable.

Second Coming: Not applicable.

## **HINDUISM**

Authority: The Bhagavad-Gita and the Vedas.

God: Pantheon of thousands of gods, such as Shiva and Krishna; Brahman is the highest god.

Jesus Christ: Possibly an Avatar or divine person; possibly just a good teacher.

Man: Man is divine and essentially good.

Salvation: There are four ways to Moksha (salvation) which include performing religious ceremonies, meditation, and yoga.

Heaven: A person can exist on many levels of heaven before being reincarnated and returning to earth.

Hell: A person can exist on many levels of hell before being reincarnated and returning to earth.

Second Coming: Some Hindus accept the teachings of Paramahansa Yogananda, which state that the second coming of Jesus Christ is experiencing the Christ Consciousness.

## **ISLAM**

Authority: The Prophet Muhammed in 622 A.D. and the Koran.

God: Allah is His name.

Jesus Christ: Jesus was one of God's prophets.

Man: God created man as His associate on this earth but man was not made in the image of God.

Salvation: Man can be saved by being a good Muslim, doing good works, which must outweigh bad works, and through sincere repentance.

Heaven: Paradise is a place where faithful Muslims can indulge in worldly pleasures, like sex, food, drink.

Hell: Hell is a literal place of eternal judgment.

Second Coming: Jesus Christ will return with the 12th Imam of Islam and convert to Islam. Then Jesus, with the 12th Imam, will kill everyone who is not Muslim and bring in the Millennial Kingdom under Islam.

## **JEHOVAH'S WITNESS**

Authority: Studies in the Scriptures by Charles Taze Russell are indispensable in interpreting the Bible.

God: There is only one God. Jehovah God is eternal and the sole Creator of the Universe. The doctrine of the Trinity is not in the Bible.

Jesus Christ: Jesus was not God, merely the Son of God. If Jesus was God, He could not have died.

Man: Man sinned but his soul is not eternal. He becomes unconscious after death.

Salvation: Jesus paid a ransom to Jehovah God and His death removed Adam's sin to all who accept it.

Heaven: You must follow Jesus faithfully until death in order to gain immortality and have any part in the His Kingdom.

Hell: There is no literal hell or eternal torture; those who reject Jehovah will be annihilated.

Second Coming: Jesus Christ returned in 1914 as a spirit creature, not physically, and is currently establishing the Millennial Kingdom.

## **MORMONISM**

Authority: The Bible as it is translated correctly, Doctrines and Covenants, The Pearl of Great Price, and The Book of Mormon by Joseph Smith.

God: There are many gods in heaven. God used to be a man and eventually became an exalted being.

Jesus Christ: Jesus was not conceived by the Holy Spirit; Jesus is our elder brother, conceived by Adam.

Man: Man has the capability of becoming God.

Salvation: Faith in Christ, baptism, good works, and being a member of the Mormon church. There is no atonement in the blood of Jesus Christ for sin.

Heaven: There are three heavens: telestial, terrestrial, and celestial. In the celestial heaven, each Mormon eventually becomes a god.

Hell: The telestial heaven where those who have rejected the Gospel and those are suffering in hell until the last resurrection.

Second Coming: Jesus Christ will physically return, He will gather Mormons in Missouri, and God's judgment will fall on the entire world except in Jerusalem.

## **SCIENTOLOGY**

Authority: L. Ron Hubbard

God: There is a Supreme Being and man can only know him through personal and total spiritual enlightenment.

Jesus Christ: Christ died for his own sins; there is no Christ.

Man: Man has no soul and is basically good.

Salvation: Man is responsible for his own salvation.

Heaven: No heaven.

Hell: No hell.

Second Coming: Not applicable.

## **THEOSOPHY**

Authority: The Secret Doctrine by Helena Blavatsky, also the Hindu scriptures, the writings of Gautama Buddha, and writings of the early Gnostic Christians.

God: God is consciousness and the universe.

Jesus Christ: World teachers, or christs, have come at various times in history, and Jesus Christ is only one of these.

Man: Man is God and has God within himself; all men are divine and can become christs.

Salvation: Each man is responsible for his own sins; man can redeem himself through the laws of Karma and levels of spiritual progression to become God.

Heaven: Man can reach heaven or Devachan by going through seven planes of progression, similar to the Nirvana of Buddhism.

Hell: Kamaloka is a dreary, dark place where people suffer for their sins and await the opportunity to be reincarnated.

Second Coming: Man goes through progressions of reincarnation to become God.

## **UNITARIANISM**

Authority: Michael Servetus, a Catholic priest who died in 1553. Honors teachings from many different religions.

God: God is one person, there is no Trinity.

Jesus Christ: A great teacher but not divine.

Man: Man can make himself better through education.

Salvation: Everyone will eventually be saved.

Heaven: Man can attain heaven on earth through good works.

Hell: Hell is when someone feels bad for doing bad things.

Second Coming: There is no literal return of Jesus Christ; the Millennium probably started in the mid-1990s.