Jainism Document 1

Derived from the Sanskrit word "jina," meaning "to conquer," Jainism teaches that all life forms have an eternal soul bound by karma in a never-ending cycle of rebirth. Through nonviolence or ahimsa, the soul can break free of this cycle and achieve kaivalya. Traditions and ideas central to Jainism can be traced to the 7th century BCE, but Mahavira, the last of Jainism's 24 great spiritual teachers, formalized them into the Jain religion in the 6th century. Some scholars see the roots of the faith as far back as the Indus civilization in Gujarat.

Central to Jainism are five vows: nonviolence (ahimsa), truthfulness (satya), non-stealing (asteya), chastity (brahmacharya), and non-possession or non-attachment (aparigraha). As a manifestation of ahimsa, Jain monks wear nets over their mouths and sweep the street with their clothing so as to avoid harming insects, thereby accruing karma from not injuring even the smallest life forms. Mahavira, whose teachings are recorded in the Agamas texts, taught liberation through the three principles of right faith (samyak darshana), right knowledge (samyak jnana), and right conduct (samyak charitra).

Between the first and second centuries BCE, the Jains divided into an orthodox sect Digambara ("sky–clad") in which followers claimed adherence to Mahavira's philosophy by going without clothes, and the Shvetambara ("white–clad") sect. Approximately four million Jains practice the religion worldwide, and important places of pilgrimage among observers include Mt. Abu in Rajasthan, site of five ornate Jain temples, and Sravanabelagola, site of a 57.5 foot statue of Gomateshvara (Bahubali), Jainism's first spiritual leader or tirthankara. Today Sravanabelagola is the site of the Mahamastak Abhishek, the biggest Jain religious festival which takes place every 12 years, the last one in 2007.

Source: PBS.org

Jainism Document 2

• Jainism is an ancient religion from India that teaches that the way to liberation and bliss is to live lives of harmlessness and renunciation.

• The essence of Jainism is concern for the welfare of every being in the universe and for the health of the universe itself.

• Jains believe that animals and plants, as well as human beings, contain living souls. Each of these souls is considered of equal value and should be treated with respect and compassion.

• Jains are strict vegetarians and live in a way that minimizes their use of the world's resources.

• Jains believe in reincarnation and seek to attain ultimate liberation - which means escaping the continuous cycle of birth, death and rebirth so that the immortal soul lives forever in a state of bliss.

• Liberation is achieved by eliminating all karma from the soul.

• Jainism is a religion of self-help.

• There are no gods or spiritual beings that will help human beings.

• The three guiding principles of Jainism, the 'three jewels', are right belief, right knowledge and right conduct.

• The supreme principle of Jain living is nonviolence (ahimsa).

• This is one of the 5 mahavratas (the 5 great vows). The other mahavratas are nonattachment to possessions, not lying, not stealing, and sexual restraint (with celibacy as the ideal).

• Mahavira is regarded as the man who gave Jainism its present-day form.

• The texts containing the teachings of Mahavira are called the Agamas.

• Jains are divided into two major sects; the Digambara (meaning "sky clad") sect and the Svetambara (meaning "white clad") sect.

• Jainism has no priests. Its professional religious people are monks and nuns, who lead strict and ascetic lives.

• Most Jains live in India, and according to the 2001 Census of India there are around 4.2 million living there. However, the Oxford Handbook of Global Religions, published in 2006, suggests that census figures may provide lower than the true number of followers as many Jains identify themselves as Hindu. The Handbook also states that there are around 25,000 Jains in Britain.

Source: BBC.co.uk

Sikhism Document 1

Sikhism is a monotheistic faith that originated in India during the 15th century. Today, it has roughly 20 million adherents worldwide, the majority of whom live in the Punjab, in northwest India. It was founded by Guru Nanak, the first in a line of ten gurus (spiritual leaders) who developed and promulgated the faith. In Punjabi, the word "Sikh" means "disciple" and the faithful are those who follow the writings and teachings of the Ten Gurus, which are set down in the holy book, the "Adi Granth."

Sikhism synthesizes elements of both Islam and Hinduism into a distinct religious tradition. Like Islam, it emphasizes belief in only one God and similar to Hinduism, teaches that the karmic cycle of rebirths cannot be overcome unless you achieve oneness with God. For Sikhs, everyone is equal before God and a good life is achieved by remembering God at all times, being part of a community, serving others, living honestly, and rejecting blind rituals and superstitions.

In the late 17th century the tenth guru, Gobind Singh, established a military brotherhood within Sikhism called the Khalsa (fraternity of the pure). Although not all Sikhs belong to the Khalsa, many obey its edict of wearing the five symbols of faith, the Five Ks: uncut hair (kesh), a wooden comb (kanga), a steel bracelet (kara), cotton undergarments (kachera), and a sword (kirpan). The turban worn by Sikh men is the most visible manifestation of their adherence to these principles.

Source: PBS.org

Sikhism Document 2

• There is only one God

• God is without form, or gender

• Everyone has direct access to God

• Everyone is equal before God

• A good life is lived as part of a community, by living honestly and caring for others

• Empty religious rituals and superstitions have no value

• Living in God and community Sikhs focus their lives around their relationship with God, and being a part of the Sikh community.

The Sikh ideal combines action and belief. To live a good life a person should do good deeds as well as meditating on God.

God and the cycle of life: Sikhs believe that human beings spend their time in a cycle of birth, life, and rebirth. They share this belief with followers of other Indian religious traditions such as Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. The quality of each particular life depends on the law of Karma. Karma sets the quality of a life according to how well or badly a person behaved in their previous life. The only way out of this cycle, which all faiths regard as painful, is to achieve a total knowledge of and union with God.

The God of grace: Sikh spirituality is centered round this need to understand and experience God, and eventually become one with God. To do this a person must switch the focus of their attention from themselves to God. They get this state, which is called mukti (liberation), through the grace of God. That means it's something God does to human beings, and not something that human beings can earn. However, God shows people through holy books, and by the examples of saints, the best ways to get close to him.

Truth is the highest of all virtues, but higher still is truthful living: Sikhs believe that God can't be understood properly by human beings, but he can be experienced through love, worship, and contemplation. Sikhs look for God both inside themselves and in the world around them. They do this to help themselves achieve liberation and union with God.

Getting close to God: When a Sikh wants to see God, they look both at the created world, and into their own heart and soul. Their aim is to see the divine order that God has given to everything, and through it to understand the nature of God. Most human beings can’t see the true reality of God because they are blinded by their own self-centered pride (Sikhs call it haumain) and concern for physical things.

God inside us: Sikhs believe that God is inside every person, no matter how wicked they appear, and so everyone is capable of change. Just as fragrance is in the flower, and reflection is in the mirror, in just the same way, God is within you.

God beyond ourselves: Sikhs believe that God’s message can be found in several ways outside ourselves. The message is written in the whole of creation; look at it with open eyes and see the truth of God, for creation is the visible message of God Sikhs believe that most of us misunderstand the universe. We think that it exists on its own, when it really exists because God wills it to exist and is a portrait of God’s own nature. The message has been shown to us by the Gurus in their lives and in their words. The message is set down in the teachings of scripture

Living a good life in this world: Sikhs don't think it pleases God if people pay no attention to others and simply devote themselves slavishly to religion. Sikhism doesn’t as eo le to turn away from ordinary life to get closer to God. In fact it demands that they use ordinary life as a way to get closer to God. A Sikh serves God by serving (seva) other people every day. By devoting their lives to service, they get rid of their own ego and pride. Many Sikhs carry out chores in the Gurdwara as their service to the community. These range from working in the kitchen to cleaning the floor. The Langar, or free food kitchen, is a community act of service. Sikhs also regard caring for the poor or sick as an important duty of service.

The three duties: The three duties that a Sikh must carry out can be summed up in three words; Pray, Work, Give.

* Nam japna: Keeping God in mind at all times.
* Kirt Karna: Earning an honest living. Since God is truth, a Sikh seeks to live honestly. This doesn't just mean avoiding crime; Sikhs avoid gambling, begging, or working in the alcohol or tobacco industries.
* Vand Chhakna: (Literally, sharing one's earnings with others) Giving to charity and caring for others.

The five vices: Sikhs try to avoid the five vices that make people self-centered and build barriers against God in their lives. If a person can overcome these vices they are on the road to liberation:

* + Lust
  + Covetousness and greed
  + Attachment to things of this world
  + Anger
  + Pride

Source: BBC.co.uk

**Jainism: Complete Sentences 8 points**

1. How do Jains understand God? **(1)**
2. How do they understand the world and universe? **(1)**
3. What is a Tirthankara? **(1)**
4. What are the five vows? **(1)**
5. How do Jains understand living beings in general? **(1)**
6. What do Jains think about humans? **(1)**
7. How do Jains think about Karma? **(1)**
8. What is meant by living in ahimsa? **(1)**

**Sikhism:** **Complete Sentences 9 points**

1. Explain the Sikh belief about God. **(2)**
2. How is God known in the world according to Sikhs? **(1)**
3. What are the three golden rules for Sikhs? **(1)**
4. How do they help Sikhs live according to God’s will? **(1)**
5. What are the Panj Kakke (the five Ks) and why are they so important in Sikh belief and practice? **(1)**
6. What is a Guru and how do they influence Sikh belief and practice today? **(1)**
7. What is the purpose of life for Sikhs? **(1)**
8. What are the personal qualities needed to reach God? **(1)**