DETAILED CONTENTS

Preface v PART I. UNDERSTANDING THE SACRED PATHS 1 1. BASIC DIMENSIONS OF RELIGION 3	Nonliterate Societies 44 Nonliterate Worlds of Meaning 48 The Sacred Reality in Sky and Earth 48 The World and Human Existence 53 The Path of Healing and Transformation 57 Worship and the Good Life 61 Sacred Time, Ritual, and Art 61 Society and the Good Life 67
Dimensions of Religious Experience 4 Families of Religions 8 Basic Human Concerns and Religious Responses 10 The Sacred Story and Its Historical Context 11 Worlds of Meaning: Theoretical Teachings 13 Worship and the Good Life 18 2. RELIGIONS OF ANCIENT PEOPLES 27	PART II. FAMILIES OF ABRAHAM: JEWS, CHRISTIANS, AND MUSLIMS 75 Introduction 75 4. JUDAISM: SACRED STORY AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT 79
The Story of Humankind 29 The Ancient Classical Religions 31 3. RELIGIONS OF NONLITERATE PEOPLES 39 Sacred Stories for Nonliterate Peoples 40 Modern Transformations in the Stories of	The Jewish Story 80 Beginnings: Israel, People of the Covenant 80 The Promised Land and the Kingdom 84 Decline of the Kingdom: The Prophets 87 The Founding of Judaism 89 Some Historical Transformations of Judaism 93 Jewish Life and Thought in Islamic Contexts 93

Tragedy and Response in Christian Medieval Europe 96 Emancipation, Enlightenment, and the Modern Age 98

5. JEWISH WORLDS OF MEANING 102

Ultimate Reality: One God as Creator, Revealer, and Redeemer 102

The Development of Monotheism 103

The Jewish Vision of the One God 104

Creation and Human Existence 106

Creation and Preservation of the World 106

The Shadow of Sin 108

Following the Path of Torah 109

God as Redeemer 109

The Human Movement of Repentance 111

The Life of Halakhah 112

Universal Blessing, Now and Hereafter 113

6. JEWISH WORSHIP AND THE GOOD LIFE 115

Jewish Worship and Rituals 115
Sabbaths for Rest, Festivals for Rejoicing 116
Mitzvot of Worship and Ritual 119
The Place of Art in Jewish Religious Life 122
The Life of Torah: Community and Ethics in Judaism 123
The Jewish People 123
The Way of Halakhah 123
The Missions of Peoplehood 125

7. CHRISTIANITY: SACRED STORY AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT 130

The Story of Christian Beginnings 130
The Jewish Foundations of Christianity 131
Life and Teachings of Jesus 132
Crucifixion and Resurrection 135
Beginnings of the Christian Church 138
Some Historical Transformations of the Christian Way 141
The Early Christian Church in the Roman World 141
Medieval Christianity: The Age of Faith 145
The Period of Renaissance and Reformation 150
The Christian Church in the Modern Period 154

8. CHRISTIAN WORLDS OF MEANING 158

One God as Father, Son, and Spirit 158
Seeing God's Face in Christ 159
One God, Three Persons: The Trinity 160
Creation and Human Existence 162
The Nature of Creation 162
Sin and Separation from God 163
The Path: Salvation by Grace 166
Saved by Jesus Christ 166
The Way of Faith 169
The Life of the World to Come 171

9. CHRISTIAN WORSHIP AND ETHICAL LIFE 172

Christian Worship and Ritual 172
Breaking Bread and Praising God 173
Festivals and Holy Days 174
Worship in Daily Life 176
Art in Christian Worship and Ritual 178.
The Life of Love: Society and Ethics 179
The Society of the Church 179
The Sanctification of Life in Ethics 181
Responsibility and Mission in the World 184

10. ISLAM: SACRED STORY AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT 187

The Muslim Story: The Prophet and the

Ummah 188
The Times Before Muhammad 188
The Coming of the Final Prophet 190
Immigration to Medina and the Beginning of the Ummah 193
A Religion for All Peoples: Expansion of Islam 196
The Islamic Ummah in History 198
The Classical Period of Islam 198
Medieval Empires: Stagnation and Flourishing Culture 207
Reform Movements and the Modern World 209

11. MUSLIM WORLDS OF MEANING 215

Allah, Lord of the Worlds 215
Life Centered in One God 216
Muslim Thinking About God and the Problem of
Evil 218

The Nature of the World and Humans Muslim Ideas About Creation 218
Negligence and Unbelief 221
Guidance on the Straight Path 223
Islam as a Path of Knowledge 224
Blessings Now and in the Life Hereafter 226

12. MUSLIM WORSHIP AND THE GOOD LIFE 228

Sacred Time and Worship 228
The Five Pillars 229
Other Festivals and Rituals 233
Art in Islamic Worship and Life 235
The Life of Shari'ah: Society and Ethics 236
Social Structure of Islam 236
The Way of Shari'ah 238
Transformations of Human Society 241

PART III. RELIGIONS ARISING FROM INDIA: HINDUISM, BUDDHISM, JAINISM, AND SIKHISM 245

Introduction 245

13. HINDUISM: SACRED STORY AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT 249

Foundings: Streams into the River of Hinduism 250

The Formative Period of Hinduism 250

The Many Faces of Classical Hinduism 257

Transformations in the Sacred Story 261

Medieval Hinduism: Shaping the Sacred Ways 261

The Modern Era: Renaissance and Response to the West 265

14. HINDU WORLDS OF MEANING 270

Ultimate Reality in Hinduism: Brahman, Dharma, God/Goddess 270
Brahman as the Sacred Ultimate 271
The Eternal Dharma 272
God as Supreme Sacred Reality 272

Existence in the World: Dharma and Samsara 275

The World and Human Nature in Hindu Thought 275

Samsara and the Problem of Existence 278

Three Paths to Transformation and Liberation 279

The Path of Liberating Knowledge 279

The Path of Action 281

The Path of Devotion 282

15. HINDU WORSHIP AND THE GOOD LIFE 287

Sacred Rituals and Times of Hinduism 287
Vedic Sacrifice and Worship of the Gods 288
Festivals and Pilgrimages 289
Rituals of the Passages of Life 291
Sacred Art in Hinduism 293
Society and Ethical Life 294
The Structure of Hindu Society 294
Living According to the Dharma 296
The Hindu Vision for Society and the World 299

16. BUDDHISM: SACRED STORY AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT 302

The Story of the Buddha 303
The Sacred Biography of the Buddha 303
The Tripitaka: Word of the Buddha 309
Historical Transformations: Shaping the Buddhist Way 309
Theravada and Mahayana 311
Great Expansion of Buddhism in Asia 314
Buddhism in the Modern Era 319

17. BUDDHIST WORLDS OF MEANING 321

The Ultimate: Dharma, Nirvana, Buddha 321
The Ultimate as Unconditioned Truth 322
Going for Refuge to the Buddha 324
Existence in the World 326
The Nature of the World 326
The Human Problem: Clinging 328
The Path to Nirvana and Buddhahood 329
Nirvana and the Noble Eightfold Path 329
The Mahayana Enlargement of the Path of Transformation 332

18. BUDDHIST WORSHIP AND THE GOOD LIFE 335	The Beginnings of the Chinese Story 382 The Ancient Rulers and Their Ancestors 382
Worship and Ritual 335	Foundings: The Stories of Confucius and
Central Rites and Ceremonies of Buddhism 336	Lao Tzu 384 The Story of Confucius 386
Holy Days and Festivals 337	Lao Tzu and the Beginnings of Taoism 389
Rituals of the Changes of Life 339	Development of Religious Confucianism and
Art in Buddhism 340	Taoism 392
Buddhist Society and the Good Life 342 The Structure of Buddhist Society 342	The Beginnings of Chinese Buddhism 395
The Buddhist Vision of the Good Life 343	
The Dharma Model for Society and the	22. TRANSFORMATIONS IN
World 347	CHINESE RELIGIOUS
19. THE PATH OF THE JAINS 350	HISTORY 398
Sacred Story and Historical Context 350	Flourishing of the Religions in Post-Han China 399
Mahavira Becomes the Jina for Our Age 351	Buddhism Expansion and Crystalization 399
Historical Transformations in Jainism 353	The Maturing of Religious Taoism 402
Worlds of Meaning 354	The Resurgence of the Way of Confucius:
Ultimate Reality: Eternal Universe, Liberation 354	Neo-Confucianism 404
Karmic Matter and Eternal Souls 355	Persistence and Transformation of Popular Religion 406
The Path of Liberation 356	Western Incursion and Revolutionary
Worship and Life 358	Climate 408
Ritual and Worship Among the Jains 358 Society and Ethics 360	Foreign Religions and Western Domination 408 Revolutionary Movements and
20. THE WAY OF THE DISCIPLES:	Communist Society 409
THE SIKHS 363	,,
Sacred Story and Historical Context 364	23. CHINESE WORLDS OF
Nanak and the Other Gurus 364	MEANING 413
Developments, Struggles, Transformations 367	The Sacred Ultimate in the Chinese Vision 41
Worlds of Meaning 368	The Supreme Sacred Power: Heaven 414
The Sacred Ultimate: God 368	The Chinese Vision of the Way of Nature:
Divine Creation and Human Nature 369	Tao 416
The Path of Transformation 370	The Inner Principle of All: Neo-Confucian Metaphysics 419
Worship and Life 371	The Chinese Buddhist Vision of the
Ritual and Worship Among the Sikhs 371 Society and the Good Life 373	Ultimate 420
Society and the Good Life 373	Cosmos and Humanity 421
PART IV.	Origin of the Cosmos and Human Nature 421
RELIGIONS OF CHINA	The Realities of Human Existence in the World 424
AND JAPAN 377	The Path of Transformation 428
J	Confucianism: Transformation Through Study
	and Ritual 428
21. CHINA: SACRED STORY AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT 381	The Taoist Path of Transformation 431
MINIUKICAL CUNIEXI 381	Buddhist Paths of Transformation in China 435

24. WORSHIP AND THE GOOD LIFE IN CHINA 438

Ritual Renewal and Worship 438 Worship and Ritual in the Confucian Tradition 439 Worship in Religious Taoism and Popular Religion 441 Buddhist Influences in Chinese Worship and Ritual 446 Sacred Times in the Chinese Traditions 447 Rituals of the Life Cycle in China 448 Ritual and Art in Chinese Religions 450 Society and the Good Life 451 The Structure of Chinese Society 451 The Confucian Vision of the Good Moral Life 453 The Taoist Perspective on the Good Life 457 Patterns and Paradigms for World Society 459

25. JAPAN: SACRED STORY AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT 462

The Story of the Japanese People 463
The Prehistoric Heritage of Japan 463
Sacred Nation: The Story of the Kami 465
The Coming of Buddhism and
Chinese Culture 467
Historical Transformations of the Japanese
Way 469
Transformations Along the Way 469
The Coming of the West and the
Modern Period 475

26. JAPANESE WORLDS OF MEANING 479

Ultimate Reality: Kami and Buddha-Nature 479
Reality as Myriads and Myriads of Kami 479

Perspectives on Ultimate Reality in Japanese Buddhism 482

The World and Human Existence 483

The Shinto Perspective on the World and on Humans 484

The Japanese Buddhist Perspective on Human Existence 486

The Path of Purification and Renewal 487

The Shinto Path of Purification 487

Buddhist Paths of Transformation in Japan 489

27. WORSHIP AND THE GOOD LIFE IN JAPAN 493

Worship and Ritual 493
Rituals of Worshiping In Daily Life 494
Sacred Times in Japan 497
Rituals of the Passages of Life 499
Art in Japanese Religion 500
Society and the Good Life 502
Structure of Japanese Society 502
The Good Life in the Japanese View 505

EPILOGUE: CROSSINGS AND GUIDEPOSTS ON THE PATHS 509

Notes 516
Bibliography 525
Glossary 532
Index 545