

Religious Writings

Here is a list of Muslim, Buddhist, and Hindu religious texts, with some additional notes.

Islam

- Muslims find the Qur'an to be authoritative.
- It is important to know that the Qur'an was written in Arabic, and most serious Muslims will only accept that version. Therefore, they usually have a problem with English translations.
- Only certain English translations of the Qur'an are acceptable by some Muslims. A couple that tend to be acceptable are *The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'an* by Muhammad Pickthall and *The Holy Qur'an: Translation and Commentary* by Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali.
- Some English versions of the Qur'an even have different verse placements (usually only by one or two verses). This means that someone could "quote" a verse in the Qur'an to you and it not actually be the verse that is in the Arabic Qur'an.
- The Qur'an does not have individual books like the Bible. Instead, it is made up of 114 chapters (called Surahs).

Hinduism

- The highest form of Hindu revelation is recorded in the four Vedas and the Upanishads.
- Most, if not all, Hindus are open to the possibility of more revelation coming. Their sages are thought to be continually reincarnating, and therefore continually able to learn more and more in their lives. This kind of wisdom, to them, is seen to have no human authorship or historical origin. It has simply always been available for discovery.
- This first-tier revelation is known as *sruti* (i.e., "that which is heard").
- Hindus also have a large collection of sacred materials that they recognize as having human authorship and historical origin. This material includes important texts such as the *Sutras*, the law books, the *Puranas*, and the two great epics, *Mahabharata* (including *Bhagavad-Gita*) and *Ramayana*.
- This second-tier material is known as *smriti* (i.e., "that which is remembered").
- Hindus are not in complete agreement as to what constitutes the *sruti* texts.

Buddhism

- Buddhists do not have a single sacred text which all of them accept as authoritative in a final sense. Instead, there are usually thousands of sacred texts, known as *sutras*.
- Two of the most famous of these are the *Diamond Sutra* and the *Heart Sutra*.
- Because Buddhism is nontheistic, all religious texts are not understood as authoritative revelation from God, but as the enlightened teachings of a Buddha.