

Chapter 4—Culture and Religion in Eurasia/North Africa, 500 B.C.E. –500 C.E.

Seeking the Main Point

Fundamentally, religions are basically alike. Does the material in this chapter support or challenge this idea?

Download and save this document so you can return to it as you take notes and for studying. As you read the chapter, fill in the chart below to remind you of the important similarities and differences between the religions examined in this chapter. The chart includes a list of the religions considered in the chapter down the left-hand side and six features of religions across the top bar to help you organize your thoughts for comparison. If you copy and paste from the text, make sure to put quotation marks around the copied material; however, if you can think of a way to put it into your own words, you should do so.

	Nature of the Divine	Holy Text	Founder	Moral Code	Spread	Institutions
Daoism	•	•	•	•	•	•
Hinduism	•	•	•	•	•	•
Buddhism	•	•	•	•	•	•
Zoroastrianism	•	•	•	•	•	•
Judaism	•	•	•	•	•	•
Christianity	•	•	•	•	•	•

After you have read the chapter, use your notes to compose an essay that answers this question:

Were the religions that emerged in China, India, and the Near East fundamentally the same?

Be sure to include an opening, introductory paragraph in which you state your thesis. Then use the body of your essay to provide evidence from the chapter to support that thesis. Remember that questions like this have no single “correct” answer. It is best to recognize that there might be developments that contradict your answer, but make the case that on balance they are outweighed by factors in support of your argument. End by writing a clear conclusion to your essay.