

JAINISM. Originating from India, Jainism is one of the world's oldest religions or philosophies, with over four million devotees. **J**ains view God as the pure, eternal soul - which is described chiefly as Infinite Knowledge, Consciousness and Happiness. **J**ain philosophy emphasizes the necessity of every individual's effort to move soul towards divine consciousness and liberation. **J**ainism denotes every soul as potentially divine and advocates non-violence towards all living beings; Jains are vegetarians. **J**ains don't believe in a supreme being, creator or manager, but rather in an eternal universe governed by natural laws. **J**ains have an understanding of Truth different to any other religion: truth is *not-one-sidedness*: one claim or another or both may be true. **J**ains have an ancient tradition of scholarship; they are India's most literate community, while their libraries are India's oldest. **J**ains stress spiritual independence and equality, and the obligation to be non-judgemental. Jainism is rapidly expanding in the West.



The foundation of Jain philosophy is non-absolutism ("multiple points of view"). This philosophy allows Jains to accept the truth in other philosophies from their perspective and thus instill a tolerance for other viewpoints.

Jain scholars have devised methods to view both physical objects and abstract ideas from different perspectives simultaneously.

This search to view things from different angles leads to understanding and toleration of different and even conflicting views. When this happens prejudices subside and a tendency to accommodate increases.

see also THE TRUTH 3 and TRUTH