

HINDUISM

Hinduism is the third largest religion in the world. In 2015, 1.1 billion people were Hindu.



HINDUISM

Hinduism originated in India. The word Hindu comes from the River Indus, which is in the region where it began.



HINDUISM

Hindus believe in a Supreme God (Brahman) who can be worshipped in many different forms and is both male and female.



HINDUISM

Hindus see life as a cycle, known as Samsara. Each person is born, dies and is reborn, many times over. At the end of this cycle, the soul achieves Moksha (freedom).



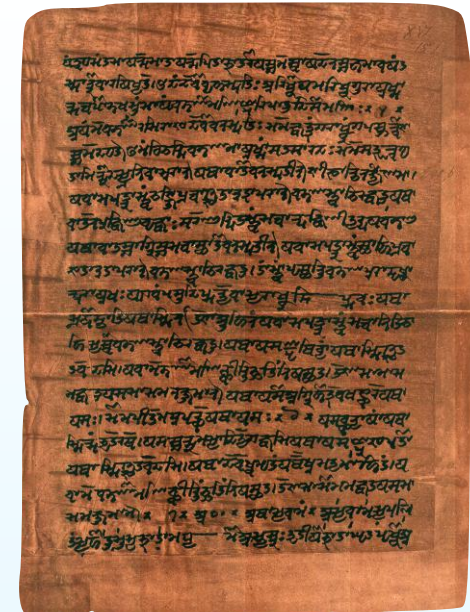
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Karma is a Sanskrit word meaning "action". The Law of Karma states that all actions have a consequence. Hindus believe that karma can reach across lifetimes, so actions in one life can have consequences in the next.



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The Vedas are four holy books. Written in Sanskrit, they are believed to be the oldest scriptures in the world. For 5,000 years they were passed down by mouth, until they were eventually written down.



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Hindu worship, known as puja, takes place both at home and in a temple (Mandir). Worshipers repeat the names of gods and goddesses and make offerings of items such as fruit or flowers.



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Diwali is a festival of lights, celebrated by decorating homes and businesses with small lamps (divas). The lamps help the goddess of wealth, Lakshmi, to find her way into homes.



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Holi is an important Hindu festival, held in the spring. It is very colourful and people celebrate by throwing powder paint, dancing and singing.



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Pilgrimage is very important in Hinduism. A pilgrimage is a special journey made to get closer to god. Some Hindus make a pilgrimage to the Ganges to have their sins washed away.



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The Ramayana is an epic poem about Rama and Sita, which is associated with the festival of Diwali. People lit lamps to welcome Rama and Sita home from exile.



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The Mahabharata is an epic poem, telling the story of a huge battle between two cousins. It has about 1.8 million words in it!



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The Puranas tell the story of the universe from creation to destruction. They also contain the family trees of important Hindu figures and other knowledge. Traditionally there are 18, but some scholars disagree on the exact number.



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There are 3 types of religious rites in Hinduism; Nitya (daily rituals), Naimittika (annual rituals such as festivals) and Kamya (additional rituals, such as pilgrimage).



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For Hindus, the Ganges is the most holy river. The goddess of the river, Ganga wears a white crown and sits on a crocodile. She holds a water lily and a pot in her hands.



HINDUISM

Most of the Hindus in the world live in India. In 2015, 79.8% of the people living in India were Hindus.



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Hinduism has different types of spiritual leaders. Priests take care of the temples and lead important rituals. Gurus are teachers and Sannyasa are monks.



HINDUISM

There are many gods and goddesses in Hinduism, who all represent a different form of Brahman. Some of the most well known are Ganesha, Shiva and Krishna.



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Hinduism has no founder, no prophets and no definite date when it began. Its origins may go back as far as prehistoric times.



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The main symbol of Hinduism is Aum (Om). It is a sound used in meditation and said to be the sound of the universe.



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