



The Nature of Brahman

Hindus believe that Brahman is formless. Brahman does not have a body nor a gender. Brahman is infinite and omniscient. A Hindu may dedicate their life to understanding the nature of Brahman.



“The person who perceives Brahman receives everlasting joy.”



Hindu Goddesses: Shakti, Durga and Kali

Shakti: In Sanskrit the name “Shakti” means “energy” or “power”. In Hinduism Shakti is known as the “Great Divine Mother”.

Durga: Durga is the Goddess of War. She has ten arms which carry ten different weapons which she used to slay Mahishasura.

Kali: In Sanskrit the name “Kali” translates to “she who is death”. In Hinduism Kali is known as the Goddess of Death and is often associated with violence.

Hindu Festival: Diwali

Diwali is the Hindu festival of light and is the Hindu New Year. This year, Hindus will celebrate Diwali on 4th November 2021.

Diwali celebrates good over evil. The story of the Ramayana celebrates how Rama saved Sita from an evil Demon and returned home to the Kingdom of Ayodhya.

Hindus will decorate their homes with the following items:

Lakshmi: the Hindu Goddess of wealth and good fortune. Hindus will create a shrine for Lakshmi during Diwali and leave offerings for her.

Diyas: oil lamps invite Lakshmi into a Hindu’s home. In the Ramayana the people of Ayodhya used diyas to help Rama and Sita find their way home.

Rangoli Patterns: Drawn on the doorstep or the pavement to welcome Lakshmi. They can be made from coloured powder or spices.

Key Terms

Hinduism	The world’s oldest religion which began in India in the Indus Valley roughly 4000 years ago.
Hindu	A person who follows Hinduism. The word “Hindu” comes from the Sanskrit term “Sindhu” which means “River”.
Brahman (Bra-man)	The Supreme God in Hinduism.
God/ Goddess	A Hindu God is a male form of Brahman. A Hindu Goddesses is a female form of Brahman.
Sanskrit	A 3500 year old language used in India. Hindu texts are often written in Sanskrit.
Trimurti (Tri-m-er-ti)	The three main Gods in Hinduism (Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva). Each God represents a different function – creation, preservation and destruction.
Mandir (Man-deer)	The place of worship in Hinduism.
Shrine	A place where a Hindu God or Goddess is worshipped.
Murti (M-er-ti)	A sacred statue of a Hindu God or Goddess.
Puja (Poo-ja)	A form of worship performed in front of a Murti as an act of devotion.
Diwali (Di-var-li)	The Hindu festival of light.
Ramayana (Rah-my-ah-na)	A Hindu Holy Book which contains the story of Rama and Sita.
 Om (Aum)	This is known as the “Om” symbol. “Om” is a <i>sacred</i> sound in Hinduism and represents the energy of the Universe. Hindus may listen or make this sound when meditating or worshipping Brahman.

Key Beliefs and Facts

Where did the term Hindu and Hinduism come from?

Between 1757 and 1947 India was part of the British Empire.

Up until this time “Hinduism” did not exist as an established religion but rather a “way of life” - people had followed certain beliefs and practices for thousands of years.

British rulers decided that people who followed these beliefs and practices were to be called “Hindus”. This is how the term “Hinduism” was created.

Therefore, Hinduism has no founder unlike many other religions.

Is Hinduism Monotheistic or Polytheistic?

The Supreme God in Hinduism is called Brahman.

Hinduism is monotheistic because Hindus believe there is only one God. However, Hindus believe there are 330-Million forms of Brahman.

These forms can either be male (Gods) or female (Goddesses).

These Gods and Goddesses are called Devas.

Through worshipping these Gods and Goddesses, Hindus are worshipping Brahman.

Which God or Goddess they worship depends on their family and current life circumstances.

How do Hindus believe the world was created?

Before the Universe began there was nothing.

Lord Vishnu slept peacefully until a humming sound - “Om” - woke him up.

From Lord Vishnu’s navel grew a magnificent Lotus Flower. In the middle of the Lotus Flower sat Lord Brahma.

Hindus believe that Lord Brahma created the Universe from the Lotus Flower.

He split the Lotus Flower into three parts and created the Heavens, Earth and Skies.

In the Hindu Creation Story it is predicted that one day Shiva will grow angry with the world’s evil and dance his ferocious dance of destruction and destroy the entire Universe!

Lord Vishnu (God of Preservation), Lord Brahma (God of Creation) and Lord Shiva (God of Destruction) make up the Trimurti.



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