

Introduction

Hindu religion is an old religion. Not a single person can be identified as a founder of this religion. This religion has flourished as a result of many devotees' sincere practices.

Part One: The Nature of Hinduism

Lesson-1: The Features of Hinduism

- i) The nature of God and belief or devotion to Him
- ii) Karmabad (principles of work)
- iii) Janmantarbad (beliefs about life after death)
- iv) Avatartatwa (theories of the incarnation) and theory of deities
- v) The worship of gods and goddesses
- vi) Mokshalava (salvation)
- vii) Dignity to women
- viii) Thoughts of well-being for living beings and the universe

The nature of Hindu religion has been revealed through these features. Now we shall learn about these main features in brief in the light of Hindu Religion.

The Theory of God:

According to Hinduism, Ishwar doesn't have any form. Hinduism strongly believes that He is one and only.

Brahma: When God doesn't have any form, we call Him Brahma.

Ishwar: When God dominates everything, He is Ishwar.

Vagabana: When God shows His kindness to creatures, He is called Vagabana.

Avatarbad (theories of the incarnation): The speciality in Hinduism is that it believes- though God doesn't have any form, He can take any form when He feels it is necessary. If God comes down to the earth to destroy the evil doers and to save the pious, we call Him Avatar. The Avatarabad is a special characteristic of Hindu Religion.

Deities: God's power reveals through gods (Deva) and goddesses (Devi) or deities. This Devbad or theory of deities too is special in Hindu Religion.

Thoughts of well-being for living beings and the universe: Ishwara lives in the living beings as soul. Every living being is a part of God. So, we should respect and serve the living beings because the service to the living beings is ultimately regarded as the service of God. Here, lie the basic moral teachings of Hindu Religion. We should accept the truth that, living beings are Ishwara. We should not give any pain to others as that should be considered as a pain to Ishwar.

Lesson-2 and 3: Belief and Devotion to God

Belief or devotion to God: The followers of Hindu Religion believe deeply in God. The cosmos is in function following His established rules. God is all pervading doer of creation, stability and destruction. He is very kind and compassionate. So, it is our duty to respect him. The deities are also a part of Ishwar. So, we will respect them too.

Principles of work (Karmabad): God is the Almighty. He is the leader of all things. He has created works to earn livelihood for the creatures. Whatever we do that is **Karma or work**. To make houses, to produce crops, to do business, to study, to worship or meditation - everything comes under Karma. Every work or karma has a result. Every doer has to undergo the result of his/ her work. None can avoid it. This is called Karmabad.

Janmantar: Human beings are reborn sometimes to take their shares of Karmafala (the result of work) if necessary. It is called Janmantar (the beliefs of life after death).

Ideas of salvation (Mokshalav): Obtaining of salvation is another feature of Hindu religion. Moksha means perpetual salvation or release. It is a kind of release from the cycle of birth and death again and again. The souls of living beings are the parts of Ishwar or Paramatma. The souls of human beings (Jivatma) mix with Ishwar (Paramatma) to obtain perpetual salvation. Whenever one gets salvation, one will never get reborn. This is called Moksha (Salvation). The way of obtaining salvation is to surrender all works to God, to complete all the work considering them as the work of God.

Worksheet**Short Questions from Introduction:**

- 1) Which religion is an old religion?
- 2) Which person is the founder of Hindu Religion?
- 3) How has the Hindu Religion flourished?

Short Questions from Lesson-1:

- 1) What things make a religion different from others?
- 2) What are the features or characteristics of Hinduism?
- 3) Has Ishwar any form?
- 4) When is Ishwar called as Avatar?
- 5) What is special characteristic of Hindu Religion?
- 6) Where and in which form does Ishwar live?
- 7) Why should we respect and serve the living beings?
- 8) Where lies the basic moral teachings of Hindu Religion?
- 9) When will be no conflict on the earth?

Short Questions from Lesson-2 and 3:

- 1) Where do the followers of Hinduism believe?
- 2) Who is all pervading doer of creation, stability and destruction?
- 3) Who is very kind and compassionate?
- 4) What is our duty towards God?
- 5) Why should we respect gods and goddesses?
- 6) Who is the Almighty?
- 7) Who is the leader of all things?
- 8) Why has God created works or karma?
- 9) What is work or karma? Give some examples of work or karma?
- 10) What is result of good work?
- 11) What is the result of bad work?
- 12) Who can avoid karma?
- 13) What is called Karmabad?
- 14) What is called Janmantar?
- 15) What are the main features of Hindu Religion?
- 16) What is the meaning of Moksha?
- 17) What is Jivatma?
- 18) Who is Paramatma?
- 19) What is called Moksha (Salvation)?
- 20) What is the way of obtaining salvation?
- 21) How do we have to lead our life?

Broad Questions from Introduction and Le-1, 2 and 3:

- 1) Explain the concept of theory of God.
 - 2) Why should we believe in God? Explain.
 - 3) Explain the concept of Karmabad with some examples.
 - 4) Explain the concept of salvation or mokshalav
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