

Dharma

There is no one way to be a Hindu, but all Hindus share the same main beliefs.

Reincarnation

Hindus believe that all living things have a soul. When something dies, it does not just disappear. Instead, Hindus believe in reincarnation. This means that the soul lives inside the body but when this body dies, the soul enters a new living thing.

Karma, good and bad actions done during someone's life, affects what will happen to a person in the next life. For example, Hindus believe it is possible for a human soul to be reborn as a cat.

Dharma

In Hinduism, 'dharma' means religion and responsibility. It is an important part of a Hindu's life. Hindus believe that there are right and wrong ways to behave, but they must always behave in the right ways. For example, a pupil's dharma is to work hard at school and the dharma of the police is to protect others. At different times in a Hindu person's life, their dharma will change.

It is everyone's dharma to be kind, honest, religious and a good person. Hindus believe that if they follow their dharma, they will feel happy. If a Hindu follows their dharma, they can expect to be reincarnated into a higher form in the next life, or good luck will come their way.



Questions

1. Which religion is this text about?

2. What is the name given to those who follow this religion?

3. What is reincarnation?

4. What does dharma mean?

5. What happens if a Hindu follows their dharma?

It is every Hindu's dharma, no matter how old they are, to be what four things?

Dharma

Hinduism is a religion which has mixed together many different traditions and practices. However, all Hindus share similar core beliefs.

Reincarnation

Hindus believe that all living things have a soul, and that it cannot be destroyed. Instead, Hindus believe in reincarnation, which means that the soul lives inside the body until this body dies. The soul then enters a new living thing.

Karma, good and bad actions carried out during your life, affects which living thing the soul will be reborn into. For example, Hindus think it is possible for a human soul to be reborn as a cat.

Moksha

Moksha means freedom of the soul from the cycle of death and rebirth. For a Hindu, this is the end goal.

Dharma

In Hinduism, 'dharma' means religion and duty; it is a very important part of a Hindu's everyday life. Hindus believe that there are right and wrong ways to behave: they must behave correctly; follow the moral law (and not just do what they feel like doing); and take their duties seriously. According to this belief, Hindus must always do the right thing. For example, a student's dharma is to work hard at school, and the dharma of the police is to protect others. At different times in a Hindu's life, their dharma will change; however, it is everyone's dharma to be kind, honest, religious and to be a good person. Hindus believe that when they follow their dharma, they feel good about themselves. Not to act in accordance with your dharma is believed to be wrong and called 'adharma'.

Karma is the law that every action has a reaction in the future. Therefore, actions in accordance with dharma will have good reactions. If a Hindu follows their dharma, they can expect to be reincarnated into a higher form in the next life, or good luck will come their way.

Did You Know?

Hinduism is often referred to as Sanātana Dharma, a Sanskrit phrase meaning 'the eternal law'.



Questions

1. How is Hinduism described in the text?

2. What is reincarnation?

3. What is karma?

4. What does moksha mean?

5. Find one piece of evidence to show why Hindus believe a soul cannot be destroyed

6. To not act in accordance with your dharma is called what?

7. Why do Hindus want to try and live in accordance with their dharma?

8. What does Sanātana Dharma mean?

Dharma

Hinduism is a religion which has fused many different traditions and practices. There is no one way to be a Hindu, nevertheless, there are certain fundamental principles that all Hindus share:



- Truth is eternal: Hindus feel that they must pursue knowledge and understanding of the truth.
- Reincarnation: Hindus feel that all forms of life have a soul (atma). They think that the soul cannot be destroyed. Instead, Hindus believe in reincarnation, which means that the soul exists in the body until the living thing dies. It then enters a new living thing.
- Karma: Good and bad actions carried out during someone's life, affects which living thing the soul will be born into next. For example, Hindus think it is possible for a human soul to be reborn as a cat.
- Moksha: Moksha means liberation of the soul from the cycle of death and rebirth. It occurs when the soul reunites with the god Brahma. For a Hindu, this is the end goal.

In Hinduism, 'dharma' means duty, religion, virtue and morality; it is a central part of a Hindu's daily life. Hindus believe that there are right and wrong ways to behave so they must behave correctly, follow the moral law and take their duties seriously. According to dharma, it is best to do the right thing at all times. For example, a pupil's dharma is to work hard at school; the parents' dharma is to raise and support their family; and the dharma of the police is to protect others. At different stages of a Hindu's life, their dharma will change, however, it is everyone's dharma to be kind, honest, religious and to be a good person in society. Hindus believe that following their dharma allows them to feel happy and live a rewarding life. Not acting in accordance with your dharma is believed to be wrong and called 'adharma'.

Karma refers to the law that every action has a reaction in the near or distant future. Therefore, actions in accordance with dharma will have good reactions. If a Hindu follows the dharma, they can expect to be reincarnated into a higher form in the next life or good luck will come their way.

Did you know?

Hinduism is often referred to as Sanātana Dharma, a Sanskrit phrase meaning 'the eternal law'.

There are two main categories of the Hindu scriptures known as Shruti and Smriti. Smriti is composed of traditional texts, including the Dharma Shastras (legal and ethical texts), the Puranas and the folk legends known as the Mahabharata and Ramayana.

The word dharma also means the ancient teachings of the Buddha in relation to Buddhism. Many of the Buddha's teachings come from Hinduism.

