

1. Key Words 🔍

Afterlife: Life after death; the belief that existence continues after physical death.

Ahimsa: Not killing; respect for life; never being violent; not hurting others

Euthanasia: Sometimes referred to as 'mercy killing'. The act of killing or permitting the death of a person who is suffering from a terminal illness.

Evolution: The process by which different living creatures are believed to have developed from earlier less complex forms during the history of the earth.

Abortion: When a pregnancy is deliberately ended so that it does not result in the birth of a child.

Quality of Life: The extent to which life is meaningful and pleasurable.

Sanctity of Life: The belief that life is precious or sacred. For many religious believers, only human life holds this special status.

Eternity: A state that comes after death and never ends..

2.Christian views on creation

†There are two creation stories in the Bible - Genesis 1 and Genesis 2.

†Genesis 1 describes how God created the world in six days and rested on the seventh.

†Day 1: light & dark; Day 2: sea & sky; Day 3: sun; moon & stars; Day 4: land & plants; Day 5: fish & birds; Day 6: animals & humans.

†There are 2 main interpretations of this account:

†**Literal** - it's a holy text from God and creation happened exactly as described in the Bible.

†**Liberal** - the Bible should be seen as a parable or symbolic story. The meaning is the same, even if it is not historically accurate.

†Many evangelical Christians are **creationists** - they reject scientific theories because they contradict the literal interpretation of the Bible.

†Some Liberal Christians say that you can accept the Big Bang and evolution.

† **Theistic guided evolution**: life came about through evolution but this process was guided by the intervention of God. **Natural evolution**: evolution is the natural process by which life emerged but God put these laws of nature into place before the universe existed.



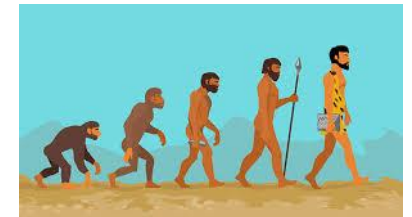
3.Hindu views on creation

- The universe is millions of years old. In line with the Hindu belief in reincarnation, it is not the first or indeed the last universe.
- The universe was created by Brahma, who made the universe out of himself. It is the power of Vishnu which preserves the world and human beings, and it is Shiva who will ultimately destroy the universe. This allows Brahma to start the process of creation all over again.
- Creation stories:
 - A lotus flower grew from Lord Vishnu's navel with Brahma sitting on it. Brahma separated the flower into three parts - the heavens, the Earth and the sky. Brahma split himself into two to create a male and a female.
 - Another story refers to life coming from the cracking of an enormous egg, which is the life from which the universe is born.
- The Hymn of Creation from the Rig Veda- nobody knows how the universe came into being and even Brahman might not know.
- Some Hindu texts offer a more scientific explanation based on the evolution of primary elements from a single source.



4.Science and Religion

- Charles Darwin was the first person to show that life has arisen through the slow natural process of evolution.
- His theory became known as the 'survival of the fittest'.
- In 1965 the Big Bang theory became the accepted explanation for the origin of the universe.
- Whilst many religious believers accept Darwin, some see it as an attack on their beliefs as it undermines God, the Bible and removes the need for a soul. ✝
- It removes the idea that God created the earth and humans for a purpose.
- However, some see the two working together, as there is no scientific explanation for what caused the Big Bang. Both theories follow the same basic order: **Light, land, life**.
- Intelligent design is a theory that the world is too ordered for it to have happened by chance. It must have been God
- Hindu accounts, written many centuries ago, were not necessarily intended to be taken as literal scientific truth, but are indicators of the complexity and infinite nature of the universe. ॐ



5. Key Words 🔍

Awe: A feeling of devout respect, mixed with fear or wonder.

Wonder: marvelling at the complexity and beauty of the universe.

Responsibility: a duty to care for, or having control over, something or someone.

Stewardship: the duty to look after the environment on behalf of God.

Dominion: dominance or power over something; having charge of something or ruling over it.

Sustainable development: building and progress that try to reduce the impact on the natural world for future generations.

Deforestation: The cutting down of large amounts of forest, usually because of business needs.

Vegetarian: A person who does not eat meat or fish.

Vegan: A person who does not eat animals or food produced by animals; a vegan tries not to use any products that have caused harm to animals (e.g. leather)

6. The value of the world

- **Stewardship-** God has given humans the privilege of living on planet Earth but with the responsibility of looking after it.
- In Genesis 2, Adam the first man, was given the task of looking after the Garden of Eden. **✝️**
'cultivating and taking care of it' (Genesis 2:15)
- People have been appointed by God to respect and manage the world, in a sustainable way. Many Christians believe they will be **✝️** accountable to God concerning how well they look after the Earth.
- Hindus believe they have a duty to look after the world in order to gain good karma and eventually reach moksha. The earth is the mother as it provides for their needs. In the Bhagavad Gita it states that a person taking resources without out a thought for others or putting something back is *'just a thief.'* **ॐ**
- **Dominion-** Christians have been given power and authority to rule over the world. *'Rule over the fish in the sea...and over every living creature that moves on the ground.'* Genesis 1: 28. A **✝️** minority have interpreted it as meaning they can do what they like with it.



7. Use and abuse of the environment

- The demand for natural resources is getting greater, so it is more important to encourage sustainable development.
- Issues include: deforestation; use on non-renewable resources; pollution- air, land, water.
- **Christianity:** Assisi and Ohito meetings- being in charge of God's creation does not give us the right to destroy what God has made. We are only the tenant of God's world. **✝️**
'Every human act of irresponsibility towards creatures is an abomination.' Christian statement in the Assisi Declaration *'...the land is mine and you reside in my land as foreigners and strangers.'* Leviticus 25:23 *'The earth is the LORD'S, and everything in it.'* Psalm 24:1
- **Hinduism-** Assisi Declarations- All beings and non-beings have the same spiritual power; nature is **ॐ** sacred, as is ahimsa; nature cannot be destroyed without humanity destroying itself; the Divine is part of nature.



8. Use and abuse of animals

- **Christianity-** Many Christians that although God values animals, humans are more important as they were created in the image of God, and **✝️** have souls.
- Noah was commanded to take animals with him in the ark so they would be safe, however, after the flood he was given permission to eat meat: *'Everything that lives and moves will be food for you.'* Genesis 9:3 The Bible also teaches that animals should be treated kindly: *'Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain.'* Deuteronomy 25:3
- **Hinduism-** All animals have value and contain a spark of the Divine. Hindus must live by the principle of ahimsa. Cow are particularly sacred. Some Hindu gods are animals themselves **ॐ** (Ganesha Hanuman) or are protected/transported by an animal (bull, tiger, mouse, peacock, eagle and swan are all vehicles for deities). Therefore, many Hindu's are vegetarians and those that aren't would not eat beef. However, most are not vegans as they use animal products.

Animal Experimentation:

- **Christianity-** As human life is sacred animal experimentation for medical use is generally **✝️** permitted as it can save many lives.
- **Hinduism-** Animals are part of the cycle of samsara and are associated with deities, **ॐ** Humans should not 'play God' and ahimsa means that animals shouldn't be harmed. However, it is important to show compassion to the sick, especially children, and many think that humans are more important than animals. Not all animals are associated with deities and the ability to carry out these experiments have come from God.

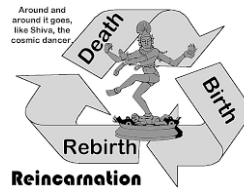


9. Religious views against abortion

- **Roman Catholics** - abortion is forbidden in all circumstances as life is sacred and God given from the moment of conception. ✝
- Abortion is murder and goes against the Ten Commandments.
- Only God can create life and take it away. *'Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,'* Jeremiah 1:5
- Some Christians believe that the UK law is applied too liberally.
- **Hinduism**- Sanctity of life is a strong belief, if life is taken before its natural time it brings bad karma. ॐ
- *'His Being is the source of all being,'* Upanishad. The soul and consciousness are present from conception and the Puranas describe how a baby wakes up within the womb. ॐ
- The foetus is being sheltered by the mother, abortion is a betrayal of trust.
- Poor quality of life is karma for a past life has been lived badly.

10. Religious views agreeing with abortion

- **Church of England** - all life is precious as it is made by God. ✝ But, in some circumstances abortion is the loving thing to do if the mother's life is in danger due to the pregnancy; if the pregnancy is a result of rape or if the baby will be born with severe and life-threatening disabilities / illness.
- **Hinduism**- Abortion is legal in the UK and India; it can be accepted if a mother's life is in danger (shows compassion); Hindu belief in reincarnation means that abortion is allowed as it only deprives the atman of one of its births. ॐ



11. Religious views against euthanasia

- Most **Christians** agree that euthanasia is not acceptable because: all life is sacred; taking life is wrong; it goes against the Ten Commandments; life is a gift from God & therefore precious; suffering can have a purpose & should be endured as God will not give us more than what we can cope with; hospices offer an alternative where care & support can be given. ✝



- **Hindu** scripture teaches that the elderly should be protected and they are seen as an essential part of the family in India. Strong painkillers would interfere with having a conscious departure (an ideal death). Interferes with God's plan; doctors would receive bad karma for carrying out euthanasia. ॐ

12. Religious views agreeing with euthanasia

- It can be acceptable to turn off a life-support machine if there is medical evidence that the person is brain dead. Some **Christians** accept that euthanasia might be the most loving thing to do when someone is suffering great pain. *'Blessed are the merciful'* Matthew 5:7 ✝



- **Hinduism**- some modern thinkers see euthanasia as a good deed and as an obligation to practice ahimsa by not prolonging suffering. Hindus are allowed to fast to death. ॐ

13. Christian views on life after death

The soul is an inner part of our being & it is through this that we connect with God. Christians believe in resurrection & eternal life. Death is not the end. As Jesus was resurrected, those who believe in Him & follow his teachings will be rewarded with life in heaven after death. Apostles Creed: *I believe in the resurrection of the body.* Some Christians believe in whole body resurrection, with others just thinking the soul goes to heaven. Some Christians see heaven (*'There will no more death or mourning or crying or pain,'* Revelation) & hell (*'There will be no rest day or night.'* Revelation) as real places, whilst others see them as symbolic. Roman Catholics also believe in purgatory.



14. Hindu views on life after death and Hindu rites of passage- death:

Reincarnation continues until moksha is achieved. Rebirth is dependant on previous karma. *'and thus the bodied soul takes other forms when it discards the worn-out ones that die.'* Bhagavad Gita.

Ceremonies associated with death are aimed to help the soul on its journey towards moksha. Funerals happen soon after death; bodies are usually cremated- this helps the soul to leave behind attachments; funeral ghats are common beside sacred rivers; In India, the body is wrapped in a white shroud; garland of orange flowers is placed on the body; a few drops of the river Ganges is placed in the mouth; the feet face south; eldest son walls around the pyre three times, then lights it; ghee and sweet smelling perfumes are used; eldest son stays with the pyre until fire dies and then collects and scatters the ashes on the river; relatives bathe after the funeral; do not socialise for 10 days after the funeral; family members who have passed are remembered and offerings of milk and rice are made.



1. Key Words 🔍

Upanishads-Part of the oldest Hindu scriptures; the shruti, containing details about Brahman

Shrine-A sacred space in the home, temple or outdoors where a deity is worshipped.

Space of the heart-a concept known as antaryami, meaning God is within the hearts of all living beings.

Murti-An image of a deity used as a focus of worship and offerings.

Celibate-giving up sexual relations.

Circumambulate-Walk round a temple or an image, saying prayers.

Ghats-Stairs or platforms beside a river, especially the Ganges, used for cremation.

Ahimsa-Not killing; respect for life; never being violent; not hurting others.

Sustainability-Only using natural resources at a rate at which they can be replaced.

2. Liberation (Moksha)

- Worship is very important and is something many Hindus do every day. It is a way of showing love and devotion to Brahman. Hindus believe they have an atman, or piece of Brahman, within them. Therefore, connecting to Brahman through worship is very important. Hindus use all of their senses when they worship so that they can fully connect to Brahman. Brahman is within people and therefore can be worshipped wherever they are.



- Different ways to worship can be found in the Upanishads:

'When a man knows God, he is free:...When in inner union he is...one with the ONE.'

'lead the mind and its powers into thy heart; and the OM of Brahman will be thy boat with which to cross the rivers of fear.'

'There are two ways of contemplation of Brahman: in sound and in silence.'

- Atman is one with Brahman, the aim of life is to return to Brahman.
- At liberation atman returns to Brahman but remains separate.

3. Places of worship

Worship can be done within the home or temple. Most Hindus worship at home every day but visit a temple when they want to and also try to visit a temple to celebrate important festivals such as Diwali.

A **temple** is called a **mandir** In countries where there are many Hindus, such as India, most towns will have a mandir so all people can worship easily. These are decorated elaborately as they represent the idea of a palace- God is like a king. Some temples have statues of various deities or scenes from important stories in Hinduism.



Inside the temple

- temples have **statues** of many popular gods, such as Ganesha and Shiva, but also some statues of gods that are important to the people of that community.
- The main **shrine room**-dome that reaches up high, symbolises the idea that Hindus can reach up to God.
- Everyone must **remove their shoes** as they should not bring dirt into such a special space.
- When they enter the shrine room, Hindus **ring a bell** to 'awaken' the deities. If possible, they will then **walk around** the main shrine area within the mandir. Next they will either **kneel or sit down** on the floor in front of the deities, clasp their hands together and offer **pranams**, or respectful greetings, this leads to **darshan**, or 'receiving sight' of the deity, who in turn, sees the worshipper. Hindus might silently recite personal **prayers** or traditional ancient prayers. Worshipers also **give offerings to the gods**, such as food and gifts.
- Once the offerings of food have been blessed by the temple priest, they are distributed to the visitors.

4. Types of worship

Inside the temple:

Havan- a fire sacrifice to the god Agni, offerings include items that symbolise the five elements of existence (earth, water, fire, air and space). **Presiding Brahmin**- looks after the statues of the deities, e.g. washing them and clothing them each day. He will also 'feed' the deities by placing blessed food, called prashad, at their feet and then shared with people in the temple or the poor.

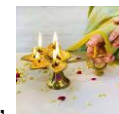
Daily worship at home:

The shrine- kept in the cleanest to show respect to Brahman. All members of the family take part in daily worship. The shrine will contain important objects that are used for worship. The puja ceremony, uses all five senses:

Object	Use in worship	Sense used
A bell	To awaken the god and let them know you are ready to worship.	Hearing
Food offerings	Food, usually fruit, is given as an offering to the gods.	Taste
Murti	A image or statue of the god being worshipped.	Sight
Incense	Incense is burnt. It fills the room, which reminds worshippers that Brahman is always there. Incense is also burnt to purify the atmosphere.	Smell
Kum-kum powder	Marks the head of the worshipper and the god to show respect.	Touch

Different forms of worship

Worship is to show **bhakti**, which means loving devotion to God. **Puja**- giving respect to Brahman, a Hindu will most likely worship one or two specific deities that are important to them and their family. **Aarti**- an aarti lamp is passed around in front of worshippers who waft their hands over the flame and then over their heads to gain blessings from God. **Darshan**- (seen by God), Hindus touch the feet of their preferred deity (honour and respect). Mantras are chanted using prayer beads, also called malas. Hymns are sung, called bhajans. **Havan** is a traditional fire sacrifice symbolises giving something up for Brahman.



5. Teachers

Guru – Gu- darkness; Ru- light. A guru is a teacher who gets rid of spiritual darkness and replaces it with enlightenment.

'The pearl is found in the oyster, and the oyster is in the sea. The diver brings it up. No one else has the power to do this.' Guru Kabir



'The guru is the skilful helmsman, divine grace the favourable wind; if with such means man does not strive to cross the ocean of life and death, he is indeed lost.' Guru Chaitanya

Many Hindus aim to reach moksha with the help of a guru. This is a holy person, who has reached enlightenment after giving up attachments and spending time studying scriptures and meditating on God. They must: be well versed in scriptures; knows about Brahman; overcome desire; be honest, sincere and trustworthy.

Sadhu – Hindu teacher or wandering holy man.

Sannyasin – In the last stage of life and has given up possessions and contact with family. They carry only a begging bowl, a stick, and some prayer beads. They are treated with great respect.

Swami – An ascetic who is known for teaching Hindu scripture. They belong to a religious order.

6. Diwali

Diwali is one of the most recognised and celebrated festivals in Hinduism and is known as the festival of lights. It is usually celebrated in October or November and lasts five days. It links to the famous story of Rama and Sita and remembers the victory of good over evil. The festival is celebrated by cleaning the home and getting the accounts in order for the next financial year. Hindus also have firework displays and light diya lamps in memory of Rama's heroic rescue of his kidnapped wife and queen, Sita.



It is said that long ago people lit diya lamps to help light the way back home for Rama and Sita after Rama defeated the evil ten-headed demon king Ravana, who had kidnapped Sita.

Hindus also worship Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, in the hope that they will have a prosperous new year, as Diwali is the beginning of the Hindu New Year.

7. Holi

Holi is known as the festival of colours and is celebrated during the spring. Hindus wear brightly coloured clothes and throw coloured powders over each other, which covers them from head to toe. The festival lasts two days and is in February or March, at a time when the moon is full.

Traditionally, Holi is also a day to mark forgiveness, and heal one's broken relationships.



At Holi, Hindus remember the victory of Prahlad over the demon girl Holika. Holika was ordered by an evil king to slay Prahlad, the king's son. Prahlad was very devoted to Vishnu whereas the king hated Vishnu. The festival is a celebration of good over evil because Holika was burnt in a fire when she tried to kill Prahlad. The festival became known as Holi to remember these events.

8

Type of yoga	Its meaning
Jnana yoga	A disciplined type of yoga that is done by Hindus who have given up worldly possessions and want to focus on trying to be in unity with God. They try to connect themselves and the world with Brahman. They study the Hindu holy books to understand Brahman in more depth.
Raja yoga	This is focused on antaryami, which means Brahman within humans. It is a meditation yoga that is mainly used by Hindu holy men, who complete mantras to focus on Brahman.
Karma yoga	This type of yoga is about focusing on doing good things around you and helping others. The idea is to try not to focus on the material objects in life and instead focus on the spiritual. Doing good things will gain a person good karma and therefore help towards achieving moksha. In the <i>Bhagavad Gita</i> , which is an important Hindu holy book, Lord Krishna explains that selfless action is the best example of karma yoga.
Bhakti yoga	This type of yoga is about worship and showing God love and devotion. This might be done through prayer to an image of a deity in the shrine at home. Hindus want to make it clear to Brahman that the most important being is Brahman. Bhakti yoga is about showing this through worship.

9. Pilgrimage

A pilgrimage is a special religious journey that is made for a specific purpose. Hindus believe that pilgrimage is important and should be carried out if possible. Hindus have many different important and sacred places in their religion, and these are usually linked to different deities. A pilgrimage can help Hindus by connecting them with Brahman. Through pilgrimage, they can show their belief in God and gain a better understanding of an important holy site. It is also a way of meeting other Hindus who share their beliefs and trying to work towards achieving moksha.



Varanasi

The most sacred city in Hinduism is Varanasi, as it is one of the oldest and most respected cities. It is believed to be the city where Shiva, the god of destruction, lived a long time ago. The River Ganges, which is one of the most sacred rivers in the world, runs through the city and is important as it is where Hindus bathe in the hope they can wash their sins away. A lot of Hindus believe that people who die in the city of Varanasi can achieve moksha.

10. Kumbh Mela

- The largest gathering of people in the world. Millions of people attend and bathe in the Ganges (in North India). The main Kumbh Mela gathering takes place every 12 years, with other events taking place every three years at four different sites (a different site is used every three years).
- It started because of the story of the Garuda, which was a bird. The bird picked up a jar that contained immortality nectar, but four drops of the nectar fell into the Ganges. Hindus therefore bathe in the Ganges with the hope of having their sin washed away and their soul purified.
- The Kumbh Mela pilgrimage lasts for 55 days and hosts many different types of Hindus, who tell stories and entertain other people. Many Hindus wear flower garlands around their neck and then throw them into the Ganges as an offering. Hindu holy men attend the pilgrimage and lead processions into the Ganges.
- Hindus hope that this pilgrimage will make them blessed by God and help them achieve their ultimate goal of moksha through their devotion.

11. The Environment

Friends of Vrindavan- protects the forests by cleaning areas and educating people about how to look after the environment. Krishna (Vishnu's eighth incarnation or avatar), lived in Vrindavan forest. Tree conservation is an important movement in Hinduism. In 1730, 300 women hugged trees to prevent them being cut down, They were killed but this inspired other movements e.g. **Chipko movement** which later won the Right Livelihood Award. *'If there is but one tree of flowers and fruit within a village, that place is worthy of your respect.'* Mahabharata

The cow protection movement- Cows are sacred animals in Hinduism and it aims to look after cows in special places called goshallas. Cows provided people with everything they have needed to survive, such as milk and butter, and therefore need to be treated with respect.



Many Hindus follow the example set by Krishna, who was respectful to cows. The Bhagavad Gita, says that cows should not be slaughtered. It says that cows are "*the mothers of all things*". At **Bhaktivedanta Manor**, in the UK, a protection project was set up in 1996 in reaction to many cows being killed because of the BSE crisis that was happening at the time. The manor now continues to look after cows and shelters them.

12. Charity

Hindus believe that charity, or dana, is important. This is because helping others is helping Brahman, as all living things have an atman, or piece of Brahman, within them. Selfless charitable acts are seen as examples of Karma yoga.



Dana means giving and sewa means selfless service. The concept of charity in Hinduism is about helping others without expecting something in return and because it is the right thing to do.

Hindus practise an important concept called ahimsa, which means not harming or killing anything living. Therefore, helping to protect the environment and looking after other people and animals are very important to Hindus.

13. Women's Rights-The Vedas hold women in high esteem and address them as dharma Patni (one who promotes and preserves the rightful conduct of life). Traditionally, a woman's role has been seen as supporting family life and playing an important role in the religious activities of the family. However, the role of women has changed greatly over. In many modern Hindu communities men and women have equal worth. A Hindu woman might choose to pursue a career and earn the most money in the household. Women who are mothers have always been highly respected and have great worth in Hinduism.



Many Hindu women have stepped forward to promote the rights of women and many charities have worked hard to raise awareness and promote the well-being, inclusion and rights of women. One charity which has devoted itself to the campaign for women's rights is the **Manushi organisation**. The interventions lead by Manushi have influence change and the way women are viewed by many. In the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna pointed out to his disciple Arjuna that women are as worthy and as capable as men of achieving liberation, or moksha.