

## I AM HINDU - WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

I am grateful to God that I am a Hindu. As a Hindu I believe that God is One but He is worshipped in different ways by different religions of the world. I adore all religions because God is the same for Hindus, Christians, Jews, Muslims, and for all humanity.

God is the very source of my mind and soul. He is everywhere. He is all loving - all powerful and all knowing. Nothing is hidden from Him. He knows even my secret thoughts. When I pray to Him or repeat His Name, I feel peaceful. A new insight develops in me and I am able to overcome my difficulties by His Divine Grace.

I can worship God as the Father - as Vishnu or Shiva, Rama or Krishna, or as the Mother - Lakshmi or Saraswati, Durga or Shakti, or I can worship God in adoring Saints and Sages - Mahabir or Buddha, or I can meditate on God as the Truth beyond all names and forms.

The Hindu scriptures teach four great techniques for living a life of happiness, harmony and success. Karma Yoga is to worship God through the performance of my duties. Bhakti Yoga is to love God and feel the sustaining presence of God within my heart. Dhyana Yoga is to practice meditation and develop the powers of the mind. Jnana Yoga is to make my intellect sharp and to understand that "I am not of this physical body, I am the Immortal Soul, I am one with God."

I believe in the law of Karma which is the law of action and reaction. If I do good deeds, I will find happiness in my life. If I do evil deeds, I will have painful situations. I have passed through many incarnations. My present condition is due to my past deeds and thoughts. My future depends upon my thoughts and actions of my present life.

With God in me, I have infinite possibilities. I am the architect of my destiny. The central goal of my life is to attain God-realization and become free of birth and death.

Life is a wonderful opportunity. I believe in disciplining my body and mind so that I will become a loving person as I grow. I will be loving to my family, friends and relatives. I will educate myself so that I can offer the best of my services to my family, my society, my country and my world. I seek good association and shun all evil company. I know God abides in everyone. Therefore, it is my aim not to hurt anyone, not to deceive anyone, not to do anything wrong to anyone. Real strength lies in controlling anger, greed and hatred. Real beauty lies in developing virtuous qualities such as humility, cheerfulness, honesty, and devotion to God. Real victory lies in mastering the mind.

One of the important prayers from the Hindu scriptures is the Gayatri Mantra which means, "O God, You pervade the three worlds. You are effulgent like the sun. May You enlighten my intellect. May You give me wisdom."

As a Hindu, I not only pray for the good of myself and my family but also for the good of all humanity. In fact, I pray for the good of all living beings - animals, birds and small creatures as well. I am indeed blessed that I am a Hindu and I want to maintain the high ethical standard of being a Hindu.

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