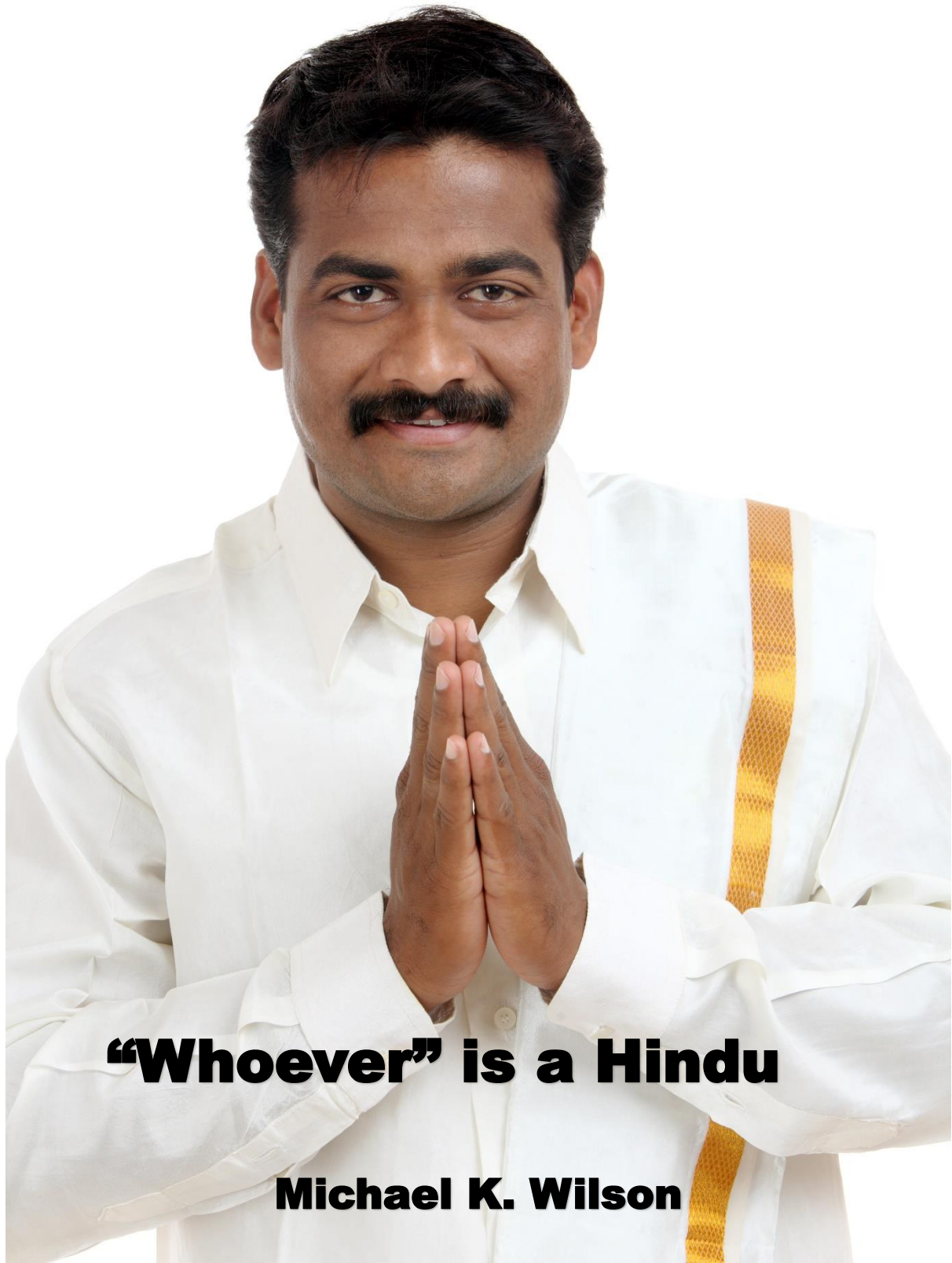


WHOEVER SERIES



“Whoever” is a Hindu

Michael K. Wilson

This booklet is written to give Christians a basic sense of the world in which our Hindu friends live. It takes a bird's eye view of Hinduism's attraction, history, beliefs and practices. It looks at what it means to be a Hindu in multicultural Australia. It promotes positive measures for Christians to adopt in relating to their Hindu friends.

“WHOEVER” IS A HINDU

WHOEVER SERIES

Facing the Challenge

A Growing Presence

Hinduism is one of the fastest growing religions in Australia. This is almost entirely due to migration. Hindus have come to Australia especially from India, but also from such countries as Sri Lanka, Nepal, Fiji and Malaysia. Many speak English fluently yet speak another language in their homes, for example, Hindi, Tamil, Gujarati, Nepali, Telugu, Kannada or Punjabi.

The educational and income levels and participation in professional occupations of Australian Hindus is much higher than the Australian average.



HATHA YOGA HAS SIX 'LIMBS': DISCIPLINES, POSTURES, PURIFICATION PROCEDURES, GESTURES, BREATHING AND MEDIATION. MANY WESTERN PRACTITIONERS, PREDOMINATELY WOMEN, TREAT YOGA AS A STRESS-REDUCING SET OF PHYSICAL EXERCISES.

There are Hindu populations in many nations, though it is only the majority religion in two nations, India and Nepal. It is the immensity of India's population which makes Hinduism the world's third largest religion after Christianity and Islam. But Hinduism is not a world religion in the same sense as Christianity, Islam and Buddhism. For the vast majority of Hindus are derived from a very limited ethnic range, that is, largely from Indian subcontinental ancestries.

Hinduism's influence on the worldviews of Australians is indirect. New Age spirituality filters a confused blend of Hindu and Buddhist beliefs into many Australian minds. Yoga is perhaps the most common interface between Hindu thought and Australian culture. Through yoga people are often encouraged to see value in emptying their minds or in viewing their bodies as a means of developing personal spirituality. Hinduism also reinforces the popular appeal of astrology, numerology, and the reading of horoscopes and palms.

“WHOEVER” YOU ARE...

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16).

Whoever you are:

- God loves you
- Jesus died for you
- Believe in Jesus
- Receive life

The Complexity of Hinduism

The name “Hindu” comes from the Persian pronunciation for the river Sindhu, now called the Indus. The plurality of gods, the non-existence of a founder, the absence of a creed and the lack of any one binding scripture makes Hinduism as hard to grasp as wet slippery soap. Hinduism has spawned a multitude of sects and provides a smorgasbord of beliefs and practices to choose from. Keep this complexity in mind when reading this simplified overview of Hindu thought and practice.



THE GANGES RIVER IS WORSHIPPED AS THE GODDESS GANGA. HINDUS PURIFY THEMSELVES BY BATHING IN THIS HIGHLY POLLUTED RIVER AND USE ITS WATERS IN RITUALS. THE ASHES OF DECEASED HINDUS ARE BROUGHT TO THE GANGES, ESPECIALLY AT VARANASI.

Historical Forces

Christianity, Islam and Buddhism all look back to pivotal historical events that have shaped them. Christianity utterly depends on Jesus' death and resurrection in history. The *hijra*, Muhammad's flight from Mecca to Medina, has immense formative importance for Islam. The enlightenment experience of Siddhartha is central to Buddhism. By contrast, the essential nature of Hinduism is not associated with any particular historical events.

Biblical religion claims that it dates back to the very creation of human beings. The Qur'an likewise claims that Adam was a Muslim. Hindus often dismiss Christianity as a relatively recent religion and may argue that the antiquity of Hinduism evidences its superiority over other religions. Some Hindus claim that their teachings and practices date back 8,000 years or more.

Scriptures

Though archaeological evidence is inconclusive it is believed that a nomadic people called the Aryans (“the noble people”) moved into India around 1500 BC. They are credited with producing the earliest Hindu scripture, the *Rig-Veda* (*rig* means “praise and *veda* means “knowledge”).

Hindus commonly have special reverence for the Vedas and Agamas. Along with the *Rig Veda* the *Atharva Veda* (Atharvan was a *rishi*, an inspired poet) is especially venerated. The Vedas include prose texts dealing with sacrificial rituals (*Brahmanas*) and more philosophical texts (*Upanishads*).

Vedic ritual practice did not involve idols or shrines. The Agamas are post-Vedic scriptures which instruct Hindus on how to build a temple and create an idol (*murti*). The *murti*, usually manufactured using stone, wood or metal, is the means through which Hindus worship the deity (*murta*) it represents. The Agamas also teach such practices as meditation and yoga.

There are four main Hindu sects - Saivism, Shaktism, Vaishnavism and Smartism. The first three of these have their own sets of Agamas. Smartism is more focused on the Vedas, though all major Hindu deities are also accepted.

Among the vast body of Hindu writings some other scriptures have especially left their imprint on Hinduism. The *Mahabharata* consists of 100,000 verses and contains one of the most read of all Indian works, the *Bhagavad Gita* (The Song of the Lord). This takes the form of a dialogue between Krishna, the eighth avatar of Vishnu, and the warrior Arjuna.



KRISHNA ADVISES ARJUNA AS TWO SIDES PREPARE FOR BATTLE. SOURCE: KRISHNAPATH.ORG

The *Ramayana* is an epic about Rama, the seventh avatar of Vishnu, whose wife Sita had been abducted by the king of Lanka (today’s Sri Lanka).

The *Puranas* consist of 18 major and 18 minor scriptures. The 18 major *Puranas* are divided into three groups, each exalting one member of the *Trimurti* (the Vedic trinity), namely Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.

Deities and Sects



HANUMAN IS AN INCARNATION OF SHIVA. IN THE RAMAYANA EPIC HE CARRIES AN ENTIRE MOUNTAIN TO A BATTLEFIELD BECAUSE ON IT GREW A LIFE-GIVING HERB. HIS MURTI IS OFTEN NEAR IMAGES OF VISHNU'S AVATARS, AND ALSO ON MOUNTAIN ROADS TO PROTECT PEOPLE FROM ACCIDENTS.

In early classical Hinduism, the two great manifestations of divine Being were Vishnu and Shiva. But, by popular account, the Hindu pantheon numbers some 330 million gods. Each main deity is associated with an animal or bird, upon which it rides, its *vahana* ("bearer"). Commonly found are iconic representations of gods such as Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Krishna, Rama, Ganesha and the Goddess, the latter appearing as either Durga, Kali, Lakshmi, Parvati or Saraswathi. Each sect has a main deity they worship. So Saivists worship Shiva, Shaktists worship Shakti, and Vaishnavists worship Vishnu.

But the complexity of Hinduism is compounded by other realities. A significant number venerate the *Bhagavad Gita* and so focus their worship on Krishna. Also Hindus have been profoundly influenced by Adi Shankara who lived in the eighth century AD and was only 32 when he died. Adi Shankara, often considered an incarnation of Shiva, taught that *atman* (the Self) and *Brahman* (the Whole) are one. He taught that there is an unchanging entity and that the relationship of the Self to the Whole is like that of an ocean wave to the ocean.

Most modern Hindus do not follow any particular sect. They treat "God" (Brahman) as in some sense personal. But they are largely unaware as to what Hindu scriptures teach and worship all deities, believing them all to be part of one God. Many believe deity is ultimately one impersonal being that is all and in everything.

In folk Hinduism it is common for blood sacrifices to be made to appease supernatural malevolent spirits and secure blessings, including protection. By contrast, higher Hinduism involves less ritualistic forms.



GANESHA: ARGUABLY THE MOST COMMONLY WORSHIPPED HINDU DEITY. HERE GANESHA IS SEATED ON HIS VAHANA, A MOUSE. GANESHA IS VENERATED AS THE GOD OF WISDOM AND SUCCESS, THE PATRON OF THE ARTS AND SCIENCES AND THE REMOVER OF OBSTACLES.

Some mistakenly assume that the Hindu concept of *Trimurti* (Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva) approximates to the Christian doctrine of the Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit). In reality the difference is massive. The doctrine of the Trinity concerns one eternal God who exists in three distinct, co-equal persons, with the only incarnation being that of the second person of the Godhead, namely Jesus. By contrast, the *Trimurti* is a manifestation of Brahman, the universal one being, with there being millions of other manifestations and incarnations.



THE TRIMURTI

Worship



A COUPLE PERFORMING PUJA

For Hindus worship, or *puja*, of a particular deity can take place either in the home or the temple. In the home, *puja* is done in ‘puja rooms’, though a kitchen cupboard might be used due to space constraints. Puja is led by a senior member of the family, who must bathe beforehand.

Domestic *puja* involves washing and drying images (*murtis*) of deities and offering them red *kumkum* (used to put a red spot on the forehead) and yellow turmeric powders, water, rice grains, flowers, food, incense, and light. The *arati* ritual is then performed by passing a ghee-lamp (fuelled by clarified butter) before the images, while sacred verses of praise are sung. Food placed before the deities is received back as *prasad*, “a blessed offering.”

Once an icon is made, priests (*brahmins*) consecrate the image, welcoming various “deities” to take up residence in different parts of its body and infusing it with living breath (*prana*). From that point on, the divine is manifest within the icon and must be cared for, served like an honoured guest, and offered love.

The Worship and Veneration of Animals

Rabindranath R. Maharaj exemplifies a common Hindu worldview:



IN MODERN HINDU SOCIETY EATING BEEF IS A TERRIBLE SIN, SO SACRED IS THE COW, COMMONLY CALLED 'MOTHER.' BUT IN VEDIC SOCIETY CATTLE WERE THE MAIN SACRIFICIAL VICTIM. THERE WAS NO PROHIBITION ON EATING MEAT.

“To the Hindu, snakes are gods. I kept a live one – a splendid macajuel snake – in my room and worshiped it, just as I worshiped the monkey god and the elephant god and above all the cow god. For me, God was everything and everything was God – except, of course, those unfortunate beings who had no caste. My world was filled with spirits and gods and occult powers, and my obligation from childhood was to give each its due” (*Death of a Guru*).

In keeping with their treatment as deities in ancient myths, snakes (*nagas*) continue to be worshipped widely in modern Hinduism. Around 25,000 live rats are venerated at the Temple of Rats (Karni Mata Temple) in Rajasthan. Such is the veneration of the cow that many Hindus drink cow urine. It is even marketed as a health drink and used in the making of soaps and shampoos.

Indian national surveys reveal that, notwithstanding their veneration of many animals, the vast majority of Hindus are non-vegetarians.

Pilgrimage

Though not required, most Hindus undertake pilgrimages to holy sites, of which there are an immense number. Examples include Mathura (the legendary birthplace of Krishna), the beach at Kanyakumari (where Parvati reputedly married Lord Shiva) and Puri where each year pilgrims attend the chariot festival.



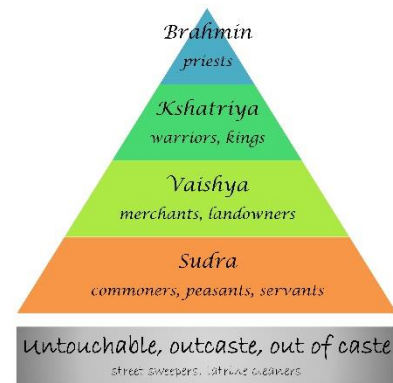
PILGRIMS IN DARASURAM, THE LOCATION OF THE AIRAVATESVARA TEMPLE DEDICATED TO SHIVA

The Caste System

The ancient *Laws of Manu* teach that ‘salvation’ is attained mainly through obedience to law, especially the law of caste. A fourfold caste (*varna*) system is presented (see Figure 9).

There were around 3000 different castes (*jati*) when 17th century British rule in India began. In classical Hinduism people married within each caste group and ate only with that group. Barring unusual cases, caste is immutably fixed at birth.

Where caste is taken seriously, it limits choice of occupation, marriage partner, dress, eating habits, religious practice, and freedom to move about.



ANCIENT CLASS SYSTEM



AN UNTOUCHABLE: DALIT SWEEPER

Modern legislation bans discrimination on the basis of caste. Now in urban areas people from all castes interact with each other in social and business contexts. The President from 1997-2002 (K.R. Narayanan), a Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and a Speaker of Parliament have all been Dalits. But caste is still a major consideration in marriages. In rural areas laws are often not enforced. Instances of an appalling treatment of people because of their caste persist. Many still believe that each caste has its own *dharma*, or ‘duty’, a divinely ordained code of proper conduct.

Life-Goals

In classical Hinduism there are four great life-goals.

1. Pleasure (*kama*), with sex as the most intense of the pleasures. Hindus pursuing this goal follow their instincts, but so as to conform with ‘virtue.’
2. Economic gain: lawful materialistic fulfilment (*artha*).
3. Virtue or action in accord with the Dharma (*dharma*), especially fulfilling one’s caste obligations. Hindus can choose their own source of authority for determining virtue, whether scripture such as the Vedas, an individual teacher, or his or her own ideas about good and bad, right and wrong.
4. Liberation of the soul from needing to be reborn (*moksha*).

These life-goals are listed in ascending order of importance. Hindus can either try to achieve all of these goals at the same time or pursue them at different times in their lives.

Liberation (moksha/mukti)

For Hindus *moksha*, the ultimate life-goal, can be achieved through four paths:

1. The way of knowledge (*jnana marga*).

The Brahmin caste especially pursues this path. Much time is devoted to the study of sacred texts and meditation, often with a guru's help. A guru can come from any caste or social background. He may have only a few disciples or millions. Pictures of such famous gurus as Satya Sai Baba and Sri Sri Ravi Shankar commonly adorn Hindu homes.

The way of knowledge is considered to be the shortest yet hardest path to liberation. Ignorance explains human suffering. So the focus is on attaining knowledge of ultimate reality. Many believe that liberation occurs once a soul fully realises that it is part of ultimate Brahman, not a separate entity. But some Hindus simply view liberation as the freeing of an eternal individual soul from the cycle of reincarnation.

2. The way of devotion (*bhakti marga*).

This is the most popular path to *moksha*. It involves devotion to a particular deity, often Vishnu or Shiva, reflected in acts of worship, both public and private. Devotees may present offerings, sing songs of devotion (*bhajans*), dance or simply meditate on a particular deity. At a shrine worshippers seek *darshan*, that is, "sight" or "viewing", a sense of the deity's greatness. The experience is considered to be reciprocal and results in the human viewer receiving a blessing.

ONENESS OF ATMAN & BRAHMAN

"Place this salt in water and come to me tomorrow morning."

Svetaketu did as he was commanded, and in the morning his father said to him: "Bring me the salt you put into the water last night."

Svetaketu looked into the water, but could not find it, for it had dissolved. His father then said: "Taste the water from this side. How is it?"

"It is salt."

"Taste it from the middle. How is it?"

"It is salt."

"Taste it from that side. How is it?"

"It is salt."

"Look for the salt again, and come again to me."

The son did so, saying, "I cannot see the salt. I only see water."

His father then said: "In the same way, O my son, you cannot see the spirit. But in truth he is there. An invisible and subtle essence is the Spirit of the whole universe. That is Reality. That is Truth. THOU ARE THAT!" (Chandogya Upanishad 6.12-14).

3. The way of action (*karma marga*).

This path to liberation involves ethical behaviour, following tradition and fulfilling one's religious duty, that is, the performance of prescribed ceremonies, duties and religious rites. The practitioner hopes to be reborn as a Brahmin on his way to liberation.

4. The way of yoga (*raja marga*; *yoga marga*).

This path to liberation involves an intense practice of meditation. The aim is to remove all mental obstructions and develop a concentrated mind that penetrates to the true nature of reality.

Karma and Reincarnation

"After death, the soul goes to the next world, bearing in mind the subtle impressions of its deeds, and after reaping their harvest returns again to this world of action. Thus, he who has desires continues subject to rebirth" (Yajur Veda, Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 4.4.6).

Reincarnation

Hindus and Buddhists view reincarnation differently. Hindus believe in the transmigration of the soul. By contrast, Buddhists believe non-self is one of the three marks of existence. In Hinduism, until one experiences liberation (*moksha*) the soul will continue to be trapped within the cycle of reincarnation (*samsara*).

The soul is intrinsically pure and only confined in *samsara* because of the force of *karma* and its attachment to material desires. The soul is neither male nor female. It may be reincarnated in one of multiple hells or in a heaven, as a deity, or on earth as a human, an aquatic creature, a reptile, insect, bird, animal or even as a plant. Hindus believe all life forms possess consciousness, even plants. Consciousness is most alert in humans, providing the best opportunity for advancement towards the realisation of *moksha*.



SYMBOL OM

Sacred Symbol

According to Hindu thinking the sound *Om* (*aum*) is the most sacred sound that can be made. It is believed to be the sound that was heard at the time when the universe was created. It is used in incantation in countless rituals and ceremonies. The three letters that make up this sound can be transliterated as A, U and M. Some Hindus associate A with Brahma, U with Vishnu and M with Shiva.

Hinduism and Discipline



A SADHU

Hinduism embraces a wide variety of practices from extreme asceticism (lives of great self-denial) to extreme sensuality. Hindus venerate holy men, especially those who employ the arduous physical and mental disciplines we know as *yoga*. The word *yoga* comes from the same root as the English word *yoke*. It has a double connotation. Firstly, it refers to the burden or yoke of discipline itself. Secondly, it refers to the ultimate goal of the discipline – the yoking or union with *Brahman*.

Hindu ascetics are often called *sadhus*. There are as many as 5 million *sadhus* in India. *Sadhus* eat meagre amounts of simple food, abstain from sex, sever their connections with family, forsake all possessions, have no dwelling place, wear little or even no clothing, spend most of their time in meditation and survive by begging. Their behaviour is sometimes bizarre. For example, Lotan Baba, the so-called “Rolling Saint”, became well-known in the West following a TV documentary on *sadhus* screened to millions. Lotan Baba undertook a pilgrimage from Madhya Pradesh to the Himalayan shrine of Vaishno Devi, not by walking, but by rolling sideways. He rolled in this way for over 3800 kilometres. Those who give to *sadhus* may regard their gift as an offering to a god and expect a blessing in return.

The son of a *guru* (Hindu teacher) recalls his relationship with his father:

We never shared anything in our lives. Because of the vows he had taken before I was born, not once did he ever speak to me or pay me the slightest heed...

For eight long years he uttered not a word, not even a whispered confidence to my mother. The trancelike condition which he achieved is called in the East a state of higher consciousness...We Indians...have known for thousands of years that there is real power in Yoga. My father proved it. He was the ultimate exemplar in real life of what the yogis and gurus...teach...

...Sitting in lotus position – toes of both feet turned up on top of the knees – on the board he also used for a bed, he passed his days in meditation and the reading of the sacred scriptures – nothing else...So completely had he turned within to realize the true Self that he never acknowledged any human presence, although admirers came from miles around to worship him and to lay before him their offerings of fruit and flowers, cotton cloth, and money. No one ever aroused a response from him” (*Death of a Guru*).

Hindu Extremism

A nationalist identity based around the Hindu religion, *Hindutva*, has been adopted by a significant number of Hindus. This has been promoted by a number of nationalistic organisations, especially Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). Those gripped by this ideology are virulently opposed to the vision of India as a secular democratic multi-religious society. On the contrary, they are intent on ensuring that India becomes a Hindu nation. To such extremists the idea of Hindus, Muslims and Christians living in harmony and as equals is utterly unthinkable. Tragically, recent years have seen proponents of Hindutva meting out considerable violence against Muslim and Christian minorities.

Some Comparisons and Contrasts

Hinduism	Christianity
No founder	Jesus is the founder
No scripture binding on all Hindus	The Bible is binding on all Christians
Continual creation and re-creation of the universe	A one-time creation and an ongoing work of new creation culminating in a renewed heavens and earth
The world is illusory	People are blinded to ultimate reality by their suppression of truth
Trimurti: Brahman, Vishnu, Shiva	Trinity: Father, Son, Spirit
Deities reveal self through images	God reveals himself in his Word
People are extensions of deity	People are created in God's image
Suffering is due to one's own bad karma	Suffering is due to living in a fallen world
Individual value as per the caste system	All people equal in value as those created in God's image
The fundamental problem is ignorance	The fundamental problem is sin
After death the soul transmigrates	After death comes divine judgment
The solution is human attainment of liberation from illusion and ignorance	People must accept God's solution via Christ's atoning sacrifice
People must save themselves via knowledge, devotion or ritual works	People cannot save themselves; utterly dependent on Christ's work/God's grace
Pilgrimages are very important	God's presence is found in his people not places
The individual disappears as it merges into Oneness (the usual view)	Liberated persons enjoy eternal fellowship with God as treasured individuals in community

Westerners are not becoming Hindus to any significant degree. However, Hindu thought has greatly influenced New Age movements and in this way, as Hiebert recognizes, “plays a central role in challenging the Christian claim that Christ is the only way to salvation.”

Mahatma Gandhi once said, “I like your Christ, I do not like your Christians. Your Christians are so unlike your Christ.” This statement says a lot about Gandhi’s belief that Jesus was more or less just like the Hindu he aspired to be. Others have similarly sought to assimilate Jesus into moulds of Hindu making. There are Hindus who believe Jesus was an avatar, an incarnation of Vishnu or even a reincarnation of Krishna. Some Hindus believe that between the ages of 12 and 30 Jesus was taught by gurus in India.

What will help Hindus to understand the utter uniqueness of Jesus and their need to trust in him as their only Saviour and only Lord?

A Lausanne paper on “Christian Witness to Hindus” advises:

The quality of Christ’s relationship with people, his teachings (particularly the Sermon on the Mount), and his unique vicarious self-giving and suffering have a strong appeal to the Hindu. As the Christian communicator fills this respect for Christ with an understanding of the unique and absolute claim to be “the Word made flesh,” a significant bridge may be built.

The biblical understanding that one reaps what one sows is not at all like the Hindu concept of *karma*. In contrast to biblical thought, Hindus believe that all suffering is due to one’s own past actions either in this or some previous life. Those who devote themselves wholly to a particular deity, such as Krishna, may live in hope that the deity will reward them by writing off their karmic debt and enabling *moksha*. This is cheap grace without the atonement that is so essential given the enormity of sin. The exclusive grace of Jesus is objectionable to many Hindus. Yet the reality is that many Hindus are yearning for forgiveness and peace. Indeed, Bakht Singh, a convert from Hinduism and famous Indian evangelist, once said, “I have never yet failed to get a hearing if I talk to [Hindus] about forgiveness of sins and peace and rest in your heart.”

In all of this, it is vital that our Hindu friends be helped to see that biblical Christianity does not deprive them of their cultural identity; that it does not involve assimilation to a foreign religion.

“The resurgence of Hinduism as an active formal religion challenges Christians to rethink their mission to Hindus and the Hindu world” (Paul Hiebert).

Things to Bear in Mind

1. Hindu thought and practice is highly variable.
So avoid preconceived ideas. Ask questions.
2. Hinduism is highly animistic. Charms, amulets or talismans are commonly used to provide protection against feared evil spirits and the evil eye. Astrology, horoscopes and divination are taken seriously. Hindus need to be helped to see the incomparable power of our Lord.
3. Hinduism is more about right practices than it is about right belief.
4. Hindus are very religious and think much of holiness, which they associate with externals. There is great power in the transformed holy lives of Christians.
5. Many Hindus view it as shameful and degrading to become a Christian because so many people from lower castes have become Christians.
6. Many Hindus believe that to become a Christian is to become a Westerner. Don't stress the term 'Christian'; speak of being a 'follower of Jesus.'
7. Exploitation of India by the British in the 17th-20th centuries has fostered the view that becoming a Christian is to follow the ways of the exploiter.
8. Temples, festivals, and pilgrimages have become even more important for modern Hindus.
9. Given our Hindu friends' devotion to their gods, Christians need to make much of their personal devotion to Christ.
10. For many Hindus living in the West Hinduism is more of a cultural identity than a religious allegiance.
11. Christian mercy ministries (e.g. hospitals, schools) have impacted many Hindus, especially as these are far from being the natural fruits of Hindu thought and practice.
12. Share your testimony.

1 CORINTHIANS

8:4-6

So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that 'An idol is nothing at all in the world' and that 'There is no God but one.' For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many 'gods' and many 'lords'), yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.

Recommended Resources

Joshua Raj, *A Biblical Approach to Indian Traditions and Beliefs* (Singapore: Genesis Books, 2008)

Madasamy Thirumalai, *Sharing Your Faith With a Hindu* (Bethany House Publishers, 2002)

Robin Thomson, *Engaging with Hindus. Understanding their world sharing good news* (UK: The Good Book Company, 2014)

Michael K. Wilson, Web Resources on Hinduism:
<https://www.facetofaceintercultural.com.au/web-resources-for-hinduism>

Questions

1. How would you explain the significance of Jesus' death and resurrection in a way that might make sense to a Hindu?
2. Why might you need to be particularly careful in explaining what it means to confess Jesus as Lord? How would you do this?
3. What aspects of Hindu thought and practice provide bridges for explaining the gospel?
4. Christians declare that "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Why do Hindus object to this? How would you respond?

5. For more titles in the “Whoever” and “Contending with Culture” series of booklets see the listings at: www.facetofaceintercultural.com.au



In an Australia that is becoming ever more multicultural, “whoever” will often be someone coming from a quite different culture. This presents particular challenges for churches intent on reaching “whoever.” We think here of all churches, not merely dominant culture churches that may be predominantly Anglo-Celtic in composition. As your church faces these challenges may you know God’s guidance and enabling as you set yourself to be the channel of God’s love to “whoever.”

Need Advice?

Contact Mike Wilson, facetofaceintercultural@gmail.com

More resources: www.facetofaceintercultural.com.au

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