

BRAHMAN



Many Hindus believe in one God called Brahman. This can be seen as ultimate reality existing everywhere and in everything. The personal Atman (like a “soul”) can be released into Brahman when the person reaches spiritual perfection. Even those who believe in Brahman may believe in a number of the other Gods and Goddesses available.

There are three high level active Gods in Hinduism. These are Brahma the creator, Vishnu the preserver and Shiva the destroyer/ regenerator. Together they are called the Trimurti. They reflect the reality of the universe that initially it begins, then it is preserved and then parts are continuously and dynamically destroyed and regenerated. So Hinduism observes the dynamic, transient nature of reality.



The picture on the right shows Brahma with many heads. Sometimes Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva are shown as one with three heads to illustrate that they work together (and may be considered to be the activities of Brahman).

Copy and complete the following sentences:

1. The three main deities in Hinduism are _____ the _____, _____ the _____ and _____ the _____.
2. These three Gods show that the universe is created and then _____.
3. The three Gods together are called the _____.
4. The three Gods may be shown as one with three heads because _____.

Hindus often worship one God more than others. Vishnu and Shiva are worshipped more than Brahma. Brahma simply creates. Vishnu actively preserves and on occasions sends avatars at times of trouble (for example, Krishna and Rama). Shiva actively destroys and recreates, being both fearful and kind. Then there are other active Gods in the scriptures and stories such as Ganesha the problem solver and Hanuman who helps bring good over evil. Incidentally, a few Hindus are atheists!

Answer these questions with full sentences:

5. Which two Gods of the Trimurti are worshipped more and why?
6. Explain why Hindus choose particular Gods to worship.
7. In your opinion, does it make most sense to worship one supreme God, a particular God (e.g. in the Trimurti or elsewhere) or not God at all? Give reasons for your answer.