

The teachings and beliefs of hinduism about death



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Hindus believe that death is not the end of life. They believe in the circle of life and death known as reincarnation. This is where the atman (eternal soul) travels from the dead body of a Hindu and is reborn into its next phase of life. In the Hindu religion it is believed that the atman is completely separate from the physical body. Hindus believe your atman will be reborn in a certain form depending on your karma. Hindus don't like the idea of being reborn after death, they wish to reach Moksha, this is when a Hindu becomes one with his or her god.

Hindus can achieve this by gaining good karma. Karma is what Hindus believe they receive once they complete a deed, whether it is good or bad Hindus still gain karma. Hindus believe every action has a consequence and whenever they gain karma their actions will be repaid. For example if a Hindu killed someone they would get a fair bit of bad karma, this karma imbalance would be repaid either, sometime during the Hindu's life, when the atman passes through the cycle of reincarnation (it may be reborn as a pickle) or maybe even during the next life of the Hindu.

The Better Karma a Hindu has the higher up the reincarnation ladder he or she will be reborn the top of the ladder being Moksha. The Atman is what a Hindu believes is his or her eternal soul. The Atman is immune from disease and can never die instead it just passes from body to body. The circle of life, death and rebirth is known as samsara. In respect of the human body, Hindus believe it is just a vessel to carry the Atman through its journey to Moksha and once the body is dead it is no longer important or needed. Reincarnation is when the atman passes from one form of existence to another.

A Hindu believes that what he or she will be reborn as depends on his or her karma. If he or she has bad karma, then they will be born as a lower form on the hierarchy of reincarnation. However, if a Hindu has better Karma, they believe they will be born higher up the ladder of reincarnation. It is every Hindu's goal to reach the top of the ladder, Moksha. To reach moksha, a Hindu must be willing to give up all his possessions and become selfless. He or she must also have no desire, which means he or she cannot want moksha.

When a Hindu reaches Moksha, the Hindu's Atman becomes one with their god and will not be reborn and will eternally live as part of that god. A02 Explain how the particular belief in an afterlife may affect the way in which Hindus may lead their lives. The main beliefs about death and the afterlife in Hinduism are that the Atman or eternal soul is reborn into another form when the Hindu dies. The Hindu's main ambition is to carry their Atman through to Moksha, to become one with their god. They can do this by gaining good karma.

Whereas, a Hindu with bad karma will be reborn in a less respected form. Karma is one of the main governing factors in a Hindu's life. It affects them on a day-to-day basis, as they will have to be careful in the actions and decisions they make to avoid any harmful consequences. It will mean that Hindus will try in their lives to gain more good karma and complete good deeds to do this. This will lead a Hindu in his or her life as the Hindu will constantly be trying to achieve the best karma they possibly can so they can obtain a high-ranked form in their Atman's next life.

Hindu's believe that if they are reborn with bad karma they will be born into a poor family or disabled. People have argued that this attitude which comes with the Hindu religion could make Hindu's harsh towards poor and disabled people. Some people believe that this will make Hindu's feel as if people with bad lives have gotten themselves into that situation and they do not need help. For Hindu's death is not the end. It marks the separation of the atman from the soul. The funeral takes as soon as possible after the death, usually before sunset.

This is for reasons of Hygiene. If the dead body is male it is washed and cleaned by men and women if the body is female. Cremation is the most common way of dealing with the body, however burial is accepted if the dead person is under the age of puberty, a pregnant women or someone admired as a saint. These people are considered to have sacred qualities which set them apart from the rest of humanity which means they don't have to have the spirits released in the same way.

The dead body is dressed in new clothes to represent getting rid of old things. As a man takes off worn-out clothes and puts on new one, likewise the atman casts off worn-out bodies, enters into new ones' (Bhagavad Gita 2: 22) This quote emphasises the fact that Hindu's believe that the body is just a shell used for carrying the atman through samsara. The body is then place on the pyre (the pyre is made out of scented wood and perfume). The pyre is covered in melted ghee and clarified butter. The eldest son or chief mourner lights the pyre to cremate the body. Ghandi was one of the leading figure heads in the hindu religion he practiced the Hindu traditions enforcing the message behind the religion.

He was a selfless man who wished to help others. He dressed the way he did so he could understand how some of the poorer families lived. He practiced Satyagraha. This was a form of passive punishment, for example if someone was about to run you over in a car, you should let them and not do anything to prove a point. Unfortunately the victim may have to die to prove his or her point. In conclusion, Hindu's believe that if they live a good life and gain the best karma possible, they will be reborn as 'best' a being as possible.

Although controversial, this is what most Hindu's wish to achieve.

AO3: 'Everyone should enjoy their life and forget about what might happen next' do you agree? I believe that people can live their lives in fear of what comes next, when there could be nothing at all after life. People can miss out on the best times of their lives as they believe there is some sort of reward or to become immortal in some kind of heaven. However, just because someone wants to live a good life doesn't mean they can't be happy all they have to do is live as well as possible without upsetting or hurting too many people.

Some people can appear to live a good life but they may be unhappy as they will be trying to live as best they can, for example for a Hindu to reach moksha they have to become selfless and have no desire, not even the desire of Moksha. However, unless someone is completely free of desire there will be something they want but because they will not allow themselves to obtain what they want they will become unhappy. For a person to be truly happy they must live by desire and impulse this way they will have everything they want and could ask for nothing more.

However, if they have to face judgement they will have to come to terms with what they have done wrong in their lives. However some people do not believe in the theory of judgement and because of this they believe they don't have to live their lives by any rules. Some of these people could become murderers, rapists or wife-beaters. If the theory of judgement and punishment or reward after death was proven, these people would more than likely change the ways they live their lives.

Some Hindu's will enjoy their lives others will focus on being good and working towards what they believe is the afterlife. Some Hindu's will achieve both this is a rare situation in which a Hindu is free of desire or in which they have no regard for the laws of their religion. Overall I believe that people should live their lives however they feel like but keep within the laws. I also, believe that the only judgement people receive is that of the law in this current life.