

Marriage in hinduism essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Studies of Religion Religions of the World: Hinduism. “ Describe one significant practice within Hinduism and demonstrate how this practice expresses the beliefs of Hinduism. Further, analyse its significance for both the individual and the Hindu community.

” Hinduism could be described as one of the world’s oldest religions, dating back to some 3, 000 – 6, 000 years ago. The name ‘ Hindu’ was given to portray the people who lived near the River Indus in India – the word ‘ Indus’ became ‘ Hindu’. Hinduism is a very varied religion with many ways of practicing. Most Hindus, however, share the same basic beliefs. Many Hindus prefer to call their religion ‘ sanatana dharma’ which means ‘ eternal teaching’.

They believe that this teaching applies to everyone, at all times and in all places. Hindus believe that beyond the material world we live in someone called Brahm (spirit). The material world is always changing and does not last however their spirit is unchanging and eternal. The spirit cannot be seen but is considered to be everywhere.

Today, there are millions of Hindus, and most still live in India where Hinduism began. Many people in the Hindu religion believe that arranged marriage is the traditional form of marriage in India and that love in marriage is a modern form that is currently becoming more and more acceptable. Hindus often do not choose their own marriage parents, even though there are more love marriages taking place, many Hindus will have an arranged or ‘ assisted’ marriage. In other parts of the world, marriage is the union of a man and woman, conversely in India it is the joining of two groups of people.

People in India believe marriage is for a different purpose, and have different expectations to other parts of the world. In an arranged marriages, when a woman is old enough to get married word passes through a close-knit network or relatives, friends and associates that she is looking for a husband.

Her parents will then consult a priest and a horoscope is drawn up. Someone who suits her personality is sought out by her parents and relations. Once several possible partners have been found, she is visited, in the company of female relatives by each of the chosen men. After the meeting if any connection was felt between them, their parents will discuss the plans for the wedding and the future of the couple. In India most marriages take place between the months of December and July.

This is to avoid the rainy season. Traditionally the wedding would take place in the brides home, but more often a hall is hired. In the past wedding celebrations could go on for days but they now only usually last for one day. The bridegroom and all his family travel from their village to the hall where the wedding will take place. In the hall there is a shrine to Ganesha and to the gods of both families. A small stage with a canopy on top may be built in the middle of the room, and a havan is place at the front of it.

The guests then take a seat around the stage looking on at the wedding ceremony. Hindu brides are prepared carefully, complicated patterns are painted onto the soles of her feet, her eyes are made up with a mixture of ghee, herbs and black make-up and a red sari is worn. When the bridegroom arrives, he is offered a diva lamp and sweets or honey, he is then led to sit next to the bride. A simple puja is performed before the bride is given to the

groom by placing her hand in his. They make promises to each other and walk seven steps around the havan.

During this time they hope for: •Food throughout their lives •Strength and good health •Wealth •Happiness •Children •Enjoyment of the seasons •Friendship for the rest of their lives They then sit down and a piece of cotton thread is tied around each of their wrists. This symbolizes that they are now bound together for life. The groom ties a necklace around the bride's neck and he takes her hand saying, " I hope that we will grow old together". Mantras are recited from the priest while the couple sit in front of the havan, the husband and wife add woods, ghee, leaves, grain and water into the fire. To conclude the ceremony they receive blessings and give each other garlands of flowers. The rest of the day is celebrated with food, dancing, music and everyone enjoying themselves.

During the wedding ceremony, the priest, bride and groom all recite prayers from sacred texts, such as the Vedas. These are normally in Sanskrit, but in other countries there are often in an English translation. If the ceremony is at night, the groom points to the pole star. This, like the prayers above, show the important Hindus give to steadiness and commitment in marriage, based on love, respect, and valuing our differences.

Prayer by the bridegroom to his wife " I am the sky, you are the earth. I am the seed, you are the ground. I am the mind, you are the speech. I am the song, you are the melody. " Prayer by the bride " I adore the Supreme Lord, the unifier of hearts.

Now that I am leaving my parents' home for my husbands, I pray that God may keep us together for ever. Prayer recited together “ Let us be devoted to each other. Let us share each other's joys and sorrows, Wish each other well And look upon each other with love. Let us live together for a hundred autumns. ” Bibliography Young, S.

(2007). World Religions: Hinduism. Marshall Cavendish Benchmark: New York. Chhapi, S.

Kadodwala, D. (1996). Everyday Religion: My Hindu Life. Wayland Publishers Limited: England. Watts, F.

(2006). Hindu Prayer and Worship. Franklin Watts Australia: Sydney.
Symmons, D. (1998).

This is Hinduism. Stanely Thornes (Publishers) Ltd: England.