

to show the path of *bhakti* to the souls. The descension of God into the material (*mayic*) realm is called *avatar* in Sanskrit.

- ❖ The Divine scriptures of Hinduism include the Vedas, the Upvedas, the Vedangas, the Smritis, the Darshan Shastras, the Upanishads, the Puranas, the Itihas (Ramayan and Mahabharat), the Gita, the Bhagwatam and the writings of Jagadgurus, *acharyas*, and Saints.
- ❖ The vast collection of *Bhartiya* scriptures are a systematic line of teachings. They provide the guidelines for all kinds of people, having varying levels of purity of mind and receptivity for God, and lead them towards God realization.
- ❖ The *Bhartiya* (Hindu) scriptures also reveal the scientific axioms that are valuable in the research and development of modern science. They reveal the sequence of the procedure of creation of the universe, the exact model and working of the universe, as well as the science of defense, medicine and aviation, whatever is required by the society for daily living.

## *Do you know...*

- ❖ That Bhartiya scripture -- the Upanishads and the Bhagwatam give a detail description of 12 step-wise phases of creation of the universe and the exact calculations of the age of sun and earth planet.
- ❖ That the Valmiki Ramayan, relating the history of Bhagwan Ram, was written 18.144 million years ago.
- ❖ That Bhagwan Krishn descended on the earth in 3228 BC and the Mahabharat war took place in 3139 BC.
- ❖ That Sanskrit is the mother of all the languages and it has been in its perfect form since its introduction in the world.

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by H.D. Dharm Chakravarty Swami Prakashanand Saraswati

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# Hinduism at a Glance



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A non-profit, educational organization founded to  
"Re-establish the Greatness of Hinduism"

# Hinduism...

- ❖ The original name of Hinduism is *Sanatan Dharm*. ‘Sanatan’ means eternal and ‘Dharm’ means those actions, thoughts and practices that promote physical and mental happiness in the world and ensure God realization.
  - ❖ *Sanatan Dharm* eternally exists in God, is revealed by God, describes the names, forms, virtues and the abodes of God, and reveals the true path of God realization for the souls of the world.
  - ❖ There are three eternal existences: soul, *maya*, and God. Souls are unlimited in number, infinitesimal in size, Divine in quality but eternally under the bondage of *maya*. Soul does not belong to *maya* or the *mayic* world. It has a natural and eternal relationship with God.
  - ❖ *Maya* is a lifeless power of God having three qualities: *sattvic* (pious), *rajas* (selfish) and *tamas* (impious) that represent its existence when it is evolved into the form of the universe. The universe has two dimensions -- material and celestial. The Divine dimension of God lies beyond the field of *maya*.
  - ❖ Hinduism is monotheistic. There is one single God Who represents the various aspects of His unlimited Blissful charm through many forms such as Krishn, Vishnu, Shiv and Shakti and the impersonal aspect. Out of these Krishn is the absolute supreme form of God which includes all others. God is an eternal, omnipresent, all-Blissful, all-Gracious, all-kind and all-loving Divine personality.
  - ❖ Hinduism explains that the soul is eternally yearning for perfect, unlimited and everlasting happiness. But the soul is mistakenly searching for this happiness in the *mayic* world where one finds only transitory pleasures followed by disappointments.
  - ❖ The illusion of finding perfect happiness in the *mayic* world is the cause of soul’s reincarnation. The soul, since uncountable lifetimes, has been taking birth into the 8.4 million species of life where it undergoes the consequences of actions (*karmas*).
- Perfect happiness is neither a feature of the mind nor a nature or quality of the *mayic* world. It can only be attained by God realization.
- ❖ The human form of life is the only chance for a soul to attain God realization, if one understands the disappointing nature of the illusive attractions and attachments of the world and sincerely proceeds on the path of God realization by completely trusting in the causeless kindness of God.
  - ❖ The aim of human life is to attain God realization. The means of God realization is *bhakti* and God’s Grace.
  - ❖ Humble, loving and wholehearted submission to a personal form of God is called *bhakti*. *Bhakti* evokes the Grace of God and ensures God realization. Upon God realization the soul is released from the bondage of *maya* and achieves unlimited Divine Bliss forever.
  - ❖ *Sattvic* practices such as austerity, intellectual study of Vedant, practice of renunciation and meditation, on their own, can only evolve the *sattvic* quality of person’s mind to a certain extent. They can never be the means of God realization. When one begins to do *bhakti*, these practices, with the Divine uniting factor of *bhakti*, are then classified as *karm yog* or *gyan yog*. Only when these practices are performed with *bhakti*, can they become the means of God realization, because only *bhakti* unfolds God’s Grace.
  - ❖ A personality who has the Divine knowledge of all the scriptures and who is God realized is needed to guide, protect and Grace the souls on their path to God realization. Such a Divine personality is called *Guru*. It is the *Guru* who imparts the Divine vision or Divine love of God to a dedicated soul when they reach a stage of complete surrender through *bhakti*. Divine personalities are always present on the earth planet to guide the souls.
  - ❖ In addition to sending Divine personalities from His abode to the earth planet, God Himself descends on the earth planet from time to time to establish and protect *Sanatan Dharm*, to reveal His absolute Blissfulness through His Divine actions (*leelas*) and