

SOCIETY FOR ADHYATMA STUDIES

**17, Civil Lines, Opp. Commissioner's Office, Moradabad-244001
Mob: 9412241221**

Unique Tenets of Hinduism (Which are not available in other religions)

Indian civilization is the oldest in the world. Nobody knows as to when it came into existence. According to some scholars it may be more than twenty thousand years old. This civilization has got some distinct features and a distinct philosophy which shows us the way to attain blissful life. This knowledge has been codified in our scriptures – 4 Vedas, 220 Upanishads, 6 Darshan Shastras, Bhagwad Gita etc. Because we do not know as to when this civilization was started we call it Sanatan i.e. continuing from times immemorial. The name 'Hindu' does not find place in any scripture. This name was given to this civilization when Alexander's forces attacking India reached river Sindhu and as they could not pronounce 'S', they started calling it 'Hindu' and thereafter the whole of this area from Himalaya to Kanyakumari became known as 'Hindu' – Hindustan. Over a period of time we started calling persons living here as 'Hindus' and the religion they follow became known as 'Hinduism'.

Every religion of the world has got some systems which have been enunciated with the objective of smooth running of the society. Such systems can be classified as **systems of thought and systems of living**. The systems of thought control and guide systems of living. Every religion has got some unique features and unique systems of thought and living. But in all religions principles of love, compassion, tolerance etc. are generally found. Such principles are available in Hinduism also but this religion has got some unique systems which other religions do not have.

Such unique tenets of Hinduism can be summarized as follows:-

- **There is one God and nothing but God**
Concept of one God is there in all popular religions of the world. But in Hinduism this concept is a bit different. It says that there is one God and every other thing is part of the God. The God lives in each molecule of every thing which exists in the whole universe. In a way modern science also admits this fact when it propounds the theory that all things are made of atoms. Our religion says that God is present in each atom in all living or non-living, moving or non-moving beings or things.
- **Atma**
The concept of Atma is not available in any other religion throughout the world. According to 'Hinduism' Atma is that substance due to which body of a living being remains alive. As soon as Atma departs from the body the life becomes

extinct and the living body becomes dead. This Atma is part of God. It comes from God and goes back to God.

- **Atma takes rebirth**

This concept of rebirth is again a unique feature of 'Hinduism'. It says that the Atma comes to a body at the time of birth and after leaving the body at the time of death the Atma travels to another body and takes rebirth as a completely new being. This cycle of rebirth goes on for 84,00,000 lives. Thereafter the Atma goes back to the God. In some of the religions of the world there is a concept of life after death but that is for once only. After you die you will get up again on the Day of Judgment to be sent to Hell or Heaven according to your actions. This concept is quite different from the concept of rebirth.

- **Moksha – Freedom from the cycle of re-birth**

The cycle of re-birth goes on till 84,00,000 lives after which there is no re-birth. This state is called Moksha. But for emancipated souls this cycle of re-birth may stop earlier also depending upon the knowledge gained, actions undertaken and the grace of God received. After Moksha the Atma unifies with God.

- **“Prarabdha” - The accumulated effect of actions done during previous birth/s**

This concept is unique as it says that the effect of actions during life time will accumulate and travel with the Atma to the next birth and may continue for several subsequent lives and everybody has to face the consequences of his actions. If you have done good or bad things in life you will reap the harvest in the next lives. It further says that you will be allotted subsequent lives according to your actions.

- **God is achievable**

There are various methods through which we can achieve or experience God. Some of the better known methods are Raj Yog, Gyan Yog, Karma Yog, Bhakti Yog, Mantra Yog, Tantra Yog, Kundalini Yog etc. The underlying principle in all of them is Dhyān – Meditation. Through Dhyān we can cleanse our mind from all thoughts, emotions and desires pervading human mind constantly every minute. When this train of thoughts, emotions and desires stops we are able to experience God within ourselves.

- **God is Real World is Unreal**

This concept means that God only is immortal and the whole of the world is mortal and therefore we must not have any feeling of attachment with the world or worldly objects.

- **Incarnation of God**

Incarnation of God is a unique concept in Hinduism. God takes birth as ordinary human being in order to alleviate the suffering humanity. This incarnation can be in various forms – man, animal or natural forces.

- **It is an open religion**

This religion is not dependent upon any book or the sayings of any one person. The principles and ideology upon which this religion is based are cumulative wisdom of thousands of saints who devoted their lives in experimenting with various methods and searched out most appropriate methods to attain ultimate bliss. This wisdom is enshrined in our scriptures which are in existence from times immemorial. This religion is not a closed circuit religion but it is open to change. It accepts and encourages discussions including disagreements and hostile points of view and whenever a reasonable point of view comes to fore it is accepted.

- **Whole world is one family**

This religion believes that all human beings as well as all non-human beings are members of one big family. Human beings irrespective of their faith or religion are part of the same family and they are also similarly lovable.

- **Non-expansionist**

This religion does not believe in expansion of religion through sword or money or by conversion. It only propagates the wisdom enshrined in our scriptures throughout the world without converting anybody to Hinduism.

- **Freedom of action**

In this religion everybody is free to act according to his wisdom and conscience but he will have to reap the harvest of his actions.

- **Freedom of system of worship**

There is no dogmatic system of worship in this religion. There are several methods through which one can worship God. The individuals are free to adopt any method of their choice. Worship is meant for self development and to invite blessing of God. Even if somebody chooses not to worship he is acceptable and is not considered an outcaste.

- **Four objectives of life**

Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha are the four main objectives in everybody's life. Everybody is required to act in order to achieve these objectives. He must adhere to the path of religion, earn money by rightful means, satisfy the needs of body and desire within reasonable limits, and to achieve Moksha as the ultimate goal. The one who does not act to achieve these objectives has just wasted his precious life.

(SUDHIR GUPTA)