

Hinduism



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Hinduism

Hindus traditionally have a triune view of god: Brahma the creator god; Vishnu the preserver god; and Shiva, the destroyer god. Almost all of the over 330 million Hindu gods relate back to one of these three aspects of god, but mostly to Shiva and Vishnu. The goal of a Hindu's life is to build up enough good karma (the cause and effect of actions) to attain freedom from samsara (the cycle of reincarnation) and join with god.

There are more than 800 million Hindus in India alone. Millions of those are in people groups unengaged with the gospel. This means that they have never had the chance to hear the Good News. You could be sharing the gospel with one of these – even in the United States.



1 Preparation

Read over the sections on **Worldview**, **Religious terms** and **Answering Questions and Objections**. Become familiar with these so that you are more comfortable relating to a person of this faith.



Worldview

There are a lot of factors that shape a person's view of the world. History, culture, language and tradition are among some of the factors, which provide a framework for how a person filters information, understands truth or makes decisions.



Hindu Worldview

- Even though most Hindus use images or statues in their worship practices, most believe ultimately there is one eternal God (above other gods). Unlike Americans, Hindus love to talk about spiritual experiences with God as long as they know you are truly sincere.
- The Bible is considered a holy book, but does not apply to them. Hindus have their sacred scriptures, but most simply follow a guru (teacher).
- They believe in karma and reincarnation. Do not say, "born again" as they will understand this as reincarnation.
- More than dealing with sin, Hindus are more concerned with fulfilling obligations in life ("Dharma") such as obeying parents and taking care of them when they are older.
- Hindus are accepting and tolerant of other religions and love world peace. They believe there are many paths to God.
- Hinduism is extremely diverse with no essential beliefs or required practices. Therefore, they look for a guru who will lead them. They will understand if you refer to Jesus as your Guru who shows his followers (devotees) the path to experience salvation.
- Hindus worship in temples. Each temple is typically dedicated to one of their many gods. They also have family altars in their homes.
- The most common testimony from former Hindus coming to faith in Jesus involves answered prayer. Hindus will never reject your request to pray for them.

Religious Terms

Other religions often have their own words for the one true God, sin, etc. Also, the name Jesus may be translated into their religious language. It's often helpful to use their translated name for Jesus. Using what they know can help improve understanding and reduce the amount of information to get across.

You may not be comfortable using other terms than what you know. We encourage you to prayerfully consider using terms that are familiar to the person you are sharing with, as appropriate.



Hindu Religious Terms

- Use the English word, "God." Hindus will know you are talking about the Christian understanding of the one true, eternal, creator God.
- Jesus in Hindi language is "Yesu," pronounced, "yeh-shoo.""
- The word "Moksh" (Mohk-sh), "salvation" means salvation or liberation from rebirths and reincarnation.
- The word "Pop" or "Paap" means sin.
- The word "Guru" means someone who leads people from darkness to light. Hindus strongly rely on gurus to help them know truth. Jesus is our Guru.

Answering Questions and Objections

Every major religion has common misconceptions regarding Jesus, God, truth, salvation and heaven. Myths and misunderstandings have been passed around from family to family and country to country. We have compiled the most common questions and objections.

After you read over these, take time to read any Scripture that will help you grow in your faith, as well as give you confidence to answer with biblical Truth.



Answering Questions and Objections

"All paths lead to heaven."

Response: "Tell me all about your path." (**Listen to their response**)

Then: "I follow a Guru (guru is a spiritual leader) who demonstrated his path to heaven by dying and returning back to life three days later. This Guru invites all who want to travel on his path to eternity in heaven to join him. Do you know of any gurus claiming to have successfully traveled beyond death and returned to confirm that their path leads to heaven?"

"But I must follow Hinduism because my family is Hindu."

Response: "I have learned that a Hindu is anyone born in a Hindu community, and a true Hindu is one who finds and devotes him/herself to a guru, who can lead them out of darkness into light. I became a Yeshe Bhakta because I knew I was living in darkness. Satguru Yeshe showed me the way to light and life. He knows the way from darkness to light! Would you like to make him your Guru?"

"Jesus is the same as Krishna."

Response: "Do you want your son to be like Krishna?" Remind them of the story of Krishna stealing the clothes of the gopi girls when they were bathing in the river and hid in a tree. Krishna always chases women. Tell the story of Jesus and the attempted stoning of the woman caught in adultery (John 8:1-11). Jesus never married or misbehaved with women.

2 Talking

Use these basic steps to start a conversation and reach the point of sharing the gospel through Romans 6:23.



Greeting

You can always just say “hello.” But, if you want to see a person’s face light up with a smile, try greeting them in a way that is familiar to them. We suggest you practice this greeting phrase and use it as you begin to talk.

Hindu greeting:

“Namaskar” (Nah-mah-skar)

Hold your hands in prayer position and
bow your head slightly forward



Find the audio at G2G resources at <http://southasianpeoples.imb.org/G2G>.

Bridges

Some people find it easy to transition a conversation to spiritual matters. Others struggle to do so. These bridge questions are tested and have been used to quickly and naturally share Romans 6:23.

Choose one and memorize it so you can use it more naturally.

From the point of greeting the person, move as quickly as possible to your bridge question. Typically, the longer it takes the less likely you will get to the gospel.



Bridge Options

- 1 Ask:** "Have you ever talked with a person who has died and later came back to life?" (allow the Hindu to answer)

Bridge: "I know a Guru who died and three days later came back to life. His story is in the Bible and I found one verse in the Bible that explains the story of Yeshu," (Share One Verse - One Story)

- 2 Ask:** "Can I ask your understanding of how a person can obtain moksh (salvation)?" (The typical response from Hindus is that a person must become good.)

Bridge: "Do you know what the Bible (or 'holy scriptures') says about obtaining moksh? I found one verse that explains God's plan to give us moksh," (Share One Verse - One Story).

Bridge Options

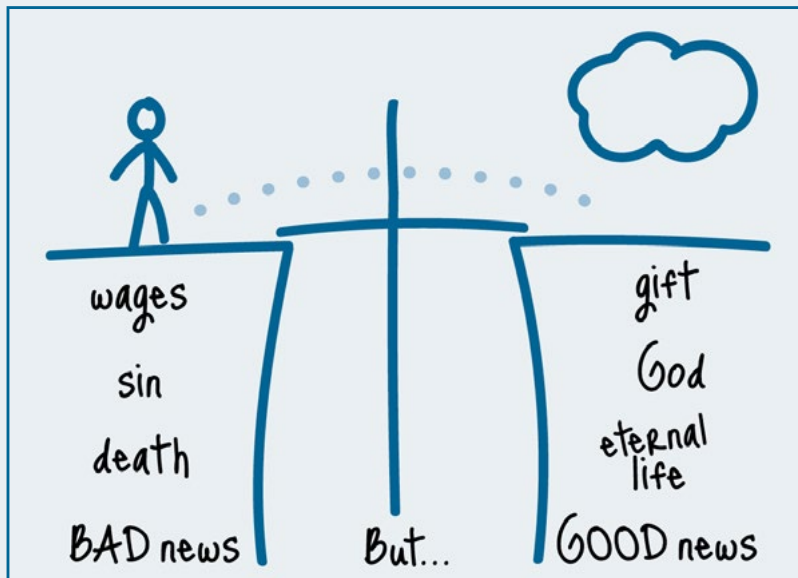
- 3 Ask:** "What must a Hindu do to be forgiven for 'pop' (sin) so they can go to heaven when they die?"

Bridge: "I found one verse in the Bible that explains the Creator God's plan to free us from the punishment of our 'pop' and give us eternal life in heaven after we die." (share One Story/One Verse).

One Verse – One Story | Romans 6:23

Romans 6:23 provides the structure for talking about the need for a Savior and concluding with the question, “Do you want God’s gift of eternal Life?”

Use the One Verse – One Story video, printable guide or eTract to prepare to share the gospel.



 southasianpeoples.imb.org/OneVerse-OneStory

3 Next steps

Possible responses and what to do next:

- A) The person chose to accept God's free gift of eternal life: Seize the moment. Review and explain again the core truths of the gospel. Answer any questions and encourage them to pray and tell God they are turning from their disobedience, believing the good news of Jesus and confessing Him as Lord. Get the person's contact information so that you can follow up. Invite the person to your church or begin meeting at his or her house.
- B) "I want to know more." Get the person's email or phone number. Begin sending electronic resources from this religion's G2G resources section. Arrange to meet them in a public place like a coffee shop to discuss this more.
- C) "I am not interested." Ask how you can pray for the person.

4 Share more

Bible stories

Everyone loves a good story. We remember them. We share them. Stories touch our hearts — whether they're movies, family anecdotes or Bible stories. They affect our decision-making and transform our worldview.

God's Word changes lives. Consider becoming familiar with one or more stories that will fill the gap in understanding the gospel. Having a Bible story in your mental toolbox will help you guide a person to understand the work of Christ in a way that fits his or her culture and background.



Telling a Bible story isn't strict memorization. Identify the essential parts of the story you must share — we've noted them with our Bible references.

Then, read over the passages of Scripture several times. Once you know the story, you are ready to share it in your own words. Run through the story in your head and share with a friend or relative to practice.



Bible Stories Filling the Gap of Understanding God & Yeshu

Use these stories and passages to address some of the questions, concerns or beliefs found in this religious worldview.

What is God like? (Prodigal Son, Luke 15:11-24)

Hell is real and eternal (Lazarus and Rich man, Luke 16:19-31. This story is told by Jesus who is familiar with life beyond the grave.)

No Karma (John 9:1-12, Jesus heals the man born blind. Who's sin caused this? No one.)

How powerful is Jesus? (Demon possessed man, Luke 8:26-39; Jesus forgives sin, Mark 2:1-12)

Fear of death? (Jesus conquered the grave, Luke 24:1-12)

Extra Resources

Biblical resources – such as a video or tract – can help within a conversation or be given for the person to view later. We've identified a select and varied set of biblical resources for you to choose from. In some cases, there may be a hundred other options out there. We've limited the resources to one per type or category.

In G2G you need to choose one or more resources to share. Choose the type of resource that best fits you and your preferences. For example, if you commonly share videos from your mobile device, then choose the video. If you prefer to hand someone a tract, then download and print the tract. You may want to keep a Bible or New Testament with you and have key passages bookmarked from this guide.



Find these G2G resources at <http://southasianpeoples.imb.org/G2G>.

- **Scripture Portions**, John 14 & Acts 1-2 and Matthew 5-7.
- **Video: "Demon Possessed Man"** – Segment from the *JESUS Film Project* (length: 2 minutes.) Be sure to point out Jesus has power over evil spirits.
- **Video: "Creation to Christ"** – From Create International (www.creationtochristvideo.com), (Hindi contextual & English languages, 19 minutes). Includes the Ten Commandments' emphasis of worshipping no other gods.
- **Tract: "Encountering the Eternal Guru"** – True story of Hindu who views Jesus as his Lord and Savior. Includes a Gospel presentation and prayer of acceptance.
- **10 Days of Yeshu Bhakti (Bahk-tee, means "devotion") Printable.**
Present this resource as a challenge for Hindus to experience Jesus through prayer and the reading of God's Word for ten straight days. The most important rule is that they cannot pray to other gods during the ten days. Only in the name of Yeshu (Jesus).

Need help?

Email questions to

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<http://southasianpeoples.imb.org/G2G>

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