

# Hindu Religion, Culture, & Traditions For Children

Volume 6



## ***Introduction***

This book series on Hindu Religion, Culture & Traditions for children is in form of a dialogue between a grandmother and her two granddaughters.

The series starts with a set of simple stories of Lord Ganesha which a four year old can read and enjoy. The series then proceeds with stories from Ramayana, Bhagavata, Puranas, Mahabharata and of various Gods and Goddesses, highlighting the moral values these stories teach. The series explains that while it appears that there are many Gods and Goddesses, there is only God which appears as all things, as all beings, and as the entire universe. He is everywhere and in everything. One can pray to him in any form one likes. It describes briefly the 'Om' symbol, how to do Puja and meditation. The series also explains unity in diversity and the law of karma using situations which children face in their daily lives as examples. The series answers few basic questions like why we pray, celebrate festivals like Diwali, Holi, and Raksha Bandhan, draw Rangoli, put Bindi on our forehead, and do namaste to each other. The series concludes highlighting the importance of following basic moral values and respecting nature. The pdf and youtube link to simple prayers are given on the last page of each volume.

The series has ten volumes:

1. The 'So Be It' Lord Ganesha
2. Ramayana — Story of Lord Rama
3. Happy Diwali
4. Stories of Lord Krishna
5. Happy Holi
- 6. Brahma Vishnu Mahesha** — There is only God
7. Mahabharata — Teachings of Bhagavad Gita
8. Different yet the Same
9. Happy Raksha Bandhan
10. Value of Values



Nani, Mama is Hindu because she was born in India, Papa is Christian because he was born in Germany.

Who am I, Hindu or Christian?

You are you Shali!

We all want to know how this world was created and by whom. We want to know what happens to us when we die.

Many people believe God created this world and lives in heaven. He keeps an eye on all of us. Other people have different beliefs. Based on their beliefs



different religions like Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, and Buddhism were born.

People of different religions pray to God in different ways. They perform different rituals to please God. They go to different places to worship.

*“All religions teach us to be kind to others, be loving, be caring, and be honest and helpful.”*

Christians believe that God created this world in seven days and Jesus Christ is the son of God. The Bible is their holy book which has stories of Jesus, his disciples, and the prophets. They go to church to pray. They celebrate Christmas as Jesus's birthday.

Muslims call their God Allah. Their holy book is The Koran which has the teachings of their prophet Mohammad. They go to mosque to pray.

The Jewish holy book is Tora and they go to synagogue to pray.

Buddhists follow the teachings of Buddha and pray in a temple.

Hindus consider the four Vedas their holy books. They are called the books of knowledge. The Vedas teach us that God is everywhere and in everyone. The whole world is seen as one. They tell us to always do what is right, do our best, and accept the results of our actions, whether to our liking or not, gracefully as gifts from God.

Hindus worship God in various forms like Lord Ganesha, Lord Krishna, etc. They pray to him that everyone be happy and live in peace. I am going to tell you all about the Hindu religion because that is what I know best.

This time let's talk about Brahma Vishnu Mahesha, There in Only God.

# **Brahma Vishnu Mahesha**

## **There in Only God**

Anji – Nani, what are we going to plant now?

Nani - tomato seeds. Once we plant the seeds, they will sprout, and then they will become big plants, then they will flower and finally produce lots of tomatoes. The plants need good soil, water, sunshine to grow. After sometime, the plant will die making seeds which we can plant again next summer.

The cycle of creation and destruction keeps on going. It's like turning my golden chain, ring, and coin into gold by melting them and then using the gold to make new jewellery and coins. The entire creation appears and disappears again and again.

Nani - How can a tiny seed know that it needs to grow into a tomato plant? Why not an apple tree?

Shali, as you have rules in your school, in your home, in the same way, things happen in this

world according to certain laws. A tomato seed will only produce tomatoes.

A ball thrown up does not stay up and comes down.

Shali, can you stop the rain, stop the wind from blowing, or snow from falling?

No Nani

It all happens because of these laws. The laws of nature. The laws of God.

Everything in this world, first manifests (like a seed sprouting), then it is sustained for some time (the plant grows and produces tomatoes) and then it perishes (dies). Lord Brahma represents creation, Lord Vishnu represents sustenance, and Lord Mahesha or Shiva represents destruction.

For creation, knowledge is needed, so Devi Sarasvati, Goddess of knowledge, is the consort

of Lord Brahma. For sustenance, wealth is needed, so Devi Lakshmi is the consort of Lord Vishnu. For destruction, power is needed, so Devi Parvati is the consort of Lord Shiva.

Nani, How many Gods and Goddesses are there?

While it appears that there are many Gods and Goddesses, there is only God which appears as all things, as all beings, and as the entire universe.

He is everywhere and in everything. You can pray to him in any form you like. These beautiful forms makes it is easy for us to pray to God. We give names to these different forms.

The form can be a She-God like Devi Lakshmi, Devi Parvati, Devi Sarasvati, or Devi Sita or be a He-God like Lord Rama, Lord Krishna, Lord Vishnu, or Lord Shiva. It can also be an animal form like the monkey Lord Hanuman, plant form like Tulsi Devi, or river form like Devi Ganga.

As you have to take specific medicines for



specific ailments. Like that, you have specific prayers for specific occasions.

If you have an eye problem, you can invoke the God who presides over eyes.

When we need wealth, we invoke God as Devi Laksmi presiding over wealth.

For knowledge, we worship God in the form of Devi Sarasvati.

Similarly when we start something new and we want to be successful, we invoke God in form of Lord Ganesha to remove all the obstacles.

God is also all knowledge and all laws.

God is one and one for all

God is one he loves us all

Brahma, Visnu, Mahesha

God is one within us all

Sarasvati, Lakshmi, Parvati  
God is one the source of all  
    Rama, Sita, Hanuman  
God is one the truth of all  
    Ganesha, Krishna, and all

You can compare God to a mighty ocean.

Waves are born of the ocean, waves are sustained by the ocean as they travel across its surface, and waves eventually return to the ocean when they wash up on the shore

In the same way, you, I, and everything else that exists in the universe are born of God, we are sustained by God, and we return to God.

In the ocean, some waves are huge - they could represent soaring mountains and wide continents. Some waves are tiny - they could represent all of us living amongst those mountains and continents.

And, these waves, large and small, all exist within the mighty ocean, just like every living being and inert object in the universe exists within God.

Every wave is made of water. In fact, a wave is only water.

The shape of the wave isn't something separate or different. If a wave contains 100 gallons of water, the shape of the wave doesn't add anything. So, every wave in the ocean is just a form of water. And, the entire ocean is itself another form of water, even though it's a much larger form.

Both the ocean and waves are but forms of water, the same water.

The water, because of which the mighty ocean exists, is exactly the same water, because of which each and every individual wave exists.

The mighty ocean and each individual wave are utterly different in form, but they are one in essence, because they are just water, and nothing

else.

This shows how God and his creation, including you and me, are one in essence, even though all our forms are utterly different.

**Om**

Nani, what is Om?

Om is a very beautiful, single syllable word written as:



You can think of it as name of God. Om represents all things, all beings, in fact the entire universe.

Now you can call God, invoke him, pray to him. This is why many of the prayers, chants or mantras begin with Om.

Om also represents all sounds. In Om, there are two vowels 'a' and 'u' and a consonant 'm'. 'A' plus 'u' becomes 'o', a diphthong. When you open your mouth, the sound you make is "a". When you close your mouth, the sound you make is "m". All the other sounds are in-between 'a' and 'm' sounds, whether they are consonants or vowels.

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## **Meditation**

Nani, I am not been able to focus my mind on my homework. I am making too many mistakes.

The mind is your best friend as well as your worst enemy. The mind is a friend for those who have control over it and an enemy for those who do not control it. You should try to control this friend. The mind is like wind, very restless and difficult

to control, but you can control it by regular practice of meditation. As you take a bath to clean your body, you do meditation to calm your mind. The best time to meditate is in the morning before going to school.

1. Sit in a comfortable posture holding your waist, spine, chest, neck, and head erect, motionless and steady. Close your eyes slightly.

2. Take a few slow and deep breaths. 3. Now chant 'Om' mentally. If your mind starts to wander here and there, bring it back gently and slowly to chanting of 'Om'.

If you practice this every day for five minutes, the mind slowly gets trained to focus. Now when you do your homework, your mind will not wander off.

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### **Calming the Mind**

Nani, I am so angry, I am unable to do this puzzle!

Shali, whenever you are feel angry, count from 100 to 1 backwards and do these two breathing exercises:

1. Take a deep breath in through your nose and hold it while you count to five. Then tilt your head up to exhale through your mouth.

2. Take three quick inhales in through your nose and then one long exhale through your mouth. Repeat it three times. This will calm you down.

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Nani, why do we pray?

Shali, just think of all the nice things God does for us. He gives us so many different foods we enjoy. He gave us the sun for heat and light. Look at the beautiful sky with the moon, the stars, and clouds in the night. This is all his beautiful creation. Worshiping God is saying thank you for his kindness.

Shali, we pray because not everything is under our control and we seek help and guidance from God.

When we do or need something, we try our best but we also pray to God to grant our wishes.

We also pray to God so we are able to do the right thing like be kind, be loving, be caring, be honest and be helpful.

We pray to God that everyone be happy and live in peace and harmony with each other.

-END-



## Prayers

सरस्वति नमस्तुभ्यं वरदे कामरूपिणी । विद्यारम्भं करिष्यामि सिद्धिर्भवतु मे सदा ॥

sarasavati namastubhyaṃ varde kāmarūpiṇi

vidyārambhaṃ kariṣyāmi siddhirbhavatu me sadā

Salutation to you O Goddess Sarasvati, who is giver of boons, and who has a beautiful form! I begin my studies. Let there be success for me always.

सर्वमङ्गलमाङ्गल्ये शिवे सर्वार्थसाधके । शरण्ये त्र्यम्बके गौरी नारायणि नमोऽस्तु ते ॥

sarvamaṅgalye śive sarvārthasādhake

śaraṇye tryambake gaurī nārāyaṇi namo'stu te

Salutations to you, O Devi, who is the auspiciousness of all that inauspicious, who is the consort of Lord Shiva, who is the means of accomplishing all desires, who is the refuge of all, who is three – eyed and who is fair-complexioned one.

नमस्समस्तभूतानाम् आदिभूताय भूभृते । अनेकरूपरूपाय विष्णवे प्रभविष्णवे ॥

namassamastabhūtānām ādibhūtāya bhūbhṛte

anekarūparūpāya viṣṇave prabhaviṣṇave

Salutations to Lord Vishnu, who is the creator of all beings, the sustainer of the creation, whose form is all forms, who is all pervasive, and who is self-effulgent.

नागेन्द्रहाराय त्रिलोचनाय भस्माङ्गरागाय महेश्वराय ।

नित्याय शुद्धाय दिगम्बराय तस्मै नकाराय नमः शिवाय ॥

nāgendrahārāya trilocanāya bhasmāṅgarāgāya maheśvarāya

nityāya śuddhāya digambarāya tasmai nakārāya namaḥ śivāya

My salutation to Lord Shiva, who is in the form of the syllable 'na', who wears the serpent as a garland, who has three eyes, who has ashes smeared all over his body, who is the supreme Lord, who is eternal and pure and whose clothing is the sky

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