Hinduism

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Q1. Brahma, atman, samsara and moksha are some of the main concepts of Hinduism. At the same time, different texts from Bhagavad Gita reflect on these concepts. Braham is a Sanskrit word which refers to magnificent power beyond this world. This power is to uphold and support everything in the world. In the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Kirshna reflects on the concept of Brahaman by using the words, “eternal source of all”. It covers two concepts one is the unlimited power and the other is the “eternal self”. Atman is the right word for “everlasting self” or ‘spirit”. It is all about spirituality and Hinduism philosophy emphasizes on detachment from material world to satisfy atman. Likewise, Samsara is the continuous process of reincarnation which is a complete cycle. According the Hinduism philosophy any soul is immortal and it is reborn again and again. On the other side, Moksha is the process through which a person gets free from the cycle of reincarnation. As the Lord Krishna says in Bhagavad Gita that “these creatures return to unmanifested matter” and “I send them fourth again”. In addition, Karma is the action and it is similar to the law that every action has an equal reaction. Every good action a person performs will have an equal good reaction. For instance, there is a text from Bhagavad Gita in which Krishna promises that, “Those who worship”, “I will provide for their needs”.

Q2. However, there are few concepts of social injustice embedded by the Brahman Hindu caste. It has introduced different caste systems in Hinduism, and it discriminates against the lowest caste (untouchables) in this category. Many of the philosophers criticized on this system and Mahatma Gandhi was one of them. He fought against such extremist concepts in Hinduism. He used the words, “This evil has stuck to us and still remains with us”, against the division of people into caste system. He further stated that it is a sin against God and human beings. Nothing is good about categorizing human beings as untouchables. He criticized the Brahamans that these are “selfish Motives” where they consider themselves high and other people low. Using his philosophy he changed the typical concepts about untouchables. He told the people about the other religions of the world which call God as friend of helpless people. He used a word “Harijan” that means “a man of God” for the weak people. He described untouchables as the men of God, because they were helpless and miserable. However, Gandhi’s beliefs changed the minds of many Indians. It was a turning point in Hinduism, and Gandhi’s efforts minimized the consequences of caste system.

Q3. The concept of divine varies in different traditions of Hinduism. As Hinduism is considered as the oldest religion, it has many gods. However, some of the Hindu concepts claim that they worship many gods who are under one supreme God; there are different names for all the deities. The four main deities of Hinduism are Shiva, Shakti (Devi), Vishnu and Smarta. All of the deities are linked with each other and they are responsible for specific functions. However, polytheism has never affected the Hinduism. They are very tolerant to other religions and they think that each religion has its own ways to reach the one supreme God. At the same time, all the deities have equal powers under the Hindu view. All the followers of Hinduism equally worship all the deities without denying the existence of other gods. Also, they remember the supreme one as the above of all. However, the concepts of Divine varies in Hindu Tradition from time to time.