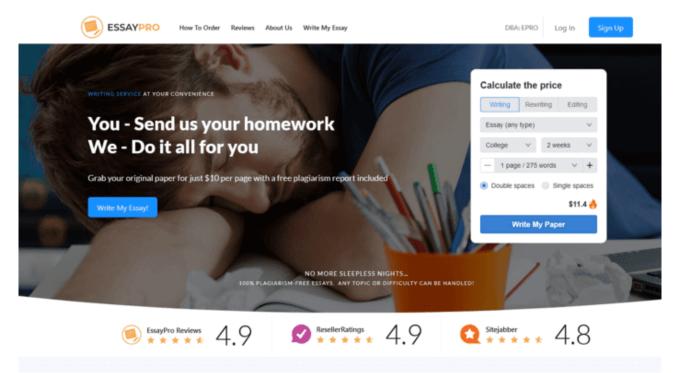
Religious Festivals



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Religious Festivals

"Religious festivals in Christianity and Hinduism"

The concept of religion has many different definitions, particularly amongst different societies and cultures. Many of the assumptions we hold about the characteristics of religion are given to us by the society we live in or by our community. Which for some people may be a religious community. When dealing with the signs of <u>religion</u>, there would be general agreement that <u>Christianity</u>, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism are religions, if for no other reason than because this is how they are described.

Christianity is a community which holds certain beliefs in a commune, a faith community. It is a set of beliefs which draws the Christian community together. At the heart of the Christian faith, is the assertion that Jesus, a God-made man was put to death in a way that many people could not comprehend. Christianity shares a number of beliefs and practices with other religions, particularly Judaism and Islam. With Judaism and Islam, Christians believe in one God, who created the Universe and all that is in it. All believe that this God is active in history, guiding and teaching his people. All three religions, including

Christianity, have been called, "ethical monotheism". This term emphasises the belief in one God, and the fact that following this God commits us to a number of ethical rules or principals.

India's population consists of many followers of many religions and many people who have rejected religion in any form. The Republic of India has a constitution which allows the religious freedom of all, but does not give a privileged position to any one religion. More than eighty percent of India's population are Hindus. Hindus worship not one, but many "Gods", they tend not to think of Hinduism as a religion, but as a "way of life".

The classical theory of the origins of Hinduism, traces the religions roots to the Indus <u>civilisation</u> circa 4000 to 2200 BCE. The development of Hinduism was influences by many invasions over thousands of years. The major influences occured when light-skinned, nomadic "Aryan" Indo-European tribes invaded Northern India (circa 1500 BCE) from the steppes of Russia and Central Asia. They brought with them their religion of "Vedism". These beliefs mingled with the more advanced indigenous Indian native beliefs, often called the "Indus Valley Culture".

An important thing that these groups all have in common is that they come together to express their beliefs and practices.

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