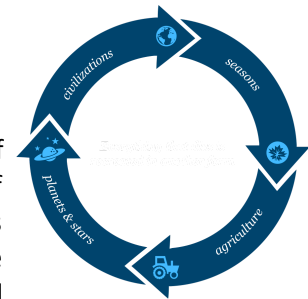


## Time in Hinduism

In Hinduism, time is not seen as solely linear. Instead, time is seen as having both linear and cyclical elements. This foundational belief impacts the way Hindus see many things. Concepts regarding time came from Hindu observations of *Rita* (natural law). By watching the cycles of the seasons, agriculture, planets and stars, and even civilizations over linear time, the observing Hindus came to two conclusions:

1. Everything that is born, dies.
2. Everything that dies is recreated in another form.

Simultaneously, time is seen as having linear elements. Namely, the destiny of each individual being builds from lifetime to lifetime towards the goal of *moksha*. Accordingly, Hindus believe that the universe itself follows these rules as well, and goes through constant cycles of birth and rebirth while progressing towards the goal of *moksha*. Therefore, time, as both linear and cyclical, progresses as a spiral in Hindu thought.



## Yugas

According to Hinduism, *yugas* are great expanses of time through which the course of spiritual evolution is run. There are four *yugas*:

- *Krita yuga* - 1,728,000 years
- *Treta yuga* - 1,296,000 years
- *Dvapara yuga* - 864,000 years
- *Kali yuga* - 432,000 years

*Yugas* both run through even larger repeating cycles of time, and contain smaller repeating cycles of time. Notice that the *yugas* get shorter and shorter progressively.

Hindus believe that in the *Krita yuga*, everyone is completely pure-hearted and wholesome, living together in peace and harmony.

In the *Treta yuga*, Hindus say that humanity loses one fourth of its goodness. With three fourths of ideal qualities remaining though, humanity still manages to live in peace.

During the *Dvapara yuga*, humanity is thought to hold onto half of its goodness.



By the *Kali yuga* (the *yuga* that Hindus believe the world is currently in), humanity only has one fourth of its goodness and spirituality, and is filled with selfishness, hatred, and

self-delusion. According to some Hindu scholars, though there is quite a bit of debate, the *Kali yuga* began about 5,000 years ago. Though *Kali yuga* is defined as only having one fourth of the goodness of earlier *yugas*, it is believed that if an individual engages in spiritual practice with focus and sincerity, they can find peace and attain *moksha* all the same.

Hindus believe that when *Kali yuga* is over, the entire universe dies. From these ashes, the universe eventually recreates itself and then cycles through the entire process again, for infinity.

### **Key Takeaways**

- Hindus see time as progressing in a spiral.
- Hindus have historically seen time on par with the age of the world, in billions of years.
- Hindus believe we are in the *Kali yuga*, where goodness has declined.