

# Vishnu

Vishnu is one of the triad of gods who are responsible for creation (**Brahma**), preservation (**Vishnu**) and destruction of the Universe (**Shiva**).

As the guardian of the Universe, Vishnu protects the earth and its people from the destructive influences of evil.

In his role as preserver, he often assumes different roles in order to restore the balance of the Universe. These different forms are known as '**avatars**' or incarnations. There are ten incarnations of Vishnu, many of which are animalistic. Some are human and some combine human and animal characteristics. Of the ten avatars, nine have already appeared, with the last (**Kalki**) yet to arrive.

Vishnu is usually depicted resting on the coils of a mighty cobra, accompanied by his wife (**Paravati**). He only rises from his recumbent posture to vanquish evil and destruction.

The two most important of his avatars are Krishna and Rama. Vishnu travels on a "**Garuda**", a half man-half bird creature.