The great god Vishnu appears on earth in various forms known as avatars – descents. Traditionally ten incarnations have been identified, though only two (Rama and Krishna) play a significant role in the life of Hindu worshippers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The ten incarnations of Vishnu</th>
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| 1. MATSYA  
Fish                |
| 2. KURMA  
Tortoise         |
| 3. VARAHA  
Boar               |
| 4. NARASIMHA  
Man-lion           |
| 5. YAMANA  
Dwarf             |
| 6. PARASHURAMA  
Rama with the axe  |
| 7. RAMA  
Prince            |
| 8. KRISHNA  
Young hero and lover |
| 9. THE BUDDHA    |
| 10. KALKI  
Incarnation yet to come |