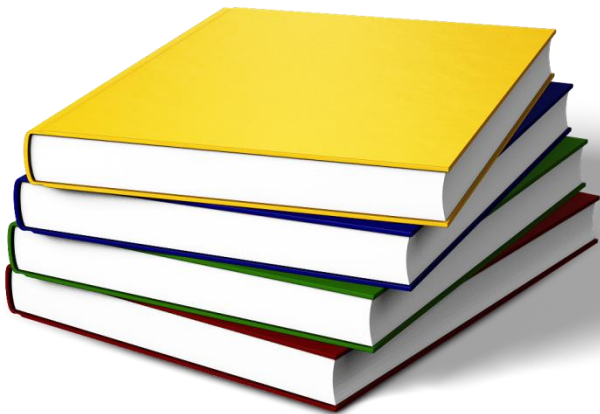


Sanatana Dharma or Hinduism



Śānti Mantras



- ॐ सह नाववतु ।
सह नौ भनक्तु ।
सह वीर्यं करवावहै ।
तेजस्विनावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै ।
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥
- Om saha nāvavatu |
sa ha nau bhunaktu |
sa ha vīryam karavāvahai |
tejasvināvadhītamastu mā vidviṣāvahai |
Om shāntiḥ shāntiḥ shāntiḥ ||

Śānti Mantras



- **Meaning:**

1: Om, May God Protect us Both (the Teacher and the Student),

2: May God Nourish us Both,

3: May we Work Together with Energy and Vigour,

4: May our Study be Enlightening, not giving rise to Hostility,

5: Om, Peace, Peace, Peace.

INTRODUCTION



- Sanatana Dharma or “Eternal Way”
- Hinduism was a term conferred (by visitors to India) on Indians practicing Sanatana Dharma
- Sanatana Dharma is rooted in the Vedic tradition is the basis for spirituality, religion and culture in Hinduism
- Dharma is the basis for all actions and is the vehicle that can prepare one for knowledge of the Self

SCRIPTURES



- Sruti (heard)
 - Veda
- Smrti (remembered)
 - Puranas
 - Ramayana
 - Mahabharata

SCRIPTURES



- Vedas
 - Rg (oldest book known to mankind)
 - Sama
 - Yajur
 - Atharva
- Bhagavad Gita (also known as Gita) occupies a special place in the scriptures

VEDAS



- How were the Vedas passed on from one generation to another?
 - Oral tradition
 - Method
 - Still practiced today!
- Study of the four Vedas is accompanied by the study of the ten other disciplines, which help one in understanding the Veda

Vedas as a Means of Knowledge



- Life is full of choices
- Vedas, as a body of knowledge, helps people make these choices intelligently
- The two sections of the Vedas are:
 - Karma Kāṇḍa
 - Jñāna Kāṇḍa

Vedas as a Means of Knowledge



- It is a fact that individuals have desires
 - The Karma Kāṇḍa prescribes methods to fulfill these desires (in accordance with dharma)
 - Actions prescribed by the Karma Kāṇḍa section of the Vedas produce results
 - There are two types of results – *dṛśhta phala* (tangible or verifiable result) and *adṛśhta phala* (unverifiable result)

GOD



- In Sanatana Dharma or Hinduism, the fundamental tenet is: “All is God”
- When understood properly, this creates an understanding of unity with all peoples, creatures, things, and everything in creation

Worship Practices



- Practicing Hindus worship God present in every form, recognizing that everything is a manifestation of God
- Sometimes we hear that Hindus practice Idol worship - this is incorrect
- Hindus do not worship the idol but God in a particular form
- This is common practice in all religions where some symbol is used to invoke the image of God in the mind

Pursuits of a human being



- The Vedas classify all pursuits of a human being into four categories called “puruśārthas”
 - Dharma (ethics)
 - Artha (securities)
 - Kāma (pleasures)
 - Mokśa (liberation)
- Of the four puruśārthas,
 - Artha is the quest for security
 - Kāma is the quest for experiencing pleasure

The Four Puruśārthas



- The four puruśārthas can be classified into two sets
- The set comprising of Artha and Kāma is shared by all living beings
 - How?
- The set comprising of Dharma and Mokśa is unique to human beings
 - Why?

The Four Puruśārthas



- Why is Dharma the first of the Puruśārthas?
 - Because the struggle for security and the search for pleasures must be governed by ethical standards
- What happens if Dharma is violated in achieving security or pursuing pleasure?
 - Breakdown of moral and spiritual standards
 - Destruction of the fabric of society

Ashramas: Stages of Human Life



- Brahmacharya: Education is the primary goal of the person
- Gṛhastha: Life as a householder; very important stage (supporting society); applying karma yoga
- Vanaprastha: Becoming more introspective and engaging is serious self-inquiry
- Sannyasa: Renunciation of attachments to material pleasures and sole dedication to pursuit of self-knowledge
- Each stage brings more maturity in a person

Karma and Rebirth



- Human birth is rare
- We can get Self-Realization on in human form
- We see disparity in health, wealth, and so on...
- How do we explain that some suffer while others seem to coast through life?

Karma and Rebirth



- The Law of Karma states that an individual is the creator of her/his own destiny
- The results of past actions place us in various circumstances (good or bad); how we act in these circumstances is up to us!
- If we act with our selfish interests in mind, we are bound to create more bindings and eventually to more suffering down the road; if we act selflessly, we can transmute the karma!

Guru or Teacher



- Hinduism places a special emphasis on all our teachers
 - Mother (our first teacher) is equated to God
 - Father (our second teacher) is equated to God
 - “Acharya” or spiritual teacher is equated to God
 - “Atithi” or a guest is also equated to God!
- This is a unique feature of Sanatana Dharma
- Guru is truly that teacher who removes (ru) the darkness (gu) or ignorance from one’s mind

Yoga



- What is (commonly understood as) Yoga?
- What is “Aṣṭanga Yoga”?
- Eightfold path culminating in “samadhi”

Fundamental Problem



- What is the Fundamental Problem?
- Why is the Knowledge of the Self important?
- How can ignorance of the Self be dispelled?

Three Pillars of Hinduism



- **What are the major beliefs?**
- **Satyam**
- **Brahmacharya**
- **Ahimsa**

Ahimsa



- **Ahimsa means “non-aggression”**
- **Most important value in Sanatana Dharma**
- **It does not imply passivity**
- **Hinduism does not advocate conversion – this is against the value of “Ahimsa”**

Rituals



- **Every society & every religion has rituals**
- **In Hinduism these rituals serve to remind us about God every day present in various forms and manifestations**

Prayers and Temple



- **How many times do you go to a temple each week?**
- **Most Hindus go to temples sometime during the week**
- **Nearly all Hindus have a shrine at home – this is a sacred place of worship and meditation**

Restrictions?



- **Are there any restrictions (dietary or otherwise?)**
- Eating habits of Hindus range from strictly vegetarian to non-vegetarian
- Discuss Gunas
 - Sattva
 - Rajas
 - Tamas

Varna System or Caste System



- There is widespread misunderstanding about the varna system in Hinduism
- The caste system is present in every society in one form or another – we even see it in our workplace
- Prasad – add here as needed

What are the Major Festivals



- There are more festivals in the Hindu calendar than perhaps in any other religion in the world
- Festivals help us to remember the divine through individual and group prayers
- Some festivals celebrated at the temple:

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Brahmotsava | Deepavali |
| Ganesh Puja | Maha shiva ratri |
| Janmashtami | Vaikunta ekadasi |
| Nava ratri | Guru Poornima |
| Rama navami | Sankranti |

Questions



- **What are the major holidays?**
- **Are there any restrictions (dietary or otherwise)?**
- **What would be considered the most sacred belief?**
- **How many times a week do you go to Temple?**
- **Other questions?**

Concluding Śānti Mantra



- ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदम पूर्णात् पूर्णमदच्यते ।
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमीदाय पूर्णमैवावशिष्यते ॥
Om Pūrṇamadah Pūrṇamidam Pūrṇāt-Purṇam-
Udacyate
Pūrṇasya Pūrṇamādāya Pūrṇamévāvaśiśyate ||
Om Śāntiḥ Śāntiḥ Śāntiḥ ||

Meaning:

That (God) is infinite; this (world) is whole;
from the infinite the world becomes manifest.

From the infinite, even if the whole is taken away,
what remains again is the infinite.