

Path to Dharma

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Author - B.S.Sarma

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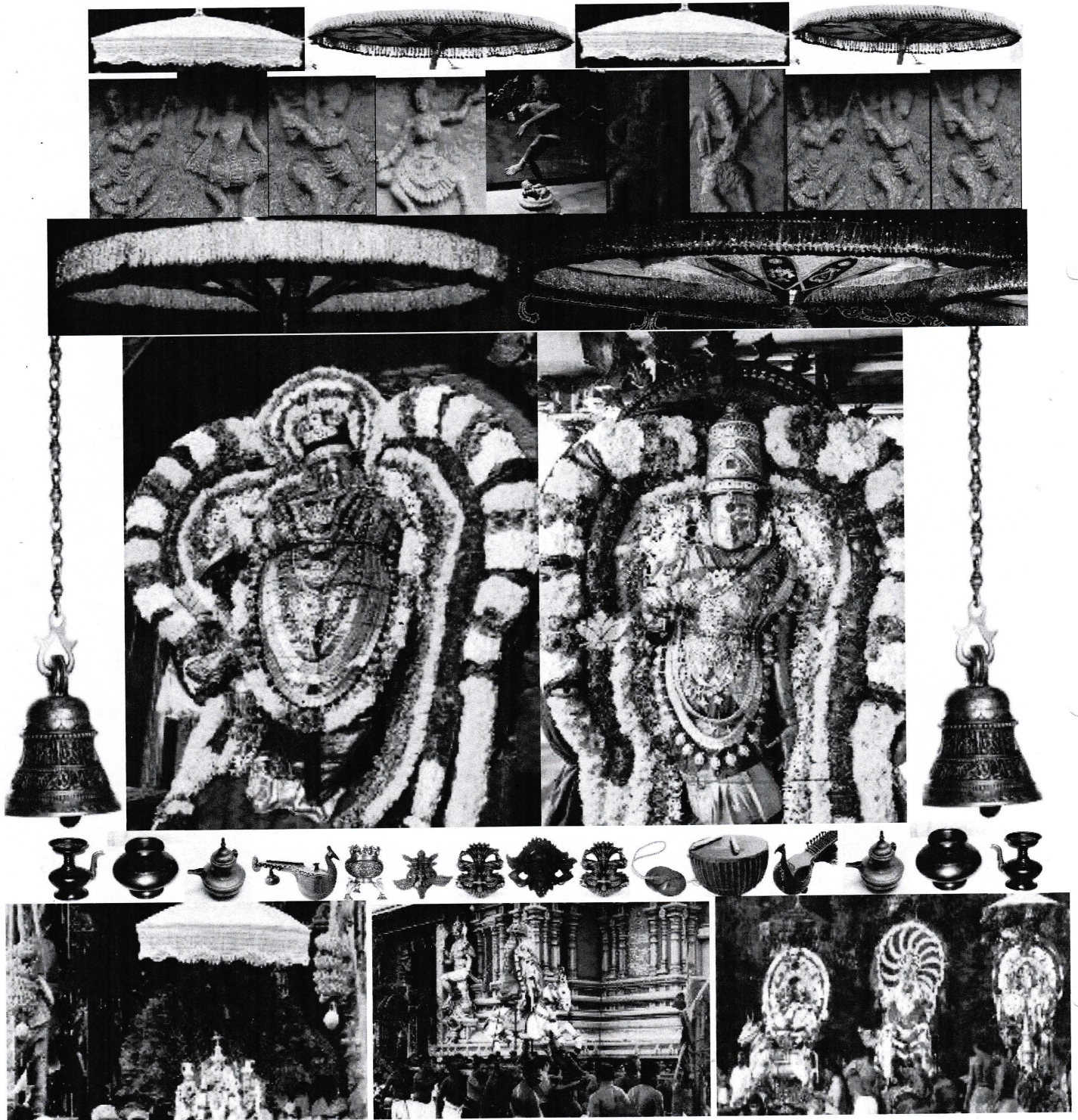
Editorial.

The monthly publication 'Path to Darma', by KshethraVinayakaTemple, Sri Munneswaram, Chilaw, Sri Lanka, is presenting the 98th number this month.

The main imperative endeavor of this monthly magazine is to pass on the vision associated to Hindu dharma basically by replies to the issues put forward by the anxious readers. The comments and analysis of the readers are appreciated.

B.S.ivaramakrishnaSarma,

KshethraVinayakaTemple, SriMunneswaram, Chilaw, Sri Lanka. . February, 2016



Sacred Texts of Hinduism

A list of Hindu scriptures

Several lists include only the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Bagavad Gita as scriptures broadly accepted by Hindus. Some scholars consider texts as the Tantric Agamas, Bhagawata Purana, Yajnavalkya Smriti and Nalayira Divya Prbandham in addition to the above. A list of prominent texts are given below.

This list includes all major religious Hindu texts, including the Hindu scriptures.

- i. **Agama** – important Smriti scriptures. Different denominations interpret this term in different ways.
- ii. **Aranayaka** : Part of the Vedas, the third layer embedded inside them, treated as Sruti.
- iii. **Atharva Veda**: The last of the four Vedas
- iv. **Akilathirattu Ammanai**: A 19th century Tamil Vaishnavite text and the primary scripture of Ayyavazhi sect.
- v. **Bhagavad Gita** : The , Part of the greater epic Mahabharata, located in the Bhishma –Parva chapters 23–40. A core sacred text of Hindu philosophy
- vi. **Bhagavata Purana**; one of the "Maha" (great) Puranic text called 'The Book of God'.
- vii. **Brahmana** – one of the parts into which the Vedas are divided, and are its second layer.
- viii. **Brahma Sutras** – important texts in Advaita Vedanta.
- ix. **Chandas**- the study of Vedic meter, ('organs of the vedas') is one of the six Vedanga disciplines.
- x. **Chandogya Upanishad** – is associated with the Samaveda. It figures as number 9 in the Muktika canon of 108 Upanishads. It is part of the Chandogya Brahmana, which has ten chapters.
- xi. **Charaka Samhita**: An early Ayurvedic text on internal medicine. It is believed to be the oldest of the three ancient treatises of Ayurveda.
- xii. **Code of Manu** – is the most important and earliest metrical work of the Dharmaśāstra.
- xiii. **Devi Mahatmya (Durga Saptashathi)** – 700 verses from Markandeya purana, an important text of Shaktism.
- xiv. **Devi Bhagavata** – An important Purana on in Shaktism.
- xv. **Dhiya prbhandha** – Collection of 4000 verses on Vishnu (Dravida Veda) in Tamil language sung by Alvaes
- xvi. **Gheranda Samhita** This is one of the three texts of Hatha Yoga.
- xvii. **Bhadavat Gita** - The famous Bhagavad Gita, which is one of its chapters (*Bhishmaparva*) which is a sacred text of Hinduism.
- xviii. **Hatha Yoga Pradipika**: is basic text of Hatha Yoga. It comprises of Asanas, Pranayama, Chakras, Kundalini, Bandhas, Kriyas, Shakti, Nadi and Mudras.
- xix. **Ithihasas** – Hindu religious texts (Hindu epic poetry) on the Mahabharata and the Mahabarata and the Ramayana.
- xx. **Kamba Ramayana**- Written by Kambar in 12th century. It is the Tamil version of Ramayana adapted by Kambar.
- xxi. **Maha Bharata**: One of the two major ancient Hindu epic in Sanskrit, the other one is Ramayana.
- xxii. **Manu Smrithi** : This text (Laws of Manu) is regarded as an important work on Hinduism.
- xxiii. **Nalayira Divya Prabandham**: is a collection of 4,000 Tamil verses (Naalayira in Tamil means 'four thousand') composed before 8th century AD, by the 12 Alvars, and was compiled in its present form by Nathamuni during the 9th – 10th centuries.
- xxiv. **Puranas**: Purana meaning "ancient" , is the name of a genre (or a group of related genres) of Hindu written literature. Its general themes are history, tradition and religion.
- xxv. **Ramayana**: this is a part of the Smriti which is written by sage Valmiki. This epic consists of 24,000 verses in seven 'kandas' (chapters) describes about Raguvamsa of Ayodhya.
- xxvi. **Rig veda**: The Rigveda is a collection of Vedic hymns considered as the holiest of the four religious texts of Hindus, known as the Vedas.
- xxvii. **Sahasranamas**: texts containing a list of names of deities normally one thousand.
- xxviii. **Sama veda**: Third of the four Vedas.

- xxix. **Siva samhita:** is one of the three classical treatises on Hatha yoga
- xxx. **Siva Sutras:** a collection of seventy seven aphorisms that form the foundation of Kashmir Shaivism.
- xxxi. **Smriti:** Hindu scriptures other than the Vedas like the Ithihasas, the Puranas.
- xxxii. **Sruti:** This is believed to have no author; rather a divine recording of the "cosmic sounds of truth", heard by rishis.
- xxxiii. **Sutra:** refers to an aphorism or a collection of such aphorisms in the form of a text. Each Sutra form a school of thought of Vedic study, related to and somewhat later than the Upanishads..
- xxxiv. **Sushura Samhita:** This text, attributed to one Sushruta, foundational to Ayurvedic medicine.
- xxxv. **Swaa yoga:** This text deals with pranic body rhythms. It explores how prana can be controlled through the breath.
- xxxvi. **Tantras:** The esoteric Hindu traditions of rituals and yoga.
- xxxvii. **Thevaram:** A collection of important Tamil Saivite scriptures.
- xxxviii. **Thirukural:** An important smriti written in Tamil.
- xxxix. **Thrumanthiram:** an important Saivite work written in Tamil.
- xl. **Upanishads:** Part of the Sruti texts which discuss meditation and philosophy.



The Vedic Literature

The primary authorities of Hinduism are known as **Vedas**. They were revealed to the Rishis, (the sages or seers), as an intuition by direct revelations from the Divine.

Sage Veda Vyasa categorized in an orderly manner the four Vedas, **Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda** and **Atharva Veda**. His disciples Paila, Vaisampaya, Jaimini and Sumanta educated the four Vedas to their disciples. Latter the concepts of Veda were passed down to their student generations by guru-shishya teaching - learning methodology of education.

The knowledge of four Vedas was passed down from generations to generations by memorizing and reciting the verses for thousands of years. The **Rig Veda** consists of **1028** Suukthas collected as **21** Sakhas (sections) with hymns in praise of the Divine. **Yajur Veda**, consists of **109** Sakhas, mainly consists of Hymns used in religious rituals and rites. **Saama Veda** consists of **1000** Sakhas, and it is composed of Verses from Rig Veda set to music. **Atharva Veda** consists of **50** Sakhas with **598** hymns, gives many rites and rituals to guide man in his daily activities and materialistic life, to ward off evil and destroy enemies.

The **Vedas** are composed with numerous Parts. They have the **Manthras** (Hymns) for prayers, the

Brahmanas

The Brahmanas were compiled between 1000 and 700 BCE as interpretations of the four Vedas. Hence, each one of the Brahmana is attached to a particular Veda. Each Brahmana explain the significance of mantras, spell out the performance of certain sacrificial procedures. Each Brahmana functions as a guide showing the appropriate utilization of the material in the Veda to which it belongs.

Brahmanas, the explanatory treatises for using the manthras in rituals, the **Aranyakas**, the forest books and the **Upanishads**, the portion of knowledge. The Aranyakas are the mystical interpretations of the manthras and rituals. The Vedas and the Upanishads are the foremost in authority, importance and antiquity.

The Agamas

Agamas are Divine in source and are considered authoritative texts. These are independent of Vedas, explain the worship of God in various manifest forms. In addition these lay out the rules for construction of Temples and other places of worship.

There are other texts which are explanatory treatises to guide us in proper path. **Vedangas** are explanatory limbs of the Vedic texts, rituals and astrology. They are **Siksha, Vyakarna, Chandas** and **Niruktha** which deal with the usage, pronunciation and grammar of the Vedic language; **Jyothisha** which deals with astronomy and astrology. **Kalpa Suthras** explain various rituals, laying out the area for homa (Yagna), ethics, customs and laws for the domestic life. There are four **Upa-Vedas** on science and art of health, archery, music and politics [Ayurveda, Dhanur-veda, Gandharva-veda and Arthasasthra]. **Dharsanas** are called the *Upangaa*, texts by various authors explaining various pathways of understanding and the practice of the Vedic philosophy and teachings. The **Smrithis** or the **Sasthras** are the sacred law codes written based on the Vedic teachings. **Ithihasas** and **Puranas** carry these teachings through stories to practice the faith. When the human civilization began to settle down as groups in tiny areas, as cultivators, hunters and merchants, (ancient Neolithic age), inhabitants felt the societal requirement for appeal to a supreme being which later evolved as various

The Agamas are theological treatises and practical manuals of divine worship. Along with Vedas these scriptures too, extolled as primary sources. The Agamas include the Tantras, Mantras and Yantras. These are treatises explaining the external worship of God, in idols, temples etc. All the Agamas composed of the following items.

1. Jnana or Knowledge
2. Yoga or Concentration
3. Kriya or Esoteric Ritual
4. Charya or Exoteric Worship

They also give elaborate details about ontology and cosmology, liberation, devotion, meditation, philosophy of temple rituals, mantras, mystic diagrams, charms and spells, temple-building, image-making, domestic observances, social rules, social obligations public festivals etc. The Agamas are divided into three sections: the Vaishnava, the Saiva, and the Sakta. The chief sects of Hinduism, are Vaishnavism, Saivism and Saktism, base their doctrines and dogmas on their respective Agamas.

Each one of these group of people developed their own systems for worship and religious practices. Nearly all groups prayed for diverse forms of natural forces. When wandering societies intermingled with each other through journeys and conflicts, several different varieties of worships coexisted.

Nearly all the primitive social groups and their civilizations developed later from these groups had various forms of worship of different Gods. The different Gods, were worshiped, one for each one form of force or activity.

The important Agamas

A vast compilation of Sanskrit scriptures which along with the Vedas, are revered as sruti (revealed scriptures of supreme theological authority and spiritual value). The date of the origin of Agamas is uncertain. They are supposed to be part of a verbal tradition of unidentified antiquity. Many professionals and experts consider the Agamas as olden as the earliest Vedas, dating back to 5000 BCE to 6000 BCE. The Agamas are regarded as the prime source and authority for different rituals, types of yogas and the varied temple constructions. Each one of the major sections of Hinduism, (Saivism, Vaishnavam, and Saktism) has its distinctive Agama texts of their own, Smartas be aware of the Agamas, but do not inevitably adhere to Agamas but depend generally on the Smriti texts.

Saiva Agama

The available scriptures of Saiva Agama give the details of Saiva murthas (idols), impressively theistic. The Saiva Agama recognize Lord Siva as the Supreme Lord, immanent and inspiring. There are in two chief divisions of the Saiva Agama,

- i. The 64 Kashmir Saiva Agama
- ii. The 28 Saiva siddhanta Agama

The second group (The 28 Saiva Siddhanta Agamas) are the basic scriptures of Saiva Siddhanta cult and out of twenty eight Saiva Siddhanta Agamas, ten Saiva Siddhanta Agamas are of the Sivabheda division and are considered dualistic; and the other eighteen Agamas are of the Rudrabhedha group classed as dual-nondual.

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Ajita Agama | 2. Amsumat Agama |
| 3. Chintya Agama | 4. Dipta Agama |
| 5. Kamika Agama, | 6. Karana Agama |
| 7. Sahasraka Agama | 8. Sukshma Agama |
| 9. Suprabhedha Agama | 10. Yogaja Agama |
| 11. Anala Agama | 12. Chandrajnana(hasa) Agama |
| 13. Kirana Agama | 14. Lalita Agama |
| 15. Makuta Agama | 16. Mukhabimba-bimba Agama |
| 17. Nihsvasa Agama | 18. Paramesvara Agama |
| 19. Prodigita-udgita Agama | 20. Raurava Agama |
| 21. Santana Agama | 22. Sarvokta-narasimha Agama |
| 23. Siddha Agama | 24. Svayambhuva Agama |
| 25. Vatula Agama | 26. Vijaya Agama |
| 27. Vimala Agama | 28. Virabhadra Agama |

Upanishads

The **Upanishads** divulge some of the supreme truths ever revealed to human. They contain the essence of spiritual truth and philosophy of the Vedas. This directs mankind all the way through the ages in search for spiritual enlightenment. The Muktika Upanishad gives a list of the names of 108 Upanishads. Out of which 12 are exceptionally important.

It is accepted that the following ten main Upanishads namely Isa Upanishads, Kena Upanishads, Katha Upanishads, Prasna Upanishads, Mundaka Upanishads, Mandukya Upanishads, Taittiriya Upanishads, Aitareya Upanishads, Chandogya Upanishads and Brihadaranyaka Upanishads are the most authoritative and ancient. In addition to these the Kaushitaki Upanishads, Svetasvatara Upanishads, Mahanarayaniya Upanishads and Maitrayaniya Upanishads are also taken into account as they have been referred to by many early authorities. These belong to the different Vedas as shown below:

1. Rig Veda
 - i. Aitareya Upanishad
 - ii. Kaushitaki Upanishad
2. Yajur Veda
 - a. **Krishna Yajur Veda** (important Upanishad of this)
 - i. Katha Upanishad
 - ii. Svetasvatara Upanishad
 - iii. Maitrayaniya Upanishad
 - iv. Mahanarayaniya Upanishad
 - v. Taittiriya Upanishad
 - b. **Sukla Yajur Veda** (important Upanishad of this)
 - i. Isavasya Upanishad
 - ii. Brihadaranyaka Upanishad
3. Sama Veda
 - i. Kena Upanishad
 - ii. Chandogya Upanishad
4. Atharva Veda
 - i. Mundaka Upanishad
 - ii. Mandukya Upanishad
 - iii. Prasna Upanishad

The empirical meaning of the term Upanishad is 'Sitting near devotedly'. Factually Upanishads form the fourth and final portion of the Vedas, clarifying the divine secret, philosophical significance of the Vedic hymns. The Upanishads are a compilation of philosophical texts which are the resource of Vedanta. These texts have dominated Hindu ideas for thousands of years. They are idealistic chronicles of rishis illuminating and explaining the nature of God, soul and cosmos, exquisite interpreting of the deepest thought of Hindus. The Upanishads are generally dated later than the Samhitas and Brahmanas, though some are actually portions of the Brahmanas. It is considered that most of the Upanishads were written between the period 1500 and 600 BCE. Conventionally, the number of Upanishads is given as 108. Ten to sixteen are classified as 'major' (principal) Upanishads being those considered paramount important which philosophical scholars have commented on through the centuries. In content and concept all these Upanishadic texts deal around the identity of the soul and God the doctrines of reincarnation, the principle of karma and of liberation through renunciation and meditation.

The most important Upanishads

Artharvasikha Upanishad

Artharvasikha Upanishad is a philosophical Upanishad. This Upanishad describes importance and perception and the interpretation of the pranava mantra 'Aum'.

Aruneya Upanishad

Aruneya Upanishad is considered an important Upanishad which deals with the concept and the duties of sanyasa.

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad is one of the most important Upanishads which is a part of the Satapatha Brahmana of the Yajur Veda, attributed to Sage Yajnavalkya. Brihadaranyaka Upanishad explains the methods of worship, types of meditation and the identity of the individual self with the Supreme Self.

Chandogya Upanishad

Chandogya Upanishad is considered as one of the major Upanishads. Chandogya Upanishad consists of eight chapters of the Chandogya Brahmana of the Sama Veda. It instructs the origin and significance of the mantra 'Aum' the importances of the Sama Veda, the Self, meditation and life after death.

Ganapati Upanishad

Ganapati Upanishad is normally considered as one belongs to a later period, but a very popular Upanishad on Lord Ganesha. This Ganapati Upanishad is not connected with any Veda. The date of composition of this Ganapati Upanishad is unknown. It is a major scripture for the Ganapatians.

Isa Upanishad

Isa Upanishad is the last of the forty chapters of Vajasaneyi Samhita of the Yajur Veda, Isa Upanishad deals with life which is a short and considered highly mystical and spiritual scripture

Jabala Upanishad

Jabala Upanishad is considered to belong to the Athra Veda. Jabala Upanishad is a scripture which explains the of knowledge to attain renunciation.

Jaiminiya Brahman Upanishad

Jaiminiya Brahman Upanishad is a philosophical discourse of the Sama Veda. This Jaiminiya Brahman Upanishad explicates the death, passage of life after death to other worlds and reincarnation.

Kaivalya Upanishad

Kaivalya Upanishad is a philosophical text of the Atharva Veda. This Kaivalya Upanishadic exposition explains the ways and methods of reaching Siva through meditation

Katha Upanishad

Katha Upanishad is considered as one of the major Upanishads. Katha Upanishad belongs to the Taittiriya Brahmana of the Yajur Veda. Katha Upanishad includes the well-known narration of Nachiketas who extracts from Yama, Lord of Death, the knowledge of liberation to realize of the supreme.

Kaushitaki Upanishad

Kaushitaki Upanishad is one of the major Upanishads belongs to the Rig Veda. Kaushitaki Upanishad converses the important concepts of the course of souls after death, the doctrine of prana (vital energy or life principle) as related to the atman and the realization of moksha.

Kena Upanishad

Kena Upanishad belongs to the Talavakara Brahmana of the Sama Veda. Kena Upanishad is important script as it is a discourse upon Brahman, Absolute Reality and His worship as personal God.

Mahanarayana Upanishad

Mahanarayana Upanishad is believed an important philosophical script of the Krishna Yajur Veda.

Maitri Upanishad

Maitri Upanishad is regard as a script belongs to to Maitrayaniya branch of the Krishna Yajur Veda. Maitri Upanishad is one of the later Upanishad explain Covering Aum, outer nature, the Self, control of the mind

Mandukya Upanishad

Mandukya Upanishad is one of the principal Upanishads. This Upanishad belongs to Atharva Veda consisting of twelve brief verses. Mandukya Upanishad elucidate the meaning of the pranava mantra 'Aum' and the four states (avastha) of awareness; walking (viswa), dreaming (taijasa) dreamless sleep (prajna) and transcendent, spiritual consciousness (tyriya)

Mukti Upanishad

Mukti Upanishad explains in length about yoga practice. It is supposed to have been written in the 14th century.

Mundaka Upanishad

Mundaka Upanishad belongs to the Athava Veda and clarifies the different between the intellectual study of the Veda and their supplementary texts. Mundaka Upanishad throws light on the perceptive knowledge by which God is known.

Paingala Upanishad

Paingala Upanishad belongs to the Sukla Yajur Veda. This Upanishad comprises of a twelve verse conversation between Sage Yajnavalkya and his dseciple Paingala conversing a wide range of themes, including liberation and the five sheath of man.

Pranagnihotra Upanishad

Pranagnihotra Upanishad is a minor Upanishad. This Upanishad explains the ways and means of the transforming the external ritual of the fire sacrifice into 'pran- agnihotra' the saceifice offered in the 'prana fire' of a person.

Prasana Upanishad

Prasana Upanishad is belived to belong to the Atharva Veda. Prasana Upanishad is divided into six segments addressing six questions raised to the sage Pippalada by his disciples, in relation to life, Realization and the meaning of the pranava mantra Aum.

Sandilya Upanishad

Sandilya Upanishad is an essential Upanishad belongs to the Atharva Veda. Sandilya Upanishad gives the details of eight forms of yoga, restraints, observances, breath control, meditation and the nature of Truth.

Sanyasa Upanishad

Sanyasa Upanishad is a vital Upanishad of the Athava Veda. Sanyasa Upanishad deals in detail the transition from the grihastha to the vanaprastha and sanyasa asramas.

Subala Upanishad

Subala Upanishad is considered to belong to the Sukla Yajur Veda. Subala Upanishad gives the famous dialog between sage Subala and Brahma about the Supreme Being as Narayana.

Svetasvatara Upanishad

Svetasvatara Upanishad It is a major Upanishad, among the greatest monistic writings especially valued by Saivite schools and belongs to the Yajur Veda. This Svetasvatara Upanishad describes about personal God, devotion, unity of God, soul and world.

Taittiriya Upanishad

Taittiriya Upanishad belongs to the Taittiriya Brahmana of the Yajur Veda and is divided into three sections known as vallis. The first valli deals with phonetics and pronunciation, the second valli and third valli deals with Brahman and the attainment of bliss.

Yajnavalkya Upanishad

Yajnavalkya Upanishad A musical description; type of script rendering of the Jabala Upanishad, which expounds on sannyasa, renunciation of worldly life in the quest for liberation.

Yogatattva Upanishad

Yogatattva Upanishad scripture consists of 142 verses. This Yogatattva Upanishad gives a detailed account on Advaita Vedanta and yoga practices.

The list of 108 Upanishads (as per the list contained in the Muktikopanishad).

{Arranged in four categories according to the particular Veda to which each of them belong}.

RigVeda(10)

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Aitareya Upanishad | 6. Nadabindu Upanishad |
| 2. Atmabodha Upanishad | 7. Akshamaya Upanishad |
| 3. Kaushitaki Upanishad | 8. Tripura Upanishad |
| 4. Mudgala Upanishad | 9. Bahvruka Upanishad |
| 5. Nirvana Upanishad | 10. Saubhagyalakshmi Upanishad |

Yajurveda(50)

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Katha Upanishad | 26. Bhikshuka Upanishad |
| 2. Taittiriya Upanishad | 27. Yajnavalkya Upanishad |
| 3. Isavasya Upanishad | 28. Satyayani Upanishad |
| 4. Brihadaranyaka Upanishad | 29. Amrtanada, Upanishad |
| 5. Akshi Upanishad | 30. Amrtabindu Upanishad |
| 6. Ekakshara Upanishad | 31. Kshurika Upanishad |
| 7. Garbha Upanishad | 32. Tejobindu Upanishad |
| 8. Pragnihotra Upanishad | 33. Dhyana Bindu Upanishad |
| 9. Svetasvatara Upanishad | 34. Brahavidya Upanishad |
| 10. Sariraka Upanishad | 35. Yogakundalini Upanishad |
| 11. Sukarahasya Upanishad | 36. Yogatattva Upanishad |
| 12. Skanda Upanishad | 37. Yogasikha Upanishad |
| 13. Sarvasara Upanishad | 38. Varaha Upanishad |
| 14. Adhyatma Upanishad | 39. Advayataraka Upanishad |
| 15. Niralamba Upanishad | 40. Trisikhibrahmana Upanishad |
| 16. Paingala Upanishad | 41. Mandalabrahmana Upanishad |
| 17. Mantrika Upanishad | 42. Hamsa Upanishad |
| 18. Muktika Upanishad | 43. Kalisantaraaa Upanishad |
| 19. Subala Upanishad | 44. Narayana Upanishad |
| 20. Avadhuta Upanishad | 45. Tarasara Upanishad |
| 21. Katharudra Upanishad | 46. Kalagnirudra Upanishad |
| 22. Brahma Upanishad | 47. Dakshinamurti Upanishad |
| 23. Jabala Upanishad | 48. Pancabrahma Upanishad |
| 24. Turiyatita Upanishad | 49. Rudrahrdaya Upanishad |
| 25. Paramahansa Upanishad | 50. SarasvatIrahasya Upanishad |

SamaVeda(16)

1. Kena Upanishad
2. Chandogya Upanishad
3. Mahat Upanishad
4. Maitrayani Upanishad
5. Vajrasuci Upanishad
6. Savitr, Upanishad
7. Aruneya Upanishad
8. Kundika Upanishad
9. Maitreyi Upanishad
10. Samnyasa Upanishad
11. Jabaladarsana Upanishad
12. Yogacudaman Upanishad
13. Avyakta Upanishad
14. Vasudevai Upanishad
15. Jabali Upanishad
16. Rudrakshajabal Upanishad

Atharvaveda(32)

1. Prasna Upanishad
2. Mandukya Upanishad
3. Mundaka Upanishad
4. Atma Upanishad
5. Surya Upanishad
6. Narada-Parivraja Upanishad
7. Parabrahma Upanishad
8. Paramahansa-Parivrajakas Upanishad
9. Pasupatha-Brahma Upanishad
10. Mahavakya Upanishad
11. Sandilya Upanishad
12. Krishna Upanishad
13. Garuda Upanishad
14. Gopalatapani Upanishad
15. Tripadavibhutumahnarayana Upanishad
16. Dattatreya Upanishad
17. Kaivalya Upanishad
18. Nrsimhatapani Upanishad
19. Ramatapani, Upanishad
20. Ramarahasya Upanishad
21. HayagrIva Upanishad
22. Atharvasikha Upanishad
23. Atharvasira Upanishad
24. Ganapati Upanishad
25. Brhajjabala Upanishad
26. Bhasmajabala Upanishad
27. Sarabha Upanishad
28. Annapurna Upanishad
29. TripuratapanI Upanishad
30. Devi Upanishad
31. Bhavana Upanishad
32. Sita Upanishad

The Smritis available

There are eighteen Smritis (Dharma Sastras) and the names are as follows;

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| i. Manu Smriti | x. Vasishtha Smriti |
| ii. Yajnavalkya Smriti | xi. Yama Smriti |
| iii. Parasara Smriti | xii. Apastamba Smriti |
| iv. Vishnu Smriti | xiii. Gautama Smriti |
| v. Daksha Smriti | xiv. Devala Smriti |
| vi. Samvarta Smriti | xv. Sankha-Likhita Smriti |
| vii. Vyasa Smriti | xvi. Usana Smriti |
| viii. Harita Smriti | xvii. Atri Smriti |
| ix. Satatapa Smriti | xviii. Saunaka. Smriti |

The Puranas (Eighteen)

There are eighteen main Puranas. Of these, six are Sattvic Puranas and glorify Vishnu; Six are Rajasic Puranas and glorify Brahma; six are Tamasic Puranas and glorify Siva. Sage Bhadraryana, (Vyasa) is the authour of these Puranas.

The Puranas and their stories were designed for and used by the normal Hindu. The eighteen major Puranas are collections of stories about the gods and their activities. The earliest were composed around 400 ce, but others, especially some minor ones, were created a millennium later. Thus the Puranas span the period from Classical Hinduism into Medieval Hinduism. They tend to emphasize two points: bhakti (devotion to a god) and dharma (doing one's personal and social duty). The Puranas thus fall into three groups: those dealing with the stories of Brahma, those concerning Vishnu (and his avatars and consort(s)), and those about Siva .

Vishnu Puranas

- | | |
|--|--|
| 01. Vishnu Purana, (23 000 verses) | 04. Garuda (Suparna) Purana, (19 000 verses) |
| 02. Naradiya Purana, (25 000 verses) | 05. Padma Purana, (55 000 verses) |
| 03. Srimad Bhagavata Purana, (18 000 verses) | 06. Varah Purana, (24 000 verses) |

Brahma Puranas

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 07. Brahma Purana, (10 000 verses) | 10. Markandeya Purana, (9000 verses) |
| 08. Brahmanda Purana, (12 000 verses) | 11. Bhavishya Purana, (14 500 verses) |
| 09. Brahma Vaivarta Purana, (18 000 verses) | 12. Vamana Purana, (10 000 verses) |

Siva Puranas

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 13. Matsya Purana, (14 000 verses) | 16. Siva Purana, (24 000 verses) |
| 14. Kurma Purana, (17 000 verses) | 17. Skanda Purana (81 100 verses) |
| 15. Linga Purana, (11 000 verses) | 18. Agni Purana. (15 400 verses) |

The Upa-Puranas (subsidiary Puranas)

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 01. Sanatkumara Purana, | 10. Kalika Purana, |
| 02. Narasimha Purana, | 11. Samba Purana, |
| 03. Brihannaradiya Purana, | 12. Nandi Purana, |
| 04. Sivarahasya Purana, | 13. Surya Purana, |
| 05. Durvasa Purana, | 14. Parasara Purana, |
| 06. Kapila Purana, | 15. Vasishtha Purana, |
| 07. Vamana Purana, | 16. Devi-Bhagavata Purana, |
| 08. Bhargava Purana, | 17. Ganesa Purana, |
| 09. Varuna Purana, | 18. Hamsa Purana. |

Brahmanas

Brahmanas were written between about 900 and 700 BC the in prose form as sacerdotal commentaries on the four *Vedas*. These *Brahmanas* explain the practices of the sacrifices. Thus give us information about the social customs of this period and serve as a transition from the *Vedas* to the *Aranyakas* and the mystical *Upanishads*. The caste system based on color (*varna*) was now established. *Jaiminiya Brahmana* shows how to overcome with the fears of death.

Brahmanas are specific ritualistic, ritualistic in its approach and have esoteric meanings. They are more extensive, and explain how to recreate the ritual action of life itself, to portray the cosmic ritual in a few special actions.

The ritual proceeds primarily through speech, breath and mind. The main power of the ritual is the manner of chanting the mantras. The chants attune us to the cosmic vibration and put us in tune with the transformative force of nature. Such rituals and chants prepare us for the spiritual knowledge, make our life and thought a rich field for it to grow. The *Brahmanas* there by lead us to the *Upanishads*.

Aranyakas

The large volume of Vedic literature is divided into two parts with the four *Rig, Sama, Yajur, and Atharva Samhitas* and their *Brahmanas* making up the Karmakanda on the work of the sacrifices. The *Aranyakas* and the *Upanishads* are the portion on knowledge termed the Jnanakanda. The *Aranyakas* and the *Upanishads* were tacked on to the end of *Brahmanas*. Only three *Aranyakas* extant share the names of the *Brahmanas*. *Aitareya, Kausitaki, and the Taittiriya*; the first two are related to the *Rig Veda*, the third to the *Yajur Veda*.

Between the *Brahmanas* and *Upanishads* are a few secondary texts. These are called *Aranyakas* (Forest texts) used by those who left society to reside in the forest to gain spiritual knowledge (*Vanaprasthas*). The *Aranyakas* provide us with mystic teaching of the sacrificial religion.

It is possible that certain sacred rites were performed in the isolation of the forests where teachers and pupils meditated on the significance of these rites. The distinction between *Brahmana* and *Aranyaka* is not an absolute one. The *Aranyakas* combine ritual passages with philosophical texts.

The *Aranyakas* are called the forest texts, because ascetics retreated into the forest to study the spiritual doctrines with their disciples, leading to less importance to the sacrificial rituals that were still performed in the towns. They were transitional between the *Brahmanas* and the *Upanishads* in that they still discuss rites and have magical content, a set of formulas and some hymns from the *Vedas* as well as the early speculations and intellectual discussions that flowered in the *Upanishads*.

The *Taittiriya Aranyaka* shows that the truth was the highest value and through truth the right to heaven was retained. Debtors were in fear of punishment in hell, probably because the social punishments in this world were severe. The emphasis now was on knowledge, even on wisdom, as they prayed for intelligence. The concept of *prana* as the life energy of the breath is exalted as that which establishes the entire soul. *Prana* is found in trees, animals, and people in ascending order. Human immortality is identified with the soul (*atman*), not the body. Hell is still feared, but by practicing austerity (*tapas*) to gain knowledge individuals hope to be born into a better world after death or be liberated from rebirth. Non-attachment (*vairagya*) also purifies the body and overcomes death.

The Sutras

The Sutras are a collection of thoughts to organize many of the ideas of the Vedas into a series of rules and regulations that can be practiced. The Sutras came at the end of the Vedic literature and each one is usually derived from a Veda and its commentary literature. One of the most famous sutras in the West is that rulebook of sexual pleasure, the *Kama Sutra*.

The Epics- Mahabharata and Ramayana

The two great Hindu epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, are the main mythology. According to recent evidences it is proved that both are accounts of real events, not merely mythological. *Itihasas*, literally means 'that which happened'. The epics *Mahabharata*, and *Ramayana* are intertwined in Hindu philosophy and serve as parables and sources of devotion for Hindus into the present day.



ஸ்ரீ சக்கரம் பற்றிய ஒரு தகவல்

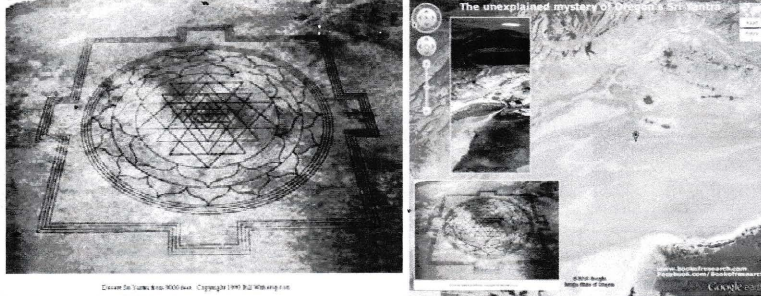


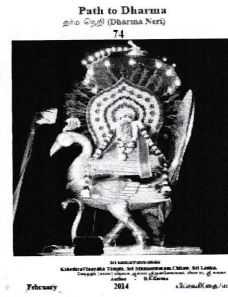
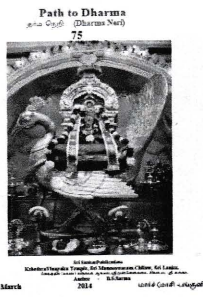
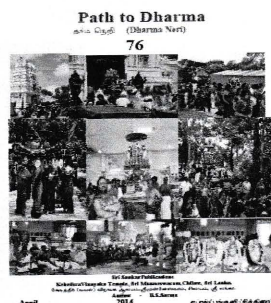
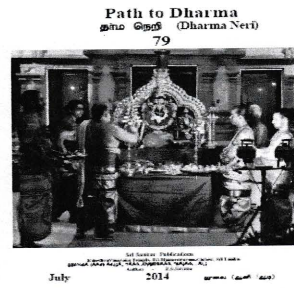
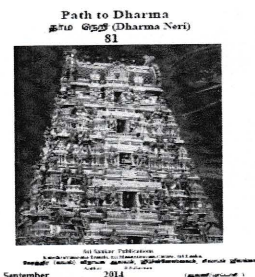
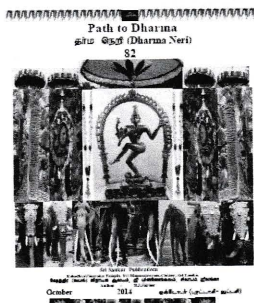
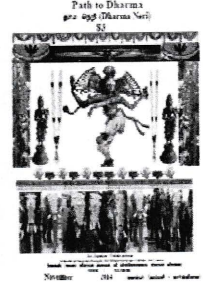
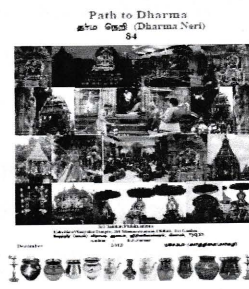
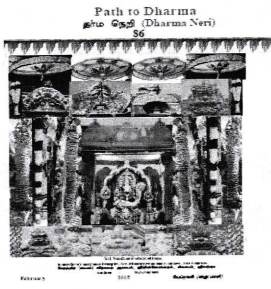
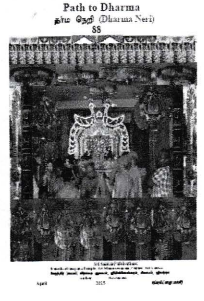
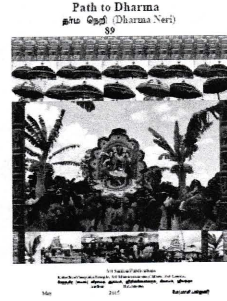
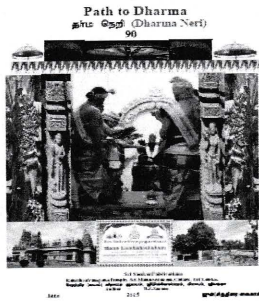
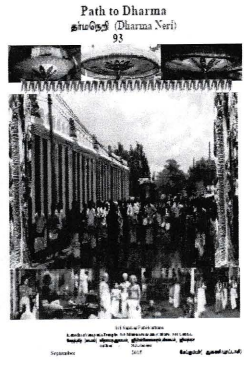
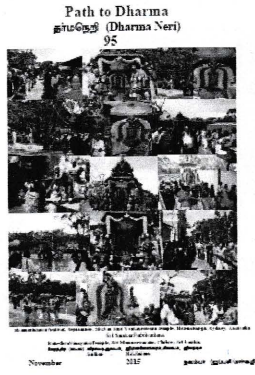
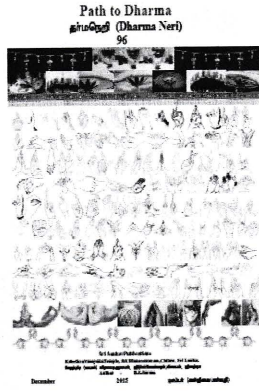
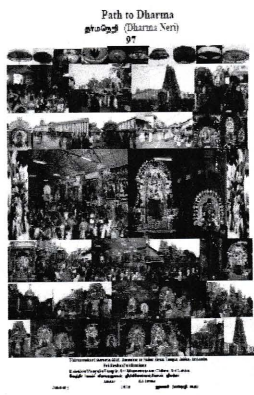
அமெரிக்காவின் ஒரெகன் மாநிலத்தின் ஸ்டீன்ஸ் மலைகளின் தென்கிழக்கில் உள்ள இடம்தான் மிக்கி பேசின் சூரியனின் வெப்பத்தில் மணல் கொப்பளிக்கும் அளவுக்கு பாலைவன தேசம். பில் மில்லர் என்கிற ராணுவ அதிகாரி இந்த இடத்தை குட்டி விமானம் மூலம் கடந்து செல்கையில் 13.3 அடைய சதுர அளவுக்கு வரி வரியாக வரைபடம் போன்ற ஒன்றை கண்டார்.

ஏதோ நாட்டின் வரை படம் என்று நினைத்து அதை பற்றி ஆராய்ந்தவருக்கு பயங்கர அதிர்ச்சி காரணம் அது நம் இந்து மதத்தில் காலம் காலமாக வழிபடும் சிவ விஷ்ணு பராசக்தியை குறிக்கும் ஸ்ரீ சக்கரம் தான் அவர் பார்த்தது தொடர்ந்து 30 நிமிடங்கள் வட்டமிட்ட பின்னே தான் அவரால் முழு சக்கரத்தையும் 1 தடவை சுற்ற முடிந்தது.

இதைப் போலவே வரைய அவர்களால் எவ்வளவு முயன்றும் (1990 வழி 2014) இன்று வரை முடியவில்லை காரணம் நாலாயிரம் அடி மேலே பறந்து பார்த்தால் தான் ஸ்ரீ சக்கரம் என்றே தெரியும்.

ருகு ஆராய்ச்சியாளர்கள் டான் நியுமேன்ஓலன் டெக்ளர் இருவரும் இந்த இடத்தை செப் 15 ல் ஆய்வு செய்தனர். அந்த ஆய்வில் இந்த இடத்தை சுற்றியுள்ள எந்த பகுதியிலும் மனித கால் தடமோ வாகன வந்து சென்ற தடமோ இல்லை என்றும் மனிதனால் இது சாத்தியமே இல்லை என்றும் கருத்து தெரிவித்துள்ளனர்.





Dharma -98-தர்ம நெறி - Sri Sankar Publications – February, 2016- பெப்ரவரி (தை/மாசி)