



HINDUISM (SANATANA DHARMA)

A SHORT INTRODUCTION

Hinduism is the oldest religion in the world. It is not just a religion; it is a way of life. It has spread globally, not because of conversion or coercion like many other religions, but because of migration of Hindus from India to other parts of the world and also due to its ability to attract people from other cultures.

Hindus prefer to call their religion as "**Sanatana Dharma**". **Sanatana** means eternal and everlasting. **Dharma** means natural law or righteousness. Faith of Hindus was given the name of Hinduism in English language. The term Hindu is of geographic origin. It was the name given to people settled along the river Sindhu (Indus) in the north-west India, by Persians who came to India thousands of years ago. "Sa" in Persian is pronounced as "Ha", hence Sindhu was pronounced as Hindu

Hinduism does not have a single founder, messenger or prophet and therefore its date of origin cannot be traced.

It has a multitude of scriptures, e.g. Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas etc., dealing with concepts, beliefs, rituals and philosophy, rather than a single holy book like Bible for Christianity and Quran for Islam.

There is a great deal of diversity in the practice of Hinduism but there is unity in concepts and beliefs and that is why Hinduism is often described as "Unity in diversity".

HINDU SCRIPTURES

Hindu scriptures can be broadly classified into two categories:-

Shruti—these are scriptures which have been orally narrated and memorised and passed on from generations to generations. They are the oldest and most sacred. They have now been written and printed. Primary scriptures in this group are **Vedas and Upanishads**

Smriti— These are the ones which have been written and remembered. They are, **Vedangas, Dharmashastras, Puranas, Agamas, Darshanas, Itihasas(Epics), Upavedas, Sutras, and Tantras**

Vedas

They are the most ancient among world's scriptures and the oldest book in the library of mankind (Max Muller). Veda is derived from Sanskrit word "Vid" which means knowledge. Vedas are eternal in origin. It is believed that Lord Brahma, the creator of the world imparted the divine knowledge to the *Rishis* at the beginning of creation, who in turn transmitted it to their disciples and it thus spread from a succession of gurus and disciples. It is believed that

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Rishi Ved Vyas compiled the Vedas into four: ***Rig Veda, Sama Veda, Yajur Veda, and Atharva Veda*** about five thousand and five hundred years ago. Vedas contain hymns in praise of God and describe rituals of worship, sacrifice and meditation. Knowledge revealed through Vedas is not only spiritual knowledge, but also contain fundamentals about Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, Political science and Music etc. Vedas are the guidelines to the divine concept of Dharma

Upanishads

They are part of Vedic texts; in fact they are at the end of Vedas and are called Vedanta. They are the primary source of spiritual guidance and contain divine knowledge about creation of the universe and cosmic evolution. They date back to nearly 800 BC TO 400 BC. Many of the most important Hindu philosophical ideas are contained in these texts, for example;

- (a) Individual soul(atma) and Universal soul (Brahman) are identical
- (b) Brahman is eternal and formless.
- (c) The soul passes through a cycle of births and deaths of living beings which is determined by the results of one's *Karmas*.
- (d) The soul is capable of achieving liberation (Moksha) from the cycle of births and deaths.

Puranas

They were written much later than Vedas, around five thousand two hundred years ago. They contain inspiring stories, legends and myths, devoted largely to one of the three attributes of Trimurti—Brahma (the creator), Vishnu (the sustainer) and Shiva (the destroyer). They contain narratives of history of the universe from creation to destruction, genealogies of sages and demigods, kings and heroes. Rishi VedVyas is considered to be the author of early Puranas.

Agamas & Tantras

They deal with theological disciplines and doctrines for the worship of deities. They also deal with rules for constructing temples and sculpture and carving of the images of deities.

Darshanas

These are treatises of Hindu philosophy

Epics

There are two great epics in Hindu scriptures; *Ramayana and Mahabharata*. *Srimad Bhagavad Gita* is a part of Mahabharata

Ramayana

It was originally written in Sanskrit by Sage Valmiki. Hindi version, known as *Ramcharit Manas* was written by Goswami Tulsidas in 17th Century AD. It portrays a picture of the religious,

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social and political life of ancient India. It is a beautiful tale of devotion, duty, right relationship and Karma.

This is the story of Lord Rama (an incarnation of Lord Vishnu), his banishment to the forest for fourteen years, during which time his wife Sita was abducted by Ravan, the king of Lanka. He fought a battle with help of an army headed by Hanuman to get his wife back and established a just kingdom. Ramayana presents Rama as an ideal son, student, brother, husband and above all an ideal king. Sita is presented as an embodiment of chastity and showing the highest ideals of womanhood



Picture showing, RAMA and SITA on throne, LAKSHMANA on the right of Rama, BHARATA on the left of Sita. Mahavir(Hanuman) sitting in front of Lakshman and Shatrughan sitting in front of Bharata.

Mahabharata

This divine epic was composed about five thousand years ago. It is the longest epic poem in the world, comprising over 100,000 verses. The authorship of this epic is attributed to Rishi Ved Vyas. It describes a great battle for power at Kurukshetra between Pandavas and Kauravas. Pandavas were five brothers who were very noble representing *Dharma* (righteousness). Kauravas were one hundred brothers and they represented *Adharma* (treachery, sinful, etc.). In this story are interwoven all kinds of episodes of love, hatred, war, intrigue relationships and all the countless situations which we face in real life. The attentive reader and listener can learn moral, social, political and religious teaching from this great epic.

Bhagawad Gita

This is perhaps the most well known sacred Hindu scripture and it was probably written about five thousand years ago. It is actually the sixth chapter of Mahabharata. It contains the essence of Vedic knowledge; has 700 verses and eighteen chapters, and is full of divine teaching and knowledge. These are teachings of Lord Krishna (incarnation of Lord Vishnu), who was the charioteer to Arjuna, one of the Pandavas, at the battlefield, when Arjuna becomes filled with horror at the thought of the battle and killing his own kith and kin and his gurus. Lord Krishna teaches Arjuna about the nature of self, about Brahman, the paths to Brahman and about *Dharma and Karma* and guides Arjuna to fight for the just cause and victory would be his. The emphasis is on performing one's duty and Dharma without getting attached to its results. (*Nishkama Karma*).



CONCEPTS AND BELIEFS

Existence of God

Most Hindus believe in the existence of God as one Absolute Supreme Reality, Universal soul or Universal spirit and is called Brahman or Parmatma. It is formless and neuter in gender. It is omnipresent. Cosmic energy emanates from this imperishable source. The divinity of God is vibrant in every atom of creation. Life in all its forms and the whole universe is a manifestation of this Absolute Supreme. The multitude of Gods and Goddesses described in Hinduism are in fact different aspects or manifestations of the Absolute Supreme Reality, symbolised in different forms. They are not viewed as separate or rival powers but as different functions, different aspects and different ways of understanding and approaching the One Reality.

Atma (Soul)

Hindus believe in the existence of Soul (Atma), which is eternal, invisible and immortal. Atma is a part of the Universal soul. It exists in all living beings

Karma

It means 'action' or 'deeds'. It is believed that all actions, physical as well as those conducted by mind produce results. It refers to the totality of our actions and their reactions in present life and previous lives which determine our future lives. Hindu scriptures convey the message, "as we sow, so shall we reap". Cycle of births and deaths continue until the soul accumulates enough positive merits to outweigh the demerits, when it is released from this cycle, i.e. gets liberated (Moksha) and unites with the Supreme Reality.

Dharma

It can be described as a path of righteousness. By fulfilling one's Dharma one achieves good merits or Karmas, which helps towards the goal of attaining Moksha. Essential aspects of Dharma are observance of:- patience, forgiveness, self control, honesty, purity of thoughts, control of senses, truthfulness, reasoning, control of anger, non violence, knowledge and learning.

Moksha

It means emancipation or salvation. This is the ultimate goal of every Hindu. In this stage Atma merges with the Universal soul (Brahman) and gets rid of the cycle of births and deaths. There are three paths to obtain Moksha; **Karma marga**, the path of action; **Jnana Marga**, the path of spiritual enlightenment and **Bhakti Marga**, the path of devotion and love of God.

Journey of life

Life is like a journey which should ideally consist of both; material achievement and spiritual development. Vedic concepts have described stages, objectives and directions to achieve this goal of life.

Four stages (Ashramas)

Brahmacharya- Equivalent to student life with emphasis on studies under the guidance of a teacher, self control of senses, celibacy and self discipline.

Grahastha ashrama---Stage of a householder, getting married and having a family. Earning livelihood by honest means and responsibly raising his or her family to the best of their abilities and discharging their duties towards the community.

Vanprastha— Equivalent to retirement and spending more time for spiritual enlightenment as well as helping the community.

Sanyasa— Stage of renunciation and ascetism, which is not commonly followed.



Objectives of human life

Dharma—as described earlier, is to adhere to the path of righteousness which helps with spiritual development in life

Artha— earning by honest means, for material prosperity and livelihood.

Kama—to satisfy the sensual and aesthetic pleasures within moral parameters.

Moksha— is liberation from the cycle of births and deaths and unity of individual soul with the Universal soul

Sanskaras (Rites of passage) or Directions

There are sixteen sanskaras from birth till death, including marriage ceremony. The purpose of these rites of passages is for the betterment of individual development and in turn a better community and ultimately leading to a better nation.

HINDU DEITIES

It is commonly said that Hindus have several Gods and Goddesses, but the fact is that different Gods and Goddesses are symbols of different aspects and manifestations of Absolute Supreme Reality, the Universal Soul, Parmatma or Brahman. Vedas say that “Reality is one, sages call it by different names.”

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Trimurti (The Hindu Trinity)

TRIMURTI

This represents the three major aspects of the Supreme Reality or the Godhead; Brahma, the creator; Vishnu, the sustainer and Shiva, the destroyer. They are artistically represented as three faced human figure

Brahma—He is symbolised as having four heads facing all four directions, indicating that he has created the universe. He has four arms, holding a sceptre in one, a vessel in other, string of rosaries in the third hand and Vedas in the fourth hand. He sits on a lotus flower which is a symbol of purity. The feminine aspect or consort of Brahma is Saraswati, an embodiment of learning and wisdom. She holds a Vina, a stringed musical instrument symbolic of music or rhythm of the universe.

Vishnu—He is symbolised as a human body with four arms. His body is in blue colour, which signifies infinity, as he is limitless as blue sky and has infinite attributes. He holds

Lord Vishnu

shankha(conch) in one hand which symbolises removal of ignorance and spread of the divine sound OM or AUM.; a mace(*gada*) in other hand which signifies removal of evils from the universe; discus (*Chakra*) in third hand which signifies that he maintains righteousness or Dharma and a lotus flower in his fourth hand which signifies the purity and beauty of the Cosmic universe. The feminine aspect or consort of Vishnu is called Lakshmi or Sri. She personifies prosperity and wealth



LORD VISHNU and LAKSHMI

Vishnu's preserving and protecting attributes have been manifest on this earth in various forms, called *Avatars* or *Incarnations*, which means "the descent of Lord into the world." Avatars deliver the message to the mankind that God always helps to establish Dharma or righteousness by destroying the evils. The various *avatars* are:-Kurma(tortoise);Varaha(Boar); Narasimha(Man-lion); Vamana(Dwarf); Parashurama (Warrior with an axe); Rama; Krishna; Buddha and finally Kalki, yet to come.



Lord Radha and Krishna(with the flute)

Krishna is the most popular incarnation of Vishnu and worshipped widely. One of the Puranas, called Srimad Bhagavatam is devoted to his life and contributions. Bhagavad Gita is his teachings to Arjuna, at the

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battlefield of Kurukshetra, where Pandavas and Kauravas fought the Battle of Mahabharata narrated as an epic. His beloved devotee Radha stands beside him in most of the images and he stands with a flute in his hand. This symbolises a spiritual relationship between devotee and the God.



BALA JI

Bala ji is also known as Venkateshwara, a popular form of Lord Vishnu, specially in South India.



Shiva (Mahesh)

Shiva symbolises the dissolution or destruction aspect of the Supreme Reality. Shiva dissolves in order to create. He destroys evil, grants boons, bestows grace and awakens wisdom in his devotees. There are three popular forms of image of Shiva; **Yogiraj**, **Natraj** and **Shivalingam**. His consort is named as Uma or Parvati



Lord Shiva (as Yogiraj)

As **yogiraj**, he is seated on tiger skin, in a meditation pose indicating peace and inner harmony. There are a number of cobras around his neck representing the evolutionary power within human body and spiritual energy within life. His hair is piled high on top of his head on which crescent of moon rests. The sacred river Ganga flows from his head. The trident in his hand symbolises power. His vehicle is a bull called Nandi, a symbol of strength and happiness and also symbolises the soul of a man, yearning for union with the Universal soul or the Supreme Reality.

Lord Shiva (as Natraj)

Natraj—Shiva has been immortalised in this pose in countless beautiful sculptures. It symbolises the divine activities of God and cosmic energy. Natraj has four hands. One hand holds a drum symbolising "Big Bang" of creation; second hand holds a flame of fire

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symbolising destruction; third hand is held as palm facing the devotees with fingers pointing upwards symbolising protection and blessing, and the fourth hand points to the uplifted foot, symbolising how to rise above ignorance



Shivalingam--- It is a phallic symbol representing the energies necessary for life on earth. It is also called "Lingam of fire". Fire can destroy but is also essential for sustaining life. Shivalingam represents the source of soul-seed which contains within it the essence of entire cosmos. The shaft of the Lingam is set on a circular base, the seat of divine energy (*Shakti*)



Mother Goddess (Durga)

She is a symbol of cosmic energy or the power and energy by which the Supreme Reality creates, preserves and destroys the universe. She has various names **Durga, Kali, Parvati, Uma Ambika and Bhawani**. Mother Goddess has been an image of worship for Hindus from ancient times dating back before Indus Valley Civilisation.

Durga, represents the active and ferocious side of Shiva. She is composed of all the angry energies of male Gods. Her image shows riding on a lion, symbolising that ego and arrogance need to be controlled. She has eight arms, holding the symbols of power and might.

MOTHER GODDESS (DURGA)

Eight weapons in her hands fight the eight evils; greed, hatred, passion, vanity, envy, jealousy, contempt for others and illusions.



Lord Ganesha

He is one of the most important deities of Hindus. He is also known as Ganapati, Vighneshwara, Vinayaka. He is the son of Shiva and Parvati. His image consists of a human body with an elephant head. Big elephant head symbolises wisdom and understanding. He has small eyes suggesting one must concentrate; the rope or noose in one hand suggests pulling oneself nearer the highest goal and control of senses. There is only one tusk, which suggests to retain good things and throw away the bad ones, large ears suggest to listen more, and small mouth suggests to talk less, large belly suggests to peacefully digest all good

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and bad things in life. His one leg is on the ground and the other one is folded in meditative pose, symbolising a balance between practical and spiritual life.

Ganesha is worshipped before every important undertaking in life and is the first deity to be worshipped in any yajna or Puja. There are various legends associated with Ganesha's elephant head.



Mahavir ji(Hanuman ji)

He is represented in the form of a monkey, signifying that animals are also a creation of God and have a soul. He is a manifestation of Shiva's strength and grace. He is a celibate warrior who helped Rama to fight against Ravana the demon king of Lanka who had abducted Sita, Rama's wife. Hindus recite his praise in a popular poetry called "Hanuman Chalisa"

WORSHIP

Worship means establishing a direct and personal communion with God. The ultimate purpose of ritualistic worship is the realisation of the Supreme Reality. There is immense degree of diversity in rituals of worship in Hinduism. It can be done at home or at temples and it can be personal or public. The temple has idols of various deities. The devotees sit in front of the deities and do the worship; it however does not mean that they are worshipping the idols themselves. Idols are means to help the devotees concentrate on the various aspects of God, because it is rather difficult for common men and women to concentrate on formless God. It is a way of acknowledging the omnipresence and omniscience of God. If God is omnipresent then everything in the universe including the "Idols" one worships is filled with the energy and presence of God.

Puja—is one of the rituals of worship. It can be performed at home or at temple, usually directed by a priest but not necessarily.

Arati—is an offering of love and devotion to the deity. It involves waving of a plate made of copper, brass or steel having a lamp filled with *ghee* and five lights, symbolising the five elements of the universe; fire, air, earth, water and ether. Waving of the Arati plate is accompanied by singing of songs in praise of the deity. During Arati the plate is believed to acquire the radiance and power of the deity. The devotees cup their down turned hands over the flame and then raise their palms to their forehead and by doing so they receive the blessings from the deity.

Prasada—It consists of a mixture of fruits and sweets. It represents the gift from the deity to the devotee. One should not leave a puja session without taking the prasada.

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Havana (Homa, Agnihotra)—It is the most ancient Vedic form of worship. It consists of lighting a sacred fire in a square shaped container, called Havana-kund. Oblations of ghee, food grains, herbs, incense sticks etc. are offered and various ‘mantras’ are chanted by the priest. Havana is a part of a worship called ‘yajna’

HINDU CALENDAR

It is a lunar calendar, based on the waxing and waning of the moon. Months and years are based on movement of the moon around the earth. Each month is divided into two halves. First half is called ‘*Krishna paksh*’ or dark half when moon starts getting smaller after full moon till the new moon appears and is called ‘*Amavashya*’; the second half is called ‘*Shukla paksh*’ starting from new moon day to full moon called ‘*Purnima*’ Each half is usually 15 days or sometimes 14 days.

Hindu lunar months, starting from new year are; *Chaitra, Vaisakh, Jyeshtha, Asadha, Shravana, Bhadrapada, Ashwin, Kartik, Margaseersh, Poushya, Magh, and Phalgun.*

The Hindu calendar is called **Vikram Samvata**, named after King Vikramaditya who defeated various tribes invading India in 57 B.C. Thus year 2010 will be 2067 Vikram Samvata.

HINDU FESTIVALS

Festivals are held on specific dates of Hindu calendar. There are various myths and legends associated with the festivals. They have a cultural as well as deep spiritual meaning behind them. In addition to festivals, there are also fasts which are observed on particular days by some Hindus. Some of the popular festivals are mentioned here.

Holi

This is celebrated on Purnima (full moon day) in the month of Phalgun and heralds the arrival of spring and the beginning of the new year according to the Hindu calendar. It is a festival of colours. Men and women splash colours on each other. Holi is derived from the word “*Hola*” which means offering oblations of grains to the Almighty as thanks giving for good harvest, in a bonfire.

There are legends associated with this festival to signify the triumph of goodness and righteousness over the evil. There was a demon king named Hiranyakashyapu who had a son called Prahlada. The king had a sister called Holika, who had a boon from Brahma that she would not be burnt in a fire. Prahlada was a great devotee of Vishnu, whereas his father the demon king believed himself to be the greatest in the world and did not like his son’s devotion to Vishnu. He tried various ways to get his son killed and one day Holika sat in the fire taking Prahlada on her lap with the hope that he would get burnt to death and she would come out unharmed. When the fire extinguished Prahlada came out unharmed whereas Holika was



burnt to death, signifying, that she had misused her boon in favour of the evil and Brahma could not forgive her. This bonfire is called “*Holika Dahan*”

Another legend is associated with Lord Shiva. Kamdev, the god of passion and love, in his foolish pride aimed his arrow at the Almighty Shiva who was in deep meditation on this day of full moon of Phalgun month. Lord Shiva opened his third eye and burned Kamdev to ashes.

Mahashivratri

It means the great Shiva’s night. It is believed that Shiva descended to the earth on this night and performed the “Tandava” dance. It is celebrated on 14th day of the dark fortnight in the month of Magh. Devotees observe fast and go to the temple of Shiva to perform Puja in the tranquillity of midnight. The significance of offering prayers at this time is to sit in silence, meditate and make resolves to get rid of evil tendencies and gain spiritual enlightenment. The devotees chant the Vedic mantra “Om namaha Shivaya”.

Ramnavami

It is a celebration of the birthday of Rama. It falls on the 9th day of the bright fortnight of the month of Chaitra. This auspicious day is celebrated all over the world. The devotees go to the temple and pray to Lord Rama and seek his blessings.

Janmashtami

It is a celebration of the birthday of Lord Krishna. It falls on the 8th day of the dark half in the month of Shravana, Devotees all over the world pray, fast and worship in various temples which are decorated beautifully, till midnight to celebrate his birth.

Raksha Bandhan

It falls on the full moon day in the month of Shravana. The legend associated with this festival is that in olden days when a “Guru” initiated a disciple, he tied a red or orange thread around his wrist, which signified a promise to protect and develop a bond of mutual love and trust between the “Guru”,(teacher) and the pupil. Later on this practice metamorphosed, into sisters in India tying a “Rakhi”to their brother’s wrist. It has become a symbol of affection between a brother and a sister, and also signifies the duty of a brother to protect his sister in times of trouble.

Dussehra, Durga Puja, Navratri

This is a festival of worshipping the Mother Goddess or Shakti. It is celebrated in three different ways in different parts of India. It lasts from 1st day to the 10th day of the bright half of the month of Ashwin. Tenth day is called *Vijaya Dashmi*.



Navratri means festival of nine nights, three nights each for the goddesses, **Durga, Lakshmi** and **Saraswati**. A very popular type of dance called “*Ras Garbha*” is associated with this festival. Vijaya Dashmi is the celebration of victory of Mother Goddess Durga over the demon Mahisasur.

In North India, where Rama is worshipped more commonly, Rama Lila is enacted during Navratri depicting Rama’s life and on Vijaya Dashmi, Rama’s victory over the demon king Ravana is celebrated, by burning an effigy of Ravana.

Diwali (Deepawali)

It is commonly known as festival of lights and is one of the most popular festivals for Hindus. It falls on the night of Amavasya in the month of Kartika. Homes are cleaned and decorated with lights and there is display of fireworks.

It signifies the victory of divine forces over the evils. It is also the celebration of homecoming of Rama after 14 years of exile in the forest. In some parts of India and especially for Business community, it is celebrated as a New Year’s Day when they worship Goddess Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth. Diwali signifies victory of light over darkness, knowledge over ignorance and goodness over evil.

GAYATRI MANTRA

***Aum Bhur Bhuvaha Swaha
Tatsavitur varenyam
Bhargo Devasya Dheemahi
Dhiyo yo Nah Prachodayata***

It is the oldest divine mantra from the Vedas. Mantras awaken the power centres in our body through the sound waves and vibrations during their chanting.

Meaning of Gayatri Mantra is as follows:-

Aum (Oh God); Bhur(Giver of life); Bhuvaha(Remover of pain and sorrows); Swaha(Bestower of happiness); Tatsavitur(Creator of universe); Varenyam(Adorable); Bhargo(Pure); Devasya (the most luminous); Dhimahi(We meditate on you); Dhiyo(Intellect); Yo (May you)Nah (our); Prachodayat (Inspire and guide us in the right direction).

It can thus be interpreted in English as follows:-

Oh, the Almighty, you are the giver of life, remover of pains and sorrows, bestower of happiness, Creator of the Universe. May we receive your supreme sin- destroying light and may you guide our intellect in the right direction.

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OM (AUM)

Om is regarded as the most powerful Hindu mantra. It is believed to be the first sound which emerged from the creator's mouth. All aspects of speech have come from this sound. It is the sound of primal energy. It is a symbol of consciousness. The shape of three represents the Trinity, the three aspects of God; creation, preservation and destruction. Half moon and the dot stand for momentary silence between two successive chants. Om is chanted at the commencement of all prayers, religious ceremonies and at the beginning of all Mantras.



SWASTIKA

This is an auspicious symbol used in religious ceremonies. The word, Swastika is derived from a combination of "su" meaning well; "asti" means is; "ka" means a noun ending. Thus swastika means "it is all well". Vedic sacrificial fire sticks were always set down in the form of a cross. Hence many scholars regard it as fire or solar symbol. It is a symbol of cosmic continuity, endlessness or eternity.

SHANTI MANTRA

Aum Dhyau Shanti Antarikshagwam, Shanti Prithvi, Shanti Raapah,

Shanti Roshadhayah, Shanti Vanaspathayah, Shanti Vishvedevah,

Shanti Brahma, Shanti Sarvam Guang, Shanti Shanti Reva, Shanti Saama

Shantir Redhi

Aum Shanti, Shanti Shantihi

May there be peace in heaven. May there be peace in sky. May there be peace on earth. May there be peace in waters. May there be peace in plants. May there be peace in trees. May there be peace in all divinities. May there be peace in the Brahman. May there be peace for all. Peace for oneself. Peace for environment. Peace for the animal world.

May that peace come to me! ***Aum Shanti, Shanti, Shantihi.***



SOME GEMS FROM VEDAS

एकं सत् विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति

(ekam sat, vipra vahudha vadanti)

(Rigveda 1-164-46)

Truth (God) is one; learned people call Him by different names.

आ नो भद्राः कृतवो यन्तु विश्वतः

(aa no bhadra, kritavo yantu vishwatah)

(Rigveda 1-89-1)

Let noble auspicious thoughts come to us from all directions.

मित्रस्य चक्षुषा समिक्षामहे

(mitrasya chakshusha samiksha mahe)

(Yajurveda, 36-18)

May we all look at one another with friendly eyes.

विश्वानि देव सवितर्दुरितानि परा सुव

(vishwani deva savitardu ritani para suva)

(Yajurveda 30-3)

O God! Dispel all our evil impulses.