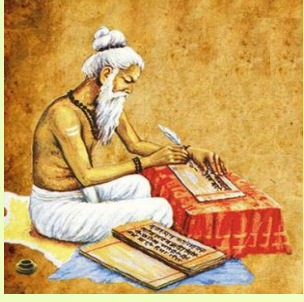


An Understanding of Hindu Religion

- Brahmasri Dr. Samavedam Shanmukha Sarma



Maharshis handed over our Sanatana Dharma. Children of other religions are brought up with an understanding of their religion right from childhood. But, children of Hindu religion, the eternal dharma, are being brought up without proper understanding of their religion. Ages ago, our religion taught knowledge, scientific rationale, unlimited morality etc. But, even elders do not have proper comprehension about it. Hence, they are unable to inculcate the same in children. What they all think is that going to temple and bowing before the God is all in Sanatana Dharma. Off late, children have been raising many questions. Hence, this explanation is provided here.

Who is the prophet of our religion? Who is the God? What is the prescribed book? –

These are some of the questions asked by children. These questions arise because every other religion has one prophet, God, and book. Hence, they are asking the same things about our religion. Looking at this, it is clear that children are feeling that our religion is also like other religions. Because other religions have a prophet and a book, it is not necessary that every religion, especially our religion, should also be the same. Form and nature of every religion is distinct. Nothing is great or low. Every religion needs to be respected.



Hindu Religion Books –

But, it's important to comprehend our religion. Our religion is called 'Sanatana Dharma', 'Hindu Dharma', 'Arsha Dharma'.

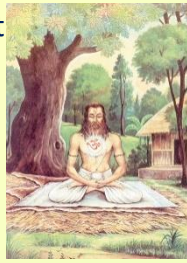


In this Sanatana Dharma, there is no specific book, per se. It's all knowledge. Rather than assuming that this knowledge is obtained from thin air, if it's absolutely necessary to name a book, then it should be mentioned that '**Vedas**' is the basis for Sanatana Dharma i.e. '**vēdōktēna dharmamidam**'. Neither language nor the aspects of Vedas are like moral statements that can be preached to commoners. Those mantras are divine sounds that have been envisioned by seer rishis during their Samadhi state. The ultimate truth would be understood only in the state of Samadhi. But, it is essential to understand that these great dharmas cannot be comprehended with imagination, logic, and thought at an ordinary plane. Vedas are nothing, but the congregation of such ultimate truths seen by rishis with their capacity which is obtained by intense tapas and is beyond the senses.

To make us realize the intricacies of those ultimate truths and the style of life propounded therein, Maharshis undertook the task of compiling Puranas, Itihasas, and Dharma Shastras. Hence, Our Sanatana Dharma flourished beginning with Vedas up to Puranas, Itihasas, and Dharma Shastras. When children ask, we should tell them that **Vedas form the basis of our Sanatana Dharma, from which some of the Vedic rishis compiled Puranas, Itihasas, and Dharma Shastras enabling the reach of those profound aspects to commoners.** Some of those great rishis are Valmiki, Vyasa, Agastya and many more. Those Rishis are seen both in Vedas and Puranas. Hence, it is very clear that it is those rishis in Vedas handed us the same knowledge in the form of Puranas and Itihasas. They undertook this task to make sure that this knowledge reaches the common man. That's why Hindu religion penetrated even into the common man's life so deeply. One should know that these are the books of Hindu religion.

Who are the prophets or preachers of Hindu Religion?

Now, who is the prophet for Hindu religion? **It is the Supreme Lord Himself.** '**yasya niśvasitam vēdāha**' i.e. Breath of Lord is Vedas. Though Vedas came from the Lord, who could be termed as preacher, all the Maharshis who saw it to be called preachers. These Maharshis are in thousands. This knowledge is not given by one, but multitude of Maharshis. It is a general observation that words of two or three people do not match and cross each other. But, it is quite astonishing to note that though thousands of Maharshis gave this knowledge, none of them is contradictory. This is one of the greatest aspects we should understand. Though each set of knowledge is distinct, there is no conflict among them. Summation of all these is called Sanatana Dharma. That is the special characteristic of our religion. Children should be made aware of all these aspects.



Who is the God in Hindu Religion?

Now, the next question is who is the God in our Hindu religion? The Supreme Lord orchestrating the creation, sustenance, and dissolution is ONLY ONE. He is GOD. When it is mentioned as 'Supreme Lord', it is the philosophical connotation, rather than names of Śiva, Vishnu etc. That Supreme Power is conducting the entire universe and all the tasks of creation, sustenance, and dissolution. He pervaded right from the atom to the cosmos, and everything is within His control.

This is the key difference in the concept of God in Bhaarateeya culture and other cultures. Here, God not only is doing the creation, sustenance, and dissolution, but He is also omnipresent in every atom of the creation He created. Distinction of Sanatana Dharma or Hindu Religion or Arsha Dharma is that God manifests Himself in different forms for the convenience of His devotees to perform their worship. Hence, everyone can worship the **SAME ONE GOD** in their own chosen form. We should strive to make this comprehensible to children. In fact, it is very easy to make children understand this.



It is responsibility to teach these aspects in school curriculums. By doing so, it does not amount to doing any crime. When other cultures and religions all over the world are being introduced, it is not at all a mistake to introduce that this is the Sanatana Dharma of Bhaarata. Not only that, parents should inculcate the practice apart from just telling the children. Just like how children are fed at home though they eat multiple things outside, in a similar fashion, children should be given the energy and knowledge of Sanatana Dharma though they are taught multiple things outside. This is certainly the responsibility of parents.