

Monastic Life



What Is the Hindu Monastic Tradition?

Sloka 116: In the Hindu tradition there have always existed a few men for whom the world held no attraction and *karmas* had almost gone away. Some of these great souls live alone. Others reside with their spiritual brothers in monasteries.



What Are the Goals of Renunciate Life?

Sloka 117: The two main objectives of *sannyasa* are to promote the spiritual progress of the monastic, bringing him into God Realization, and to protect and perpetuate the religion through his illumined leadership.



What Is the Sannyasin's Inner Path?

Sloka 118: The *sannyasin* balances within himself both the male and female energies. Complete unto himself, he is whole and independent and thus becomes a knower of the known.



What Is the Sannyasin's Initiation Rite?

Sloka 119: Young, unmarried men of the Hindu faith may qualify for renunciation rites. These may be given by any *sannyasin*, but the most potent initiation comes from a *satguru*. Rites include head shaving, vows of nonpossession and receiving robes.



What are the Holy Orders of Sannyasa?

Sloka 120: The holy orders of *sannyasa* are lifetime vows of poverty, obedience and chastity, never to be given up or taken back. The *sannyasins* are the religious leaders, the strength of the Sanatana Dharma.

Knowers of God



Who Are Hinduism's Spiritual Leaders?

Sloka 121: The saints, sages and *satgurus* who commune with God and Gods through devotion and meditation are Hinduism's holy men and women. We revere them and strive to follow their example and words of wisdom.



What Is a Saint, a Sage and a Satguru?

Sloka 122: Saints, devoid of ego, reflect the peace, humility and purity of a devout life. Sages, though perfectly liberated, may outwardly appear detached and ordinary. *Satgurus*, also fully enlightened, guide others on the path.



Are There Other Terms for Holy Ones?

Sloka 123: Many terms name Hindu masters, teachers and aspirants including: *jivanmukta*, *rishi*, *muni*, *siddha*, *mahatma*, *guru*, *swami*, *sannyasin*, *tapasvin*, *yogi*, *sadhu*, *sadhaka*, *pandita*, *acharya*, *shastri*, *pujari*, *shishya* and *brahmachari*.



What Is the Nature of Guru Protocol?

Sloka 124: *Guru* protocol, as outlined in the *Kularnava Tantra* and *Guru Gita*, defines the traditional ways of relating to one's spiritual master to draw forth his wisdom and blessings and fully understand his inner nature.



What Is the Satguru's Special Function?

Sloka 125: To transcend the mind and reach the ultimate goal of God Realization, seekers need the guidance of a *satguru*, an enlightened master who has followed the path to its end and can lead them to the Divine within themselves.

Revealed Scripture



What Are Hindu Revealed Scriptures?

Sloka 126: The *Vedas* and *Agamas*, revealed by God, are Hinduism's supreme scriptures, called *sruti*, "that which is heard." Their timeless truths are expressed in the most extraordinarily profound mystical poetry known to man.



What Is the Nature of the Veda Texts?

Sloka 127: The holy *Vedas*, man's oldest scripture, dating back 6,000 to 8,000 years, are a collection of four books: the *Rig*, *Sama*, *Yajur* and *Atharva*. Each has four sections: hymns, rites, interpretation and philosophical instruction.



How Are the Vedas Significant today?

Sloka 128: The *Vedas*, the ultimate scriptural authority, permeate Hinduism's thought, ritual and meditation. They open a rare window into ancient Indian society, proclaiming life's sacredness and the way to oneness with God.



What Is the Nature of the Holy Agamas?

Sloka 129: The *Agamas*, Sanatana Dharma's second authority, are revelations on sacred living, worship, *yoga* and philosophy. Saivism, Shaktism and Vaishnavism each exalts its own collection of *Agamas*, many over 2,000 years old.



How Are the Agamas Significant Today?

Sloka 130: While the *Vedas*, with a multitude of Deities, bind all Hindus together, the *Agamas*, with a single supreme God, unify each sect in a oneness of thought, instilling in adherents the joyful arts of holy worship.

Secondary Scripture



Do Smriti and Sacred Literature Differ?

Sloka 131: Hindu sacred literature is full of hymns, legend, mythology, philosophy, science and ethics. From this vast body of writings, each lineage recognizes a certain portion as its secondary scripture, called *smriti*.



What Texts Amplify Vedas and Agamas?

Sloka 132: Many texts support the *Vedas* and *Agamas*. *Vedangas* detail conduct, family rituals, astrology and language. *Upavedas* explain politics, health, warfare and music. *Upagamas* and *Paddhatis* elaborate the Agamic wisdom.



Does Hinduism Have Epics and Myths?

Sloka 133: The *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* are Hinduism's most renowned epic histories, called *Itihasa*. The *Puranas* are popular folk narratives, teaching faith, belief and ethics in mythology, allegory, legend and symbolism.



Are there Other Types of Sacred Texts?

Sloka 134: India's lofty philosophical texts expound diverse views in profound, exacting dialogue. Yoga writings unveil the mysterious path to ultimate mystical experiences. Heart-melting devotional hymns disclose the bliss of Divine love.



What Is the Source of This Catechism?

Sloka 135: The philosophical basis of this catechism is the monistic Saiva Siddhanta of the Kailasa Parampara as expressed in the *Vedas*, *Saiva Agamas*, *Tirukural*, *Tirumurai*, *Tirumantiram* and contemporary scripture.

Affirmations of Faith



What Is the Holy Namasivaya Mantra?

Sloka 136: Namasivaya is among the foremost Vedic *mantras*. It means “adoration to Siva,” and is called the Panchakshara, or “five-letters.” Within its celestial sounds and colors resides all of the intuitive knowledge of Saivism.



How Is Namasivaya Properly Chanted?

Sloka 137: The Panchakshara Mantra, Namasivaya, is repeated verbally or mentally, often while counting a *mala* of *rudraksha* beads, drawing the mind in upon itself to experience Lord Siva’s infinite, all-pervasive presence.



Is Initiation Necessary to Perform Japa?

Sloka 138: The most precious of all Saivite *mantras*, Namasivaya is freely sung and chanted by one and all. *Mantra* initiation bestows the permission and power to do *japa*, regularly repeating Namasivaya 108 times. Without initiation, its repetition has less benefit.



What Is Saivism's Affirmation of Faith?

Sloka 139: The statement "God Siva is Immanent Love and Transcendent Reality" is a potent affirmation of faith. Said in any of Earth's 3,000 languages, it summarizes the beliefs and doctrines of the Saivite Hindu religion.



How Is this Affirmation of Faith Used?

Sloka 140: When we say the affirmation of faith, we positively assert that God is both manifest and unmanifest, both within the world and beyond it, both personal Divine Love and impersonal Reality.