

UPNISHADS



HINDU SCRIPTURES

A PART OF VEDAS

BY

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UPNISHADS

- Upanishads are also called Vedanta.
- The word Vedanta means at the end of Vedas.
- Thus, Upanishad is the last chapter of Vedas which are known to be the oldest and original scriptures of Hindus where from the wisdom of god realization and religious practices are derived.

- All the four Vedas including Rig, Sama, Yajur and Atharva Vedas have around 100,000 verses out of which the first 80,000 give us the knowledge of Mantras, Yajnas, Rituals and Prayers.
- About 16,000 verses give the knowledge of material & social sciences including economics, philosophy, music, dance, health and behaviors etc.
- At least 4,000 verses give the spiritual knowledge which are at the end of each veda.

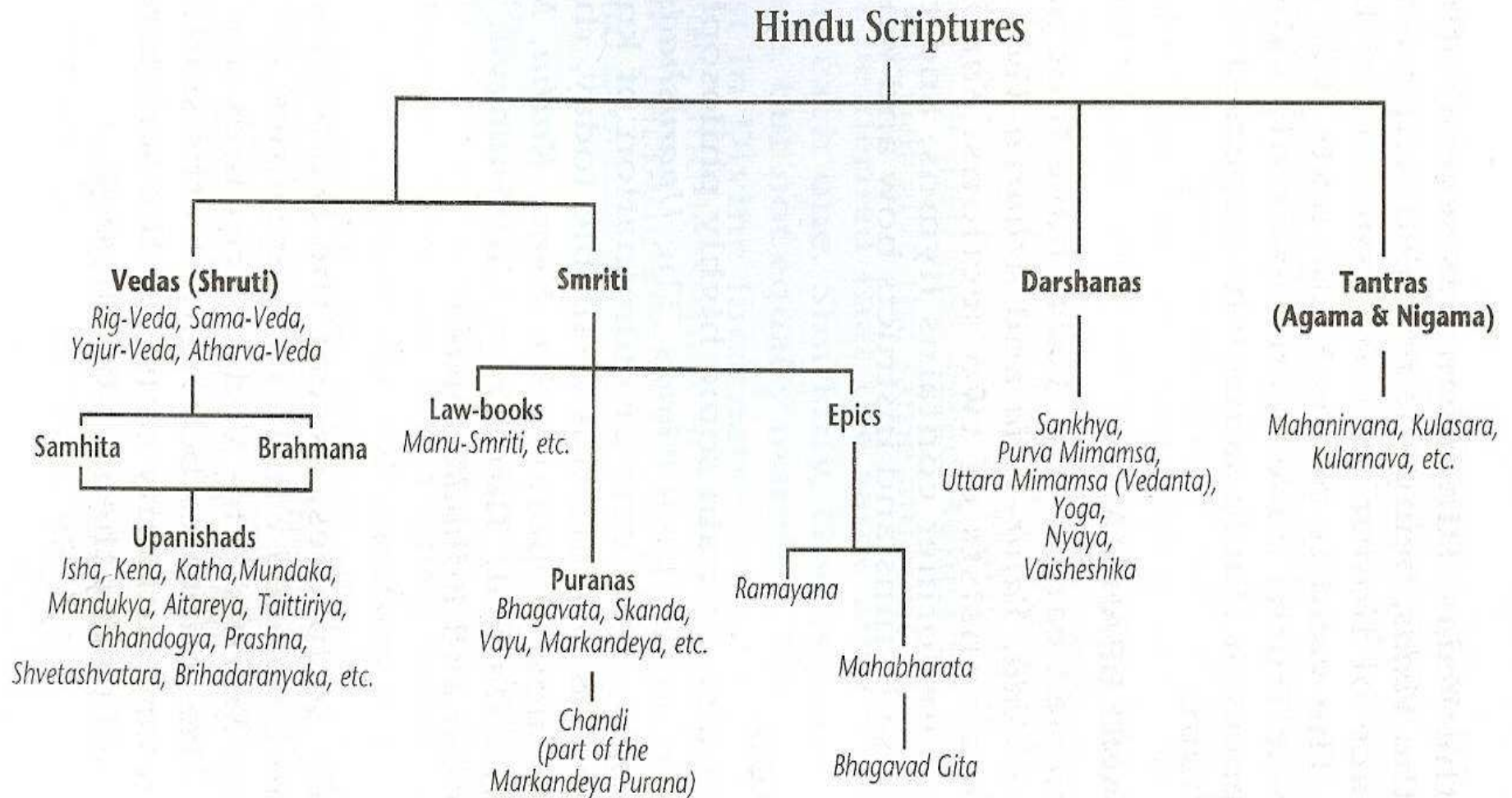
ORIGIN OF VEDA

- Originally Veda was given to Brahma, the first Prajapati from whom the human race is known to be descended.
- Vedas are also called Shruti & Smriti because in ancient days there was no practice of writing but that to hear and memorize.
- Later in Dwapar yuga, Maharshi Vedavyas, a great scholar/rishi after having the knowledge passed down through generations organized Veda in four parts.

VEDAS ARE DIVIDED INTO 4 PARTS

- **Samhita**
- **Brahmana**
- **Aranyaka**
- **Upanishads (Vedanta)**
 - Thus Upanishads have been extracted from the end chapters of the 4 Vedas and interpreted by many scholarly rishis and sages of ancient Aryavarta (Bharat), later called India.

TABLE OF HINDU SCRIPTURES



- There were originally 1180 Upanishads related to 1180 branches of the Vedas derived by sages and rishis in different periods.
- At present only 200 are available yet it is mentioned in Muktikopnishad that 108 Upanishads contain the spiritual philosophy of god realization and the basic facts of the divine world.

FOLLOWING ARE THE MOST READ UPANISHADS

- **Ishavashyopnishad**
 - **Kenopnishad**
 - **Kathopnishad**
 - **Mundaka**
 - **Mandukya**
 - **Aitareya**
 - **Taittiriya**
 - **Chhadogya**
 - **Prashna**
- **Shvetashvatara**
- **Brihadaranyaka**



ISHOPNISHAD (OR ISHAVASYOPNISHAD)

Shanti Patha

- Like all Upanishads this also starts with Shanti Mantra
- This Upanishad is the 40th chapter of Shukl Yajurved (samhita)
- The first word in this Upanishad is “Isha or Ishwar”, thus the name Ishopnishad.
- “Ishwar” meaning divine personality of godhead.
- This Upanishad has 8 verses endorsing the knowledge of God & God realization.
- Bhagwadgita is also considered as an Upanishad only because of the knowledge provided similar to all other Upanishads and appears as an extract of that.

CONT.

- Like Bhagwadgita the knowledge of complete, indivisible and omniscient supreme being (paramatma) is provided in this Upanishad.
- This Upanishad teaches us to always remember the paramatma and practice nishkam karmayoga.
- The identity of the supreme being is established to comprehend with the result of that understanding.
- It also teaches what to pray while leaving the body at the last stage of life –
- Shanti Patha

KENOPNISHAD

Shanti Patha

- This Upanishad begins with the word “ken” therefore, it is named Kenopnishad.
- This is a part of the Talavkar Bhrahman of Samaveda thus, also called Brahmanopnishad.
- Like the Sanatan Learning tradition, this has disciple asking questions and Guru answering with detailed explanations.
- It talks of the Omniscient Paramatma only sensitize our senses (indryas).
- Jivatma is a part of Paramatma & the power in all the senses to perceive and act are of the Paramatma only.

CONT.

- This Upanishad emphasizes to attain the knowledge of Paramatma in this lifetime itself to avoid suffering through the cycles of rebirth and death.
- Godly entities like Indra, Agni Dev, Vayu Dev, etc had failed to comprehend the omniscient power of the Paramatma Tatva by which the entire manifestations are activated and driven in the time cycle (Kal-Chakra).
- This Upanishad talks about the appearance of Yaksha to teach a lesson to all these godly entities about the same.
- This Upanishad reveals the Brahma Gyan in a subtle way to give the knowledge of Bramhavidya and its importance
- Shanti Patha.

KATHOPNISHAD

Shanti Patha

- Here the son of Maharshi Arun, Uddalak & his son Nachiketa discuss the norms of yajna followed by Godan.
- Nachiketa recognizes the shortcomings of attachments while conducting Daan.
- Nachiketa then goes to yamaloka where Yamraj welcomes him & asks him to request his 3 boons. On this Nachiketa requests the following-
 - To relieve his father of his sins
 - Agni Vidya to attain abode of Swarga Loka
 - Atma Gyan

CONT.

- On the insistence and dedication of Nachiketa, Yamraj ultimately gives the Atma Gyan & provides the benefit of this knowledge. But to the one who does not aspire the knowledge he experiences loss and sufferings.
- Yamraj gives the knowledge for prayer as the ultimate source or tool for Paramtma Darshan (Atma Sakshatkar). He guides us to control our senses and dedicate them to the Paramatma as senses are the main hurdle in attaining the Paramatma Tatva Gyan.

- The one who attains knowledge sees Paramatma in everything and every excellence in the universe to ultimately achieve Moksha.
- Those who do not attain this knowledge and see Him as different entities remain stuck in the cycle of birth and death.
- Since Nachiketa wanted to obtain Paramananda, yamraj gives the knowledge of manifestation of universe in the form of a reverse Ashwattha Tree which is also provided in the Bhagwadgita.

- Yamraj also gives the knowledge of Yoga and process to practice with total devotion to Paramatma.
- He also gives the result after death of those who are devoted and not devoted.
- Attaining the knowledge given by Yamraj, Nachiketa achieves the ultimate goal and merges into Paramatma Tatva (Purna Moksha)
- Shanti Patha