

[Saivite Creed: Twelve Potent Verses Expounding the Essence of Saivism](#)

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INSIGHT

Saivite Creed: Twelve Potent Verses Expounding the Essence of Saivism

Every religion has a creed of one form or another, an authoritative formulation of its beliefs. Historically, creeds have developed whenever religions migrate from their homelands. Until then, the beliefs are fully contained in the culture and taught to children as a natural part of growing up. A creed is the distillation of volumes of knowledge into a series of easy-to-remember beliefs. A creed is meant to summarize the explicit teachings or articles of faith, to imbed and thus protect and transmit the beliefs. Creeds give strength to individuals seeking to understand life and religion. Creeds also allow members of one faith to express, in elementary and consistent terms, their traditions to members of another.

Though the vast array of doctrines within Hinduism has not always been articulated in summary form, from ancient times unto today we have the well-known creedal mahavakya, "great sayings," of the Vedic Upanishads. Now, in this technological age in which village integrity is being replaced by worldwide mobility, the importance of a creed becomes apparent if religious identity is to be preserved. We need two kinds of strength— that which is found in diversity and individual freedom to inquire and that which derives from a union of

minds in upholding the universal and shared principles of our faith.

Saivism is truly ageless, for it has no beginning. It is the precursor of the many-faceted religion now termed Hinduism. Scholars trace the roots of Siva worship back more than 8,000 years to the advanced Indus Valley civilization. But sacred writings tell us there never was a time when Saivism did not exist. Modern history records six main schools: Saiva Siddhanta, Pasupatism, Kashmir Saivism, Vira Saivism, Siddha Siddhanta and Siva Advaita. Saivism's grandeur and beauty are found in a practical culture, an enlightened view of man's place in the universe and a profound system of temple mysticism and yoga. It provides knowledge of man's evolution from God and back to God, of the soul's unfoldment and awakening guided by enlightened sages. Like all the sects, its majority are families, headed by hundreds of orders of swamis and sadhus who follow the fiery, world-renouncing path to moksha. The Vedas state, "By knowing Siva, who is hidden in all things, exceedingly fine, like film arising from clarified butter, the One embracer of the universe—by realizing God, one is released from all fetters."

The twelve beliefs on the following pages embody the centuries-old central convictions of Saivism, especially as postulated in Saiva Siddhanta, one of the six schools of Saivism. They cover the basic beliefs about God, soul and world, evil and love and more. On the last page is a glossary of words used in the twelve beliefs.

Belief One

REGARDING GOD'S UNMANIFEST REALITY

Siva's followers all believe that Lord Siva is God, whose Absolute Being, Parasiva, transcends time, form and space. The yogi silently exclaims, "It is not this. It is not that." Yea, such an inscrutable God is God Siva. Aum.

Belief Two

REGARDING GOD'S MANIFEST NATURE OF

ALL-PERVADING LOVE

Siva's followers all believe that Lord Siva is God, whose immanent nature of love, Parashakti, is the substratum, primal substance or pure consciousness flowing through all form as energy, existence, knowledge and bliss. Aum.

Belief Three

REGARDING GOD AS
PERSONAL LORD AND
CREATOR OF ALL

Siva's followers all
believe that Lord Siva
is God, whose

immanent nature is
the Primal Soul,
Supreme Mahadeva,
Paramesvara, author
of Vedas and
Agamas, the creator,
preserver and
destroyer of all that
exists. Aum.

Belief Four

REGARDING THE ELEPHANT-FACED DEITY

Siva's followers
all believe in the
Mahadeva Lord
Ganesha, son of
Siva-Shakti, to
whom they must
first supplicate
before
beginning any

worship or task.
His rule is
compassionate.
His law is just.
Justice is His
mind. Aum.

Belief Five

**REGARDING
THE DEITY
KARTTIKEYA**

Siva's
followers all
believe in the
Mahadeva
Karttikeya,
son of
Siva-Shakti,
whosevel of

grace
dissolves the
bondages of
ignorance. The
yogi, locked in
lotus,
venerates
Murugan. Thus

restrained, his
mind becomes
calm. Aum.

Belief Six

REGARDING
THE SOUL'S
CREATION

AND IDENTITY WITH GOD

Siva's

followers all
believe that
each soul is
created by
Lord Siva
and is

identical to
Him, and
that this
identity will
be fully
realized by

all souls
when the
bondage of
anava,
karma and
maya is

removed by
His grace.
Aum.

Belief Seven

THE

**GROSS,
SUBTLE
AND
CAUSAL
PLANES OF
EXISTENCE**

Siva's
followers
all believe
in three
worlds:
the gross

plane,
where
souls take
on
physical
bodies;

the subtle
plane,
where
souls take
on astral

bodies;
and the
causal
plane,
where

souls exist
in their
self-effulg
ent form.
Aum.

Belief

Eight

REGARDI NG KARMA, SAMSARA AND

LIBERATI ON FROM REBIRTH

Siva's
followers
all
believe in
the law

of karma
that one
must
reap the
effects of

all

actions

he has

caused

and that

each soul
continues
to
reincarna
te until

all

karmas

are

resolved

and

moksha,
liberation,
is
attained.
Aum.

Belief

Nine

REGARD
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FOUR
MARGAS

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STAGES
OF
INNER

PROGRE

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Siva's
followers
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believe

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charya,

virtuous
living,
kriya,
temple

worship,
and
yoga,
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Parasiva

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bring
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jnana,

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Aum.

Belief Ten

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bad. All

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Siva's

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Aum.

Belief Eleven

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