

[SAIVA DHARMA](#)

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A CREED FOR SAIVITE HINDUS

"Saiva Dharma: A creed for Saivite Hindus" was created in 1975 as an outgrowth of a need. It has been memorized and extolled throughout the Saiva world. Now in 1980 a complete explanation of words, word arrangements and sentences within it is in its final editing and will be printed soon as Lesson Two of the San Marga Master Course. "Saiva Dharma" has two parts. "A Catechism for Saivite Hinduism and "A Creed for Saivite Hindus."

Historically, creeds have developed when a religion is transmitted from one culture to another. Until then, the religious beliefs are fully contained in the culture and taught as a naturally part of growing up. But when the religion enters into another culture, as when an Indian Hindu family moves to Africa or North America where other faiths predominate, then the importance of a creed arises. A creed is meant to summarize the specific teachings or articles of faith, to imbed and thus protect and transmit the beliefs. Creeds serve to aid in maintaining continuity and identity of the original, verbally expressed doctrines, and in giving strength and guidelines to individuals seeking to understand life and religion.

In Saivism such doctrines have not always been specifically articulated, although even the ancient Gayatri mantram from the Rig Veda (3.62.10) is, in part, a profession of faith, as are the Mahavakiam or Great Sayings from the Upanishads and Sat Gurus. But in our technological age in which village integrity is being replaced by world-wide mobility, the importance of a creed becomes apparent if religious identity is to be preserved. Our religion has always championed freedom of thought and conviction and never sought to dogmatically demand total uniformity of belief, and we wholly preserve that broad vision. We need both 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 principles of our faith. It is in that spirit that this creed is offered.