

# Introduction to Samkshepa Dharma Sasthra

By  
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The Vedas are the fundamental and most sacred books of The Hindus. It is believed that all the knowledge contained in Vedas were floating in the atmosphere. Some great sages were able to hear these immortal truths and taught them to their disciples. Vedas are nothing but the collection of such truths as taught by very many rishis to their disciples. Every section of the Veda thus has a sage who realized the perennial truth and taught to his disciples. Then each of these has a meter. This was required, because in the initial days, there was no script to our language .Also Sanskrit pronounced differently lead to different meanings. So the sages taught what they have heard to their disciple, following a meter, so that learning them by heart became very easy.

The large number of people who learned the Vedic truths by heart from their Guru and passed on to the next generation were the Brahmins. Not only they preserved the perennial truths but followed the ritualistic and simple life taught by their Gurus. At this time a need arose for very brave warriors who would sacrifice even their life to protect the society and these people were called Kshatriyas. There was also a need to look after the wealth generated by a community, buy essential things based on barter from other similar communities. These wealth managers and business people were called Vaisyas. These three specialized group of people needed assistants and servants, who would help them in other routine jobs of life and in production of food. These people need to be strong and hard working. They were called Shudhras. These were the four varnas of Hindus. Early study of the Vedas and Puranas seem to indicate that these caste labels were given based on their suitability for the above four different roles.

The Vedas, the Grihya Suthras as well as Dharma Shastras codified the rules of life for these four groups of people. Among the best compilation of the rules of life for a Brahmin, is the great book called Vaidhyanatha Deekshitheeyam. (The Xerox copy of the book in Sanskrit running to nearly thousand pages is available in the web site [www.mudgala.com](http://www.mudgala.com).) Copies of this book are normally not available and with people giving less and less importance to Sanskrit education, it was extremely difficult to understand this book. The late Paramacharya of Kanchi Ordered , Sri Manjakkudi Venkatrama Sastrigal, who was one of his disciples, to make a selection from this book and seek the help of Sri E.S.Ramamurthy Sastrigal for translating it in to Tamil. This book was published by Heritage India Educational Trust, Mylapore, Madras as per the wishes of Paramacharyal. The great sage also told the publisher that there should not be any copy right to this book. This book was named as “Samkshepa Dharma Sashthram (Summary rules of Dharmic life)” and was first published in 1985.

This book had seven sections viz:-

**1.Varnashrama Dharma Prakarana(Dharma for different Varnas)**

**II. Aahneeka Dharma Prakarana(Dharma of activities of day to day life)**

**III. AAsoucha Dharma Prakarana (Dharma for upholding cleanliness)**

**IV.Sradha Dharma Prakarana (Dharma towards the manes)**

**V.Thidhi nirnaya Dharma Prakaranam (dharma towards fixing time )**

**And VI.Prayachitha Dharma Prakarana,(Dharma of redemptive acts)**

**Theses are followed by a sort of appendix entitled Samkeerna Vishaya.**

Sri P.P.Ramachandran , a great Sanskrit scholar . who is my honoured friend came across an appeal in another web site and had few months back was seeking for volunteers to translate this great book in to English. I volunteered and all the chapters have been translated now.

Since I am not a Vedic Pundit or an expert in Grhya Suthras, the translation proved to be a very difficult job. Wherever I have not understood a particular word/name/usage , I have given the same word and added a question mark in brackets. I also found some terms mentioned in the beginning and explained in later chapters of the book. Wherever possible I have given cross reference to the later chapter.

I know the rules, regulations and aacharas mentioned in this book is applicable to a Tamil Brahmin iyer. But each and every one of those rules is a quotation from a great sage or Veda. Are they being practiced by Brahmins outside Tamil Nadu. I am really ignorant about this.