

ARYA SAMAJ OF NJ

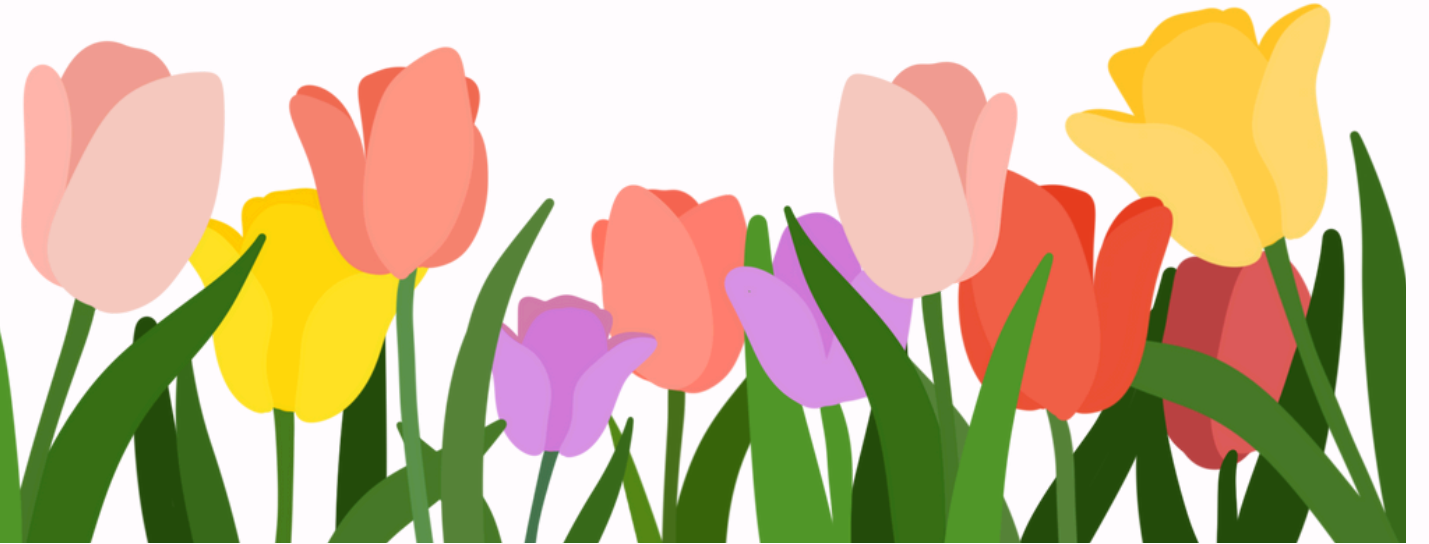
Arya Patrika
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SPRING
EDITION





Arya Samaj of New Jersey



Arya Samaj and Women's Empowerment

**By
Alka Chandra**

Arya Samaj, founded by Swami Dayanand Saraswati in 1875, was a social and religious movement in India that aimed to promote values such as social equality, education and social reform. A core part of Arya Samaj's ideology was its advocacy for the upliftment of marginalized communities and challenging deeply ingrained social customs, such as caste discrimination and the oppressive status of women. Arya Samaj's progressive stance has had a lasting impact on gender equality, especially concerning women's empowerment in the context of 19th century India, where traditional social structures restricted women's rights.

Listed below are some areas that the reforms led by Arya Samaj had a direct impact on women's empowerment, challenging the patriarchal norms that relegated women to traditional domestic roles.

- **EDUCATION** for women was seen as the key to empowering them financially and socially. Swami Dayanand believed that women should be educated to contribute to society and lead their lives with dignity and independence. Arya Samaj encouraged the opening of schools for girls and promoted female education as a means of empowerment.
- **OPPOSITION TO CHILD MARRIAGE:** Arya Samaj was a strong critic of child marriage, which was widespread in India at that time. Swami Dayanand advocated for the right of women to choose their life partners and emphasized the importance of consent in marriage. This progressive stance was radical for its time and challenged many of the entrenched societal norms.



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- **SUPPORT FOR WIDOW REMARRIAGE:** One of the key contributions of Arya Samaj to women's empowerment was its strong support for widow remarriage. Swami Dayanand believed that widows should not be condemned to a life of deprivation or social isolation and that they should have the right to marry. This was a crucial step in improving the social standing and dignity of widows, who were often marginalized in traditional Indian society.
- **GENDER EQUALITY IN RELIGIOUS PRACTICES:** Arya Samaj believed in the equality of all people regardless of gender. This principle extended to religious practices as well, with women being allowed to participate fully in religious rites, such as the recitation of Vedic mantras, which had previously been reserved for men. The idea was to break down the gender-based barriers in spiritual life.
- **ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE:** By promoting education and self-reliance Arya Samaj greatly contributed to the economic empowerment of women. Arya Samaj supported the idea that women should have equal rights to inherit property and manage their finances. By encouraging women to be financially literate and independent, Arya Samaj promoted the idea that women should not be solely dependent on their male relatives. In an era when laws like the Hindu Succession Act (1956) were yet to come into effect, Arya Samaj's principles advocated for financial autonomy for women in a society where their economic roles were limited.

In modern times, Arya Samaj's principles and reforms - progressive stance on education, marriage rights, widow remarriage, gender equality in religious practices, financial independence etc. - can be seen as a precursor to the growing movement of women's empowerment in India and other parts of the world. With the rise of women entrepreneurs, professionals and leaders in various fields, the legacy of Arya Samaj continues to resonate.





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The Works of Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati

By

Ramesh Gupta MD, FACP, FACG, Past president APSA



Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati was born in Tankara Gujrat in February 12, 1825 and lived for a short span of 59 yrs. He left home at the age of about twenty-one, seeking answers to two questions: Who is the real Shiva and what is the mystery of death? He travelled across India for more than fifteen years in search of truth.

Finally, on November 14, 1860, he arrived at Mathura to meet Swami Virjanand ji, who was a strong believer that only by learning Ashtaadhyaye and Mahaa-bhaashya, which were in his opinion, the only authentic grammar texts, could one learn the Vedic scriptures and comprehend their real and intended meaning. Maharshi Dayanand was fully convinced that learning these grammar texts and then understanding the Vedas will give him the answers to the questions about God, life and death as he was seeking. In a short span of 3 yrs., this became a reality for Maharshi Dayanand. Now he was ready to spread this knowledge in the community at large and he gave his word to Swami Virjanand ji, that he will spend rest of his life in learning and propagating Vedic teachings and bring Bharat's Vedic civilization back to its full glory. To fulfill his commitment, Maharshi Dayanand struggled hard, suffered stiff opposition and even was poisoned multiple times and finally succumbed to these attempts of poisoning in October 30, 1883 on the occasion of deepawali.

He initially propagated his thoughts through multiple speeches and dialogues both intra and interfaith. At some point, strong suggestions were made to him that he should write articles and books to put his teachings on paper. He was able to write a total of about 20,000 pages even having the privilege of having any proper facilities in a poverty stricken and slave nation. His vast and multi-faceted writings may be classified as follows:

1. Basic principles text-The “Satyarth Prakash”

2. Vedic Texts

3. Ritualistic Texts

4. Grammar texts



5. Philosophical and Interfaith critique Literature

6. Some from intra and interfaith discourses.



7. Miscellaneous writings including Various letters

SATYAARTH PRAKAASH

Maharshi Dayanand expressed, in **Satyaarth Prakaash**, the truth for which he had left his home. This treatise does not belong to any sect or religion. He has focused his attention only on inherent meanings of truth and the criticism of various prevalent religious practices prevalent at that time. He had no intention to harm anyone, but simply to put forward the truth.

The book has 14 chapters. First ten chapters are called the first half and the last four chapters are called the second half. The first half, Maharshi ji has discussed various philosophical and social issues and the second half is explicit presentation of fallacies of various religious practices prevalent at the time.

1st chapter explains various names of God.

2nd the early learning and education of children.

3rd with yoga, meditation, celibacy, overall education system and curriculum and methodology of teaching.

The 4th chapter contains marriage and life of a householder.

5th Vanprastha and sannyasa ashrams

6th with governance,

7th the subject of God, soul and nature

8th deals with creation, sustenance and dissolution

9th deals with the right and wrong knowledge, how to achieve salvation, the phenomenon of rebirth, the 3 bodies (physical, psychic and causal bodies), how the soul takes with it the sanchit karma upon death and brings with it upon rebirth.



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The 10th chapter deals with code of conduct and what should be eaten and what not.

11th chapter contains a logical criticism of different sects prevailing in India.

12th chapter discusses the views of Charvaka, Buddhists and Jains.

13th chapter is the critique of Christian faith

14th chapter discusses with quotes from their own holy book, the views of Muslims.

Vedic Texts

Maharshi ji in 1875 put together a book called “**Aaryabhivinaya**”, which is the translation of few selected Vedic mantras, mainly for devotional purpose. It also contained references that provided inspiration to achieve freedom of the nation. This book has been translated in several languages including Urdu, English, Marathi, and Gujarati.

Rig-vedaadi-bhaashya bhumika or introduction to the Vedas: Before translating the Vedas,

Maharshi ji wrote an introduction to methodology of the commentary on all the four Vedas.

In this text, as many as 32 subjects have been discussed in the context of methodology, by virtue of which, it has become a monumental work by itself. The subjects discussed are as follows:

(1) Prayer to God, (2) The Origin of the Vedas, (3) The Perpetuity of the Vedas, (4) The Contents of the Vedas, (5) The Terminology of the Vedas, (6) Theosophy (Brahma-vidya), (7) Dharma as Ordained in the Vedas, (8) Cosmogony, (9) The Revolution and Rotation of the Earth and other Planets, (10) Gravitation and Attraction, (11) The Illuminator and the Illuminated, (12) The Science of Mathematics, (13) Praise, Prayer and worship of God, (14) Emancipation, (15) The art of Building Ships and Aerial Cars, (16) The Science of Telegraphy, (17) Medicinal Sciences, (18) Re-birth, (19) Marriage, (20) The Niyoga (appointment), (21) The Duties of the Ruler and the Ruled, (22) The Varnas and the Ashrams or 4 stages of life, (23) The Five Daily Duties (Pancha-mahaa-yajnas), (24) The Authenticity of Vedic/Aarsha and non-acceptable/Anaarsh literature, (25) methods of studying and teachings Vedas and Vedic literature (26) Clearing Doubts against upcoming Vedic translations, (27) General Principles, (28) A Few Questions and Answers, (29) Some Peculiarities of the Vedic Words, (30) Rules about nouns and other grammar, (31) Figures of Speech, and (32) Abbreviations used in the Commentary.



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Rigveda bhashya or the Translation of Rigveda

After writing Rigved-aadi-bhashya-bhumikaa, Maharshi ji started writing Rgveda-bhashya on tuesday, **December 11, 1877**. These were printed in the form of monthly issues during and even after his passage for a total of 22 years. Maharshi ji could finish the **Rigveda** translation only up to 7.61.2. before he was taken away from the world.

Yajur-veda-bhashya or the translation of Yajur-veda

Maharshi ji started writing the Yajur-veda Bhashya on Thursday, **January 17, 1878**. Again, these were published in the form of papers for many years and finally compiled as a text after his death. The perfect definition of God can be found in the 8th mantra of 40th chapter of Yajur-veda. There is no magic or witch-craft or superstitions and vulgarity in the Vedas as has been presented by Mahidhara, Bloomfield etc. The Vedas are the source of cosmic knowledge and are a guide to the human conduct. Manusmriti, which is based on Vedic teachings, can easily be called the first book of Law on earth.

RITUALISTIC GRANTHAS: These are as follows:

Sandhyaa

A rather small book named Sandhya was written by Maharshi ji in 1863. It was published by Jwala Prakash Press, Agra. It was the first work of Maharshi ji but is unfortunately now unavailable.

Pancha-mahaa-yajna-vidhi

This book of rituals was written by Maharshi ji during his stay at Bombay. In this, he has given a systematic procedure for the need, logic behind it for the performance of five daily yajnas as per the Dharm-shaastras. This book was completed in October, 1874, and was published from Bombay. Its revised edition was published from Kaashi in 1877. It deals with the form of Brahma-yajna, Deva-yajna, Pitri-yajna, Bhuta-yajna (Baliveshva-deva-yajna) and Atithi-yajna. The procedures advised by Maharshi Dayanand are practical as well as scientific. Such systematized text about the daily yajnas were not available before Dayanand.



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Sanskaar-vidhi

Maharshi ji started writing Sanskaar-vidhi on, October 28, 1875 and it was completed in less than 3 months, on January 14, 1876. Its first edition was published in March 1876 from Asiatic Press, Bombay. In this text, Maharshi ji has given systematic approach to all 16 sanskars, 3 before birth, 12 during life and 1 after demise in a very simple manner with its reasoning as well. By giving a systematic and self-explanatory form to 16 Sanskaars, the Sanskaar-vidhi has actually become the most authentic text for Vedic rituals and can itself be called a *Grihya-sutra*. Several scholars have written more books based on Sanskaar-vidhi. Some of these are: Sanskaar Samuchhaya, Sanskaar Chandrikaa and in English, **Vedic Vision (by Satyavrat Siddhaantalakar)**.

In Grihya-sutras, many rituals which are unethical and immoral have been mentioned. For example, in Anna-praashana Sanskaar the rule of eating the flesh (*maansa*) of birds has been mentioned. Maharshi ji has refuted such believes and has clarified it well in his writings. Had the eating of meat been Vedic, this sanskaar would have been named as Maans-praashan Sanskaar and not Anna-praashan-Sanskaar.

Grammar Texts:

Guru **Virjaanand** was himself a learned scholar of Kaumudee, but he had realized that true wisdom and scholarship could be attained only by studying the Aarsha granthas written by our sages. So, he taught **Ashtaadhyayee** to his disciples in the era when most of the education in other places was being done through **Siddhaant- Kaumudee**. Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati understood and then wrote and propagated the **Ashtaadhyayee** tradition. He has to his credit following books on grammar. Some of these are: **Ashtaadhyayee Bhaashya, Sanskrit- Vakya- Prabodha and Vedaanga Prakaash(This included 14 books. (i) Varnoccaarana-shikshaa** or the pronunciation education, (ii) **Sandhi Vishaya** or the learning of dissecting and joining Sanskrit words, (iii) **Naamika** i.e. Declension, (iv) **Kaarakiya**, (v) **Saamaasika** i.e. Compound words (vi) **Satraina Tadhita** i.e. Genders (vii) **Avyayaartha** i.e. Indeclinables, (viii) **Aakhyaatika** i.e. The verb, (ix) **Sauvara** i.e. Accentuation and Prosody September, (x) **Paaribhaashika** i.e. Technicalities, (xi) **Dhaatu-paatha** i.e. Roots, (xii) **Gana-paatha** i.e. Conjugation (xiii) **Unaadi-kosha** i.e. Word-making, an explanation of UnaadiSutraas. (xiv) **Nighantu**. Maharshi ji considered it to have been originally composed by Sage Yaaska.



PHILOSOPHICAL/CRITIQUE WRITINGS

Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati did not author an independent book on the six books of Vedic philosophy, but in Satyarth Prakaash and Rig-ved-aadi-bhaashya-bhumikaa, he has explained many of the sutras of these philosophy texts. Overall, Maharshi ji has explained 17 sutras of Saankhya darshana, 69 of Yoga-darshana, 24 of Nyaaya darshana, 49 of Vaishesika darshana , 5 Maharshi ji's writings on this issue are: **1. Aaryoddeshya-ratna-maalaa , 2. Mata-mataantara-Khandanam , 3. Bhramochedana and Anu-bhramochedana, 4. Shikshaa-patri-dhvaanta-nivaarana , 5. Bhaagavata Khandanam or Vaishnava-mata-khandan.**

MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS

The Autobiography: In April 1879, Colonel Olcott met Maharshi ji and requested him to write an autobiography. Which was published in different issues of a monthly journal "Theosophist" in October 1879, December 1879 and November 1880. Maharshi ji was hardly 49 or 50 years of age, when he wrote his autobiography. Though brief and incomplete, it provides important facts of his initial life. It is an authoritative document of his pledges, distresses and bold decisions. Importantly, it has neither self-praise nor any boastful statements, indicative of vanity.

Poona Pravachana, Vyavahaara-bhaanu, Go-karunaa-nidhi, Gardabha-taapini-Upanisad

Gautama Ahilyaa Kathaa.

Correspondence letters and Advertisements for discourses

CONCLUSION: The sources of Maharshi Dayanad's writings and his conclusions are the Vedas, Braahmanas, Aaranyakas, Upanishads, Vedangas and other Aarsha granthas. He quoted the seers from Brahmaa to Jaimini as evidence and always gave the original references in support of his expositions. He has profusely used the etymological style, the dialogue style, the question-answer style, the debate style, the Aarsha style, the fearless style, the Aakhyaana style and the sayings and idioms in his writings. Because of this, the language has become interesting and lively.



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His work is an embodiment of this belief. The scope of Maharshi ji's work is vast and awe-inspiring, given that the time he got was just twenty years. The vast treasures of the ancient Shaastras and their deep meanings were revealed for the benefit of humanity through his writings. He had attained such an enlightened state of mind that whatever he uttered was authentic and true. Dayanand is indeed rationality personified.

Note: Besides my own review of literature, a great deal of help was taken from the material already compiled into an article by Professor Virendra Alankar of Chandigarh India with his permission.





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Eggless Banana Bread

By
Rhea Jain

There is always that extra ripe banana lying around that no one wants to eat! The extra ripe bananas are packed with nutritional value and should not be wasted. This recipe makes good use of this banana plus its very easy to make! Try this recipe and share with your siblings, friends or serve to your parents as a teatime snack!

Ingredients

- 3 bananas, ripped
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar, or 1 cup depending on sweetness of banana
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup oil or butter
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup all-purpose flour
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup wheat flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp cinnamon powder
- pinch of salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup walnut / akharot



Instructions

1. Take ripped bananas and cut them into pieces.
2. Add sugar and mash the banana.
3. Add oil and vanilla extract.
4. Also sieve all purpose flour, wheat flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon powder and salt.
5. Blend and combine all the dry ingredients with the banana puree.
6. Add walnut and fold gently.
7. Transfer the cake batter into the cake mould or bread mould.
8. Pat the tray twice to remove the air incorporated into the batter.
9. Place the tray into preheated oven. bake the cake at 180 degree celsius or 356 degree fahrenheit for 40 minutes.
10. Allow the cake to cool completely.
11. And later cut to slices and serve.
12. Finally, serve the eggless & vegan banana bread or store in airtight container.



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Snicker Bar- Peanut Butter Stuffed Dates

**By,
Ruhi Bakshi**

Peanut butter-filled dates are an awesome snack that's super easy to make! You just take a sweet, chewy date, remove the pit, and stuff it with creamy or crunchy peanut butter. It tastes like candy but is actually pretty healthy! You can even add a little sea salt, drizzle some chocolate on top, or sprinkle crushed nuts for extra crunch. It's a great snack for after school, before sports, or whenever you need a quick energy boost!



Ingredients:

- 12 Medjool dates, pitted
- 1/3 cup creamy or crunchy peanut butter or any nut butter of your choice
- Sea salt (optional)
- Chopped nuts or seeds for topping (optional)
- Dark chocolate for drizzling (optional)

Instructions:

1. Prepare the Dates:

- Start by carefully slicing each Medjool date lengthwise on one side to create a pocket. Remove the pit if not already pitted.

2. Fill the Dates:

- Using a small spoon or a butter knife, fill each date with approximately 1 teaspoon of peanut butter. Adjust the amount according to your preference for peanut butter.



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3. Add Toppings (Optional):

- If desired, sprinkle a tiny pinch of sea salt on top of the peanut butter for a sweet and salty flavor contrast.
- You can also add chopped nuts or seeds for an extra crunch if you like.

4. Chocolate Drizzle (Optional):

- If you want a decadent touch, melt some dark chocolate in a microwave-safe bowl for about 30 seconds or until completely melted. Drizzle the melted chocolate over the stuffed dates.

5. Chill and Serve:

- Place the stuffed dates on a plate and refrigerate them for about 15-20 minutes to allow the peanut butter to firm up slightly. You can also freeze them.
- Enjoy these delicious treats as a healthy snack or dessert!

Storage:

- Store any leftover stuffed dates in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to a week.

Enjoy!

These date and peanut butter snacks are not only delicious but also packed with nutrients, making them a perfect energy booster!





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Palm Trees" themes of colorful kindness"

**By
Ravya Baxi**





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Republic Day 2025

The youth group of Arya samaj did a presentation on the Icons of India on the occasion of Republic Day 2025.

Icons of India

A presentation by the
Arya Samaj Youth Group

*Born before
independence*

*Born after
independence*

Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati (1824–1883)	Pia Sehgal
Jhansi ki Rani (Rani Lakshmibai) (1828–1858)	Rayva Baxi
Sarojini Naidu (1879–1949)	Mira
Srinivas Ramanujan (1887–1920)	Parth Aggarwal
Bhagat Singh (1907–1931)	Akash Patel
Indira Gandhi (1917–1984)	Anaya Rajput
Lata Mangeshkar (1929–2022)	Nandita Dani
Kiran Bedi (born 1949)	Rhea Jain
Indira Nooyi (born 1955)	Rhea Gupta
Kalpana Chawla (1962–2003)	Diviya Verma
Mary Kom (born 1982)	Ruhi Bakshi





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Visit to Triboro Food Pantry

on 23 February, 2025

By

Sachi Kaisare

This year, the Arya Samaj Youth Group got a special look inside the Triboro Food Pantry, located right near our Samaj!

It was a really eye opening and interesting experience. I personally was really impressed by how the community rallies to bring necessities to those in need.

The use of space in the church building was not only efficient, but showed just how much the community cares about individuals suffering from food insecurity.

The church has allowed the food pantry to store their food in the auditorium, where amenities are stacked in shelves that range almost wall-to-wall.

This is truly a commendable and inspiring act, and I am happy to say that our youth group contributed very generously to this noble cause.

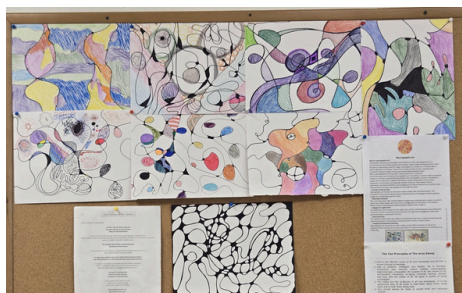
It is always so important to emphasize the difference that individuals can make on a community level, and having this opportunity served as both an educational experience and a way to help the community.





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TAKE A LOOK AT OUR PAST FEW MONTHS!





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THE TEN PRINCIPLES OF THE ARYA SAMAJ

1. God, His Characteristics: The Primordial Root - the Eternal Unseen Sustainer - of all true knowledge and of objects made known by true knowledge - any of all these - is the-Supreme God.
2. His Attributes and Worship: God is Personification of Existence, Intelligence and Bliss. He is Eternal, Formless, Almighty, Just, Benevolent, Unborn, Endless and Infinite, Unchangeable, Incomparable, Support of All, Lord of All, All-pervading, Omniscient and Controller of all from within, Fearless, Holy and Creator of the Universe. To Him alone is worship due.
3. His word, the Vedas: The Vedas are the books of true knowledge. It is the paramount duty of every Arya to learn and teach the Vedas.
4. Truth: We should be ever ready to embrace truth and to forsake untruth.
5. Righteousness: All acts should be done in accordance with Dharma after deliberating what is right and wrong.
6. Benevolence: The prime object of the Arya Samaj is to do good to the world, that is, to promote physical, spiritual and social good of every sentient being.
7. Love and Justice: Our conduct towards all should be guided by love, righteousness and justice.
8. Nescience and Science: We should dispel "avidya" - nescience, and promote "vidya" - science, spiritual and physical.
9. Individualism and Altruism: No one should be content with promoting his good only; on the contrary, he should look for his good in promoting the good of all.
10. Subordination and Liberty: All men should subordinate themselves to the laws of society calculated to promote the well-being of all; they should be free in regard to the laws promoting individual wellbeing



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