

the Ṛṣis are called the Vedas. Ṛṣis were of two varieties—Ṛṣis who were protagonists of religious rites leading to worldly happiness and those who were protagonists of the religion of detachment. Those who promulgated rituals and "saw" or created, i.e. who were seers or composers of the Mantras to be uttered in connection with the performance of rituals were called the Ṛṣis of the religion of attachment, which aims at happiness in this and the next world, thus perpetuating phenomenal existence, or round the births. Those who discovered the way to salvation and promulgated the philosophy bearing on it, were known as the Ṛṣis of the religion of detachment or renunciation, the object of which was attainment of peace or quiescence and thus freedom from rebirth, sorrow and suffering. Ṛṣis like Janaka, Yājñavalkya, etc. were of the latter type. Paramarṣi Kapila was reputed to be the foremost of such Ṛṣis. Nivṛtti Dharma or religion of detachment was flourished only in India, while Pravṛtti Dharma or religion of attachment is to be found everywhere.

The two principal features of the rules of conduct relating to Pravṛtti Dharma or religion of attachment are (i) the worship of God or some saint, and (ii) charity, doing good to others, love and amity, and performance of other pious deeds. The goal of such religion is attainment of heaven. The main principle of Nivṛtti Dharma or religion of detachment, on the other hand, is that even though performance of religious acts may lead to heaven, residence there is not everlasting and that it does not bring about a cessation of the process of birth and rebirth. Attainment of correct knowledge of the fundamental truth is the only means of bringing about the cessation of such a cycle. Real Yoga or Samādhi with absolute fixity of the mind on the direct object of contemplation and complete renunciation, are the only means of realising the real truth and gaining correct knowledge, i.e. of the real self. Through realisation of real truth, incorrect knowledge or misapprehension which is the cause of all suffering, is destroyed whereby the sorrowful process of birth and rebirth ceases.

Knowledge of self, again, falls into two categories. Sāṃkhya philosophers think of Self as absolute, without any attribute; while the Vedāntists consider the Self to be both attributeless and with attributes. In all philosophies, however, Yoga, i.e. suppression of the fluctuations of the mind through a process of habitual practice and cultivation of the spirit of renunciation, has been advocated as the means of realising the Self and through it the attainment of perpetual peace.

Realisation of the existence of Ātmā—Self or Soul—as an indestructible entity or Puruṣa within oneself is regarded as the true knowledge of