

**The Scientific Aspect of Kumbh Parva in Indian Culture &
Prayag**

Name -Bhaskar Mishra

Designation -Research Scholar

(Sanskrit)

Institute-C.M.P College,

University of Allahabad Prayagraj

[Email-bhaskarmishra3499@gmail.com](mailto:bhaskarmishra3499@gmail.com)

Mobile-9795550591

Abstract

The literature that organizes the entire world in relation to nature is Sanskrit literature. Sanskrit literature has created a cultural environment by incorporating the entire science of the world under spiritualism in its rich vocabulary. The cultural image of Kumbh festival also originates from here, which presents spirituality to the society in the simplest method through scientific method. Description of Kumbh is found in Vedic literature, mythological stories, legends and

worldly Shrutis. The historicity of Kumbh, the culturality of the festival, the scientificity of faith are worth reading and emulating. It is an event of incomparable magnitude, vast ancient traditions, Special mystical vision and contact with higher consciousness by many of it's devoted pilgrims that afford it the aura of another dimension of reality altogether. One could call the Kumbh greatest humans gathering on the face of the earth and one that occurs on a regular basis with the melas happening three years in different part of India.

Introduction-

India is the center of the entire universe, which has the duty to run the entire world in a systematic manner, and this religion is called Sanatan Dharma. Sanatan Dharma is **Gey Antiquated & Eternal Neoteric** and treats the scientific activities of nature as Indian culture. The sun gives light through its rays every day, we say that the sun is rising even after knowing that the sun is not of today, this is Sanatan Dharma. The mystical scientific nature of Sanatan was well established as culture by the philosophers for the

simplest use of the common people, and its speciality was propounded in the form of Vedic knowledge. From this knowledge, the form of Kumbh festival is obtained-

“चतुरः कुम्भांश्चतुर्धा ददामि क्षीरेण पूर्णा उदकेन दध्ना।

एतास्त्वा धारा उपयन्तु सर्वाः स्वर्गे लोकेमधुमत् पिन्वमाना॥”¹

“जघान् वृत्रं स्वधितिर्वनेव रुरोज अरदन्न सिन्धून्।

विभेद गिरिं नवभिन्न कुम्भभागा इन्द्रो अकृणता स्वयुम्भिः॥”²

“आविशन्कलशं सुतोविश्वाऽर्षन्न मिश्रियः।

इन्दुरिन्द्राय धीयते॥”³

“कुम्भोवनिष्ठुर्जनिता शचीभिर्यस्मिन्नग्रे योन्यां गर्भाऽअन्तः।

प्लाशिर्व्यक्तः शतधार उत्सो दुहे न कुम्भी स्वधां पितृभ्यः॥”⁴

In this way, the form of Kumbh is found in all the four Vedas. The word Chatur of Atharvaveda indicates the four places of Chaturdha Kumbh, Haridwar, Prayagraj, Ujjain and Nasik. The Ardha Kumbh held halfway in the twelve-year

¹ अथर्ववेद 4.37.7

² ऋग्वेद 10.89.7

³ सामवेद पू० 6.3

⁴ शुक्लयजुर्वेद 19.87

interval at Haridwar & Prayagraj. Each of these festival attract of crores of pilgrims, both sadhus and ordinary people at a spectacular confluence of faith, piety, spirituality, urban planning, literature, art, music healthcare, commerce etc. by human traditions.



Most diverse, most inclusive: Foreign women at the Prayaga Kumbha.

The Etymology & Structure of Kumbhparva-

After getting the indication of the form of Kumbh in Vedic literature, we understand the interpretation of Kumbh Parva in this way-

१)-कुं पृथ्वीं भावयन्ति सङ्केतयन्ति भविष्यत्कल्याणादिकाय महत्याकाशे

स्थिताः बृहस्पत्यादयो ग्रहाः संयुज्य हरिद्वार-

प्रयागादितत्पुण्यस्थानविशेषानुदिश्य यस्मिन् सः कुम्भः।

२)- कं जलेन उम्भति पूरयति अवर्षणादिदुर्भिक्षेभ्यो दूरयतीति कुम्भः।

३)-कुं पृथ्वीं उम्भति पूरयति मङ्गलसम्मानादिभिरिति कुम्भः।

४)-कुः पृथिवी उभ्यतेऽनुगृह्यते उत्तमोत्तममहात्मसङ्गमैः तदीयहितोपदेशैः

यस्मिन् सः कुम्भः।

५)-कुं पृथ्वीं भावयति पोषयतिविविधयागादिभिरिति वा कुम्भः।⁵

Therefore Kumbh festival is the holiest place on earth, which is indicative of welfare etc., and which pacifies the physical, divine and material sufferings of man. There is a famous shloka about the form of the Kalash, which is also known as the symbol of Kumbh-

“कलशस्य मुखे विष्णुः कण्ठे रुद्रः समाश्रितः।

मूले त्वस्य स्थितो ब्रह्मा मध्यमे मातृगणा स्मृताः।

कुक्षौ तु सागराः सर्वेः सप्तद्वीपा वसुन्धरा।

ऋग्वेदोऽथ यजुर्वेदः सामवेदो ह्याथर्वणः॥

⁵ कुम्भपर्व-माहात्म्य, वेदाचार्य पण्डित वेणीराम शर्मा गौड़, पृष्ठ संख्या 1 व 2

अङ्गैश्च सहिता सर्वे कलशं तु समाश्रिताः।

अत्र गायत्री सावित्री शान्तिः पुष्टिकरी तथा”।⁶

Thus, the form of the Kalash has been considered as a symbol of the universe. The first mention of Kumbha is found when it was created from the churning of the ocean by the gods and demons carrying the stream of nectar in the Kalash-

देवदानवसम्वादे मध्यमाने महौदधौ।

उत्पन्नोऽसि कुम्भ विधृतो विष्णुना स्वयम्।⁷

In fact, this is a symbolic story, in which the nature of gods and demons has been implanted in the human body. Thus, considering the form of Kumbha as symbolic, the inclusion of all the positive and negative energies of the world is indicated in the structure of Kumbha.

Cultural Interpretation of Kumbh-

The Kumbh festival begins with the story of the churning of the ocean. When the churning of the ocean started

⁶ नित्यकर्म पूजा प्रकाश, लाल बिहारी मिश्र, पृष्ठ संख्या 189

⁷ कुम्भपर्व माहात्म्य, वेदाचार्य उसके वेणीराम शर्मा गौड़, पृष्ठ संख्या -4

Fourteen Ratna were obtained from it, which respectively included Kalakoot poison, Kamdhenu cow, Uchchaishrava horse, Airavat elephant, Kaustubh gem, Kalpavriksha, Rambha Apsara, Mahalakshmi, Varuni wine, Moon, Sharang bow, Panchjanya conch, Dhanvantari and Amrit. It's all 14 Ratna explained to the symbolic conditions of human body, which is always discovering in external world. Amrit was in the urn, and as soon as the nectar was obtained, the dispute between gods and demons started -

एवं विवादमानेषु काश्यपेषु सुधाग्रहे।

भगवान् मोहयित्वा तान्मोहिन्या विभजत् सुधाम्॥

विवादे काश्यपेयानां यत्र यत्रावनिस्थले।

कलशोन्यपततत्र कुम्भपर्व तदोच्यते॥⁸

इस प्रकार कुम्भ पर्व का दृष्टान्त समुद्र मन्थन से प्राप्त होता है-

“पृथिव्यां कुम्भयोगस्य चतुर्धा भेद उच्यते।

चतुस्थले च पतनाद् सुधा कुम्भस्य भूतले॥

विष्णुद्वारे तीर्थराजेऽवन्त्यां गोदावरी तटे।

⁸ स्कन्द-पुराण, माहेश्वर खण्ड केदारखण्ड, पृष्ठ संख्या -25

सुधा बिन्दु विनिक्षेपाद् कुम्भ पर्वेति विश्रुतम्॥

तस्यात्कुम्भात्समुत्क्षिप्त सुधाबिन्दुर्महीतले।

यत्रयत्रात्यतत्तत्र कुम्भपर्व प्रकल्पितम्॥”⁹

That is Kumbh festival started in Haridwar, Prayagraj, Nashik and Ujjain due to the overflowing of nectar. It is noteworthy that the moon protected the nectar from falling, the sun protected the pitcher from breaking, Jupiter protected it from the demons snatching it and Saturn saved it from Jayant. For this reason, Kumbh festival is held on the special conjunction of these planets, in which in Haridwar Jupiter is in Aquarius and Sun is in Aries, Kumbh in Prayagraj is when Sun is in Capricorn and Jupiter is in Taurus, Kumbh in Ujjain is when Sun is in Aries and Jupiter is in Leo and Kumbh in Nashik is when Sun is in Aries and Jupiter is in Leo. The cultural analysis of Kumbh is very clear and proven. In this Kumbh festival of cultural environment, people try to make the mind stable by creating a spiritual environment for a month at the above mentioned places on the concept of

⁹ प्रयागराज कुम्भ कथा -डा० राजेन्द्र त्रिपाठी रसराज पृष्ठ संख्या 52

Kalpavas. The importance of Kalpavas of Kumbh festival is the highest in Prayagraj. Rigveda also clarifies-

“सितासिते सरिते यत्र सङ्गमे तत्राप्लुतासौ दिवमुत्पतन्ति।

ये वै तन्वं विसृजन्ति धीरास्ते जनासो अमृतत्वं भजन्ते॥”¹⁰

Purna Kumbh is organized in Prayagraj in the 12th year in the area of the famous river (Ganga-Yamuna), about which it is clearly mentioned in the Atharva Veda -

“पूर्णः कुम्भोऽधिकाल अहितस्तं वै पश्यामो बहुधा नु सन्तः।

स इमा विश्वा भुवनानि कालं तमाहुः परमे व्योमन्॥”¹¹

Thus, it is clear that the cultural interpretation of Kumbh festival is visible from Vedic literature to secular Sanskrit, which is still popular among the Indian people. In the culture of Kumbh festival, there is a rule of Kalpvas, Kalpvas means various religious activities. Of which the main ones are-

1) - Provision for common people to take bath, meditate etc. on the holy shores of Prayagdi for a period of one month.

¹⁰ ऋग्वेद खिल 10.75.1

¹¹ अथर्ववेद 19.53.3

2)- Organizing the tradition of debate etc.

3)-Decisional activity of religious activities by famous Acharyas.

4)-Integration of various projects for internal and external refinement.

Unfortunately, in the current situation, the spiritual and cultural environment of Kumbh festivals has been distorted by making it a picnic centre. Hence, we should try to keep this cultural splendor intact.

The Scientific Stance of Kumbhparva-

This festival of faith, Kumbh is not a matter of mere imagination. As proven by the stories of Vedic literature, it is an indicator of the science of the universe itself. The planetary movements of astrology confirm its scientificity. The immortality that “Kumbhika Dooshikah Peekaan” talks about is a drink obtained from nature, whose flow will last forever. Kumbh festival has another connection with drinking nectar. It is stated above that the essence of nectar is the natural symbolic life-giving substance, which is present in the five

elements of nature. Since the body in the form of a body is filled with five elements, nectar remains present in it also. Water is also a part of Panchabhuta, hence it remains present in the body in the form of nectar -

**“आपो मे रेतसि श्रिताः । रेतः हृदये। हृदयं मयि। अहममृते। अमृतं
ब्रह्मणि।”¹²**

The scientific nature of festivals like Kumbh etc. is that the places where the usefulness of Kumbh festival has been described by applying astronomical methods through mythological symbolic stories for the physical and mental attainment of this nectar-like Sanjeevan Rasa hidden in the body, are full centers of positive energy. According to modern science, matter is indestructible, but on thinking, it is known that the external form of matter is completely mortal, only its element remains in it, in which energy is automatically generated through some medium. This energy is transferred and always changes its form, it never gets depleted. Naturally, this energy is obtained in a completely pure form through Panchtatva (earth, water, fire, air and sky). We all

¹² Kriya yoga Sadhana – Pandit Devdutt Shastri, Page-88

receive this nectar-like energy through water on festivals like Kumbh etc., this is the scientific nature of this festival. Pandit Devdutt Shastri has said that every disease can be cured by this nectar-like energy -

“The determining power of the human body is Prana. All diseases can be cured by using this Amrit Tattva (nectar) based on the main centres of the nervous system.”¹³

Thus, Kumbh festival is a mystical contemplation of the ancient sages, which is worth emulating in every way.

The Kumbha Mela is held at Haridwar on the banks of the Ganga near Har Ki Pauri; at Prayaga near the triple confluence (triveni sangama) of the Ganga, the Yamuna, and the invisible Sarasvati; at Ujjain on the banks of the Shipra near Rama Ghat; and at Nashik-Tryambakeshwar on the banks of the Godavari near Rama Kunda and Kushavarta Kunda. The Mela is organized when a specific astronomical combination (kumbha yoga) of the Moon, the Sun, and Jupiter

¹³ Atharvavediya Tantra Vigyan – Pandit Devdutt Shastri, Page-8

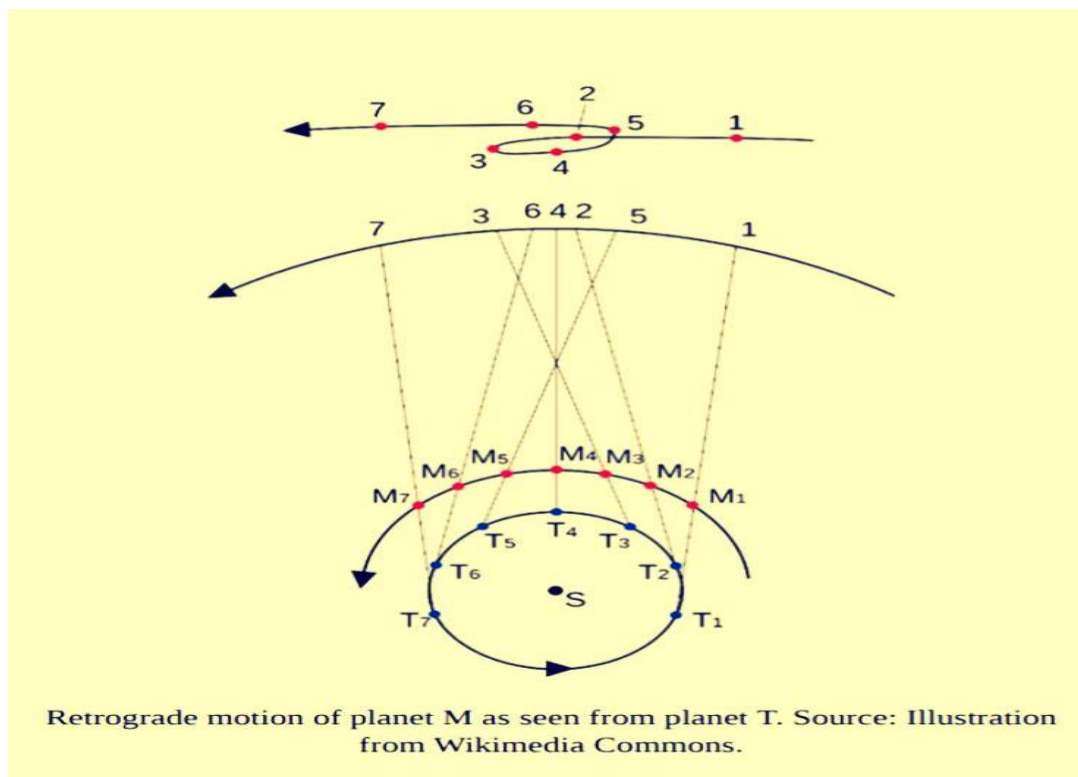
occurs in specific zodiac signs. The Moon takes around one month (27.32 days) to orbit the earth during which it transits through the 12 signs. The Sun transits through the 12 signs in around one year (365.2425 days), the time taken by the earth to orbit the Sun. Finally, Jupiter transits through the 12 signs in nearly 12 years (11.8618 years), the time taken by it to orbit the Sun. The transit period of Jupiter being the longest-12 times that of the Sun and around 159 times that of the moon- the kumbha yoga for a location repeats when Jupiter enters the same sign again. This is why the Kumbha Mela is held once every 12 years at a given venue, as a general rule. The seventh Mela after six melas held in 72 years (each held 12 years after the previous one) is held 11 years after the sixth Mela, giving us seven melas in 83 years. The reason is that Jupiter completes seven transits of the zodiac in nearly 83 years ($11.8618 \times 7 = 83.0326$), and moves to the next sign in the 84th year. This is why the Haridwar Kumbha was held in 1938 after 1927 and the Prayaga Kumbha was held in 1977 after 1966. The last Kumbha in Haridwar was in 2010 (1938 +72), but the next one will be

in 2021 ($1938 + 83 = 2021$). While 12 years is an overestimate for the time taken by Jupiter to transit through the 12 zodiac signs once, 83 years is an underestimate for seven such transits. Fortunately, 83.0326 is very close to 83, so the thumb rule of seven Kumbha Melas in 83 years works well for a reasonably long period of time. Using the logic used to add leap days to a year, it is easy to see that one year will need to be added every 2490 years to bring the Mela cycle in sync with Jupiter's position. In other words, after 29 cycles of seven Kumbha Melas in 83 years, the next seven Kumbha Melas are to be held in 84 years. This gives us 210 Kumbha Melas in 2,491 ($2983 + 84$) years.

The time taken by Jupiter to complete 210 transits of the zodiac is nearly 2,491 years ($11.8618 \times 210 = 2490.978$).

These thumb rules (1 in 12, 7 in 83, and 210 in 2,491) do not always work since the apparent movement of Jupiter across the zodiac signs neither has uniform speed nor is always direct. On average, Jupiter stays for around one year in a sign, but sometimes this period is much shorter. For example, as per the Western (sayana) mode of reckoning,

Jupiter will enter Aries on 21 December 2022 and then Taurus on 17 May 2023, staying in Aries for only 147 days. Similarly, as per the traditional Indian (nirayana) mode of reckoning, Jupiter will enter dhanus (Sagittarius) on 5 November 2019 and then makara (Capricorn) on 30 March 2020, staying in dhanus for 147 days. The position of a heavenly body as per nirayana reckoning, used for holding the Kumbha Mela, is obtained by subtracting the ayanamsha (currently around 24 degrees) from the sayana position.



Kumbha Parva in Prayagraj

Prayagraj is located in southern Uttar Pradesh, at a distance of 130 km from Varanasi. It is served by Bamrauli Airport, though flights are few and are often disrupted by fog in the winter. The city has seven railway stations under the Northern, North Eastern, and North Central zones. As per the 2011 census, the city had a population of 12 lakh and a literacy rate of 86.06%. Prayaga is considered the most sacred of all holy sites by Hindus. For (Tirthraj "the king of sacred places"). this reason, it is known as The word prayaga is derived from the root vyaj which has three meanings-worshipping a deity by a yajna (deva-puja), coming together (sangati-karana), and donating (dana). The word yaga () from this root means an act of worshipping (i.e. a yajna), coming together, or donating. The place where there is an eminent yaga is called prayaga. It is believed that Brahma performed a great yajna at Prayaga. From the meaning "coming together", a confluence of rivers is also called prayaga as in the Pancha Prayagas, the five confluences in the Himalayas (Vishnuprayaga, Nandaprayaga,

Karnaprayaga, Rudraprayaga, and Devaprayaga). At Prayaga, there is the confluence (sangama) of the Ganga, the Yamuna, and the invisible (guptasalila) Sarasvati. Finally, charity (donation) at a tirtha like Prayaga is especially eulogized. Thus, Prayaga is the place of all three an eminent yajna, an eminent confluence, and eminent donations. The name prayagaraja is alluded to in a verse from the Brahma Purana, as cited in the Tristhalisetu-"It is prayaga due to its eminence and it has the sound (i.e. is suffixed with) raja (meaning 'a king') due to its supremacy." A beautiful metaphor of Prayaga as a king is presented by Tulasidasa in the Ramacharitamanasa. He says of King Prayaga (see the appendix for the original verses), "Truth (satya) is his minister, devotion (shraddha) is his dear wife, and [the twelve] Madhavas are his beneficial friends. His storehouse is replete with the four entities (dharma, artha, kama, and moksha). The sacred land [of Prayaga] is his extremely beautiful dominion. The region [near Sangama] shines forth as the impenetrable and strong fort which cannot be breached by

the enemies (sins) even in their dreams. All the sacred sites are the brave warriors of his army, they are skilled in battle and destroy many vices. The Sangama is his exquisite royal throne. The Akshaya Vata, which charms the minds of even the sages, is his royal umbrella. The waves of the Yamuna and the Ganga are his chowries. Just on seeing him, sorrows and desires are destroyed. Virtuous and pious sadhus wait upon him and attain all that their mind desires. The Vedas and Puranas are the court singers who narrate his immaculate virtues."The Kumbha Mela is held at Prayaga when Jupiter is in Taurus and the Sun is in Capricorn. A popular Sanskrit verse (see the appendix) of untraceable origin goes: "When the lord of the days (the Sun) is in Capricorn and Jupiter is in Taurus, the extremely rare kumbha yoga occurs in Prayaga." The Prayaga Kumbha lasts around two months, starting on Makara Sankranti (14 January) and ending on Maha Shivaratri in February or March. The dates of the three royal baths are: 1) Makara Sankranti (14 January), when the Sun enters Capricorn (as per nirayana reckoning).

2) Mauni Amavasya, the new moon day of the Magha month which falls in late January or February. The word mauni means "silent". It comes from the word mauna("silence") which in turn is derived from the word muni ("a sage"). Silence is one of the attributes of a muni. Many tirthayatris take up a vow of silence on this day.

3) Vasanta Panchami, the fifth day of the bright half (shukla paksha) of the Magha month. In all, there were nine snana days at the 2013 Prayaga Kumbha which was visited by around 12 crore people. An estimated three crore people took a dip in the Sangama on Mauni Amavasya, the biggest bathing day. An estimated 60 lakh people had visited the Sangama on the Mauni Amavasya day in 1954 (3 February), the day when a stampede killed hundreds. As early as in 1977, the number of people bathing at the Prayaga Kumbha on Mauni Amavasya had one crore. The growing numbers of tirthayatris at the Prayaga Kumbha have been mentioned in the Preface.



The Image of Prayagaraj Kumbha



The ephemeral city that never sleeps: Kumbha Nagari of Prayaga during the night. Image © UP Tourism

Conclusion-

Thus, in the present times, the Amritotsav of Kumbh is celebrated at the four places Haridwar, Prayag, Ujjain and Nasik. Apart from this, other details related to Kumbh are also found in Puranic literature and legends. To recognize

the light of the soul present in the body, the sages explained the specialty of these places on the basis of date, planet, constellation etc. to explain the pools of Amritras inside the human body. The story of the origin of Kumbh festival is symbolic science, which includes the deep science of self-churning of the ocean and obtaining the Amrit Kalash from within oneself. Consciousness has two forms - mind and soul, the mind is restless and disturbed, while the soul is calm. When spirituality reached the extreme limit of thinking and analysis, then it realized the soul and the soul element. The ease of analysis was given in symbolism, in which Kumbh festival is also one. The Kumbh Mela organised in Prayagraj during the month of Magha energises the soft atmosphere of the Gangabank with the rays of the sun and gives concentration to the mind, gives peace to the mind through stellar sciences and gives rise to the tendency of self-exploration. Organising Kumbh Mela on the basis of nature is a part of the religious system. In Prayagraj, at the confluence of Ganga and Yamuna, in the month of Magha, one has to balance the physical body with the five elements

and to prevent the karma-related diseases in the form of Kalpavas..

In Indian culture, it is also known as water therapy and sunray therapy. According to astrology, the Bhachakra is 360 degrees or 108 parts. Bhachakra is divided into 12 zodiac signs, so one zodiac sign is of 30 degrees or 9 parts. According to Shaunakiyashakhokta Vidya, the zodiac sign and ascendant from which all the four Kumbha sthans start, removes the Nairrti Dosha, Kshetraj Vyadhi Dosha, Devayajan Dosha etc. and frees one from sins, curses and sufferings. Skanda Purana etc. propounded these scientific facts in the form of a story of Kumbha festival, so that all of us common people can understand its science in a simple way. It is a complete science of spirituality. It is worth noting that Kumbha is a festival, not a celebration or festival, so it is the moral duty of all of us to contemplate its depth for sattva intellect and complete benefit.



A bare beginning: Initiation of new Naga sadhus at the Prayaga Kumbha.

सन्दर्भ ग्रन्थ सूची

- 1) अथर्ववेद ४.३४.७
- 2) ऋग्वेद १०.८९.७
- 3) सामवेद पू० ६.३
- 4) शुक्लयजुर्वेद १९.८७
- 5) कुम्भपर्व-माहात्म्य, वेदाचार्य पंडित वेणीरामशर्मा गौड, कृष्णगोपाल केडिया, वणिकप्रेस बनारस, प्रथम संस्करण-सन् 2004ई.
- 6) नित्यकर्म पूजा प्रकाश, व्याख्याकार-लाल बिहारी मिश्र, गीता प्रेस गोरखपुर प्रकाशन।
- 7) कुम्भपर्व-माहात्म्य, वेदाचार्य पंडित वेणीरामशर्मा गौड, कृष्णगोपाल केडिया, वणिकप्रेस बनारस, प्रथम संस्करण-सन् 2004ई.
- 8) स्कन्दपुराण, माहेश्वर खण्ड केदारखण्ड, गीता प्रेस गोरखपुर प्रकाशन।
- 9) प्रयागराज कुम्भ कथा- डॉ० राजेन्द्र त्रिपाठी रसराज, सत्साहित्य प्रकाशन दिल्ली, प्रथम संस्करण-2019 ई०, -2019 ई०, ISBN:978-81-7721-382-9
- 10) ऋग्वेद खिलसूक्त(10.75.1)
- 11) अथर्ववेद 19.53.3
- 12) क्रिया योग साधना- पण्डित देवदत्त शास्त्री, शुभम प्रकाशन इलाहाबाद, संस्करण-सन् 2013 ई०, ISBN:978-9382415-01-05

- 13) अथर्ववेदीय तन्त्र विज्ञान-पण्डित देवदत्त शास्त्री, शुभम प्रकाशन
इलाहाबाद, संस्करण-सन् 2013 ई०, ISBN:81-901887-7-1