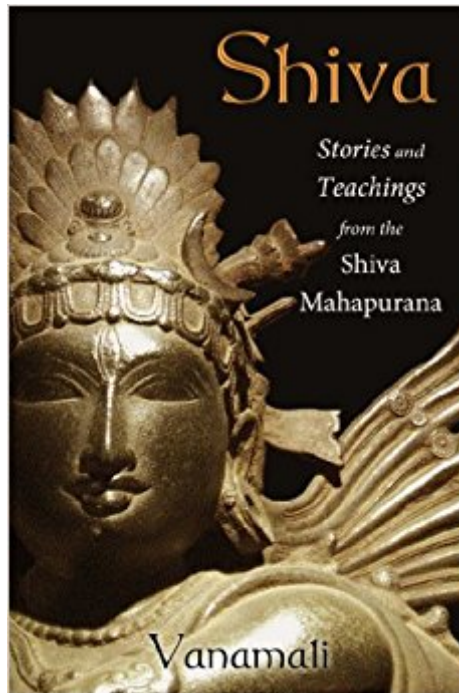


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Shiva: Stories And Teachings From The Shiva Mahapurana



Synopsis

The traditional understanding of Shiva told through stories and teachings from the Shiva Mahapurana. Explains Shiva's contradictory forms, such as destroyer or benefactor, and how his form depends on the needs of the devotee. Reveals how Shiva's teachings allow one to see through the illusions at the root of all grief and alienation in human life. Explores Shiva's relationships with Durga, Shakti, Sati, and Parvati and with his sons Ganesha and Kartikeya. Shiva, the most ancient and complex deity of the Hindu pantheon, has been portrayed in many contrasting lights: destroyer and benefactor, ascetic and householder, wild demon slayer and calm yogi atop Mount Kailash. Drawing from the Hindu sacred text the Shiva Mahapurana--said to be written by Shiva himself--Vanamali selects the essential stories of Shiva, both those from his dark wild side and those from his benevolent peaceful side. Vanamali discusses Shiva's many avatars such as Shambunatha and Bhola, as well as Dakshinamurti who taught the shastras and tantras to the rishis. She explores Shiva's relationships with Durga, Shakti, Sati, and Parvati and with his sons Ganesha and Kartikeya. Examining Shiva's acceptance of outsiders, Vanamali explains why ghosts and ghouls are his attendants and why his greatest devotees are demon kings, like Ravana. She includes famous Shiva stories such as the Descent of the River Ganga and Churning the Milky Ocean as well as those that reveal the origin of the festival of lights, Diwali; his creation of the cosmic couple, or hierogamos; and how Shiva and Parvati taught the world the secrets of Kundalini Shakti. The author also draws upon Shaivite teachings to illustrate the differences between Western science and Vedic science and their explanations for the origins of consciousness. Integrating Shiva's two sides, the fierce and the peaceful, Vanamali reveals that Shiva's form depends on the needs of the devotee. Understanding his teachings allows one to see through the illusions at the root of all grief and alienation in human life, for Shiva is the wielder of maya who does not fall under its spell. While Ganesha is known as the remover of obstacles, Shiva is the remover of tears.

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Customer Reviews

"Vanamali's passionate writing blends a grandmother's loving wisdom with a lifetime of devotion to the Sanatana Dharma. Like an ancient vedic chant, Vanamali's spellbinding prose elevates the reader to sublime Himalayan peaks of Transcendental Consciousness. Mataji's erudition and devotion is a portal to a legendary realm of the Gods." (Bruce Burger, founder of Heartwood Institute and author of *Esoteric Anatomy: The Body as Consciousness*)
"Shiva is a complex Hindu deity. Both destroyer and creator, he is always energetically involved in the world, bringing his special wisdom to us in whatever form we might recognize. Vanamali has gathered together the sacred tales of Shiva's adventures for this book, recounting them with reverence and insight. Customers will begin to see their lives and their potential with greater clarity as they read her carefully crafted words." (Retailing Insight, October 2013)
"Vanamali's book is seductive, full of the charm of myth retold with sincerity and with a minimum of intellectualization; it should appeal to many school and college collections." (Library Journal, November 2013)

Mataji Devi Vanamali has written 7 books on the gods of the Hindu pantheon, including Shakti, Hanuman, and The Complete Life of Krishna, as well as translating the Bhagavad Gita. She is the founder and president of Vanamali Gita Yoga Ashram Trust, dedicated to sharing the wisdom of Sanatana Dharma and charitable service to children. She lives at the Vanamali ashram in Rishikesh, northern India.

Explained and filled in many blanks in my knowledge about Shiva, Parvati, Vishnu, Brahma, and the ancient Hindu pantheon. We have been watching Hindu videos on You Tube without knowing the Hindi language and wanted to understand what was going on better. Reading this book clarified a lot! I especially appreciated the transliterated mantras, the extra lists and the glossary. My meditations have really been enhanced and I feel more intimate with the massive active consciousness of the Lord of the Cosmos. A little old lady wrote this book, you can find racier

versions of this material. Being a little old lady myself, I was much relieved at the dignity with which the stories were presented. I only wish the book could have been much thicker with more in depth intricacies, but that would not be one book. Good job condensing the essentials! I will re-read this one. Aum, Namah Shivaya!

The book is a well written trove of information about Shiva, those whose worship him, and a glimpse of what "devotion" is. I'd recommend it to anyone interested in the source and foundation of many of today's books written as a basis for religions.

I've gained a lot of knowledge about Shiva from this book. It's a very great one although stories told in this book are quite different from what I've read before. I'm sure anyone reading this book will enjoy the stories.

I love this book. It tells of Shiva which is my favorite of Trimurtis. It explains many different aspects of Shiva instead of him just being the destroyer, which is more realistic. If he was just the destroyer he be more akin to a messenger or angel than a personification of the one God. It even tells you how you can worship him/her and even speaks of Shakti/Shivaa. I would recommend this book to anyone who is interested in eastern religion.

This is a remarkable book for those looking to grow in their depth of connection and understanding of Shiva.

This is a very easy read for first timers with no exposure to the Shiva Mahapurana... very well narrated! However, I am still looking for a more elaborate translation of Shiva Mahapurana and then compare it with this book

informative and easy to read.

An awesome account of the stories of Shiva. Vanamali is superb in her rendering of such an ancient knowledge to the ordinary person..would recommend it whole heartily to anyone searching for truth.

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