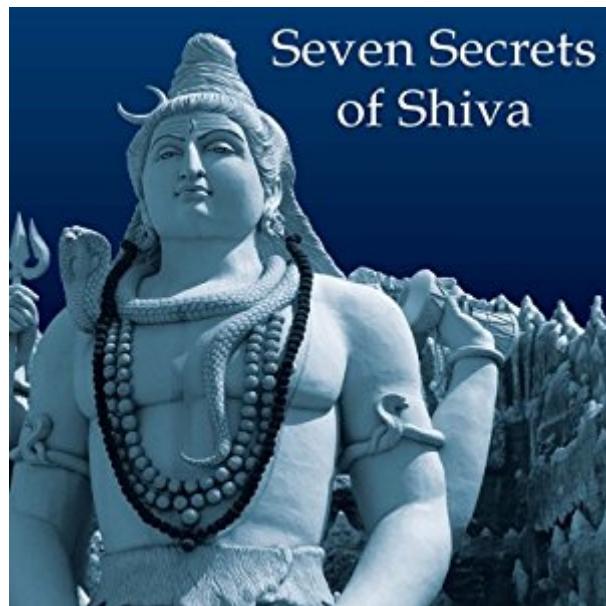


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Seven Secrets Of Shiva



Synopsis

Shiva, 'the destroyer' among the Hindu trinity (of gods), is depicted in many contradictory manners. He is an ascetic who wears animal skin, his body smeared with ashes. Contradictory to his wild nature, he is also depicted as having a family, with a beautiful wife and two children. There are many more such varied representations of Shiva, the most prominent of these being the Linga and the Nataraja. The author, Devdutt Pattanaik, introduces the readers to these varied aspects and representations, and then sets about interpreting them. He explains the different anomalies and conflicts in beliefs, things that might puzzle people who are not familiar with Hindu culture and religious symbolism. The author has taken up seven aspects of Shiva worship from Hinduism, which are nothing but seven different forms of Shiva worship. Shiva is worshipped in many forms, as the Lingeshwara, Kala Bhairava, Sundareshwara, Shankara, and Nataraja, and the author goes into each form and analyzes what it represents. He also discusses Shiva's two sons, Ganesha and Karthikeya. He goes into the symbolism behind these forms and provides his interpretation. This book serves as a nice introduction to Shaivite concepts and explains many stories, both known and unknown, the symbolism, and rituals and the reasons behind Hindu worship.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This may be an absolutely essential book for those who are interested seriously in the ideas behind Shiva God of creation and destruction. He is the God of the centrifugal force which destroyed the Bindu and with Brahman, created the so-called Big Bang. The book is full of pictures and marvelous stories that even a strong devotee of Shiva like myself, On myself learning new

things and being transported to new worlds of wonder and excitement. I don't think there's a spare word in the whole book and if you are interested in Shiva I can suggest several other books that aren't worth half of what this one is worth I have to thank the author, Devdutt Pattanaik, but this incredible plethora of marvels equal to any book of fancy which turns out to be authentic and absolutely on the mark in a manner of showing one has to live life to the fullest. A Roman Catholic by birth and I practiced I am also a Hindu, and specifically a devotee of Shiva. I cannot recommend this book more highly.

Seven Secrets of Shiva is a non-fiction work that endeavors to explain Shiva, the Lord of Kailash through the labyrinth of myths, stories and cultural perception. Why is Shiva dressed like an uncouth tramp? Why does he smear ashes from the cemetery, on his body and dress with a tiger skin? Why did he arm Ravana and Basmasura with boons that finally led to trouble? Who is this God who acts like a hermit devoid of family, commitments and emotion and yet has a huge following of ganas, wives and sons? One will find all the answers for these questions in this book. With impeccable research, Devdutt Patnaik steers us through Sati's marriage to Shiva, the impact of her death on him and his resultant withdrawal from the world. I liked the way, the author explains the role of Parvathi in Shiva's world. It is she who facilitates Shiva's engagement back in the world. It is she who teaches esoteric nuances of sex and love to him. And author's assertion that Shiva was innocent to the world's prejudices and cultural perception makes a lot of sense. As with any other mythology book, the author has delved deep into both north and south Indian fables, folk tales, myths and legends and has presented Shiva to the common man to understand, venerate and learn the primitive wisdom that would help us escape the trapping of the world. Devdutt's language is simple to understand yet he manages to explain complex arguments about Shiva in very understandable terms. Plus Points: Thorough research of all legends, stories and myths related to Shiva. Minus Points: Felt that the first chapter dragged a bit with a lot of esoteric explanations.

This book is meant for all those people who view Hinduism from a western perspective. Mr Pattanaik's style of writing is very simple and keeps the reader glued. This book has answered a lot of questions which I had carried since my childhood and has successfully transformed my mental state. The best take away from this book has been discussion about the topic - Meaning of life! I feel proud of my religion after reading this book but this book is not about Hinduism and its advantages though. Shiv Ji is the centre point of the book and I will definitely go for other works of the author.

Very well researched and objectively presented. Pattanaik digs into the esoteric and symbolic manifestations and representations of Shiva. As a practicing Hindu, I found this book to add greatly to my own understanding of the implicit within the art/ narrative depictions of Shiva. I'm not sure if this is a good "beginners" book - but highly recommend it for the spiritually curious. I also enjoy that the author steps away from the obligatory religious anecdotes (for instance, of Shakti mounting Shiva to invigorate him to benefit the universe - compared to the layman account of the same depictions placing Shiva at Shakti's feet to calm the angry goddess). Cannot wait to read Pattanaik's other works!

Understand what a lot of idol craftsmen intended to convey through the stone carvings. Probably the idols were never meant to be worshipped but rather communicate awesome philosophies and concepts that cannot be easily explained. Or rather the idols are "logos" of thought concepts. This book will really enrich your understanding of Indian mythology. This is a must read along with Seven Secrets of Vishnu

This book intends to explain the philosophy of Lord Shiva by explaining the symbols, sights and rituals associated. While doing this so, this book arouses one's spirituality to a great extent. The philosophy explained is meaningful, upto the point and is very easy to understand. I started off with this book with an intolerant attitude towards the religion, often calling it a religion full of compelling myths which made no sense to a great extent. Having read this book, I further continued with the book "Seven Secrets of Vishnu". Now I am a genuine admirer of both these. For all those who wish to understand philosophy of Shiva logically this is the book.

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