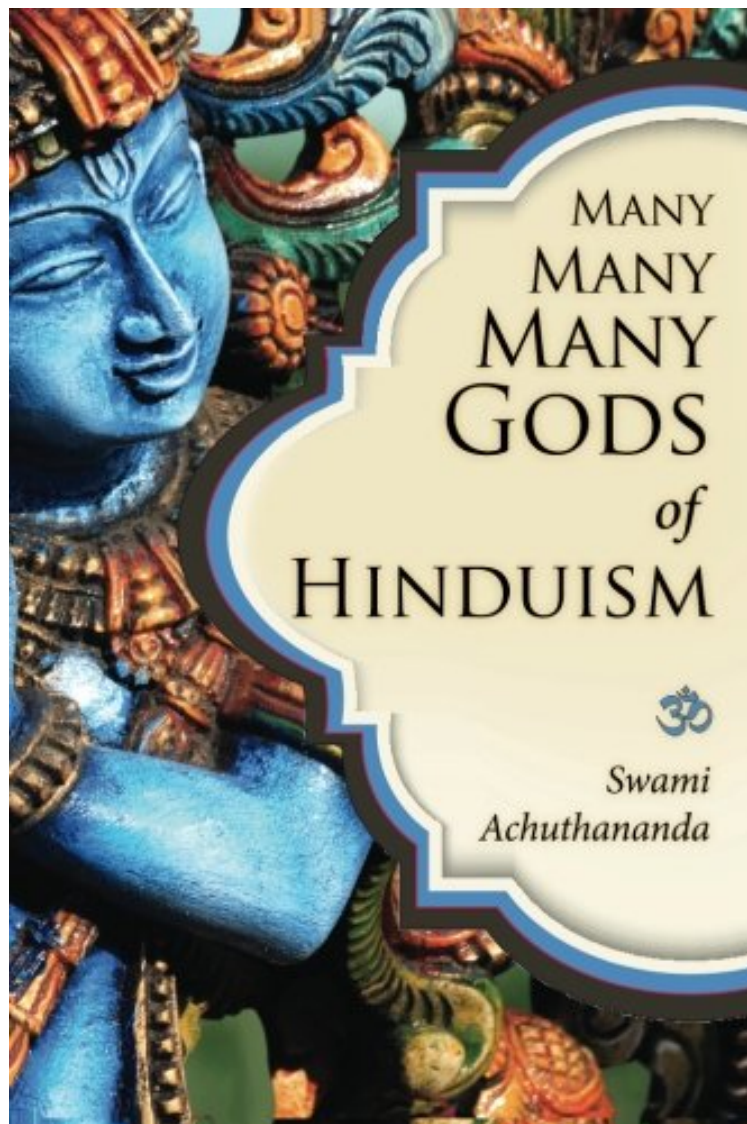


(Ebook pdf) Many Many Many Gods of Hinduism: Turning believers into non-believers and non-believers into believers

Many Many Many Gods of Hinduism: Turning believers into non-believers and non-believers into believers

Swami Achuthananda

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Swami Achuthananda : Many Many Many Gods of Hinduism: Turning believers into non-believers and non-believers into believers before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Many Many Many Gods of Hinduism: Turning believers into non-believers and non-believers into believers:

17 of 17 people found the following review helpful. fascinating introduction to HinduismBy Book ReviewAlthough

"Many Many Many Gods of Hinduism" by Swami Achuthananda was only published a few months ago, it has already garnered many thoughtful plaudits from reviewers. Rather than repeat the same praise well deserved as it is I would suggest that first the reader go to the on-line Norman Goldman (Book Pleasures) interview with Achuthananda to get a feeling for the almost light-hearted approach the author has taken in presenting material that could be at the very least confusing to most of us and at worst, positively stultifying. "Many Many Many Gods of Hinduism" is carefully, simply, satisfyingly, and often amusingly written. The chapters are short, cogent, engaging, but never trivial. In the first section of the book, the author states "In India, the religion is the culture and the culture is the religion. You cannot learn one without the other." Like everything else in this book, that sentence is worth contemplating. Certainly those of us who are Christian would find that baffling compared to what we consider our culture-free belief. But slowly, sometimes through analogy (the banyan tree), sometimes through simple and fascinating historical exposition, we begin to sense this tradition: a religion of many holy books but not one single divine authoritative text, with no one hierarchical leader, with no holiest of places, without one overriding doctrine or formal symbol, a religion with 330 million personal gods, all manifestations of Brahman, the transcendent indescribable Brahman who is the only absolute reality (totality) and whose presence in all things is called Atman (self). In Chapter 33 Achuthananda gives in a few paragraphs the essence of Hinduism. "When people say salvation in Hinduism is achieving the highest state of the mind, they are not off the mark. But this is just a simplification of its complex tradition. When you further explore the concepts of Maya, karma, dharma, samsara and Moksha, you've taken the whole of its vast traditions. In the supreme state of meditation, consciousness goes beyond time and change. It is in this state that the Atman of the soul merges with Brahman." Bookreview.com considers "Many Many Many Gods of Hinduism" one of the most fascinating and valuable books we have come across in a long time. 18 of 18 people found the following review helpful. A happily thorough book on Hinduism. By Brian So much history and custom sits in Hinduism that I figured this book would be a mile wide and an inch deep. Instead it covers the basics of Hinduism and focuses on what Westerners don't know about the religion and its history. It delves into how Hinduism was brought to the West, and how Hinduism views other religions. The historical and cultural connections to Zoroastrianism were fascinating. This book is for anyone who wants to learn about Hinduism. It would make a great primer and introduction, covering much of the history and the basic of the beliefs and practices. 8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. A major religion that you need to know more about... By hem43 This is a well-researched book that the author has written with much passion. The author writes in a clear easy to read style. However, there are too many ideas and facts in this book for me to give an adequate review. I feel that this is a worthwhile book to read because Hinduism is a major religion that most of us know little about. The author states that one out of every six people around the world is an Indian who can trace their root to India. He also states that 80% of all Indians throughout this planet are Hindus. Hinduism is the oldest of the world's major religions. He makes the case that Hinduism is a serious religion that needs to be understood as equally important as the Christian, Jewish and Islam's religions. Moreover, the principles of Hinduism have over time spread throughout the world. In fact, almost every American has practiced one of the key principles of Hinduism at least once in their lives, even if they did not know one of their life long principles came from Hinduism. "What goes around comes around" Just about all us have heard or uttered the previous sentence at least once in our life while at work or some other location. The author refers to this way of looking at life as Karma: a word most of us have uttered at one point in our life while never knowing that Karma plays an integral part of Hinduism. The author has stated: "The law of karma states that your thoughts, words, and actions-good and bad- circle back to determine your future. Simply put, you are responsible for your own actions. If you plant goodness, you will reap goodness, but if you plant evil, it will come back and hurt you. It is the universal principle of cause and effect. " Karma is not an abstract philosophical thought it is a practical way of looking at life. If you are a bad person, decent people don't want to form friendships with you. The only people who will talk to you are other bad people. Of course in the end bad people will do to you the same thing that you like to do to decent people. The author does a good job of contrasting and comparing Hinduism with the other major religions like Christianity and Islam. The author makes the point (I agree) that the other two religions believe in proselytizing or securing converts. Many times when these religions were introduced to native populations, they were accompanied by men with weapons. As a contrast Hinduism not only didn't proselytize* but for much of the history of the religion wouldn't accept you as a member of the Hindu religion if you weren't born a Hindu. "Today" the author states, "you can become a Hindu by adopting a Hindu name." About the title: the author writes that despite what westerners believe, the Hindu religion only has one God. However, they also worship many different gods that are all manifestations of their one god (Brahman). I guess this is possible, but I have to wonder if sometimes people get caught up in their local god and think of the local god as the overall god. *One big exception would be the Hare Krishna sect. This group was founded in New York City in 1966 a city that is the epic center of a country that excels at selling people anything. This is in keeping with the author's point that in order to understand a religion you have to understand that religion in confluence with all the things that are brewing around that religion at its creation. Past Twilight

Religion is the opium of the people, said Karl Marx many centuries ago. For more than a billion people living in India

and abroad, Hinduism is the religion and a way of life. In this multi-award winning book, Swami Achuthananda cracks open the opium poppy pods, analyzes the causes for euphoria, and comes away with a deeper understanding of the people and their religion. *** Winner 2014 Next Generation Indie Book Awards (Religious Non-fiction) *** This is a comprehensive book on Hinduism. It tells you why Hindus do the things they do - and don't. Written in a casual style, the book guides you through the fundamentals of the religion. It then goes further and debunks a number of long-standing myths, some of them coming from the academia (of all places). While most books shy away from contentious issues, this book plunges headlong by taking on controversies, like the Aryan Invasion Theory, idol worship, RISA scholarship and many more. In fact one-third of the book is just on controversies that you rarely find in any other literature. Other Awards: *** Finalist - 2014 Pacific Book Awards (Religion) ***** Bronze - 2014 IPPY Award - (Religion) ***

"...a positive and edifying introduction to Hinduism that teems with basic facts and love for the faith....Achuthananda's explanations are helpful without oversimplifying or removing his emotional connection to the ideas..." --Kirkus
Overall, this book is an excellent introduction for anyone interested in learning about Hinduism. Its short chapters make it easy to read selections as time permits, and Swami Achuthananda's casual and humorous voice makes presented concepts easy to follow. --Clarion "In India, the religion is the culture and the culture is the religion. You cannot learn one without the other." Like everything else in this book, that sentence is worth contemplating. But slowly, sometimes through analogy (the banyan tree), sometimes through simple and fascinating historical exposition, we begin to sense this tradition....Bookreview.com considers "Many Many Many Gods of Hinduism" one of the most fascinating and valuable books we have come across in a long time. --BOOKREVIEW.COM..an eye-opening and compelling read. Many of your preconceived notions about Hinduism will be challenged by Swamiji. -- T.K. Narayanan, Radio commentator (retired), AIR
Not often a book on religion can be a fun read, but this one was fun, and I recommend it to anyone with an open mind. --Tania Henley, Religious Forum (speaker), Alabama
Sprinkled with human stories, parables and personal views (and occasional "peeves"), the writing is always engaging and at times delightfully controversial. --Tom Bryson, Author of Too Smart to Die
Swami Achuthananda has used exactly the right mix of scholarship and unsophisticated prose to blow the lid off some of the most misconceived impressions of Hinduism. -- Norm Goldman, BookPleasures
In the form of short essays, Swami Achuthananda with his intimate knowledge of Hinduism, clearly and effectively sets the record straight concerning inaccurate information prevalent today pertaining to Hinduism and the way it is portrayed.--Norm Goldman, BookPleasures
The similarities and differences with Buddhism are fascinating, and the book doesn't avoid the hypocrisies, shortcomings, and superstitions related to the faith. It pulls no punches and shows all sides and facets, ugly or beautiful, smart and silly.--Michelle, BN
er
From the Inside Flap
In this book, Swami Achuthananda takes generation XYZ on a journey to ancient India to discover the wisdom of its ancestors and the secrets to the future. Surveying the religious landscape, Swamiji notes with disbelief that a great deal of misinformation exists in the way Hinduism is portrayed. But Swamiji is no wimp when he rounds up a few rogue academics -- like water buffaloes in the wild -- for perverting history and perpetuating century-old myths. "Hindu literature is diverse and vast and will take you several cycles of rebirth to comprehend," says Swamiji. "It's best understood by those who have a genuine interest and appreciation of the culture." About the Author
Having lived more than two decades in India, Swami Achuthananda lives and breathes the culture. He is an exponent of Indian Classical (Carnatic) music and a former student of K.J. Jesudas, India's most award-winning playback singer. A born Hindu, Swami loves India passionately but lives outside of it, devours fries and burgers as much as curry and spices, and appreciates Indian classical music as well as western songs. When Swami is not discussing Hinduism, he's seen talking about India's other greatest religion - cricket.