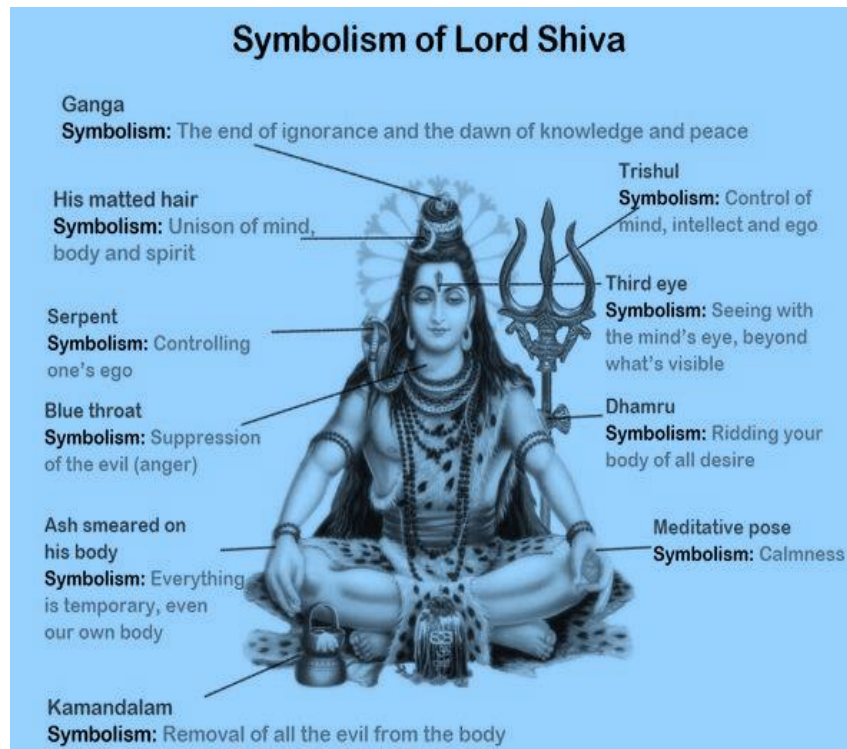


Shiva Pariwar
(Shiva, Durga, Lingha)



Lord Shiva



Shiva meaning “The Auspicious One” is one of the Holy Trinity- Brahma the creator, Vishnu the protector and Shiva the destroyer. He is worshiped as the Supreme God within Shaivism. Shiva is the dissolving force in life. Shiva dissolves in order to create since death is necessary for rebirth into a new life. So the opposites of life and death, creation and destruction, both reside in his character.

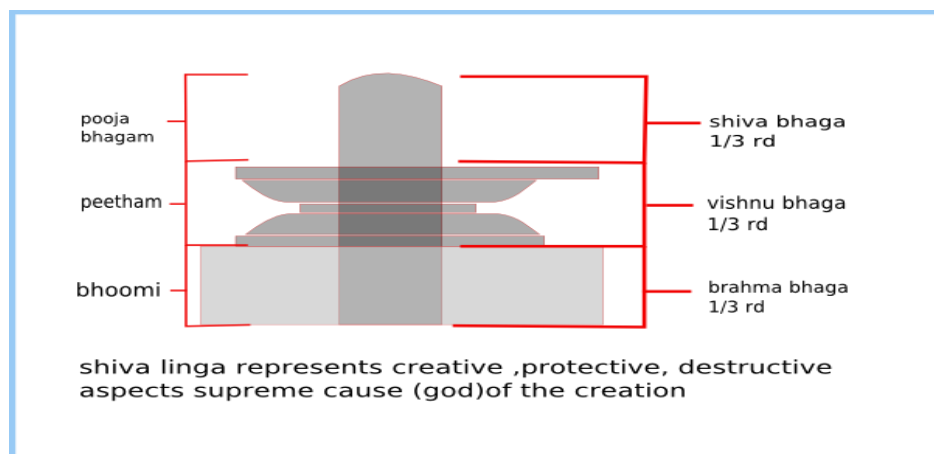
The actual image of Shiva is also uniquely different from other deities: his hair is piled high on the top of his head, with a crescent tucked into it and the river Ganges tumbling from his hair. Around his neck is a coiled serpent representing Kundalini, the spiritual energy within life. He holds a trident in his left hand, in which is bound the 'damru' (small leather drum). He sits on a tiger skin and on his right is a water pot. He wears the 'Rudraksha' beads, and his whole body is smeared with ash. Shiva is also often portrayed as the supreme ascetic with a passive and composed disposition. Sometimes he is depicted riding a bull called Nandi, decked in garlands. A very complicated deity, Shiva is one of the most fascinating of Hindu gods.

He is also called as “Mahadeva or Sankara”. Lord Shiva is considered birth-less and is called as the “Father of the universe” while Goddess Parvathy his wife is called as the “Mother of the universe”

Linga

In temples, Shiva is usually depicted as a symbol, the 'linga', which represents the energies necessary for life on both the microcosmic and the macrocosmic levels--both the world in which we live and the world which constitutes the whole of the universe. In a Shaivite temple, the 'linga' is placed in the center underneath the spire, where it symbolizes the navel of the earth.

In Sanskrit, Linga means a "mark" or a symbol, which points to an inference. Thus the Shiva Linga is a symbol of Lord Shiva: a mark that reminds of the Omnipotent Lord, which is formless. It is only the outward symbol of the formless being, Lord Shiva. The ancient Hindu scripture "Linga Purana" says that the foremost Linga is devoid of smell, color, taste, etc., and is spoken of as Prakriti, or Nature itself.



A Shiva Linga consists of three parts. The lowest of these is called the Brahma-bhaga; the middle one, the Vishnu-bhaga; the uppermost one, the Shiva-bhaga. The typically circular base or peetham (Brahma-bhaga) holds an elongated bowl-like structure (Vishnu-bhaga) and on top of the bowl rests a tall cylinder with a rounded head (Shiva-bhaga).

There is an indescribable power (or Shakti) in the Linga. It is believed to induce concentration of the mind and help focus one's attention. That is why the ancient sages and seers of India prescribed Linga to be installed in the temples of Lord Shiva.

Shiva Slokas

"Aum Trayambakam Yajamahey

Sugandhim Pusti Vardhanam

Urvaarukamiva Bandhanaath

Mrutyor Muksheeya Maamritaat"

We worship the three eyed One (Lord Shiva) who is fragrant and who nourishes all beings; may He liberate me from death, for the sake of immortality, even as cucumber is severed from its bondage of the vine.

Karacharana Kritham Vaa Kayajam Karmajam Vaa

Shravana Nayanajam Vaa Manasam Vaa Aparadham

Vihithama Vihitham Vaa Sarva Medha Kshamasvaa

Jaya Jaya Karunabdhey Shree Mahadeva Shambo

Oh Lord! Please forgive me for all the wrong actions that I have committed knowingly or unknowingly with my hands, feet, speech, body, ears, eyes and mind. Victory to you, Oh Lord of compassion and Mercy

Shiva Gayatri

Om Tat Purushaya Vidmahe

Mahadevaya Dhimahi.

Tanno Rudra Prachodayat.

"Om. Let me meditate on the great Purusha, Oh, greatest God, give me higher intellect, and let God Rudra illuminate my mind.

Shiva Mantra

Om Namah Shivaya ||

I bow to Shiva. Shiva is the supreme reality, the inner Self. It is the name given to consciousness that dwells in all.

Durga

The Goddess Durga is also known as Shakti or Parvathy. She is the protective mother of the universe. She is the protector of all that is good and harmonious in the world. Sitting on a lion the multi-handed Durga battles the evil forces of the universe.



In Sanskrit “Durga” means a “fort” or a “place that is difficult to overrun”. This shows the nature of Goddess Durga. She eliminates the sufferings on all those who pray to her. She has multiple hands with weapons, always ready to fight a battle with the evil appearing in any direction. She holds a symbolic object in each of the hands. Durga carries a variety of weapons like the conch, the bow and arrows, the thunderbolt, the sudarshana chakra (disc), the sword, the trishul. Like Shiva, Durga is also referred as “Triyambake” – The three eyed goddess. Her eyes represent desire (moon), action (sun) and knowledge (fire).

Durga is usually depicted as riding on a lion which represents power, will and determination. She symbolizes her mastery over the three qualities of a lion. Her bold posture is called “abhaya mudra” which means “freedom from fear”.

Durga Sloka

Sarva-Mangala-Maanggalye Shive Sarvaartha-Saadhike |

Sharannye Tryambake Gauri Naaraayanni NamostuTe ||

Salutations to You O Narayani! Who is the Auspiciousness in All the Auspicious(Complete with All the Auspicious Attributes) and Who fulfills All the Objectives of the Devotees, Who is the Giver of Refuge, With Three Eyes and a Shining Face