

Spiritual interpretation of aspects related to Deity Shiva

Preface

When we understand the spiritual science about a Deity, it strengthens our faith in the Deity. Faith increases bhāv, and worship with bhāv is more fruitful. With this perspective, emphasis has been laid upon providing information on Shiva in this Text series, which is not normally available elsewhere and is useful from the spiritual perspective.

The experimental interpretation of Shiva's worship and the underlying spiritual science is also provided in this Text, such as some Names of Shiva and the spiritual meaning of His characteristics such as Ganga, the third eye, serpents, *bhasma*, *rudrāksha*, etc.; spiritual characteristics and functions, such as the great Ascetic, Master of ghosts, one who creates the Universe, etc; His various forms such as Rudra, Kālbhairav, Naṭarāj, etc.; theoretical interpretation of *Jyotirlingas* (Powerful Divine and sacred symbols of Deity Shiva), applying *bhasma*, having *darshan* (Vision) of Shivalinga through Nandī's horns, offering *bēl* leaves and *Akshatā* (unbroken rice); not offering turmeric powder and *kumkum* (Red powder made from turmeric), etc. An ordinary individual does not understand the subtle process that takes place at the time of having darshan (Viewing) of a Shivalinga through Nandī's horns, offering *bēl* to Shiva, *Abhishēk* (Ritualistic consecration with water or milk, etc.), etc. The analysis based on subtle knowledge and the pictures based on subtle knowledge drawn by seekers of Sanatan, who have the ability to understand the subtle dimension, is a unique feature of these Texts.

Devotees of Shiva and those who perform sectarian spiritual practice of Shiva will certainly benefit from this spiritual information; however, ordinary individuals should remember the following rule in this regard. When some people read the Rāmāyaṇ, they feel like worshipping Shrīrām, and upon reading the Atharvashīrsha, Shrī Gaṇēsh. Similarly, after reading the information in this Text series some people may feel like worshipping Shiva. However, undertaking such spiritual practice does not lead to rapid spiritual progress for all the devotees, because it will benefit only those who need that worship to make spiritual progress. An ordinary individual cannot decide if the worship of Shiva is essential for him or not. Only those who are spiritually evolved can understand this; hence, an ordinary individual should read these Texts only for the sake of information. To get the spiritual experience of Shiva, we must take the first step in spiritual practice, that is, chant the Name of our *Kuladēvatā* (Family Deity) Shrī should be prefixed to the Name of the *Kuladēvatā*, the Name that follows should be in the dative case (*Chaturthī pratyaya*) and should conclude with Namaha. (If *Kuladēvī* is Bhavānī then chant 'Shrī Bhavānīdēvyai Namaha). Later, if the Guru asks us to chant the Name of Shiva or if it is necessary to chant it for spiritual progress in the next stage of spiritual practice, then this information will help augment faith in Shiva. We pray at the Holy feet of Shrī Guru - 'May the faith of devotees of Shiva strengthen further and may everyone get the inspiration to enhance their spiritual practice by reading these Texts'. - **Compilers**

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