

knowledge of the Great It, the Incomprehensible, Controller of the Universe, Creator of Life, who is beyond anthropomorphic imagery.

There are many images of Shiva. If there are gods and goddesses, then Shiva can be thought of as the Supreme Deity, controller of all, whom you can reverentially approach for assistance. In understanding a new endeavor, He can be the one to turn to for a blessing. In the logic of opposites that is part of Hinduism, if there is maleness, there must also be femaleness. Thus, Shiva has a wife who may be called Parvati. Our very creation depends upon the uniting of two members of the opposite sex.

My favorite image of Shiva is that of Lord of the Animals, sometimes shown with the image of a deer springing from His hand. What a wonderful Lord who creates not only us, but all other creatures of the earth who are our brothers and sisters in creation! Is it not the ultimate reality for all of us mere mortals to consider ourselves as wondrous miracles among the endless and countless miracles that characterize all of creation!

The image of Shiva Nataraja in southern India depicts a dancing Shiva beating out endless cycles of time with a tribal drum. The cosmic halo around Shiva is related to the fact that there will be total destruction and the end of a cycle, but a fresh new cycle with new creation

will inevitably follow. An old house must be destroyed in order for a new one to be created in its place. There are, of necessity, eternal cycles of destruction and creation, and All forever changes.

Shiva Nataraja dances on a demon with one hand pointing downward toward the body. This conveys the message of there being a moral order in the world, with the sinful ultimately being destroyed.

It is probably safe to say the most common image of Shiva throughout India is that of the linga, male principle, conjoined with yoni, the female principle. This one gets right to the heart of demonstrating what creation is all about. It is creation linked to endless miracles that is our ultimate reason for reverence and humility.

Vishnu, the Preserver, is the third manifestation of the Hindu triad. Because any human endeavor depends first on the preservation of the body, there is an obvious need for a deity like Vishnu.

So there is Brahma the Creator, Shiva the Destroyer and Vishnu the Preserver, all of whom can be found in the ancient rocks of Grand Canyon National Park.

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OLD IS GOLD

This is the fourth edition of the Om Shanti Mandiram Journal, the previous three dating back to 1997. Sixteen years later, we have returned to the journal, having grown as people and OM devotees.

As an homage to the wisdom in those past pages, we revived an article from the earlier issues. This piece by William A. Noble, "Hindu Gods Seated in the Grand Canyon," is of special significance. When it was first published in the summer of 1997 in the Om Shanti Mandiram Journal, we did not have the pictures to go along with it. Now, with the reprint, you can see the temples for yourself as you read.

All four issues of Om Shanti Mandiram Journal are available online through MOspace, <http://bit.ly/1aF1Ryl>. Just search for Om Shanti Mandiram.

Go online now and check them out to soak in all the wisdom they have to offer!