Outstanding Books On Dharma
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A Reader's Resource

Outstanding Books On Dharma

Like us, you may have found how hard it is to find truly great books on dharma, especially for children. Whether due to violence, imprecise philosophy, or other shortcomings most titles that cross our desks somehow miss the mark. Listed here are a few dozen notable exceptions drawn from an array of Hindu traditions and other religions. We endorse them all, but recommend those marked with a star (*) most highly. We believe all to be in print.

CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Carr, Rachel, Be a Frog, a Bird, or a Tree.Harper Colophon Books, 10 East 53rd Street, New York, New York 10022, USA. 1977. A children's course in hatha yoga,with 30 poses.

Corkery, Forrest and Marti Mueller, A Child and a Tree.Sri Aurobindo International Institute of Educational Research Aspiration, Auroville, Tamil Nadu 605 104, India. 1989. The cause, consequences and solution to deforestation, as seen through the eyes of a boy in an Indian village.

Dasa, Yogesvara and Jyotirmayi-devi dasi, A Gift of Love: The Story of Sudama the Brahmin.Bala Books, 125520 Kirkham Court, Suite 7, Poway, California 92064, USA. 1982. The story of Krishna's boyhood friend Sudama. For young children.

Greene, Joshua, Sakshi Gopal, A Witness for the Wedding.Bala Books, 125520 Kirkham Court, Suite 7, Poway, California

92064, USA. The classic tale of an old brahminwho gets the Deity Sakshi Gopal to come as a witness for him. For young children.

Harkonen, Reijo, The Children of Nepal.Carolrhoda Books, Inc., 241 First Avenue North, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55401, USA. A colorful picture book of children from all parts of Nepal. Not especially informative on Hinduism, but a nice glimpse into a child's life in Nepal.

Hermes, Jules, The Children of India.Carolrhoda Books, Inc., 241 First Avenue North, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55401, USA. A colorful picture book of children from all parts of India. Not especially informative on Hinduism, but a nice glimpse into a child's life in India.

Kalman, Bobbie, India, the Culture; India, the Landand India, the People.Crabtree Publishing Company, Department 2TT, 350 Fifth Avenue #3308, New York 10118, USA. Nicely written; beautiful photographs. This is a children's tour of India's land, people and culture. It has a reasonably accurate description of Hindu beliefs and customs.

*Khandpur, Swarn, Let Us Know India(12 volumes).India Book House, 249, Dr. D.N. Road, Bombay 400 001, India. 1976. A comprehensive series dealing with all aspects of India: people, geography, history, customs, culture, arts, economy, agriculture, dress and music.

Krishnaswami, Uma, Stories of the Flood.Roberts Rinehart Publishers, 5455 Spine Road, Mezzanine West, Boulder, Colorado 80301, USA. Similar stories of a great flood in ancient times found in many world religions, including Hinduism.

Nath, Pratibha, A Bowl of Water.Children's Book Trust, Nehru House, 4, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi, India. A book for young children on kindness to animals.

Patel, Mickey, Rupa the Elephant.National Book Trust, A-5 Green Park, New Delhi 110 016, India. 1974. A book for very young children about a friendly elephant.

Pfeffer, Pierre, Elephants, Big, Strong and Wise.Young Discovery Library, 217 Main Street, Ossinging, New York 10562, USA. Adults will also love this remarkably comprehensive book on these marvelous creatures.

*Rushton, Lucy, et al., Comparing Religions.Thomson Learning, One Penn Plaza, 41st Floor, New York, New York 10119, USA. This is a six-book series originally done in the United Kingdom: Pilgrimages and Journeys, Death Customs, Birth Customs, Food and Fasting, Marriage Customsand Initiation Customs.Excellent and unbiased presentations for each of the world's major religions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Christianity, Judaism and Islam. The series has the impact of strengthening each religion's beliefs, culture and customs.

Sasso, Sandy Eisenberg, In God's Name.Jewish Lights Publishing, P.O. Box 237, Sunset Farm Offices, Route 4, Woodstock, Vermont 05091, USA. 1994. A story for young children on how people learned the nature of God.

Sawnt, S.D. and Badalkar, S.D., The Gandhi Story.Director, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, Patiala House, New Delhi 100 001, India. 1966. A picture book on the life of Mahatma Gandhi.

Shepard, Aaron, Savitri.Albert Whitman and Co., 6340 Oakton Street, Morton Grove, Illinois 60053, USA. Well-illustrated retelling of the classic tale of Savitri's winning of her husband from Yama, God of Death.

*Singh, Anne, Living in India.Young Discovery Library, 217 Main Street, Ossinging, New York 10562, USA. Colorful and entertaining book about India's people and way of life.

*Subramuniyaswami, Sivaya, Saivite Hindu Religion, The Master Course, Book 1.Himalayan Academy Publications, 107 Kaholalele Road, Kapaa, Hawaii 96746, USA. A complete, modern children's course for teaching Sanatana Dharma in its purity.

Tilak-devi dasi, ABC Coloring Book.Bala Books, 125520 Kirkham Court, Suite 7, Poway, California 92064, USA. 1982. An A-to-Z coloring book for young children.

Vijaykar, Mona, The Vee Family(series). Tri Color Books, 38774 Altura Street, Fremont, California 94536, USA. 1991. Color books for children on an Indian immigrant family's adjustments to America.

*Vishwashrayananda, Swami, Ramakrishna for Children.Sri Ramakrishna Math, Udbodhan Office, 1 Udbodhan Lane, Calcutta 700 003, India. 1975. The life of Sri Ramakrishna, with color illustrations.

*Vishwashrayananda, Swami, Vivekananda for Children.Sri Ramakrishna Math, Udbodhan Office, 1 Udbodhan Lane, Calcutta 700 003, India. 1975. Companion book to Ramakrishna for Children.

Warner, Rachell, Indian Migrations.Thomson Learning, One Penn Plaza, 41st Floor, New York, New York 10119, USA. Well illustrated book detailing the migration of Indians to many countries, including England, Fiji, Trinidad, South Africa, USA, etc. Many first-person accounts bring to life the hardship and adventures of the early Indian immigrants. The book is surprisingly up-to-date also, with accounts of present-day situations.

White, Rosalyn et al., illustrators, Jataka Tales.Dharma Publishing, 2425 Hillside Avenue, Berkeley, California 94704, USA. This is a set of beautifully illustrated and printed books

for young children drawn from traditional Buddhist tales. Parents might be selective in which ones to acquire as some are overly violent, or without a strong moral point. Recommended are: The Magic of Patience, Great Gift and the Wish-Fulfilling Gem, Courageous Captainand A Precious Life.

Wood, Douglas, Old Turtle.Pfeifer-Hamilton Publishers, 210 West Michigan, Duluth, Minnesota 55801, USA. 1992. Similar to In God's Nameabout how people come to understand God, for young children.

STORY COLLECTIONS

*Nivedita, Sister, Cradle Tales of Hinduism.Advaita Ashrama, available from Auromere, 1291 Weber Street, Pomona, California 91768, USA. 1907. Wonderful retelling of India's classic stories in a thoughtful and gentle way suitable for children.

Prakashananda, Swami, Don't Think of a Monkey and Other Stories My Guru Told Me.Saraswati Productions, 43463 Columbia Avenue, Fremont, California 94538, USA. A collection of traditional and contemporary stories as told by Swami Muktananda.

Ramakrishna, Sri, Tales and Parables.Sri Ramakrishna Math, 16, Ramakrishna Math Road, Madras 600 004, India. A collection of the stories told by Sri Ramakrishna to his disciples.

Ramdas, Swami, Stories as Told by Swami Ramdas.Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, South Asia Books, P.O. Box 502, Columbia, Missouri 65205, USA. 1969. A collection of traditional and contemporary stories.

*Ryder, Arthur W. (trans.), The Panchatantra.The University of Chicago Press, 11030 South Langley Avenue, Chicago, Illinois

60628, USA. 1925. A highly readable translation of the classic animal tales.

LIFE STORIES

Anandamayee Sangha, Mother as Seen by her Devotees.Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha, Bhadaini, Varanasi, India. The story of Ma Anandamayee, one of India's greatest modern-day woman saints.

Brunton, Paul, A Search in Secret India.Samuel Weiser, Inc., Box 6612, York Beach, Maine 03910, USA. 1985. Classic account of Brunton's meeting with the saints and sages of India in the early 20th century, especially Ramana Maharshi.

*Evans-Wentz, W.Y. (editor), Tibet's Great Yogi Milarepa.Oxford University Press, 2001 Evans Road, Cary, North Carolina 27513, USA. 1928. This classic story details the austere training of Milarepa under his guruMarpa. Good for appreciating the guru.

Gandhi, Mahatma, The Story of My Experiments with Truth. Beacon Press, 25 Beacon Street, Boston 02108, USA. The influential story of Gandhi's life as recounted by himself. Useful both for its insights into Hinduism and for India's history.

Gowda, H.H. Anniah, Divine Power from Adi Chunchanagiri: The Spiritual Biography of Sri Sri Sri Balagangadharanatha Swamiji. Sri Adi Chunchanagiri Mahasamsthana Mutt, Vijayanagar, Bangalore 560 040, India. The inspiring life-story and modern achievements of one of Karnataka state's most beloved swamis.

Hall, Manly P., The Guru.The Philosophical Research Society, Inc., 3910 Los Feliz Boulevard, Los Angeles, California 90072, USA. 1972. Entertaining and somewhat embellished narrative of a Hindu saint.

*Johnsen, Linda, Daughters of the Goddess, the Women Saints of India.Yes International Publishers, 1317 Summit Avenue, St. Paul, Minnesota 55105, USA. 1994. Short biographies of modern women saints: Sri Ma, Anandamayi Ma, Anandi Ma, Gurumayi Chidvilasananda, Ma Yoga Shakti and Ammachi.

Nikhilananda, Swami (trans.), The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna. Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, 17 East 94th Street, New York, New York, USA. The classic biography of one of the greatest modern Hindu saints.

Ramdas, Swami, In Quest of God, The Saga of an Extraordinary Pilgrimage.Blue Dove Press, P.O. Box 261661, San Diego, California 92196, USA. 1994. An inspiring narrative of the life of Swami Ramdas (1884-1963).

Rao, S.K. Ramachandra, Life and Light of Sri Thiruchi Swami.Sri Kailasa Asrama Maha-Samsthana, Sri Rajeswari-Nagar, Bangalore 560 039, India. 1994. Rare life story of one of the most respected swamisin South India.

Sharga, P. Brijnath, Life of Swami Rama Tirtha.The Rama Tirtha Pratishthan, 14 Marwari-Gali, Lucknow, India. 1968. The story of Rama Tirtha, who journeyed to the USA, Japan and other countries in the early 20th century.

*Shastri, Hari Prasad, The Heart of the Eastern Mystical Teaching.Shanti Sadan, 29 Chepstow Villas, London, W. II, United Kingdom. 1954. Life story of Shri Dada, a saint born in North India in 1854.

*Sivananda, Swami, Saints and Sages.Divine Life Society, 570 New Germany Road, Clare Estate, Durban, South Africa. Short accounts of the lives of many saints from several religious traditions.

Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Sri Aurobindo, The Story of His Life. Auromere Books, 1291 Weber Street, Pomona, California

91768, USA. The story of one of India's great modern sages, whose impact is far-reaching.

*Sugrue, Thomas, There is a River, the Story of Edgar Cayce. Dell Publishing Co., Inc. 750 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10017, USA. 1961. Remarkable account of an American healer who lived in the first half of this century and taught of karma and reincarnation.

*Yogananda, Paramahansa, Autobiography of a Yogi. Self-Realization Fellowship, 3880 San Rafael Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90065, USA. Classic story of Yogananda's training in India and later mission in the West.

SPECIAL SUBJECTS

*Borgia, Anthony, Life in the World Unseen.The Citadel Press, Carol Publishing Group, 120 Enterprise Avenue, Secaucus, New Jersey, 07094, USA. 1962. A very unusual book describing life in the Devaloka, where souls live after death.

Johari, Harish, Chakras, Energy Centers of Transformation. Destiny Books, One Park Street, Rochester, Vermont 05767, USA. 1987. A well-done and technical book on the chakras,the inner force centers of the body discovered through yoga.

*Subramuniyaswami, Sivaya, Dancing with Siva, Hinduism's Contemporary Catechism.Himalayan Academy Publications, 107 Kaholalele Road, Kapaa, Hawaii 96746, USA. An unequalled Hindu reference book.Its 1,008 pages contain 155 daily lessons, 300 illustrations, 600 Vedic verses, a 40-page timeline, world religions' summary, children's primer and a 190-page lexicon.

*Vivekananda, Swami, Jnana Yoga, Raja Yoga, Karma Yoga & Bhakti Yogaand Inspired Talks.Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, 17 East 94th Street, New York, New York, 10018, USA.

1955. A set of four small books containing the essence of Swami Vivekananda's teachings.

VEGETARIANISM

Ballentine, Rudolph, Transition to Vegetarianism.The Himalayan Publishers, RR1, Box 405, Honesdale, Pennsylvania 18431, USA. How to overcome meat eating.

Krizmanic, Judy, A Teen's Guide to Going Vegetarian.Puffin Books, 375 Hudson Street, New York, New York 10014, USA. Designed to help Western youngsters make the transition to vegetarianism by giving advice for a balanced diet and addressing a variety of possible concerns.

Null, Gary, The Vegetarian Handbook.St. Martin's Press, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10010, USA. 1987. A comprehensive sourcebook on vegetarianism.

*Satchidananda, Swami, The Healthy Vegetarian.Integral Yoga Publications, Route 1, Box 172, Buckingham, Virginia 23921, USA. 1986. Practical reasons and good advice for becoming and staying a vegetarian.

Desiring success, they sacrifice to the Gods with ritual actions, for from such actions success comes quickly in the world of men. Liberation achieved,

attachments gone, with a mind fixed on knowledge, man's whole action becomes a sacrifice, his deeds melt entirely away. --Bhagavad Gita 4.12.12, 23