



## WHY DO WE WROSHIP DREADFUL FORMS OF THE GOD?

Saiva Siddhanta Peedam, Canada.  
[www.knowingourroots.com](http://www.knowingourroots.com)

**Why do we worship many dreadful, fiery forms of Gods and Goddesses in our religion? Some say we should not keep these forms for worship at home. Some even further went on to say we should not worship these fiery forms at all. Please explain.**

Introducing to the worship, prayers and meditation of fiery forms of God from the very young age help the individuals to overcome fears and phobias. They are less likely to suffer from anxiety and phobias later in their life. Sri Ramakrishna of 19th century saint worshiped the dreadful form of the Goddess KALi until his last breath. There is nothing to fear to keep, worship and meditate these forms at our homes or anywhere. These forms are there to overcome our own fears. Rejection of these forms is the projection of our own hidden fears and phobias.

### FROM SIVA JNANA SIDDHIYAR

போகியா யிருந்து யிர்க்குப் போகத்தைப் புரிதல் ஓரார்  
யோகியா யோக முத்தி உதவுதல் அதுவும் ஓரார்  
வேகியா னாற்போற் செய்த வினையினை வீட்ட லோரார்  
ஊகியா மூட ரெல்லாம் உம்பரின் ஒருவ னென்பர்

They know not that in His Auspicious Form He grants enjoyments to the souls. They know not that in His Yogic Form He grants perfection to yogis. They know not that in His Dreadful Form, He makes the souls to consume their twin karma. Only ignorant without discernment think of Him as one of the many gods.

- SIVA JNANA SIDDHIYAR, 70.

ஒன்றொடொன் றொவ்வா வேடம் ஒருவனே தரித்துக் கொண்டு  
நின்றலால் உலக நீங்கி நின்றனன் என்று மோரார்  
அன்றி அவ் வேட மெல்லாம் அருள்புரி தொழிலென் றோரார்  
கொன்றது வினையைக் கொன்று நின்ற அக் குணமென்  
றோரார்.

They know not that as He assumes different and contradicting forms He does not  
belongs to the (rules of nature) of existential world. They know not that all His  
forms are only different expressions of His Grace. They know not that even His act  
of destruction is only the destruction of the sin.

- SIVA JNANA SIDDHIYAR, 71

### FROM KUMARA SAMBHAVA

*"No selfish want ever prompts a deed of mine;  
Do not the forms - eight, varied forms - I wear  
The truth of this to all the world declare."  
And he observes in another place  
"The gods, like clouds are fierce and gentle too  
Now hurl the bolt, now drop sweet heavenly dew,  
In summer heat the streamlet dies away,  
Beneath the fury of the God of day  
Then in due season comes the pleasant rain,  
And all is fresh and fair and full again."*

- kumara Sambhava by the great poet kaaLidaasa

### FROM PURANAS

இறுதிசெய் திடலே சீற்றம் இன்பமே யாண்மை என்னா  
அறைதரு சக்தி நான்காம் அரன்தனக் கையை காளி  
முறைதரு கவுரி இன்னோர் மும்மையும் பெற்றோர் ஏனைப்  
பெறலருஞ் சத்தியான்இப் பெற்றியும் மறைகள் பேசும். -Kantha  
Purána

ஆத்யா சக்திர் மஹேசஸ்ய  
சதுர்த்தா பின்ன விக்ரகா  
போகே பவானீ ஞுபா ச  
துர்கா ஞுப ச சங்கரே  
கோபே ச காளிகா ஞுபா  
பும் ஞுபா ச மதாத்மிகா - VishNu in BrahmANda purANa

ஏகைவ சக்தி; பரமேச்வரஸ்ய  
ப்ரயோஜநார்த்தாய சதுர்விதாபூத்  
போகே பவானீ புருஷேஷு விஷ்ணு  
க்ரோதே ச காளீ ஸமரே ச துர்கா .- Kumára Sambhava by KáLi dása

*Only one is the Sakthi of the Lord;  
In grace she comes as four;  
Bestowing enjoyments as Bhaváni; In male form as VishNu;  
Fearful as angry KáLi; warring as Dhurga  
Say the scriptures.*

### FROM MAHA BHARAT

*"Yudhishtira, understand from me the greatness of the glorious, multiform, many-named Rudra. They call Him Mahadeva, Agni, Sthanu, Maheswara, One-eyed, Tryambaka, the universal formed and Siva. Brahmin versed in the scriptures of vEdas knows two kinds of His forms, one awful, another auspicious; and these two forms again have many forms. The dire and awful forms are fire, lightning, and the sun. The auspicious and beautiful forms are virtue, water and the moon. The half of his essence is fire, and the moon is called the (other) half. The one, which is his auspicious form, practices chastity; while the other, which is his most dreadful form, destroys the world. As He is the Lord (Iswara) and the Great (Mahat), He is called Mahesvara. Since He consumes, since He is fiery, decree, an eater of flesh, blood and marrow, He is called Rudra. As He is the greatest of the gods, as His domain is wide, and as He preserves the vast universe, He is called Mahadeva. From His smoky colour, He is called Dhurjati. Since He constantly prospers all men in all their acts, seeking their welfare (siva), He is therefore called Siva" etc, etc. " - Lord Krishna in mahabharat*

## FROM VEDIC SCRIPTURES

*Modern scholars have puzzled and bewildered themselves over these different forms, names and characters of **Rudra**, in **vEdic scriptures**. The characters ascribed to the God (**Rudra**) in the hymns of the **rig veda** are most heterogeneous and frequently indefinite. So, these scholars wrongly conclude this as the early primitive nature worship period or polytheistic period of Hinduism.*

*He is connected with **Soma** in the dual, and entreated along with the latter to bestow good and avert evil. Scholars have themselves mooted how the god **Rudra**, even in the **rig vEda**, is now spoken as **Indra** - the god of storms and clouds, as **Maruta** - the father of winds, as **Vaayu** - the wind itself, ), as **Agni** - the fire, as **SUrya** - the sun, as **Chandra** - the moon, and is associated with **Soma**, as the healer and **supreme physician**. He is spoken as the destroyer, and the destroyer of the lord of death - **Andhaka (Yama)** in the **atharva veda**, as **Medapati** - the Lord of sacrifices, and **Pasupati** - the Lord of all living creatures (**pasu** means souls not cattle) and **isan** - the ruler and **Mahadeva** - the God of gods (**Mahadeva**) and as deriving his power from himself and as self-dependent. None of these epithets are connected with other gods. As the Lord of sacrifice and **Pasupati**, He gets the first portion of the offering, and the hands have to be washed after giving the first portion. Connecting these with the position He holds in the **upanishads**, **ithihAsas** and the **puraNas**, asserts **Siva** as the only one without a second and as the **Supreme Brahma** and consort of divine Intelligence - **Uma**. **Rudra**, as the Supreme Being, identified with all animate and inanimate existence, being the indweller in eight-fold nature ( earth, water, fire, air, space, sun, moon and the living beings) as **ashta-murti**. He is the generator, and preserver and destroyer - the universal evolver. His cruel or destructive aspects, though apparently so, are really the most gracious beneficent aspects. This is also explained by the **puraNic** description of Him as "inwardly beneficent" (**antas satwam**), and "outwardly cruel" (**bahis tamas**). And when we understand the really beneficent action of the terrible storms and clouds, and thunder and lightning, sun and heat, we can also conceive, how His wrath is productive and beneficial to the suffering and sinning humanity, helping them to freeing from this mortal and effete body and from this world, as the **vEdic seers -Rishis** so rapturously sings in **yajur vEda**, "like a cucumber severed from its stem" to regenerate (**srishti**) again after proper rest (**droupava**) to undergo with greater strength the struggles of life, and thus consume and exhaust his karma and eventually to obtain final release from birth, and rest in God.*

*His being the killer (**devourer of kada upanishad**) is to his power of destroying our bondages - **paasa** - the root cause of sin, sorrow, ignorance and attachment to our body-mind-sense complex. As the killer of evil, He is represented as fierce and terrible, and yet as He is the saviour of our soul by this very same act He is called **Siva** - the Auspicious, **Sankara** - the Beneficent, **Sambhu** - the Treasure and **Nandi** - the Lovable(Lovable).*

*Only since and after the days of the **Mahabharat**, the worship of **VishNu**, influenced by the tales of **Rama** and **Krishna** was gaining greater prominence.*

### FROM RIG VEDA

*Following are some of the descriptions of the God in **rig vEda**:*

- *This God is described as wise, bountiful, and powerful, (1.43.1;1.114.4),*
- *as the strongest and most glorious of beings (2.33.3),*
- *as Lord (**Isana**) of this world, possessed of divine power (2. 33.9),*
- *as unsurpassed in might (ibid. 10),*
- *as the father of the world, mighty, exalted, undecaying (6.49.10);*
- *as cognizant of the doings of men and gods by his power and universal dominion (7.46.2);*
- *as putting the waters in motion (10.92,5);*
- *as self-dependent (7.46,1),*
- *and as deriving his renown from himself (1.129,3; X.92,9);*
- *as the lord of heroes (1.114.1-,3, 10; X 92,9);*
- *as the lord of songs and sacrifices (1.43.4),*
- *the fulfiller of sacrifices (1.114.4)*
- *brilliant as the sun, and as gold (1.43.5),*
- *tawny-coloured (this epithet is frequently applied), with beautiful chin (2.33, 5),*
- *fair-complexioned (ibid 8),*
- *multiform, fierce, arrayed in golden ornaments (ibid 9),*
- *youthful (5.60, 5),*
- *terrible as a wild beast, destructive (2.23, 11),*
- *wearing spirally-braided hair (1.114. 1.5);*
- *and as the celestial boar (ibid 5).*
- *He is frequently represented as the father of the **maruts** or **rudras** (1. 64, 2;1. 85, 1;114, 6, 9,;2. 33, 1;2. 34, 2; 5 52, 16; 5 60, 5; 6. 50, 4; 6. 66, 3; 7. 56, 1; 8i. 20, 17).*

- *He is once identified with **agni** (2. 1, 6).*
- *He is described as seated on a chariot (2, 33, 11),*
- *as wielding the thunderbolt (2. 33. 3),*
- *as armed with a bow and arrows (ibid 10, 14; 5. 42, 11; 125, 6),*
- *with a strong bow and fleet arrows, with sharp weapons, (6. 74, 4; 7. 49, 1. 8i. 29, 5).*
- *His shafts are discharged from the sky and traverse the earth (7. 46, 3),*
- *He is called the slayer of men (**nri-ghre** 4. 3, 6).*
- *His anger, ill will, and destructive shafts are deprecated (1. 114. 7, 8; 2i. 33, 1, 11, 14; 6. 28, 7; 8. 46, 3, 4).*
- *But he is also represented as benevolent (1. 114, 9),*
- *as mild, and easily invoked (2. 33, 5),*
- *beneficent (ibid 7)*
- *gracious ( 10. 92, 9),*
- *as the cause or condition of health and prosperity to man and beast (1. 114, I).*
- *He is frequently described as the possessor of healing remedies, and is once characterized as the greatest of physicians (1. 43, 4; 1. 114, 5; 2. 33, 2, 4, 7, 12, 13; 5. 42, 11; 6. 74, 3; 7.35, 6; 7.. 46, 3; 8.. 29, 5).*
- *He is supplicated for blessings (1. 114. 1, 2; 2. 33, 6),*
- *and represented as averting the anger of the gods (1. 114, 4; 2. 33, 71). In R.V. 6.74, 1 ff.*

### FROM SRI RUDRAM IN YAJUR VEDA

*Following are some of the vivid descriptions of Rudra, the most dreadful form of Siva in the Sri Rudram of yajur vEda. This is chanted in routine ablutions in all the Saiva Temples.*

- *O, Supreme Lord who showers mercy! Protect us from all worldly troubles with the weapons and bow in your hands, which are not for hurting us.*
- *Salutations to Him who protects the world by the might of His drawn bow, to Rudra the destroyer of all miseries; to the Lord of the fields and sacred places, salutations.*
- *Salutations to Him who is the Lord of infantry, the thundering One, who makes the enemies shriek.*

- *Salutations to Him who stands prominent, and who wields the sword; to the Chief of thieves, salutations.*
- *Salutations to the Chief of robbers, armed with quiver and arrows.*
- *Salutations to the deceiving, elusive Chief of marauders.*
- *Salutations to the wandering, ever evasive Chief of thieves in forest.*
- *Salutations to the Chief of thieves, ever alert in defense and eager to strike.*
- *Salutations to the Chief of dacoits, who are on the move by night, carrying swords.*
- *Salutations to You who can hit and pierce from all sides, and to You who can pierce in diverse and manifold ways.*
- *Salutations to You who manifest as hosts of shaktis, gentle and violent.*
- *Salutations to You, the covetous and greedy, and the leaders of such.*
- *Salutations to You who are present in diverse crowds and races, and the leaders of such.*
- *Salutations to You who are in the forms of great ones and the small ones.*
- *Salutations to You who are formless and yet manifest in universal forms.*