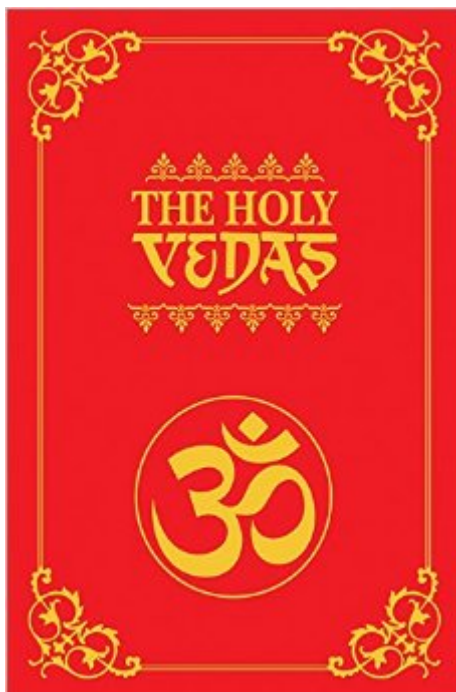


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The Holy Vedas



Synopsis

The four Vedas contain the divine, infallible knowledge revealed to those primal men whose soul was specially illuminated to by the grace of god to receive and impart humanity the words of almighty god. The Vedas are the sacred heritage not only of India but of all mankind. In this book an attempt has been made to bring together representative hymns which encompass all the aspects enshrined in the Vedas. The author has tried to retain the spirit of the original Sanskrit mantras in English renderings and to impart some of the holy ambience of these sacred texts which are the fountainhead of Hindu philosophy and culture.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (13 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

This is an absolutely fabulous book if you want a "taste of the Vedas". It's wonderfully organized to give you an overview of concepts, without bogging you down in the language. The language chosen for this book is beautiful and poetic and a spiritual experience to read. That said, this is *not* a book to get if you are trying to actually study the Vedas. It is not organized by Veda::chapter::verse, nor are any of the verses complete enough to let you get into the nitty gritty. I suppose one could learn Sanskrit for that, but there are other English translations that are much better for this purpose, especially if you are native English speaker.

These other reviews are very misleading. No one disputes that the Vedas themselves deserve a five star rating, but the review is for this volume. First of all, for those expecting the complete Vedas translated in sort of a "Holy Bible" format, this is very far from the case. There are only some selected portions of the hymns and not very many at that. The book is mainly pages of pictures (just

general pictures like the sky or landscape) and a verse. There are some pages with text only, but the text is in reasonably large print and arranged chaotically. It's very difficult to make any order out of this volume. Ironically, a large section of the book seems to lay out the verses, text only and in order, but it's in Sanskrit! Aside from the poor layout of the book, the physical construction of the book is also very poor. The book is technically hardcover, but the covers are flimsy and the gold to fill in the characters is splotchy. The binding is also very bad. It seems to be bound with some type of string and looks as though great care should be taken to keep it from falling apart. Strangely, thick paper is used for the pages, maybe for the purpose of making the book look thicker than it is. If this book was normally bound, it would be thin and require a much cheaper price. That said, this volume is way overpriced. I know it looks good in the picture, but it's not really that nice looking. It is definitely not worth the price they want. If I would compare this book to the price of comparable books, I would price it at about \$17 or \$18. As a final note, I would really suggest saving your money and buy the Penguin copy of the Rig Veda. No, that is also not the complete text, but at least it has a little better format and it's about \$12. This "Holy Vedas" volume under review has a few good things about it, but for the price it just isn't worth it. I kind of think the marketing could be more forthright and portray it as more for what it is.

This book is not a collection of stories. No, not at all. It does not contain any love stories or epic poems. It is a selection of hymns from Vedas. The four Vedas--Rig, Yajur, Sama, and Atharva--are the holiest books for all Hindus. The first among them, the Rigveda, is considered the oldest book ever composed. The four Vedas consist of 20416 verses. An English translation of all original Sanskrit verses along with commentaries on them is available in twenty-three volumes at a cost of several hundred dollars. I think that is good for academics. For others, there is this book, a golden treasury of "The Holy Vedas," selected and translated by one of the authorities on Sanskrit and Hinduism. In this book, selected Vedic hymns have been classified into six sections consisting of the hymns on Creation, Devotion, Revelation, Action, Splendour, and Positive Sciences. You can read the book from cover to cover, but please don't rush. You can also select a section in any order you want. Or you can randomly open a page and enjoy. And don't forget to keep sticky notes with you because you would want to mark pages and verses, so that you could come back and read them again and again. I love this book and recommend it to all Hindus and non-Hindus, who want an introduction to Vedas.

This book disappointed me very much. From its title and even its description it claims to be a

translation of the four Vedas of ancient India, but it is actually a poetic composition of the author. The various passages are translated from the Vedas, but out of order and rearranged to fit the author's choice of subject matter. A line from the Rig Veda will be followed by a line from the Samaveda, then the Yajurveda, then the Rigveda again. The names of the various gods and divine powers have also been taken out and all loosely translated as "God". I found lines that from context I could tell were talking about Indra but instead said "God". And lines to Agni, Varuna, Mitra and various other gods and goddesses where the name was replaced with "God." The point of this seems to have been to make the "Vedas" more acceptable to a Western monotheistic readership, but robs the text of its original meaning. If you are looking for a complete translation of all four Vedas this is not it. As far as I know the Rigveda is the only one that has been adequately translated into English. The name of this book should have been "Excerpts of the Holy Vedas," as that would have been much more accurate. Students of Hinduism and Eastern religion should also avoid this book, as it has been white-washed with too much western Judeo-Christian terminology to be of much use for the study of Hinduism and Indian spirituality.

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