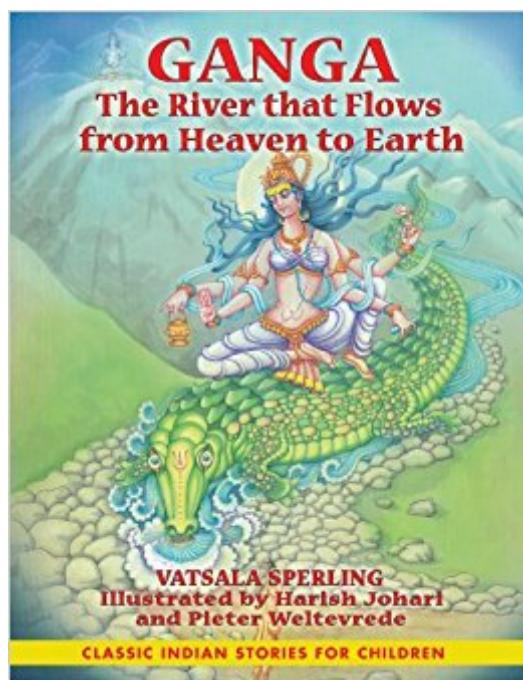


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# Ganga: The River That Flows From Heaven To Earth



## Synopsis

Tells how the Hindu goddess Ganga came to Earth as the Ganges River. Introduces children to one of the most beloved characters of Hindu mythology. Illustrated throughout with full-color paintings in traditional Indian style. The Ganges River, which flows from the high reaches of the Himalayas all the way down to the Bay of Bengal, is sacred to the Hindu people, who consider it to be the earthly form of the goddess Ganga. The story of how Ganga was born, and how she became a river, tells of a journey from a place even higher than the Himalayan mountaintops--a journey from Heaven itself. Born in a pot of sacred water, the baby Ganga grows into a beautiful and lighthearted girl, the darling of Heaven. But one day her sense of humor gets her in trouble. When grumpy Sage Durvasha is caught in a whirlwind that blows his clothes right off him, Ganga makes the mistake of laughing at him. In a rage, the sage puts a curse on her: "You must go to Earth as a river!" Ganga is heartbroken and begs the sage to forgive her. He can't take back the curse, but seeing that she is truly sorry, he gives her a blessing as well: her water will purify the souls of men, releasing them from sin. When Sage Baghirath prays to the gods to help him release the souls of his ancestors, Ganga comes tumbling from the sky and follows the sage across India, the river unfurling behind her. To this day millions of people take comfort in her healing waters, and Ganga, too, takes comfort in relieving their suffering.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 32 pages

Publisher: Bear Cub Books; First Edition edition (November 10, 2008)

Language: English

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Product Dimensions: 8.5 x 0.5 x 11 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 3 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,422,329 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #79 in Books > Children's Books > Religions > Eastern #909 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Asia #1311 in Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths > Multicultural

Age Range: 5 - 11 years

Grade Level: 1 - 6

## Customer Reviews

"This lovely re-telling of a classic story from India will capture imaginations of children everywhere. . . . Highly recommended for ages 6 and older, especially those interested in world cultures." (Awareness magazine, July 2009)"This book begins long before the birth of Ganga and then follows through her birth, her life, and ends with how she becomes a river saving the souls of hundreds. Beautifully written and lovingly illustrated, this hardcover book is a wonderful keepsake for any family interested in Indian Culture or in teaching their children about various pantheons." (The Pagan Review, Jan 09)"Illustrated with richly beautiful watercolor and tempura paints in the style of classic Indian art, Ganga: The River that Flows from Heaven to Earth is a wonderful addition to children's multicultural lore shelves." (The Midwest Book Review, Jan 09)"There is also a note to parents and teachers, explaining that although this is a story about ethereal beings, it is also about ethics and values that human beings can attain. Author Vatsala Sperling also includes a page of the cast of characters with a drawing of each one, as well as the phonetic pronunciation of the name and a brief description of the character. This addition makes the characters more easily differentiated and understood." (Susan LosCalzo, New Age Retailer, Spring 2009)

FOLKLORE The Ganges River, which flows from the high reaches of the Himalayas all the way down to the Bay of Bengal, is sacred to the Hindu people, who consider it to be the earthly form of the goddess Ganga. The story of how Ganga was born, and how she became a river, tells of a journey from a place even higher than the Himalayan mountaintops--a journey from Heaven itself. Born in a pot of sacred water, the baby Ganga grows into a beautiful and lighthearted girl, the darling of Heaven. But one day her sense of humor gets her in trouble. When grumpy Sage Durvasha is caught in a whirlwind that blows his clothes right off him, Ganga makes the mistake of laughing at him. In a rage, the sage puts a curse on her: "You must go to Earth as a river!" Ganga is heartbroken and begs the sage to forgive her. He can't take back the curse, but seeing that she is truly sorry, he gives her a blessing as well: her water will purify the souls of men, releasing them from sin. When Sage Baghirath prays to the gods to help him release the souls of his ancestors, Ganga comes tumbling from the sky and follows the sage across India, the river unfurling behind her. To this day millions of people take comfort in her healing waters, and Ganga, too, takes comfort in relieving their suffering. VATSALA SPERLING, Ph.D., a native of India, learned these stories at her mother's feet and enjoys introducing them to children of the Western world. She is the author of several books in this series, including, most recently, *Karna: The Greatest Archer in the World*. She lives in Vermont with her husband and son. HARISH

JOHARI (1934-1999) authored many books that bring Eastern spiritual traditions to Western audiences, including *How Ganesh Got His Elephant Head*, *How Parvati Won the Heart of Shiva*, and *The Monkeys and the Mango Tree*. PETER WELTEVREDE began his artistic studies with Harish Johari in 1977 and also studied with Shri Chandra Bal. He has illustrated several books in this series, including, most recently, *Ram the Demon Slayer*. He lives in Holland with his wife and three children and travels to India annually.

This is a nice hardcover high quality storybook with very nice illustrations! Charming story about the river which is famous for its healing powers. The background is provided on the main characters so if you're new it's there to help you along with understanding the places involved as it is a complex story which has a nice message of perseverance and prayer. I look forward to other titles in the series, it's so pretty the artwork rendering of Ganga it brings the stories right to life, really an awesome little book and is fine for adults and children alike! Really artistic every page is very bright and pretty so it's filled with paintings and expressive pictures. For the price it's really worth it fantastic art and so much emotion in the story. The message of peaceful prayer even in the time of loneliness and waiting for an answer it really makes for a positive impact, and makes it as entertaining as it is. Love the art!

Well I love books and whilst I am not a reviewer I can say that I loved this book. I am keeping it in my library for my kids to read and learn about the Holy River Ganga. The author dealt with the dark material (king Sagar's sons being burnt to ashes etc) extremely well and I guess as well as one can deal with a Voldemort in Harry Potter or Jesus being tortured and put on the cross. The moral of the stories are uplifting and try to push home the maxim that "truth and righteousness" and perseverance (in the case of Bhagiratha) shall always prevail. Sometimes to know what is good, you have to know what is bad. I loved the fact that the authors explained the importance of the stories and how to deal with the unsavoury bits (violence etc) when reading the books to kids.

*Ganga: The River that Flows from Heaven to Earth* is a children's picturebook of East Indian legend of the river goddess Ganga. Her mocking insults of the great sage Durvasa cause the sage to banish her from Heaven forever with a curse. When she repents, the sage sees that she is truly sorry; though he can't take back the curse, he does pair it with a blessing - as a river on Earth, Ganga will flow with holy water that can purify the souls of men and free them from sin. Illustrated with richly beautiful watercolor and tempura paints in the style of classic Indian art, *Ganga: The*

River that Flows from Heaven to Earth is a wonderful addition to children's multicultural lore shelves.

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