

## **Beyond the Forbidden Fruit: Decoding Myths, Morals, and Meanings from the Garden of Eden**

*“Myth is the foundation of life. It is the timeless pattern, the religious formula to which life shapes itself.”*

- German Author, Thomas Mann

The Garden of Eden, a timeless symbol of paradise in Abrahamic lore, has captivated the imagination of countless individuals across cultures and generations. However, beneath the surface of this familiar narrative lies a rich tapestry of untold stories and lesser-known figures whose stories challenge traditional interpretations of power, desire, morality, and female agency.

One such figure is Lilith, a name that has echoed through the ages as a symbol of rebellion and defiance. Mythology tells the tale of Lilith, Adam's first wife, who refused to be subservient to him and left Eden, embarking on a journey that defied societal norms and patriarchal expectations. Her departure was not the end of her story but the beginning of a remarkable odyssey that has inspired generations of women to embrace their agency and question the established order.

**Avid Learning, Royal Opera House, Mumbai, Bangalore Literature Festival, Penguin Random House India, and Hachette India** present **Unveiling the Secrets of Eden: A Journey Through Myths and Cultures**, an engaging discussion with *Mythologist, Author, and Speaker* **Devdutt Pattanaik** and *Author and Festival Director, Bangalore Literature Festival* **Shinie Antony**. The conversation will be moderated by *Founder, @anuradhasays* **Anuradha SenGupta**. The experts will **illuminate** the tales and metaphors from the Garden of Heaven woven across cultures and religions.

Devdutt, the author of *Eden: An Indian Exploration of Jewish, Christian and Islamic Lore* (2021), will take listeners on a fascinating journey through the vast world of Abrahamic myths, seen through a uniquely Indian prism. He will introduce angels, demons, prophets, patriarchs, judges, and kings, offering a fresh perspective on these age-old narratives. Complementing his exploration is Shinie Antony, whose recently published *Eden Abandoned: The Story of Lilith* (2024) shines a spotlight on the story of female rage and agency, sculpting the figure of Lilith as a ferocious, exuberant, and unapologetic woman – a historic villainess and a modern-day heroine.

**Literature** is one of the most important and robust segments of our curatorial vision at Avid Learning. We are constantly striving to bring newer perspectives and voices to our Maximum City. Our programs have contributed to supporting literature in varied forms, regularly collaborating with literature festivals, publishing houses, authors, intellectuals, and thought leaders to give unique opportunities and experiences to the city that will long be remembered.

Join us for a captivating storytelling session uncovering timeless lessons from ancient tales and understanding their relevance for the 21st century.

**When:** Thursday, 23rd May 2024

6:00 PM - Registrations | 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM – Panel Discussion

**Where:** Royal Opera House, Mumbai

**Register:** [www.avidlearning.in](http://www.avidlearning.in)

**Press Email:** Ayeshah Dadachanji (ayeshah.avid@gmail.com)

## **Speakers' Bios:**

**Devdutt Pattanaik** writes on mythology, which he defines as cultural truths revealed through stories, symbols and rituals. He lectures on the relevance of both Indian and Western myths in modern life. In the last twenty-five years, he has authored and illustrated over fifty books, including *Book of Ram and Eden: An Indian Exploration of Jewish, Christian and Islamic Lore*. Known for his TED talk and TV shows such as *Devlok* and *Business Sutra*, he is a regular columnist for reputed newspapers like *The Times of India* and *Dainik Bhaskar*. A medical doctor by training, Devdutt spent fifteen years working in the pharma and healthcare industry, but over the past decade he has been fully immersed in exploring mythology and sharing its wisdom with the world.

**Shinie Antony** is a writer and editor based in Bengaluru. Her novels include *Eden Abandoned: The Story of Lilith*, *Can't*, *The Girl Who Couldn't Love*. Her short-story collections include *Barefoot and Pregnant*, *The Orphanage for Words*. She has put together the anthologies *Boo*, *Why We Don't Talk*, *An Unsuitable Woman*. She is the founder of the Bangalore Literature Festival and director of the Bengaluru Poetry Festival. Her story 'A Dog's Death' won the Commonwealth Short Story Asia prize in 2002

**Anuradha SenGupta** is an independent journalist who runs her own YouTube channel @anuradhasays. She has spent close to thirty years creating and anchoring current affairs feature shows and interview shows for CNBC-TV18 and CNN News18. They include *Storyboard*, *Beautiful People*, *Off Centre*, *Reporters Project* and *Media Dialogues*.