



DEEPAM

Volume 20: Issue 2, October –December 2011

Happy Deepavali and Prosperous New Year



HINDU TEMPLE,

13010 Arbor Street, Omaha, NE 68144,
Phone: 402-697-8546, htom.org

Deepavali Celebrations



Program from 5 to 9:00 p.m.

Shri Laxmi Puja
Cultural Program
Update on Temple Activities
Honoring Priests and Temple Guarantors
Deepavali Raffle Draw
Dinner



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Patrons,

Namasthe.

Sri Ganeshaaya Namah! Om Namō Hanumate Namah!

One of the shlokas in the last sukta of Rigveda is:

सं गच्छध्वं सं वदध्वं सं वो मनांसि जानताम्।

देवा भागं यथा पूर्वे संजानाना उपासते॥

*saM gacchadhvaM saM vadadhvaM saM vo manaMsI jaanataam.
devaa bhaagam yathaa purve saMjaanaanaa upaasate*

The Rishi wants that as a society we must always find a common ground. We do that by knowing each others' minds, speaking the consensus, and working for a common purpose. In this effort, we should follow the example of the Devatas. They accept their yajña-bhāga in an orderly way. That sort of unanimous approach to sharing should be our inspiration. (I wish to thank Shri Dhrubaji for this clear explication.)

This unanimous approach to sharing is indeed inspiring us in the Hindu Temple. We are pleased that the *Long Range Planning Committee* went through detailed deliberations, and finally came up with a consensus plan regarding the expansion of our temple's social hall. You all will be able to see these plans later in this issue of Deepam. All the community leaders got together and found common ground. The *Executive Committee* as well as the *Board of Trustees* also overwhelmingly approved this plan, with not a single vote against this, which is a remarkable achievement. Now, the expansion begins, and I am pleased that a *Temple Building Committee* has been created under the joint leadership of Shri Jagdish Nijhawan and Dr. Shantaram Joshi. The committee's mandate is to implement the plan that was passed by all the aforementioned committees. I want to take this opportunity and personally thank Shri Shan Batheja and Shri Sree Nair for investing a lot of time in preparing and presenting various plans to the *Long Range Planning Committee*.

Beyond these activities, our temple is also planning to start a cafeteria on an experimental basis. We will have Indian snacks available at nominal prices in the social hall on each Saturday and Sunday from 11:15am to 2:00pm. We are hoping that this would increase the traffic in our temple, and more members of our congregation will visit us more frequently.

We would also like to request each one of you to kindly visit our temple's website (www.htom.org), and REGISTER your address and family details. Even if you are receiving emails from us, we would still request you to kindly register in our website. This membership drive is a very important project for our *IT and Membership Committee*, and we want all of you to input contact information so that we can be in touch with you both electronically as well as via the postal mail.

As I write this message, we are in the midst of celebrating Navarathri, which is one of our most auspicious festivals. Very soon, we will all be getting together and celebrate our festival of lights – Deepavali! I want to take this opportunity and wish you all a very happy festive season. May the brightness of the lamps shine within each of you forever! Thanks for your continuing support to our temple. We are in this journey together.

Phani Tej Adidam
President, Executive Committee

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear Friends; Namasthe/Namaskar

Almost at the culmination of our busiest festival season starting with Ganesh Chaturthi and Navaratri's nine nights, let me wish you all a very happy Diwali/Deepavali and may Prasanna Ganapathi bestow his best wishes on all of us. As you browse through this special Deepavali issue of our Temple's publication – Deepam, let us thank the sponsors and the advertisers that made this edition possible. And let us also not forget the volunteers who are involved in getting this issue ultimately in your hands – the contributors of articles, the word processors, the page composers, the printers and so on. And if you are reading this on a different medium – the IT coordinators and others make it available for a wide and lasting dissemination.

As you might have heard or gleaned through other articles in this Deepam, we are making a steady progress with unanimous approval of the Temple expansion plan. We are looking at about \$1.06 million project at the least. As Temple patrons you have been donating generously in the past and I hope you will dig into your wallets just a little more to complete this project and also pay for it completely in as short a time as possible. You will be hearing more details in the weeks to come.

As we start this ambitious project at this time, we cannot but remember the history when less than twenty years ago some visionaries in our community hatched the whole idea of a Hindu Temple in our community and we are now reaping the benefits of that effort. We are planning to honor the grand guarantors of the initial financial commitments at the Diwali function this year. Please join the rest of the community when we do that on Oct 29th.

As always if you have any comments or questions about the Hindu Temple please feel free to contact any of the current EC or Board members. Thank you for your support and may Prasanna Ganapathi continue to Bless us all.

Sincerely,

V T Ramakrishnan

Chairperson of the Board

**Hindu Temple, Omaha, thanks all the donors
for their generosity and request
all of you to consider donating to the Temple**

MESSAGE FROM THE LONG RANGE COMMITTEE CHAIR

Temple Renovation – Onward with Unity, Fortitude & Devotion.

Dear Patrons and Devotees of Temple
Namaskar,

It gives me a great pleasure to report to our Temple community that with Lord Ganapati's blessings and after careful & vigorous deliberations our Temple has come to a unanimous decision to implement a single plan for the renovation and expansion of our Temple.

The purpose of this renovation is to provide adequate space for our Balvihar and other educational & spiritual activities. It will also expand the Social Hall to accommodate the large number of devotees who come to attend Temple functions and for Prasad after pujas. The kitchen and bathroom are also a part of this much needed renovation.

This process of deliberation and debate has yielded a plan that best utilizes the space for our Temple's needs. As you know this debate at times was very vigorous and emotional but this reflects the tremendous love and devotion we have for our Temple and thus the zeal to do what we think is the best for our Temple.

And then in the best traditions of our Temple we all came together when an outstanding plan, that was best for our Temple, emerged from these discussions.

I am happy to report to you all that such is the unity in our Temple community that this proposal has been passed without a single dissenting vote in the Long Range Planning Committee, Executive Committee, and the Board of Trustees.

Our President, Dr Adidam, has constituted a Building committee under the joint leadership of Jagdish Nijhawanji and Shantaram Joshiji to implement this plan for the renovation and expansion of the Temple.

I want to commend the sagacity and foresight of our community leaders in this critical endeavor. I also want to thank the eminent members of the Long Range Planning Committee for their efforts in this important undertaking. It is now vital that we all support this holy effort with pious enthusiasm.

Sanjay P. Singh, M.D.
Chairman, Long Range Planning Committee.

**THIS ISSUE OF DEEPAVALI SPECIAL DEEPAM IS CO-
SPONSORED BY
SANDHYA AND SHAILENDRA SAXENA,
A LONG TIME SUPPORTERS OF OUR TEMPLE.
THEIR GENEROUS FINANCIL SUPPORT IN PUBLISHING THIS
ISSUE IS GREATLY APPRECIATED.**

MESSAGE FROM THE FUND RAISING COMMITTEE CHAIR

Dear Patron and Devotees of our Temple

We would like to update you on the progress of the Temple Expansion. The initial idea for the Temple Expansion was conceived and presented in November 2009. The initial goal for fund raising was 750K. Between 2009 and 2011, a total of 660 K was pledged over a 3-year pledge drive. We expect to receive most of the pledges by the end of this year. The Building Committee has been working diligently for the past 2 years to come up with most optimum plan for the expansion. We are pleased to inform you that a new plan has been drawn with input from all the stakeholders that has unanimous support from the Temple Leadership. The key highlights of the new plan are:

- Extension of the west wall by 11 feet
- New restrooms and bathrooms
- New kitchen
- Bal Vihar Classrooms x 6
- Flexible large conference room in addition to the main social hall
- New stage with modified green room
- Additional storage space

We have a Design and Build contractor who has given us an estimated cost for the project close to \$1.1 million. Given this information, our new goal for the project is \$ 1.25 million. Our strategy to achieve this new goal is to extend the 3-year pledge drive to a 5-year pledge drive. We thank you for your support for the initial Pledge Drive. We hope that you would extend your pledge for an additional 2 years that would raise your contribution towards the 5-year pledge. An outline of the 5-year Pledge Drive with Chair Recognition is in the attached pledge form.

The Temple Leadership is committed to getting the project started in the coming year. To avoid any long-term debt, the Leadership also recognizes the need for getting majority of the pledges for the new goal before they start the project. Once again, we thank you for your support and patience, and hope you will send in your pledge forms at your earliest.

Naresh Dewan, M.D.
Chair, Fund Raising Committee

**THIS ISSUE OF DEEPAVALI SPECIAL DEEPAM IS CO-
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PADMA AND KRISHNA LASSI,
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Aaya Vyaya Patrika

Hindu Temple, Omaha NE (Aug 2011 thru Sep 2011)			
INFLOW		OUTFLOW	
Hundi collections cash	\$9,843	Operating expenses	\$12,749
Direct deposits	\$2,818	Staff expenses	\$5,945
Puja services	\$6,835	Priest expenses	\$15,014
Capital Pledge (hall expansion)	\$13,492	Towards Mortgage/payoff	\$0
Non-pledged donations	\$5,708	Mortgage interest	\$0
Sponsored/event donations	\$6,195	Charitable contributions	\$1,001
		Other events	\$2,762
Total inflow	\$44,891	Total outflow	\$37,471
----- Balances As of September 30,2011 -----			
Balance owed on Mortgage/Short-term line of credit : \$0			
Operating Account Balance : \$33,675			
Savings (Endowment) balance : \$73,403			
Social hall expansion Fund Balance : \$313,698			
<p>INTERESTED ??? Are you on the Hindu Temple e-mail mailing list ? If you would like to be included, please send an e-mail with your e-mail information to htom@qwestoffice.net. Also please give us your current address if you have moved.</p>			

Use the pledge form here to support your Hindu Temple on a regular basis :

HINDU TEMPLE P L E D G E F O R M 2011

We offer automatic bank withdrawal. If you want to sign up for this, please attach a voided check of your bank account. We will then start an automatic process to debit your account on a monthly basis, thus making it easier for you.

Name (s) : _____

Address: _____

Phone/ e-mail _____

Pledge Amount: _____ Monthly Start Date: _____

(\$200 or \$100 or \$50 or \$25 or other amount per month as per your wish)

Signature & Date : _____

Drop this form & voided check in the Temple hundi.

Or

Hand over to a Temple volunteer

Hindu Temple Bal Vihar

By Manju Mehta, Chair Bal Vihar

Namaskar

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all the parents, teachers and students to Bal Vihar class of 2011- 2012. We have 94 students registered and ten very talented and capable teachers donating efforts and time this year. We have planned very interesting, intellectual, intriguing and knowledge-based curriculum for the students, based on age groups. We are looking forward to have a fruitful year.

I want to share with you a good news. The Executive committee has approved the new construction plan and the construction should start soon. This plan includes six well-equipped class rooms for Bal Vihar students.

I would request all of you to donate generously to this project. Bal Vihar success depends on the cooperation of the community and you parents, so please join hands with us to make it successful.

The aim of education should be to teach us rather how to think, than what to think - rather to improve our minds, so as to enable us to think for ourselves, than to load the memory with thoughts of other men. ~Bill Beattie

**SUPPORT BAL VIHAR
BY DONATING TO
TEMPLE EXPANSION/
REMODELING PROJECT**

From a Tiny Acorn...

By Nina Mote

"I know who the first people on Earth were," a friend's daughter said with a proud grin. "Adam and Eve!" Her mother, a devout Hindu, was embarrassed. Bringing up a Hindu child among a Christian majority is difficult. My husband and I made an effort to teach our son about our religion, philosophy, traditions and culture so he could be proud of his heritage, though it was different from that of most of his friends and classmates. When he was a toddler we taught him simple Sanskrit prayers, and we had stacks of *Amar Chitra Katha* and story books of Hindu myths and folk tales. But what we taught in the home wasn't reinforced in the schools and play groups in Omaha. Our friends too were concerned about their children's religious education. A seed was planted. Our need watered it and it took roots.

In 1980 on *Gudhi Padwa*, the first day of the Hindu New Year, we started a Hindu religion class in my basement. I taught thirteen children one Sunday a month. We opened class with a prayer and moved on to stories, philosophy, traditions and symbolism. Our children were curious: they wanted to know the reasons behind the rituals. "Why can't we wear shoes in temples?" "Why do we do *namaskar* to the lamp?" "Why do we touch God's feet -- why not knees? hands? head?" The classes provoked discussion and understanding of our roots. They also kept me on my toes. I had to read, research and ask questions to those who knew more than I did, so I could satisfy these curious minds.

The transition from the little class in my basement to the present Bal Vihar did not occur over night. The class in my basement lasted for about four years. Then in 1993-94 the Hindu Temple was built in Omaha. Along with the religious and spiritual needs of the community we had to address the religious education of the future generation. Many volunteer teachers offered many ideas about the functioning of this class. We tried many different methods. Gradually current standard was evolved. Our seed had sprouted. It grew new shoots, new leaves and new branches.

Hindu Temple *Bal Vihar* (as the class is now known) has grown with the community. The Hindu Temple of Omaha has given us an official status, and our 94 students are divided into three groups: Prathama for the first and second graders, Dwitiya for third and fourth graders, and Tritiya for fifth and sixth graders. All students start class in the social hall for prayers and Surya Namaskaras. We have a standardized curriculum for each group used by all the volunteer teachers which includes not only religion, philosophy and culture, but the Hindi language as well. We have Fun Days where we play traditional games like *kabaddi* and *kho-kho*, and learn crafts like Diwali lanterns, rangoli, and clay lamps. Students are active participants in a special Saraswati Puja we perform. At the end of the year, Bal Vihar holds a program that showcases songs, prayers and skits (the Tritiya skits are performed entirely in Hindi). Bal Vihar's website keeps students and their parents informed about the activities, homework and special announcements. Youth Group is for children in the seventh grade and beyond. Some non-Hindu young adults also attend our Youth Group. One little girl from India was adopted by a non-Hindu family. They brought her to Bal Vihar regularly even though it meant coming from Red Oak, IA. This year we have two students from South Dakota.

If the Temple expansion project moves forward, so will Bal Vihar. The growing number of students needs more classroom space. We will revise the class handbook and expand the curriculum. For us parents, the rewards of a healthy and active Bal Vihar are evident. Little Shelly was invited to sleep over at her friend's house. At dinner time she was asked to say a prayer. Shelly, very proudly, closed her eyes, folded her hands in namaskar and recited "Om Sahana yavatu". Then she explained the meaning of the Sanskrit prayer. "All my friends go to

Sunday schools and now I can tell them about my Sunday School” Another little girl told her mother.

So, has our tiny acorn grown into a mighty oak yet? Hardly, I would think. We are just a sapling still. With Prasanna Ganapati’s blessings, we will be able to expand Bal Vihar to bring knowledge and pride for our religious heritage to all the children of our community.



←

FIRST
BALVIHAR
CLASS
In 1980
With
NINA MOTE
AS THEIR
TEACHER

←







The President and Chairman of Hindu Temple, Omaha wish to thank all Bala Vihar teachers for their dedication and hard work.

Bal Vihar Teachers: Top Row: Manju Mehta, Nina Mote and Natasha Keshwani
 Middle Row: Vandana Singh, Arunima Dasgupta, Monica Arora
 Bottom Row: Prasad Ramakrishman, Archana Janakiran, Sudha Agarwal and Sanjuktha Satpati

Geetha Bhashyam

Realization of Freedom from Evils

It is a principle that whatever does not exist in the beginning and the end has no existence at present as well. - "aadaavante cha yannaasti vartamaane'pi tattathaa" (Mandukya Karikaa 4/31). As in a mirror, neither there was an image before, nor it will be afterwards, nor is it at present, though it actually is seen, it is not there as such. So is the case with flaws (evils), it only appears that we have flaws, but as such they are not in us. As we are free from flaws (evils), so also, others are without flaws (faults), because the self of all is naturally free from all evils. Therefore we should not consider anyone as evil, that is, our eye should naturally be on the faultless self. If anyone performs an evil deed, we should think that being overpowered by the transitory evil he performed it but neither the evil nor its fruit is permanent. Neither the action nor the fruit will remain, but the self ever remains. Moreover if we find and accept faults in others, then those faults (flaws, evils) will come in him, because, seeing those faults in him, our renunciation, penance and power etc. will naturally aid in giving birth to these evils, whereby the person will become evil. So from the principles point of view, in relating with our children or pupil, we should give advice to them by considering them faultless and their evils transitory. Only by consider them to be free of faults, we should try to free them from evils. If evils crop up in the mind and intellect, one must not come under their sway - "tayorna vashamaagacchet" (Gita 3/34) i.e, don't perform any actions coming under the sway (being influenced and impelled) of those evils. By acting under their sway, the evils are strengthened. But if we don't act being swayed by them, we get renewed encouragement and enthusiasm (utsaah). Suppose someone utters harsh words and we don't get angry, we should feel pleased and encouraged that today we have been saved from anger, but not due to our own effort, rather due to the grace of God that we have been saved, or else we would have come under the sway of anger! In this manner, whenever an aspirant "sadhak" sees any flaws (evils), he should not come under their influence, and he should not accept these faults (evils) to be in him. The main flaw is the misuse of freedom bestowed upon us. It is up to us to accept the existence or non-existence of the unreal. We can choose to indulge in evils such as fraud, forgery and violence etc., or not. This is the independence that we have received. From the time we began to misuse this freedom, we have been snared in the cycle of birth and death. In order to remain free of flaws, i.e. to safeguard himself against evils and the cycle of birth and death, an aspirant should not misuse this freedom. When man misuses the freedom bestowed on him and associates himself with the unreal (temporary), he gets attached to the pleasures derived from association with the unreal. This attachment to sense pleasures is the root of all evils (flaws). Realization of Freedom from Evils Man (Self) being a part (ansh) of God is "saadharmya" identical with God in attributes. As God is totally free from flaws (evils), so is man. Being free of flaws, (nirdoshtaa) is not acquired by his own effort, rather it is innate and axiomatic. In the Ramcharitmanas Saint Tulasidasa declares - "Ishvar ansh Jeeva abinashi | Chetan Amal Sahaj Sukhraasi || (7/117/1) Soul being a part of God is naturally sentient, pure and an embodiment of bliss. People have a strong conviction that they will get rid of their flaws, they will become free of evils, then only they will be able to realize God. But the method of attaining God is quite different from that of gaining mundane worldly things. Attainment of worldly things is attainment of the unattainable. While God being eternally existent, is the attainment of the ever attained. The self (soul) is inherently free from flaws (evils) and is ever attained. So, this fact is to be accepted. Purity (flawlessness) is not to be inculcated. Be indifferent to flaws (evils) rather than trying to wipe them out. If you try to get rid of them, by accepting them in you, you will rather confirm them, make them more solid. The reason is that your wiping them out supposes their pre-existence. Every aspirant

has the experience that faults (evils) were more forceful, more lasting, more frequent before he began his spiritual discipline, than they are today. This difference in measure should encourage an aspirant and bring about increased enthusiasm that really these faults are not inherent in him. Had they been a part of his nature, these changes (difference) could not have been observed and perceived. The point is that there are changes (differences) in the degree of faults (evils) while there is no change in the self. It means that faults (evils) are distinct from the self. All evils such as desire, anger, greed, infatuation, pride and jealousy etc., are "Asat" (unreal) i.e. have no existence of their own and are born because of your affinity for the unreal. As while asleep, forgetting wakefulness, and one begins to dream, so by assuming relationship with the unreal, you become unaware of your inherent pure flawless nature and feel yourself as impure (with flaws). These evils make their dream like appearance but as such have no independent existence of their own. Evils appear and disappear while the unpolluted self ever remains the same. It is the common experience that evils flash while we remain intact. We are aware of the appearance and disappearance of evils because of our inherent purity. Without being free from flaws, one cannot become aware of the flaws. It is because we are free of flaws that we are aware of the flaws and that which we are aware of is quite distinct from the self. Whatsoever impurities there may be, they are felt only in the mind and intellect but never in the self. But by identifying the self with the mind and intellect we assume that they are in us. The mind and intellect being the evolutes of Nature (Prakriti) have flaws and are perishable. Our relationship is neither with the mind-intellect, nor with the flaws (evils) that come in it. Realization of Freedom from Evils Inclination and taste for the unreal things, the liking of prosperity, hoarding (sangraha) and sense enjoyments (bhog) etc., and seeing pleasure and happiness in them, as well as, having the desire to possess them are the root of all evils. Only he who feels agony and is suffering, has the desire for contact born (sensual) pleasures, because only the afflicted longs for any kind of pleasure. Only such an afflicted person relishes happiness in sensual pleasures, just as food is relished by he who is very hungry. It is a rule that pain follows pleasure. Lord Krishna declares - "The pleasures born of contact (with objects) are sources of suffering only" (Gita 5/22). Thus suffering precedes and follows pleasure. By knowing this fact, the desire for pleasures is renounced because no one desires suffering. The moment we discard this desire for pleasure, we become conscious of our inherent purity. Flawlessness (freedom from evils) is not a product of efforts, but it is innate, natural and axiomatic. If an aspirant holds that flawlessness is a product of efforts, egoistic feeling develops in him; and egoism is the root of all evils. It is the duty of an aspirant to safeguard this flawlessness i.e. he should have a strong conviction that he is inherently free from all flaws (evils) and flaws can never enter him. Even then if any evil appears before him, he should invoke God by uttering - "O' Lord! O' my Lord!!" "The Lord looks after His devotees in all respects" - "yogakshemam vahaamyaham" (Gita 9/22). He safeguards their flawlessness and frees them from those evils which merely flash. Then why should we worry? We should depend, on His grace by holding that He, Who has made our flawlessness known to us, will also safeguard it. By having this faith in His grace, flashing of evils will also cease. As invocation to God is a means to be conscious of our inherent flawlessness, so the strong conviction that we are free from evils is also a means. The existence of "Is"(Self) is totally free from all evils, flaws and blemishes and there is no possibility of any kind of evil or flaw in it. That flawlessness is innate, automatic, natural, eternal and axiomatic. Having a strong conviction in this flawlessness, become completely calm and quiet. Thus by being calm i.e. by attaching a higher value to the flawless entity, we naturally realize the total lack of flaws (evils). Having once realized it, we never get deluded because it is not through practice, rather it is an awareness of the innate reality.

Provided by Janakbhai Dave

ESSENCE OF THIRUKKURAL

By VT Ramakrishnan

An Introduction to *Thirukkural* (6)

It is said that God's sayings to Man is *Geeta*
 Man's sayings to God is *Thiruvaachakam*
 Man's sayings to Man is *Thirukkural*.

Thirukkural was written by *Thiruvalluvar* hundreds of years ago. It consists of 1330 couplets (called *kural* in Tamil) split into 133 chapters covering various aspects of individual life, social aspects and societal living. *Thirukkural* has also been translated in some 80 languages.

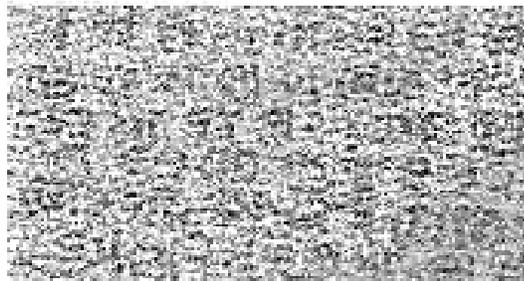
This is an attempt to present these couplets in this and future issues of *Deepam* – the original couplet in Tamil, with literal English phonetics and a short explanation.

(12)

Thuppaarkku thuppaaya thuppakkith thupaarkku
 Thuppaaya thoovum mazhai.

துப்பார்க்குத் துப்பாய் துப்பாக்கித் துப்பார்க்குத்
 துப்பாய் தூவம் மழை..

Not only does rain aid in producing the food we eat,
 But it also serves as a kind of food..



A request to our Tamil friends :

Please share your favorite *kural* and comments so that they may be included in future *Deepam* editions

www.thirukkural.com is one of many web sites for more information

BASAVANNA: A GREAT INDIAN PHILOSOPHER

N.R. Vasudeva Murthy*

Basavanna (1106-1167), a philosopher and a social reformer from the state of Karnataka, India, has left us a great **social** legacy and a simple system of philosophy. He developed a new egalitarian religion, Veerasaivism that preaches attaining the divine experience by following a righteous way of life and by recognizing the dignity and equality of all individuals, irrespective of their social status, class, caste, gender and profession. In fact, Basavanna, advocated ethics, nonviolence, non-discrimination and women's liberation in peoples' daily lives. Even though, as a pious Brahmin by birth, he was well versed in Sanskrit and had studied and analyzed Hindu religious texts such as Agamas, Shastras, Puranas and the Vedanta, he was opposed to the then existing caste system, rituals and superstitious religious beliefs such as animal sacrifice. He propagated a new system of philosophy that recognizes God as eternal, infinite, formless and absolute but also understood the need for devotees in the real world, to worship their own personal God. His personal God was an Ishtalingam(Siva). Unlike other Indian philosophers, he was not interested in the spiritual and ceremonial aspects of the religion, but he focused on the devotional and ethical aspects of living in a society to usher both internal and external harmony. He vigorously fought for social injustice and religious hypocrisy during his life time and he was the first social reformer who advocated the eradication of untouchability in India. He suggested that religious cannons and texts should be taught and discussed in local languages (in his case, Kannada) so that the common man could understand them easily. Basavanna put practice before preachings. Some of the work ethics and work-values that we cherish and practice in the United States today, he had already advocated about 850 years ago. For him, work is worship, work is heaven, and labor is dignified. Basavanna believed that "kayaka" or dedicated work undertaken by a person would enable him or her to attain salvation.

During his life- time, Basavanna established a spiritual parliament or platform and laid the foundation for social democracy called the Anubhava Mantapa. In the Anubhava Mantapa, people, irrespective of their profession and social status, were invited to discuss and debate social conduct, ethical and spiritual matters and day-to-day issues. In fact, Basavanna, much before the days of the great classical economist Adam Smith (1776), had understood the important roles of division of labor, productivity of labor and interdependence of a society that are key factors in driving an economy to amazing economic and social progress. He showed people how to lead a self-less and simple life in order to experience salvation. To propagate his philosophy, he composed many easy to understand religious sayings or meaningful short prose texts in Kannada, called "Vachanas"("those which are being said"). These vachanas are considered jewels of truth, canons of conduct and experience. They are loaded with ethics, rules of conduct and philosophical truths. Every vachana of Basavanna is a great mine of profound truth and is a prescription for leading a harmonious life to attain internal and external purity. These vachanas can also be thought of as "Basaveshwara Commandments".

Basavanna has written many vachanas. A crude translation of one of his well-known vachanas from Kannada reads as follows:

***Do not rob, do not kill,
Do not utter lies, do not be angry,
Do not think low of others,
Do not boast of yourself,
Do not degrade others,
This indeed is the way of respect,
This is the way to be respected,
This is the right way of pleasing my Lord, God of the meeting rivers,
Koodala Sangama Deva.***

If people followed the essence of these vachanas, the world would be a better place without any conflicts and bloodshed. People would realize both internal and external tranquility and peace ("Antharanga Shudhi and Bahiranga Shudhi).

*. Murthy is a Professor of Economics, at Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska. One of his hobbies is contemplating on Indian Philosophy.

- References: Jyotsna Kamath, History of Kannada Literature (2011)
- A.K. Ramanujan, Speaking of Siva, Penguin Books, 1973.



We are one of the fastest growing IT companies and provide
Information Technology related services and solutions.

UnifiedSys is founded by IT professionals with experience in
Enterprise Software Application Development & Consulting

Enterprise IT Solutions provider

IT Training and Placement Services

We provide training, placement and H1B for OPT and MS graduates

We process H1B Visa and Green Cards for our employees.

UnifiedSys also provides industry standard health care coverage to all employees.

We provide training in the following areas

- ❖ Java/J2EE
- ❖ Informatica
- ❖ Oracle BI, Hyperion
- ❖ SAP B17/BW/R3/MM
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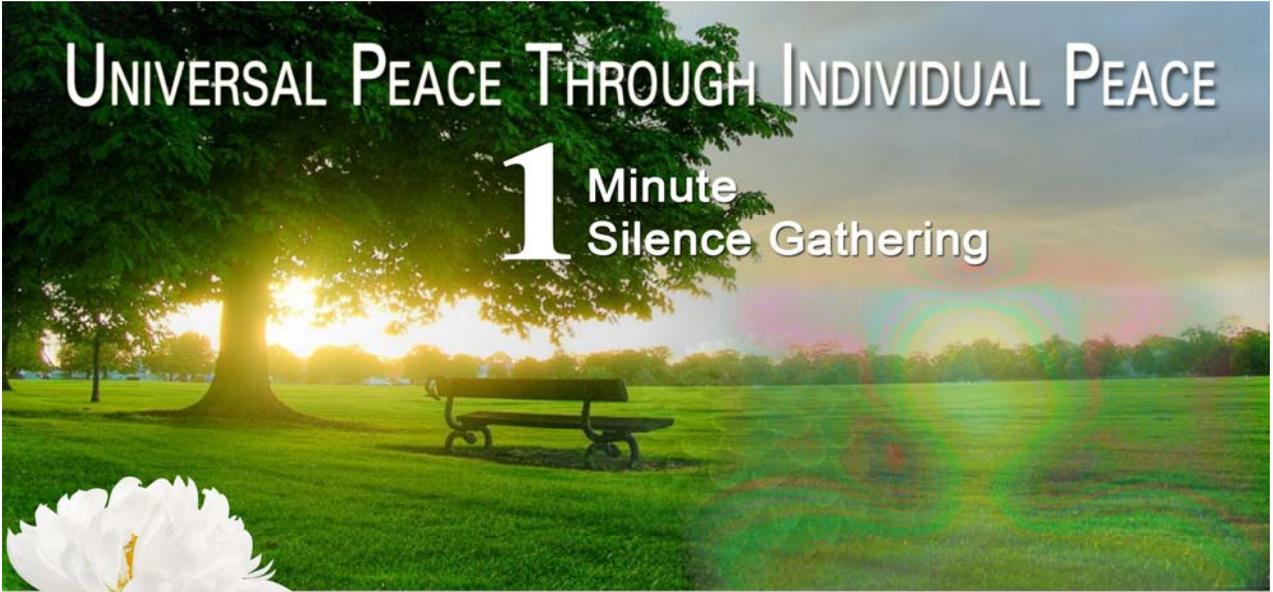
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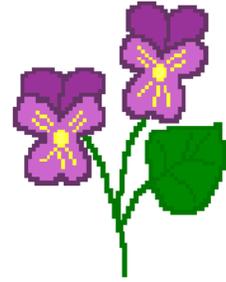
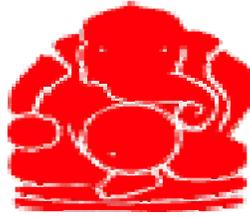
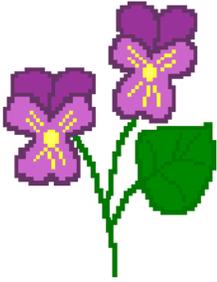


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Human Values

BY K Laxmi Narsimha Rao

Saint Thyagaraja (1767 - 1847) in one of his most famous devotional krithis (sublime compositions), a jewel in the Pancharathna Keerthanas, "Enduro Mahanubhavulu" (as many great souls as there be), "andarki vandanamulu" (to everyone of them I bow respectfully).

In a span of 250 to 150 years before now, St. Thyagaraja had found Mahanubhavalus (great souls), and had bowed to them respectfully. Notwithstanding the fact that he was a Muni by himself, his greatness shines all the more brightly in those immortal verses. Even after that, there were great souls like Ramana Maharshi, Aurobindo, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Swamy Vivekananda to name a few, who had innumerable unstinted followers in their wake. But things have changed rapidly since then.

Now, we live in a world that gives a lot of attention to externals of life. The kind of house we live in, the car we drive, the dress we wear, the grades on our certificates, etc., seem to define us. In addition our physical appearance, shape, weight and color do matter when it is assumed that after all it is the selected beautiful people who make the grade in this world.

As a result we tend to change our normal human behavior in a quixotic way by wearing masks, hundreds of masks, and masks that we are afraid to take off as none of them is us. This kind of human behavior may not be confused with 'Alter Ego'. Alter ego is different. It is a psychological state of mind and exists, whereas this one what I am trying to explain is self-made and non-existent. We panic at the thought of our limitations and fear of being exposed. And that is why we frantically create masks to hide behind a nonchalant sophisticated facade to help us pretend that we are better than others. The only person who knows his/her assets and liabilities is the person himself/herself. Often others see us as we want them to see us. We wear a mask to hide the true self. We may fool most of the people some of the time, and some of the people most of the time. But we cannot fool the person we see in the mirror in front of us. This philosophy of human interaction, a frame of mind and heart has placed us in a position where decisions waver to suit one's predominant inner self.

At this juncture it reminds me of a typical incident, which took place in Karnataka, India sometime ago. A man who had built for himself an image of a person leading a life of righteousness was traveling in a bus. He used to give lectures on honesty, truthfulness, integrity, the ideals of service, etc., at several places and had become quite a known figure in the region. He gave a one hundred rupee note (bill) to the Conductor towards the fare which was something like Rs.70/-. The Conductor issued him the ticket and handed over Rs.430/- as change. This gentleman took it and pocketed the money. At his destination, this gentleman while getting down handed over the excess Rs.400/- back to the Conductor. The Conductor instead of thanking, smiled at him, and said that he knew him well, and had heard his lectures several times on righteousness etc., and had been impressed by his personality. He further continued and said that he wanted to test his integrity by giving change for Rs.500/- instead of for Rs.100/- and waited for his reaction. And he told him that he was sorry to observe that he did not practice what he preached.

The Conductor was right in telling him so. Because this person had chosen to keep the Rs.400/- not belonging to him in his pocket for two and a half hours debating all the while, whether to return the amount to the Conductor or keep it for himself, though good sense ultimately prevailed over him.

It is therefore time to evaluate and re-evaluate our actions and of the things we think, say or do, lest some unpleasant needs could crop up and jeopardize our plans. Unless one measures oneself with a tape of his vision, he may miss a life-time opportunity.

One wise man has said: "Your life is God's gift to you.

What you do with it is your gift to God." By **K. LAXMI NARSIMHA RAO**

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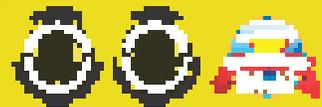
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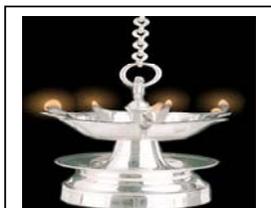
WISHING A VERY HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS DEEPAVALI

HAPPY DEEPAVALI TO ALL !!!

SREE AND AMBIKA NAIR

venu, jackie, isabella surya and sinjin nair

sanjay, veena, ajay ravi and anjana sree varma







Shri Ganesh Chaturthi 2011



Shri Ganesh Chaturthi 2011



Shri Krishna Janmastami 2011



Lord Shiva

Trident represents the three powers of knowledge, desire and implementation

Drum symbolizes sound which represents the words of the Vedas, the holy scriptures given by the Lord to guide us through life.

Serpents on neck signify the ego which once mastered can be worn as an ornament

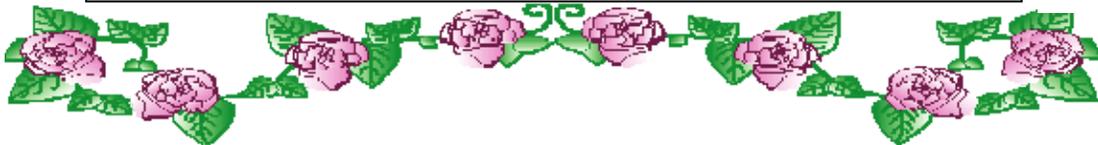
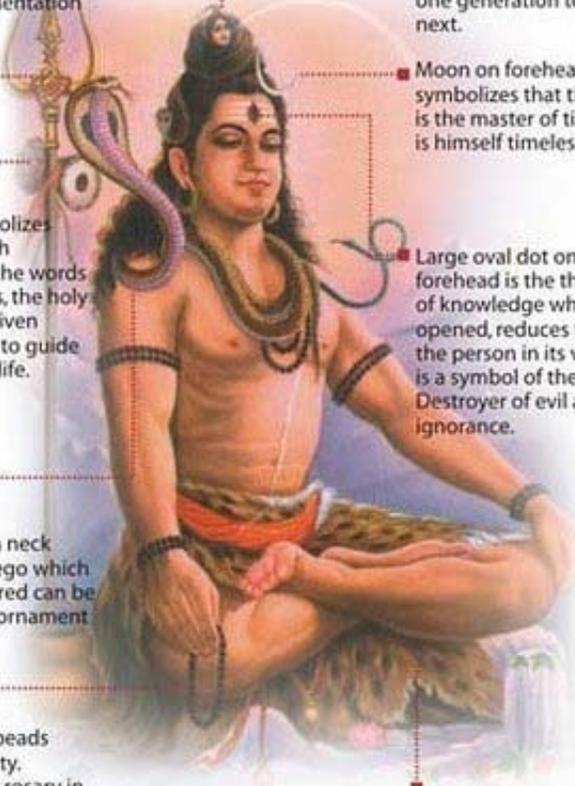
Rudraksha beads denote purity. The mala or rosary in the right hand symbolizes concentration.

Face on head represents the Ganges, the holy river, signifying the flow of scriptural teachings passing wisdom from one generation to the next.

Moon on forehead symbolizes that the Lord is the master of time and is himself timeless.

Large oval dot on forehead is the third eye of knowledge which, if opened, reduces to ashes the person in its vision. It is a symbol of the Destroyer of evil and ignorance.

Wearing a tiger skin Shiva is said to be fearless.



From:
Bhavana and Rakesh Singh
& Janakbhai Dave

November (Karthick-Marghaseer) 2011 Puja Schedule

Date	Day	Thithi	Morning	Evening
1	Tuesday		<u>Murugan Abhishekam</u>	Ram Parivar Puja/Hanuman Chalisa
2	Wednesday		Ayyappa Abhishekam	Radha Krishna Puja
3	Thursday		Puja	Shashti Kavacham
4	Friday		Devi Puja	Laxmi Devi/ Saraswathy Devi Puja
5	Saturday		Navagraha Abhishekam	Ayyapa Puja
6	Sunday		Ganesh Abhishekam Jagannatha Puja Skandha sashti puja	Puja
7	Monday		Puja	Rudra Abhishekam
8	Tuesday		<u>Murugan Abhishekam</u>	Ram Parivar Puja/Hanuman Chalisa
9	Wednesday		Ayyappa Abhishekam	Radha Krishna Puja
10	Thursday	Purnima	puja	Shashti Kavacham
11	Friday		Devi Puja	Parvati Devi Puja
12	Saturday		Venkateshwara Abhishekam	Ayyapa Puja
13	Sunday		Ganesh Abhishekam Jagannatha Puja	Pooja
14	Monday		Puja	Rudra Abhishekam Sankatahara Chaturthi
15	Tuesday		<u>Murugan Abhishekam</u>	Ram Parivar Puja/Hanuman Chalisa
16	Wednesday		Ayyappa Abhishekam	Radha Krishna Puja
17	Thursday		Puja	Shashti Kavacham
18	Friday		Devi Puja	Vaishnao Devi Puja
19	Saturday		Venkateshwara Abhishekam	Ayyapa Puja
20	Sunday		Ganesh Abhishekam Jagannatha Puja/ Geeta Paath Havan Youth and Children Participation/Ayyappa Mandala ARAMBHA PUJA	Puja
21	Monday		Puja	Rudra Abhishekam
22	Tuesday		<u>Murugan Abhishekam</u> NARAKA CHATURDASHI	Ram Parivar Puja/Hanuman Chalisa
23	Wednesday		Ayyappa Abhishekam	Radha Krishna Puja
24	Thursday	Amavas	puja	Shashti Kavacham
25	Friday		Devi Puja	Durga Devi Puja
26	Saturday		Venkateshwara Abhishekam	Ayyapa Puja
27	Sunday		Ganesh Abhishekam Jagannatha Puja	Puja
28	Monday		Puja	Rudra Abhishekam
29	Tuesday		<u>Murugan Abhishekam</u>	Ram Parivar Puja/Hanuman Chalisa
30	Wednesday		Ayyappa Abhishekam	Radha Krishna Puja

December(Marghaseer-Pausch) 2011Puja Schedule

Date	Day	Thithi	Morning	Evening
1	Thursday		Puja	Shashti Kavacham
2	Friday		Devi Puja	Laxmi Devi/ Saraswathy Devi
3	Saturday		Navagraha Abhishekam	Ayyapa Puja
4	Sunday		Ganesha Abhishekam Jagannatha Puja JANMOTHSAVA PUJA	Puja/
5	Monday		Puja	Rudra Abhishekam
6	Tuesday		<u>Murugan Abhishekam</u>	Ram Parivar Puja/Hanuman Ch
7	Wednesday		Ayyappa Abhishekam	Radha Krishna Puja
8	Thursday		puja	Shashti Kavacham
9	Friday		Devi Puja	Parvati Devi Puja
10	Saturday	Purnima	Venkateshwara Abhishekam	Ayyapa Puja
11	Sunday		Ganesha Abhishekam Jagannatha Puja	Pooja
12	Monday		Puja	Rudra Abhishekam
13	Tuesday		<u>Murugan Abhishekam</u>	Ram Parivar Puja/Hanuman Ch
14	Wednesday		Ayyappa Abhishekam	Radha Krishna Puja Sankatahara Chaturthi
15	Thursday		Puja	Shashti Kavacham
16	Friday		Devi Puja	Vaishnao Devi Puja
17	Saturday		Venkateshwara Abhishekam	Ayyapa Puja
18	Sunday		Ganesha Abhishekam Jagannatha Puja/ Geeta Paath Havan Youth and Children Participation/Ayyappa mandala Samaptha puja	Puja
19	Monday		Puja	Rudra Abhishekam
20	Tuesday		<u>Murugan Abhishekam</u> NARAKA CHATURDASI	Ram Parivar Puja/Hanuman Ch
21	Wednesday		Ayyappa Abhishekam	Radha Krishna Puja
22	Thursday		puja	Shashti Kavacham
23	Friday		Devi Puja	Durga Devi Puja
24	Saturday	Amavas	Venkateshwara Abhishekam	Ayyapa Puja
25	Sunday		Ganesha Abhishekam Jagannatha Puja	Puja
26	Monday		Puja	Rudra Abhishekam
27	Tuesday		<u>Murugan Abhishekam</u>	Ram Parivar Puja/Hanuman Ch
27	Wednesday		Ayyappa Abhishekam	Radha Krishna Puja
29	Thursday		puja	Shashti Kavacham
30	Friday		Devi Puja	Durga Devi Puja
31	Saturday		Venkateshwara Abhishekam	Ayyapa Puja
1	Sunday		<u>NEW YEAR PUJA</u> SUNDER KAND READING	



BEST WISHES AND
Happy Deepavali 2011



From:

THE GOGOI FAMILY
SAMAR, ARCHANA AND MAYA

Best Wishes and Congratulations to
Hindu Temple Omaha
Deepavali Celebrations 2011



May the lord show all of us the righteous path

Subhash and Jayashri Paknikar
Sujay and Sujetha Paknikar



**MAY THIS DEEPAVALI BRING MOST HAPPINESS, PEACE AND
PROSPERITY TO YOU ALL**

From:

HEMATBHAI, DHARMISTABEN DESAI

KAJAL DESAI, AAKASH DESAI

With Best Compliments From

**Latha and Jayappa
Sheelaben & Jaybhai Patel
and Nethan Jayappa
& Indiramma**

for

**Hindu Temple Deepavali
Celebrations 2011,**



Hinduism Basic Tenets - Part 3

Sanjay P. Singh, M.D.

As I have done in the past, I must preface this article by clarifying that this is meant for the youth and students. It is deliberately written keeping the needs of the uninitiated in mind. The first two parts have been published in the past issues of the Deepam.

What is a Hindu Temple?

The Hindu Temple is a mirror of the cosmos outside and our microcosm within, this is the mandate expressed in the seminal text Sthapatya Veda. So our Temple is designed to represent the cosmos outside and within as expressed in the Vedas.

The Shikhar is the main rising tower of a Temple. The shikhar represents the mount Meru, which is present at the center of the universe and is directly above the garbha griha where the deity representing the paramatma is seated at the 'center of the universe'. Also the seat of the main deity is called the garbha griha, a continuation of the Upanishadic analogy, in which the atman (soul) is likened to an embryo within a womb or to something hidden in a cave. This is to inspire the devotee to find the God within.

There is a kalash above the shikhar. Now the shikhar represents Mount Meru. Mount Meru was used for Samundra manthan (devas and assura –churned the ocean), which resulted in the kalash of amrit (elixir of immortality). The kalash on top of the shikhar represents that kalash of amrit.

The Garbhagriha is almost always surrounded by a circumambulatory path-pradakshina path, around which the devotee walks in a clockwise direction. In Hindu thought, this represents an encircling of the universe itself or this parikrama acknowledges that Parmatma is the center of our universe.

The Mandapa the assembly hall in front of the garbha griha. This is the part of the Temple where devotees assemble for puja and aarti. The artha-mandapa is the entrance porch.

In some Temples there are a series of walls before you get to the Garbhagriha. These represent the sheaths one must pass through before they reach the divine principle. The sheaths are the panch kosha which one must penetrate to reach the atman, annamaya kosha (food), pranamaya kosh (prana – life breath), Manomaya kosh (mind stuff), Vigyanamaya kosh (intellect, wisdom) and Anandmaya kosha (bliss). Everything in our Temple architecture has profound meaning and significance.

The three main sources upon which Hindu Temple architecture is based are Sthapatya veda, Brihatsamhita and vastu-purusha-mandala.

The various parts of the Temple are repositories of different levels of energy.

Bhakti

Bhakti is the complete loving submission of oneself to God. It has been advocated as the path to God in Kaliyuga, the current yuga.

There are a number of ways of expression of devotion to the Lord:

- **Shravana** - Listening to recitals of the names and glories of God

- **Kirtan** - Oneself reciting the names of God (nam-sankirtan)
 - **Smaran** - Recalling Him and His deeds
 - **Padaseva** – worshipping His lotus feet, Waiting on Him, serving
 - **Archana** - Worshipping Him, and offering flowers to Him
 - **Vandana** - Saluting Him
 - **Dasya** – considering oneself to be the Lord's slave and Serving Him, as did Hanuman.
 - **Sakhya** - Befriending Him as did Arjuna, he is our best friend for several lifetimes
 - **Atma-nivedan** - Dedicating one's whole self to Him, complete surrender.
- This above is also referred to as Navadha Bhakti.

Bhakti and its virtues have been described in our scriptures and also by our saints.

The Bhagwad Gita describes it as surrender and single-mindedness(sharanagati and ananyata).

The Lord says,

"ananyas cintayanto mam

ye janah paryupasate

tesam nit yabhi yuktanam

yoga-ksemam vahamy aham"

meaning - Whoever prays to me with no other thought, whoever thinks of me incessantly, I will take care of their welfare.

Such is the grace of the Lord and his love for his bhakts is boundless. We just have to become a worthy receptacle and his love & bhakti will be poured in it.

The Bhagwatam talks of selflessness in bhakti. It advises us to drink the nectar of the leela bliss of Krishna and selflessly desire for His vision and the divine love.

Jagadguru Ramanujacharya described the feelings of bhakti as **Prapatti**, "surrender or taking to God for refuge" . Prapatti: (Sanskrit) "Throwing oneself down." This can be practiced by all.

Jagadguru Nimbarkacharya introduced the path of **Ashtyam seva** which is a method of devotional remembrance and meditation all day long – 24 hours. Scripturally informed devotion is the only way to achieve liberation from suffering and enter into ceaseless bliss.

Shri Vallabhacharya defined the path of devotion as the **Pushti Marg** (path of grace), spiritual nourishment. The loving grace of god fosters the devotional feelings of a selfless devotee. A devotee humbly surrenders his whole being to god. The daily seva includes the following in pushti marg:

- Raag – playing and hearing devotional music
- Bhog – offering pure vegetarian food
- Vastra & Shringar – decorating the deity with beautiful clothes and jewelry

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu described the means of **Sadhana bhakti** (the culture of pure devotion through regulations). He recommends chanting the name and leelas of Krishna to develop various stages of bhakti from rati to anuraag and onwards to becoming one with Krishna.

Thus Bhakti is as simple as loving the lord and completely surrendering to him but there are also many different ways to practice it as described above. You do see some of these being practiced in our Temple and by other organizations in our community.

Educational Initiative to help children in Kashmir

Friends: As some of you know, I was borne and grew up in Kashmir India. Soon after I moved to the US, Kashmir descended into political chaos which has now continued for well over twenty years. Regardless of the sources of conflict, and our own political persuasions, there is a human element to this conflict that ends up taking it's highest toll on the most innocent and vulnerable - the children. It is therefore laudable that a group of expatriates from Kashmir have assembled a non profit organization to help provide better educational opportunities for needy children of Kashmir. I know several of the organizers personally and hence can recommend this organization for your support, which I hope you will consider. Thank you for your support of children in the civil war torn Kashmir, the most beautiful place on earth I know. Best, Hamid

<http://www.kashmirei.org/Home/Home.aspx>

Hamid Band, MD, PhD. Eppley Institute UNMC, Omaha, Nebraska 68198

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(Please circle years applicable)

I support the Temple expansion plan.

I agree to honor my pledge to the Hindu Temple.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Deepavali Greetings To All
From:
Shriyuth Pandit Vidya ShankarJi
Shriyuth Pandit Damodar BhattarJi
Shri Chandrasekhar Karmegam



The President and Chairman of the Hindu Temple sincerely thank the hard work and commitment of Sunil Singh and his team in taking care of the Temple flower garden and special decoration for the Deepavali Celebrations. See photographs of the volunteers including young volunteers in these two pages.



Character Building

There is one very important point that when the aim is of the imperishable, the perishable things will come on their own. You will not have to undergo suffering for them. But if the aim and focus is of the perishable, the imperishable essence will not be attained, and one will have to worry and make an effort for the perishable. And further ahead Lord says, that see toward one's innate duty, therefore it is only beneficial to fight the war of righteousness for a Kshatriya. (Gita 2/31). The point is that it is only by fulfilling duty that man progresses, and by going towards non-duty he takes a fall. The main thing in fulfilling one's duty is to renounce desires, proprietary interest and attachment. The meaning of renouncing these is that one should not have the aim of "jada", the inert (insentient). Previously the body etc. was not ours, later on as well, they will not remain ours and at present too they are separating from us every single moment. If this kind of alertness is awakened then the aim will not be of the inert and the senses, the inner faculties will be restrained and controlled on their own. There is building of character In self-control itself. In lack of control, and lack of restraint, progress is curtailed and with that the character takes a fall. In the beginning of the third Chapter, Arjun asks that why are you engaging me in these most sinful acts? Lord says - though these appear to be very sinful on the surface, then too one must fulfill their duties by giving up selfishness, proprietary interest, egoism, and desires. By doing so, the dreadful does not remain, only the action remains. Actions can be various according to one's varna (order of life) and ashram (stage in life), but the terribleness, the filth, the passion, all lead to one's downfall, and it arises due to desires. Keeping desires in the forefront if one reads and shares with others the spiritual messages (with the aim of money or other things), it is considered demoniac tendency and one cannot escape sins; even on listening and sharing spiritual truths, good character cannot be developed because desire is the root of all sins (Gita 3/37). However, if the aim is God, then even though engaged in worldly duties and activities, then too good character will come in them. Therefore, in the third chapter, Lord gives great emphasis on renouncing desires and doing one's duty. Similarly, in the fourth chapter it has been said that when there is no desires, when there is no sense of pride in doership, then all actions become inactions, in other words, even while doing karma man is not bound; because his aim is to go towards God. In the fifth chapter also says to fulfill one's duty - Yukta karmaphalam tyaktvaa shanatimaanoti naishtikim | Ayuktah kaamkaarena phale sakto nibhadhyate || (Gita 5/12) "He who is a Karmayogi, who by abandoning attachment to the fruit of action, attains everlasting peace (God Realization); whereas, he who acts with a selfish motive, being attached to the fruit of actions through desire acquires bondage." Fruits (objects) are the kind that will be born and will later perish, but the desire for them is what is binding. Desire makes one fall in character. When character takes a fall, there is lack of peace and whereas building character, one attains peace. The moment there is ill feelings in the mind, one experiences lack of peace. And the moment there is good feelings within, peace immediately follows. If you are attentive, then it is every man's experience that the more that he renounces the perishable, that much more peace, joy, equanimity, good qualities, continue to come in him and the more that he desires the perishable things, that much lack of peace, discord, anguish, burning infliction, and bad qualities arise. In the sixth chapter also, it has been said to engage in God having "That as the aim. That God is present and pervading everywhere. He who sees Me (the Universal Self, God) present in all beings and sees all beings existing in Me (Paramatma), I am never out of sight for him, nor is he ever out of my sight. Yo maam paschyati sarvatra sarvam cha mayi pashyati Tasyaahum na pranashyaami sa cha mein na pranashyati || (Gita 6/30) That man who sees other's sorrow and happiness as his own, he is an eternal yogi - Aatmoupamyena sarvatra samam pashyati yorjuna | Sukham va yadi vaa dukham sa yogi paramo matah || (Gita 6/32) He who has the sentiments - Let there be no unhappiness and sorrow such a one attains Divinity, God (Paramatma tattva). How can the suffering of all come to an end? How can all be happy? One who has such sentiments - their character is the highest of all. Further when the conversation leads towards bringing the mind under control, then the Lord reveals about study and practice "abhyaas" and detachment "vairaaag" (Gita 6/35). Those who do work for the welfare of all, even if their work is left incomplete, he will be benefited. He whose mind and intellect is only engaged in God is eminent. In other words, there too the talks are about removing the mind from the world, and engaging it in God. When talking about progress in the life beyond this world, there too the same has been emphasized, that even he who walks

the path of Divinity, and in between if his spiritual practices comes to an end and he dies, then too he will be benefited, he will not attain misfortune (Gita 6/40) He whose mind and intellect is only in God, he is considered the best among the yogis (Gita 6/47). He who is not devoted to God, God calls him an evil doer (Gita 7/15) and he who is devoted to God, he is called virtuous (Gita 7/16). The point is that he who walks the path towards God are called virtuous and benevolent, and he who walks the path of the world is called an evil-doer. Further ahead it is said that he whose actions are pure, whose character is great, they become unyielding in their spiritual pursuits and do worship and devotion of God (Gita 7/28). Gita on Character Building (cont'd) In the fifteenth chapter God reveals His extra-ordinary glories and radiance and says that I am the Supreme Personality (Supreme Soul) over both the "Insentient" (Perishable) and "Sentient" (Imperishable Embodied Soul). (Gita 15/16-18). He who knows Me as the Supreme Personality, the Highest Person, is "sarvavid" the knower of all, and he worships Me, with all his being. (Gita 15/19). Divine traits naturally manifest in him who is devoted to Me and worships Me. Therefore in Sixteenth Chapter, God gives the description of "Divine Traits". But, he who has become distant from God, who only wants to nourish his own body, to engage in sense enjoyment and in hoarding, demoniac tendencies manifest in him. God elaborates at great length those demoniac traits in the Sixteenth Chapter. He says, Divine traits leads to liberation, whereas Demoniac traits lead to bondage. (Gita 16/5), and such a person attains birth through 8.4 million different wombs (Gita 16/19) and goes to hell. (Gita 16/20). In the Seventeenth Chapter, the Lord describes the three modes - of goodness (sattvic), passion (rajasic) and ignorance (tamasic). Even on seeing this, the goodness and divine sentiments are among those that have a disinclination for the world and inclination towards God. They rise above the sentiments of passion and ignorance. Thus those who perform the acts of sacrifice, penance and various acts of charity for God, then such acts are of the mode of goodness and they are liberating. (Gita 17/25). However if they are done for the world, i.e. with aim of honor, fame, pleasure, rest and relaxation etc. and sacrifices, austerities, charity etc. done with negligence and ignorance, then they become of the mode of passion and ignorance. In the Eighteenth chapter, God elaborates in great detail, Sanyaas (Sankhyayoga) and "tyaag" (Karmayog). In the end God concludes that leave dependency of all dharmas, and only take refuge in Me. "Sarvadharmaan parityajya maamekum sharanam vraja |Aham tvaa sarvapaapebhyo Mokshayishyami maa suchah || (Gita 18/66). All the work in the world, all accomplishments, all progress, all is encompassed in that one - "sharanagati" (taking refuge in the Lord". Godsays that all the sins that are there, evil qualities and conduct, I will free you from these. You do not worry. By My grace, the divine traits will come naturally, on their own. Just as a child that stays in his mother's lap, gets provided for, is nourished, taken care of and he grows, similarly, on taking the refuge in the Lord, all the good traits and conduct will come unknowingly. Building of character will take place on its own.

ANNUAL DEEPAVALI RAFFLE

On October 29th, 2011 in the Evening after the Cultural Program
1st Prize \$1000 Cash; 2nd Prize: iPad (\$500 value) ; 3rd Prize: iPod Touch
(\$250 value), 4th Prize: 2each Yoga session for two, 5th Prize 3ea. \$100
Grocery, 6th Prize: 6 ea. Dinner for two; 7th Prize: 10 ea. Ticket for Movie
Only \$10 Per Ticket

Why Me?

By VT Ramakrishnan

I'm sure everyone has had an incidence in which you wondered, "Why me?" We are consistently confronted by suffering of different kinds throughout our life on earth. First, there is suffering caused by natural disasters such as hurricanes, earthquakes or tsunamis. Next, there are communal tragedies such as wars, plane or train crashes, or bombings. Lastly, there is individual suffering that we all go through to a greater or lesser extent, such as feelings of loneliness, depression and anger. When we go through such tragedies we often wonder, "Why me?" Theologians, philosophers, psychologists, and ordinary men, for centuries have wrestled with this question of suffering, and no one has come up with a simple and complete answer. First question is, what is the reason or cause of suffering? Is it something that happens by chance, or something that God whimsically inflicts upon us for no reason? The answer is, neither. We ourselves are responsible for all the pain and pleasure we experience in our lives. We are all familiar with the saying "You reap what you sow." This is the law of cause and effect and is referred to as the doctrine of *karma*.

Each human being has the freedom to perform action. Every action we perform produces results. We have to experience the fruits of our actions, whatever they may be, good or bad. (Prashnopanishad, chapter 3/7). Some of the actions, due to their nature, bear fruit in this life itself, while others pass on to future lives. This is called destiny. Destiny is nothing but the result of our own actions which we performed with a freedom of will. In other words, we are products of the past, and producers of the future. You want to know what your future is? Your future is nothing but the past, modified by the present. Fruit arises out of actions, and action out of fruit. We get what we earn, no more and no less. Therefore, to cry out against some injustice is only ignorance of this law of *karma*. To be born with a handicap or as an athlete, a beggar or a king, is the result of previous actions. God is in no way responsible for the pain or pleasure we experience. This is the chain that ties us to the wheel of birth and rebirth which is called the doctrine of reincarnation.

More and more people are accepting the doctrines of *karma* and reincarnation, because they make absolute sense. Nothing in life makes any sense if you accept that there is only one life to live. Why is one person born blind while another has great eyesight even at an advanced age? Why is one child born in a family of criminals while another is born in a family of devotees? Why is it that one is born in abject poverty while another is born in luxury? Western philosopher William Jones, who introduced eastern philosophy to Europe said, "I am no Hindu, but I hold the Hindu doctrine concerning rebirth as more pious, more rational, and more likely to deter men from vice, than the dreadful opinions inculcated by Christians about punishment without an end."

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Wish You All a Very Happy Deepavali!

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Vinay and Angie Nijhawan
Adam and Luke Nijhawan
Dave and Anita Haggstrom
Andrew and Erik Haggstrom

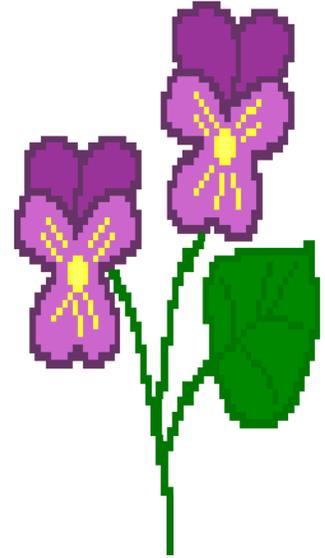
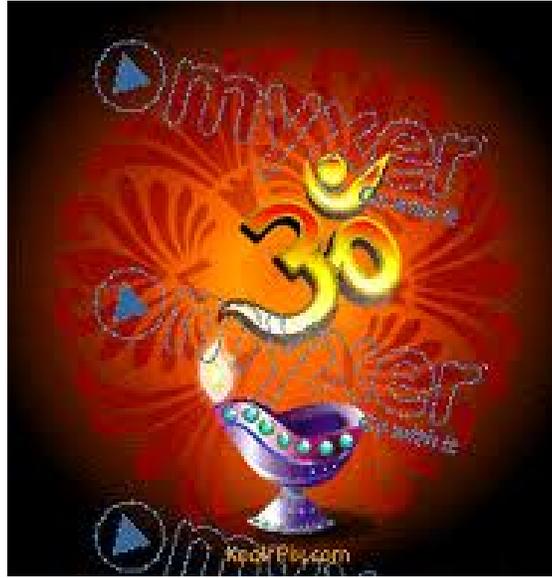
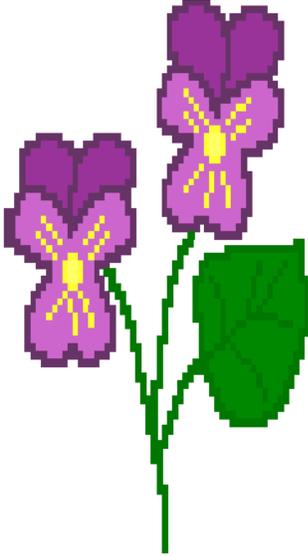


HAPPY DEEPAVALI WISHES FROM THE DASH FAMILY



From:

Smita and Alekha Dash
Debaleena and Rohan Dash



**Happy Deepavali And
Very Prosperous
New Year**



**From:
Sandhya & Shailendra Saxena
And Family**



Shri Venkatesh Jayanthi 2011





Carnatic Music Concert 2011

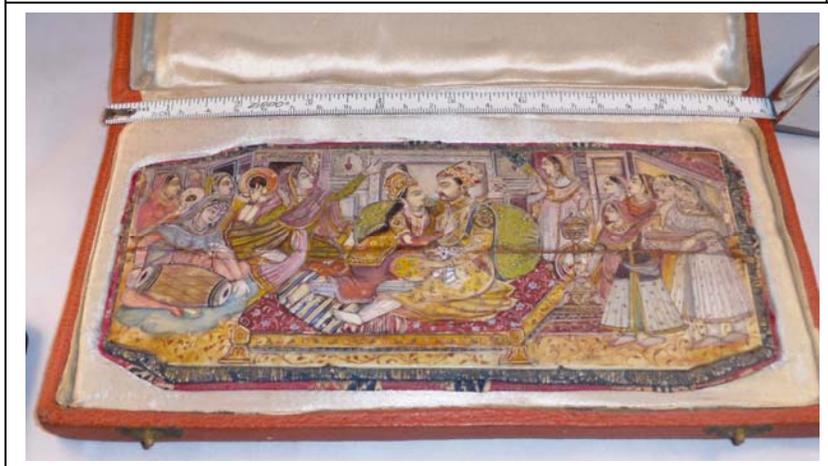
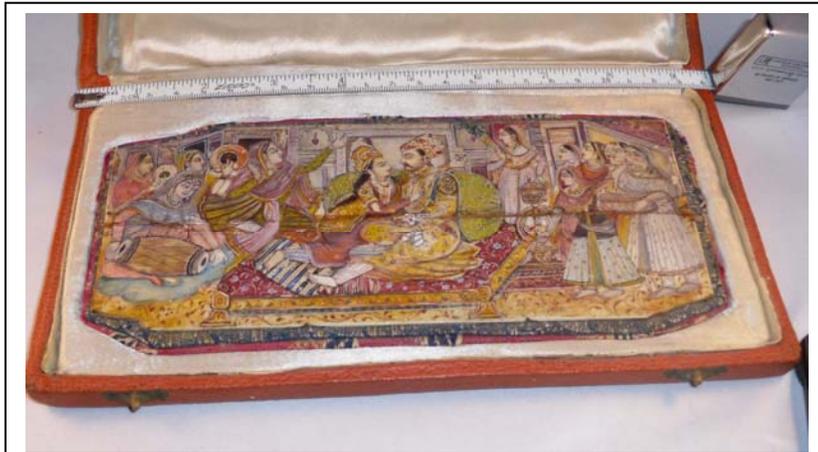


For Sale!

Miniature Ivory depicting the reunification of Ram and Sita, a beautiful story from which all of our lives should be enriched, a model of sacrifice, patience and love. The miniature dates from the late 19th Century and is from Delhi, North India. It was recently appraised by Sotheby's London for \$2,000. plus the 40% buyer's fee of \$800. I believe it should be in a Hindu home, perhaps displayed during Diwali. Please refer to the attached photos. It is a magnificent piece, cloth bound on the back and in its own presentation case. Please contact me at 402 432-9916 or by email at mjlneblud@yahoo.com if you have an interest in purchasing the miniature. I will consider bids over \$1,600.00.

Namnasthe and Happy Deepavali to You All,

Marilyn

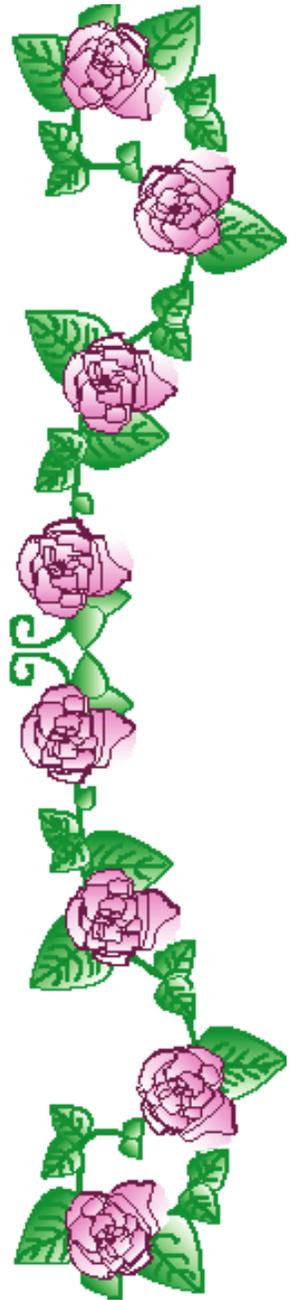




**Wishing You All Very
Happy Diwali and
New Year**



**From:
Padma and Krishan Lassi
And Family**



Religious or Spiritual?

A Note to Contemporary Nebraskan Hindus

By Ram Bishu

There is a fundamental difference between being religious and being spiritual. In a way, I would say that it is a continuum with certain people being 100 % religious while certain others being 100% spiritual.

100% religious-----0% religious
0% spiritual-----100% spiritual

Continuum

A typical religious person would observe all the religious rituals with fervent devotion while a spiritual person would spend more time thinking about god. More often than not each group member decries the other. I am not saying one is a virtue, while the other is not. The question is what is right and what is wrong? Like all other aspect of Hinduism (Sanatana Dharma) the answer to this is also very complex

Complexities of Hinduism

1. There are two types of scriptures: Smriti and Shruthi
2. There are six systems of practice (*Shad Darsanas*)
3. There are three basic major models of philosophy(*Advaita, Vishishta Advaita, and Dvaita*)
4. Theology is region dependent
5. There are a number of god realized saints (Gurus) at any point in time
6. There are a number of Geethas, (*Bhagwath Geetha, Rama Geetha, Udhavar Geetha etc*)

What do all these mean? More importantly who cares?

What do scriptures say?

Hinduism is totally experiential. One can have Ph.D level of knowledge; but without practice that knowledge is useless. In fact a meaningful combination of both knowledge and practice is required.

Scriptures also say that progression towards self-realization is a steep ascent towards the peak.

They say that it may take generations to achieve it. The ascent comprises three stages

Stage One: One has to be religious doing his/her daily rituals with unfailing periodicity

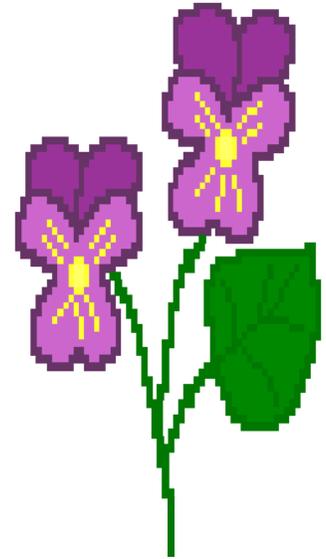
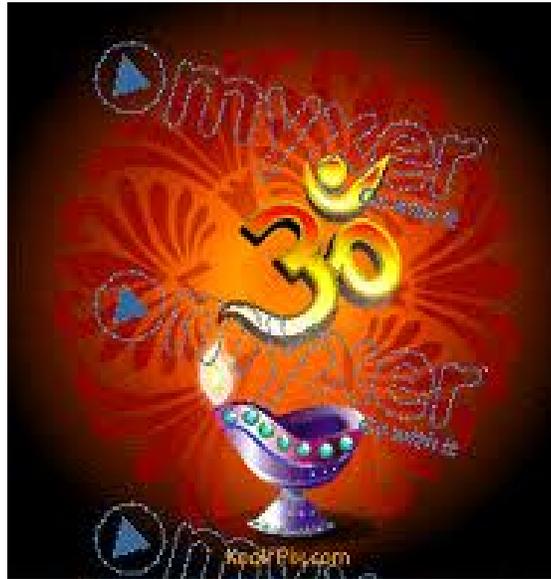
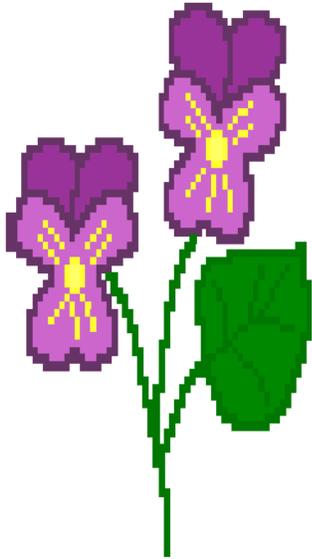
Stage Two: One has to be spiritual and in groups. Satsang, Keertans, Bhajans and group meditation etc are prescribed.

Stage Three: Totally spiritual and individualistic. This is the final stage of the ascent.

What do all these mean for Nebraskan Hindus:

1. Religious people should start devoting some time for spiritual practices. Practicing *some steps of ashtanga yoga* can be a start
2. Spiritual people should be some what religious. That will give them some discipline. At any case they should not use their spirituality as a means of escape
3. Start practicing discrimination and dispassion (Viveka and Vairagya) soon
4. Try to get rid of desire, anger, jealousy etc

I am sure that if one practices 1 through 4 in right earnestness, that person will improve with time and will be able to deal with life stress in a more manageable way.

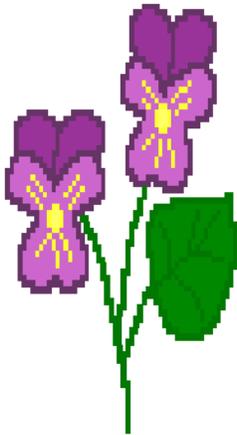
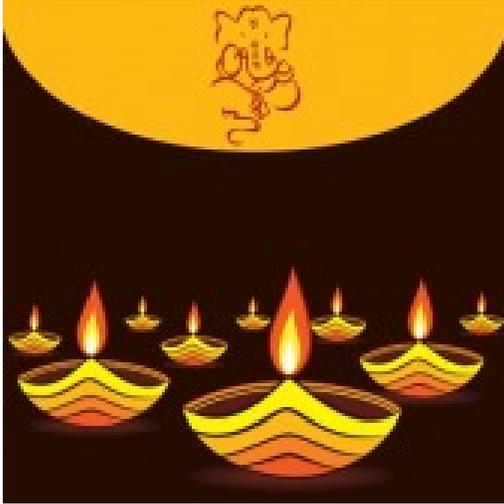


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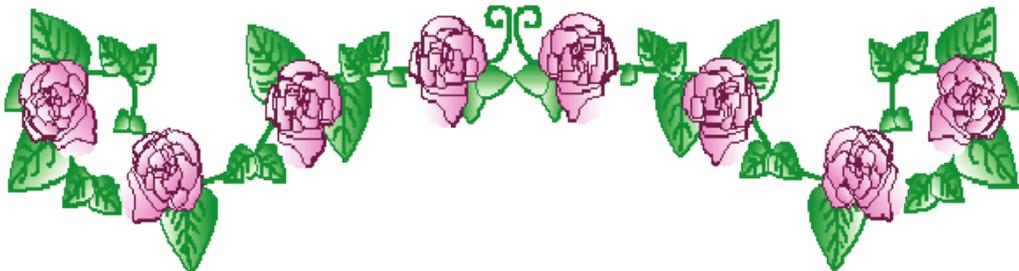
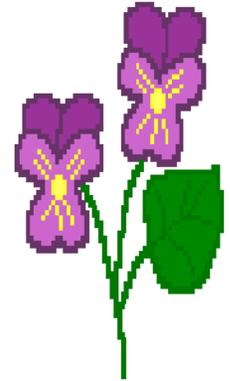


From:
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Sumangala and Shantaram Joshi
Yashaswini and Krishnamurthy Joshi
And Deepa Joshi

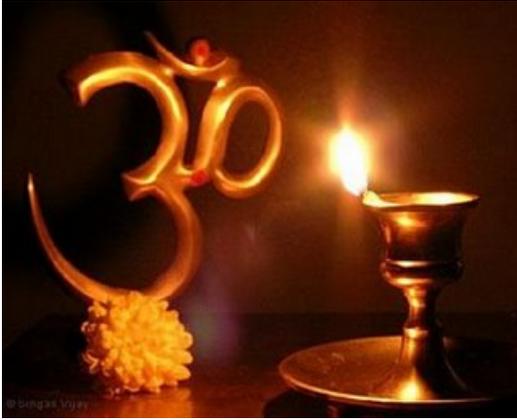
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WISHES FROM THE MURTHYS**



From:
**Kalpana Murthy
Vasudeva Murthy
Anand Murthy
Coco Murthy**



Best Wishes Happy Diwali



From:

Madhuben and Arvinbhai Patel
Megan and Samip
Emily and Sachit @ Shreyen

Happy Deepavali
and Prosperous New Year



From:

Bharati and Ashok Amin
Deep, Neel & Jay



Wish You All a Very Happy Deepavali!

From:

*Nayanaben and Thakurbhai Patel
& Krupa, Meera, Sunil*

**Wishing You All A Very Lightful Happy Diwali
And Prosperous New Year**



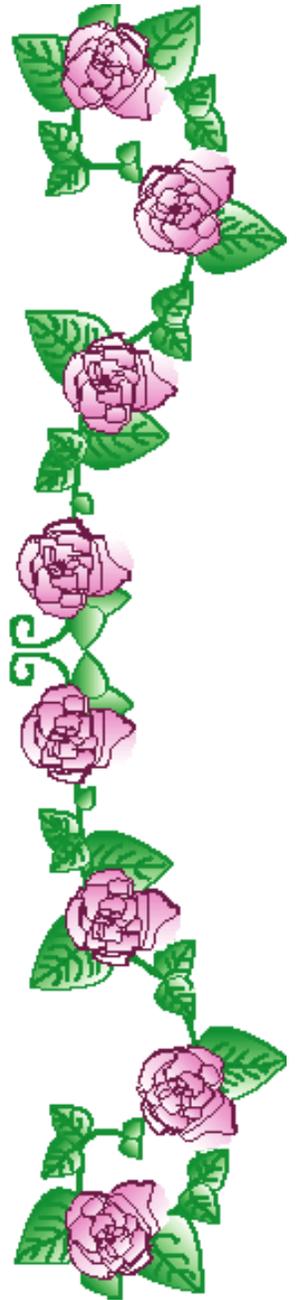
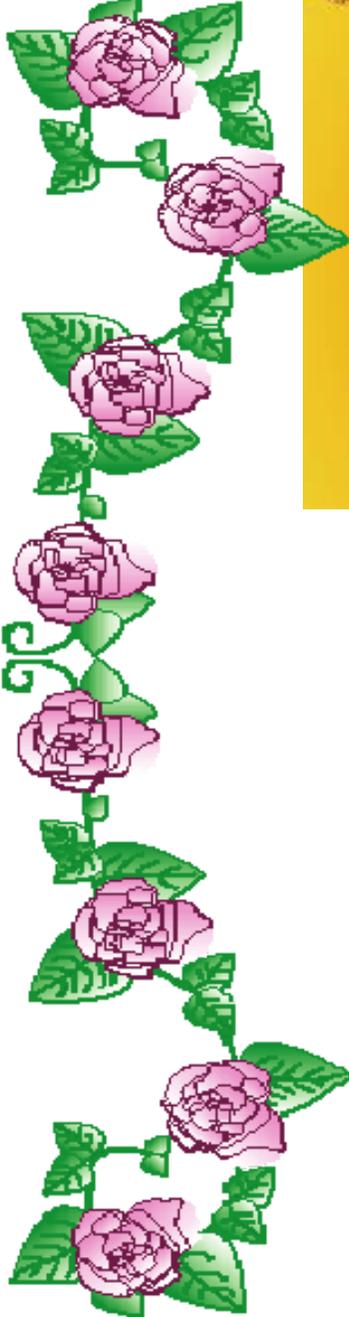
From:

**Sumitaben and Bhaskarbhai Patel and
Sejal, Samir & Amit**



**Wishing You All Very
Happy Diwali and
New Year**

**From:
Niranjanaben and Ashwinbhai
Rupal and Wayshalee Patel**





Hindu Temple, 13010 Arbor Street, Omaha, NE 68144



*BHOOTHA-NATHA SADANANDA
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SWAMIYE SHARANAM AYYAPPA

Mandala Kalarambha Puja on Sunday, November 20TH, 2011

9:00 – 9:30 am	:Ganapathi Homam
9:30 – 10:30 am	:Sankalpa, Kalasha Puja, Rathayathra & Abhishekam
10:30 – 11:15 am	:Alankaram & Bhajans
11:15 – 11:45 am	:Ayyappa Ashtothara Namavali & Sharana Gosham
11:45 – 12:30 pm	:Padipuja, Deepa Aradhana & Ayyappa Namaskaram
12:30 -- 1:30 pm	:Mahaprasad

With the blessings of Swami Ayyappa, we will be celebrating the Mandala season commencing from Sunday, November 20th, 2011.

Devotees are encouraged to sponsor Kalasha Puja for \$101.00. Signup sheets will be posted at the Temple or contact one of the following persons.

For more details: Panditjis @402- 697-8546, Ram Bishu @ 402-421-1541,
Shantaram Joshi@ 402-965-9777, Tej Adidam @ 402-331-3519, Maya Venugopal
@402- 391-4177, Suresh Seshadri (sindhupappa@hotmail.com)
Ambika Nair (sreeambi@msn.com)

SWAMI SHARANAM AYYAPPA SHARANAM

HARIHARA SUTHAN AYYAN AYYAPPA SWAMIYE SHARANAM

EDITOR'S CORNER

Om Shri Prasanna Ganeshayanamaha
Om Shri Maha Kaali, Maha Laxmi, Maha Saraswathyai Namaha

Again this year, we are pleased to bring this special issue of Deepam to you all. This indeed is an exciting period for our Temple. Because we are making a significant progress in moving forward with our expansion plan as detailed by our leaders elsewhere in this issue.

In this issue, we have attempted to include several articles related to religious, spiritual and social issues for our community. The contents in each one of the articles are the views of the authors and as an editorial policy we have not altered the content except for minor editing. We want to sincerely thank all the well wishers and the contributors for this publication. We just had to ask once. Everyone readily accepted our request and provided respective contributions, thus demonstrating their continued commitment to our Temple and its mission. We have not made any progress in having articles written by our younger generation. We request all parents to help us in this regard by encouraging them to contribute to the Deepam.

This special issue brings to you the greetings for the Deepavli holiday season from the Editorial Team. Bringing out several hundred copies of a multi page publication such as this is a monumental task and obviously costs a lot of money. In order to reduce the cost to our devotees, we have included advertisements and personalized greetings from our well wishers and community members. We take this opportunity to thank all of our advertisers and well-wishers for their generous support. Like last year, this has been quite an undertaking in reaching businesses, individuals and families for this purpose. Specifically we want to thank Sandhya & Shailendra Saxena and Padma & Krishan Lassi for co-sponsoring the publication of this issue. Their generosity is greatly appreciated.

We want to thank members of the publication committee for their help in putting together this issue. We also want to thank Mr. Shane Harris from the Creighton University Printing Facility for going out of his way in helping us in printing this publication.

As always we invite constructive suggestions from our readers to improve the quality of this publication and we thank you in advance for the same.

**NAMASKAR AND
VERY HAPPY DEEPAVALI TO YOU ALL.**

Shantaram S. Joshi and Parmender P. Mehta

PUBLICATION COMMITTEE

**Shantaram Joshi, Parmender P. Mehta
Murali Chintalpalli, Jayaram Nagarajan
Vijay Anand Kannan, Nagendra Chaturvedi
And Janakbhai Dave**



With best Wishes for
2011 Deepavali Celebration
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