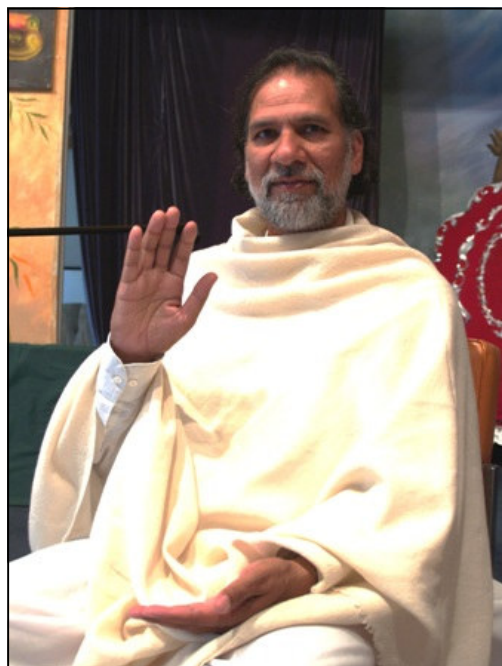




Yogeesh Ashram
[A Place for Total Transformation]
November Newsletter

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***The Essence:* Diwali as a Celebration of Life**

Acharya Yogeesh

Diwali is a great celebration in India. It is felt throughout the country and it is the largest of its kind in the world. In Hindu philosophy, there is the assertion that there is something beyond the physical body and mind called Atman, the soul. Diwali is the celebration of this inner light. With the realization of the Soul come compassion, love and awareness of the oneness of all things. This realization is celebrated with fireworks, lights, flowers, sharing of sweets and worship. Stories vary about Diwali but its essence remains in the rejoicing of the inner light. The festival also marks the victory of good over evil thus it is observed as a festival of lights. Entire cities and villages are illuminated. In the dark night you can see lights everywhere reflecting into the sky. Hindus, Jains and Sikhs all mark this occasion. Particularly for the Jains, Diwali marks the day when Mahavira achieved Nirvana. This day is celebrated in many parts of the world including United Kingdom, Canada, South Africa, Thailand, Trinidad, Nepal, Indonesia, and Mauritius etc. It has become part of the local culture in many areas.

There is great preparation prior to this day. Homes and businesses are cleaned and redecorated to invite the goddess of wealth, Laxmi to enter. We need Laxmi because every one loves money. Laxmi and Ganesh, the god of prosperity who is half animal and half human are very powerful figures. You need to know what to do to attract Laxmi and Ganesh into your sphere. Laxmi will not enter any environment that is unclean or has unworthy attitudes or behavior.

The night before Diwali you have to prepare an offering comprised of the following ingredients:

Bathe Ganesh and Laxmi with rosewater and place them at the alter

Red flowers

Lamp

Ghee

Sweets

Vermillion

Turmeric

Leaves of pan

Tulsi dipped in milk

Silver or gold coin

You have to pray with 2 mantras in order to invite prosperity.

Mantra for Laxmi:

Aum Hrim Shrim Kamale Kamalaa-laye Praseed Praseed

Hrim Shrim Hrim Aum Mahaa Laxmyai Namah

“Thought for the Day”

- by Acharya Yogeesh

- Laziness is the worst enemy of man.
- Happiness is not found in money, Happiness is found in the heart.
- Look forward to changing your Self, not to changing the entire world.
- When you act upon the Guru's teachings, it becomes the most befitting tribute to the Guru.
- If you can visualize it, then you can actualize it.

- continued on next page



“The Essence” continued -

Mantra for Ganesh:

Om Gam Gam Gam Pataye Namaha

Culturally and historically Diwali marks the day of few events that are cause for celebration:

It is the day of the birth of Laxmi, goddess of wealth, from the bottomless ocean.

On this day Mahavira achieved Nirvana.

After defeating Ravanna, on this day Lord Rama returned with his beautiful wife, Sita from exile in Sri Lanka, where she was taken after being kidnapped. All the streets were lit to illuminate their path in Ayodhya

This day commemorates the assassination of Narakasura, the evil demon by Lord Krishna. As a consequence Lord Krishna released 16,000 women from prisons from his prison.

For the Sikhs, this day is a commemoration of the laying of the foundation stone for the Golden Temple.

The Sikh guru, Hargobind was released from prison on this day and he demanded that the Mogul Emperor release 52 kings imprisoned with him.

Gautum, the chief disciple of Mahavira also attained complete knowledge on this day.

On this day in 2063 B.C., was the coronation of the prehistoric king Vikramaditya .

Pope John Paul II came to India on Diwali in 1999 and participated in the celebrations by lighting the candles. The tilak, (symbol of the third eye) was placed on his forehead.

In the Mahabharata, on this day, Pandava returned to his city after 12 years of banishment.

The fifth incarnation of Vishnu assassinated Bali, the mighty king, who wanted to banish all people from the face of the earth. He appeared before the king as a midget. He asked the king to give him 3 steps. The king granted his wish thinking he would not be able to do any harm in his midget stature. Vishnu made his body huge became very strong and by taking his first step he crossed all continents. With his second step he crossed all the oceans. Then he asked, ‘where do I put my third step?’ He proceeded to put his foot on his neck and suffocated him. Upon the death of Bali Vishnu released Laxmi from his prison.

Decoration with lamps is a symbol of inner light. I wish you all joyous Diwali, happiness, prosperity and most of all enlightenment for everyone here. Gautma, the chief disciple of Mahavira always complained that even though he was the closest to him and always present by his side he was not yet enlightened. Mahavira explained to him, ‘you are too attached to me. Gautma finally got enlightenment when Mahavira achieved Nirvana. Even though he was crying like a baby for his departure, as soon as he understood that this body has to go away one day, he was enlightened. All of his darkness disappeared. Enlightenment is a sudden click in your being like when a room is closed up for 1000 years where all curtains are drawn, doors are shut and the interior is dark, no light can enter. Then one day someone opens the door and light comes in, the room becomes lit. The soul is like that. For lifetimes or centuries it stays in darkness and one day by some incident it becomes lit and the person gains knowledge. He no longer is in darkness.

I went into silence for 3 days before Diwali. This time I decided not to take any drinks either. I did it a little differently this time. I have had many experiences in previous times but this time I wanted to focus on this planet, our world. What I saw was that our world will experience peace eventually but not before more disturbance. Things will get better but before that happens they will get much worse.

Summarized by Eileen Shahbazian



Diwali and Light - by Daniela Romero

Within the Indian culture Diwali is recognize as the "Festival of Light." Each year, Indians world-wide enthusiastically celebrate Diwali, and therefore link to one another through the symbolism of light.

This expression of light is the spiritual connection within the Universe and it happens every year in the fall, at the time of the darkest night within the lunar cycle. It is called "The Festival of Light" because deepaks, through their light, are used to brake the darkness. Diwali embodies many different aspects with light being the common denominator between them.

Light is power. It represents life, knowledge, vision, understanding and ultimately enlightenment. Light is the connection and the spark that destroys illusion. The light that comes from a deepak merely lights a few feet in front of you. Still it is a great symbol. Within itself it carries the truth. It is a true reminder for you to light your own heart. Your heart is the real deepak.

For most, Diwali is a cultural event, where they lighten the outer world. Its true meaning is to lighten oneself from within. Diwali holds the universal experience ready to be expressed through your heart. Once this is your reality, every moment is Diwali.



Geetali's Mundan Samskar- October 1, 2006

Gitika and Vinay Jain's daughter, Geetali, had her first hair cut. Guruji not only blessed her, but he also delivered a lecture about samskaras. Guruji send his blessings and best wishes to the Jain's family.

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Yogeesh Ashram is a Place for Total Transformation of human life. We are blessed to have a Self-Realized Master like Acharya Shree Yogeesh. He delivers lectures on various topics and subjects which leads us to spiritual growth.

Because of your cooperation and contributions, you help the Ashram grow:

October 2006 Contributions:

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