

Vedanshi

The part of the sacred knowledge

That action which is regulated and which is performed without attachment, without love or hatred, and without desire for fruitive results is said to be in the mode of goodness.

Chapter 18, Verse 23; Bhagavad Gita

A Monthly Newsletter

Issue No 21: August 2015

Karma Yoga-Part I

Desire produces Karma. You work and exert to acquire the objects of your desire. Karma produces its fruits as pain or pleasure. You will have to take births after births to reap the fruits of your Karma. This is the Law of Karma.

Page 2

Varalakshmi Vrat

Friday, August 28th, 2015



Janmashtami

Friday, September 4th,
2015

Hindu Rituals and Routines - Part VII

21. Why do we chant Om?
22. Why do we do aarati?



Page 3

Ganesh Chaturthi



Wednesday, September
16th, 2015

Puja Time = 11:49 to 14:16

Page 4

SHSK Activities



Page 4

SANATAN HINDU



SANSKAR KENDRA
OM TAT SAT ITI

PO Box 80362,
Lafayette, LA - 70598

shskendra@gmail.com,
www.sanatanlft.org

Teachings of Lord Krishna

Lord Krishna, is the one of the most loved Gods of the Hindu religion. His teachings on various aspects of human life to Arjuna during the epic battle of Mahabharata are world famous. His teachings were written in form of a book by famously known as Bhagwad Gita. Bhagwad Gita literally means divine songs of Lord. Teachings of the lord, are relevant even in the present age. They are being promoted by a number of spiritual gurus. Few of his important teachings are as follows:

Four Kinds of Actions:

According to Lord Krishna there are four kind of Actions or karma that a human can perform they are, Kamya Karma- Actions performed for selfish gains, Nishiddha Karma- Actions that are forbidden by holy texts and scriptures, Nitya Karma- Actions that must be performed daily and finally Naimittika Karma-Actions that must be performed on certain special occasions. Lord Krishna clearly forbade his devotees to perform the first two kinds of Karmas as they lead to rebirth and laid stress on the performance of the latter two as they help in getting Moksha or Nirvana, in other words, salvation.

Liberation and Bondage:

Lord Krishna emphasized on being free from all kinds of negative and positive emotions like, joy,



sorrow, grief, happiness, jealousy, as they are all illusions or maya. These emotions are ephemeral. All the beings are bonded due to lack of knowledge but they get free and achieve liberation once they realize that the world is nothing but illusion. All the souls taking birth on the Earth must surrender to Lord, be free from attachments to living and non living objects. One should not be conditioned by body or the worldly things around.

Glory of Satsanga:

Lord Krishna described, 'satsanga' as the fastest means to be closer to him and please him. Satsanga literally means being in the company of Sadhus or the knowledgeable one, as it helps in reducing and finally putting an end to attachment of all kinds.

Withdrawal from Sense-Objects:

Lord Krishna preached withdrawal from all the sensory- objects as a means to avoid delusion. All the objects of desire ultimately lead to misery. One must control his senses and not run after the pursuit of desires. As soon as one of the desire is fulfilled, another desire takes its place thus creating a vicious circle. One should give up ahamkara or Ego and identify only with God.

Importance of Meditation:

Lord Krishna emphasizes on the benefits of meditation. It is a means of introspection, looking inside oneself, being close to God and removing oneself from the materialistic world. One should sit in a comfortable position, placing both the hands on the lap and fixing the eyes on the tip of the nose, followed by deep breathing. The mind should be free from all thoughts and chanting only the universal sound of 'Om'.

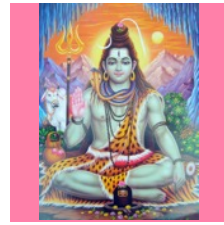
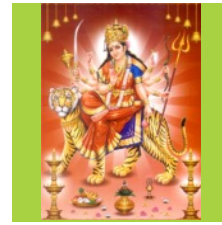
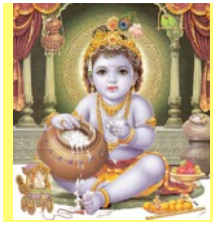
.....continued on Page 4

Ganesh

Krishna

Durga

Shiva



Sanatan Hindu Sanskar Kendra

PO Box 80362, Lafayette, Louisiana - 70598

Email: shskendra@gmail.com, Website: sanatanlft.org

Tax Id: 46-2580905

Karma Yoga - Part I

by Swami Sivananda

What is Karma?

Karma is a Sanskrit term. It means action or deed. Any physical or mental action is Karma. Thinking is mental Karma. Karma is the sum total of our acts, both in the present life and in the preceding births.

Karma means not only action, but also the result of an action. There is a hidden power in Karma or action termed 'Adrishta' which brings in fruits of Karmas for the individual. The consequence of an action is really not a separate thing. It is a part of the action and cannot be divided from it.

Karma, according to Jaimini Rishi, is the performance of Agnihotra and other Vedic rituals. According to the Gita, any action done with Nishkamy Bhava is Karma. Lord Krishna says: "Work incessantly. Your duty is to work but not to expect the fruits thereof." The central teaching of the Gita is non-attachment to work. Breathing, eating, seeing, hearing, thinking, etc., are all Karmas. Thinking is the real Karma. Raga-dvesha (likes and dislikes) constitute real Karma.

How Karma is Fashioned?

Man is threefold in his nature. He consists of Iccha, Jnana and Kriya. Iccha is desire or feeling. Jnana is knowing. Kriya is willing. These three fashion his Karma. He knows objects like chair, tree. He feels joy and sorrow. He wills - to do this, or not to do that.

Behind the action, there are desire and thought. A desire for an object arises in the mind. Then you think how to get it. Then you exert to possess it. Desire, thought and action always go together. They are the three threads, as it were, that are twisted into the cord of Karma.

Desire produces Karma. You work and exert to acquire the objects of your desire. Karma produces

its fruits as pain or pleasure. You will have to take births after births to reap the fruits of your Karma. This is the Law of Karma.

Kinds of Karma

Karma is of three kinds, viz. Sanchita or the accumulated works, Prarabdha or the fructifying works, and Kriyamana or the current works. Sanchita is all the accumulated Karmas of the past. Part of it is seen in the character of man, in his tendencies and aptitudes, capacities, inclinations and desires. Prarabdha is that portion of the part of Karma which is responsible for the present body. It is ripe for reaping. It cannot be avoided or changed. It is only exhausted by being experienced. You pay your past debts. Kriyamana is that Karma which is now being made for the future. It is also called Agami or Vartamana.

In Vedantic literature, there is a beautiful analogy. The bow-man has already sent an arrow; it has left his hands. He cannot recall it. He is about to shoot another arrow. The bundle of arrow in the quiver on his back is the Sanchita. The arrow he has shot is Prarabdha. And the arrow which he is about to shoot from his bow is Agami. Of these, he has perfect control over the Sanchita and the Agami, but he must surely work out his Prarabdha. The past which has begun to take effect he has to experience.

Actions are of three kinds, viz., good, bad and mixed. Good Karmas make you a god or angel in heaven. Bad Karmas throw you in lower wombs. Mixed actions give you a human birth.

Every work is a mixture of good and evil. There can be neither absolute good work nor absolute bad work in this world. This physical universe is a relative plane. If you do some action, it will do some good in one corner, and some evil in another corner. You must try to do such actions that can bring the maximum of good and the minimum of evil.

.....continued on Page 4

August & Sept 2015 Dates

Based on Lafayette, Louisiana, US Time

19 Wednesday	Nag Panchami
25 Tuesday	Shravana Putrada Ekadashi
27 Thursday	Onam
28 Friday	Varalakshmi Vrat
29 Saturday	Shravana Purina Rakhi, Gayatri Jayanti
31 Monday	Kajari Teej
04 Friday	Janmashtami
16 Wednesday	Ganesh Chaturthi

For more details please refer DrikPanchang.com



Find us on Facebook and get SHSK updates



Subscribe to SHSK channel on youtube and listen to devotional playlists.

Hindu Rituals and Routines

Why do we follow them? - Part VII

Hinduism is not a religion but a way of life. Unlike other religions, Hindu dharma has many specialties. This is not known as a religion, it is known as the dharma; Sanaathana Dharma. Sanaathana means, according to Bhagavath Geetha, which cannot be destroyed by fire, weapons, water, air, and which is present in all living and non living being. Dharma means, the way of life which is the 'total of all *aacharaas* or customs and rituals'.

21. Why do we chant Om?

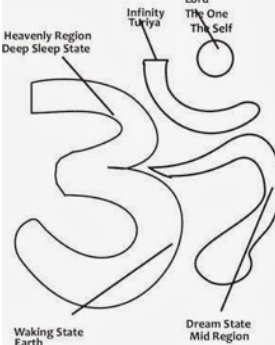


Om is one of the most chanted sound symbols in India. It has a profound effect on the body and mind of the one who chants and also on the surroundings. Most mantras and vedic prayers start with Om.

All auspicious actions begin with Om. It is even used as a greeting - Om, Hari Om etc. It is repeated as a mantra or meditated upon. Its form is worshipped, contemplated upon or used as an auspicious sign.

Om is the universal name of the Lord. It is made up of the letters A (phonetically as in "around"), U (phonetically as in "put") and M (phonetically as in "mum"). The sound emerging from the vocal chords starts from the base of the throat as "A". With the coming together of the lips, "U" is formed and when the lips are closed, all sounds end in "M".

The three letters symbolize the three states (waking, dream and deep sleep), the three deities (Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva), the three Vedas (Rig, Yajur and Sama) the three worlds (Bhuh, Bhuvah, Suvah) etc. The Lord is all these and beyond.



The formless, attributeless Lord (Brahman) is represented by the silence between two Om Chants. Om is also called *pranava* that means, "that (symbol or sound) by which the Lord is praised". The entire essence of the Vedas is enshrined in the word Om. It is said that the Lord started creating the world after chanting Om and *atha*. Hence its sound is considered to create an auspicious beginning for any task that we undertake. The Om chant should have the resounding sound of a bell (*aaooooommm*).

Om is written in different ways in different places. The most common form symbolizes Lord Ganesha's. The upper curve is the head; the lower large one, the stomach; the side one, the trunk; and the semi-circular mark with the dot, the sweetmeat

ball (modaka) in Lord Ganesha's hand. Thus Om symbolizes everything - the means and the goal of life, the world and the Truth behind it, the material and the Sacred, all form and the Formless.



22. Why do we do aarati?

Towards the end of every ritualistic worship (pooja or bhajan) of the Lord or to welcome an honored guest or saint, we perform the aarati. This is always accompanied by the ringing of the bell and sometimes by singing, playing of musical instruments and clapping.

It is one of the sixteen steps (*shodasha upachara*) of the pooja ritual. It is referred to as the lighted lamp in the right hand, which we wave in a clockwise circling movement to light the entire form of the Lord.

Each part is revealed individually and also the entire form of the Lord. As the light is waved we either do mental or loud chanting of prayers or simply behold the beautiful form of the Lord, illumined by the lamp. At the end of the aarati we place our hands over the flame and then gently touch our eyes and the top of the head.

We have seen and participated in this ritual from our childhood. Let us find out why we do the aarati?

Having worshipped the Lord of love - performing abhisheka, decorating the image and offering fruits and delicacies, we see the beauty of the Lord in all His glory. Our minds are focused on each limb of the Lord as the lamp lights it up. It is akin to silent open-eyed meditation on His beauty. The singing, clapping, ringing of the bell etc. denote the joy and auspiciousness, which accompanies the vision of the Lord.

Aarati is often performed with camphor. This holds a telling spiritual significance. Camphor when lit, burns itself out completely without leaving a trace of it. It represents our inherent tendencies (*vaasanas*). When lit by the fire of knowledge which illumines the Lord (Truth), our *vaasanas* thereafter burn themselves out completely, not leaving a trace of ego which creates in us a sense of individuality that keeps us separate from the Lord.



Also while camphor burns to reveal the glory of Lord, it emits a pleasant perfume even while it sacrifices itself. In our spiritual progress, even as we serve the guru and society, we should willingly sacrifice ourselves and all we have, to spread the "perfume" of love to all. We often wait a long while to see the illumined Lord but when the aarati is actually performed, our eyes close automatically as if to look within. This is to signify that each of us is a temple of the Lord.

Just as the priest reveals the form of the Lord clearly with the *aarati* flame, so too the guru reveals to us the divinity within each of us with the help of the "flame" of knowledge (or the light of spiritual knowledge). At the end of the *aarati*, we place our hands over the flame and then touch our eyes and the top of the head. It means - may the light that illumined the Lord light up my vision; may my vision be divine and my thoughts noble and beautiful.



The philosophical meaning of *aarati* extends further. The sun, moon, stars, lightning and fire are the natural sources of light. The Lord is the source of this wondrous phenomenon of the universe. It is due to Him alone that all else exist and shine. As we light up the Lord with the flame of the *aarati*, we turn our attention to the very source of all light, which symbolizes knowledge and life.

Also the sun is the presiding deity of the intellect, the moon, that of the mind, and fire, that of speech. The Lord is the supreme consciousness that illuminates all of them. Without Him, the intellect cannot think, nor can the mind feel nor the tongue speaks. The Lord is beyond the mind, intellect and speech. How can this finite equipment illuminate the Lord? Therefore, as we perform the aarati we chant;

**Na tatra suryo bhaati na chandra taarakam
Nemaa vidyuto bhaanti kutoyamagnib Tameva
bhaantam anubhaati sarvam Tasya bhasa sarvam
idam vibhaati**

He is there where the sun does not shine,
Nor the moon, stars and lightning.
then what to talk of this small flame (in my hand),
Everything (in the universe) shines only after the Lord,
And by His light alone are we all illumined.

- Swami Chinmayananda



SHSK Recent activities: Trustee Meeting on July 25th and at Temple site unwanted Trees and shrubs were cleared.

Karma Yoga..Continued from page 2

The Law of Karma

The Doctrine of Karma forms an integral part of Vedanta. The Law of Karma is one of the fundamental doctrines not only in Hinduism, but also in Buddhism and in Jainism.

As a man sows, so he shall reap. This is the Law of Karma. It expounds the riddle of life and the riddle of the universe. It brings solace, satisfaction and comfort to one and all. It is a self-evident truth. Fortunately, the Westerners have also begun now to acknowledge its importance and veracity. The Americans have now full belief in this doctrine. Every sensible man will have to accept it. There is no other go.

A close study of this law gives encouragement to the hopeless man, to the desperate and ailing. Destiny is created by man's thoughts, habits and character. There is every chance for his correction and improvement by changing his thoughts and habits. The scoundrel can become a saint; the prostitute can become a chaste lady; a beggar can become a king. This mighty law provides for all this.

The Doctrine of Karma only can explain the mysterious problem of good and evil in this world. The Doctrine of Karma only can bring solace, contentment, peace and strength to the afflicted and the desperate. It solves our difficulties and problems of life. It gives encouragement to the hopeless and the forlorn. It pushes a man to right thinking, right speech and right action. It brings a brilliant future for that man who lives according to



Ganesh Chaturthi

Wednesday, September 16th, 2015

Puja Time = 11:49 to 14:16

Duration = 2 Hours 26 Mins

Time to avoid Moon sighting

On 16th, 9:41 to 21:16

On 17th, 10:33 to 21:54

this universal law. If all people understand this law correctly and discharge their daily duties carefully, they would rise to sublime heights in the ladder of spirituality. They will be moral and virtuous and

have a happy, peaceful, contented life. They can bear the burden of Samsara with patience, endurance and strength of mind. There will not be any room for complaint when they see the inequalities in birth, fortune, intelligence, capacities, etc. There will be heaven on earth. All will rejoice even in suffering. Greed, jealousy, hatred, anger, passion will vanish. Virtue will reign everywhere. We will have a glorious Satya Yuga now with peace and plenty everywhere. Blessed is the man who understands and lives in the Law, for he will soon attain God-consciousness and become one with the Law-giver! Then the Law will no longer operate on him.

.....www.dlshq.org

Teachings of Lord Krishna... Continued from page 1

Path to Life Long Happiness:

Lord Krishna describes, Karma(action) Jnana (Knowledge) and Bhakti (Devotion) as the three fold way to attain Lord and please him. This is sure short way to achieve happiness and Moksha. Being knowledgeable will help perform the right Karma and not worry about the fruit of the action. Devotion to God helps introspect and remove from the worldly desires. The three paths lead to removal of illusion or maya.

-www.krishnajanmashtami.com

Thank you for your support and blessings.
Srinivasan Ambatipati, Editor