

# Vedanshi

The part of the sacred knowledge

*Over and above performing faithfully all one's duties, taking shelter in Me, it is by My pleasure a devotee obtains the eternal, unchangeable state.*

*Chapter 18, Verse 56; Bhagavad Gita*

A Monthly Newsletter

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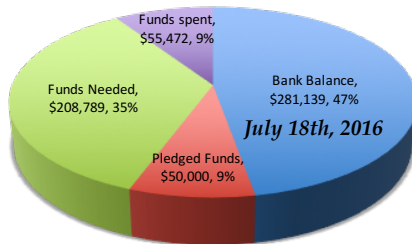
## Sanatan Hindu Sanskar Kendra

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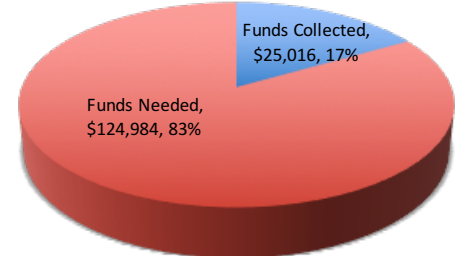


### Temple - Fundraising Campaign

Estimated Construction Cost + Deities : \$595,400



Fund Raising Challenge : \$150,000



Sponsor Category	Sponsors Needed	Committed
\$15,000	6	2
\$10,000	6	2
\$5000	10	4
\$2500	15	2
\$1000	20	3

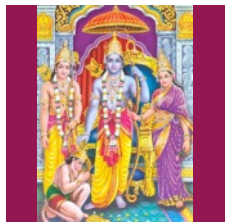
### Challenge Update

An Anonymous donor will match \$1 for every \$3 that is donated towards SHSK Temple. The matching contribution will max upto \$50,000, therefore taking the challenge amount to \$150,000. SHSK request all the supporters to fulfill this challenge to obtain the funds needed for the temple to the amount of \$200,000, as this challenge will end on **December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016**. Thanks to our generous supporters who came forward to contribute \$25,016 so far after initializing this challenge on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016. This challenge excludes already committed \$50,000 donation made prior May 1<sup>st</sup> 2016.

### Residing Deities

Balaji, Lakshmi, Shiva Ling, Durga, Ganesha, Radha Krishna, Ram Parivar, Subramaniyam Parivar, Saraswati, Hanuman and Navagraha

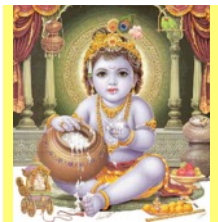
Sita Ram



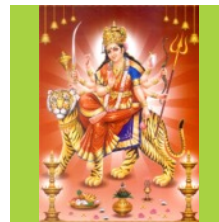
Ganesh



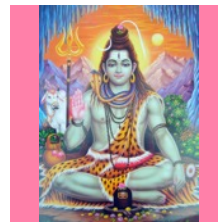
Krishna



Durga



Shiva



## The Birth of Krishna

-Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev

Krishna as a man, the mission that he took up in his life, the frailty of being a human being living such an active life and at the same time, the divine element – all these aspects form a complex web. It is not right to see him just as this or that. He would come out as a totally distorted figure if you were looking at just one aspect of his life. He is so multi-dimensional that unless you at least touch a little bit of all of him, it would be total injustice to him.

Geographically, his birth took place in Mathura, in the present state of Uttar Pradesh. There was a prominent chief of the Yadava community named Ugrasena. Ugrasena was becoming old and his very ambitious son, Kamsa, who had no qualms about how to become powerful could not wait for his father to die. He imprisoned his own father and took over the leadership. He also aligned himself with an absolutely ruthless emperor from the East whose name was Jarasandha. Jarasandha's dream was to conquer the whole known world. Through absolute brutal force, his power was growing at great pace. Kamsa aligned with him because that was the only way to get powerful at that time.

Kamsa's sister Devaki got married to Vasudeva, another Yadava chief. Just after the wedding, when Kamsa himself was driving the newlywed couple in his chariot, an astral voice made a prophecy. This voice said from the sky, "Oh Kamsa, very happily you are driving your sister after her wedding. The eighth child born to this sister of yours will slay you. That will be your end."

Immediately, Kamsa got violent. "Oh, her eighth child is going to come and kill me? I am going to kill her right now. Let's see how she will have her eighth child." He took out his sword and right there, wanted to behead his own sister. Vasudeva



the groom, begged of Kamsa, "Please spare her life. How can you do this? She is your sister and we are just married. How can you just slaughter her right here?" "Her eighth child is going to kill me. I am not going to let anything like that happen." So Vasudeva offered a pact, "I will give all our newborn children to you. You can kill them. But please spare my wife right now."

But Kamsa, overly concerned about his life and security, kept his sister and his brother-in-law under a kind of house imprisonment so that they were constantly watched. The first child was born and the guards informed Kamsa. When he came, Devaki and Vasudeva wept and begged, "It is only the eighth child which is going to kill you. Spare this one." Kamsa said, "I don't want to take any chances." He picked up the child, held him by the legs and smashed him on a rock. This continued. Every time a child was born, the parents begged Kamsa in many ways, but he wouldn't spare a single one. Six new-born children were slaughtered like this.

### *Vasudeva carries Krishna across the river Yamuna*

Devaki and Vasudeva were very frustrated with Kamsa's ways. The subjects in the kingdom were very fearful of Kamsa. Over time, they also got frustrated with the absolutely cruel ways of the king, constantly at battle with someone and then, killing these children. Slowly, dissension was beginning to happen within the palace. So when the seventh child came, Vasudeva managed to smuggle it out and replace it with a stillborn child that they found elsewhere. This child was smuggled across the Yamuna River to Gokula and gave it to Rohini, another wife of Vasudeva.



The name of this child was Balarama. As he grew up, he became like a giant and there are many number of stories about his strength

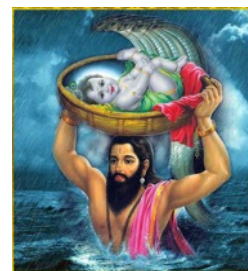
and the feats that he performed.

When the eighth child was due, Kamsa got really nervy. All these days, they had been under house arrest, but now he shackled Vasudeva and put Devaki in a proper prison. The child was born on the eighth day into the dark half of the month, and it was pouring rain and thunder. Kamsa would not allow anybody to enter the prison because something may happen. He put his trusted aide, a lady who was related to him whose name was Puthana, as a midwife. She was supposed to watch. The plan was that the moment the child is born, she would hand it over to Kamsa who would kill the child.

The labor pains came and went, came and went. Puthana waited and waited. It didn't happen. During the night, she went out to visit her home for a few minutes and come back. But when she

arrived at her home, suddenly a very heavy rain set in and the streets were flooded. In this situation, Puthana was unable to go back to the prison.

That was when the child was born and a miracle



happened. The doors of the prison opened up by themselves – all the guards fell asleep – the shackles broke. Immediately, Vasudeva saw that this was a divine intervention. He picked up the child and as if by intuitive guidance, he

walked to the river Yamuna. Though the whole place was flooding, he found to his surprise that the ford which crossed the river was sticking out and he could clearly walk. He walked across and went to the house of Nanda and his wife Yashodha. Yashodha had just delivered a girl child. She had had a difficult labor and was unconscious. Vasudeva replaced the girl child with Krishna, took the girl child and came back to the prison.

(Contd.. Page 4)



SHSK is seeking sponsorship of Radha Krishna Idols for the temple to the order of \$20,000

More information on Deity Sponsorship can be found in [May 2016 Newsletter](#)



# The Symbolism of Sri Satyanarayana Puja

Sri Satyanarayana Swami Vratam (Sri Satyanarayana Puja) is a popular, and traditional ritual of Hinduism, which is performed in many Hindu households on important occasions. The ritual seemed to have gained popularity in modern times because it is considered to have a beneficial effect upon those who perform it with reverence and sincerity. According to the legends associated with the ritual, several kings and merchants used to perform it in the past to overcome adversity and earn the grace of Satyanarayana Swami, a benevolent form of Lord Vishnu.

People in various parts of India perform the ritual to overcome adversity and resolve problems and difficulties in their lives. It is especially popular in Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, West Bengal and adjoining areas. The famous and ancient temple of Sri Satyanarayana Swami, located at Annavaram in the East Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh, is a famous pilgrim center. The stories (Satyanarayana Katha) associated with the ritual are found in the Skanda Purana.

Sri Satyanarayana Swami Puja is an elaborate domestic form of ceremony (puja) performed both in the households and temples on auspicious days such as the full moon day, 11th day after full moon day (Ekadasi), or the day of solar eclipse. It is also performed to celebrate certain events in a devotee's life, such as the purchase of a house, entering a new house, buying some property, starting of a new venture, getting a job, marriage in the house, or the birth of a child. It is usually performed to neutralize adversity and overcome difficulties with divine intervention.

During the ritual devotees offer prayers to Lord Ganesha and the nine planetary deities (Navagrahas) before they worship Sri Satyanarayana in a traditional manner by chanting his numerous names, making offerings of flowers, fruits, clothes, water, coconut, incense, flame, and prayers. The puja is performed with or without an officiating priest. The whole procedure is available in print and one can read it and chant the mantras to worship the god, even with little knowledge of Sanskrit.

Offerings are made to a photograph of the deity with a Kalasa placed in front of him. Before the worship begins, both are placed on a clean ground in the house or in the prayer room and decked with



flowers, turmeric, beetle leaves, rice, kum kum, etc. The ritual is concluded invariably by narrating a few stories, which highlight the significance of the ritual and beneficent nature of the chief deity. Once the stories are narrated, the remains of the ritual are distributed in the form prasadam (wheat flour mixed with ghee and sugar) among the devotees, which concludes the ritual. Guests are then served with food.

## Hidden Symbolism

Satyanarayana Puja has a hidden symbolism, every ritual in Hinduism has two aspects: an outer, visible, ritual aspect and an inner, hidden, spiritual aspect. The ritual performed with gross organs of the body externally is less significant than the ritual performed with the subtle mind and intelligence. The ritual performed with the heart is even more significant than the ritual performed with the body and the mind. This is affirmed in the Vedas itself. Internal rituals performed with devotion purify us and prepare us for liberation, while external rituals may serve us to remember our duties and obligations in the world and earn good karma. They do not liberate, but secure us a place temporarily in the ancestral heaven.

Satyanarayana means Lord of Truth, or Narayana in truth form. Sat means both truth and existence, in contrast to asat (untruth and non-existence). Lord Narayana (literally meaning lord of nara, the pranic energy or the life sustaining astral water) is Brahman, the highest Supreme Self. As Brahman, He is both existence (sat) and non-existence (asat), also called Being and Non-Being. His purest and the highest manifestation in creation is Isvara, the Primal Being, or the Lord of the Universe, who is His reflection in the purest form of sattva (suddha sattva).

Lord Satyanarayana is the personification of Brahman as the Truth Being. He represents truth and personifies truth in action (dharma). The true

worship of Sri Satyanarayana involves the truthful performance of obligatory duties, practice of truth in daily conduct, and commitment to truth in all aspects of life. The ritual is a promise (or vow) to God that one lives truthfully and honestly in the service of God (Narayana) and works for one's salvation. Truthfulness is one of the highest virtues in Hinduism. Without it one cannot achieve liberation. Truth has to be worshipped not only ritually but also spiritually. The mental and spiritual worship of the Lord of Truth is more important than the physical and superficial worship. The Satyanarayana Puja serves as a reminder that one should practice truth and embody it in oneself through righteous and truthful conduct.

If you analyze the stories associated with the Satyanarayana Puja, the symbolism becomes self-evident. In them you will notice that people suffer when they fail to honor truth, but overcome their difficulties when they observe it. Truth and falsehood lead to different consequences (karma) in life. Truth leads to light, wisdom and liberation. Falsehood leads to adversity, darkness and suffering. People suffer from adversity and misfortune when they indulge in falsehood and deception, fail to keep their promises or live dishonestly. Such negative consequences can be overcome only when they renounce their sinful ways and worship truth in thought and deed. You may worship Lord Satyanarayana occasionally through rituals, but practicing truth and honesty in your daily life is true worship.

You can find this symbolism in the stories associated with the ritual. For example in the first story, sage Narada observes that the people upon earth are suffering from numerous difficulties. He goes to Vishnu and requests him for a solution. Vishnu suggests that they should worship the Lord of Truth (Satyanarayana Swami) to overcome their suffering. The idea presented here is observance of truth will help the people on earth to overcome their negative karma, fulfill their desires, and achieve freedom from the cycle of births and deaths.

In the second story, a poor Brahmana is suffering from hunger thirst, as he is unable to practice his livelihood and obtain the support of patrons. God appears to him as an old Brahmana and advises him to worship the Lord of Truth. The Brahmana then begins to worship Truth and becomes rich in the process. He uses all his money in the worship of truth. After sometime, when a poor woodcutter comes to him for help, he gives him similar advice and helps him to overcome adversity.

In the third story, a wealthy merchant, who is childless, worships the Lord of Truth for progeny. When a daughter is born to him, he forgets his promise to God and fails to worship Him, whereby he faces numerous difficulties. His problems disappear when he repents for his wrong ways and agrees to worship the Lord of Truth.

(Contd.. Page 4)





## SHSK Temple Model

### *The Birth of Krishna (Contd..)*

#### **Kamsa tries to kill the eighth child**

Then the girl child cried. The guards went and reported to Kamsa. By then, Puthana had returned. Kamsa came and saw that it was a girl. He knew something fishy had happened, so he asked Puthana, "Are you sure? Were you here when the child was born?" Puthana, fearing for her life said, "I was here. I saw it with my own eyes. This child was born to Devaki." To add authenticity, she said, "This child was born right here in front of my eyes." Devaki and Vasudeva begged, "See, it is just a girl. This girl cannot kill you. If it was a boy, he would have been your slayer. But this is a girl.



Spare this girl." But Kamsa said, "No, I don't want to take any chances." So once again, he picked up the child by her legs and wanted to crash her on the floor. As he was about to do this, this child slipped out of his hands, flew out the window, laughed at him and said,

"Your slayer is elsewhere."

Now Kamsa really got suspicious. He interrogated everyone who was there. The guards had slept, Puthana had gone out. Nobody was willing to admit anything because all of them valued their heads. When you run situations by threat, initially you think it's an advantage. "If you don't do this, you're dead" – so things will happen the way you want them. But after some time, this becomes a big problem. People know that if something doesn't happen the way you want it, it will cost their life.

So they will create a whole make-believe situation all around you. When you run things by fear, this is the consequence that you will have to face.

Meanwhile, Krishna was placed into the community of Gokula. In spite of being the son of a chief, he grew up in an ordinary cow-herding community. There are many number of miracles and adventures that happened around him during that phase of his life. [to be contd.]

[www.isha.sadhguru.org](http://www.isha.sadhguru.org)

### August 2016 Dates

Based on Lafayette, Louisiana, US Time

05 Friday	Hariyali Teej
07 Sunday	Nag Panchami
12 Friday	Varalakshmi Vrat
14 Sunday	Shravana Putrada Ekadashi
16 Tuesday	Simha Sankranti
17 Wednesday	Shravana Purnima, Raksha Bandhan, Gayatri Jayanti
20 Saturday	Kajari Teej
25 Thursday	Krishna Janmashtami
27 Saturday	Aja Ekadashi
31 Wednesday	Surya Grahan

For more details please refer [DrikPanchang.com](http://DrikPanchang.com)

### *Symbolism of Sri Satyanarayana Puja (Contd..)*

In the second part of the same story you will notice that the merchant suffers from another calamity when he lies again. While returning home in a boat laden with wealth, he lies to the Lord of Truth, who comes to him as an old man, that he has nothing to offer since his boat contains only hay and leaves. As a result, all the things in the boat turn into hay and leaves and the boat becomes lighter. When the merchant notices this, his son-in-law tells him that it happened because he lied to the old man who came to him for help. When the merchant realizes his mistake and repents for it, The Lord of Truth fills his boat again with plenty of wealth.

Thus, Satyanarayana Swami Puja is not about an empty ritual we need to perform to overcome adversity. The real Satyanarayana Puja involves the practice of truthfulness, which is considered a chief virtue, upon which rests the entire Dharma. Peace and happiness flow from truthfulness, and adversity and misfortune arise when people indulge in falsehood and deception and incur negative karma. Truth is a purifier. By speaking truth, and worshipping truth one can neutralize the consequences of past actions and overcome adversity. The ritual by itself does not solve our problems, unless we develop respect for truth. Since it is very difficult to remain truthful in the present age, the internal worship of Lord Satyanarayana becomes relevant and important in our daily lives.

- by Jayaram V

<http://www.hinduwebsite.com/>

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