

Vedanshi

The part of the sacred knowledge

The yogi is deemed greater than body-disciplining ascetics, greater even than the followers of the path of wisdom or of the path of action; be thou, O Arjuna, a yogi!

Chapter 6, Verse 46; Bhagavad Gita

A Monthly Newsletter

Issue No 34: September 2016

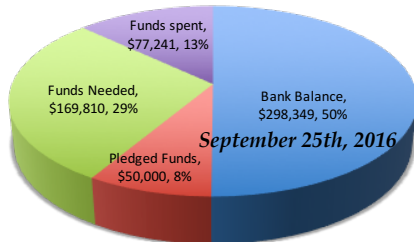
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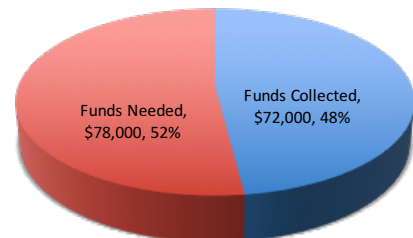


Temple - Fundraising Campaign

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 31st, 2016**. Thanks to our generous supporters who came forward to contribute \$72,000 so far after initializing this challenge on May 1st, 2016. This challenge excludes already committed \$50,000 donation made prior May 1st 2016.

Presiding Deities

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

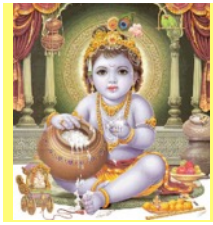
Sita Ram



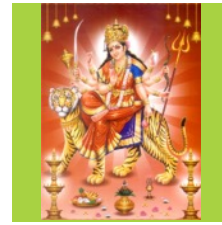
Ganesh



Krishna



Durga



Shiva



The story behind Navratri

It is that time of the year where Hindus start preparations for celebrating Navratri, the joyous festival of nine nights, which is dedicated to the Divine Mother Durga. Virtually every Hindu community in the world celebrates Navratri.

The major story associated with Navratri is the battle between the great Goddess Durga and the demon Mahishasura, who represents Egotism. To understand this story one must understand the Hindu view of life and society. Hinduism views the world drama as a battle between the forces of light and darkness. But the battle is not defined as a battle between different sections of human society on the basis of belief or disbelief in a particular dogma.

The struggle takes place between Divine Beings (Devas) and Demonic Beings (Asuras). The divine forces are those that lead to progress; to a grander, more divine society. The demonic are harmful forces that thwart progress, such as Greed, Lust, Envy, etc.

To us, it may be difficult to think of these forces as real beings, but in reality, forces such as Greed, Wrath, Courage and Love (of several types) are more real and enduring than the human beings who come under their influence. Compared with them, humans are temporary and fleeting. Devas and Asuras are forces of consciousness that have existed since the beginning of our universe, and indeed in previous universes too.

In a heightened state of awareness, Hindu Rishis of ancient times saw and experienced the Deva-Asura struggle that underlies the world drama. We ourselves take part in this drama, by being the field through which the various forces act and project themselves. The human heart and mind is in fact a battlefield between these great forces. When Asuric tendencies dominate, animal appetites dominate society. When the Devas gain ascendancy in human nature, it enhances aspirations for a larger and deeper life dominated by truth and beauty.

The art, literature and great festivals and temples of India are all themed to portray this complex and perpetual Deva-Asura struggle. They vividly portray the inner world of the universe, which human beings can only become aware of in a heightened state of spiritual awareness achieved through inner purification. Festivals like Navratri



celebrate the ascendancy of the Devas in both our inner nature as well as in society.

The Story of Durga and Mahishasura

The following is a brief adaptation of the story as appears in the Devi-Mahatmya. It is adapted in a way so as to lift the veil of the spiritual symbolism employed in the story:

The Devas, such as Self-discipline, Universal Love, Selfless Service and Courage were being routed by the most fearsome demon they had ever beheld, Mahishasura (Egotism). Ego disregards the promptings of the Devas and claims all he sees for his own, living only for sensual pleasure and self-glorification, aided by lesser demons like Greed, Lust, and Anger.

The divine beings ran to the greatest of all the gods, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, to plead for help. But when the Big Three realize whom they are up against, they exchanged worried glances. "This job is too much for the Three of us," they agree. "In a case like this, there is only one recourse." And sitting down for meditation, the gods concentrate their mental energy on her, the Supreme Goddess. Her response is instantaneous.

At that very moment as Greed and Lust are trampling the world, an extraordinarily beautiful woman rivets their attention seated quietly near a mountaintop. "She's incredible!" they pant. "Ego must possess her!" And indeed, when Ego hears about her ravishing beauty, he sends his henchmen to her with a proposal.

"Submit to Ego and all the wealth of the world will be yours!" the demons announce to the mysterious woman. "Become his slave and we will serve you forever!"

Smiling shyly, she responds, "Oh my, that's a very attractive offer. But – silly me – I took a foolish vow when I was a little girl that I would only marry the man who defeats me in battle. I'm afraid I cannot accept your master unless he conquers me."

Mahishasura is enraged at this reply and sends his generals with their heavily armed divisions to take the mysterious beauty by force. As the demons reach out to grasp her, however, the delicate maiden begins to grow. An extra eye swells from her forehead, numerous arms sprout from her trunk, and fangs erupt from her howling mouth. Swords, spears, cudgels, and whirling discs with very sharp edges-every conceivable weapon appears in each of her numberless fists. The tawny rock on which she has been sitting unfurls into an enormous, razor-clawed, ravenous lion.

"I think we bit off more than we can chew," Fear mutters under his breath as he leads the suicide charge against Durga, the Mother of the Universe.

Continued on page 4



SHSK is seeking sponsorship of Durga Idol for the temple to the order of \$20,000

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

Nishchala Tattvam: *Creating An Unwavering Intention*

Sadhguru looks at the significance of unwavering intention, and explains what Adi Shankaracharya meant by saying “Nishchalatattve jeevanmukti”, in his famous Bhaja Govindam.

Sadhguru: A spiritual process is to burn the very roots of the animal in you and create a situation for the flowering of the Divine. One may not be able to see the fruit of that seed and effort immediately. A weed flowers within a few days but if you want a coconut tree to flower it takes six years. Only an impatient fool who doesn't know the way of life will uproot a coconut tree in the fourth year thinking it isn't yielding anything. If you really want to produce something worthwhile, it takes time. But if the seed is right and the way we nurture it is good, the fruit is bound to happen – there is no doubt about it.

What is Spirituality

The word “spirituality” is one of the most corrupted words on the planet. It has been used and misused in a million different ways, largely because of ignorance and many times out of unscrupulousness. Because of this misuse, it has generated such a level of confusion and doubt in people's minds about whether it is really worthwhile or not. It has created a phenomenal sense of uncertainty. Even after walking the path for many years, people have doubts because there has been so much ambiguity and such a level of misunderstanding.

Whatever we think in our mind can't be spiritual. You can't have a spiritual thought. Whether you think about God, heaven or liberation, that is not a spiritual thought. Thought is essentially psychological, there is nothing spiritual about it. We can think about spirituality but thought can never be spiritual. It is like saying I have a spiritual little finger. The finger is plain physical. It can only be physical. Maybe I have made my physicality in such a way that my little finger and my whole body has become a conducive passage for a spiritual process, but still it is not spiritual. It is a good, physical little finger. It can be a block or it can be a gate but it is physical.

The physical is not against the spiritual. It is only because we have a physical body we are thinking of another dimension. Otherwise it would never arise. If we did not exist here physically, the need for a spiritual process would never have risen anywhere at all. So, physicality is in a way the fundamental of the spiritual but physical can never become spiritual. Similarly, the psychological and the emotional can never become spiritual. They are different dimensions of life, nothing right or wrong about them. It all depends on how you use them. We can use this body as barrier and a trap or we can use this body as a passage. Similarly, we can use this mind as a misery-manufacturing machine or we can use this as a possibility for a spiritual

possibility. But mind, body and emotion cannot be spiritual.

When we say spiritual, we are talking about a dimension which is not physical, which does not belong to this realm. If all we are looking for is mental peace, that is not spirituality. People talk about spiritual peace. There is no such thing. Peace is of the physical and the mental. You can disturb the physicality and the psychological, you cannot disturb that which is neither of these two things. It is neither seeking peace nor does it need peace.

The Crafty Barrier

The integrated mechanism of body, mind, emotion and the physical energy together has made what you refer to as “myself”, physical. Though this integrated mechanism and the rest of the existence is the same material, because of its integrity and the way it is constructed, it looks absolutely individual right now – so perfectly individual that you can't believe this and that could be one. Everything that this creation is, is just the five elements – earth, water, fire, air and space. The same five elements have become such a fantastic amalgamation and have become a human being. It is just the play of these five elements, but the play is so beautifully constructed it doesn't need to draw from anything. It is so complete by itself that we begin to question the very existence of the creator. That means it is really perfect. If it couldn't function without a morning and evening prayer every day, this is not a perfect creation. This is so perfect you can forget the creator. That is a real complement as to what a wonderful piece of creation this is.

Even if you blow bubbles in the air, the inside and the outside of the bubble is the same stuff but still it has a distinct identity. This individual nature is just like that. The inside is the same stuff as the outside but there is just one little crafty barrier – such a crafty barrier that you can't see where it is. Whichever way you look at it there seems to be no barrier but there is a distinct barrier between the individual and the rest. It doesn't matter how hard you try, it is still there – you tell someone you love them but the next moment it is thinking, “Is this guy alright?” It is from the same material. Water inside water, air inside air, mud inside mud, but the distinction is so beautifully crafted, you can't understand how.

Unwavering Attention

If we want to know the intricacies of this human mechanism, it is one way. If we just want to cross barrier, it is another way. But one who does not cross will never know. For one who does not break the barriers, there is no possibility of knowing. First comes breaking the barrier, then knowing, which is a much longer process. But if you just want to enjoy the freedom and bliss of crossing the barrier, it is much simpler than knowing because knowing takes much more. To break the barrier, all it takes is an intense dimension towards any one thing. This is not possible for people who are “multi-tasking.” That is a very common word nowadays.

People who are multi-tasking are going in five different directions at the same time. One who goes in five different directions obviously doesn't go anywhere. He will do many things, in a social context people may clap their hands, but he will not move an inch within himself. I am not referring to multi-tasking the way corporates are talking about it. It is just that people are constantly shifting. They are constantly grazing all over the place. Animals who graze don't go anywhere. The stomach becomes full but you don't go anywhere. That is always the quality of grazing.

If one wants to go somewhere, one has to stick to one thing. Truth or the divine does not need your assistance. It will happen without you. It is just that you can deny it to yourself. People bring enormous amount of punishment, pain and suffering upon themselves, not necessarily because of a life committed to evil. Their life may be committed to spiritual wellbeing, but every day they choose and re-choose. They keep destabilizing themselves by constantly falling off and falling on. We will bring enormous trouble to ourselves if we do not allow life to form itself – if we keep disturbing that which is taking shape. Every time you choose and un-choose, you distort the course of your destiny. Maybe you un-choose the path you are on because of some situation that you experience as frustrating. But even if in a few hours you are again on, by un-choosing yourself for a few hours, you have destabilized the formation and course of your destiny.

A determined mind, a mind whose choice is permanent, will allow destiny to flow the way you have chosen. If you think something is worth it, there should be no turning back. If it is worth it, that one point should not change. On the way so many things will come and so many challenges will be there. If one has to successfully go through all these things, that one unchanging point is needed.

This is what Adi Shankara means when he says, “Nishchala tattve jeevanmukti.” For one who is unwavering in his intention, liberation cannot be denied. If there is no nishchala tattvam, there is no mukti; there will only be chaos. Nishchala tattvam is needed. Otherwise you will not transcend your limitations and the hurdles that come – every hurdle will look like an impossible mountain.

If the goal was fixed, if there is no other way and that is the only thing, people would never think something was impossible. They would always be striving for the possibility. That is what a spiritual seeker should do. That is the first and foremost thing that you must do – you establish one steadfast point such that, this one thing is not changeable. If you do not compromise on this, the rest of life gets organized behind you, not in front of you as a hurdle. Life will organize behind you and will support you all the time. Your faculties, your energy, the whole world will get organized behind you because you have nishchala tattvam.

- www.isha.sadhguru.org



Ganesh Chaturthi Celebrations in Lafayette - September 6th, 2016

The Story of Durga and Mahishasura

The enemy the Ego has unwittingly engaged is the Chit Shakti herself-the purifying power of Supreme Consciousness. The Ego has finally confronted the Higher Self-and it is mighty! The Divine Warriors thwarts her foes with powerful mantras, the sword of discrimination, the bow of determination, and the bludgeon of persistent yogic practice. A fierce and grisly battle ensues in which Egotism expends every means at its disposal to overcome the spiritual force within as it reasserts its innate sovereignty.

The fighting is portrayed in detail, including Mother Durga's famous battle with Rakta Bija ("Red Drop"): each time a drop of his blood, spilled in battle, touches the earth, it leaps up as a new warrior. The Divine Mother transforms herself into the gruesome Goddess Kali, who swallows every drop of blood before it reaches the ground. To the casual reader this is a grotesque episode, but meditators will instantly recognize the analogy: in the struggle to control one's thoughts and desires, they seem to replicate magically and maniacally. Only by catching them before they have the opportunity to take root can this endless cycle be stopped.

Eventually, the all-powerful demon Mahisha (Self-Delusion) lurches into battle, transforming himself from one shape into another as he attempts to elude the Universal Mother. Indeed many of us have experienced this shape shifting as, for example, brash egotism sublimates itself into spiritual pride. He is in the form of a half-man/half water buffalo when the Divine Force finally overcomes him.

Indian religious art is replete with paintings and sculptures of the calm, benign Mother Durga slaying the buffalo demon Mahisha.

At one point the Universal Mother projects millions of goddesses from herself, including Brahmani, the Goddess of Prudently Applied Intelligence, Vaishnavi, Goddess of Wisely Used Material Resources, and Varahi, the Goddess of Desire for Spiritual Perfection. Ego cries out, "This is not fair!" and the Goddess reabsorbs her emanations, leading to the climatic scene in which Ego and Pure Spiritual Awareness stride forth to battle each other-alone. In this final confrontation the great demon Mahishasura is slain.

When the Ego perishes, order is restored to the universe and harmony returns to nature. Indra and the other Gods regain their place in heaven (i.e, the mind and senses, in service of the Divine, resume their functions).

-<https://hinduperspective.com>

SHSK is seeking sponsorship of Lakshmi Idol for the temple to the order of \$5,000



October 2016 Dates

Based on Lafayette, Louisiana, US Time

01 Saturday	Navratri Begins
07 Friday	Saraswati Avahan
08 Saturday	Saraswati Puja
09 Sunday	Durga Ashtami, Maha Navami
10 Monday	Dussehra, Vijayadashami
12 Wednesday	Papankusha Ekadashi
15 Saturday	Sharad Purnima
16 Sunday	Tula Sankranti
25 Tuesday	Rama Ekadashi
26 Wednesday	Govatsa Dwadashi
27 Thursday	Dhan Teras
28 Friday	Kali Chaudas
29 Saturday	Narak Chaturdashi, Diwali, Lakshmi Puja
31 Monday	Gowardhan Puja

For more details please refer DrikPanchang.com

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