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DIWALI

A Mini Pravachan

Presented by

Dr. Ram

Sunday Satsangh

October 20, 2019

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THE MEANING OF DIWALI

- ❖ *“Diwali” is a muted form of the Sanskrit word “Deepavali”, which means a “Row of Lights”.*
- ❖ *In South India, Karnataka in particular, “Deepavali” is the word of choice as “Diwali” also means “Bankrupt”.*
- ❖ *Diwali is the most celebrated Hindu festival all over the world wherever Hindus live.*
- ❖ *Besides India, it is an official holiday in Sri Lanka, Thailand, Nepal, Myanmar, Malaysia, Singapore, Mauritius, Guyana, Trinidad & Tobago, Suriname, and Fiji islands.*

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DIWALI CELEBRATION

- ❖ *Diwali is celebrated over a period of 3-5 days depending upon where you live, except in the state of Gujarat where it is celebrated for 7 days.*
- ❖ *Each of those days carries its own significance and a legend associated with it.*
- ❖ *Diwali starts on the 13th day of Krishnapaksha (the darker fortnight) of the Lunar month of Ashwin and ends on the 2nd day of Shuklapaksha (the brighter fortnight) of the Lunar month of Kartik.*

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DAY 1: DHAN TRAYODASHI OR DHAN TERA

- ❖ *Dhan = Wealth; Trayodashi or Tera(h) = 13th Day.*
- ❖ *It is the start of the New Year for the business communities, when merchants close their old books and start new ones.*
- ❖ *Considered an auspicious day for buying utensils and gold.*
- ❖ *Legend: Dhanvantari, the Lord of Ayurvedic Medicine, emerged from Samudra-Manthan (Churning of Ocean by Devas & Demons) with a Kalash full of Amrit (Nectar) on this day. Start of Ayurveda (Ayu=Life, Veda=Knowledge).*
- ❖ *Worshiping God Dhanvantari on this day brings good health.*

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DAY 2: NARAK CHATURDASHI

- ❖ *The North Indian celebration of Lord Rama's return from Vanavasa (Forest Dwelling). Note: There is some controversy about the date of this event.*
- ❖ *The South Indian celebration of the killing of Narakasura by Lord Krishna & Satyabhama.*
- ❖ *It is the most important day of Diwali in South India.*
- ❖ *Day 2 festival is also known as 'Choti Diwali' in North India and 'Kali Chaudas' in Gujarat, Rajasthan, West Bengal, and a few parts of Maharashtra.*

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NARAK CHATURDASHI/ CHOTI DIWALI CELEBRATION (CONTD).

- ❖ Celebrated with a number of rituals. On this day, people wake up earlier than usual, rub their bodies with perfumed oils before bathing, and attire themselves into clean or new clothes.
- ❖ In Goa (South India), Narak Chaturdashi is celebrated with the creation of effigies of the demon, Narakasur. These are then paraded through the streets and are eventually burnt down to symbolise the victory of good over evil.
- ❖ In West Bengal (Calcutta), this day is celebrated as 'Kali Chaudas' and is celebrated as the birthday of Maa Kali.

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DAY 3: AMAVAASYA: DIWALI DAY

- ❖ *It is the new moon day (Amavasya). This darkest day of the month is the most significant day of the Diwali festival in most parts of India and elsewhere wherever Hindus live.*
- ❖ *Goddess Lakshmi is worshiped on this day, with a special puja performed in the evening.*
- ❖ *Colorful and artistic Rangoli's are drawn by ladies early in the morning on the compound in front of homes to welcome Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth.*
- ❖ *The day is marked by wearing new clothes, eating lots of sweets, exchanging gifts, decorating home with Diyas & lights and spending time with family and friends.*

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DAY 4: PRATHAMA (KARTIK SH. PAKSHA) GOVARDHAN PUJA/ANNAKOOT (NORTH) BALI PAADYAMI (SOUTH)

- ❖ *Govardhan Puja/Annakoot are performed in Northern India, while Bali Padyami is observed in South India.*
- ❖ *Legend for Govardhan Puja: Lord Vishnu defeated the arrogant Indra by lifting Govardhana Hill in order to save his people and cattle from the torrential rains and floods caused by the wrath of Indra.*
- ❖ *Annakoot represents large quantities of food decorated like Govardhan Hill. Devotees prepare 56 or 108 dishes to offer to Lord Krishna. This offering is also known as 'bhog'.*

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BALI PAADYAMI IN SOUTH INDIA

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Legend: Lord Vishnu destroys the arrogance of the powerful emperor Bali by taking the form of a dwarf Brahmin called Vaaman and asking the emperor to give him a small land to stretch his three steps.



Upon receiving king's approval, the Brahmin stretches his 1st step that covers the entire earth, and the 2nd covers the entire heaven. When asked for where to put his 3rd step, the King offers his head as the space.



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Upon receiving Vaamana's third step on his head, the King was thrust into hell. When Bali asked for mercy, Vaamana grants him the boon to return to earth each year on the Prathama Day of Diwali to light Diyas as a token of dispelling the darkness and ignorance from human minds and infusing them with light that represents knowledge and wisdom.

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DAY 5: YAMA DWITIYA (SOUTH) BHAJ DOOJ (NORTH)

- ❖ *The last day of Diwali, celebrated on 2nd day of Shukla Paksha of Kartik month.*
- ❖ *Called Yama Dwitiya (South) and Bhai Dooj (North).*
- ❖ *Marked by precious gifts from brothers to their sisters in appreciation of the delectable food prepared and served.*
- ❖ *Legend: This day, Lord Yama, the God of Death, visited his sister Yami (The Yamuna River), who served him with delicious foods. Pleased with his sister's hospitality, Yama gave her precious gifts, and hence the name Yama Dwitiya.*

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THE SPIRITUAL MEANING OF DIWALI

- ❖ *Celebration of Victory over Evil by lighting Diyas and bursting fire crackers are only temporary since eventually oil runs out of Diyas and fire gets extinguished from crackers.*
- ❖ *More meaningful and long-term meaning of Diwali is spiritual. It symbolizes exposure of one's inner light that is something beyond the physical body and mind, called "Atman".*
- ❖ *The Atman (Soul) is pure, eternal, and infinite, whose recognition and self-realization leads to Brahman (Paramaatman), who is the Ultimate Truth & Reality of the Universe. And that is the real meaning and purpose of Diwali.*

DIWALI CELEBRATION

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