



***Aum, Aum Aum.
Aum Shree MahaGandhipattaye namoh namah.***





Hindu customs, rites, rituals, festivals

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Structure of presentation

1. **India – Poetic reflections**
2. **Mahakaal – Seasons, movement of time –**
 1. **Understand basic Hindu calendar terms**
 2. **Seasonal times.**
 3. **Vedic synopsis.**
 4. **Hindu calendar system**
3. **Highlights on auspicious times.**
4. **Highlights on auspicious festivals**
5. **Cultural aspects of good Hindu home.**
6. **Some good mannerisms.**
7. **Some Hindu “Samskaras”**
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9. **Conclusion**
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“Bharatti” – Mother India

“Bharatti” alias India is a mother, sister and a daughter.

Across the seas, in the distant land of mother India, the earthen clay is filled with the boon of ancient ‘dharma’ (religion), ‘ritti-rivaj’ (traditions), ‘karma’ (deeds) and ‘bhakti’ (devotion).

The sun rises and sets mystically over the Himalayan mountains and glimpses over the valleys, rivers and sea shores before scorching the buzzing streets with its heat.

“AUM” (the sound of eternity) echoes undyingly in benign silence and dances to the mysticism of Shiva-Shakti at the dawn and the dusk. The noises and the haste all over India quietens at the dusk and away from chaotic streets, there is a beauty beyond words – the grand pastures, perennial, rustling of the trees, thrashing of the waves on the seashore, the smoky mist, the cold air calming the heat of the days sun, and the natives singing and dancing in colourful costumes.

Natural Beauty, natural divinity, and galore of colourful traditions, customs, rites, and rituals make Mother India extraordinary ‘GIVER’, despite its mass social drudgery, mass poverty and mass mundane struggles. Amidst most arduous and most wretched conditions and circumstances, emanates world class beauty, world class intelligence, and world class wisdom. This can only be attributable to the divine mysticism of MAA (alias mother) the giver of givers!

Languages of India

Urdu

Hindi

Punjabi

Oriya

Rajasthani

Bengali

Gujarati

Sanskrit

Assamese

Marathi

Telegu

Konkani

Kannada

Tamil

Malayalam



The Lingaraja Temple



The Sun Temple, Konark



Meenakshi Temple



Khajuraho



Temple at Thanjavur



The Shore Temple



The Brihadeswara Temple



Jagannath Puri Temple



Mahabalipuram Rathas



Figurines of Vidya Devis



Maiden's figurine



Kailashnath Cave Temple, Ellora



The Natraj Temple



Meenakshi Sundareswarar Temple



Buddha sculpture at Borobudur, Java



The Rajarani Temple



Brihadeswara Temple



Dilwara temple - exquisitely carved



Lakshmi Narayana Temple



Hari Mandir (the Golden Temple)



The Hoysaleswara Temple, Halebidu



Manipuri



Bharata Natyam



Mohini Attam

7 Classical Dance forms



Odissi



Kathak



Kuchipudi



Kathakali

Aum namoh namah Shivayeh shivayeh namah aum

“Mahaakaala”, “Great Eternal Time” presides above creation’s golden arch. Devouring instants and eons, with a ferocious face, ‘Shiva’- Mahakaal purusha (The Great Cosmic Vedic God) is Time beyond time, reminder of this world’s transitoriness, that sin (papam) and suffering (dukham) will pass as transient episodes of life. Desire (moha), Illusion (maya), joys (arthakaya), attachments (mahad) and society (samsahar) always end in suffering (dukha cha pidha). ‘Ignorance’ according to the Vedas is the longest night. To be aware is to be awakened. Righteousness (dharma) brings happiness, peace and truth. Unrighteousness (adharma) brings falsity, sorrow, and chaos.

Trinity



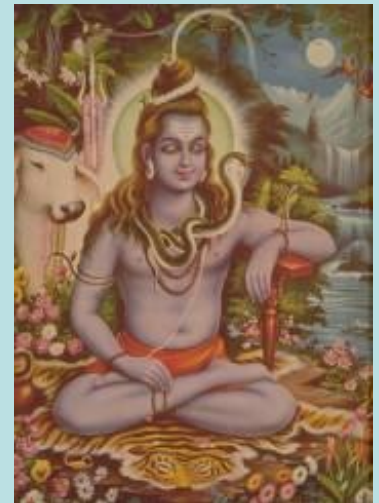
Creator

Brahman



Preserver

Vishnu



Destroyer

Shiva

Aum Satt-Chidd Anandam Hari Aum Tat Sat Aum Hamnssa Aum Soham Aum Swaha

“Truthfulness, divine thoughtfulness, divine blissfulness, Oh Altogether Godhead whose one word is “HARI”, thou art that truth without a second meaning and that truth is the light of delight as I light this candle of delight in my lotus heart offering you obeisance with flowers in rejoicing this truth.”

The Vedas are the eternal truths of the seers and sages for the laws of existence and righteous living on the human earth. The eternal ways of life, the laws of eternity and the cosmic code of conduct have been elucidated in elaborate manner in mantras, hymns, poetries, lyrics, compositions, dialogues ‘shlokas’, insights and narrations. The human is born to ponder on its own soul divine and to realise its real true essential spirituality whilst journeying in the passage of time to experience the karmic wheel of ‘samsahr’ (customs and rites).

The grey clouds may cover the shine of righteousness, but it would have to clear some time, and the truth will shine no doubt! Truth alone triumphs and truth is GOD.

Seasons come and seasons go

Time flies, time forever is. Seconds turn into minutes, minutes turn into hours, hours turn into rotation of days. The Dawn and the Dusk turn into months; months turn into seasons and seasons turn into a year – “Varsha”. Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter are the four seasonal festive occasions and moments of one ‘manushya varshapal’ (one human calendar year). The Vedic hymns begin with ‘Agnee’ light of fire in the Sun (Surya) and end in the light of fire in the Sun. The dawn and the dusk forever perpetuate.

Vedic light of delight

- *The Vedas never cease to call upon the three worlds of existence namely the celestial world (Eishwarya loka), the spiritual world (Deva chaiva Pittiri loka) and the terrestrial world –human earth (manushya bhautika bhummi) from birth to death, during birth and death, and, beyond birth and death. The Vedic life of life commemorates every single aspect of human life in ‘togetherness’, in relation to the Cosmic Godhead and in collaboration of the altogether human existence – ‘Samnsahr’ – the communion of sharing the joys and sorrows of human life here on human earth.*

JUL 8 2001

Sun is the soul of cosmos

The sun was visible on the first dawn upon this earth. This 'hora' or hour was dedicated to this planet. People called it Ravivar or Adityavar i.e. Sun's day. In the second 'hora' or hour, the other planets appeared in quick succession in the rotation as referred to above. In the 24th 'hora' or hour, moon appeared in the sky. So this day was named as Somvar, Chandravar or Moon's day. Likewise other planets followed this pattern and the days were named after them which appeared in the first hour of the succeeding dawn. So 'Shani' was the deity of the dawn on the 7th day. Rahu and Ketu (the dragon head and tail) would share Sundays, Mondays as well as Wednesdays.

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DINA (days)

Here are highlights of deities and their respective best days of worship/ puja:

- Ravi-vaar = Sunday = Maa,Surya-Narayan & Ramayan / Rahu & Ketu/ Sun-
- Somavaar = Monday = Lord Shiva-Moon-Rudra abhishekha
- Mangalvaar = Tuesday = Ganesh & Maa Bhavani / Hanumanth/ Mars
- Budhvaar = Wednesday = Narayana/budha//Vishnu/ Naag puja// Mercury
- Guruvaar = Thursday = Brahaspatti/ Gayatree/ Nava graha puja/ Jupiter
- Shukravaar = Friday = Shukra/Lakshmee/Kartikay/Kuber/Daanpan/ Venus
- Shanivaar = Saturday = Shanni/ Hanuman/ Kali/ Shiva/ Maun/ SATURN

THE HINDU RITES IMPLY THAT WE FOLLOW EACH DAY WITH PROFUND AWARENESS, GREAT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND CONSIDERATE COMPASSION TOWARDS OTHERS. WHAT WE THINK AND WHAT FEEL SHOW ON OUR AURICLES OUR FACES AND WE REFLECT THESE ENERGIES EITHER TO ATTRACT OTHERS OR TO REPEL OTHERS. WHEN WE GIVE SELFLESSLY GOD RETURNS IT TO US TENFOLD.

Moon is the param-manas (cosmic mind) that goes around the sun to make a month in thirty nitya karma dinas (days)

- Lunar calendar means that moon goes around the sun in 30 days. Each completed cycle completes one Hindu calendar month.
- First fifteen days the moon goes around the sun is called the 'shukla' paksha' or 'sud' or bright cycle of the moon and another fifteen days is called 'krushna paksha' or 'vad' or dark cycle of the moon. Each cycle affects the three elements of nature vatta-pitta-kapha by stimulating the oceanic currents and the air in the atmosphere. Most auspicious ceremonies and pujas (rites and rituals) are conducted in the bright cycle of the moon. There are certain more auspicious 'tithis' (moments of brilliancy) than others that do not fall in all the bright cycle of the moon phases or NITYA.
- The 15th day of 'shukla paksha' (bright cycle) brings us to full moon ('poonam') and subsequently the 15th day of 'krishna paksha' brings us to 'AMAVASHYA' (darkest day – moon is not visible at all from earth). During this phase there is light of lights in the celestial, the spiritual worlds and it is very prominently time for worshipping the lord of rattree – Lord Shiva. Lord shiva is worshipped as purusha – or eishwarya brahman or Vedic godhead. In some parts of India, the worship of lord shiva begins on eleventh day, of the dark cycle of the moon and ends on the fifteenth day the amavashya. The 11th day – "ekadhashi" is a beautiful 'tithi' moment for granting sacrifices and paying tributes to the spiritual worlds and the celestial world in particular recitation of 'Vissnoosahasranaama' is very rewarding as is the recitation of any Vissnoo jaapa.

Hindu Panchang

- WE THUS GET TWELVE MONTHS OF HINDU CALENDER. From the 'Hindu panchang' a magnificent scientific astrological permutations of each hora (hour), each 'dina' (day), each 'tithi' (moment) each of the 27 nakshattaras, each of the nine karmic planets, and each of the twelve horoscopes are positioned during their respective transits in time. There are controversies emanating in this subject area. In my opinion, it is best to follow THE PANCHANG THAT IS DESIGNED BY A BRAHMANS AND THE PANCHANG THAT HAS BEEN HANDED DOWN BY THE SEERS AND SAGES OF THE VEDIC TIMES. Any other panchang designed by any other individual contravening the Vedic Panchang is A WRONGFUL ACT. In Ved-puranas it is said time will fluctuate between each cycle of the moon as there will be differences in horas and dinas. As such, the tithis will have CUSPS. These cusps will manifest prominently during the kalyug. Therefore, we must allow and give allowance to such magnitude by up to seven hours maximum. For example, in astrology, the karmic birth charts tend to show more accurate picture of the subject if the charts are drawn from the time the water breaks rather than the time the first cry of the child is heard. This is purely an Ayurvedic observation. Automatically the panchang has variations.
- RUSHI PANCHANG IS AN AUTHENTIC PANCHANG AND IS RECOMMENDED because it removes the individualism and political camouflages. Also, it ties in with the Indian Vedic calendar. Panchang means the journey of the sun around the twelve zodiac signs of cosmic horoscope and twenty seven nakshattaras (constellations) during the transits of waxing and waning moon during twelve months. There is NO proven precision of annual variation in degrees as yet.

The Vedic months

VEDIC MONTH	TIMES FROM TO	RASHI
• CHAITRA	APRIL-MAY	Aries/mesha
• BVAISHAKK	MAY- JUNE	Taurus/Vrushub
• JYESHTHA	JUNE – EARLY JULY	Gemini/Mithuna
• ASHAADHA	JULY – EARLY AUGUST	Cancer/Karaka
• SHRAVANA	AUGUST- EARLY SEPT	Leo/Simna
• BHADARVO	SEPT. – EARLY OCT.	Virgo/ Kanya
• ASHWINI	OCT.- EARLY NOV.	Libra/ Tula
• KARTIKA	NOV.- EARLY DEC.	Scorpio/ Vrishik
• MARGASHIRSHA	DEC. – EARLY JAN.	Sagitarious/ Dhan
• POUSHA	JAN.- FEB.	Capricorn/Makar
• MAGHA	FEB.- EARLY MAR.	Kumbh/Aquarius
• PHALGUN	MARCH-EARLY APRIL	Meena/ Pisces

Highlights on some more auspicious times

- VIVAH – MARRIAGES AUSPICIOUSNESS FOR PROLIFERATION
- Most auspicious times for marriages:
Bright cycle of the moon during the months of Bhaishakk and Jyeshththa months are very good omen of longevity of the married life and of the bonding of the husband and wife. During the Jyeshththa month the eldest son does not get married (Jyeshththa means eldest).
- When marriages are conducted in the bright cycles of the moon during the months of Chaitra (April's), Sravana (August's), Magha (feb.-mar.), Phalgun (before holi March) on 'beeja' (second day of the bright cycle of the moon), labham pancham (fifth day of very highly auspicious nakshattaras), dussera (vijaya dussera), terrass (thirteenth day of the bright cycle of the moon) are auspicious.
- Also the months Poush and Kartik represent good luck from the wife to the husband provided the nakshattaras favour and are in the bright cycle.
- Hindus **DO NOT marry** in the months of Bhadarvo (pittiri) from the poonam to the amavashya; during phalgun month holashtakka (eight days of holi to the holi full moon); No auspicious (shubh) or (labh) karya (ocassion) is undertaken during panchak, especially vishti karan, aidra and pushya nakshattaras. Sankranti periods (when sun enters a particular rashi) and Harishyana (ashadha sud ekadashi to kartik sud dwadeshi). **Also avoid 'kharra masa' (sun entering Sagitarius and pisces rashes).** 'Rikta Vrudhee tithis' (adverse times), like the chauth, naum and chaudass of the vad are **inauspicious** for any good beginning, house ceremonies, marriages or pujas for progress. During such periods Jaapa are done.
- Marriages conducted on Akshaya treeej (third day of the bright cycle of the moon falling in bvaishakk month), dhanterash, vijaya duserra, vassant panchami, and labh panchami are best favoured.

Highlights on some more auspicious times

- The 27-29 yogas (planetary effects) portray different effects upon the particular 'titthi' (moment in time). The culmination of influences from the higher cosmic order, and the manner in which the cosmic galaxy is configured by nine karmic planets, in twelve rashi bhavas (houses), within the 27 nakshattaras (constellations of stars) represents a panchang on earth. When the atmosphere on earth becomes somewhat heavy and uncomfortable and uneasy we can correlate such acute imbalances in harmony to the cosmos, its placement in the time, and the planetary placements around the zodiacs twelve houses and 27 constellations of stars. Hindus, normally undertake auspicious tasks leading to buying, marriages, getting cars, houses, assets, gold, starting education, new businesses, new relations, new homes, good progress and prosperity in the BRIGHT CYCLE OF THE MOON. The dark cycle of the moon are dedicated towards JAAPA, devotion and maun (silence) towards the spiritual and the celestial worlds. However, certain dark cycles like the Krishna leela and Rama Leela are conducted in the dark cycle of the moon hence the 'Janamashtamee' and 'Deepavali' fall in the dark cycle of the moon and are most auspicious times for Hindu festivities, celebrations, and any good karyas (occasions). To go deep in the subject matter is NOT the aim of this talk.

Highlights on some more auspicious times

- According to the Hindu Vedic Panchang, 'Akshaya thrij' is a tithi when the sun enters the Kritika nakshattara (constellation) in the month of 'bvaishakk' is considered tripple fold favourable and auspicious. All days in the first fifteen days of the 'bvaishakk' month are very auspicious for celebrations and private functions.

Highlights on some more auspicious times

- In the panchang, tithi's like – 'panchami' or 'terrassh' or 'poonam', are especially best days to buy gold ornaments and gold for the queens and the ancient royals would conduct special ceremonies for these tithis.
- Also, days like 'beeja', 'chatturthi', and 'assthami' of the bright cycle of the moon are regarded as very auspicious for holding any private pujas, celebrations, and gratification pujas.
- Keeping the vratt 'Poonam' for women who cannot conceive children proved beneficially prolific.
- Observing the two 'ekadashi' vratts in a month (either by jaapas or by maun-silence) has proven to free one from the ancestral debts. 'Ekadashi' = eleventh day of the bright cycle of the moon and the eleventh day of the dark cycle of the moon.

Highlights on some more auspicious times

- For those of us who suffer malefic planetary conflicts in our birth charts, the times from the 11th day of the dark cycle of the moon to the Amavashya are days of worshiping RUDRA-SHIVA-DISSOLVER-DIFFUSER of 'vi-karma' (malefic karma). Rudra abhishekh (shiva manas puja) and shiva is worshipped for five days and on the Amavashya dina (30th day of the moon cycle or darkest day of the moon cycle), a maha rudra abhishekh is conducted. Karma is not made of just one lifetime. Karma is made of seven life times put together and it is very wrong to look at suffering in this lifetime to be the result of this lifetime. In this lifetime, we have the opportunity to amend our fates, our previous karma. Cosmic gods guide us.

Highlights on some more auspicious times

- Durga bhavani, Bhagavatti, Maa, Shakti is worshipped always in the bright cycle of the moon. Never in the dark cycle of the moon.
- Maa is best worshipped in the following tithis:
 - Beeja – second day of the bright cycle of the moon
 - Ashthamee – eight day of the bright cycle of the moon
 - Navaratri – the nine days in the chaitra month and the nine days of Ashwin months are particularly auspicious.
 - Dusera – for yagnas and chandi-yagna for protection.
 - Poonam – for fulfilling a virgin woman's desire to obtain a nice spouse.
 - Panchami – for progression of career and wealth.
 - Trij and chaturtee – for fortune, welfare, house harmony.

Highlights on some more auspicious times

- **Shraddha karma**

Amavasya (30th day of the moon) corresponds to the spiritual world and time to offer obeisance, peace and prayers to the ancestors. The dusk is a daily reminder of the same peace offering towards the spiritual world. Samndhya karma is offered to the spiritual world for peace and during these evening prayers we light deepams on windows and if our windows are clean and shining the spirits from the spiritual world pay us a visit but we cannot see them. The deities become happy and bless our homes with harmony and peace.

Such sacrifices towards the ancestors are conducted during the Pitri months of Bhadarvo and Margshira krishna paksha.

Tarpana = is the ritual for praying to pitri – offering water and milk from kalash to the running rivers looking at the sunset or the sunrise.

Everyday, when we remove one piece of rotti, fill it with kheer, and sugar and make four pieces (tiny koryas) and feed one piece to a cow, one piece to a dog, one piece to birds and one piece to crows, we get solace and blessings from the pitri loka.

Everyday, only for just five minutes, when we do a deepam made of wick of oil and ghee slanted placed in metal container containing rose water, we recite the Rama-mantra- to the pitri even if it is for eleven times offering a white flower and rice reaches the departed spirit without fail and the departed spirit gets peace, rest and freedom from any attachments.

Browsing through Hindu calendar

- In April, the day sun enters Aries being the first astrological month of the Hindu astrological calendar month (CHAITRA) marks the beginning of the Hindu solar new year. It is the day for rejoicing the harvest, the day to thank the heavens for rain, the day to sing and dance all over India. 'Chaitra' / or April month stirs much enjoyment, celebrations, singing, rejoicing, dancing, and colourful commemorations remarking the glory of Sun. 'Baisakhi' sings the praises of harvesting, whilst in Kerala new garments are bought to welcome freshness of the new year. In Assam, 'Bohag-Bihu' feasting, food, and eating together is celebrated with music and dance. So, this is the first month of the VEDIC ASTROLOGY AND HINDU CALENDAR.

More prominent Hindu festivals

- Chaitra month - NAVARATTRI RAMA NAVARATTRI, LAKSHMEE PANCHAMEE, HANUMAN JAYANTI, DURGA PUJA, RAMA PUJA. Brahma goes to rest.
- Bvaishakk month – Akshaya treej, Surya sankranti, Narssimha jayanti, Ganga puja, Shree Sita-Rama Jayanti, Bvaishakk celebrations, and shubh labh karya.
- Jyeshtha month – Rambha Durga puja (gupta navaratri), Ram Nami, Gayatri Jayanti, Vratt Savitri, Shiva Puja.
- Ashaada month– Rath yatra, Parvatti puja, Lakshmee vratt, Jaya parvatti jagran, Guru poornima, and Nava-graha hasta nakshattara. Gods go to rest.
- Shravaana month - Shiva Puja, Naag Panchami, Surya puja, ALL DEITIES AND NAVA GRAHA PUJA, RAM PUJA, UPAKARMA, RENEWING VEDIC STUDIES, RAKSHA BANDHAN, GANESH PUJAN, KRISHAN JANAMASHTHAMEE, SHIVA PUJAN
- Bhadarvvo month – Ganesh Chaturthi; Saptami- Bhagawatt; pittiri month; Propitiation of departed spirits (from poonam to amavasya), worship of Shiva and Pittari.

More prominent Hindu festivals

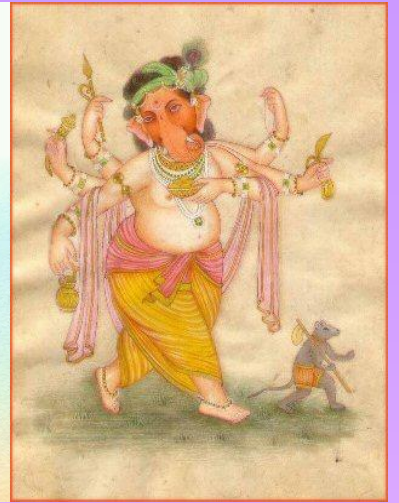
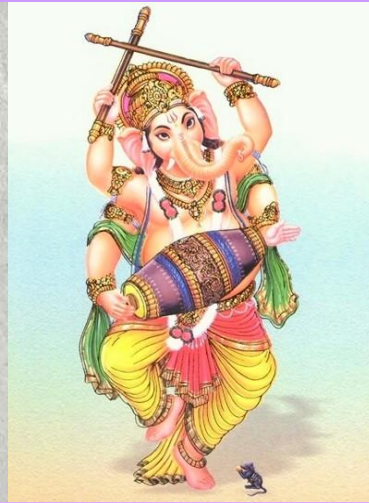
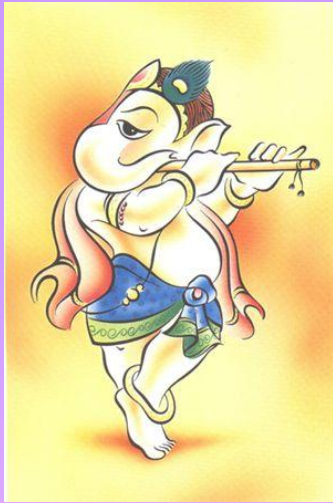
- Ashwini month – Navaratri; Durga Puja; Ram leela, Krishna asthamee, Dhan terash, end of era for ramas vaan – GREAT DEEPAVALI NIGHT WHEN LORD RAMA RETURNS BACK FROM FOURTEEN YEARS ASSYLUM; BEGINNING OF NEW ERA – Devhutti -
- Kartikk month – Deva deepavali, Sri Nehru Jayanti, Kala Bhairav jayanti. Dev deepavali.
- Margssirsha month – For devotion, for narayan. For doing private pujas. No auspicious pujas during sankranti.
- Poushya month – Sankranti – Sun enters capricorn – big event; REPUBLIC DAY OF INDIA GREAT CELEBRATIONS. Usually after January 14th ish when Dhanarak completes, auspicious times for all celebrations, pujas.
- Magha month – Swami Ramakrishna jayanti; Shivaji Jayanti, very auspicious nakshattara for sharadha falls on the DHANNISHTTA NAKSHATTARA amavasya – we offer tributes to the departed souls on this day. Usually falling on 10th or 11 March. Also Vasanti celebrations. Shiva goes to rest.
- Phalguni month – Rang panchami, eclipse, HOLI – SUN ENTERS THE LAST OF THE TWELVE ZODIAC COMMEMORATING THE COMPLETION OF CYCLE AND THE CELEBRATIONS OF HOLI ARE CARRIED OUT IN GRAND SCALE ALL OVER INDIA. HOLI LASTS FOR EIGHT DAYS. Burning of desire and burning of negativities. Worship of AGNEE DEVATA. When meena-rak manifests Sun entering pisces no auspicious occasions.

Some Hindu Festivals explained

- **NAVARATTRI – NINE DAYS**

Nine nights and nine days; nine elements namely Antahkarana - purusha-atman, manas, budhee, ahamkar, and the pancha-mahabhautas – akash, vayou, tejas, jaal, prithvee. = NINE cosmic energies.

- The nava-durga shaktee represent the motherhood of each of these nine cosmic elements.
- At the earthly level, we perceive them as Saraswatti, Kali and Lakshmee.
- Durga MATA is regarded in BHARATTI in three swaroopam = maa (AMBA, BHAGAVATTI BHAUNESHWARI BHAVANI), bahena (DURGA) and beti (KANYAKUMARIKA).
- Kanya puja and randal puja is performed on the eighth and ninth day of the navaratri festivals.
- Dussera commemorates the victory over evil. Lord Rama killed the King Ravana after worship of Shakti for nine days.



Some Hindu Festivals explained

- **Makara sankranti:** January -
- Sun is posited on the north of equator and the Vedas called upon Varun (cosmic deity of compassion) to submerge Ganga into the Ocean. Hence, taking a holy dip into the Ganga, and giving of gold to poor brahmin bramcharis is auspicious.
- Lohadi is a day before makar sankranti people of Punjab make REVADI prepared from sesame seeds and maize. The night is gazed with fire and dancing and singing.
- In Gujurat and Maharashtra – Houses are decorated with ‘Rangoli’ and food prepared from jaggery is eaten.
- It is said that third of the VEDAS commenced on this day and thus continued to the VASANTA PANCHAMI to commemorate mata Saraswatti.
- These times are very auspicious for studying the VEDAS.

Some Hindu Festivals explained

- **Holi – phalgun month:**
- From the ashtamee to the full moon comprising eight days represents holashthaka. These are days when desires, attachments and pleasures are sacrificed in jaap (mantras) and sacred fire (or deepam). We Hindus do not undertake good karays (auspicious tasks) during such period.
- On the full moon, this is the last of the festivals that puts away all the negativities and burns all the desires. Per ancient Vedic wisdom, oblations are offered made of wheat, grams, oats, coconut, and cereals (holka) to the sacred holi fire. Its greatness dates back to Prahlad's victory Hiranyakashipu who ordained Holika (Prahlad's sister) to sit on the burning fire with Prahlad in her laps. Holika straight away put on her chunni over her head and took Prahlad in her laps. She had a boon from Eishwaar that no fire could burn her and that she herself was HOLIKA agnee devi. She saved Prahlad. Holi is victory over evil. Holi marks the end of evil, and the beginning of good.
- **RAM-NAVAMI**
- Incarnation of Rama avatar and sama samnskarik sabhyetta mariada bhava is commemorated. It is a notion that Shree Rama was incarnated to teach us how to be a noble father, a noble brother and a noble fellow humanbeing. Maa Sita teaches us of shaktee, pati-vrata (loyalty to husband) and how to be a noble mother, noble sister and a noble satti (a woman who is pure, chaste and without sins).
- Also just after the Ram-navami, we celebrate the HANUMAN JAYANTI

Some Hindu Festivals explained

- **RATH YATRA:** JULY-AASHAD SHUKLA: Grand parade of JAGANATH PURI – Nearly four thousand people pull the huge chariot and other devotees form the parade. Pomp and gaiety Celebrations. Haridwar, JagannathPuri, Kashi and South India are four very prominent religious places of worship. Lord stays for 3 days in Puri and meets Goddess Lakshmi. After this, Lord returns to his normal position.
- **Ganesh Chaturthi (September):** Bhadrapad month shukla paksha early morning after completing rituals, Ganesh made of clay is bathed, worshiped and posited on a beautiful asana (platform of idol) with red, green and yellow cloth materials. At the dusk, everyone especially the Marathas worship the chaturthi moon the fourth day of the bright cycle of the moon and after puja (ceremonies), water is offered as peace and gratification (arghya). Usually the Idol of Ganesh in Maharashtra is kept for nearly nine days before the dusk of the chaturthi and on the day of the ANANT CHATURTHI IT IS DISCHARGED AT THE DUSK AS VISARJAN INTO THE OCEAN. Plenty of singing and recitals take place at the time of VISARJAN (illusory Ganesh goes into the womb of the mother OCEAN divine).

Some Hindu Festivals explained

- DEEPAVALI

- Deepavali may have deeper significance than what is popularly believed. At the time of the festival the sun is in the house of 'Thulam' (Libra the scales) which signifies commerce, justice, balance and equilibrium of energies. Hence 'deepavali' is associated with merchants and the Goddess of wealth and abundance (material proliferations). The darkness and light symbolise ignorance and knowledge respectively. As the falsehood represent the entire whole 'samnsar' (manifestation of the human world), and the truth represents the infinite soul divine (param-anandam divya-jyott – the light of light that which is delight). As the light dispels darkness, ignorance is replaced by knowledge. Deepavali, the festival of lights, symbolises this prayer.



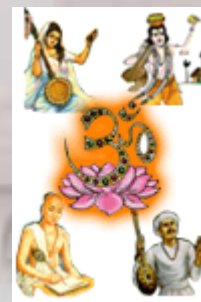
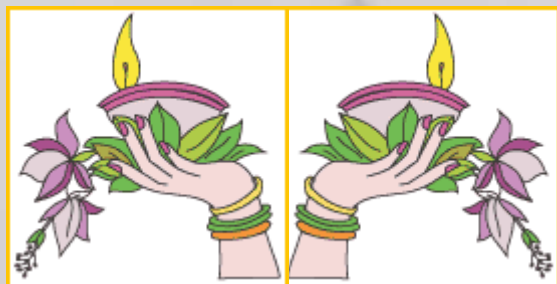
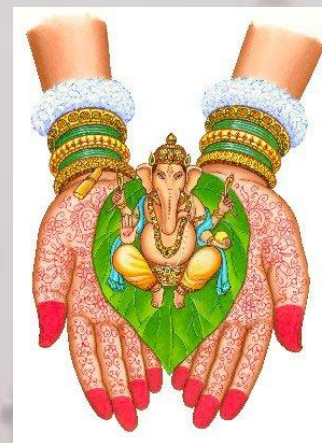
Some Hindu Festivals explained

Raksha Bandhana and Bhai-Beeja:

Of particular relevance is the relationship of a brother and sister. It is a relationship of true divine friendship. When a sister with all her heart blesses her brother on the full moon day with a rakhee (friendship band) the brother is protected from diseases, misfortunes, and accidents. Wife cannot play this role on her husband albeit wife can protect her SUHAAG-SAUBHAGYA (the non widowhood) by putting the red kumkum powder on her hair and red kumkum BINDI on her forehead every day as SITA MATA DID. Thus when one day Hanumanji asked Sitamata why she put the sindhoor on her maa said to him that it was for her SUHAAG-SAUBHAGYA PATTTI RAM (for the love of her husband, protecting her husband, loving her husband, and wishing him victory). Oh Hanumanji maharaj felt Sitaji's love for Rama deep inside his navel and began to put SINDHOOR ON HIMSELF in a playful mode. "Look MAA, I am wholly painted with sindhoor because I love shree Rama benevolently beyond words too. Divine friendships need not be confined to brothers and sisters. Only once a year, on bhai-beej, a Hindu brother can eat at her married sisters house and bless her with gifts, money, gold, ornaments, cloths, and traditionally on this day it is a great honour and pride for the brother to visit her married sister's samnsahr (life).

Cultural Hinduism

- Each of the religions of the world has its own culture, with many customs, traditions and refined qualities. The Hindu culture is a culture of love, respect, honouring others and humbling one's own ego so that the inner nature, which is naturally pure and modest, will shine forth. *'Forget like a child any injury done by somebody immediately. Never keep it in the heart. It kindles hatred and burns you like fire. Cultivate Maitri (friendship), Karuna (compassion), Daya (mercy), Prema (love), bhava (attitude), Kshama (forgiveness). Develop good manners, compassion, courtesy, etiquette, good demeanour, nobility, gentleness, mildness. Never be rude, harsh, or cruel. There is nothing to be hated in the world. Hatred is ignorance. All contempt for anything or any being must be removed through love and Vichara (enquiry)'.*



Some examples of Hindu manners

- RESPECT & REVERENCE FOR ELDERS, GURUS, PRIESTS, AND PARENTS
- 1. Acknowledgment of seniority and appreciation for what we are is demonstrated through endearing customs, such as sitting to the left of elders, bringing gifts on special occasions, not sitting while they are standing, not speaking excessively, not yawning or stretching at dinner tables, not putting one's opinions forward strongly, not contradicting or arguing, seeking their advice and blessings, giving them first choice in all matters, even serving their food first and being humble at all times.
- 2. NAME PROTOCOL: Younger never uses the proper name of their elders. Bhai. Bahen, Devimata, Mata, Motaben are few references. The elder, however, may use the name of the younger. Children are trained to refer to all adults as auntie or uncle. Only people of the same age will address each other by first name.
- 3. TOUCHING FEET IN RESPECT: One touches the feet of holy persons in recognition of their great humility and inner attainment. A dancer or a musician touches the feet of his or her teacher before and after each lesson. Children prostrate and touch the feet of their mother and father at festivals and at special times, such as birthdays and before departing on a journey.
- 4. **Darshan** (darshana): "Vision, sight." Seeing the Divine. Beholding, with inner or outer vision, a temple image, Deity, holy person or place, with the desire to inwardly contact and receive the grace and blessings of the venerated being or beings. Even lightening a 'deepam jyott' candle.
- 5. **DAKSHINA**: It is tradition to provide dakshina, a monetary fee or gift to a priest given at the completion of any rite. Dakshina is also given to gurus as a token of respect for their spiritual blessings.

Some Hindu mannerisms continued

- 1. PURITY AND FOOD: One cooking food for others would never taste of the dish from a spoon and then put the spoon back in the pot. If food is to be tasted while cooking, a small portion is placed in the right hand. Similarly, one would not touch the lips to a water vessel that is also used by others. Nor would one offer something to another from which one has taken a bite or a sip.
- 2. FLOWER OFFERINGS: One does not sniff flowers picked for offering to the Deities; even the smell is for the Gods, not for us. Flowers that fall to the ground should not be offered.
- 3. OFFERINGS: Offerings, like flowers or garlands, are carried with both hands on the right side of the body, so as to not be breathed on. All items are washed in preparation and, if carried more than a short distance, wrapped or covered.
- 4. THE LEFT HAND: Handing another person anything with the left hand may be considered a subtle insult.
- 5. SHOES: Shoes are considered impure. The cultured Hindu never wears shoes or sandals inside a temple or shrine, nor in his home or the homes of other Hindus. An ultimate insult is to be struck with a shoe.
- 6. CAUTION WITH FOOTWEAR: It is very important to apologize immediately if one touches someone with his or her shoe or sandal.

Some Hindu mannerisms continued

- EXCHANGE OF 'PRANNA' (life of life)
- 1. GIVING AND RECEIVING WITH BOTH HANDS: Giving and accepting things from one to another, presenting offerings to the Deity, etc., is most properly done with both hands. The reason for this is that with the gift, 'pranna' is also given through both hands, thus endowing more energy to the object. The recipient of the gift receives it with both hands along with the prana from the gracious giver. It is known that this exchange of energies is vital for friendship, harmony and the total release of the gift to the recipient. **Hindus never accept gifts from strangers or unknown persons.**
- 2. Hugging and Embracing: Hugging and embracing is found in Hindu culture; but it is restricted to close relatives, Guru/disciples and associates that too in a private place.
- 3. NOT POINTING THE FINGER: Pointing with the forefinger of the right hand or shaking the forefinger in emphasis while talking is never done. This is because the right hand possesses a powerful, aggressive 'prannic' force, and an energy that moves the forces of the world. Pointing the index finger channels that force into a single stream. The harshness of this energy would be severely felt in the nerve system of the recipient. **The entire hand is used as a pointer, with the palm up and the thumb held alongside the forefinger.**
- 4. SHAKING HANDS: The traditional way that Hindu men greet one another is with the anjali mudra, then, with palms still held together, extending their hands to one another, in a two-handed handshake, in a deliberate transfer of prana. Namaskaram.
- 5. NOT THROWING THINGS: Throwing any object on another person is considered extremely improper, even if the persons know each other very well.
- 6. CARE IN SITTING: It is improper to sit with one's legs outstretched toward a temple, shrine or altar, or even toward another person. This is a grave insult. Crossing one leg over the knee when sitting in a chair should be avoided, though crossing at the ankles is permitted. One must always try to follow the example of traditional elders.
- 7. DOORWAYS: Conversations are not held inside or through doorways. This is considered inauspicious. Similarly, to exchange or give or lend an object, one-steps inside the room first, or the recipient steps out of the room so that both parties are in the same room.

Some Hindu mannerisms continued

- A visitor is like God and should be treated with utmost respect and obeisance. Any visitor brings with him or her something, a message or even a blessing.
- To feed the birds and animals is considered Hindu practice as is considered the morning rituals.
- Regular feeding of children between the ages of 5 to 7 brings abundance.
- Regular feeding of children up to the age of 12 brings good fortune.
- Regular feeding of Brahmins is a tradition of the kshatriyas.
- Typical Hindu cleanse their homes everyday, dusting, and wiping minute dirt to welcome gods and deities to visit.
- A good Hindu home always lights deepam at least twice a day. This is called samndhya sadhana. The dawn and the dusk are considered to be most auspicious times for prayers.
- Hindus follow 'tithi' (particular astrological day), 'yog' (particular quality of the time), and (jyotisha-bhave) astrological constellations for undertaking any auspicious tasks. It is a tradition to look at the planetary positions of the moment before undertaking any good ceremony, task, or even karma.

Some Hindu mannerisms continued

Performance of daily puja and daily rituals:

From the moment one gets up to welcome the fresh dawn up to the moment one goes to sleep finally retiring to 'rattree', one recites mantras, shlokas, hymns, praises, prayers and even holy recitals. Some more significant and important rituals for prayers, shlokas, hymns, shlokas are:

1. GETTING UP from bed – TO WELCOME THE TRINITY OF ENERGIES AND KISSING OF THE TWO PALMS TO WELCOME SARASWATTI, DURGA BHAVANI AND LAXSHMEE
2. BATHING AND CLEANSING – TO INVOKE THE SEVEN RIVERS AND SEVEN SEAS TO REMOVE THE IMPURITIES OF THE MIND.
3. BRUSHING OR CLEANSING OF MOUTH AFTER EVERY MEAL.
4. PRAYERS BEFORE ANY MEAL – TO THE ANNA-BRAHMA PRARTHANA
5. PRAYERS BEFORE ANY KARMA – TO THE GANESH DEITY PUTTING ALWAYS THE RIGHT FOOT OUT OF THE MAIN DOOR FOR MEN AND LEFT FOOT FOR THE WOMEN.
6. DRINKING A SMALL GLASS OF WATER BEFORE BEGINNING ANY AUSPICIOUS TASK OR ANY DEMANDING WORK.
7. OFFERING FLOWERS TO THE DEITY OF GANESH IN THE OFFICE.
8. OFFERING FLOWERS TO OUR FOREFATHERS REGULARLY AND OFFERING PRAYERS AND CANDLES ON REGULAR BASIS.
9. TAKING TIME TO SIT QUIETLY AND ALONE TO REFLECT UPON THE DAY AND TO SEEK FORGIVENESS FROM LORD SHIVA IS ONE OF THE MOST TRADITIONAL HINDU VEDIC CUSTOM.
10. THE DAWN IS USUALLY GREETED WITH GAYATREE MANTRA AND SURYA NAMASKARAM INCLUDING THE YOGA MUDRAS.
11. THE DUSK IS USUALLY GREETED WITH RATTREE MANTRA TO LORD SHIVA.
12. LIGHTING DEEPAM USUALLY INVOKES GOOD ENERGIES AND SETS A CONCORD OF PEACE AND HARMONY.

Classification of Hindu rites

- NITYA KARMA

LIKE SAMNDHYA VANDANA, DAILY SAMSKARAS, DAILY RITES, AND DAILY CUSTOMS (DINA-CHARYA)

- NAIMITTIKA

LIKE SAMSKARA'S OR EVENTS. LIKE FOR EXAMPLE PERFORMING A PUJA AS THANKS GIVING OR AS REALISATION OF ONE'S WISH OR EVEN CELEBRATIONS.

- KAMYA

FOR PRODUCTIVE AND PROGENY OR FOR PROLIFERATION OR PROGRESS OR EVEN SACRIFICIAL YAGNAS. THESE MAY INCLUDE PILGRIMAGES, PURIFICATIONS, RETRIBUTIONS, ETC. VISITING TEMPLES AND VISITING SHRINES IN INDIA IS ANOTHER FORM OF PROGRESSIVE EVOLUTION FOR THE SELF.

- AGAMIC

FOR WORSHIPING IMAGES AND STATUES OF DEITIES PRIVATE PUJAS, FEAST, VRATTS, FASTS, IN TEMPLES DOING PUBLIC PUJA

Highlights of Nitya karma

- In the Hindu household, dusk and dawn, hold a special significance as far as prayer is concerned, as it is during this transition (From dawn to morning, and dusk to evening) that negativity needs to be burnt and righteousness welcomed.
- Traditionally the 'Aarti' is performed during the morning and evening in a Hindu household.
- The Aarti consists of a small flame which burns on a wick, placed on a plate, which is rotated round the Deity.
- The Ritual of the Aarti makes the light of the flame dispel darkness and ignorance, the incense that is burnt gives out fragrance to ward off evil, a bell is rung to invoke good energies, hands are clapped while one sings the Aarti to remove any bad vibrations. Feng-Shui confirms that all the above is very good to ward off evil forces, negativities and bring around a sacred spiritual environment!
- The 'Aarti' reminds us of the greatness of the Lord, because the flame that we rotate is symbolic of the Cosmos (Sun, Moon, Stars) revolving around the Almighty paying obeisance to Him.

Hindu Samskaras

- There were 52 in total, of which we only follow some 16 to 18 at the most in India.
- CORRESPOND TO THE STAGES OF LIFE – BIRTH, CHILDHOOD, ADOLESCENCE, ADULTHOOD, MIDDLEAGE AND FINALLY OLD AGE.
- FOUR PURPOSES OF LIFE KAMMA, ARTHA, DHARMA AND MOKSHA ARE REALISED IN THE FOUR CYCLES.

Hindu Customs and Rites

1. Sacraments - Samskaras.

There are sixteen main Sacraments (Samskaras). These range from conception to funeral ceremonies.

1. Garbhadhan (Sacrament of Impregnation).
2. Punsavanam (second or third month of pregnancy).
3. Simantonayana (between the fifth and eighth month of pregnancy).
4. Jatakarma (At the time when the child is being born).
5. Namakarana (Naming the child).
6. Niskramana (Child is brought out of house. 3rd and 4th month).
7. Annaprashana (The first feeding of cereal at six months).
8. Chudakarma (First time cutting of hair, 1st year or 3rd year).
9. Karnavedha (Piercing the ears in the third or fifth year).
10. Upanayana (Investiture of Sacred Thread) From 8th year.
11. Samavartana (When studies are completed).
12. Vivaha Samskara (Marriage ceremony).
13. Grihasthashrama (Sacraments relating to house-holders.).
14. Vanprasthashrama (Renouncing the house-holder's life).
15. Sanyasashrama. (Leading the life of a monk).
16. Antyeshti (Funeral: last rites of the dead).

Some more significant Hindu Samskaras

- PRE-BIRTH

Garbhadhan (Sacrament of Impregnation); Punsavanam (second or third month of pregnancy); Simantonnayana (between the fifth and eighth month of pregnancy) the mother's hair is oiled with coconut oil and in some parts of India her feet and hands are decorated with mehndi (henna). The significance of these are to cool down. It is believed in the ancient puranas that when pregnant mothers read holy scriptures like Ramayana and Geeta and recite Vishnoo hymns, between the Garbhadhan to the birth of the child, and takes honey from pure gold dipped into it everyday the child becomes a very profound child. This has been proven in many instances in Ayurveda also. Pregnant women taking panchamratt and honey in this manner after leaving 24c gold dipped into them overnight has proven to result into very good immune system and also very healthy baby life. A mother shapes her child's character in the womb when she carries it between the months three to nine months. When a beautiful glow comes on the mother and the 'ojas' looks shiny it is said in Ayurveda that both the mother and the baby are doing very well. Healthy eating, pure eating, and good thoughts! Ayurveda says that if the new born baby up to the age of seven years can be given a touch of honey from pure gold 24 carat piece dipped into honey for wellbeing and good health.

Some more significant Hindu Samskaras

- Birth ceremony Sixth day, after the child is born, the Hindu goddess of life and fate comes to give jati, ayush, bhagya, and karma nitti. On this day the baby is acknowledged in the karmic world. The ceremony is conducted by the baby's father's sister. Gujaratti people call it 'CHATTI', others call it janmakarma, some call it jati-karma depends which part of India you are in.

Some more significant Hindu Samskaras

- **Naamkarana** – Naming the baby: This is performed on the twelfth day after the baby is born. For ten days the mother and the baby remain in seclusion to avoid infections, etc. Parents and child are dressed in fresh new cloths. Mother sat on the right her husband with the baby in her laps. Rice grains are spread on the thalli which is kept in front of them. Priest conducts the ceremony. Father uses gold piece to write the name of the family deity, the date of birth of the child and proposed name in red ink (kumkum). This name is then whispered into the right ear of the child three times. The baby will subsequently be placed in the cradle and families come to greet the baby with gifts and blessings. Gifts are presented to the priest in the name of the baby. Just before the twelfth day, both parents are purified by consecrated rose water and ganga jaal. For purifying the environment and the parents, the priest receives a dakshina and also a coconut is broken outside the house to ward off the negativities. Astrologically speaking, the seers and sages have said that names should be kept in accordance with the rashi-bhava alphabetic sounds of letters relating to one of the twelve horoscopes (specific horoscope prevailing at the time of birth).

Some more significant Hindu Samskaras

- **New born Baby's first outing**

Usually, during the second month after baby is born, the baby is shown the bright moon after bathing dressing and ceremonies. Families visit the Shrine/ temple for blessings from gods and goddesses. Baby inter acts and corresponds with the light of the righteous karma and the dharma, affiliations with the society 'samnsahr', and cognition.

- **Aunnu prasana**

Between six and eight months, after birth, baby is given first solid food after weaning, whilst mantras, shlokas, and hymns are recited and some prashadi (oblations) of flowers and food are offered to the deities. Women in the family gather to dance and sing holy songs for the baby and AARTI is undertaken followed by grand feast. Usually MITHI-KHEER is fed to the baby by the father and the mother.

Some more significant Hindu Samskaras

- **Chuda karma (Baalmooran- or baalmoovran) – shaving off the head hair at the age of six to nine months:**

This is for hair to grow healthier and to remove the karmic ties of the mother's womb. It also protects and harmonises the baby and Ayurveda says that it removes negativities. The baby is oiled, bathed and adorned in nice dress and gold ornaments. Sat on consecrated assana (made of green and red colour rich cloth), the puja and ceremony is conducted by a priest whilst the barber shaves the head hair. Boys shave off completely whilst girls tend to leave a tuft of hair (shikta). Plenty of singing, hymns, and dancing take place. Aarti is performed on the child and the child is given gold on this day by parents, families and relative.

Some more significant Hindu Samskaras

- **The sacred thread ceremony:**

Usually up to twelve the child is regarded as BAAL BRAHMAN OR BAAL. Between the ages of eight and twelve, the Yajno-Paveeta or Janayoti or sacred thread ceremony is performed. Some purana-sastra' (ancient scriptures) suggest to do it earlier. The ceremony is conducted by priest and Guru and father. The three strands of cotton threads denote SARASWATTI, DURGA AND LAKSHMEE as three shaktees and BRAHMA, VISHNOO AND SHIVA as three purusha. The three qualities of sat-raj-tam are spiritually thus installed into the material body as are the three subtle state of being divinely instilled namely the JAGRUT (awakened), THE SWAPNA (semi-conscious), and THE TURIYA (the deep sleep – meditative).

- Satt-Chitt-Ananda – Hari Aum Tat Sat Swaha is recited as a mantra from the Guru invoking the truthfulness, thoughtfulness, and blissfulness of sri Hari Narayan. Gayatri mantra is recited and many Vedic recitals are undertaken to give the BAAL (child) its individual character of spiritual, moral and ethical essence. Yellow garments are given to imply spirituality and celibacy; scriptures like the GITA, SRIMAD BHAGAVAD GITA, SAMHITAS, BRAHMANAS, VEDAS AND UPANISHADS ARE PRESENTED TO THE CHILD.
- When a spirit of life (jivatman) becomes of adolescence, he or she is prepared for higher learning and higher faculties of life. After successfully completing the higher education and adolescence and further studies and university degrees, the adult becomes more aware of the responsibilities towards his parents, families, society and community. On success he or she performs SAMAYARTNA OR RETURNING HOME for togetherness. The adult is now ready to resume grihastha ashrama or adulthood.

Some more significant Hindu Samskaras

- **Vivaha:**
- Blessed is the home in which vivah takes place for it is a sacred occasion when shiva and parvatti visit the home. Every bride and groom are regarded as lakshmee narayan swaroop (form).
- Blessed are couples who are chaste and pure celibate and enter in to sacred engagement.
- Hindu marriages are so detailed and so prominently lasting for nearly ten days. Here, the ceremony brings together whole livelihood of the person getting married in memories and is celebrated in the most GRANDEST ways.
- From the DAY THE OFFICIAL MARRIAGE IS WRITTEN TO THE DAY THE OFFICIAL CEREMONY TAKES PLACE THERE IS grand display of COLOUR, SONGS, DANCES, BEAUTY, GALOUR, GLITTER, SPLASH OF GRANDEUR OSTENTATIOUSNESS, AND MUCH MORE. The Hindu wedding usually ends in THE VIDAI the saddest part whereat the bride is bid farewell as if she almost loses the reign to be a free roaming spinster girl at her parents and instead wears the crown of a responsible family-hood, discarding her older home and welcoming her new family – the family of her spouse.

Rites for a new home

- Vaastu puja and Vastu-shantih can be classified into three phases:
 - Evaluation in accordance with the good and bad vastu laws and in relation to birth charts.
 - When Contracts exchange – When the deposit is made for the house.
 - VASTU SHANTIH: Kumbh/ kalash: A sacred sacrament of container containing rose water, ganga water and holy waters from pilgrimages is taken preferably of silver or copper and gold coin, flower, and some religious items are immersed into the container. Five pan leaves 'nagarvell na pann' are spread in circle at the top of the container and a coconut is kept on the top opening of the kalash/kumbh. The Kalash/kumbh container is tied with a nada-chaddhi thread and kumkum tilak is done on four directions of the container. The container is then placed on the north eastern corner of the new home as a gesture of 'ghar-sthapan' (first ownership claimed by God) is claimed by placing this on the rice and whole mung lentils the mung lentils and rice are decorated in a swastika and together with the a tray of Ganesh and decorative wheat. This ceremony is done by the youngest member of the closest family of the mother or a boy and a girl both aged under 12 years. The priest will conduct the GRAHA SHANTIH AND HOMAM later on.

Some more significant Hindu Samskaras

- VANAPRASHTHA – Retirement
- Sanyasa – Renouncing the material world to study and to meditate on the VEDAS, the holy GITA, and to undertake sadhana.
- Pretta-kriya is a karma of the funeral rites that is performed by oldest son and the nearest brotherly relative.
- Dukha-Kriya
- Dasgathra-kriya = PINDA PITTARI PUJAN OFFERING THE DEPARTED SOUL BALLS OF RICE FOLLOWING THE CREMATION PINDA ARE OFFERED TO THE DEPARTED SOUL. HYMNS, SHLOKAS AND BHAJANS ARE RECITED FOR THE PEACE AND HARMONY OF THE SOUL.
- SHRADDHA PINDDA CEREMONY – ON THE THIRTEENTH DAY ELEVEN PINDDAS (ROUND BALLS MADE OF RICE AND MILK AND FLOUR) ARE OFFERED TO THE DEAD. This ceremony is to help the departed soul acquire a new existence. This ceremony is not auspicious ceremony and is very grieving time for everyone. However the Gita suggests that NOT CRYING FOR THE DEAD will grant the dead an earlier reroute to next re-incarnation or next phase. Families and friends have a feast after puja and sankirtan (recitals of holy hymns). Aarti is NOT carried out.

Vedic lore of life

The multiplicity of rites, rituals, customs, festivals, and mannerisms altogether make BHARATTI- a beautiful MAA, BAHENA AND BETI, OR A BABA, BRATHA AND BETA.

“Hamnssa” is SPIRIT OF LIFE in Sanskrit. Hamnssa journeys across time from life to death, to experience and to adventure the colourful beauty of customs and cultural rites in stages of life to eventually merge in the grand divine ocean of universal destiny.

- So, what do we take with us, from this world of human existence when we die?***
- Is it not true that we came to give, give and give, despite our claim that we want more and more!***

Clips from 'A flight of delight'

- ***“It is here and now in the present moment in time that the beautiful most wonderful delight of God's light can be realised barefooted, empty handed in emptiness! Not yesterday, not tomorrow, but today, now, at this present moment in time. All said and done, what really matters is that we form a togetherness of the universal spirit of humanity to offer a prayer to the three worlds of existence - the spiritual, the celestial, and the terrestrial world.”***

Life oh life; Let it be

- ***“Before I close my eyes to rest in the nightfall, I offer my sacred prayer of resolution that I may live tomorrow to form togetherness of human relationships. If I should leave this earth in my sleep, oh divine omnipotent god almighty supreme, may my last thought be on the grand union of the three worlds and the merging of all the rivers into the ocean of eternity. In togetherness, I hold the spirit of my life to bring total concord of happiness within me, around me and with my fellow human spirits. Let me be free! Let me be happy! Let me rejoice even; how I wish this peace, in united bliss, would form a concord of harmony in life itself. Life oh life let it be a flight of delight!”***

Beautiful trail

- ***“All said and done, don’t look back. Be gentle with yourself. Go placidly and be alone if necessary. Make peace with yourself and bring sunshine into the lives of others less fortunate than yourself. This is the greatest sat-karma. When you are afraid no longer in the empty moments of aloneness, you have found your way home into the beautiful world of stars and magnificent galaxies. Follow your dreams, follow your own path. Let no one touch the integrity of your spirit. Nurture your spirit for it belongs to you. Close your eyes and open your spiritual vision and you will never cease to be happy in all that is beautiful.”***
- ***Vividly ‘Hamnssa’ speaks: “Life oh life! Let it be what it may. Let it be, come what may. Face it, accept it, grit it, but grin and shrug it away. Life oh life! Let it be a flight of delight.”***

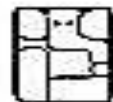
Prayers

- *May the Great light of lights carry us from darkness to light, from falsehood to truthfulness, from the mortality of materialism to infinite bliss.*
- *May there be togetherness and harmony.*
- *May there be no jealousy, envy, hatred, anger, or greed. May the households be filled with LOVE.*
- *May there be fairness, justice and equal distribution of wealth. May all prosper and progress alike.*
- *May all the families realise here and now that it is far more important and far more significant to understand and to show compassion to those who need it the most. Let there be none out on the limb. May there be peace in the spiritual world; may there be peace in the celestial world; may there be peace and harmony here on the human earth.*





Ganesha Symbolism



Innocent, childlike, loving, compassionate, pure as the lotus flower, true real friendship is rare - When two souls meet here on this human earth to nurture and to share the joys and sorrows of one another without the confines of ownership and individualism, their lives become blessed with health, wealth and happiness!

Without fear, be still here and now, shut off the noise and haste and wasteful camouflages of the society, listen to your inner most voice. Be loving, be gentle, be kind, be considerate, be compassionate and be righteous always with the rightful intention – this is dharma; this is satt-karma and this is good custom.

We must stop judging people. We must stop being so opinionated and prejudiced about others and we must cease to operate political umbrellas of individualism, then only we will have a universal religion based on fearlessness, love, compassion, humanity, and above all togetherness without the confines of “MINE”, “ME”, AND “I”. This is a good custom.

The future is not ours the future belongs to our children. We owe it to them. We can learn so much from children by merely being child-like. Everyone needs to love and to be loved. LOVE is the greatest religion! LOVE ALL!



We are born with a flame of life (JIVAN-ATMAN); From deepam we came into the womb of this mother earth to light a candle of delight (anandamayam); With the illumination of the Agnee, we evolve towards the light of lights in delight (chidanandamayam); In agnee we ultimately merge to surrender the life of life in the light of delight (PARAM-ATMAN). In love and compassion our destiny merge without the differentiation of this, that and the other, colour, caste, creed, or cultures – Love begets love.





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