

Sai Dharmam



Bhajan Corner

Diwali

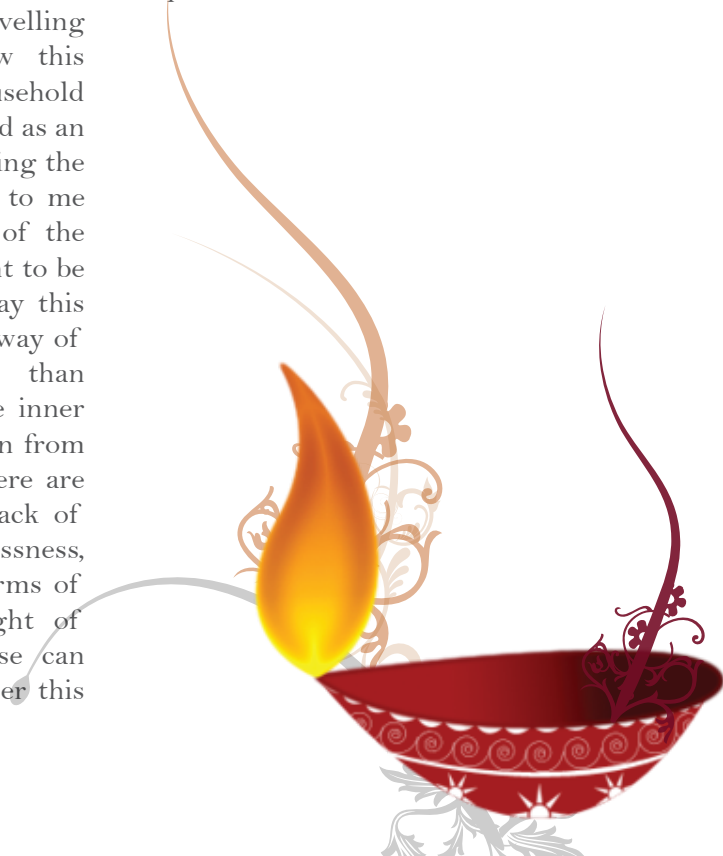
Rama Rama Sai Rama
Parthipurisha Sai Ram,
Rama Rama Sai Rama
Madhura Manohara
Sundara Naam,
Shyamala Komala
Nayanabhi Ram,
Ravikula Mandana
Rajana Rama,
Parama Pavana
Mangala Dham,

Meaning:

Hail to Rama and to Sai; Sai, who is Lord of Puttaparti; His very sweet, beautiful name enchants the mind; His cloud-like soft complexion pleases our eyes; Descendent of the race of the sun, favourite Lord; Supreme purifier, abode of all good.

Deepavali falls on October 30th, 2016. Deepavali, or Diwali, literally translates itself into “the array of lights.” It is said to be the day that Lord Rama’s coronation ceremony took place. There are surely many variations on the story of how the festival came about. The one that touches my heart the most is the following one. They say that on the way back from Lanka with Mother Sita, Lord Rama’s vehicle lost its way due to the darkness that it was travelling in. The citizens of Ayodha foresaw this dilemma and lighted lamps in every household to guide the Lord home. The lamps acted as an indicator of where home was by dispelling the effect of darkness. This story is dear to me because I think it illustrates the irony of the situation. Is it us or God that needs light to be freed from darkness? That is not to say this story must be discredited. I see it as a way of highlighting the reality rather than discrediting it. Bhagavan says that the inner significance of Deepavali is to lead man from darkness to the light. He says that there are multiple forms of darkness; sorrow, lack of enthusiasm, misery, peacelessness, disappointment etc. To defeat these forms of darkness, you must usher in the light of prosperity, health, love, etc. Who else can better lead us on the right path to usher this light than Light Himself.

On Deepavali, the typical household will light every corner of the house with lamps – signifying eradication of darkness. On this sacred day, let us strive to constantly relight this lamp of enthusiasm on the spiritual path when are spirits are drowned by darkness of daily life. If we continually do so, there will come a time when there is no need to rekindle. We can simply bask in the light of the eternal lamp within our hearts.



In 2010, I was given one of the most amazing opportunities I've ever come across in my spiritual path – meeting Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. I only had one selfish dream going into Puttaparthi that summer and that was to get a close-up view of my guru. As a pilgrim amongst the Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Cooksville, I had to not only sit with the group on a daily basis during darshan but also sit in the row number that showed up on the given token. Coincidentally, our centre started from row 27 on the first day, and until the day we performed, we would be granted a row closer to Sai every single day. A day or two before the Canadian Youth Program, our group was finally asked to sit in the fifth row, which was obviously much closer to Baba than ever before. As I was in bliss seated there quietly awaiting the grand arrival of my guru, about 7-10 individuals in wheelchairs were rolled up beside me – completely blocking my view of the lord's seat on stage. At this sight, I was feeling very angry and frustrated. "Why can't you just give me one close up view of you Baba? I came all the way to India to see you for the first time, and this is what I get?" As I said those words to myself, I felt bad looking at the individuals with disabilities, and thought "Okay, I guess they never get a good view of Baba. Let it be." As that thought of

positivity came across my mind, a seva dhal stood right in front of me and pointed at 5 individuals – "1, 2, 3, 4, and you! Get up!" I was scared and shocked. She then told us to walk across Baba's aisle and told us "okay the four of you can sit in the 3rd row, and you (me) sit in the second row." As directed I sat in the second row in silence. I was in complete speechless mode and dumbfounded. "How could that be? Fifth row to 2nd row after I said those selfish things?," I asked myself. Stunned at the thought that He's listening, there he was, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba approaching closer and closer in his chair. He stopped in front of the lady seated in front of me and asked her "Where are you from?" I took one good look at His skin, His eyes and His hands as he gave her vibuthi. Folding my hands, I whispered, "Sai ram Swami, Sai ram. Thank you so much." He looked at me and strolled away. I can never forget this moment.

Diwali: The Festival of Light **Story and Morales**

Diwali, the festival of lights, is celebrated across the globe as a prominent Hindu festival. From a spiritual perspective, the festival signifies the victory of light over darkness. It can also be symbolic of the victory of good over evil, knowledge over ignorance, and hope over despair.

Bhagavan beautifully illustrates a story behind the significance of the festival of Diwali. On this day, the demon, Narakasura was killed. Nara means man, and Asura means demon. Swami says this demon is present in every human being. However, only with the power of love and light, can one kill this demon. This festival is celebrated so devotees can join in Satsang (good company) and develop love, give happiness and take happiness.

The festival of Diwali is commonly referred to as the Festival of Lights. What is the significance of the hundreds and thousands of diyas that are lit around people's houses, streets, shops and workplaces? Swami explains that there are two significant qualities of the flame of the diya. The first quality is that this flame banishes darkness. Darkness does not exist where this flame exists. Secondly, there is a continuous upward

movement of the flame. Regardless of where or how the flame is kept, it will rise upwards. This is symbolic of a devotee's path to divinity. A devotee must always rise upwards, battling through the obstacles he or she faces.

It is for these very same reasons that Diwali is celebrated by lighting countless diyas: to remind oneself of the light of a flame and the many qualities of it one can emulate.

Diwali is said to usher in the light of prosperity. There are numerous forms of darkness that may plague one such as sorrow or disease. It is with the light of happiness or good health that this darkness may be removed. The festival of Diwali signifies this battle and the reign of light over darkness.

Vice President's Message

Based on what Bhagawan has said in many of his discourses, Deepavali means "the array of lights." On Deepavali day, we light numerous lamps with one candle. The whole array of lamps is lit by the light from one lamp. That one lamp symbolizes the Supreme Effulgent Lord. The others symbolize the light in individual selves. The truth of the Vedic saying, "The One willed to become the Many" is exemplified by the lighting of lamps by the flame of one.

Deepavali is a festival which is designed to celebrate the suppression of the Ego by the Higher Self. Man is plunged in the darkness of ignorance and has lost the power of discrimination between the permanent and the evanescent. When the darkness of ignorance caused by Ahamkara (the ego-feeling) is dispelled by the light of Divine knowledge, the effulgence of the Divine is experienced.

"Thamasomaa jyotirgamaya" (Lead me from darkness to light) is an Upanishadic prayer: This means that where there is darkness light is needed. What is this darkness? Sorrow is one form of darkness. Peacelessness is another. Loss is another. Disappointment is one form of darkness. Misery is yet another. Lack of enthusiasm is another. All these are

different forms of darkness. To get rid of the darkness of sorrow, you have to light the lamp of happiness. To dispel the darkness of disease, you have to install the light of health. To get over the darkness of losses and failures, you have to usher in the light of prosperity.

Deepavali is the day when old clothes are discarded and new ones worn; when the home and its precincts are swept clean, given a new look and made to appear fresh and fine. But even while doing all this, attention has to be paid to the discarding of worn out prejudices, the adoption of new habits of love and mutual respect, the freshening of one's attitude towards one's kith and kin, brothers and sisters of all creeds and castes, the hanging of festoons of friendship and fraternity over the door sill of the heart. This will make the festival really meaningful and fruitful.

On this Deepavali day, resolve to light the lamp of namasmarana and place it at your doorstep, the lips. Feed it with the oil of devotion; have steadiness as the wick. Let the lamp illumine every minute of your life. The splendor of the Name will drive away darkness from outside you as well as from inside you. You will spread joy and peace among all who come near you.



S S E N K R A D B N Y E B D I
E F H L D G R E A K R F Z H A
B U L W A O X R A X O F L Q N
X E B A M V A Q I W T U I W W
L O M I M K I L L U C L G O Z
Z U V U A E A T B I I G H D D
H B Z S R W O V S C V E T J V
M G U U I Y T N X E G N N Q O
R R G D D E M O N O F C V Y P
A M G E O Y K M L B U E H O L

Game Corner

WORDSEARCH

Find the following words!

DARKNESS
DEMON
DIWALI
EFFULGENCE
FESTIVAL
FLAME
LIGHT
NARAKASURA
VICTORY