

Sanatana Dharma

Lesson 12: The Samskāras

Festival: Holi



Review of

**Lesson 11: Jivanmukti: Liberation
While Living**

Śānti Mantras



- ॐ सह नाववतु ।
सह नौ भनक्तु ।
सह वीर्यं करवावहै ।
तेजस्विनावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै ।
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥
- Om saha nāvavatu |
sa ha nau bhunaktu |
sa ha vīryam karavāvahai |
tejasvināvadhītamastu mā vidviṣāvahai |
Om shāntiḥ shāntiḥ shāntiḥ ||

Śānti Mantras



- Meaning:
 - 1: Om, May God Protect us Both (the Teacher and the Student),
 - 2: May God Nourish us Both,
 - 3: May we Work Together with Energy and Vigour,
 - 4: May our Study be Enlightening, not giving rise to Hostility,
 - 5: Om, Peace, Peace, Peace.

Review: Lesson 11: Liberation While Living



- Bhaja Govindam is a wonderful hymn attributed to Sri Adi Śankaracharya and teaches the seeker the path to jivan-mukta

Sat-sangatvé nis-sangatvaṃ

Nissangatvé nir-mohatvam

Nirmohatvé niścalatatvaṃ

Niścalatatvé jivan-muktiḥ

Review: Lesson 11: Liberation While Living



- One who has gained self-knowledge is called a “jivan-mukta”
- A Jivan-mukta lives in a liberated state (ever free) because he has understood that neither he is the doer or actions (karta) nor is he the enjoyer of the results (bhokta); he understands that the Lord is both the doer and the enjoyer
- The beauty of Sanatana Dharma is that the Vedas provide us a way of life to **discover** this truth, which liberates an individual from all bondage **here** and **now**

Festival: Holi



- From “Hindu Festivals and Celebrations” by Smt. Anasuya Sastry
- **Holi** is celebrated every spring on the full moon day of the month Phalguna
- In North India, men, women and children, regardless of age or wealth, enjoy this festival of color
- In South India, it is also the day of Kāmadahana or burning the effigy of Kāma or Cupid

Festival: Holi



- Kāmadahana legend from the Purāṇas
- Parvati, daughter of the king of the Himalayas, was deeply immersed in penance to seek the hand of Lord Shiva in marriage
- Lord Shiva was oblivious of everything since He was immersed in deep meditation
- The Gods had planned for this wedding because the divine son from this union was to kill the wicked demon Tārakasura

Festival: Holi



- The Gods sent Kāma (Cupid) and his consort Rati to break Lord Shiva's meditation
- Kāma's shot an arrow, to break Lord Shiva's meditation
- His meditation disturbed, Lord Shiva's third eye opened and burned Kāma to ashes
- Rati prayed to Lord Shiva to restore her husband's life and He graced her request
- Lord Shiva also saw Pārvati and granted her wish

Festival: Holi



- Story of Prahlāda
- Prahlāda was a great devotee of Lord Nārayana
- Prahlāda's wicked father, Hiraṇyakaṣipu wanted Prahlāda to denounce Lord Nārayana and tried in vain to make him do so
- Frustrated, the demon Hiraṇyakaṣipu even asked his sister, the demon Holika, to destroy his own son Prahlāda!

Festival: Holi



- Holika had a boon that fire would not burn her
- She took Prahlāda on her lap and entered a blazing fire
- The Lord always protects his devotees
- Since Holika tried to intentionally harm one of the Lord's own devotees, Holika's boon that fire would not harm her was suddenly withdrawn
- Holika was destroyed in the fire but Prahlāda came out unscathed!

Festival: Holi



- The story of Lord Krishna as an infant
- Kaṁsa, was a tyrant who tried to kill his nephew Krishna because of a prophecy that the nephew would put an end to him and his bad deeds
- When Krishna was still an infant, Kaṁsa sent a demon, Pūtana, to kill Krishna by feeding him poisoned milk from her breast
- Instead, Lord Krishna sucked her blood out and the demon Putana was killed

Festival: Holi



- The religious element in Holi is the worship of Lord Krishna
- People remember Lord Krishna as a baby or as a young boy playing with the merry milkmaids of Brindavan
- The fire during the festival of Holi symbolizes the yajña (fire ritual) into which we offer our desires and tendencies, so that the spiritual blaze of enlightenment will remain in our hearts

The Saṃskāras



- In the Vedic vision, all aspects of one's life are considered sacred
- If saṃskāras are performed with care and devotion, they help an individual become aware of the Iṣwara in him/her and help the individual understand his role in society at various stages of his/her life

The Saṃskāras: Purpose



- Saṃskāras have a two-fold purpose
 - Removal of inappropriate tendencies
 - Creation of an inner disposition so that an individual can cultivate the eight virtues of the self (atmagunas)
 - Compassion
 - Accommodation
 - Absence of jealousy
 - Purity of body & mind
 - Inner leisure
 - Pleasant disposition
 - Absence of miserliness
 - Absence of attachment

The Saṃskāras



- Metaphorically, an individual's evolving character is compared to a colorful painting in Paraśara Smṛti
- Some saṃskāras are performed before the baby is born and some are performed afterwards
- What are some saṃskāras you have heard about?
- Have you witnessed any saṃskāras being performed in your family or at your family friends' homes?

Meditation



Lesson 12: The Origin of Samskaras



- Human beings have a choice while other creatures do not
- Human beings can therefore use their “free will” to act, to act differently, or to not act at all
- Dharma is the basis for all action in Sanatana Dharma
- When we act, we can follow Dharma or act in an Adharmic manner

Lesson 12: The Origin of Samskaras



- Human beings have no choice but to act
- These actions (Karma) are organized into three categories
 - Nitya karma (daily)
 - Naimittaka karma (occasionally)
 - Kāmya karma (to gain some desired end-result)
- Karmas can be performed
 - for society (śrauta-karma) or
 - for oneself or one's family etc. (gr̥hya-karma)

Lesson 12: The Origin of Samskaras



- Karma should be performed according to the kalpa-śāstra or the dharma śāstra, which are again based on the Vedas
- There are also “niśiddha karma” or “actions that should be avoided” – the principles of Dharma and Ahimsa should be followed because they are universal

Concluding Śānti Mantra



- ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदम पूर्णात् पूर्णमदच्यते ।
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमीदाय पूर्णमैवावशिष्यते ॥
Om Pūrṇamadah Pūrṇamidam Pūrṇāt-Purṇam-
Udacyate
Pūrṇasya Pūrṇamādāya Pūrṇamévāvaśiśyate ||
Om Śāntiḥ Śāntiḥ Śāntiḥ ||

Meaning:

That (God) is infinite; this (world) is whole;
from the infinite the world becomes manifest.

From the infinite, even if the whole is taken away,
what remains again is the infinite.