

# Sanatana Dharma

## Lesson 6: Unique Aspects of Vedic Dharma The Daśavataras



# 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



- The four vedas are: Rg veda, Yajur veda, Sama veda, Atharva veda
- Vedas are THE means of knowledge to discover the Self
- The Vedas have been preserved in their pure original form through the oral tradition
- The four puruśārthas are: Dharma, Artha, Kama & Moksha
- What is an Avatāra?

# The Avatāra



- Jiva – born out of a result of previous karma
  - Bound by karma which manifest as papa and punya
  - Bound by karma and continues in an endless cycle of birth and death
  - Attains the state of jivan mukta eventually
- Avatāra
  - Not bound by karma
  - Not bound by endless cycle of birth & death
  - Divine intervention in response to prayers of righteous people to re-establish dharma

# The Four Yugas and the Avatāra



- The four yugas:
  - Krta yuga = devatas and danavas lived in different worlds (e.g., churning the milky ocean)
  - Treta yuga = devatas and danavas lived in different continents countries (e.g., Ravana and Lord Rama)
  - Dvapara yuga = devatas and danavas lived in the same family (e.g., Kamsa and Lord Krishna)
  - Kali yuga = devatas and danavas lived in the same jiva! (our “good side” and “bad side”)
- Purpose of the āvatara is to destroy demons (danavas) or re-establish dharma

# The Daśāvatāras



- Daśa avataras = daśāvatāras = ten incarnations of the Lord
- Matsya – Fish (with horn – to save the seven sages and Vishnu incarnation to kill the demon Hayagrīva and rescue the Veda)
- Kūrma – Turtle (to hold up the Mandara mountain and prevent it from sinking while the devatas and danavas churned the Milky Ocean using the famous serpent Vāsuki as the churning rope)

# The Daśāvatāras



- Kūrma – Turtle (to hold up the Mandara mountain and prevent it from sinking while the devatas and danavas churned the Milky Ocean using the famous serpent Vāsuki as the churning rope)
- Varāha – Divine boar (to destroy demon Hiraṇyākṣa with the Sudarṣana Chakra and rescue the earth; Hiraṇyākṣa had buried the earth deep in the ocean of water after conquering the devas)



# The Daśāvatāras



- Narasimha – Half man-half lion (to kill demon Hiraṇyākaṣapu and protect his devotee Prahlada)
  - Story to be related by one of the balavihar children
- Vāmana – Dwarf (to vanquish King Bali)
  - Story to be related by one of the balavihar children
- Paraṣurāma – Sage Jamadagni’s son (to rid the world of adharmic kṣatriyas)
  - Story to be related by one of the balavihar children
- Rāma – King Daṣaratha’s son (to eliminate the demon king Ravana)
  - Story to be related by one of the balavihar children

# The Daśāvatāras



- Kṛṣṇa – King Vasudeva’s son (to rid the world of adharmic kṣatriyas like Kamsa, Jarasandha, and teach us all through the Bhagavad Gita)
  - Story to be related by one of the balavihar children
- Buddha – King Śuddhodhana’s son (to teach the world the value of Ahimsa as the basis for righteousness and Nirvana as the ultimate goal of life through the eight-fold path)
  - Story to be related by one of the balavihar children

# The Daśāvatāras: Homework Assignment



- Write an essay (1-2 pages long, typed, single-spaced) on what we can learn from each of the avatāras and how we can apply these lessons in our daily life
- We will also discuss the winter break assignment in our next class (see next slide) and how that can help each of you in different ways.

# Winter Break Assignment



- Reflect on the teaching in the last few months during our Bala Vihar classes and also the festivals and group projects and events we did in Bala Vihar at the temple
- We have learned the three pillars (or central values) of vedic dharma are: Satyam, Brahmacharya, and Ahimsa. Write a two-page essay on what this means to you and how this knowledge has helped you develop as a young person. How has it shaped your personality? How do you feel as a young person following Sanātana Dharma in this country?

# 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.