



Newsletter ~ Vallabh Vidya Mandir ~



Publisher – VVM

Volume Number 5

Issue Number 7

Date: Oct 2009

An Expression...

During the auspicious month of Dussehra and Diwali, we all try to live a centered, more profound life. We try to let go of our negative feelings and immerse ourselves in oneness with our surroundings, trying to lift the cloud of ego and false pride. Vijaya Dashami also known as Dussehra, Dashahara, Navaratri, Durgotsav... is one of the most important & fascinating festivals of India, that is celebrated in the lunar month of Ashwin (September or October). The word Dashahara is derived from Sanskrit words “dasha” & “hara” meaning removing the ten (10).

During the Dashahara families perform *Aditya Homa* as a *Shanti Yagna* and recite *Sundara Kanda* of *Srimad Ramayana* for 9 days. All these *Yagna* performances are to create powerful agents into the atmosphere surrounding the house to keep the environment clean & healthy. The purpose of performing these *homas* is also to kill the 10 bad qualities, which are represented by ten heads of Ravana as follows: (1) *Kama* (lust), (2) *Krodha* (anger), (3) *Moha*

(delusion), (4) *Lobha* (greed), (5) *Mada* (over pride), (6) *Matsara* (jealousy), (7) *Manas* (mind), (8) *Buddhi* (intellect), (9) *Chitta* (will) & (10) *Ahankara* (ego).

In Sanskrit, 'Vijaya' means victory and 'Dashami' means 10th day - thus Vijaya Dashami means victory on the 10th day. On this day *Shri Ram* (7th incarnation of Vishnu), defeated the great demon Ravana. Ram invoked the blessings of Durga to kill Ravana. This victory of Ram is, since then celebrated as “Vijaya Dashami”.

Another interpretation is that goddess mother Durga is worshipped and invoked in different manifestations of her Shakti - the 10th day is in honor of Durga devi. One belief is that this festival is to worship feminine principle of the universe in the form of the divine mother to remind the teachings of the *Taitreya Upanishad*, “*Matru Devo Bhava*.” The essence of the Navaratri celebration at social level is to remind and respect all the women, who are the guardians of the family, and culture to take lead in times of crisis and guide the humanity towards the path of

social justice, righteousness, equality, love, and divinity.

Durga is worshipped as the main deity of *Navaratri* by all segments of the society including tribal communities. Another legend about Durga is –

Mahishasur and his negative energy needed to be controlled so all the *Devas* came together & contributed their individual energy to form “*Shakti*” a single mass of incandescent energy to fight and destroy *Mahishasur*. *Durga* with weapons in her ten hands, riding on Lion, took on *Mahishasur*. The battle raged for nine days and nights. Finally on the tenth day the evil demon *Mahishasur* was defeated by *Durga*.

Durga as Consort of Lord Shiva represents two forms of female energy - one mild & protective and the other fierce and destructive.

...No Classes

October 4th
&
October 18th

Navaratri & Diwali Holidays



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The fact that in Indian Vedic Astrology there are also nine planets namely (1) Ravi (Sun), (2) Chandra (Moon), (3) Mangal/ Bhaum (Mars), (4) Budha (Mercury), (5) Guru/Bruhaspati (Jupiter), (6) Shukra (Venus), (7) Shani (Saturn), (8) Rahu (North Node) & (9) Ketu (South Node) is very interesting.

Navaratri means "nine nights", which we must use to seek blessings from the nine planets. In the worship of the goddesses during Navaratri, one of the planets should be worshipped. Bodily actions are ephemeral. The body derives its value from the spirit within. Hence it should be regarded as a sacred temple. Navaratri festival is observed for ten days, nine of which are for cleansing oneself of all the impurities, and the last day is dedicated to "worship of weapons" (Aayudha Pooja). The weapons to be worshipped are the divine powers and virtues within. When the divine is worshipped, one is bound to progress spiritually.

Chatrapati Shivaji, the founder of the Hindawi (Hindu) Swarajya worshipped Lord Shiva & Goddess

Durga in the form of goddess Bhawani before any military expedition. Goddess Bhavani had blessed Shivaji with her own sword called "Bhavani Talwar". Buses, trucks and machines in factories are decorated and worshipped as Dussehra is also treated as Vishwakarma Divas - the National Labor Day of India.

At the end we realize that Dussehra and Navratri symbolize the conquest of good over evil. May we all conquer our inner evil-self and are able to live a meaning full life. As Swami Vivekananda said, **"The blossom vanishes of itself as the fruit grows so will your lower self vanish as the Divine grows within."**

Phalguni Kikani

The March is On..

It's funny thing about life: If you refuse to accept anything but the best, you very often get it -

W. Somerset Maugham

Expect the Best – understanding this Life-changing law*

A native American boy was talking

with his grandfather. "What do you think about the world situation?" he asked. The grandfather replied, "I feel like wolves are fighting in my heart. One is full of anger and hatred; the other is full of love, forgiveness and peace." "Which one will win?" asked the boy. To which the grandfather replied, "The one I feed."

This simple story provides the essence of a life-changing law of the universe. *You become what you think about.* The words are too simple to feel important. However, if you "get it", , you can forever harness the power of attitude.

Simply stated... if we choose to think positive thoughts, we'll get positive results; if we think negative thoughts, we'll get negative results. Pretend for a moment that every thought is a seed you sow in your fertile mind. Therefore, "If you plant crabapples, don't expect to harvest Golden

VVM Picnic

October 3rd 2009, Saturday
11 AM - 4 PM

CANCELLED



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apples.” You will reap the fruits of the thoughts you sow.

In his best-selling classic *The Power of Positive Thinking* Dr. Norman Vincent Peale wrote: “Learn to expect, not to doubt. In doing so you bring everything into the realm of possibility...It is amazing how a sustained expectation of the best sets the forces in motion which cause the best to materialize.”

Whether you think you can, Or think you can't ... you are right.

Henry Ford

*(From “The Power of Attitude” Mac Anderson)

Sureshbhai Patel

Year 5 Begins...

VVM started its 5th Academic year on Sept 20th. The day in pictures...

