

American Hindu Association

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HINDU CONNECTIONS

July, 2006

KRISHNA JANMASTAMI ~ August 19, 2006 at 6PM Shorewood Community Center

You are cordially invited to a special program organized by the American Hindu Association on the occasion of Krishna Janmastami. Lord Krishna is the manifestation of Supreme God who came down to the material world showing the path to eternal world. Please join us to celebrate this auspicious day of his birth.



Siddheshvari Deviji, a well-known speaker on Hinduism will be giving a lecture. Siddheshvari Deviji is a great presenter. Do not miss this opportunity to listen to her. Program will start with Puja followed by Special speech and Melodious Bhajans by Didiji, concluded with a Potluck Dinner. Please bring a dish, your choice of food, to share with others. The program will be at "**Shorewood Community Center**" 901 Swarthmore Ct, Madison, WI 53075 on Saturday, August 19, 2006 at 6PM. For more information: www.americanhindu.net

The Aitareya Upanishad Shree S. K. Das www.americanhindu.net/Vedas.doc

This Upanishad tells the story of evolution of life in a simple but dramatic manner. It brings out the truth that the one source and the innermost reality present in us is the Self. It underlines that the external world can be fully understood only when studied with conjunction of mind and senses.

The practical consequence is that we seek to get pleasure from the outside world by thinking that we can get that happiness by trying out this or that because we believe that there is an "outside" apart from us. But the Upanishad says that we carry the world within us and thus we if we turn to that we can feel all fulfillment, all love and all creativity.

It belongs to the Aitareya Aranyaka of the Rigveda. It is divided into three chapters and contains 33 verses.

The first chapter deals with the creation of *Purusha*, (the primeval being in its macrocosmic form and man in its microcosmic aspect), the creation of the various

divinities, and how they were placed and assigned various duties.

Section three of the first chapter deals with how food was created and how the various divinities sought to control it, but failed. In the last few verses of this section we are explained how the self entered the body and stayed there as the enjoyer.

The second chapter is more difficult to understand. We are explained here the three births of the self.

The third chapter deals with the qualities of the Self or Brahman. It contains one of the most famous expressions of the Vedanta, "*pragnanam Brahma*," which means Brahman is intelligence.

Excerpts

1. The Self only verily all this was in the beginning. Nothing else whatsoever stirred. He (the Self) thought, "Let me now create the worlds."
2. He then created all these worlds. He created water, light rays, death and elements such as water. Above the heaven is water. The heaven supports it. The light rays are the space. Death is the earth. Those which are below are also waters.
3. He brought for them a person. They said this was an appropriate creation. A person is indeed an appropriate creation. He said to them, "Enter your respective parts."
4. Fire becoming speech entered the mouth. Air becoming breath entered the nostrils. The sun becoming sight entered the eyes. The directions of space, becoming hearing entered the ears. Plants and trees becoming hair entered the skin. The moon becoming mind entered the heart. Death becoming the outgoing breath entered the navel. Water becoming semen, entered the reproductive organs.

The Taittiriya Upanishad Shree S. K. Das www.americanhindu.net/Vedas.doc

The *Taittiriya* Upanishad is one of the older, "primary" Upanishads commented upon by Shankara. It is a Mukhya Upanishad, associated with the *Taittiriya* school of the Black Yajurveda. It figures as number 7th of 108 Upanishads.

It is divided into three sections called Vallis. the *Siksa Valli*, the *Brahmananda Valli* and the *Bhrgu Valli*. The *Siksa Valli* is the first of the six Vedangas ("limbs" or auxiliaries of the

Vedas), concerned with phonetics and pronunciation. The other two sections deal with the knowledge of Atman.

Excerpts

The science of pronunciation we shall now expound the sounds, the tone, the measure, and the force for articulation the uniformity and continuity in their pronunciation are all important.

The chapter on pronunciation is thus explained.

Having heard the basics of pronunciation from the teacher the students invoke Brahman and pray for the glory of both.

And the teacher then explains the secrets of conjunction of words using the five perceptible objects: the Universe, the light, the knowledge, the people and the body. These are known as the five great aggregates.

Regarding the universe, the teacher explains like this: the earth is the first form, the heaven the second, and the space in between is the middle. The air is the connecting element. This is it should be about the universe.

Regarding light the teaching is like this: fire is the first form, the sun is the second. Water is the middle. Lightening is the connecting element. This is how it should be about light.

Regarding knowledge the teaching is like this: the teacher is the first form, the taught is the second. Learning is the middle. The instruction is the connecting element. This is how it should be about knowledge.

Regarding people the teaching is like this: Mother is the first form, father is the next. The progeny is the middle. Procreation is the connecting element. This is how it should be about the people.

Regarding the individual the teaching is like this: the lower jaw is the first form, the upper jaw is the second form. Speech is the middle. Tongue is the connecting element. This is how it is about the individual.

Importance of Rain ~ Tirukural by Tiruvalluvar

It is the unfailing fall of rain that sustains the world. Therefore, look upon rain as the nectar of life.

Rain produces man's wholesome food; and rain itself forms part of his food besides.

Though oceanic waters surround it, the world will be deluged by hunger's hardships if the billowing clouds betray us.

When clouds withhold their watery wealth, farmers cease to ply their ploughs.

It is rain that ruins, and it is rain again that raises up those it has ruined.

Unless raindrops fall from the sky, not a blade of green grass will rise from the earth.

The very nature of oceans, though vast, would diminish if clouds ceased to take up water and replenish rain's gifts.

Should the heavens dry up, worship here of the heavenly ones in festivals and daily rites would wither.

Unless the heavens grant their gifts, neither the giver's generosity nor the ascetic's detachment will grace this wide world.

No life on Earth can exist without water, and water's ceaseless flow cannot exist without rain.

A Hindu View on the Use of Alcohol By David Frawley **www.americanhindu.net/Hindu_View_Alcohol.mht**

The consumption of alcohol has existed in human society since time immemorial. Probably all societies, at least in historically-recorded times, have had members who have used alcohol, which has been a common source of relaxation, intoxication or inebriation. In the modern world, all types of alcoholic beverages are freely available in the world market.

Most societies have placed some restraints or restrictions on the use of alcohol; because of the dangers arising from its over use. Some groups, particularly of a religious nature, have tried to ban alcohol altogether and have made it into a sin to consume it at all, although some members within these groups have continued to use alcohol anyway.



Alcoholism is a major health and social problem throughout the world. Such groups as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) have arisen to help people to deal with alcohol addictions. Alcoholism is a major cause of motor accidents, which is a major cause of death, particularly for young people. That alcohol has a potential down side, no one, even those who drink it regularly, would dispute.

What is the Hindu view of alcohol consumption? Hinduism is a spiritual tradition that is not based upon mere faith or belief but upon an understanding of dharma, the natural laws behind the universe. So the question for Hindus is how does the use of alcohol fit in with its sense of dharma and how does it effect us karmically? Alcohol is also part of the use of intoxicants and stimulants in general, not a separate item. For more information, visit "source" above.

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