

Sat Chit Anand

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Diwali: Festival of Lights



Om bhur bhuvah svah
 tat savitur varenyam
 bhargo devasya dhimahi
 dhiyo yonah prachodayat

Meditate on the glory of the Creator
 Who has created the universe
 Who is worthy of worship
 Who is the embodiment of knowledge
 and light
 Who is the remover of all sin and
 ignorance
 May he enlighten our intellect

And direct our minds towards the path of Good.

Diwali is the Indian Festival of Lights. The word Diwali comes from the Sanskrit word Deepavali meaning row of lights. Hence Diwali literally signifies a row or cluster of lights. Light is a symbol of hope and positive energy, and indicates the victory of good over bad. Darkness is symbolic of ignorance and blindness, whereas light is symbolic of salvation. The Upanishads pray: lead us from darkness to the light. By lighting lamps and spreading light, we express our wish to destroy the reign of darkness and negativity. As light disperses darkness, this Festival of Lights dispels ignorance. The deeper meaning of Diwali is awareness of the inner light. A sublime light of knowledge dawns upon humanity and this self en-light-enment is expressed through the twinkling lamps that illuminate. From darkness to the light that empowers us to consign ourselves to good activities and brings us closer to Divinity.

En-light-enment is a process of peeling back the many layers of the false self or ego to experience your true radiant Infinite Self. It is a process of opening to your innermost being, and as a result to the entire universe. It is reaching towards the center into the very essence of your being where true spiritual knowledge resides, and which is the Source of your Reality and of all things. As you rest deeper into the peaceful still center in the heart of your being, you will eventually awaken to the Divine being you truly are, and experience and enjoy a spiritually rich life, full of depth, meaning, clarity, peace, love, joy and bliss.

From the Hindu religion, here is a beautiful declaration of en-light-enment: Janak said: *“Light is my self-nature. I am not other than that. When the universe is illuminated, it is illuminated by my light. Amazing am I, I bow down to myself. When the whole world shall perish from Brahma down to the very blade of grass I shall not perish. I am eternal. Amazing am I, I bow down to myself. Although embodied, I am the non-dual. I neither go anywhere nor come from anywhere; I just exist, I pervade the universe. Amazing am I, I bow down to myself. None here is as capable as I, who have been maintaining this universe for an eternity without even touching it with the body. Amazing am I, I bow down to myself. I have nothing at all, or I have all that can be encompassed by speech or thought.”* – *Ashtavakra Gita*

The Buddha refers to the experience of light when describing his en-light-enment: “In the last watch of the night, I attained true knowledge. Ignorance is destroyed, wisdom is arisen, darkness is dispelled and light is arisen.” The Buddha's enlightenment was marked by splendid light. Speaking of the emergence of light during the Buddha's meditation, the Lotus Sutra says: “His body was motionless and his mind had reached perfect tranquility. And as soon as the Lord had entered upon his meditation, there fell a great rain of divine flowers ... And at that moment there issued a ray of light from within the point between the eyebrows of the Lord. It extended over 18 hundred thousand Buddha-fields, so that all those Buddha-fields appeared wholly illuminated by its radiance.” After his enlightenment, the Buddha said: *“I shall kindle the incomparable light for people lost in blindness ...”*

In Christianity, it is said that *God is light and in him there is no darkness*. God is absolute good – there is no evil or sin in God. When you have union with the absolute goodness of God, there is no sin or darkness, and you manifest goodness in your daily life. If you act from a separate self, then there is sin. If there is union and oneness, there is no sin. Jesus said: *I am the light of the world. You are the light of the world*. It is our duty to live as the light, to bring hope, peace, love and light into the world. You are the light of the world. Be that, and help manifest the Kingdom of God. When Jesus discovered that the foundation of his being, God, was the light of the world, he also discovered that the foundation of every created being, which is God, is also the light of the world. Jesus did not say you must become the light of the world – he said you are (already) this, but you have lost this awareness, and I want you to discover it.

“One's original state, the real 'I', which is the image and likeness of God in every human being, is a gift God gives to each one of us from all eternity. That is what God has created and what God has created he has already saved. This is the hidden treasure, the precious pearl, buried in the heart of every man and woman. The ego is not the creation of God; it is the creation of the human mind through ignorance, and it is bondage from which the human mind has to liberate itself so that it can discover the Truth and the grace of God within.” [Brother Martin: *You are the Light*, page 124]

Third annual Festival of Lights

When: Wednesday 26 October from 5.30pm and Where: Old Nicks, N2 just outside Plettt

What: Music, dance, food, fun, light and laughter, candle lighting, sky lanterns, and more

Entrance: a clean joke. Spiritual talk at sunset, just before candle lighting

WITH LOVE AND LIGHT, LEELA

This weeks schedule:

Tuesday 17h00 - 18h30: Faith sharing, topic spiritual friendship

Wednesday from 17h30: Diwali Festival of Lights Celebration

Thursday 17h00 - 18h30: Yoga

Spiritual Retreats anytime

<http://www.satchitanand.co.za/programme.htm>

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