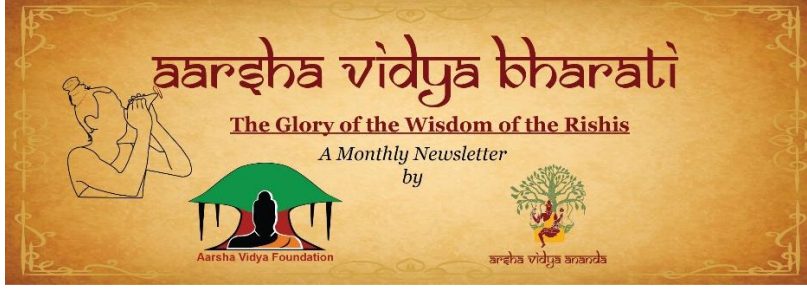


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# Aarsha Vidya Bharati - Nov 2021

A monthly newsletter that will bring you more happiness, more wisdom and more freedom



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This is one of many articles from our monthly newsletter. Access the [Nov 2021 issue](#) or read any of the [articles](#).

## Living Our Traditions

Deepavali - Its significance and how it is celebrated  
By Purnima Bhatt, Mumbai

Every year in October-November, the world is lit up by a celebration – a celebration that has come to be known as Deepavali. It is celebrated by Hindus, Jains and Sikhs - not only in India but all over the world. The word 'Deepavali' consists of two words viz. *Dīpa* (lamp) & *Āvali* (row), which is also known as Diwali. During Deepavali we light lamps in front of our houses, offices, temples and also decorate them with flowers, rangolis etc. The light of the lamp symbolizes victory of light over darkness.

The festival spans 5 days starting from *Dhanatrayodaśī*, the 13<sup>th</sup> day of Krishna Paksha of Ashwin month, to 2<sup>nd</sup> day of Shukla Paksha of Kartikmonth.

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### November 2021 Deepavali Dates

- 2<sup>nd</sup>: Dhanatrayodashi
  - 4<sup>th</sup>: Naraka Chaturdashi
  - 4<sup>th</sup>: Deepavali
  - 5<sup>th</sup>: Balipratipada
  - 6<sup>th</sup>: Bhai Dooj
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### Day-1: *Dhanatrayodaśī*

Kubera is worshipped for external wealth in the form of Gold, Silver, land and so on, and also for inner wealth called *Daivīsampatti*, which is the wealth of the devas such as freedom from fear, purity of mind, compassion for living beings etc. (BhagavadGita-16.1-3)

**Dhanwantari:** The deity who blesses us with long and healthy life and the source of Ayurveda is worshipped. So the day is also called Dhanwantari Jayanti and in recent years has been adopted as the National Ayurveda Day.

**Yamadīpadāna:** In the evening, a lamp is kept at the entrance of the house to avoid accidental death and to be free of fear and negativity. Meditation on Hanumanji is done during the day.



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### Day 2: Naraka Caturdaśī

As per the legend, *Bhagavān* Shri Krishna killed *Narakāsura* – the asura king who had kidnapped and imprisoned 16,000 girls. Since the girls were freed from Naraka, the day is called *Naraka Caturdaśī*. Naraka is the place full of inner impurities.

The day is also called *Roop Caturdaśī*. Many of us wake up early in the morning, before sunrise and have a bath after an oil massage and a chandan pack to remove our external impurities. In many communities in the south of India, this early morning bath after applying sesame oil is called *Gangā Snānam*. Fresh new clothes are worn to indicate new and auspicious beginnings after the bath and prayers are offered to Lord Vishnu.

### Day-3:Deepavali

Deepavali falls on the no-moon day (Amavasya) of Ashwin Month. Goddess Mahalakshmi appeared in this universe on this day. We worship her by doing Lakshmi pooja in the evening. Though it is the darkest day of the year, it is an auspicious day as the moon and the sun come together and create wealth generating opportunities.

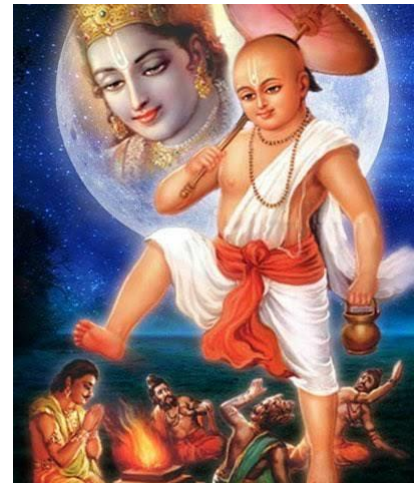
On this day, *Bhagavān* Sri Ram returned to Ayodhya after his victory over the asura Ravana. The citizens of Ayodhya lit rows of lamps to welcome him. We too celebrate this victory of truth by lighting lamps and decorating our homes.



The Jains believe that Sri Mahavira, last Jain Tirthankara attained Nirvana on this day.

### Day4: Balipratipada

Balipratipada falls on the first day of the Shukla Paksha of Kartik month. King Bali was known for his generosity. However, he also had pride. *Bhagavān* Vishnu took the form of a dwarf, *Vāmana avatāra*, approached Bali and asked for 3 steps of land. Bali readily agreed. The little *Vāmana* grew in size and his first step covered the entire earth. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> step, he covered *svarga*. As Bali recognized that *Vāmana* was *Bhagavān*, he offered his head for the 3<sup>rd</sup> step. *Vāmana* sent Bali to *Pātāla loka*. However, Bali asked whether his giving would go to waste. So, *Bhagavān* promised that he could visit the earth on the first day of Kartik month and he would be worshipped for his generosity. People therefore, gift each other on this day highlighting the importance of *Dāna*, giving.



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*Annakūta*: - On this day Govardhan puja is performed and different varieties of *Anna* (mainly sweets, rice items etc.) are offered to Shri Krishna. A mountain of food is offered in gratitude for the time that *Bhagavān* Krishna lifted the mountain Govardhan to protect the citizens from torrential rains. It reminds us of seeking refuge in *Bhagavān*.

Day 5: *Yama Dvitīya* or Bhai Beej (Dooj)

As the story goes, the lord of death, Yama had a sister called Yamuna who took a promise from her brother that those brothers and sisters who bathe in the Yamuna River on the second day of the Kartik month, would not face *Yama Yātna*, suffering. Yama would free them from suffering. Hence the bond between brothers and sisters is celebrated on this day as bhai dooj.

Let this Deepavali bring abundance of love, peace, happiness & prosperity for all!