



GANEŠĀNJALI



MAHĀ ŚIVARĀTRI MAHOTSAVAM

Tuesday, February 21st thru Saturday, February 25th 2017



Śri Śiva - Pārvati

THE HINDU TEMPLE SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA, NY
Śri Mahā Vallabha Ganapati Devasthānam
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THE BILVA

The *Bilva*, *bael*, Wood or Stone Apple, or *Aegle marmelos* is a tree filled with potent ingredients from its roots to its leaves. Each part has multiple uses. In deference, the ancient sages deemed them as sacred. The authoritative *Vedas* and the vividly descriptive *purānas* validate and reiterate their importance, increasing our awareness of them. The *Bilva* leaves are especially auspicious for offering to *Śri Śiva* - especially on *Śivarātri*. Two popular collections of *ślokas* highlighting the superior benefits obtainable when offering even a single *Bilva* leaf are the *Bilvāshtakam* (eight *ślokas*) and the *Bilvāshtottara* (108 *ślokas*). The following *śloka* is extracted from the *Bilvāshtottara*.

BILVA SAMARPANA ŚLOKA

akshamālādharam rudram pārvatīpriyavallabham |
chandraśekharameeśānam ékabilvam śivārpanam ||

Meaning

I offer one Bilva leaf to Lord Śiva, who wears a garland of beads, is the beloved of Pārvati, wears the crescent on His highest point (top of the matted hair on His head) and is the god of North-East.



ŚRI PANCHĀKSHARA MANTRA

॥ ॐ नमः शिवाय ॥
OM NAMAHA ŚIVĀYA

MAHĀ ŠIVARĀTRI CELEBRATIONS

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21ST THRU SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25TH 2017

Tuesday, February 21st, 2017

- 8:00 AM Šri Mahā Ganapati Homam, Navagraha Homam, Poornāhuti, Hārati.
- 9:30 AM Šri Šiva Abhishekam, Šri Rudra Trišati Nāma Archana, Hārati.
- 5:00 PM Kalaša Sthāpanam, Pooja, Šri Šiva Moola Mantra Japam & Homam. (1st Kālam)
- 7:15 PM Poornāhuti, Hārati.

Wednesday, February 22nd, 2017

- 8:00 AM Šri Šiva Moola Mantra Japam & Homam. (2nd Kālam)
- 9:15 AM Poornāhuti, Hārati.
- 9:30 AM Šri Šiva Abhishekam, Šri Rudra Trišati Nāma Archana, Hārati.
- 5:00 PM Šri Šiva Moola Mantra Japam & Homam. (3rd Kālam)
- 6:45 PM Poornāhuti, Hārati.

Thursday, February 23rd, 2017

- 8:00 AM Šri Šiva Moola Mantra Japam & Homam. (4th Kālam)
- 9:15 AM Poornāhuti, Hārati.
- 9:30 AM Šri Šiva Abhishekam, Šri Rudra Trišati Nāma Archana.
- 4:30 PM Mahā Pradosham, Abhishekam
- 5:00 PM Šri Šiva Moola Mantra Japam & Homam. (5th Kālam)
- 6:45 PM Poornāhuti, Hārati.



THE GLORY OF MAHĀ ŚIVARĀTRI

Skanda Purāna extols four types of *Śivarātri* - *nitya*, *māsa*, *māgha prathamādi*, and *māgha krishna chaturdaśi Śivarātris* (meaning daily, monthly, beginning with the first day after the full moon between mid-Feb and mid-Mar, and the fourteenth day in the dark fortnight of *māgha* between mid-Feb to mid-Mar). The last one is by far the most widely observed and is known as *Mahā Śivarātri* (the great night of *Śiva*) or just as *Śivarātri*. As recounted by Lord *Śiva* to His Consort *Śri Pārvati*, the Lord showers His blessings on those, who on this day, observe the *vrata* of fasting and spiritual discipline during the day and worship Him all night, whether knowingly or otherwise. Our *purānas* are abound with stories of devotees who attained salvation in this way.

Śiva Purāna narrates the story of a gambler named *Gunānidhi*. On the evening of a *Śivarātri*, the starving *Gunānidhi* noticed a devotee approaching a *Śiva* temple with *prasād* for the Lord in his hands. Observing the devotee take a nap in an unlit spot in the temple after his prayers, *Gunānidhi* re-lit the lamp and was about to eat the Lord's *prasād*, when the sleeping devotee woke up and killed him. The unintentional fasting during *Śivarātri* and lighting a lamp in the *Śiva* temple were enough for the sinful *Gunānidhi* to win a place in heaven and later become *Kubera*.

The *Mahābhārata* tells the story of a hunter chased by a tiger in a forest. In order to save himself, the hunter climbed what happened to be a *Bilva* (Bael) tree. The tiger sat under the tree all night. Hungry, and afraid to fall asleep lest he might fall down, he spent the entire night plucking the leaves of the *bilva* tree and dropping them. He wept thinking of his family. That happened to be *Śivarātri*, and the *Śiva Lingam* below the tree was drenched with the tears of the hungry hunter and was covered by the *bilva* leaves dropped by him all night. Lord *Śiva* was pleased and granted salvation to both of them - the hunter as well as the tiger.

Lord *Śiva* narrated two other events that mark this sacred day. Once, when the gods and the demons churned the Ocean of Milk in search of *Amrita*, the *hālāhala* (a flaming poison) emerged first and threatened to burn the universe. In order to assuage the frightened gods, Lord *Śiva* swallowed the poison, but *Śri Pārvati* clasped His throat and held the poison in His throat. Hence *abhishekam* is performed to Lord *Śiva* all night on *Śivarātri* to cool His burning throat. In another event, Lord *Śiva* appeared as a *Jyotir Linga* or Pillar of Light in front of Lord *Vishnu* and Lord *Brahmā* when both of them were arguing as to who was more powerful. In order to find the origin of the Pillar of Light, Lord *Vishnu* took the form of a wild boar and ploughed into the depths of the earth, while Lord *Brahmā* turned into a swan and flew as high as he could. Neither of them could, however, reach either the beginning or the end of this Pillar of Light. So they both prostrated before the *Jyotir Linga* and proclaimed that Lord *Śiva* as *Jyotir Linga* was limitless and was superior to both of them. *Śivarātri* marks this sacred day, when *Śiva* appeared as *Jyotir Linga*.

All holy waters and devatas are said to merge in the *Śiva Linga* on *Śivarātri*. On this day, the cosmos is believed to be charged with spiritual energy and is suitable for spiritual practices. Our ancestors have, therefore, urged us to stay awake all night focusing on our inner growth.

OM NAMAHA ŚIVĀYA



MAHĀ ŚĪVARĀTRI DAY

Friday, February 24th, 2017



- 8:00 AM Śri Śiva Moola Mantra Japam & Homam (6th Kālam), Mahā Poornāhuti, Hārati.
- 9:00 AM Śri Śiva Abhishekam, Śri Rudra Triśati Nāma Archana, Hārati.

THE ALL-NIGHT VIGIL

PHASE I - 4:00 PM

- 4:00 PM MAHĀNYĀSAM
- 5:00 PM EKĀDAŚAVĀRA RUDRĀBHISHEKAM STARTS, Special Alankāram, Pooja, Hārati.
- 7:30 PM Śri Pārvati Abhishekam, Pooja, Hārati.

PHASE II - 10:30 PM

- **Bilva Samarpana Śloka Japam, Śri Śiva Abhishekam, Special Alankāram, Śri Rudra Triśati Nāma Archana, Hārati.

PHASE III - 1:00 AM (on Feb. 25th)

- *Śri Panchākshara Mantra Japam, Śri Śiva Abhishekam, Special Alankāram, Bilva Ashtottara Śata Nāma Archana, Hārati.

PHASE IV - 3:30 AM (on Feb. 25th)

- Śri Śiva Abhishekam, Special Alankāram, Pooja, Śri Nandi Abhishekam, Hārati.

PLEASE NOTE

** *Bilva Samarpana Śloka Japam* will be chanted during *Abhishekem* in Phase II. Only those who attend the practice sessions may participate in the *Japam*.

**Śri Panchākshara Mantra Japam* will be chanted during *Abhishekam* in Phase III. ALL ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE.

Friday, February 24th, 2017

Scheduled *Mahā Lakshmi Abhishekam* will be at 9:00 AM instead of 7:15 PM

Scheduled *Lalita Sahasranāma* is at 10:00 AM

Scheduled *Pārvati Abhishekam* will be at 7:30 PM instead of 10:00 AM

Saturday, February 25th, 2017



4:00 PM **ŠRI ŠIVA POOJA BY CHILDREN**

5:00 PM Šri Šiva Abhishekam, Sahasranāma Pooja,
Hārati.

7:15 PM **ŠRI ŠIVA-ŠRI PĀRVATI KALYĀNA
MAHOTSAVAM, Hārati, Prasādam.**

NEXT GANEŠĀNJALI

- YUGĀDI • ŠRI RĀMA NAVAMI UTSAVAM
- SATYANĀRĀYANA KALYĀNA UTSAVAM

TARIFF FOR SERVICES

● All 4 days	\$501.00
● Šri Šiva Moola Mantra Homam (Single Session)	\$ 31.00
● Šri Šiva Moola Mantra Homam (All Sessions)	\$101.00
● All 4 Phases – Abhishekam	\$251.00
● Ekādaśavāra Rudrābhishekam (PHASE I)	\$125.00
● PHASE II, III or IV Abhishekam	\$ 51.00
● PHASE I - Chandana Alankāram (for Šri Šiva)	\$501.00
● PHASE II -Vibhooti Alankāram (for Šri Šiva)	\$501.00
● PHASE III -Vastra Ābharana Alankāram (for Šri Šiva)	\$301.00
● PHASE IV - Pushpa Alankāram (for Šri Šiva)	\$2,001.00
● Šri Pārvati Abhishekam	\$ 51.00
● Šri Siva Pooja by Children (Feb. 25 th)	\$ 25.00
● Šri Bilva Samarpana Šloka Japam	\$ 21.00
● Šri Panchākshara Mantra Japam	\$ 21.00
● Nandi Abhishekam	\$ 31.00
● Bilvāshtottaraśatanāma / Triśatināma Archana	\$ 11.00
● Šri Šiva - Pārvati Kalyāna Utsavam	\$ 31.00

**Sponsorship of Pooja Sāmagri &
Oil for Deepas on a regular basis
For one or more of the Deities.**

(Oil - approx. \$101 per month per Deity)
(Pooja Sāmagri - Approx. \$ 601 per Deity per month)

TRAVEL DIRECTIONS TO THE TEMPLE

By Automobile: (A) If you are driving **from Manhattan or points West**, take I-495 East (Long Island Expressway) to Exit 24 (Kissena Blvd) and turn LEFT at Kissena Blvd.

(B) If you are driving **from Long Island or points East**, take I-495 West (Long Island Expressway) to Exit 24 (Kissena Blvd) and turn RIGHT at Kissena Blvd.

Drive about a mile on Kissena Blvd and turn RIGHT into Holly Avenue. Drive 3 blocks on Holly Avenue to Bowne Street. The Temple is on the LEFT side.

(C) If you are driving **from Connecticut or points North**, take I-95 South to I-678 South (Van Wyck Expressway). After crossing Whitestone Bridge, stay on I-678 South (RIGHT lane) and take Exit 15 to 20th Ave. At the traffic light, turn LEFT into Parsons Blvd and drive about 2.5 miles. At Flushing Hospital Medical Center (on RIGHT), turn RIGHT into 45th Ave and drive to next block. At Smart Street, turn LEFT and drive to the end of the street to Temple Parking Lot behind the temple.

(D) If you are driving **from Princeton, Philadelphia or points South**, take I-278 via Staten Island and take Exit 35 to I-495 East (Long Island Expressway) and follow directions as above (A).

By Public Transportation: Take Subway **Train No. 7** from Times Square to Flushing Main Street (the last stop on 7 train). Then take MTA **Bus Q27** from Main Street to Bowne Street on Holly Avenue. The bus runs on Kissena Blvd and turns left into Holly Ave Bus Stop. The next stop is Bowne Street near the temple. The bus ride is about 5 to 10 minutes. You may also take MTA **Buses Q17, Q25 and Q34** to Kissena Blvd and Holly Avenue and walk two short blocks to the temple.

Long Island Rail Road (**LIRR**) Trains from Penn Station / Woodside to Port Washington also stop in Flushing Main Street, adjacent to 7 train.