

The Inner Significance of Maha Shivaratri



A Study Guide based on the teachings of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

What is Shivaratri?

Today is the holy day of Shivaratri. Shiva means auspiciousness. Where there is Shiva (auspiciousness) there cannot be shava (inauspiciousness). This holy day of Shivaratri must be spent in the constant contemplation of God chanting the holy name of Shiva right from early in the morning till you go to bed. The Lord's name must dance on your tongue.

March 8, 2005

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/you-are-all-amrutaputras-sons-immortality>

Shiva means auspiciousness. Since Shiva resides in us, does that imply that we too must be auspicious? How do we then feel auspicious at all times?

How can we constantly remember to chant the name of the Lord on Shivaratri?

We are spending nights daily ever since we are born, but not all those nights can be termed as Shivaratri. People meditate upon, sing, and listen to the glory of the divine name and experience the divinity of Lord Shiva. Since the whole night is spent in meditation and singing the glory of the divine name of Lord Shiva, this night is called Shivaratri. Not only this night, whenever you spend the entire night meditating upon the divine name, that night is also Shivaratri. Lord Shiva is not a separate Avatar.

February 23, 2009

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/love-god-and-meditate-him>

The night is a blessed night and in all discourses during Shivaratri, Swami has emphasized its importance. How can we better prepare ourselves for undertaking some form of spiritual exercise for this special night?

No one seems to have made an effort to recognize the meaning and significance of Shivaratri. In fact, the very word Shivaratri reveals its meaning. “*Shiva*” means auspicious and “*ratri*” means night. Thus, Shivaratri means auspicious night. Then the question arises: who is Shiva? The divine consciousness pervading all the living beings is none other than Shiva. This *Shivattwa* (divine consciousness) permeates not only human beings but the birds, beasts, and animals as well. In fact, every moment in our life can be taken to be Shivaratri. We need not wait for Shivaratri on a particular day in a year.

March 9, 2005

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/experience-all-pervading-divine-consciousness>

The night is only an orientation program for us to imbibe the spirit of Shivaratri and make this an integral lifestyle for the rest of our lives. What transformational changes do we want to see in ourselves? What new resolutions can we make on this night to bring a transformational change?



Today we are celebrating Shivaratri. What does it mean? *Ratri* (night) is associated with darkness. The Vedas declare, “*Chandrama Manaso Jatha, Chaksho Suryo Ajayatha* (the moon was born out of the mind and the sun out of the eyes of the Purusha).” Moon is the presiding deity of the mind. So, mind should be pure and unsullied.

February 14, 1999

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/cultivate-love-your-heart>

Why does Shivaratri place its importance on the mind?

What relevance is the significance of Shivaratri to our daily living?

You will be observing Shivaratri in the true spirit of the term only when you give up bad qualities and cultivate divine love. Merely observing vigil on Shivaratri is not sufficient. You have to contemplate on God incessantly. Many people claim that they have observed *jagarana* (vigil) on Shivaratri night by playing cards. The fisherman goes on watching intently to trap the fish in the net. Can this be termed meditation? If one abstains from food on account of quarrel with one’s wife, can it be called fasting? No. Similarly, observance of sacred vigil on Shivaratri night is not achieved by playing cards the whole night. You should spend this night chanting the name of God, using the time in doing good deeds.

February 14, 1999

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/cultivate-love-your-heart>

Here the emphasis Swami is making on the need to move away from mechanically carrying out rituals as opposed to appreciating the real purpose of these auspicious events. Contemplate and describe the various rituals involved during Shivaratri and find relevant significance behind each one of these acts.

Today is the sacred day of Shivaratri. Legend has it that when Shiva, in order to save the world, swallowed *halahala* (poison), He lost consciousness and fell down. The resultant heat affected the world. In order to cool down the world, Shiva created the Himalayas. Then He placed the Himalayas on His stomach. As a result, the Himalayas absorbed all the heat from His body and He got up. People celebrate this event as Shivaratri. But, this is only a worldly interpretation. Truly speaking, the Himalayas are within you. In fact, the whole world is within you. The Divinity within you has neither birth nor death. The body may undergo change, but the Divine Principle remains the same. Love never undergoes any change. It remains love always. The quality of sugar is sweetness. It does not change whether it is added to coffee, tea, water or rice pudding.

February 15, 1999

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/manifesting-divinity-lingodbhava>

Swallowing *Halahala* (poison) by Shiva is a very important event. How can we relate this to daily life events?

Shiva created the Himalayas and placed in his stomach and thereby absorbed the heat. Again these can be left as stories but there is a deeper inner significance of these two events.

Contemplate on the inner significance of these two events and assess how these can be relatable in daily living.

The nights you experience on other days are ordinary nights. But Shivaratri is an auspicious night. How is it auspicious? It is auspicious when you spend your time in an auspicious way singing the glories of the Lord. The mind has sixteen aspects. The moon is the presiding deity of the mind. Of the sixteen aspects of the moon, fifteen are absent today. If you sing His glory throughout the night wholeheartedly, even the remaining one aspect can also be merged with the Divine. On this day, it is possible to

get full control over the mind by contemplating on God. Hence it is considered as an auspicious night. Unfortunately, in this Kali Age, people observe the vigil of Shivaratri by seeing cinema shows or playing cards all through the night. This cannot be called Shivaratri. Every moment of the night should be devoted to the thoughts of God and chanting of His name wholeheartedly. The chanting should come from within. This is what is called the reflection of the inner being.

March 4, 2000

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/sheaths-self>

The most important night of all nights is Shivaratri. It appears that this is the night, with appropriate vigilance and steadfast devotion we might get a leap of consciousness. What intensity and intention should we possess in order to gain this opportunity?

How much more dedication must we pour to make the event a memorable one? What extra vigilance and steadfastness that we need this time to be sharper and more devoted to the Lord of our hearts?

Today is the very auspicious day of Shivaratri. Shiva stands for auspiciousness. What is so special and auspicious about Shivaratri? Mind has 16 aspects, of which 15 are merged on this night and only one is remaining. Make proper use of this holy night by undertaking *Sadhana* with devotion and steadfastness. What sort of *Sadhana* you must undertake? Cleanse your heart of all evil qualities. Evil qualities arise in you because of the misuse of the senses. It is the root cause of all sins. *Sadhana* does not mean doing *Japa* and meditation. You should develop pure and divine feelings in you. Consider everyone as divine. Respect them. "All are Mine and I belong to everybody." Once you have such firm conviction, you can enjoy immense happiness in life. There will

be no trace of worry in your life Have Firm Faith In God.

February 21, 2001

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/vision-atma>

Contemplate on the negative qualities that we have and can we be better prepared to surrender this negative traits to Lord Shiva on that night.

Imagine a life without these negative qualities in our lives. Imagine the envisaged peace and love we would experience in the future, leading a life without these negative qualities. Anchor on the possible envisaged future and readily and willingly surrender these qualities.

Therefore it is said, Truth is the life of the tongue. Righteousness is the life of hands. Non- violence is the life of the heart. Shivaratri is celebrated to teach man the significance of these values. Shiva also stands for humility. A person with humility is one of *Shivam* (auspiciousness). On the other hand, a person with ego is verily a *savam* (corpse).

March 12, 2002

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/idols-are-pointers-divinity>

Swami has said that one of the first qualities of a seeker heading towards the light of truth is humility. Shiva stands for humility. The whole objective of the night is to be vigilant and absorb the qualities of Lord Shiva. Hence contemplate in your life the incidences that made you realize that your own ego manifested in your life which resulted in the spring of anger, hatred etc. Use this auspicious night to anchor back to our innate true nature and make a commitment to always manifest humility and make humility an integral part of one's lifestyle.

In order to rise to the level of divine, *satsang* is very essential. "One thought, one vision, and one action." These three must be unified. Shivaratri is celebrated to recognise the oneness of Divinity. When you do bhajans tonight, you will have only one thought. You will experience the bliss of bhajans. It is the nondual bliss. Why is it prescribed that you should do bhajans all through the night? Bhajan is done to control the mind and focus it on Divinity. Some people keep discussing worldly matters even while they are doing bhajan. Do not go anywhere near such people.

March 1, 2003

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/experience-unity-real-satsang>

Alignment of thought word and deed. Take a vow not to engage in any other activities but remain silent and vigilant over your thoughts. Spent this night on constant contemplation. Contemplate on this very deeply and assess how many times did the mind did not obey this injunction that you have imposed on yourself. This is the first step towards meditation. To become vigilant over your thoughts . Use this night profitably to gain a mastery over your mind.

The Shiva-consciousness is all-pervading. How can we limit it to a particular time and place?

Sarvatah Panipadam

Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham

Sarvatah Sruthimalloke Sarvamavruthya

Tishthati

(With hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire Universe).

If we carefully analyze this aspect once, it will be obvious that all that we witness around is Shiva consciousness, and nothing else. Shiva does not mean a particular form with matted hair and tiger skin. Wherever we look and whichever form we come across

—whether a child or an elderly person, whether a woman or a man— in every form, the Shiva consciousness is resplendent. How can you describe that all-pervading Shiva-consciousness or limit it to a particular time and place? People display a particular dance form to portray the *Shiva Tandava* (the cosmic dance of Lord Shiva and Parvati). But this is only symbolic and does not portray the real Shiva Tandava. How can one describe the transcendental Shiva consciousness, which words cannot describe or the mind cannot comprehend?

March 9, 2005

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/experience-all-pervading-divine-consciousness>

This beautiful extract of the speech summarizes the conclusion of the experience. Our consciousness must graduate to a point in which we confine the term Shiva to a particular form, space and time. All whom we see must be seen with auspiciousness. All whom we encounter must be with auspiciousness. How can we evolve to the level of consciousness?

Develop virtues and lead an ideal life. Only then will Swami be pleased with you. If you make Me happy with your ideal conduct, I will confer much more happiness on you. Your happiness is My happiness. Wherever you go, earn a good name for yourself. Your character is very important for Me. Hence, make every effort to mould your character and be an ideal to others. This is the message I would like to give you on this auspicious day of Shivaratri. The day on which you experience eternal bliss is Shivaratri for Me. I shower My blessings on all of you on this holy night of Shivaratri. Sing the Divine Name throughout the night. To the extent possible, spend the night in contemplation of God. Only then can you experience divine bliss. You can even witness the manifestation of divine effulgence. Sing the Divine Name wholeheartedly. You may sing any name, but you should understand its inner meaning.

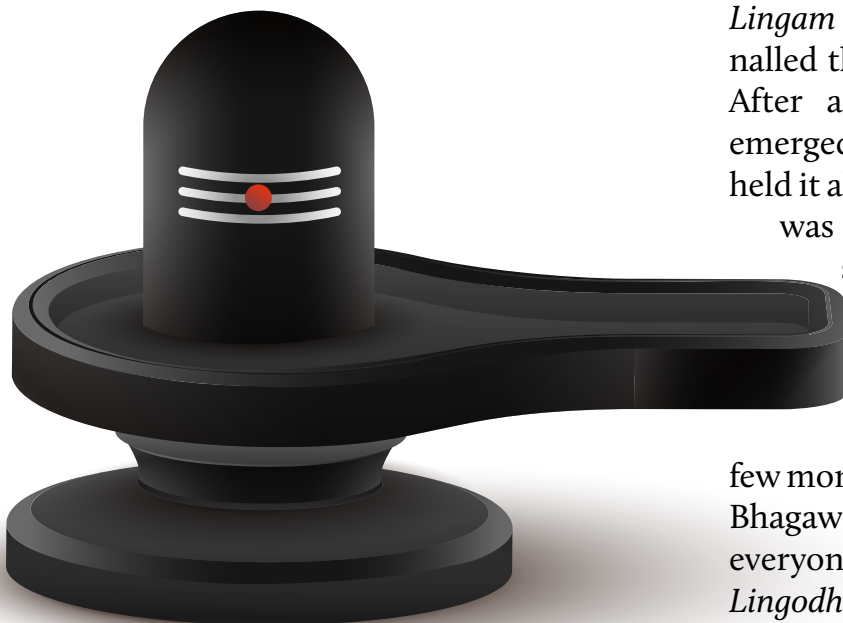
February 26, 2006

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/limit-not-all-pervading-brahman-names-and-forms>

What new ideals can I form on this?

Significance of Lingam

As Bhagawan was continuing with His discourse, He started showing signs of uneasiness as the emergence of the *Atma Lingam* was imminent. He sat down and signalled the students to start singing Bhajans. After a few moments, a golden lingam emerged from Bhagawan's mouth, and He held it aloft for everyone to see. As Bhagawan was continuing with His discourse, He started showing signs of uneasiness as the emergence of the *Atma Lingam* was imminent. He sat down and signalled the students to start singing Bhajans. After a few moments, a golden lingam emerged from Bhagawan's mouth, and He held it aloft for everyone to see. During the process of *Lingodhbhavam* (the emergence of the lingam), the body, of course felt some strain.



However, I assure you that you need not be worried about it. Suffering for the body is quite common. It just comes and goes like passing clouds.

February 18, 2004

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/divine-discourse-38>

During the emergence of the Linga, Swami says the body goes through some strain. But Swami does not feel the pain. What is the pertinent lesson for us here?

There is the principle of Hiranyagarbha within every individual. *Hiranya* means gold. When gold is mixed with other metals such as copper, silver, brass, it loses its brilliance, value, and identity. Then it becomes impossible to ascertain whether it is gold or silver or brass or copper. Similarly, man's heart, which is *Hiranmaya*, is losing its brilliance, value, and identity on account of its association with *vishaya vasanas* (sensual desires). Consequently, it is impossible to ascertain whether one is a human being or an animal or a devil or a demon.

February 14, 1999

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/cultivate-love-your-heart>

What is the significance of understanding this Hiranyagarbha?

How can the heart of man lose its brilliance and value by associating with sensual desires? Provide examples and evidence that this phenomenon is really taking place.

By our thoughts, words and deeds how will Swami judge us - human being or an animal or a devil or a demon?

This Principle of Love is Hiranyagarbha. This Hiranyagarbha is situated on the right side of the human body, with the physical heart is on the left. The physical heart on the left side has to be left one day or the other, in some circumstance or the other. *Hiranyagarbha*, located on the right side of the human body is always right. It is immortal, divine, eternal, and all-encompassing. It is present not only in human beings but also in birds, beasts, and all other living beings. The Vedas declare: "*Eswara Sarvabhoothanam* (God is present in all living beings)," "*Isavasyam Idam Jagat* (God pervades the entire cosmos)." Love is the reflection of Hiranyagarbha and originates from it. The three principles of reaction, resound, and reflection have also originated from *Hiranyagarbha*.

February 15, 1999

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/manifesting-divinity-lingodbhava>

Love usually pours from the heart and here Swami is saying that if love poured from Hiranyagrabha, it will be immortal, divine, eternal and all encompassing. How can we cultivate this quality of love?

How do we contemplate and ensure that the understanding of reaction, resound and reflection is embedded in all my day to day living activities?

What is the significance of *Lingodbhava*? God is known as Hiranyagarbha (one having a golden womb). The golden essence (*rasa*) present in His womb undergoes a vigorous churning process and assumes the shape of a Linga. Linga means a symbol or a sign. [Showing the golden Linga that He created in the beginning of His Discourse, Bhagawan said] As you can see, it has no distinctive features like eyes, face, etc. It has neither feet nor head. It can be placed in any manner. It symbolizes the formless Divinity. *Leeyathe Gamyathe Ithi Lingaha*. It is the basis of everything. The golden essence (*rasa*),

after assuming the shape of a Linga, emerges out. You need fire in order to melt gold. Similarly, the fire within melts the gold and moulds it into the shape of a Linga. Hence, the difficulty at the time of its emergence. It has to assume the form of a Linga and come out.

March 13, 2002

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/realise-magnetic-power-within>

The linga is said to be the "formless" form. How can Linga be considered the basis of everything?

The process of manifesting the linga appears to be a deep inner message for us. How can we draw the significance of this message and relate to daily living?

This body is an *Angamu* (limb) of society. There exists a *Sangamu* (association of attributes) in *Angamu*, a *Jangamu* (individual soul) in *Sangamu*, and *Lingamu* (Paramatma) in *Jangamu*. Linga is Atma, which is our very life principle. That is why the Atma is considered to be of the form of Linga. A Linga has neither a beginning nor an end. It has no head or feet. Hence, when you perform worship, you can keep it anyway you like. The Atma has a name but not a specific form. Bliss is its true form.

March 1, 2003

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/experience-unity-real-satsang>

Discovery of the self (Linga) appears to be the fundamental basis for our forming relationship with self, family and society. The answer to the world's problems perhaps lies in the fact that all our association with the world is perhaps devoid from our connectivity with our Atmalinga. Contemplate on this fact and assess if this is the truth and if so how do we make this connectivity.

Purpose of Fasting

You must free yourself from all thought of food and concentrate on the thought of God. If thoughts of food bother you, if pangs of hunger disturb you, then, it is much better to eat and then start Sadhana. *Upa-vasa*, the word for the vow of fasting, means "living in the proximity of God" (*Upa*-near; *vasa*-living) and so, the vow is meant to liberate you from the worry and bother of preparing and eating food, so that you might dwell more intimately with God. Remember that the purpose of Fast is spending time in the contemplation of God and not simply punishing the body by cutting a meal or a series of meals. Vows, vigils, fasts, etc. along with all kinds of voluntarily imposed or involuntarily suffered hardships are to be looked upon as promoting spiritual strength, not as weakening physical stamina.

February 1966

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/saalokya-saayujya>

You will be observing Shivaratri in the true spirit of the term only when you give up bad qualities and cultivate divine love. Merely observing vigil on Shivaratri is not sufficient. You have to contemplate on God incessantly. Many people claim that they have observed *Jagarana* (vigil) on Shivaratri night by playing cards. The fisherman goes on watching intently to trap the fish in the net. Can this be termed meditation? If one abstains from food on account of quarrel with one's wife, can it be called fasting? No. Similarly, observance of sacred vigil on Shivaratri night is not achieved by playing cards the whole night. You should spend this night chanting the name of God, using the time in doing good deeds.

February 14, 1990

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/cultivate-love-your-heart>

What is the purpose of fasting which is prescribed in most rituals? We can substitute abstinence due to other reasons but the real reason should be develop self-control. Sleep can be

overpowering and yet if we dedicate our efforts towards having spiritual stamina and strength to overcome sleep then we are exerting self-control. Is this really necessary? What benefits can be accrued by this effort?

What other activities can we undertake in preparation for this great night?

Unity in Diversity (Shiva's Family)

In the divine family of Lord Shiva, there are only four members, namely, Lord Easwara, his consort Parvati, and the two sons, Subramanya and Vinayaka. This is an ideal family. There is no difference of opinion whatsoever either between husband and wife or the two brothers. There is perfect accord and harmony in their family. Mother Parvati and Lord Parameswara wanted to set an example to the whole world in the matter of a most harmonious, perfect and loving relationship between a wife and husband and between brothers. A family is the most important functional unit in the world. If the family is running on sound lines, the world will also run smoothly. If the unity among the family members suffers even to a small extent, the world will face the repercussions. Unity gives strength to the lives of the family members. Therefore, every family should strive for achieving unity and harmonious relationship among its members. Every family should strive to emulate the example of Lord Shiva's family. Today, even if there are only two sons in a family, there is no harmony between them. Similar is the case of husband and wife. This is not the position in respect of Lord Shiva's family. The vehicles they ride, the circumstances in which they function, the wealth they possess - in fact, in every aspect, the members of this divine family set an example to the whole world. For example, Lord Shiva's vehicle is Nandi, the bull. Mother Parvati's vehicle is the Lion. The younger son, Subramanya's vehicle is the



peacock, whereas the elder son Vinayaka's is the tiny mouse. They move about the whole world on such strange vehicles, which are antagonistic in nature, they but still lead a perfect and harmonious family life.

March 2, 2003

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/let-unity-be-undercurrent-everywhere>

The night is a reminder to assess how harmonious is our own family. Dedicate some time and exert effort in order to gain greater harmony and peace in the family. The diverse family members with different animals can create havoc. It is a message that family harmony is vital and is necessary to have peace and love in the family. This night is also a night to reflect how much am I contributing to the harmony of my family. These questions can help:

Am I an ideal son or daughter?

How can I be a better son or daughter to my parents?

What efforts can I take before Shivaratri to settle any outstanding issues with my family members in order to achieve peace and love?

How can I be more humble and create peace among members of the family?

Can I amend rifted relationships and be a source of peace and happiness for others?

Never criticize God. Never deny Him. Everything is the manifestation of Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheswara. All are divine. This is what you have to learn on this auspicious day of Shivaratri. There is nothing other than Divinity in this world. The principle of Divinity present in a grain of sand and in a big laddu (a sweet) is one and same. Once you realize this truth, you become Brahma verily. You do not need to search for Brahma elsewhere. You are Brahma, you are Vishnu, you are Shiva, you are the very embodiment of the Divine Trinity. It is only your feeling that assumes the form of Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheswara. You are subjected to unrest and suffering because of your dualistic feeling. You perceive unity as diversity, instead of visualizing unity in diversity. Unity confers purity, which will in turn lead to Divinity. Hence, all of you must stand united. You belong to the human race. You belong to one family. Hence, you must conduct yourself like brothers and sisters. Absence of such spirit of unity will diminish purity and take you away from Divinity.

February 26, 2006

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/limit-not-all-pervading-brahman-names-and-forms>

Why does Swami stress on the principle of Unity?

What does it mean when Swami says that our restlessness and suffering is due to dualistic feeling?

Lord Shiva has no special ornaments on His body. All his ornaments are the serpents that He wears round his neck, the matted locks, the crescent moon, the cool water of the Ganga and the *vibhuti* (holy ash) that he smears all over His body. This Divine form of Lord Shiva is beautifully portrayed thus:

*Lo! Behold The Lord of the icy peak
Crowned with crescent moon
Glistening matted locks,
Bedrenched by heaven descending Ganga
Flaming eye in the forehead,
Venomous potion - poison - Halahala
purpling the beautiful neck
Live bracelets of wriggling Serpents and a
belt of Cobra holding up the Elephant hide,
His sole garment.
Pearly ash smearing the chest
A blinding white spot of vermilion on the
Forehead beside the searing eye
Ruddy lips smeared by Fresh chewed betel,
Diamond studded earrings Of purest gold,
dancing like Stars twinkling in the sky,
Vision negating form
The fair person of the Lord Radiating
Effulgence Divine.
(Telugu Poem)*

Lord Shiva has donned this divine form in order to teach a renunciant outlook to the world, including his consort, Parvati. His another habit is to beg for alms. Parvati, however, did not develop any aversion or disgust toward her husband, Lord Shiva, on account of His strange attire or habits. She did not run away from Him saying, “How can I lead a family life with such a person?” She faithfully followed Him, submitting herself to His wishes and happiness. Both of them lived in peace and harmony. Now about their sons. The vehicle of the younger son, Lord Subramanya, is the peacock, which is by nature an enemy of the serpents worn as ornaments by the father. The serpents begin hissing at the sight of a peacock. They hate each other. Similarly, the vehicle of the elder son, Lord Vinayaka, is the rat, which again is

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a natural prey of the serpent. They are bitter enemies. In spite of such divergent natures, all the members of the family of Lord Shiva lived happily in perfect peace. Each member, while discharging their duty, provided happiness and joy to others.

March 2, 2003

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/let-unity-be-undercurrent-everywhere>

Contemplate on each of the symbols and relate its significance to deriving happiness and peace in daily living.

This great night is a lesson for us to destroy our enmity and not our enemies. How can we share love with all those with whom we might have a misunderstanding?

Even in the form of Lord Shiva Himself, there are apparent contradictions. He has Ganga on His head and the crescent moon in His matted locks. These are signs of coolness. In contrast to these, He has literally fire in the third eye in His forehead. Thus, there is cool water on His head and fire below on His

forehead. These two are conflicting forces. Yet they maintained perfect harmony and set an example to the world. Thus, there was not even slightest difference of opinion or discordant note in the universal family of Lord Shiva. It is a perfectly ideal family, which the entire world should emulate. In sharp contrast to this situation, there is bitter hatred today between one person and another. Hatred is ruling all fields in the world. Even in the same family, there is discord between husband and wife, between parents and children, and between brothers. Lord Shiva and Mother Parvati by their own example are exhorting the entire world to shed hatred and enmity.

March 2, 2003

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/let-unity-be-undercurrent-everywhere>

The principle of Ying-Yang is emphasized here where a correct balance of the opposites is necessary to create the right balance on earth. The principle of unity in diversity becomes apparent. Contemplate on the differences you encounter in people or events which annoys or disturbs you. This beautiful message tells us that we need to change our perspectives and include everyone as the family of Shiva. This reminds us that we need to experience unity in diversity.



Lord Shiva is giver of Jnana

What is liberation? It is not just reaching God, it means complete merger with the Divine. Rivers like Ganga, Godavari, and Saraswathi have different names and forms, but once they merge in the ocean, they lose their name and become one with the ocean. Similarly, once you merge in God, there will be no difference whatsoever. Experiencing such nondualism is the true objective of human life.

February 15, 1999

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/manifesting-divinity-lingodbhava>

What does liberation mean to you?

The rivers lose their distinctive names when they merge into the ocean. Similarly, the identification with body, mind and intellect disappears when we realize our true nature as Atma. Thus, humility and simplicity become the hallmark of a spiritual person.

Is this true and is it evident in our lives?

You have to understand the true significance and philosophy underlying the festival of Shivaratri. First, realise that you are not the physical body, which is perishable and impermanent. You have to look at this objective world with *jnanachakshu* (the eye of wisdom), not with the *chamachakshu* (physical eye). The animals, insects, birds, and beasts are looking at this world with their physical eyes. If you also look at this objective world with mere physical eyes, what difference is there between you and those beings? You will then simply remain an animal, bird, beast, or insect. You will not be able to realize your true nature, which is beyond the physical world. You have to comprehend the transcendental reality, which is beyond the body and the mind. This is possible only with the help of *jnanachakshu* (the eye of wisdom).

February 19, 2004

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/concentration-mind-divine-real-sadhana>

How do we look at the world with the eye of wisdom and not with a physical eye?

You have to recognize that *Atma Thathwa* - not by your *chamachakshu* (physical eyes) but by the *jnanachakshu* (eye of wisdom). Then, the question arises as to what is *jnana* (wisdom)? Is it physical knowledge or secular knowledge or knowledge relating to the objects of nature? No, none of these. The true and eternal *Atma Thathwa* is immanent in one's own body. It can be realized only by the *jnananetras* (eyes of wisdom). You have to gradually give up *dehabhimana* (attachment to the body) and cultivate *Atmabhimana* (love toward the Atma). You think you are the body and develop attachment to it.

February 19, 2004

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/concentration-mind-divine-real-sadhana>

How can we develop in daily life *Atmabhimana* and give up *dehabhimana*?

Vishnu and Shiva are not limited to a physical frame. They are beyond description. They are formless and attributeless. God is attributeless, unsullied, final abode, eternal, pure, enlightened, free, and the embodiment of sacredness (*nirgunam, niranjanam, sanatana nikanam, nitya, suddha, buddha, mukta, nirmala swarupinam*). Shiva then clarified that God has no name and form; He is changeless; He has neither birth nor death, neither beginning nor end; He is eternal and the embodiment of Atma (*Atmaswarupa*). He also emphasized that it is illusion to ascribe a name and form to God. The formless God manifests with a particular form and name as per the wishes of the devotees, to fulfil their aspirations.

February 23, 2009

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/love-god-and-meditate-him>

Meanings of names of Shiva

Spend the whole night in chanting the holy Name and spread this spiritual energy to the world at large. Who is *Eswara*? He is all-pervasive. Just as the wind blows freely everywhere, so also do we find the principle of *Eswara* pervasive. Share your love with all and propagate the Divine Name to the entire world.

March 12, 2002

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/idols-are-pointers-divinity>

One of the names attributed to Lord Shiva is *Mriyunjaya*, which means one who has transcended death.

March 8, 2005

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/you-are-all-amrutaputras-sons-immortality>

Lord Shiva, however, chose to name the child *Amrutaputra*. In fact, every human being is an *amrutaputra* (son of immortality). Even the Upanishads declare him so. The Upanishads reveal the true identity of a human being by addressing as *Srunvantu Viswe Amrutasya Putrah* (Oh the children of immortality)

March 8, 2005

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/you-are-all-amrutaputras-sons-immortality>

Try to understand the true nature and significance of the names. It is a fact that nobody has ever seen Lord Easwara in person. People call Him "*Kailasvasi*" (the Lord who resides in Kailasa). Where is Kailasa? It is only when you contemplate on Him in the depth of silence that you can visualize Lord Easwara in Kailasa.

March 8, 2005

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/you-are-all-amrutaputras-sons-immortality>

Lord Shiva is described by some as *Mukkanti* (the Lord with three eyes). All of you have only two eyes. But the Lord has a third eye as well. You are aware of only the past and the present. You cannot visualize the future. Only God can. Lord Shiva, who can visualize the future with His third eye, i.e. *jnananetra*, is therefore referred to as *Mukkanti*.

One of the names given to this divine Consciousness is *Shivattwa* (Shiva Consciousness). It is not therefore correct to describe *Shivattwa* by such appellations like *Mukkanti*, *Trinetra*, etc. *Shivattwa* means the all-pervading divine Consciousness. In fact, all the devotees sitting in this Hall are embodiments of Lord Shiva. *Sarvam Shivamayam* (all that you witness in this objective world is a manifestation of Shiva). It pervades all the three worlds - the earth, the space, and the nether world. It exists in all the three periods of time - the past, present and future. It is indescribable. Any length of time is insufficient to describe the *Shivattwa*.

March 9, 2005

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/experience-all-pervading-divine-consciousness>

"*Digambara*" is one of the names of Lord Shiva. *Digambara*, in common parlance, refers to the one who is naked. But if you enquire into the inner meaning, you will know that "*Digambara*" is the One who has *dikkulu* (four sides - east, west, north, and south - as His *ambara* (vesture)). There is a possibility that people misunderstand this word and think that Shiva does not wear anything on His body. Hence, it is better that you do not use this word in bhajans.

February 26, 2006

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/limit-not-all-pervading-brahman-names-and-forms>

Easwara knew her nature and Parvati knew Shiva's nature. They are, in fact, not different from one another. Lord Shiva is *Shiva-sakti-atmaka-swarupa* (embodiment of Shiva and Sakti). So too is Parvati. *Isavasyam idam sarvam* (the entire universe is permeated by God). The power of Lord Shiva permeates the entire universe. The foremost duty of a human being is to love Easwaratwa (the divinity of Lord Easwara). Actually, the same divine power is immanent in every human body also. Just as the human body is covered with a cloth, Divinity is enveloped in *maya* (illusion). Hence, though Easwaratwa is omnipresent it is not visible. In accordance

with the maxim *Easwara sarva bhutanam* (God is the indweller of all beings), Easwaratwa is permeating every living being. Parvati explained that this Easwaratwa transcends age and it is in no way related to external appearance.

February 17, 2007

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/give-ego-and-attachment-become-great>

Significance of Vibhuti Abhishekam

The Shivaratri Festival, as celebrated here, is an example for you. You might ask, “Swami has often declared that all days are holy days, that there is no special rite or ritual that has to be observed on any single day; but Swami Himself is pouring *vibhuti* (holy ash) on the Idol and calling it *abhisheka* (anointing the idol); is this right?” Swami is doing so, to teach you a lesson.

February 20, 1974

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/shiva-all>

What greater offering can you give God to glorify Him than the ash signifying your triumph over tantalizing desire? Ash is the ultimate condition of things; it cannot undergo any further change. The Abhisheka with Vibhuti is done to inspire you to give up desire and offer Shiva the ashes of its destruction as the most valuable of all the articles you have earned. Ash cannot fade as flowers do in a day or two; it does not dry and disappear or get soiled and unpotable as water does; it will not lose color as leaves do, in a few hours; it does not rot as fruits do in a few days. Ash is ash for ever and ever. So, burn your viles, your vices, your bad habits; worship Shiva, rendering yourselves pure in thought and word and deed.

February 20, 1974

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/shiva-all>

Significance of Snake

In the science of *Kundalini Yoga*, the vital energy of man lying dormant like a coiled snake, at the bottom of this column in the lowest *Muladhara Chakra* (the Basal Plexus) is awakened and aroused, so that it courses up through six more wheels (centers of superior consciousness) until it reaches the *Sahasrara* (thousand-petalled Lotus Energy Centre) at the very top of the skull. The passage for the Kundalini is through the *Sushumna* nerve in the center of the spinal column. The worship of the snake, ridiculed as superstition, is the symbolic counterpart of this great Yogic *sadhana* which confers vigor and vitality.

February 20, 1974

<https://saispeaks.sathyasai.org/discourse/shiva-all>





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