

# धर्मसन्देश Dharma Sandesh

a quarterly newsletter of Bharatiya Mandir, Middletown, NY

आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः। Let noble thoughts come to us from everywhere. RigVeda 1.89.1

## नमस्ते Namaste

ॐ – OM. With the blessings and grace of the Supreme Lord (परमात्मा), we are pleased to bring you another issue of Dharma Sandesh.

Winter is dancing its icy cold and windy dance amidst us. The cold winds and the barren trees signal to us that although things look bleak now, a new Spring is making its advent, bringing with its lots of colors and tender shoots.

Speaking of colors, we will be celebrating Holi – the Festival of Colors soon. We are all excited to splash the red, orange, blue, yellow, green and purple colors all around us and enjoy the festivities. We will also be remembering the story of brave, young Prahlad as we perform a symbolic Holika Dahan.

We will be worshipping Lord Shiva and keeping vigil all night long as we celebrate Maha Shivaratri on Sunday, March 10. We will also be keeping an all-night vigil for the Divine Mother as we celebrate Mata ka Jagaran in April. We will pray to Goddess Durga with bhajans, songs, Vedic mantras and shlokas.

We also will enjoy performing the wedding celebrations of Lord Srinivasa (also known as Lord Venkateshwara or Lord Balaji) in May. This wedding will be performed in a traditional Vedic style. All are invited to this divine wedding, replete with music and dance.

We will usher in the New Year in April. Ugadi and Gudi Padwa will be celebrated on April 10, and Tamil New Year and Vishu will be celebrated on April 14.

In this issue, Jai Kumar writes about the concept of free will as represented in Hinduism. Dr. Padma Sundaram writes about the different vahanas

(vehicles) of the Gods. I write about the 24 Gurus of Lord Dattatreya as revealed by the Lord Himself.

We hope that readers will continue to enjoy reading these articles and gain some insight into our Sanatana Dharma. Let us all pray to Paramaatma (परमात्मा) to shower His blessings upon all His children!!

Sincerely,  
Your Editorial Board  
Web: [www.bharatiyamandir.org](http://www.bharatiyamandir.org)

## सुभाषिता Subhaashitaa

*In this section, we present a Sanskrit quotation and its interpretation/meaning.*

न चोरहार्यं न च राजहार्यं न भ्रातृभाज्यं न च भारकारी ।  
व्यये कृते वर्धत एव नित्यं विद्याधनं सर्वधनं प्रधानम् ॥

na-chora-haaryam-na-ca-raajahaaryam-na-bhraatrubhaajyam-  
na-ca-bhaarakari |  
vyaye-krute-varhdhata-eva-nityam-vidyaa-dhanam-sarvadhana-  
pradhaanam ||

Education is the greatest asset (wealth) among all types of wealth. It cannot be stolen by thieves. It cannot be taken away by the king (or government) in terms of taxes. It cannot be divided or split among brothers like other property. Unlike other wealth or property, it is never a burden. It also has this unusual characteristic that the more you spend it every day, the more it grows every day. We should strive to get more and more of this wealth called education.

*Contributed by Dr. Narasim Banavara*

## साई प्रेरणा Baba's Teachings

*In this section, we present a teaching of Sri Sai Baba. Sri Satya Sai Baba spoke thus – “the green gourd sinks in water, but a dry one floats. Become dry - rid*

yourselves of attachments, desires, and avoid anxieties and worries. Then you can float unaffected on the waters of change and chance. Even water, when it becomes steam, can rise into the sky. Be free from the desires that drag you down; have only the yearning to come face to face with the Truth. The truth is shining inside you, waiting to be discovered. God is your Indweller and so when you seek Him outside, He cannot be caught. Look for Him within you. Love Him with no other thought, and feel that without Him, nothing is worth anything. Feel that He is all. Then you become His and He becomes yours. There is no kinship nearer than that!"

- Divine Discourse, Oct 17, 1966

Contributed by Dr. Vijaya Dasari

## ज्ञानविहार JnanaVihara

In this section, we present articles on Hinduism, Vedas, Puranas, Upanishads, and related philosophy.

### Free Will in Hinduism

by Jay Kumar



The concept of free will is a significant philosophical and theological issue that has been intensely debated for centuries in both western and eastern philosophical traditions. In Hinduism, the idea of free will is viewed with some ambivalence. With respect

to the concept of karma, various schools of Hinduism differ in their perceptions of free will. Two salient schools who do are the Mimamsa (मीमांस) and Vedanta (वेदान्त) schools.

Free will is the apparent human ability to make choices that are not determined by an external force. In Hinduism, the premise of free will is based on the concept of karma. In essence, karma is the concept that every action causes an equal reaction. There are primarily three categories of karma. The first category of karma is Sanchita karma (सन्धितकर्म), which is the karma accumulated throughout one's past lives. As one cannot experience all their karma in one lifetime,

one endures a fraction of the Sanchita karma during a lifetime. Once this karma has materialized in one's life, it is known as Prarabdha karma (प्रारब्ध कर्म). The third type of karma is Kriyamana karma (क्रियामान कर्म) which is the karma that humans create in the present. All Kriyamana karma becomes Sanchita karma, and both shape our future and our next lives. The ability to change one's destiny is unique to human life. After the loss of kriya shakti (क्रियाशक्ति the ability to act), and transitively, Kriyamana karma, the soul is reincarnated in another body.

Karma is accrued in three ways: thought, intent and action. Through these, humans incite a response contingent on the nature of their thoughts, intents or actions. A malicious thought could manifest in the thought occurring to an intended individual or back at the thinker. Similarly, a moral action or one in accordance with dharma (धर्म) would cause a positive event to the actor. One's dharma is paramount in accruing karma. In the most rudimentary sense, dharma is one's duty; one's guide to act as per one's filial, moral and social duties/obligations. The mythological figures of Bhishma and Dhritrashtra exemplify the workings of karma in relation to dharma. Both were royalty who suffered greatly for their past actions, yet, more so in the former's case, lived a life in full accordance with dharma, which manifested itself when they both obtained salvation. In essence the accumulation of karma is inherently dynamic and can best be understood as an oscillating function that varies between two values: the value of good and bad merit.

The law of karma offers the provision that one's present karma can alter the fruits of past karma and change the actor's future. Logically, one's present and past action should determine the theoretical framework of the future. Hinduism does not state that our life is predetermined as fatalism does or that free will is absolute. More rather, Hinduism states free will is compatible with fate and believes that people's actions create their future. Under this notion, fate does not entirely place obstacles in the way of free will and people are solely responsible for their suffering, not God.

The Vedanta school of Hinduism agrees with the notion that man is able to act independently of any

external factors, but cannot escape the karma that his actions beget. In this process, the Vedanta school proclaims that God is an arbitrator who dispenses the fruits of the actions man chooses, surmising that “God does not make one suffer for no reason nor does He makes one happy for no reason. God is very fair and gives you exactly what you deserve.” The Vedanta school reconciles the problem of evil with this notion of free will; that ultimately, the soul is responsible for its actions on the physical plane and must either reap benefits of dharmic actions and must suffer for adharmic actions.

Conversely, the Mimamsa school of Hinduism rejects the notion that God dispenses the fruits of one's actions and views karma as acting independent of God. It believes that the law of causation is adequate in explaining the effects of karma, surmising that the results of an action are attributable solely to that action. For this reason, the Mimamsa school believes that it is useless to set an Ishvara for the purpose of Karma since the results of an action can be witnessed at any time.

Both schools of Hinduism state that man is ultimately responsible for his own actions. The overview of God within both schools is pantheistic: that God is interwoven with nature and is synonymous with the fundamental principles that govern the universe. Both schools maintain God is not, in the Western or contemporary Eastern sense, a benevolent anthropomorphic being that is biased towards men. More rather, God is a neutral figure within whose hierarchy people hold a relatively coveted position, and who, through the unique ability of sentience, can better understand its nature.

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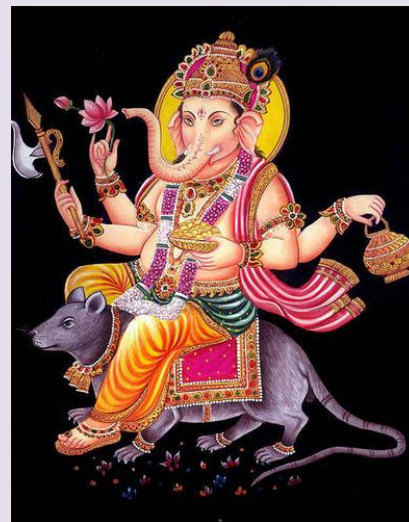
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### Vehicles of the Gods

In Hindu mythology several Gods have vehicles or vahanas (वाहन) that are very specific to each one of them. Vahana means “that which carries” or “that which pulls.” The Gods travel on these vahanas wherever they go. The vahana is typically an animal or a mythical entity. It is also called “a mount,” around which is woven much iconography and mythology. The vahana usually symbolizes the evil force that the Deity dominates. Though the vahana may act independently, it is still functionally emblematic of the rider. This becomes the positive aspect of the vahana. The vahanas also act as assistants to the Gods and, thus, double their power. Each God or Goddess has a unique vahana, and the God or Goddess is usually depicted as either sitting on the vahana or standing next to it.

There are a lot of stories about the origins of these vahanas. If I write about all of them it will become a book in itself!! So I will try, as best as possible, to write about a few major vahanas.

**Mooshika** – is the mouse which is Lord Ganapati's mount. There are a couple of theories as to how Mooshika became His mount. One of them is that



when Ganesha was a child, a giant mouse used to terrorize all His friends. So Ganesha used a lasso to rein in the mouse and made it His vehicle. The other story is that Mooshika was a Gandharva (celestial musician) who inadvertently stepped on the feet of a Rishi. The Rishi got angry and cursed him

to become a mouse. After his temper cooled, the Rishi felt bad and told him that even though he was a mouse, everyone, including the Gods, would prostrate before him. Then Ganesha took the mouse to be his mount. The symbolism here is that Ganesha, with His huge body, cannot go into nooks and crevices. So the



mouse, which is small, can go into those small places. Thus, with the help of Mooshika, Ganesha is able to overcome all obstacles. Scientifically speaking, this is a very good example of symbiotic existence!!



**Swan** – is Goddess Saraswathi's mount. The swan represents the qualities of the Goddess, namely wisdom, grace and beauty, along with music and fine arts.

**Peacock** – is Skanda's mount. Skanda is also known as Karthikeyan,

Subrahmanya, or Murugan.

The peacock represents splendor and majesty, and also arrogance and pride because of its beauty. By making it His mount, Skanda teaches man not to be proud or arrogant over external beauty.



**Owl** – is Goddess Lakshmi's vahana.



She represents wealth and fortune. The owl is a wise bird. Goddess Lakshmi is teaching man to be careful and use his fortune wisely.

**Lion** – is Devi Durga's mount. The lion is majestic yet fierce and so is Devi Durga. The story goes that the demon Mahishasura defeated

the Gods in a fierce battle and the Gods went to Lord Vishnu for help. Lord Vishnu, Lord Shiva and the other Gods put forth their energies and thus Durga



was born as an amalgamation of all the energies. She was so powerful that she needed an equally

powerful Mount. So king Himavan (God of the Himalayas) gave her the Lion as a mount. Using the power and heroism of the lion, Durga used her Shakti to vanquish Mahishasura.

**Nandi or Nandikeshwara** – is a bull and he is Lord Shiva's mount. He is also the gatekeeper of Lord Shiva's abode. Nandi is very quiet and benign, and he signifies single-minded devotion. Nandi is the



foremost disciple of Lord Shiva. He is the principal Gana of Lord Shiva as well. In several Shaivite temples, Nandi is depicted sitting facing the inner sanctum.

One has to first seek Nandi's blessings before going into the temple. The story of

how Nandi became Lord Shiva's vahana is very interesting. Once there was a farmer named Shilada. He did not have any children. He was a devout devotee of Lord Shiva. So he prayed to Lord Shiva, who appeared before him and asked what he wanted. Shilada asked for a son and the Lord said "you will have one soon." Shilada was overjoyed and went home. Several days later, when he was plowing his land he found a handsome baby with a golden hue. He heard a voice from above telling him "Shilada, take this baby and bring him up well". So, Shilada brought the baby home and named him Nandi. He taught him all the languages and scriptures. Nandi grew up to be a very learned man. One day two sages came to Shilada's house and Shilada told Nandi to look after their needs well. The sages were very happy. When Shilada and Nandi fell prostrate at their feet for blessings, the sages only blessed Shilada with long life. Shilada was upset and asked the sages why they did not bless Nandi with long life. The sages were very sad but told Shilada that his son would not live long. When Nandi heard the news from his father he told him not to worry. Nandi went to perform penance and appease Lord Shiva. Nandi closed his eyes and began his penance in the river Bhuvana. Lord Shiva was very happy and appeared before Nandi and told him to ask a boon. When Nandi opened his eyes, he was mesmerized by Lord Shiva's beauty and wisdom emanating from his body. The first words from Nandi's mouth were "Lord, I wish to be with you

forever.” Lord Shiva agreed and Nandi became Lord Shiva’s vahana. He also became Lord Shiva’s friend, gatekeeper, administrator, and the recipient of Devi Parvathi’s protection.

**Garuda** – is an eagle and is the vahana of Lord MahaVishnu. He is usually worshipped along with Lord Vishnu, sometimes separately. Garuda is known for his immense strength and strong ethics. He applies this philosophy to correct evildoers. He is regarded as the king of birds. He is depicted as having a golden body, red wings, a prominent beak, and a crown on his head. The following legend illustrates how he became Lord Vishnu’s mount. Garuda was born as the son of Sage Kashyapa and Vinata, who was King Daksha’s daughter. Kashyapa had another wife named Kadru.



There was always rivalry between Kadru and Vinata. Once, Kadru won an argument with Vinata and imprisoned her in a place that was guarded by huge serpents, which were Kadru’s children. When Garuda came to know about this he came immediately to free his mother from the prison. But the serpents would not allow that. They said that Garuda should bring them Amrita (), the nectar of immortality. Only then would they release Vinata. Garuda agreed and went to look for Amrita. The Gods had hidden the Amrita inside a ring of massive fire that covered the sky. Surrounding that were two fierce serpents. Garuda managed to mangle the serpents and take the pot of Amrita. He carried it in his mouth without swallowing it. En route he met Lord Vishnu and made a deal with Him wherein Lord Vishnu granted Garuda immortality without drinking the Amrita. Garuda, in turn, promised Lord Vishnu that he would become His mount as soon as he delivered the Amrita to the serpents as promised. A little while later, Lord Indra, the King of the Gods, came along the way and Garuda made another deal with him, which would enable Indra to take the pot of Amrita back with him to his abode (Swarga), where it rightfully belonged. Garuda came to the serpents with the Amrita and gave it to them. The serpents were overjoyed to see the nectar of immortality. They released Vinata. Then Garuda

asked them to take a bath before drinking the Amrita. As soon as the serpents went for their bath, Indra swooped down and carried the nectar away. The serpents were angry but could not do anything except lick the few drops of the nectar that had fallen on the grass. The grass was so powerful and sharp that their tongues split. That is the reason that serpents have a forked tongue. But even the few drops of the Amrita were enough for the serpents to attain immortality. Snakes shed their entire skin to symbolize their immortality. As promised, Garuda went back and became Lord Vishnu’s devoted vahana and a very good friend of the Gods.

In most of the temples of Lord Vishnu, a special area is created for Garuda and special Pujas are done for Garuda.

There are also separate temples for Nandi in several parts of India. The biggest Nandi temples are in Lepakshi, Andhra Pradesh; Brihadeshwara temple in Tamil Nadu; Bull Temple, Bangalore, Karnataka; Chamundi Hills in Mysore, Karnataka; Hoysaleswara in Halebidu, Karnataka; Shantaleshwara temple in Kerala; Nandi temple, Madhya Pradesh; Kedhareshwara temple in Balligavi, Karnataka, and Hampi Bazaar in Karnataka.

As you read this, you will see how the legends are intertwined with many characters we see throughout Hindu Mythology.

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*Contributed by Dr. Padma Sundaram*

#### The 24 Gurus of Lord Dattatreya

Lord Dattatreya is known as Gurudeva Datta. He is the Guru of all Gurus. He is the Supreme Guru. As an incarnation of the Paramaatma or Supreme Spirit,



Lord Dattatreya came down to earth to spread the universality of true religion. He descended on this earth to establish Satya (the universal truth), Rta (the cosmic order), and Dharma (the perennial principles) in all their entirety.

Lord Dattatreya is an ancient incarnation of the Trinity Brahma-Vishnu-Shiva. He is a complete and perfect manifestation of the three primordial energies and the three primary Gunas (qualities) of Sattva (positivity, goodness and wholesomeness), Rajas (passion, energy and movement), and Tamas (negativity, lethargy, darkness and ignorance). He encompasses all these Gunas and, at the same time, transcends all these Gunas.



Lord Dattatreya is an Avadhuta, the Supreme Philosopher and ever-anchored in Spirit. He is Avadhuta, he who has shaken off from himself all worldly feelings and obligations. He is dispassionate and detached from the worldly goings-on

and assumes the form of a total and supreme recluse.

Though being the Guru of all Gurus, Lord Dattatreya Himself spoke of His twenty-four Gurus. In the Srimad Bhagavata Purana, the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna speaks to His disciple Uddhava about a discussion between Lord Dattatreya and King Yadu. Lord Dattatreya said, "The Self alone is my Guru. Yet I have learnt wisdom from twenty-four other individuals and objects. So they are also my Gurus. They are: earth, water, fire, air, sky, moon, sun, pigeon, python, ocean, moth, bumblebee, honeybee, elephant, deer, fish, prostitute, osprey, baby, maiden, serpent, blacksmith, spider, and wasp." Lord Dattatreya said the following about each of His Gurus:

1. **Earth** - I learned from Mother Earth forbearance, firmness, patience, forgiveness and doing good to others as she does even when people and other creatures trod over her.

2. **Water** - I learned from water the quality of purity and movement. Water is the source of life and it purifies everything, especially when it is holy like the Ganga. Water flows unceasingly. If it stops it becomes stagnant. One has to always keep moving forward. At the same time, water teaches me humility. Water always flows to the lowest place possible, teaching me to be humble.

3. **Fire** - I learned from fire to glow with the splendour of self-knowledge and austerity. Like fire, I should accept everything, both good and bad in this world, and reduce everything to ashes by the fire of knowledge, while remaining pure myself.

4. **Air** - I learned from air that I should not be attached to anyone though I move among several people in this world. The air wafts over flowers and thorns alike, but remains unaffected. Similarly, I should not prefer flowers over thorns or friends over foes, and I should remain unaffected by one and all.

5. **Sky** - I learned from the sky that the Atman (Self) is all-pervading and yet has no contact with any object.

6. **Moon** - I learned from the moon that birth, growth, youth, old age and death are only changes brought to the body by the time-spirit and these changes are not to the soul at all. While the moon waxes and wanes, it never loses its essence, totality or shape. All the phases of life are just transitory, and I should not lose consciousness of the Self during these phases.

7. **Sun** - I learned from the sun that I should gather knowledge from various sources, transform that knowledge into practical wisdom, and share it with all without exception. The sun shines brightly over the earth, evaporates the water with its rays, transforms the water into clouds, and sheds rain over forests, rivers, seas, cities, and valleys without exception.

8. **Pigeon** - I learned from the pigeon not to have any attachment. A pair of pigeons nested in a tree with deep attachment for each other. They had offspring and nourished them with great affection and attachment. One day, the parent pigeons saw their children caught in a fowler's net. The mother pigeon flung herself on to the net to save the children and got caught in the net herself. The father pigeon did the

same and got caught in the net as well. The fowler killed them all.

9. **Python** – I learned from the python to be always content. A python does not make itself miserable by running after food. It eats whatever comes to it. Once it has eaten it lays still for days not worrying about its next meal.

10. **Ocean** – I learned from the ocean that I should always maintain my discipline and never cross my limits. The ocean accepts the waters from all rivers and streams but never overflows its boundaries. Whatever temptations, difficulties or troubles a person faces, he should remain unmoved like the ocean.

11. **Moth** – I learned from the moth to control the sense of sight and to fix the mind on the Self. Just as the moth rushes towards the flame without any distractions, I must fix my mind on the Self and concentrate on it in order to achieve it.



12. **Bumblebee** – I learned from the bumblebee that I should only take a little from anyone and not be a burden on anyone. Instead I should also help and enrich the people from whom I take something. A bumblebee takes only a few drops of nectar from any flower. It hums and provides enjoyment to the flowers. It also pollinates the flowers and helps them prosper.

13. **Honeybee** – I learned from the honeybee that I should not hoard possessions. The honeybee hoards more honey than it needs. Finally, the honey-gatherer seeks out the place of the honeycomb and carries all

the honey away leaving nothing for the honeybee. Such is the situation of a miser who hoards wealth. He neither enjoys his riches nor donates to charity. Finally someone else takes away all his wealth.

14. **Elephant** – I learned from the elephant to be careful with my passions and desires. The male elephant was attracted to the female elephant (the bait) and blinded by lust, and in the process of going to her, fell into a pit that was covered with leaves and branches. Worldly charms arouse our sensory impulses, and in the process of pursuing those impulses, our mind gets trapped and enslaved, even though it is powerful.

15. **Deer** – I learned from the deer not to listen to sensuous music. A deer is alert but it is easily attracted by the hunter's flute music and gets caught. Similarly one should not listen to sensuous music lest one's mind gets trapped in the worldly goings-on. One should only listen to songs about God.

16. **Fish** – I learned from the fish not to be greedy and covetous. The fish that is covetous of food becomes an easy victim to the bait. Similarly the man who is greedy for food or other possessions loses his independence and gets ruined.

17. **Prostitute** – I learned from the prostitute Pingala that abandonment of desires leads to contentment. Pingala used to constantly and eagerly wait for her customers. When they did not come as she expected, she would become frustrated and could not sleep at night. She became tired of waiting and getting frustrated. One night, she stopped waiting for her customers and entertained only those who came to her and felt contented. She slept peacefully that night. I learned that abandonment of desires leads to contentment.

18. **Osprey** – I learned from the osprey that the secret of survival lies in renunciation, not in possession. The osprey had a piece of flesh in its mouth and was being pursued by many other strong birds. When the osprey dropped the piece of flesh, all the birds left the osprey alone and rushed towards the flesh. By giving up attachment to that possession, the osprey obtained relief.

19. **Baby** – I learned from the baby that I should demand only when I really need something. A baby



cries when it is hungry. When it drinks its mother's milk, it does not cry anymore. It cannot be forced to drink anymore. I learned that I should demand and take only what I absolutely need to survive, and nothing more.

20. **Maiden** – I learned from the maiden that living among other people creates discord, disturbance, dispute and quarrel. A maiden was husking paddy. Her bangles made a lot of noise as she was doing her work. There were visitors in her house. Therefore the maiden took off her bangles one by one. When there was only one bangle left on her wrist, there was no more noise. Similarly, a yogi or Sanyasi should always remain in solitude. If he gets into the company of other people, there is bound to be exchange of words, disputes, quarrels and discord.

21. **Serpent** – I learned from the serpent not to build a permanent home for myself and get attached to it. A serpent does not build its own hole. It lives in the holes dug out by others. Similarly a yogi or Sanyasi should not create a permanent dwelling for himself. When he is tired, he should rest in a temple or a cave built by others. Once he is rested, he should move on.

22. **Arrow-Maker** – I learned from the arrow-maker the quality of intense concentration of mind. The arrow-maker was so absorbed in his work that the king and his entire army passed by without his noticing them. Similarly, I should fix my thoughts on Brahman and not let any external forces disturb my concentration.

23. **Spider** – I learned from the spider not to get entangled in my own web. A man creates a web of his own ideas and gets entangled in them later on. A wise man should abandon all worldly thoughts and concentrate only on Brahman.

24. **Wasp** – I learned from the wasp that if a yogi constantly thinks about God, he will become God, that is, one with God. A worm is confined in the niche of a tree by a wasp. It keeps on thinking about the wasp, and in due course, metamorphoses into the wasp. Similarly, a yogi should fix his mind on God and think only about God.

**Sources:** Sri Guru Charitra

*Contributed by Dr. Narasim Banavara*

### Some Upcoming Special Mandir Events

Maha Shivaratri	Sunday, March 10
Holi/Dhuleti – Festival of Colors	Sunday, March 31
Ugadi/Gudi Padwa– New Year (Kannada, Telugu, Marathi)	Wednesday, April 10
Mata ka Jagaran	Saturday, April 13
Tamil New Year / Vishu	Sunday, April 14
Sri Rama Navami	Saturday, April 20
Sri Hanuman Jayanti	Thursday, April 25
Bharatiya Mandir Anniversary Celebrations	Sunday, May 5
Sri Srinivasa Kalyana (wedding celebrations of Lord Srinivasa / Venkateshwara / Balaji)	Sunday, May 12 (tentative)

### Children's Classes at Bharatiya Mandir

We are very happy to inform everyone that the Children's classes at Bharatiya Mandir are progressing successfully. The children are very enthusiastic and eager to learn new material each week. They are learning shlokas and bhajans, listening to wonderful stories, and creating beautiful pieces of arts and crafts. They have also been practicing Surya Namaskar. They will also perform in a play on the occasion of the Mandir's anniversary celebrations in May. Thanks to all the parents and the volunteers who are helping to make these classes successful!!

Persaud Family (Quickway Diner and Quickway Exotic Auto) has generously sponsored the printing of copies of this issue of Dharma Sandesh. Devotees may note that all the writing of the content and the editing of the newsletter are strictly voluntary.

*Our quarterly newsletter is called "Dharma Sandesh" (धर्मसन्देश). "Dharma", in simple terms, refers to righteousness, conduct, a sense of duty, virtue, and the ultimate truth. "Sandesh" means a message or news. So, Dharma Sandesh refers to a message of Dharma.*

### Dharma Sandesh Newsletter Editorial Board:

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