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## Hindu Satsang Updates

By Shivam Viswanathan

Pranaam to all Satsangis!

Best wishes for the New Year to all of you! As it has been a tradition with Hindu Satsang, we start the new year with **Sundar Kand paath**. This year we will have well renowned musician Pujya Ajaybhai Yagnik ji who will present Sundar Kand. More details about Ajaybhai Yagnik ji on **page 9**. Also read about the beauty of Sundar Kand on **page 8**.

Please do encourage kids to participate in **Didwania and Jain Scholarships** organized by Hindu Satsang every year. Scholarships worth \$2000 will be awarded to students, more details on **page 7**.

In February, we'll have our annual **Youth Fest**. It will be held on Sunday, February 26th at Rathi Auditorium, HTGC temple from 10 am onwards. Children upto the age of 18 can participate and showcase their talent. All the participants will be awarded with a trophy with their name engraved on it. Get ready to showcase your talent to the world! More details will be sent through email. We will have the Youth Fest. in February in place of our Satsang Sabha.

Wish you all a very happy **Vasant Panchami** on Thursday, January 22nd, **India's Republic Day** on Friday, January 26th, and **Maha Shivaratri** on Saturday, February 18th.

This is our first meeting this year, make it convenient to attend this special Sundar Kand Sabha on January 22nd at 10 am.

Set a phone reminder alert to make sure you don't miss this event. नमस्ते

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## Happy Birth Month to our Satsangis born in January



Ajay Buti	Ajay Gupta	Archana Agrawal	Amisha Shah	Aroon Pal	Aruna Sharma	Arushi Singh
Binish Choksi	Dinkar Tiwari	Gunjali Mittal	Karuna Uppal	Kushal Sareen	Manju Goel	Neeraj Kataria
Nina Choksi	Niranjan Kataria	Payal Dhingra	Preeti Kalra	Promilla Dhar	Rajesh Tiwari	Raman Noharia
Reena Sood	Richa Agnihotri	Richa Bhargava	Rishi Salgia	Rohini Bahl	Ruchi Kapoor	Serena Raheja
Shana Bhagwat	Shikha Malhotra	Sonia Gunya	Subhash Sharma	Sudha Parikh	Sujata Sharma	Surbhi Agarwal
Surendra Salgia	Vinod Gandhi	Suresh Ambegaoker	Vipin Malhan	Hemal Gandhi	आपके जन्मदिन पर हार्दिक शुभकामनाएं!!	

## Happy Anniversary शादी की सालगिरह पर ढेर सारी शुभकामनाएं!

Jharna & Gitesh Shah	Roma & Neil Bhagat	Sadhana & Rajesh Tiwari	Sharda & Manohar Sharma	Shubh & Ramesh Malhan
Sudha & Hans Upadhyay	Tripta & Brum Pal	Vijay & Nisha Goyal		

## Gift of Laughter on Your Anniversary



**Wife:** Today we celebrate the best decision you ever made for yourself - Happy Anniversary!!

**Marriage Tip :** Wife will never start an argument when you are washing dishes.

Keep laughing with each other to make the most of your life because it is not the years in your life that matter, it is the life in your years.

## An Ayurvedic Perspective Fix your Vata Imbalance By Sh. Rajeev Jain (Hindu Satsang member)

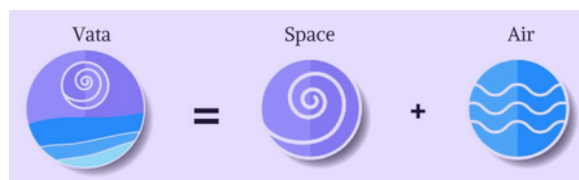


The entire universe consists of five elements - ether (space), air, fire, water, and earth. And, a combination of these elements creates the three main “doshas” that constitute all of us. They are (1) Vata (ether + air), Pitta (fire + water) and Kapha (water + earth). Each of us tends to be most dominant in one and drives characteristics of our mental and physical health. When they are in balance, we enjoy good health, and when they are out of balance, they are the root cause of any disease we experience.

Our life span is also classified by the dominance of doshas, and the older age (50+) is the Vata period of life, when we are more likely to experience Vata-driven diseases (80 of them)! Below, we will try to better understand various types of Vata and discuss how to keep yourself healthy during this period of life.

### What Aggravates Vata?

- Diet - Excessive intake of foods having bitter, pungent and astringent taste; foods that are dry, light and deep fried, carbonated drinks, alcohol, raw food, staying hungry and excessive fasting.
- Lifestyle - suppression of natural urges, staying awake till late at night, speaking with a loud voice, excessive thinking, worries, fear, sorrow, and excess of travel, exercise and sexual activity.
- Environment - excessive exposure to cold and wind, and onset of rainy and winter seasons can also be contributing factors.



**Vata**

### Signs of Aggravated Vata

A feeling of less than optimal functioning of sense organs; twisting or reduced control on limbs; general weakness; blackish spots, roughness or discoloration of skin; constipation or abdominal distension; sleeplessness (insomnia), tremor, vertigo, colic pain, and abnormal movements in the limbs, numbness, coldness, hoarseness of voice and forgetfulness – these are all indications of increased Vata.

### Five Divisions of Vata Dosha

There are five types of Vata Dosha in our body, and each performs a special function. These are Prana Vata (the vital air), Udana Vata (the rising air), Vyana Vata (movement in the body), Samana Vata (associated with digestive fire), and Apana Vata (the downward air).

- Prana Vata - is located in the heart and moves in the chest and throat. It helps in breathing, expectoration, sneezing, hiccough, swallowing of food, functioning of arteries, veins and nerves. It also supports the mind, heart, sense organs and intelligence. Its imbalance results in hiccups, bronchitis, asthma, cold, hoarseness of voice, decreased memory power, etc.
- Udana Vata - is located in the chest. It moves in the nose and chest and it travels down to the navel. Its functions are initiation of speech, voice, effort, enthusiasm, strength and complexion of the skin, memory and intelligence. Its imbalance results in diseases like voice disorders, skin dryness and reduced intelligence.
- Vyana Vata - is located in the heart and moves rapidly across the entire body.

*Continued on the next page* 

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It performs almost all the functions of the body including walking, turning the body to one side, closing and opening of eyes, etc. Its imbalance causes problems like paralysis, tremor or shivering, drooping of eyelids, etc.

- Samana Vata - is located in the stomach, small intestine and the navel region (i.e.) near the digestive fire and moves in the whole intestinal tract. It helps in digestion of the food taken in by the Prana Vata. It promotes action of the digestive enzymes, transport of the food through the tract, its separation into various tissue elements and transport of waste products into the rectum. Its imbalance causes indigestion, diarrhea and defective assimilation.
- Apana Vata - is located in the large intestine and rectum and it moves in the waist, bladder, genital organs and thigh. It is responsible for elimination of stool, urine, semen and menstrual blood. It keeps the fetus in the uterus for nine months and helps during the birth of the fetus by pressing it downwards. Diseases of bladder, anus, sex organs and uterus are due to the imbalance of Apana Vata.

The above information is helpful in understanding that all Vata is not the same – it cannot be painted with the same broad brush.

A deeper understanding of which Vata is imbalanced leads to the root cause of the problem, a proper diagnosis and selection of the treatment for the faster healing.

Generically speaking, anyone older than 50 years, or suffering from Vata imbalance should try to:

- Adopt a Vata-reducing diet
- Spend more time with nature
- Practice some meditation
- Incorporate a gentle exercise routine, e.g. yoga
- Ensure that they get at least 7 hours of sound sleep at night
- Massage their body with warm sesame oil as frequently as possible
- Explore intake of Ayurvedic herbals like triphala to improve digestive health, ashwagandha to balance stress hormones, chyavanprash for vitality, and brahmi for mental alertness (to be taken in consultation with an Ayurvedic Vaidya).

*"The doctor of the future will give no medication, but will interest his patients in the care of the human frame, diet and in the cause and prevention of disease."*

~ Thomas A. Edison

Wishing everyone a very healthy 2023.



**Food for Thought**

For people who overindulge:  
25% of what you eat keeps you healthy,  
and 75% keeps doctors in business.



A brief recap of  
Hindu Satsang's Monthly Sabha  
held on December 25, 2022

As this month's convener, Sh. Anant Vyas did a wonderful job. The turnout was good considering it was Christmas and it was freezing cold outside. We had the following satsangis begin the session by singing beautiful bhajans Sh. Subhash Sharma, Sh. Kamal Gupta, Smt. Madhu Uppal and Sh. Ramesh Malhan. It was a pleasure listening to the mesmerizing bhajans sung by our guest singers, Smt. Vimal and Sh. Subhash Sharma.

They sang some popular bhajans on karaoke tracks. Some of the songs that this couple sang so beautifully were:

- Mujhe Tumne Data Bahut Kuch Diya Hai, Tera Shukriya Hai
- Tu Pyaar Ka Saagar Hai Teri Ek boond Ke Pyase hum

Our guest speaker, Pt. Ram Prasad Shastri ji in his signature style, explains even the most serious topic with a touch of humor. He spoke about the power of speech (बोल-वाणी). Starting with Saraswati vandana, talking about Swami Vivekananda who said 5 words (*Sisters and brothers of America*) to start his speech and the audience continued clapped for 5 minutes- that is the power of speech. What you say is important but how is say is also equally important. 🌀



One of the guest singer: Sh. Subhash Sharma.



Guest speaker: Pt. Ram Prasad Shastri ji



VSC (Vivekananda Spiritual Center)





## Quiz

# Mahashivratri

By Shivam Viswanathan

The fourteenth day of every lunar month, or the day before the new moon, is known as Masic Shivratri. Among all the twelve Shivartris that occur in a calendar year, Mahashivratri, the one that occurs in February or March, is of the most spiritual significance, it is called Mahashivratri. Here is a quiz to test your knowledge about Mahashivratri. This year, Mahashivratri is on Saturday, February 18.

1. Why is Mahashivratri celebrated?
  - a. It is believed that on Mahashivratri, Shiva consumed the poison produced during the Samudra Manthan.
  - b. This is the night when Shiva performs the heavenly dance of creation, preservation, and destruction called Tandav.
  - c. According to a legend, this was the night when Shiva and Parvati got married.
  - d. All of the above
2. What is Halāhala (हलाल) ?
3. Where is Mahashivratri known as Har-ratri?
  - a. UP, b. MP, c. Kashmir, d. Maharashtra
4. What is Jyotirlinga, and how many Jyotirlinga temples are there in India?
5. What special events are held in Hindu temples such as Konark, Khajuraho, Pattadakal, Modhera, and Chidambaram during Mahashivratri?

6. Which of the following puranas mentions Mahashivratri?
  - a. Skanda Purana
  - b. Linga Purana
  - c. Padma Purana
  - d. All of the above
7. Why is Shiva called Neel Kanth?

## Answers

1. It is believed that all of the events (a, b and c) took place on Mahashivratri.
2. Halāhala (or kālakūṭa) was the poison produced during the Samudra Manthan which was consumed by Shiva to save everyone else.
3. C. Kashmir. Word "Har-ratri" meaning "Night of Har" (Devotees also address Shiva as Har Har Mahadev).
4. Jyotirlinga - A temple where Shiva is worshipped in the form of a Jyotirlingam or "Lingam (pillar) of light." There are twelve traditional jyotirlinga temples in India.
5. Classical dance events called Natyanjali (meaning "worship through dance") are held at these temples every year.
6. D. Mahashivratri is mentioned in all three of puranas - Skanda, Linga and Padma Purana
7. On Mahashivratri, Shiva consumed the poison (Halahala) produced during the Samudra Manthan and held it in his neck, without letting it go into his body. Due to this, his neck turned blue. Hence, he is known as Neel Kanth (the one with a blue neck).





## Hindu Satsang's Didwania & Jain Scholarships 2022-23

Once more, students connected to the Hindu Satsang group will have the chance to apply for the **Didwania** and **Jain** scholarships by submitting their essays. This year also, we will award 4 scholarships totaling \$2,000, with the first prize in each scholarship being worth \$600 and the second prize being worth \$400. The details of these scholarships are given below. Let me know if you have any questions (email:shivamv@gmail.com). Additionally, a certificate will be given to each participant student.

**The essay topic:** How are rituals and ceremonies like puja, rakhi, touching feet, and others important in connecting you with your dharma (Hinduism)?

**Submission Due By:** January 31, 2023

**Google Form Link for Essay Submission:**  
[Essay submission form](#)

You can find the winners of the past years on this page on our website:

<http://hindusatsang.org/pastscholarshipwinners>

Here is a link to our scholarships page on our site:  
<http://hindusatsang.org/scholarship>

A student must fulfill the prerequisites listed in the right column in order to participate:

### **Didwania Scholarship Requirements:**

- 1) A current or former Hindu Satsang Sunday School student who has participated for a minimum of 3 years.
- 2) Currently in middle or high school.
- 3) Previous winners can submit their essays, but there will be no repeat winners.

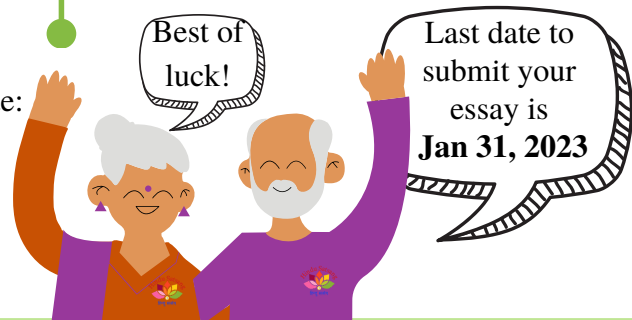
### **Jain Scholarship Requirements:**

- 1) A current college student who is or has previously been involved with Hindu Satsang.
- 2) Must be under or equal to the age of 21.
- 3) Previous winners can submit their essays, but there will be no repeat winners.

### **Other Common Requirements:**

- 1) The essay length should be 500–700 words in a Word document (not in .PDF format). It must have an introduction, body paragraph(s), and a conclusion.
- 2) Essays must be the original work of the student. This means no help from parents or others.
- 3) A subsequent interview will take place after the essay submission. Selected applicants will receive invitations to appear in person or via Zoom for an interview between February 5 and February 15, 2023.

If you have any further questions, please contact any of the Education Coordinators or Sunday School teachers.



## The Beauty of Sundar Kand

by Shivam Viswanathan

### What is Sundar Kand?

Sundara Kaanda, or Sundar Kand, is the fifth book (out of seven) in the Hindu epic, the Ramayana. The original Sundara Kanda is in Sanskrit and was composed by Valmiki, who was the first to scripturally record the Ramayana.

### Why is it called Sundar Kand?

Hanuman ji was fondly called 'Sundara' meaning a charming one, by his mother Anjani. Sage Valmiki chose this name because the Sundar Kand is about Hanuman and his devotion to Rama.

### How is Sundar Kand different from other parts of the Ramayana?

Sunder Kand is the only part of the Ramayana in which the hero is not Rama, but rather Hanuman. The work depicts the adventures of Hanuman, and his selflessness, strength, and devotion to Rama.

### What are the benefits of listening to Sundar Kand?

Each of the Ramayana's verses is a mahamantra. Although the entire Ramayana is beautiful, Sundar Kand is particularly wonderful. Just as the Gita is the best part of the Mahabharata, similarly, Sundar Kand is the best part of the Ramayana.

It is believed that just listening to Sunderkand has many benefits. A few of them are:

- It can help ward off evil.
- It removes all the negativity and obstacles from one's life and bestows the person with happiness and prosperity.
- Sundar Kand teaches you how one can overcome every difficulty and unfortunate situation
- Reciting Sundar Kand also plays a vital role in improving the financial condition of a person.
- It protects oneself against diseases and ensures good health.

### What is the beauty of Sundar Kand?

It is impossible for anyone to explain the beauty of Sundar Kand in a few words. But I'll use the following verse to try to explain the sundarta of Sundar kand:


सुन्दरे सुन्दरो रामः सुन्दरे सुन्दरी कथा  
सुन्दरे सुन्दरी सीता सुन्दरे सुन्दरं वनम्।  
सुन्दरे सुन्दरं काव्यं सुन्दरे सुन्दरः कपिः  
सुन्दरे सुन्दरं मन्त्रं सुन्दरे किं न सुन्दरम्॥

Rama is handsome (sundar), and so is the story.

Sita is beautiful, as is the Ashoka Vanam (where Sita was held captive by Ravana in Lanka).

The Kaavya (poems) are beautiful, and so is Hanuman, the self-realized kapi / vanara.

The mantras (sacred hymns) are beautiful. So what isn't beautiful about Sundar Kand?

Don't miss Sundar Kand on January 22, starting at 10am, at Vivekananda Hall at HTGC (Lemont Temple). 



## This month's guest speaker and singer



### Guest Speaker and Singer:

#### Pujya Ajaybhai Yagnik ji

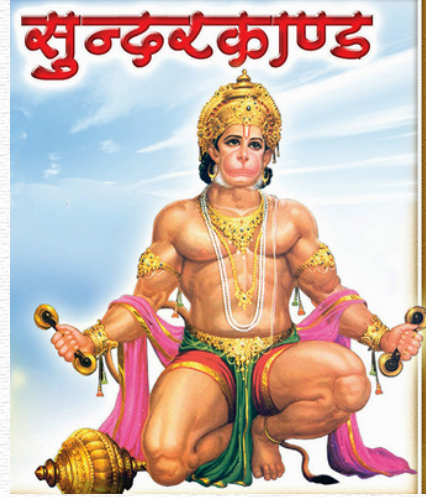
Let us start the new year with positive devotional satsang like Sundar Kand, Chalisas, and bhajans by Pujya Ajaybhai Yagnik ji. He is very popular on YouTube, where all of his videos receive millions of views from his followers. He is from Delhi, India. He has been felicitated by eminent saints like Morari Babu, Rameshbhai Oza, and many others.

Various Indian bhakti channels broadcast his Sundar Kand every morning. He has held satsangs worldwide for more than 20 years. Pujya Yagnik Ji is visiting the USA on the invitation of Sri Upasana, an organization founded by Shri Suryakant Khapekar Ji.

Please do not miss this satsang sabha at any cost. This is a rare opportunity to listen to Yagnik ji in person in the USA. As always, our sessions and mahaprasad (lunch) are totally free of charge. Feel free to bring your family and friends and take full advantage of this great opportunity.



Pujya Ajaybhai Yagnik ji



### भावपूर्ण श्रद्धांजली



It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of **Sh. Priya Pathak ji**. He will be deeply missed by all who knew and loved him. Priya ji was a humble and caring individual who touched the lives of so many with his beautiful smile. Our thoughts and prayers are with Bindu ji (his wife), kids, his extended family and friends during this difficult time. Please keep Priya ji and his loved ones in your thoughts and prayers.

Om Shati Om. 

# Hindu Satsang's Monthly Sabha (4th Sunday of the month) 10 AM CST on Sunday, 22nd, January at VSC



Everyone is  
cordially invited

## Hindu Satsang Sabha

**Venue:** VSC (Vivekananda Spiritual Center-  
the building to the right of the Vivekananda  
statue at HTGC Temple, Lemont, IL)

**Time:** 10 am to 12:00 pm, followed by lunch



## Program



10:00 am:	Vedic Pooja
10:10 am	Sundarkand delivered by Shri Ajay Yagnik ji
11:45 am	Announcements, aarti followed by a special lunch this month (Brief appetizing walk to the HTGC kitchen, we'll have a partitioned reserved section at the back of the dining room).

**We invite everyone to Satsang Sabha  
Come and feast on food for the  
body, mind, and soul.**

**October Aarti Collections**  
Thanks everyone for your  
generous donations.

Sh. Subhash and Smt. Vimal Sharma (Check)	\$25
Cash	\$37
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$62</b>

| Om Shree Mahalakshmyai Cha Vidmahe ...  
Vishnu Patnyai Cha Dheemahi  
Tanno Lakshmi Prachodayat Om |



**Maa Annapurna devi**  
**May you be blessed with good  
health, wealth, and prosperity.**



### January Prasad (lunch) Sponsors:

Darshna Jain, Nisha Goyal,  
Renu Agarwal , Uma Agarwal,  
Kiran Gupta and Renu Garg