

## **HOLI GIVES US THE MESSAGE TO BE HOLY AND TO HAVE UNFLINCHING FAITH IN GOD AT THIS TIME**

Holi also called Phagwa, [Dhulandi or Dhulendi] is a popular Hindu festival celebrated usually in March, sometimes in late February when it is the end of the winter season on the last full moon day of the lunar month Phalgun or Phalgun Purnima.

Outside India it is celebrated by the Indian diaspora populations of Surinam, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, South Africa, Malaysia, Mauritius, and Fiji. The festival was brought to these countries mainly by the indentured laborers from India.

In the diaspora countries the festival is still celebrated with some traditional rituals, feelings of love and togetherness. In Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana people celebrate with singing of chawal and visit friends and relatives to play Phagwa.

### **DEEPER MEANING:**

Like all Indian festivals Holi has a deeper spiritual meaning than the mere rituals, customs and celebrations of today which itself has undergone changes with time.

### **LEGEND:**

According to legend, there lived a demon-king named Hiranyakasyapu. He was very proud of himself. He had received a boon that no human being would be able to kill him and that he would die neither in the night nor in the day. This inflated his ego. He thought that no one would be able to do him any physical harm and that he was immortal and was, therefore, himself Supreme God.

The arrogance and self-conceit of Hiranyakasyapu made him treat others cruelly and persecute those who do not consider him to be God but professed their faith in God the Supreme Soul Who, to them, was eternally beyond birth and death and was transcendental in His nature.

Hiranyakasyapu's own son, Prahlad, also did not regard him as God.

Hiranyakasyapu told Prahlad that there was no God except him. But Prahlad did not deviate from his deep convictions. Hiranyakasyapu first threatened and then persecuted Prahlad very cruelly. The legend says that he had him thrown from a hill-top but Prahlad was not harmed. Frustrated with the results of his nefarious plans of torture, Hiranyakasyapu, one day, asked his sister Holika to take Prahlad in her lap and set fire to herself. The story says that Holika herself had a divine boon that fire would not burn her. Hiranyakasyapu had, therefore, conspired with Holika to set herself aflame hoping that Prahlad would be burnt to death and Holika would survive. The reverse happened. Holika was eaten up by the flames of fire whereas Prahlad was left untouched. As a commemoration of this event, people burn Holika every year.

The story of Prahalad's persecution did not end with Holika's demise. Hiranyakashyapu ordered that an iron pillar be heated red-hot. He then said challengingly to Prahalad, "If there is a God as you say, go and embrace this pillar. Let me see if your God comes to your rescue. I am sure that there is no other God except me and I wish you to learn this lesson or be burnt to death."

It was a test for Prahalad. The story says that Prahalad saw an ant going up that red-hot pillar in quite a normal way. He, therefore, thought that if an ant could walk on that pillar without getting burnt, he also could embrace it. Accordingly, he walked towards the pillar and, without any fear, embraced it. He was unburnt. In fact, he did not even have any sensation of heat from the pillar. According to the legend it is said that God came out of that pillar in the form of a half man- half-lion named Nar-Simha [ nara= man, simha= lion] who killed Hiranyakashyapu. At that time of this episode it was neither morning nor night but twilight and God did not have the form of a man and so the boon of Hiranyakashyapu was not violated.

The story implies that Prahalad had unmitigable faith in God due to which he was saved despite persecution and acts of torture, inflicted by Hiranyakashyapu.

#### SPIRITUAL MEANING:

The boon of Hiranyakashyapu that no one would be able to kill him, either in the day or in the night, has a spiritual connotation. God Shiva, the Supreme Father [Param Pita], has explained that the Golden Age and the Silver Age together called the Day of Brahma whereas the Copper Age and the Iron Age together form the Night of Brahma for, while man is spiritually awake during the first two ages, he is in the slumber of ignorance during the next two ages.

**Hiranyakashyapu** in the story stands for Maya (**vices**) or those men who, under the influence of Maya consider themselves to be God and have the vainglory of believing that there is no other God.

At this time of the kalpa when we are at the fag-end of Iron Age or Kaliyuga, there are many people who believe in the tenet, summed up in the aphorism 'Shivoham', meaning: 'I am Shiva' or 'I am God'. There are also the atheistic people who think that there is no God. Hiranyakashyapu represents such people.

These people curse those who believe that there is a God and that we are children of God.

**Prahalad** in this story represents people who have faith in God considering themselves children of God.

The story, therefore, means, in a nut-shell, that when it is neither Kaliyuga [Night] nor Satyuga [Day] but the confluence of these two, God descends and destroys the rule of Maya with all its atheism, violence and persecution. It also signifies that if one has unflinching faith in God, one will come out unharmed from all kinds of trials and tribulations.

The burning of Holika also has another spiritual meaning. On this occasion, people put into the fire the sheafs of grain, signifying that if the grains are roasted, they do not serve as seeds for growing a crop. In a spiritual context, it means that if our actions are burnt into the fire of yoga then they will not give rise to vicious actions and, hence, there will be no crop of sufferings.

#### TWO PERFORMANCES MAINLY MARK THE CELEBRATIONS OF HOLI:

One is the burning of Holika and the other is throwing of coloured water or powder on others. The story of the bonfire of Hoilka should remind one of the moral lesson that even a small boy emerges safe and victorious surmounting all hurdles with the help of unflinching faith in God whereas a person feeling vainly proud of some occult power faces untimely death and unhappy consequences.

Interestingly people being indifferent to the spirit of the myth on which the very name of the festival is based do not have true knowledge of God or faith in Him. They do not surrender to God.

#### **The use of colour during the festival of Holi:**

God imparts unfading colour of love and delights souls with the elixir of knowledge by teaching true holiness.

The meeting of people embracing friends, neighbors and acquaintances and coloring their faces is meant to remove enmity and jealousy that might have existed. This however can truly happen when there is an auspicious meeting of the soul with the Supreme Soul [Paramatma]. The soul imbibes purity, love, and peace from Him. This is truly being holy.

#### **Breaking News:**

*The breaking news is that God has already descended on earth in this cycle of time [kalpa] and is creating the new world of Satyuga.*

One can have an auspicious meeting with God the Supreme Father at this time and claim his God fatherly birthright of liberation and liberation in life [mukti and jeewan mukti].

One can know more about this from the nearest Brahma kumaris centre. Hurry up! It is a question of NOW OR NEVER!

Comments to [Dr.kamta-rajrishi108@yahoo.com](mailto:Dr.kamta-rajrishi108@yahoo.com) ; <https://www.facebook.com/naitram.kamta>