



# HINDU SRI

Term 3 Program material



**Hindu  
Heritage  
Foundation  
Victoria**

ABN 90248959296

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### Term 3 outcomes

Concepts	Law of Karma, Dharma, Guru
Religious Symbols	Lotus Flower, Tilak
Festivals	<i>Ganesh Chaturthi, Gokulashtami, Guru Purnima</i>
Values	Truth and Honesty: Story of King Dasaratha, King Harischandra

### Hindu Special Religious Instruction Program Schedule

(Based on "Hindu Dharma - a Teacher's Guide")

Week	Prayer/Slokas- 10 min Multi age group session		Hindu Dharma - 20 min Multi age group session
1	3 AUMs and "Sahanavavtu"	<i>Brahmarpanam Sloka</i>	Hindu core concepts
2	3 AUMs and "Sahanavavtu"	<i>Brahmarpanam Sloka</i>	Values - truth and honesty story
3	3 AUMs and "Sahanavavtu"	<i>Brahmarpanam Sloka</i>	<i>Ganesha - Significance</i>
4	3 AUMs and "Sahanavavtu"	<i>Gangecha Sloka</i>	Festivals - <i>Ganesha Chaturthi</i>
5	3 AUMs and "Sahanavavtu"	<i>Gangecha Sloka</i>	Festivals - <i>Janmastami - Krishna</i>
6	3 AUMs and "Sahanavavtu"	<i>Gangecha Sloka</i>	Religious symbols
7	3 AUMs and "Sahanavavtu"	<i>Gangecha Sloka</i>	<i>Kurma Avatara - Churning of the ocean story</i>
8	3 AUMs and "Sahanavavtu"	<i>Kayenavacha Sloka</i>	<i>Kurma Avatara - Churning of the ocean story activity</i>
9	3 AUMs and "Sahanavavtu"	<i>Kayenavacha Sloka</i>	Temples - show pictures
10	3 AUMs and "Sahanavavtu"	<i>Kayenavacha Sloka</i>	Revision of Term 3

## ***Hindu Dharma***

### **Seven Core Concepts:**

**1. Vedas:** *Vedas* are considered as divine and are the world's most ancient scriptures. These hymns are God's words. *Sanatana Dharma* or *Hindu Dharma* is based on *Vedas*.

**2. One God:** There is one, all pervasive Supreme Being who is both the Creator, the created universe and the individual being.

*Yajur Veda, Shvetashvatara Upanishad 4.14.15*

He is the God of forms infinite in whose glory all things are – smaller than the smallest atom, and yet the creator of all, ever living in the mystery of his creation. In this vision of this God of love there is ever lasting peace. He is the Lord of all who, hidden in the heart of things, watches over the world of time.

**3. Karma:** *Karma* is the law of cause and effect. When one's thoughts, words and actions are as per *Dharma*, one collects *punyam* (result of good actions) and collects *papam* (result of bad actions) when the actions are against *Dharma*. *Papam* makes one suffer and *punyam* makes one enjoy. The law of *Karma* is absolute, just and impartial. This cause and effect results may not be enjoyed or suffered immediately after actions, but may be carried to next life. The law of *Karma*, *Dharma* and re-incarnation are core beliefs and way of life of Hindus.

*Yajur Veda, Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 4.4.5*

According as one acts, so does he become. One becomes virtuous by virtuous actions, bad by bad actions.

**4. Dharma:** *Dharma* is the universal order and the ethics. One should do what one has to do and one should not do what one must not do. *Dharma* must be adhered to, whether one likes it or not. *Dharma* includes universal values and ethics like non violence and not hurting others. A religious *Dharma* consists of special values like belief in God, visiting temple and so on.

**5. Reincarnation:** Reincarnation is the natural process of birth, death and rebirth. As per Hinduism or Hindu *Dharma* the individual reincarnates, evolving through many births until *moksha*, the spiritual knowledge is attained.

*Yajur Veda, Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 4.4.6*

After death, the individual goes to the next world, bearing in mind the subtle impressions of its deeds. After reaping their harvest, the individual returns again to this world of action. Thus, he who has not yet discovered the truth continues to be subject to rebirth.

**6. Guru (Teacher/Guide):** Hinduism or Hindu Dharma contains many of the philosophies and principles of other religions. *Vedas*, *Itihasas* and *Puranas* are vast. *Guru* (Teacher/Guide) uses exact words and effective communication to convey the central teachings of *Vedas* to a qualified student. This traditional teaching method of *Guru* and the student has unbroken lineage which originated from God.

**7. Belief:** Hindus believe in One God. Hindus believe and totally trust *Vedas* as the only means to reveal the true nature and identity of God. Hindus believe in *Karma* and reincarnation to support their spiritual pursuit to discover the true nature and infinity of God. *Dharma* is Hindu way of life.

## GANESHA



Mushikavaahana modaka hastha,  
Chaamara karna vilambitha sutra,  
Vaamana rupa maheshwara putra,  
Vighna vinaayaka paada namasthe

O Lord *Vinayaka!* the remover of all obstacles (*Vighna vinaayaka*), the son of Lord *Shiva* (*maheshwara putra*), with a very short form (*Vaamana rupa*), with mouse as your vehicle (*Mushikavaahana*) with sweet pudding in hand (*modaka hastha*), with wide ears (*Chaamara karna*) and long hanging trunk (*vilambitha sutra*) I prostrate at Thy lotus-like Feet (*paada namasthe*)

Lord Ganesha is the elephant-headed God. He is the symbol of power and learning. He helps in overcoming obstacles and helps us in achieving success. He is the eldest son of Lord Shiva and Parvathi and the elder brother of Skanda or Kartikeya.

Without the Grace of Sri Ganesha and His help nothing whatsoever can be achieved. No action can be undertaken without His support, Grace or blessing. His vehicle is a small mouse. The significance of riding on a mouse is the complete conquest over egoism.

May the blessings of Sri Ganesha be upon you all! May He remove all the obstacles that stand in your spiritual path! May He bestow on you all material prosperity as well as liberation!

### **The following story is narrated about His birth and how He came to have the head of an Elephant:**

Goddess Gauri (consort of Lord Shiva), while bathing, created Ganesha as a pure white being out of the mud and placed Him at the entrance of the house. She told Him not to allow anyone to enter while she went inside for a bath. Lord Shiva Himself was returning home quite thirsty and was stopped by Ganesha at the gate. Shiva became angry and cut off Ganesha's head as he thought Ganesha was an outsider.

When Gauri came to know of this she was very sad. To console her grief, Shiva ordered His servants to bring to him the head of any creature that might be sleeping with its head facing north. The servants went on their mission and found only an elephant in that position. The sacrifice was thus made and the elephant's head was brought before Shiva. The Lord then joined the elephant's head onto the body of Ganesha.

**Big Head** — Ganesha is very wise. Signifies clear thinking.

**Broken right tusk** — Ganesha broke one tusk and used it to write Mahabharata.

Top right hand is holding a 2in1 — **parasu** battle axe and **ankusa**.

**Ankusa** — elephant goad signifies that we should goad our mind towards dharma (doing what is ethical and right).

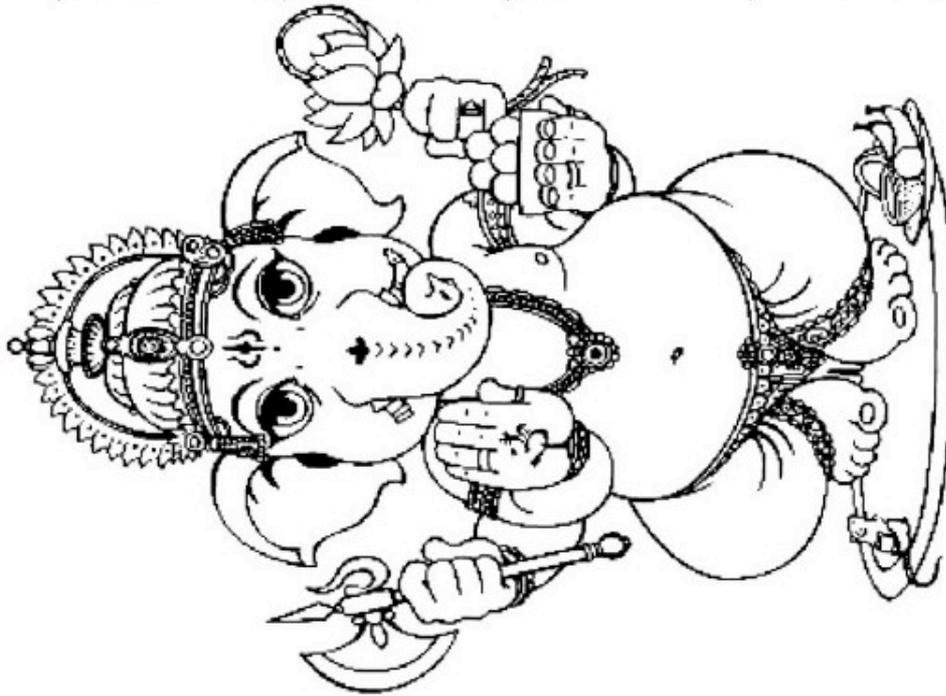
**Parasu** — battle axe signifies Ganesha's many battles with evil demons.

Bottom right hand shows **abaya mudra** — signifies protection and dispelling of fear.

Bottom right hand has **OM** ॐ symbol which signifies that Ganesha is a symbolic representation of all pervading and formless God.

**Mouse** — Serves as Ganesha's vehicle.

Ganesha



**Big Ears** — Listens well. One must listen to Vedic wisdom. One must listen well to other people.

Top left hand is holding a **kamal** — lotus flower. Lotus lives in turbid waters yet rises up and blossoms. Lotus is also a symbol of creation, since Brahma, the creator came forth from the lotus that blooms from the navel of Vishnu.

Top left hand is holding a **paasa** (in shape of a noose). Signifies that we should have our likes and dislikes under our control. This is signified by a noose in his top left hand.

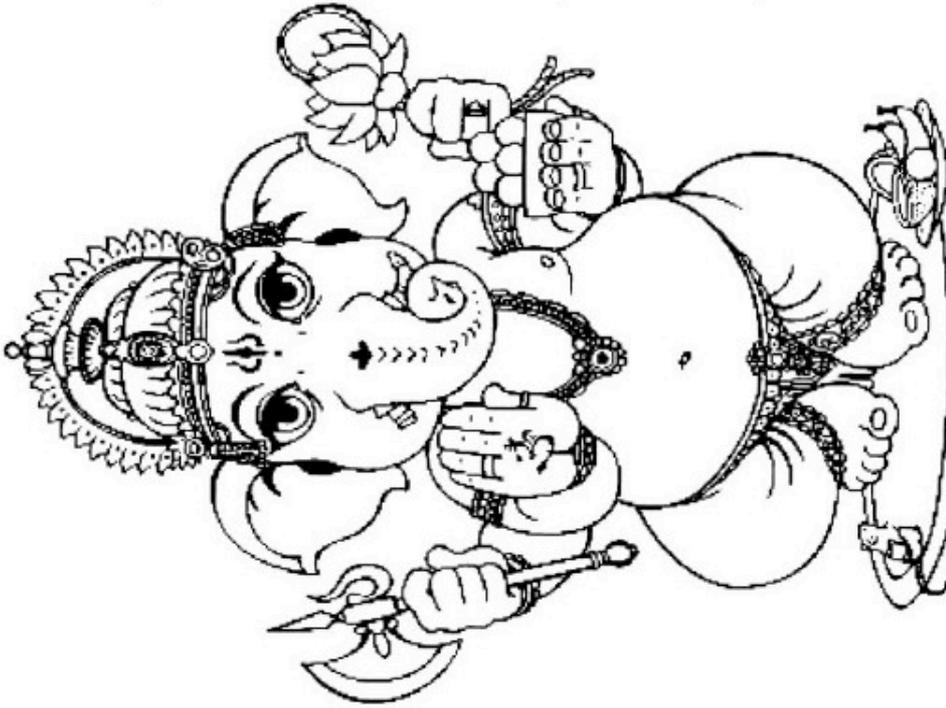
Bottom left hand is holding **Modaka**. Modaka represents moksha — which is freedom from all senses of limitations.

**Prasada** — Bananas, broken coconut and fruits are kept on a plate near Ganesha.

Hindus offer all their earnings to God. They accept the offerings back as prasada with a prayerful and thankful attitude.

Write your own interpretation of Ganesha symbols below.

Ganesha



## WORSHIP AND FESTIVALS

Festivals demonstrate the fundamental unity underlying the diverse and rich Indian culture. Generally, festivals are celebrated through prayer, fasting and rituals. Offerings are also made to the Lord and ancestors and gifts are exchanged with relatives. Festivals are occasions for celebration and merriment. Poet *Kalidasa* says, "utsavapriyah khalumanusyah" - people indeed like festivals.

### Makara Sankranti

*Makara-sankranti* is a harvest festival dedicated to the worship of the sun. Because the sun starts moving towards the northern hemisphere on this day, the festival is also known as *Uttarayana*. This day marks the successful harvest of the crops. A special puja is offered to the sun deity, because of whose warmth and blessings crops can be harvested. In Tamil Nadu, the festival is called *Pongal*. Every family on this day cooks rice with milk and jaggery in a decorated pot and lets the cooked rice spill over, a sign of prosperity. Mothers present their daughters with *Pongal* gifts. The next day after *Makara-Sankranti* is celebrated with the worship of cows. Cows are decorated and fed well on this day. In the *Vedic* culture, the cow is considered highly sacred and it is worshipped in a ceremony called *gopuja* before any big rituals or pujas. On this day, farmers worship their farming implements and bullock carts.

In Maharashtra, people exchange *til-laddus*, sweets made of sesame seeds and exchange greetings on *Makara-sankranti*. In Gujarat, this day is known as *Uttaran* and is marked by kite flying.

### Shivarathri

*Shivarathri* signifies the day on which the Lord appeared in the form of *Jyotirlinga*, a column of light, to bless the sages who worshipped him. On this day, devotees visit Shiva temples, specifically *Jyotirlinga* temples, to seek the Lord's blessings. They observe a total fast and keep vigil all night, chanting with great fervor the *panchakshari-mantra*, "om namah shivaya".

The Lord is worshipped in the form of *Shivalinga* by offering *abhishekha* during each *yama*, three-hour period of the night. *Archana* is performed with *bilva* leaves to invoke the Lord's grace. *Shivarathri* is an important day for spiritual seekers. Since Lord Shiva is an embodiment of renunciation, *sannyasa-diksha* is given on this day to seekers committed to the pursuit of knowledge.

### Ramanavami

The birth of Lord *Rama* is celebrated on *Ramanavami* day. Devotees worship the Lord by chanting, "sri rama jaya rama jaya jaya rama", throughout the day. They read the sections of the *Ramayana* that describe the birth of Lord *Rama* and his coronation. *Arati* is offered at noon, marking the time of Lord *Rama's* birth. In some parts of India, this festival is celebrated for nine days, and the entire *Ramayana* is recited.

## Gurupurnima

*Gurupurnima*, is the birthday of Sage *Vyasa*. Sage *Vyasa* classified the *Vedas* into four branches - *Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharvana*, and authored the eighteen *puranas*, the *Mahabharata* and the *Brahma Sutras*. One worships *Vyasa* on this day, remembering the great contribution he rendered to the *Vedic dharma*. Since *Vyasa* represents the oral tradition of teaching, known as the *guru-sishya-parampara*, this day is celebrated by expressing gratitude to one's *guru*. One performs *pada-puja* to one's *guru*. In the tradition, touching the feet, *pada*, of an elder person or a *sannyasi* is a sign of respect. Offering a *puja* at the feet of one's *guru* is also a sign of reverence to the unbroken lineage of teachers in the *Vedantic* tradition.

## Janmastami

*Janmastami* celebrates the birthday of Lord *Krishna*. As the story goes, Lord *Krishna* was born at midnight to *Vasudeva* and *Devaki*. The Lord incarnated as an embodiment of *ananda*, happiness and destroyed *adharma* that prevailed during his time. He unfolded the vision of the *Vedas* in his teachings known as the *Bhagavad Gita*.

On this day, an altar is made with a cradle holding an idol of baby *Krishna*. Devotees recite the *Bhagavata Purana*, and chant the mantra, "*om namo bhagavate vasudevaya*". The celebration ends with an *arati* at the stroke of midnight.

In South India, homes are decorated to welcome Lord *Krishna*. Using rice flour paste, the floor from the entrance door of the house to the puja room is marked with tiny footprints, indicating the birth of the Lord and his entry into the house. Prayers and *puja* are performed. Butter and sweets are offered to the Lord.

In many parts of India, groups of young people enact the childhood pranks of Lord *Krishna*. They climb on each other's shoulders to make a pyramid so that they can reach and break a clay pot filled with money and candies strung on a rope. People also throw colored water at each other playfully.

## Ganesha Chaturthi

The birthday of Lord *Ganesha* is celebrated on *Ganesha-chaturthi*. Lord *Ganesha* is considered to be an embodiment of wisdom. He is worshipped as a remover of all obstacles, and no *puja* is undertaken without first worshipping him.

A model of *Ganesha* is made of fresh clay and installed in one's home. People observe *nakta-vrata*, spending the whole day in puja, fasting and chanting. The fast is broken at night. Varieties of sweets including *modaka* (steamed balls of rice flour stuffed with coconut cooked in jaggery syrup) are prepared and offered to the Lord. The *Ganesha Atharvasirsa Upanisad*, which includes mantras in praise of Lord *Ganesha*, is chanted. In Maharashtra and some other parts of India, worship continues for ten days. Friends and relatives are invited home for festivities. At the end of ten days, the deity is taken out in procession. People sing the glories of the Lord, and the idol is carried to the sea-shore and immersed in the ocean.

## Dasara / Navaratri

This festival is celebrated in glorification of Goddess *Shakti's* victory over *Mahisasura*, a buffalo headed asura. During another time the story of *Dasara* marks the war between Lord *Rama* and *Ravana* and the ultimate victory of Lord *Rama* on the tenth day. *Dasara* is celebrated for ten consecutive days. The first nine days are popularly known as *Navaratri*. Goddess *Shakti* is propitiated in the form of Goddess *Durga*, *Laksmi* and *Sarasvathi* successively, for three days each. In Bengal, Goddess *Durga* is worshipped for nine days.

In South India, an altar decorated with a stepped platform and filled with small images of gods, animals, birds and other beings, animate and inanimate, are worshipped for nine days. This altar is known as the '*kolu*'. The Lord in the form of the entire creation is depicted on the altar. Before the clay images are set up, a *kalasa* (a pot filled with water and covered on top with coconut and mango leaves) is installed on the first step, and Goddess *Shakti* is invoked in it. Friends and relatives are invited to view the *kolu* and participate in the festivals by singing the glories of the Lord.

Goddess *Sarasvathi* is worshipped on the ninth day by creating an altar of books, musical instruments and tools representing skills. No study or learning is carried out on this day. Artisans worship their tools and convert their places of work into altars for *ayudha-puja*. Buses and trucks are given religious decorations. The tenth-day celebration is known as *Vijayadasami* or *Dasara*. On this day, Goddess *Sarasvathi* is worshipped again. The books from the altar are received with the blessings of the elders and some time is spent in studies. People rededicate themselves to their profession. On this day, a child also begins to learn the alphabet in a ceremony known as *vidyarambha*. This day marks the beginning of any type of learning. One offers gifts to one's teachers, seeks their blessings and prays for success in one's new endeavors.

## Deepavali ( Diwali)

This day celebrates the destruction of the *asura Narakasura* by Lord *Krishna*. It also commemorates the return of Lord *Rama* to *Ayodhya* after his victory over *Ravana*, the demon king of *Lanka*. It is believed that Goddess *Lakshmi* appeared on this day during the churning of the milky ocean by the *devas* and *asuras*.

At dawn on the new moon day, people take a ceremonial oil bath known as *gangasnana*. They wear new clothes and seek the blessings of the elders. Every home is decorated with earthen lamps lit before dawn and after dusk. The day is celebrated with sweets and fireworks. The business community invokes the blessings of Goddess *Lakshmi* on this day. This festival also marks the commencement of the New Year for certain communities, at which time businessmen open fresh account books.

In Uttar Pradesh, the day after *Deepavali* is called *Bhaiya Duj*. On this day, sisters apply vermilion to the foreheads of their brothers and pray for them. In turn, their brothers give them gifts of money.

## Activity – Celebrating Birthdays

Complete the blanks in the following tables to show how each birthday is celebrated.

Whose birthday: Queen’s Birthday	When is this birthday?
How Celebrated: Holiday in Australia.	

Whose birthday: Your birthday	When is this birthday?
How Celebrated:	

Whose birthday: Lord <i>Krishna</i> ’s birthday	When is this birthday?
How Celebrated:	<i>Janmastami</i> falls on the eighth day of the dark fortnight of the month of <i>Bhadrapada</i> (August - September).

Whose birthday: Lord <i>Rama</i> ’s birthday	When is this birthday?
How Celebrated:	It falls on the ninth day of the bright fortnight, <i>Suklapaksa</i> in the month of <i>Chaitra</i> (March - April).

Whose birthday: <i>Vyasa</i> ’s birthday	When is this birthday?
How Celebrated:	<i>Gurupurnima</i> , the <i>purnima</i> in the month of <i>Asadha</i> (June - July)

## Story of Krishna

*Krishna* was born in the family of *Yadav* dynasty. *Vasudev* was his father and *Devaki* his mother. *Devaki's* brother *Kamsa* was very wicked and cruel. *Kamsa* imprisoned his own father - *Ugrasen* and became the king of *Madhura*. His sister *Devaki* and his brother in law protested at such an unjust action. As a result, he imprisoned them as well. In the prison, seven children were born to them. *Kamsa* killed them all.

The 8<sup>th</sup> son *Krishna* was also born in the jail. But *Vasudev* secretly carried him away to a place called *Gokul*. *Krishna* was cared for by *Nanda* and *Yasoda* at *Gokul*. As a child, *Krishna* worked as a cowherd. He was also a very skilled flute player. When he grew up he visited *Madhura* and in a dramatic duel he killed *Kamsa*. *Vasudev* and *Devaki* were then set free from prison. *Ugrasen* was also set free and restored to his throne. *Krishna* left *Madhura* and took his people away to *Dwaraka*, there, on the shore of the sea; he established his kingdom and began his reign.

### Religious Symbols:

#### 1) The lotus flower

The lotus flower is a symbol of vegetation and prosperity. The lotus bud is born in watery mud and unfolds itself into a beautiful flower; hence it is seen as a symbol of the universe coming out of the primeval waters. It also symbolizes the fact that it is possible to raise oneself out of evil (mud) to purity.

#### 2) Tilak

*Tilak* is the mark of red powder or sandalwood paste that is applied on the forehead by Hindus before prayers. The forehead is the seat of memory and the 'spiritual eye or the third eye'; applying the *Tilak* thus symbolizes the retention of the memory of the Lord. The *Tilak* also has the other functions; it is a mark of respect to the higher centers in the brain where the thoughts are generated and it has the psychological effect of keeping away evil thoughts. Sandalwood is used as it has cooling properties and a very pleasant aroma; this signifies that one's head should remain calm and cool and should generate pleasant thoughts. *Tilak* is also a reminder of the vows. The most popular is the red *Tilak* (*Bindi*) worn by Hindu married women to symbolize their marriage and the wedding vows.



Vasudeva carrying Krishna to Gokula

## Story of Harischandra

Many thousands of years ago, King *Harischandra* lived in *Ayodhya*, a city in northern India. He was a good king and always spoke the truth. He would never break his promise.

The king's fame as a ruler spread far and wide. In those days, there lived a sage whose name was *Vishwamitra*. He heard of the king's truthful nature and decided to test him. *Vishwamitra* arrived at the court of the king. When the king enquired if he needed any help, the sage asked, "Will you give me whatever I ask?" The king said "Yes". Then the sage asked him for his entire kingdom.

*Harischandra* had never gone back on his word, so he gave his whole kingdom to the sage. The sage demanded, in addition to the kingdom, his *dakshina* (a gift given to a holy person). *Harischandra* had nothing left now, so he asked the sage for some time in which he could find the *dakshina*. Then *Harischandra*, his queen *Taramati* and his son *Rohitaswa* took off their royal robes, dressed themselves as ordinary people and went to look for work.

After much searching, *Taramati* found a job as a maid in the house of a holy person. *Rohitaswa* stayed with her, but *Harischandra* had to go away. Eventually he became a guard of a crematorium where he earned a small sum of money cremating dead bodies. Whatever wages *Harischandra* received were given to *Vishwamitra* as part payment of *dakshina*.

One day a snake bit *Rohitaswa*. When *Taramati* saw her son she thought he was dead and with great sadness took his body to be cremated. There she recognised that the keeper of the cremation ground was none other than her own husband. She burst out crying. "Has *Dharma* vanished from the world? Have our prayers been in vain? Look at us, we are reduced to such a pitiable plight." But there was no time for sentiment. *Harischandra* had a duty to perform and demanded the fee for cremation. *Taramati* had no money and paid the fee by giving him a part of the funeral cloth. As they prepared a funeral pyre for their son, they decided to end their lives. Then a surprising thing happened. *Vishwamitra* appeared at the crematorium. He had witnessed all that had happened and he was impressed by the patience, honesty and dutiful way in which *Harischandra* and *Taramati* conducted themselves. Appearing before *Harischandra*, he said, "I took your kingdom because I wanted to test you. You have proved to me that you are the most truthful king on the earth. As I am pleased with you, I hand back the kingdom of *Ayodhya*." The sage applied some medicine on *Rohitaswa*'s wound and the boy became well again.

*Harischandra* returned to *Ayodhya* with his family. His son became king and once again the kingdom was ruled with justice, wisdom and truthfulness.

(Source: *Markandeya Purana*)

## Questions for Discussion

1. What do we learn from this story?

2. *Satyameva Jayate* – “Truth alone triumphs”, is an ancient Hindu Scripture saying. Can you think of any other incident or story to demonstrate this saying.

3. Can you think of a time when you were honest, even though you felt like telling a lie. How did you feel about your action?

## Kurma Avatar

Once the *devas* and *asuras* undertook the task of churning the ocean of milk for the nectar, drinking of which they would become immortal. With Lord *Vishnu*'s blessings *Indra*, the king of *devas* and *Bali*, the king of *asuras* started the process.

They carried Mount *Mandhara* on *Garuda's* back to the ocean in order to use it as a churning rod. *Vasuki*, the serpent king, agreed to be the cord for whirling the rod in the ocean. Accordingly, they twined the long *Vasuki* around the *Mandhara* mountain. With the *devas* and the *asuras* on either side of the *Mandhara* rod and each pulling the ends of the coiled *Vasuki* alternately, the churning began.

Soon after due to its weight the *Mandhara* mountain sank in the waters. Lord *Vishnu* took the form of huge tortoise and went under the waters. He bore the mountain on his back and arose. The *devas* and the *asuras* rejoiced at the sight of the mountain again. The Lord, in the form of the Kurma - tortoise, continued to support the mountain on his back and the churning began once again. As *Vasuki* was being pulled on both sides in great velocity and force, he began to emit fire and poisonous smoke.

Having taken their position near *Vasuki's* head, the *asuras* suffered the heat and fumes and were unable to proceed with the churning. Soon after, the deadly poison, *halahala*, also known as *kalakuta*, emerged from the surface of the ocean. Frightened at the sight of the poison, the *devas* rushed to Lord *Shiva* for protection. Lord *Shiva* swallowed the poison and held it in his throat, due to the toxic nature the poison, his throat turned blue but he because of his selfless action he protected everyone. Lord *Shiva* came to be known as *Neela Kanta* (the one with blue throat) since that time.

The poison is the consolidated impurities of the ocean. Now that the Lord has consumed the impurities, as the churning continued, there came many beautiful magical things from the ocean. The divine cow *Kamadhenu* appeared first and was gifted to the sages. Then came the beautiful horse *Ucchaisrava* that was taken by *Bali*. The majestic elephant *Airavata* with four tusks followed and was given to *Indra*. Lord *Vishnu* was given the jewel *Kausthubha* that arose from the ocean.

The wish-fulfilling *Parijata* tree and women with captivating beauty, the *apsaras*, were presented to the heavens. Goddess *Lakshmi*, in all her grace and splendour appeared before all, she chose Lord *Vishnu* and married him.

The churning went on. Finally, Lord *Dhanvantari* arose with a golden pot containing the nectar. Both parties started to argue who should get the prized nectar. With Lord *Vishnu* as the beautiful *Mohini*, finally it was resolved and the *devas* received the nectar.

**Instructor's Note :** Hindu mythological stories were originally composed in *Sanskrit*, in the form of verses or *slokas*. These verses often seem to have more than one meaning, which makes *Sanskrit* scholars think that these stories are more than just stories. The Churning of the Ocean is full of such deeper meanings. Given below are some of them.

**Good vs Evil- The Battle within:** A common interpretation of the myth is that the *Devas* and the *Asuras* are the good and bad tendencies in all of us. And, the churning of the milky ocean waters is like the agitation we experience when we are troubled. It is the agitation in our consciousness. The story tells us that in the fight between good and bad, we must steady our mind like the mountain by supported on the back of a turtle. One of the names used for the mountain in the original story is '*Mandhara*' which means a steady mind. While the turtle is often used as a symbol for controlling the senses. Just as a turtle withdraws its head, legs and tail into its shell so also we can learn to control our six senses. The serpent *Vasuki*, represents desire that is constantly tugging us between the good and bad. As we fight this battle within our selves and try to overcome the bad, many emotions and thoughts come to the surface. At first they are negative like the *halahal* poison. But, if we swallow it like Lord *Shiva* and don't give up, we will be rewarded with great riches. These are symbolized by *Lakshmi*, the goddess of wealth, *Kamadhenu*-the wish-fulfilling Cow, the *Kalpataru* – the wish-fulfilling tree, the *Kaustubha* gem, etc.

Finally we will get the biggest treasure of all – realization of the Ultimate Reality or Truth which is the nectar of immortality.

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Fill in the blanks.

Complete the story with the appropriate words.

Bali	Mount Mandhara	Rama
Vishnu	Ravana	Asuras
Neela Kanta	Kurma	Snake

1. Lord \_\_\_\_\_ blessed *devas* and *asuras* to undertake churning of the ocean
2. To churn the ocean devas used \_\_\_\_\_ as the churning staff.
3. The \_\_\_\_\_ *Vasuki* was the churning rope.
4. The Lord *Vishnu* incarnated as a \_\_\_\_\_ to hold the mountain on his back.
5. *Indra* along with \_\_\_\_\_, the chief of *asuras* led the churning of the ocean.
6. Lord *Shiva* is also known as \_\_\_\_\_ because he held the toxic poison in his throat.



Bhagavatam – Churning of Milk Ocean - Kurmavatara

## Find Me:-

The churning of the ocean offered the *devas* and *asuras* six items. Identify and color them.



## Crossword Puzzle

Identify the items that emerged during the churning of the ocean.

### ACROSS

1. Her milk was used for Vedic rituals.
2. It was swallowed by Lord *Shiva*.
3. She married Lord *Narayana*.
4. The elephant that was given to Indra.
5. Bali took this white animal.

### DOWN

6. She charmed the *asuras*.
7. He carried the nectar.
8. The Lord wore it as an ornament.
9. It was known as the *Parijata*.

