

Happy Diwali! We will celebrate Main Diwali on November 11 of this year, although the Diwali celebration lasts five days in all. Each day of Diwali has its own significance. There are many stories of Diwali. Among these, the most popular are Lord Rama returning to Ayodhya after 14 years, Lord Krishna killing Narakasura and Lakshmi Maa's appearance during saagar manthan. Following is a brief synopsis of each of these.

Lord Rama's victory over Ravana and his return to Ayodhya: Lord Rama is an avatar of Vishnu. Lord Rama had been banished from Ayodhya for 14 years. During his stay in the jungle, Sita Maa was abducted by the evil Ravana who took her to his kingdom in Lanka. After a fierce battle between Lord Rama and his army of bears and monkeys against Ravana and his army of demons, Ravana was killed. Lord Rama then rescued Sita Maa and returned to Ayodhya. The people of Ayodhya were delighted to see their beloved Lord Rama return and lit their houses with lamps and distributed sweets and had merry making. Diwali is celebrated to this day in the same manner to mark this event.

Lord Krishna kills Narakasura: Lord Krishna is an avatar of Vishnu who took birth to kill Kamsa and other demons. Naraka, an asura (demon), had grown very strong and had captured all the kingdoms on earth and Swargaloka. All the Gods approached Lord Vishnu who promised them that He would kill Narakasura during his birth as Krishna. But Narakasura had a boon that he would be killed only by his mother.

Lord Vishnu took the form of Krishna. Narakasura's mother was re-incarnated as Satyabhama. Krishna took Satyabhama to be His wife and made her His charioteer. He rode Garuda and along with His wife (Narakasura's mother) killed Narakasura.

Lakshmi Maa's appearance: Devas (Gods) and asuras (demons) were in a race to obtain amrit (the nectar of immortality.) The amrit was at the bottom of the ocean and had to be brought to the surface. They approached Lord Vishnu for His help. Lord Vishnu took the form of a tortoise and supported the Mandara Mountain on his back. Devas and asuras then wound the serpent Vasuki about the mountain and used it to churn the ocean. When the ocean was churned, the first thing to emerge was a pot full of Vish, poison. There was no safe place to put the vish. Lord Shiva took the Vish in his mouth but did not swallow it and kept it in his throat. This turned his throat blue and earned him the name "Neel Kanth", having blue throat. Many gifts followed which the Devas and asuras shared among themselves. Lakshmi appeared sitting on a beautiful lotus with two elephants by her side during the churning. Lord Vishnu and Lakshmi Maa got reunited at this time.



We may often see Sri Lakshmi depicted as standing on a lotus with elephants pouring nectar over her. Lakshmi Maa is also called the daughter of the ocean for this reason. We celebrate the appearance of Lakshmi on the third day of Diwali. Lakshmi Pujan is performed and the dark night of Amavasya is enlightened with long arrays of diyas, candles and bulbs of beautiful colors. Homes are decorated after a thorough cleaning as it is believed that on this auspicious day Goddess Lakshmi visits the homes and blesses everyone.

Homework: color one of the following rangoli patterns. Cut the outline and paste it to the center of a paper plate.

Colour by numbers

- 1 - yellow
- 2 - pink
- 3 - orange
- 4 - blue
- 5 - light blue
- 6 - green
- 7 - red





