

Spring Festival



“Holi Phagwa is the Hindu festival of colors. It celebrates the coming of spring, fruitful harvests, unity, joy, and a tale from the Bhagavad Gita. It is traditional to celebrate by, among other things, throwing vibrantly colored powder (Holi Gulal) at one another. In addition to the throwing of colored powder it is traditional to light bonfires in celebration of the miraculous escape of a young devotee (Prahlada) of the god Vishnu. A demon (Holika) tried to throw him into a fire, but he escaped without any injuries due to his unshakable devotion. ” (from the website www.festivalofcolors.org)

In Ananda Marga we celebrate the Spring Festival all over the world as an opportunity to come together in joy and happiness. Here is how Shrii Shrii Anandamurti - founder of Ananda Marga describes the celebration of the Spring Festival:

“Vasantotsava / Phálgunii Púrñimá. [The full-moon day of Phálguna {mid February to mid March}. Spring Festival.]...

Those of the same age will play with colours and flowers among themselves in the morning of the full-moon day. The youngsters will offer the same at the feet of the elders, and the initiate at the feet of his/her ácárya/á. (But the elders will not offer colours and flowers to the youngsters.)

Then, in the afternoon, all will perform collective Iishvara Prañidhána and Varnárghyadána {Guru Puja} (using áviir [coloured powder] or flowers of colours of their own choice). At the end, all will play among themselves with this áviir or these flowers without distinction between young and old, initiate and ácárya. Do not offer these colours or flowers at

anybody's feet. But if, while people are playing, they do touch anybody's feet, that should not be considered wrong, in Ānandamūrtijī's opinion. (Men and women should not exchange colours and flowers with each other.) Finally, there will be a collective meal.

The following day, continue merry celebrations at your residence and have a procession with tāñdava dance in the afternoon. Continue collective merry celebrations in the evening."

In one of the discourses given on the Spring Festival Shrii Shrii Anandamurti gives the spiritual purport of the Festival:

"The main object of the Spring Colour Festival (Vasantotsava) is not playing with external colours; it is meant to offer Him the colours of different objects which have dyed the mind. When this practice of offering your own colours - your own attachments, becomes natural and easy, you will then merge in Him. Then you will have no need for any colour, for you will become colourless - you will go beyond the reach of any colour. Your unit-ego will become one with the Cosmic Ego. Whichever way you look you will see only Him in His ever-surging glory. There is no "I" nor "you". By an everlasting, mutual pact the final curtain will have fallen on all clashes of "I" and "you". At that stage, if you call Parama Brahma as "I", you are right in calling Him so; if you call Him as "He", you are equally right; and if you call Him as "you", again you are correct. The extent of your attainment of Him will be proportionate to your self surrender.

Remember, you have to offer your own identity - not money, rice plantains or other crude objects. The give-and-take of crude things is a business transaction. If you want to attain the bliss of Brahma, you must offer your own self. If you want to have the Great "I", you must give away your own little "I". You have to give the full sixteen annas, (the full rupee). Giving fifteen annas and holding back one anna will not do. You must completely surrender. To attain that Infinite One with the help of your mental concentration and strength, you have to surrender yourselves. But, remember self-surrender does not mean suicide. On the contrary, your soul will have its full expression. Your existence will not become contracted, for contraction is inert in principle. Hence in the Sádhaná of self-surrender the ego is expanded, not contracted. In the Mahábhárata, when Duhshásana was pulling the sari of Draopadii, she was tightly holding the cloth to her body with one hand beseeching lord Krśńa with the other. "Oh! My lord, save me!" But the Lord did not then come forward to save her from shame. When Draopadii found no means of escape, she then released her hold on the cloth and appealed to the Lord most piteously with both hands out-stretched, crying, "O Lord, I surrender my all to you. Do what you think is best". And the Lord immediately rescued her. That is why I say that you will have to dedicate yourselves to His feet wholly and unreservedly. You will earn godliness in proportion to the extent that you surrender yourselves, and finally, after merging that acquired godliness of yours

in His Entity, you will attain eternal bliss.

God bless you.”

(Vibration, Form and Colour)

HAPPY HOLI and happiness for everybody on this very auspicious day.