

Kashi Annapoorani

Narrator:

Namaste. Happy Deepavali to all of you. We all know that Deepavali is the festival of not only external lights but also the inner light, the Awareness. While celebrating Deepavali with fun, we should not forget the reason behind it.

There are several stories connected with Deepavali. One of the less commonly known is the connection of Deepavali with Kashi Annapoorneshwari. The golden statue of Annapoorneshwari is kept in the lockers of Reserve Bank of India and is taken out for a procession every year only on the special day of Deepavali. It is quite a spectacular event, worth seeing, but we cannot miss Deepavali in Fairfield. And this year the children of Fairfield will present to you the lovely story of Annapoorani and Deepavali.

I have to thank the parents and all the children who had put lot of practice to make this skit worth watching. In the dance, the children also enact the story of daksha. Daksha ignored Shiva in his Yagya, the sacrificial fire ceremony. The angry Shiva as Rudra chops his head off. I remember some parents felt uncomfortable children doing this type of violent scene.

Please excuse me for taking a few more minutes to help understand the symbolic meaning of Shiva coming in the angry form of Rudra and chopping the head of Daksha. The anger of Shiva is not the anger we express, when our Ego is hurt, this anger is Roudra. Roudra is the inner strength we gather to bring about transformation. The anger which comes out when our Ego is hurt is a negative quality. But this mustering transformational energy Roudram is a positive aspect. Death of Daksha is a positive quality of transformation. His human head means the head of our Ego and his revival with a goat head represents his transformation. Deepavali is the celebration of our inner transformation in the light of Awareness. That is our real growth and the very purpose of our life.

In this skit, the children are going to dance first on a song on Shiva.

Lord Shiva was dancing with the shiva-ganas and the devas in Kailasa, his abode. Parvathi, an equally accomplished dancer, participated in the dance along with other Goddesses and apsaras. During the dance, when

Shiva went into Meditation, she playfully closed the third eye of Lord Shiva, causing a power-cut on Earth, spreading darkness everywhere.

Shiva, in his Rudra, or angry form, cursed Parvathi to realize her mistake and bring light to remove the darkness she had created. For the realization of “Aham Brahmasmi” she would have to take human form, he said. Aham Brahmasmi means I am pure Conscious-Awareness and not a mere mortal body.

Now let us watch the first part of the story.

Part-1

This story is symbolic of Parvathi creating darkness if of great Truth. Ignorance about Shiva, the light in us, creates a world of darkness for us. Bringing in the light of knowledge to remove that darkness is the very theme of Deepavali celebration. We try to have an eventful life on earth, but in the fun we should not create an inner darkness like the Parvathi's act. The darkness we have created can only be removed by light. This light is knowledge and comes from a Guru. At this moment let us offer our gratitude to our Gurus for helping us bring our inner transformation.

Now enjoy the second part of the skit.

Part- 2

Lord Vishnu: My Lord Shiva, please be calm. Give up your anger.

Gana (Daksha): We are scared, Lord Shiva.

Apsara: Mata Parvathi was upset that you started meditating and did not watch her dance.

Durga: Her dance was so good!

Apsara: How could you close your eyes to such a beautiful dance?

Devi Bhairavi: I wish she would give me dance lessons. Her dance is magical.

Apsara: It was quite natural that she playfully closed your third eye.

Shiva: (Angrily) Apsara!!!

Apsara: Oh Lord Shiva please don't be angry on me. Forgive me please.

Indra: My Lord Rudra, please do not turn Apsara into ashes. Please forgive her.

Vishnu: Mata Parvathi, if you approach Lord Shiva with your smile, his anger would disappear within seconds.

Nandi: Please Mata, go near him.

Durga: Mata Parvathi, only you can save us all.

Parvathi: My Lord Shiva, please forgive me for my playfulness.

Shiva: Parvathi, you know that for every action there is a reaction. You have to face the result of your action.

Ganesh: Please tell her what she should do.

Shiva: Let Parvathi take birth on Earth and realize me as Jyothi, the light.

Parvathi: I will do as you say, my Lord. I will take human birth, do penance and self- realize you, my Lord.

Subramanya: Mother, but how will the beings on Earth get energy to perform actions?

Lakshmi : Don't worry my son; Devi parvathy herself will become food for higher beings.

Nandi: So devi will be born as plants and become Anna or food for other beings.

Saraswati: Oh Devi Parvathi, how great is your compassion!! I will do my part and inspire right thinking in human beings not to waste food.

Apsara: When they waste food, let them be aware that they are disrespecting your great sacrifice, Mata!

Bhoomi Devi: Let those who waste food and destroy vegetation, be born again as plants and trees to serve the world.

Durga: Lakshmi will leave the abode of those who waste food.

Parvathi: For realizing Lord, I need the help of a Guru. I will seek the great Agasthya as my Guru.

Sage Agasthya: I am blessed to have you as my student. Here is the Rudraksha and kamandalam for your penance. I will now give you the panch-akshara, the five letter mantra for Lord Shiva.

Sage Agasthya wishpers Mantra “Om Namah Shivaya five times into Parvathi’s ears.

Parvathi: Let me install the Linga of Lord Shiva as Viswanatha, the Lord of the Universe. I shall worship here, Lord Shiva.

Sage Narad: Om Namah Shivaya, Om Namah Shivaya.

Shiva: Dear Ganga, you flow out of my head. You represent the eternal bliss in me. You will be worshipped in Kasi. Every day people will do arthi for you.

Ganga: I am blessed Lord Shiva.

Bringi: Om Namah Shivaya. We are all blessed, Lord Shiva!

Vishnu: Mata Parvathi, may you be worshipped as Annapoorneswari, the one who is Anna, food for everyone. On Deepavali, you will be worshipped everywhere, especially on the mukthisthala, Kashi.

Everyone: Annapoorneshwari-ki: Jai

Parvathi sits on a seat with a feeding vessel in her hand. In the back ground chanting of the first sloka of Annapoorani ashtakam).

Apsara: Annapoorne sadapoorne sanakra prana-vallabe
Gnana- vairagya siddhyaratham biksham deheecha paravathy

Devi Bhairavi:

Matha cha Parvathee devyo pitha devo maheswaraha
Bandava shiva bakthyartham svadeso bhuvana thrayam"

Shiva: Devi Parvathi, I am present in every being, living and non-living. As the first fundamental being, I accept the first bhiksha of food from you as a chandala.

Nandhi: Let the food energize the body and help in inner evolution and realize Shivoam.

Indra: We realize you as our Self. Aham Brahmasmi.

Sage Agasthya : let us bless all the beings in this Universe, specially the Fairfield people who celebrate Deepavali with devotion.

Everyone: Shivji ki Jai

Everyone: Annapoorneshwari-ki ; Jai

Participants:

Lord Vishnu: Ahilan Kumar

Gana (Daksha): Naveen Singh

Lakshmi: Cicelia Faircrest

Durga; Narayani Thijm

Devi Bhairavi: Amrita Kumar

Apsara: Anuja Pharasi:

Ganga: Uma Wegman

Indra: Chaysten Titus

Nandi: Davin Titus

Bringi: Budhil Thijm

Saraswathi: Devika Pharasi

Ganesha: Jeyanta Wegman

Subramanya: Karthik Vempati

Bhoomi Devi: Deepika Vempati

Sage Agasthya: Kishan Thijm

Sage Narad: Devarishi Eisner

Parvathi & Annapoorneshwari: Shristi Sharma

Lord Shiva: Pranav Chhalliyil