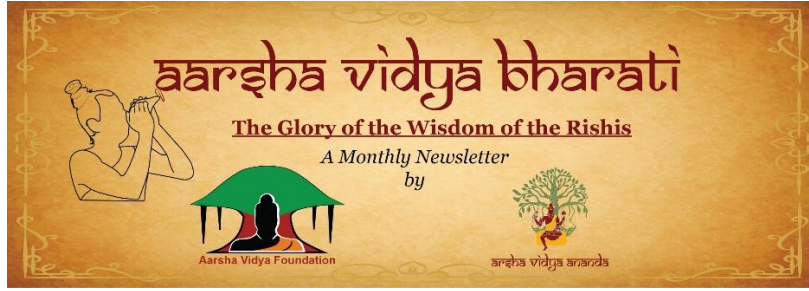

Aarsha Vidya Bharati - Nov 2023

Kartika - Agrahayana 2080

A monthly newsletter that will bring you more happiness, more wisdom and more freedom



This is one of many articles from our monthly newsletter. Access the [Nov 2023 issue](#) or read any of [the articles](#).

Pradakṣiṇa and the centre of our lives



Lord Shiva and Parvati had been given a fruit by the gods and both the sons Ganesh and Kartikeya wanted it. The parents then suggested that the one who circled the world three times and came back first would get it as a prize. Kartikeya got on the peacock, his *vāhana*, and flew around the world stopping at all sacred spots on the way and offering his prayers. Ganesha simply walked around his parents (Shiva and Parvati) in a *pradakṣiṇa*, three times, with great devotion. When his parents asked him why he was not circling the globe, he answered that his parents are the whole world. He won the prize and everyone's hearts.

Since Ganesha, we do *pradakṣiṇa* around Agni, during the *vivāha*, marriage ceremony and also during the *homa*, fire ritual offering. ‘*Pra*’ is towards and ‘*Dakṣiṇa*’ is towards the right direction or South or in a clockwise direction (*Pra+Dakṣiṇa*). We do *pradakṣiṇa* around the Tulasi plant and even the Pipal tree. Millions have done so around our glorious mountains – Govardhan, Arunachala, Kailasha. In a crowded *pūjā* function, when there is no place to do a *pradakṣiṇa*, we turn around ourselves in an *Ātma pradakṣiṇa*.

In the temple soon after *darśana* of the Deva/Devi, we chant prayers and our mantras, while doing *pradakṣiṇa*. We remind ourselves that *Bhagavān* alone is at the centre of our lives and we are on the righteous path.

Is there are a beginning or an end for the circle? Is there a beginning for when *Bhagavān* entered our lives or rather when he ends being a part of our lives?

Keeping *Bhagavān* at the centre makes us devotees, ever connected and alive to the presence of *Bhagavān* in different situations and people.

This is not just a mechanical action but a deliberate karma carrying much meaning which we extend to the rest of our day and lives.

What is at the centre of our lives? If it is our jobs, our families, money or pleasure, no matter how much we do, we continue to be dissatisfied and exhausted. On the other hand, as a devotee with *Bhagavān* at the centre we offer our *karma* across all roles and situations and accept (or try to see) all *karma-phala* as *prasāda*. Whatever we have is given and where the given is, there alone is the giver. We grow in our understanding. As our circle of grace grows, all of life becomes a blessing.

Although the words *Pradakṣiṇa* and *Parikramā* are used interchangeably, '*Pradakṣiṇa*' is used more in the context of temples, *pūjā*-s and *homa*-s while the term '*Parikramā*' is used for rivers, mountains and sacred *kṣetra*-s. We have a wonderful four-part series on Narmada *Parikramā* starting with this issue besides other articles and links.

In the upcoming Deepavali celebrations as we light a deepa for Dharma, we welcome *Bhagavān* Rama into our hearts and lives. One time and every time, every day.

Our annual Vedic Wisdom Festival is on 2nd and 3rd Dec. Please do register and invite your friends and family for it.

Love and Prayers,

Brahmavidananda
Brahmaprajnananda

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