



## Storytelling in the Hindu Tradition: It's Significance in My Life as an Indian American

- Tej Lunani (MI), 11 years

Since I was 4 years of age, every Sunday morning, we have a family tradition to read about Indian Mythology for an hour. All it has meant to me was reading yet another story. So, here is my opportunity to see, if those 330 some hours that I have spent reading and hearing Indian stories have meant anything at all.

So far I have studied these three Indian stories:

- 1) Dus Avatars
- 2) Ramayana
- 3) Mahabharata



The Dus Avatars are ten stories of how Lord Vishnu came down to Earth to fight evil in ten different forms. I have learnt that God can exist in everything and any form. It also tells us that we can pray to God of any form. This, I think is a distinguishing factor about Hinduism. Unlike most other religions, Hinduism does not force praying to one lord only.

Ramayana is another widely read Epic in India. Ramayana is the story of Rama and Ravana. It is a story of "Good vs. Evil". In story Lord Rama lived the life of a normal human being and showed us by example "How to lead a righteous life". The Ramayana depicts many examples of Truth, Respect for Elders and Keeping ones promises. Rama is an ideal son and is a role model of Respect and Humbleness. Hanuman is an ideal friend, devotee and is role model of Loyalty.

Laxmana is a selfless brother, who scarified his wife to be with his brother Ram. He helps us learn how we can make sacrifices for our family during times of need. Even though Ravana is the "bad guy" in the story – He still teaches us an important lesson of "Karma Yoga" – because he did bad things and hence bad things happened to him in the end. I believe it is important to understand and practice "Karma Yoga", in very simple words – "If you want to be treated nice, you need to treat others nice or vice versa"

Mahabharata is yet another important Epic in the Indian history. The Mahabharata is the story of Krishna, the Pandavas and the Kauravas; it is a story full of politics. It is important to understand the Mahabharata. It tells us about the "Bhagvat Gita". The Gita was a life lesson that Krishna gave to Arjuna. It has taught me about "Dharma Yoga". "Dharma" is what you are born to do and Yoga is the practice of doing something. As a student, I believe that my Dharma is to "Learn". This thought helps me focus at school and be a responsible student.

One thing that consistently seems to be common with all Hindu stories is the "Good always triumphs over Evil" and "God or the Supreme Being takes different forms to destroy evil". In both Ramayana and Mahabharata we also learn about "Ahimsa". In both cases the option of war was the last resort.

As I put these thoughts down, I guess, I have learned quite a bit from the "stories". Now that I think about it, I believe, through stories, the idea is to illustrate the greatness of the Indian culture and Hinduism. Through the stories one can learn the various aspects of the Indian life and we can apply the moral learnt through the stories in their everyday life.

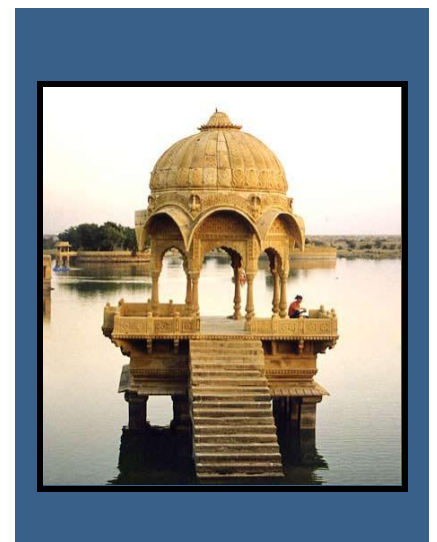
### Upcoming events

- \* Buddha Jayanti is on May 9<sup>th</sup>
- \* Mother's Day is on May 10<sup>th</sup>
- \* Mahesh Navami is on June 1<sup>st</sup>
- \* Ganga Dasher is on June 2<sup>nd</sup>

### Quote of the month:

**"Health is the greatest gift, contentment the greatest wealth, faithfulness the best relationship."**

- Gautam Buddha



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**We request our MMNA community to contribute news and other articles to the newsletter. We especially encourage youngsters to contribute jokes and short stories.**

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### **Web Site:**

[www.mmna.org](http://www.mmna.org)

## MMNA congratulates Dr. Ghanshyam D. Heda

The American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA) has announced that the 2008 William J. Stickel Award for Research in Podiatric Medicine has been awarded to "Role of Tissue-Type Plasminogen Activator in Salicylic Acid-Induced Sloughing of Human Corn Tissue," written by Ghanshyam D. Heda, PhD, and Lee K. Roberts, PhD. The winning paper was published in the September/October 2008 issue of the Journal of the American Podiatric Medical Association (JAPMA).

The William J. Stickel Award is a retrospective honor that, each year,

recognizes the best original research paper published in the Journal during the preceding calendar year.

"APMA is proud to honor this prestigious research project, which has closely examined the intricacies of salicylic acid use for podiatric medical treatment," said APMA president Dr. Ronald Jensen. "The results of this research may greatly increase the understanding of treatment, as well as the effectiveness of those suffering from painful, debilitating foot ailments."

### **Jokes Corner:**

**Driver: Sir ji, petrol khatam ho gaya , gaadi aage nahi ja sakti.**

**Banta: Chalo Phir, wapis le chalo.**

**- Nikita Zamwar, 14 years**