

# Understanding Nandi and the Shiva Lingam from a Principled Perspective

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The purpose of this paper is to build bridges of understanding between Hindus and members of Father Moon's Family Federation for World Peace and Unification. Therefore, the primary focus is for an Indian and Nepalese audience because these two nations have Hinduism as the dominant religion.

Non-Hindus can also learn from this presentation. They can see how God has been working in the oldest religion on earth, teaching the same basic concepts from the very beginning of religious history, throughout the ages, and even until today. They can also come to understand the universality of Father Moon's basic principles of peace.

The age of conversion is past. The role of religion in this age is to unite faith-traditions in support of universal moral values, common to all religions, so they can speak in unanimity and work together to build individuals of good character, families of true love, prosperous communities and nations, and a world of lasting peace.

Hinduism is the oldest religion in the world. Since the purpose of religion is to reunite God and man (from the Latin word *re-ligare* and from Sanskrit *dhri* meaning to hold together or sustain<sup>[1]</sup>), it means that

## Shiva riding on Nandi

Hinduism represents the first attempt of God (*Ishwar*) to reach out and to restore human beings to their original position after the fall. Taking this a step further, since God is absolute, eternal and unchanging, Hinduism, like all religions, must therefore reflect God's eternal and universal principles of peace.

It is through knowing His principles that we can see evidence of Ishwar's unchanging love and commitment to restore His lost children and family. From a principled perspective, the meaning of Nandi and Shiva Lingam is exactly this. Such a viewpoint will help us see how God has been working throughout history, in all religions and cultures, to restore this fallen world back to its original state of goodness.

Therefore, the purpose here is not to negate nor correct the traditional meanings that Hindus attribute to these sacred images. Rather for Hindus it is to enhance and enrich them and for non-Hindus to show how God has been working in the oldest religion in the world. We will demonstrate that Nandi and the Shiva Lingam, sacred representations for Hindus, are symbols of two of the basic principles taught in all faith-traditions.

## Two Fundamental Principles

The images of Nandi and the Shiva Lingam represent two fundamental principles. These principles are universal because, first, they are beyond time, i.e., they apply to the past, present and future, and second, they transcend culture, race, religion and nationality. These principles are: 1) the Dual Purpose Principle and 2) the Pair System Principle.

Each will be explained briefly. After that the traditional meanings of Nandi and the Shiva Lingam will be summarized. Then the correlation between these sacred images in Hinduism and as universal principles will be presented.

### **Living for the Sake of Others: The Dual Purpose Principle**

Everything in nature has dual purposes. For example, human beings have a mind and body. The mind, more elevated than the body, is invisible and internal in nature but very powerful because it directs the actions of the body. Therefore it takes on the role of subject-partner in relationship to the body. The body is visible and external in nature. It plays the role of the object-partner in relationship to the mind.

Animals, for example, have an instinct which like the mind of man is invisible and directs its behavior. In this way, instinct is in the subject-partner position, while the body is in the object-partner position. Nevertheless, the relationship between the instinct and the behavior of an animal is so strong that just by observing the way a particular nest is built, we can know the species of bird.

We can look anywhere in creation to see this principle or just look in a mirror and see how we were created. The mind is above the body. This means the internal aspects of life, the desires of our original mind which seek truth, goodness and beauty, must be given a higher priority than the desires of the body which center on self-preservation and therefore seek food, shelter and clothing. *Both the mind and the body are necessary and good, but the issue here is priority.*

Human beings are fully responsible to align these dual purposes in the proper order. This is done when we put our public responsibilities above our private desires, i.e., when we live more for the sake of others than for ourselves. This is because the relationship between mind and body is actually that between the public and private. For example, four of the five senses, to see, taste, smell and hear, are located in the area of the mind and this is the area where almost all of our public interaction takes place. The function of the body is more for self-maintenance and it houses the respiratory, digestive and cardiovascular systems.

Thus, the highest human values emerge when we live unselfishly. Virtues such as trust, responsibility or altruism, come from living sacrificially. This principle of living for others is learned most easily and naturally in the loving, nurturing environment of a family. This is because the family is the first place where these two dimensions of public and private are encountered. For example, a son or daughter of filial piety places the needs of the family above his or her own desires.

For this reason, the family is the most essential institution of society. Policy makers must do everything possible to promote and preserve the institution of the family because it is society's first and most basic educational institution. This is where we cultivate civility, develop character, bequeath culture in our children, and even mature our conscience—all are learned in the family.

### **The Pair System Principle**

The second basic principle arises from the observation that all things exist in pairs. Human beings are either men or women.<sup>[2]</sup> Animals are male or female. The reproductive parts of a plant consist of a stamen and pistil. Molecules are made of cations and anions, atoms are made of protons and electrons, and energy has either a positive and negative charge. By studying science it becomes fairly obvious that everything exists in pairs. The question is, "Why?"

There are two basic reasons. First, the pair system provides insight into the nature of Ishwar, the Creator. In the same way as the nature of a painter is reflected in his painting, so too creation reflects the nature of God. God is one and He is unique, unchanging, eternal and absolute. But by seeing that everything in creation was created in pairs, we can understand that the nature of God has the attributes of both masculinity and femininity. In simple terms, God is like a parent, combining the qualities of both a father and mother.

The second reason all things are created in pairs is because existence requires energy, and energy is generated through give-and-take action which needs two entities. For example, an electric current is created when charged particles (electrons) flow between a positive and negative pole. Within humankind, love is the most powerful energy. But love cannot exist by itself. To create love, two people are needed: a man and a woman.

Even for God to experience true love, He also needs a partner. This is actually the main reason we were created. We are to be the object-partners of God, giving Him the experience true love which He could not have if He were all alone. God is all-powerful, all-knowing and self-existing. But there is one thing He cannot create by Himself: love. Father Moon explains the need for the interplay of partners to create love:

Although God is the absolute being, He cannot be happy alone. Adjectives such as "good" and "happy" cannot apply to any being that lives in isolation. They apply only where there is a dynamic mutual relationship. Imagine a professional singer who finds herself on an uninhabited island. She may sing at the top of her voice, but with no one to listen, will it bring her happiness? In the same way, even the self-existent God absolutely needs a partner with whom to share love in order to experience joy and be happy.[\[3\]](#)

In other words, this Pair System Principle even applies to God.

#### **Freedom within the Pair System Principle**

Examining relationships between men/women, it is obvious that human beings enjoy a degree of freedom unmatched in the animal, plant or mineral kingdoms. Why did God create us with such unrestricted freedom? The purpose for this freedom is found within the context of the Pair System Principle.

First we need to make a clear distinction between the *nature* of freedom and the *purpose* for freedom. The nature of freedom is the ability to act without any external control; quite literally action without restraint. But if people focus on the nature of freedom without understanding purpose of freedom, then they may easily misunderstand why we have free will and think, "I am free, therefore, I can do whatever I want to do!" This wrong concept, if applied to relationships between men and women, becomes very dangerous. The false philosophy of "free sex" emerged from just such thinking.

On the other hand, the *purpose* of freedom is to enable human beings to create relationships of love. If God had created us perfect and pre-programmed to always do what is right, then there would be no possibility to fall or commit evil because all our behavior would be encoded within us by our Creator at the time of our creation. But there is a downside to this. Although it would not be possible to fall, it would also eliminate the possibility of creating relationships of true love. This is because without the ability to respond freely, then our relationships would be in some way mechanical or programmed-and that's not love.

In order to create relationships of true love, God needed to an object-partner whose responses would be free and spontaneous. God could not experience joy by Himself alone, nor could He experience the fullness of joy in an object-partner that He somehow controls. Without freedom, love cannot even exist. *In essence, the purpose for giving us freedom is to give us responsibility to create relationships of true love.*

Furthermore, human beings have this unprecedented degree of freedom/responsibility because God invested His nature into us. God wanted to create beings in which He could pour His entire heart and spirit into. As many religions teach, God breathed His spirit into us. He wanted beings that could reflect His nature. Then we would have the capacity as God's object-partners to understand His heart, love and sacrifice. Father Moon explains it this way:

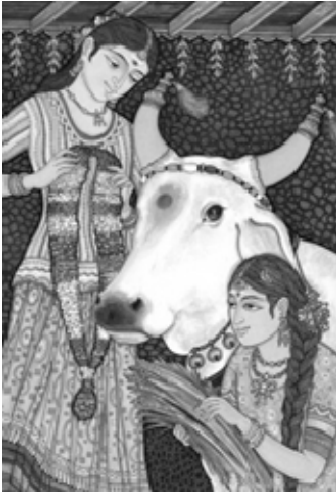
Do you think that when the omniscient and omnipotent God created the first man and woman, He secretly reserved the highest position for Himself and made them to be only second best? We cannot imagine that God would do that to His children, to His partners who share absolute love with Him.

As our eternal True Parent, God invested Himself 100 percent in the creation of human beings and endowed us with the right of equal status with Him, to participate in His work as equals, to live with Him, and to inherit from Him. God bestowed upon human beings all of His attributes.[\[4\]](#)

In essence, freedom to respond in a loving relationship of give-and-take with God and our loved ones enables us to fulfill the Pair System Principle.

These two principles-the Dual Purposes Principle and the Pair System Principle-are universal. In focusing on the meaning of Nandi and the Shiva Lingam, we will show how they have served for millennia as representations of these two principles.

### **Traditional Meanings of Nandi and the Shiva Lingam**



In Hindu imagery, Nandi is the sacred bull found at the entrance of many Hindu temples. Hinduism emerged during a time when people lived in agrarian societies. For a farmer, surely the most valuable possession was his livestock, particularly the bull and cow. In primitive societies special significance and veneration was given these animals because of the value they had for tillers of the soil. In fact, worshipping bull and the cow can be traced as far back as Indus Valley Civilization, more than 2,600 BC, when dairy farming was the most important occupation.<sup>[5]</sup> These animals, more than any other, were symbols of prosperity, strength, affluence, selfless-giving, and were seen as a sign of an abundant earthly life.

Many cultures give special reverence to the cow. In Zoroastrianism there is a specific term "*geush urva*" which has the meaning *the spirit of the cow*. So honored was this animal it was considered *the soul of the earth*. Ancient Egyptians associated the cow with the goddess Isis and would not sacrifice it. In China, as far back as the Tang dynasty (618-907) it was customary to line the banks of rivers with oxen to prevent flooding.<sup>[6]</sup>

But nowhere more than in India were these animals revered so highly. In the Rig Veda (3.33.1cd), written as early as 1,500 BC, cows were a symbol of wealth. Even in modern India, Mahatma Gandhi said he would "defend the worship [of cows] against the whole world." <sup>[7]</sup> He and millions of Indians think of the cow as an earthly mother. To slaughter a cow or eat beef is unthinkable.

Nandi is also the primary vehicle for Shiva, the Auspicious One, and Shiva's principal gana, or disciple.<sup>[8]</sup> Nandi therefore plays the role as gate keeper of the temple, and statues of Nandi adorn the entrances of temples dedicated to Shiva. There is naturally a very close relationship between Shiva and Nandi, to which we will return later.



The Shiva Lingam resting on the Yoni, installed in the temple sanctuary

In the Shaivite tradition of Hinduism, Shiva is considered the supreme God. In other branches of Hinduism, Shiva represents one of the three primary aspects of the Divine collectively called the *Trimurti*. Respectively they are: Brahma the creator, Vishnu the maintainer or preserver, and Shiva the destroyer or transformer.<sup>[9]</sup> Even so, Shiva is most often worshipped in the form of the male sexual organ. The lingam or phallic symbol, which literally means *sign* or *distinguishing mark*, is believed to be one of the most potent emblems in Hindu imagery.<sup>[10]</sup> Sometimes this image is alone, but most often it is conjoined with the corresponding female organ called *yoni*, meaning *sacred temple*.<sup>[11]</sup>



It must be stressed that the lingam and yoni are objects of the greatest sanctity. They are placed in the holiest or innermost sanctuary of Hindu temples, and in no way should this be seen as a license to free sex. The lesson for Hindus is very clear-human sexuality is holy and sacred. Hindus believe, "Each individual lingam that enters a womb and procreates is a harbinger of divinity, and engaging in a sacred act."[\[12\]](#)

### **Understanding Nandi from a Principled Perspective**

Beginning in the 1900s, the term "sacred cow" passed into the English language to mean, "a person or thing immune to criticism or questioning... This term alludes to the honored status of cows in Hinduism, where they are a symbol of God's generosity to humankind."[\[13\]](#)

Again the question is, "Why?" Why is there such a reverence for this animal? And particularly why did the oldest and therefore the very first religion in human history so passionately worship them? What lesson should we learn from this? Does it have any relevance for us today?

Because of the fall of our first human ancestors, selfishness and moral confusion became the norm. Their names, called Adam and Eve in the West, correspond to Manu and Satrupa in the Hindu tradition. The important thing is that at the outset of history human beings lost the most basic and fundamental teachings of life, what Hindus call *Sanatana Dharma* or the Eternal Path.

From the perspective of Father Moon, the first of two principles lost at the fall was the Dual Purpose Principle. Human beings lost the understanding of the value of putting the public well-being above private interests. In other words, the positions of mind and body were inverted. Stated differently, we became selfish and egocentric to such a degree that we were unable to think or care for others.

Such selfish people naturally engaged in conflict with each other. This is evident from the murder in the first family where Cain killed his younger brother Abel. As civilizations grew families fought one another, and then communal and civil wars broke out, culminating in world wars. Needless to say, in the process of restoration the first order of business is to teach the value of living for others.

As was mentioned at the outset, Hinduism is the oldest religion in the world. It emerged before any language developed, even before the Sanskrit language. This means that Hinduism appeared before any written scriptures. Since at that time people could neither read nor write, God had to teach His eternal truths by pictures or through images. Parents do the same thing with their children. Before children learn letters, words, and sentences, parents teach through picture books.

If God wanted to teach the concept of *living for others* using pictures, what image would He use? It would be something that people would recognize, and that could teach the lesson of being totally unselfish. In an agrarian society what animal serves human beings the most? Surely, it is the bull and the cow. They are the symbols of selfless service and sacrifice.

Cows were the center of livelihood and sustenance of a farming family. They plowed fields, provided a means of transportation, hauled cargo, threshed grain, and irrigated fields. They provided milk to drink and numerous dairy products, dung for fuel, and in some cases, food to eat. Even after they died, they continued serving: leather for clothes, and glue to build and bind. If God wanted to teach the concept of unselfishness without words, then surely there is no better illustration than that of a cow to convey this idea.

The images in Hinduism are God's picture books. Some religions have falsely accused Hindus of idol worship. But this is not the veneration of lifeless stone-it is education! God was trying to teach, raise up, and educate a people who could not read or write.

Starting from the very beginning of religious history the first lesson God was trying to teach human beings-through images-was that the proper relationship of mind and body is achieved by sacrificing yourself for the benefit of others. This is also the ultimate value of being human, because it is at the core of God's heart and love.

By living for others, the public side of our lives is naturally elevated and the private side is put down in its rightful place, below our public responsibilities. This creates harmonious families because everyone puts the well-being of the whole family above their own individual interests. In order for communities to develop and prosper, families must put the welfare of the community above that of the family. People do this by being good, law-abiding citizens and paying taxes. And so it continues. A patriot lives for the sake of the nation, above their own family or community. Even higher, a person who lives for the sake of the world is referred to as a Mahatma, *a great soul*, or saint.

Mahatma Gandhi understood this principle. Inscribed in stone on the eastern gate of Gandhi's Samadhi in New Delhi, India is his prescription of living for the greater good. It reads,

I would like to see India free and strong... the individual, being pure, sacrifices himself for the family. The family for the village, the village for the district, the district for the province, the province for the nation, and the nation for all. I want *Khudai Raj*, which is the same thing as the Kingdom of God on earth.

Gandhi saw the principle of living for the greater good as necessary at every level of society; always that which is more public should be put above that which is less public.

#### **A Universal Religious Value: Public-mindedness**

Once written languages developed, God could teach the same *Dharma* (principle) in the sacred writings of the world's religions. All religious scriptures teach that we should avoid being selfish and cultivate the heart of selfless giving. In a variety of words and phrases all religions teach the need to live lives that benefit others. The cross fertilization of these common teachings from different holy scriptures strengthens this fundamental principle and shows the universality of this social norm.

#### **Hinduism**

A gift is pure when it is given from the heart to the right person at the right time and at the right place, and when we expect nothing in return. (Bhagavad Gita 17:20)

A person who has given up all desires for sense gratification, who lives free from desires, who has given up all sense of proprietorship and is devoid of false ego - he alone can attain real peace. (Bhagavad Gita 2:71)

Of sacrifices, the sacrifice performed according to the directions of scripture... by those who desire no reward, is of the nature of goodness. (Bhagavad Gita 17:11)

**Buddhism:**

Sever the love of self... Develop the path of peace. (Dhammapada 20:285)

Misers certainly do not go to the heavens... but noble men find joy in generosity, and this gives them joy in higher worlds. (Dhammapada 13:177)

**Christianity:**

Whoever seeks to gain his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will preserve it. (Luke 17:33)

**Islam:**

By no means shall you attain righteousness unless you freely give of that which you love; and whatever you give, of truth God knows it well. (Qur'an 3:92)

Do not expect, in giving, any increase for thyself ! (Qur'an 74:6)

**Sikhism:**

What is that love which is based on greed? When there is greed, that love is false. (Adi Granth, p. 161)

This principle of living for the higher purpose is taught in all religions. It was taught in the very first religion, Hinduism, through the image of Nandi, the sacred bull. Once written languages developed, the same concept was voiced in the pages of revered writings.

The Dual Purpose Principle-the concept that everything has a dual purpose to its existence and that the more public purpose should be elevated above the purpose for self-existence-is a common virtue taught in all religions of the world. This is an important foundation for building an interreligious understanding based on universal moral values.

**Understanding the Shiva Lingam from a Principled Perspective**



To depict the second principle that everything exists in a pair system, the Chinese have given us a rather generic symbol, the *taijitu* diagram (right), which literally means, "diagram of the supreme ultimate." More popularly known as the yang and yin, this concept was first described in the *I Ching* as early as 2,000 BC.



same basic belief, but theirs are a bit more anthropomorphic. The first is the image of God in human form, literally as half man and half woman (below). This representation is called *Ardhanarisvara* and is the combination of three Sanskrit words, *ardha*, *nari*, *ishvara*, literally, "half, woman, God." The deities depicted here are Shiva and his partner Shakti (or Parvati).



Ardhanarisvara

The other Hindu image is the *Shiva Lingam*. Here the sexual organ of a man and woman are co-joined and worshipped representing God. The Shiva Lingam is placed in the innermost sanctuary of all Shiva temples. [14] The image is an educational tool, and its placement in the temple teaches a vivid lesson: the conjugal union of a man and woman is the most sacred of all relationships; it is one that represents God.

The Shiva Lingam thus depicts the unique value and the ultimate importance in the union of man and woman. A couple united in love reflects most fully the nature of God. Mother Moon likewise emphasized this in speeches she gave more than a decade ago:

We marry in order to resemble God. God exists as a being of dual characteristics. Thus, husband and wife, united, return to God. Together, they are a reflection of His original image and nature. [15]



A household Lingam (the phallic-shaped stone) set in its Yoni. This sacred object is worshipped daily by unmarried girls seeking a good husband. The ritual is to pour milk over the Lingam, which drains into the Yoni at its base.

The conjugal relationship is the most powerful emotional experience. It was designed to be that way. But the purpose for this is not merely for the individual ecstasy. The reason God made human sexuality the most powerful human experience was because true love is the glue that binds a husband and wife together as they are supposed to be-in the image of God.

If there were something stronger, or more desirable than love, then the union of a husband and wife would constantly be threatened and always be in jeopardy of being broken by this greater

energy. But fortunately, nothing is more powerful than love. God made it this way so that love that brings a man and woman together in oneness would go unchallenged and last forever. Father Moon explains,

True love is the wellspring of the universe. Once we possess it, true love makes us the centers and the owners of the universe. True love is God's essence and the manifestation of His will and power. When we are bound together in true love, we can be together forever, continually increasing in the joy of each other's company. The attraction of true love brings all things in the universe to our feet; even God will come to dwell with us.[\[16\]](#)

Since God is absolute, unchanging and eternal, then the love that brings a man and woman together into God's image should have these same qualities, namely, it should also be absolute, unchanging and eternal. This is the meaning of the Shiva Lingam from a principled perspective.

#### **A Universal Religious Value: Sexual Purity**

The sacredness of conjugal love is depicted in the image of the Shiva Lingam which is a representation of God. However, after languages developed, God taught this same concept directly. Although religions developed at different times, in some cases centuries apart, and although cultures were separated by deserts, oceans, and mountains, nevertheless all the religions of the world teach that human sexuality within the bonds of marriage is sanctioned and at the same time warn us that sexuality outside marriage is dangerous and destructive.

The purity of conjugal love has two requirements: abstinence before marriage and fidelity afterwards. All religions warn against sex outside marriage in the strongest terms.

#### **Hinduism:**

From lustful passions comes the confusion of the mind, then loss of memory, then negligence of duty. From this loss comes the ruin of reason and the ruin of reason leads to destruction. (Bhagavad Gita 2:63)

There are men selfish and false who moved by their lustful passions perform terrible atrocities not ordained by sacred books: fools who torture the powers of life in their bodies and me who dwells in them. Know that their mind is darkness. (Bhagavad Gita 17:5-6)

#### **Buddhism:**

The man who goes to the wife of another... digs up the very roots of life. (Dhammapada 18:247)

Four things happen to the thoughtless man who takes another man's wife: 1) the degradation of the soul, 2) a frightened pleasure, 3) the danger of the law, and 4) the path of hell...Considering these four, let not a man go after another man's wife.

(Dhammapada 22:309-10)

Weeds are the curse of fields; lust is the curse of mankind... (Dhammapada 24.356)

Better to swallow a red-hot iron ball, which would consume you like a flame of fire, than to be an immoral... (Dhammapada 22:308)

**Islam:**

Do not come near adultery: for it is a shameful (deed) and an evil, opening the road (to other evils). (Qur'an 17:32)

Approach not fornication; surely it is an indecency and evil as a way. (Qur'an 17:34)

Let not Satan deceive you, as he deceived your parents out of paradise. He stripped them of their garments to reveal to them their nakedness. (Qur'an 7.27)

**Sikhism:**

Sexual relationship with another's wife... is like eating poison: the enjoyer comes to grief, only to be reborn and waste their lives again. (Adi Granth, p. 1255)

**Jainism:**

Of all temptations, the craving for women is the most difficult to overcome. (Thus Sayeth Our Lord, 24)

**Zoroastrianism:**

Adultery is the worst deed that man and tyrants commit. (Yasht 17.47-60)

**Christianity:**

Do not commit adultery. (Exodus 20:14)

Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. (I Corinthians 6:18)

Anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown

into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell. (Matthew 5:27-30)

### **Sociology and Moral Values**

Sociologists and marriage counselors in the United States and other developed nations now understand what religions have been teaching for thousands of years. Marriage is "a key institution for the well-being of *adults* as well as for the children and for society."[\[17\]](#) And since the defining point of marriage is sexual exclusivity, "premarital and extra-marital sexual activity... are destabilizing to future or existing marriages."[\[18\]](#)

The nature of true love is that it should be totally subjective, that is, it should be beyond comparison, unparalleled and unrivaled. The only way for this to happen is if the love between a man and woman is exclusive. But this is not a bad thing.

Paradoxically, by closing off their options... [married couples] increase the energy and attention that each devotes to the needs of their one partner, increasing the likelihood that satisfying sex will result" developing what sociologists refer to as "partner-specific skills."[\[19\]](#)

On the other hand having multiple partners, either before or outside of marriage, leaves behind memories of past sexual encounters that intrude on sexual intimacy,[\[20\]](#) since comparing one partner with another is almost unavoidable. Psychologists call this phenomenon a "mental flashback." These troubles can be overcome, but it is certainly best and easiest to avoid them altogether.

### **Morality Appropriate to the Stages of Life**

Hinduism teaches the sacredness of human sexuality not only in images, but also in its understanding of the various stages of life. The first stage of life, called *Brahmacharya*, requires sexual purity. Here the goal is not just abstinence or sexual self-control, but also mental purity and devotion to God. This becomes the foundation for the next stage, *Garhastha*, or the life of a householder. In addition to marital fidelity, each couple is expected to lead a life of "selflessly carrying out one's duties to family and society."[\[21\]](#),<sup>[\[22\]](#)</sup>

When Father Moon speaks about using love correctly and at the same time warns of its misuse, his words reiterate the traditional Hindu understanding of life's stages:

For people to perfect themselves in resemblance of God and obtain the stature of people of character who can be called sons and daughters of the Absolute Being, they must follow the path based on the absolute standard God has determined. The essence of this path is the standard of absolute sexual purity... The first stage is maintaining absolute sexual purity prior to getting married... Second is the model of absoluteness in the love as husband and wife.[\[23\]](#)

Thus we find that throughout history, religions have been teaching the virtue of sexual purity and the sanctity of marriage. This Pair System Principle is a universal teaching as the sacredness of human sexuality is prominent in all religions, and in Hinduism it is depicted in the image of the Shiva Lingam.

### **Why are Nandi and the Shiva Lingam Always Together?**

In addition to the meaning these two images represent by themselves, there is a remarkable significance to the fact that Nandi and Shiva are always found together. Why should this be?

Recall that Nandi represents the principle of living for the sake of others, and the Shiva Lingam represents the sacred relationship between husband and wife. From a principled perspective, living for the sake of others is the bedrock foundation for all relationships and especially the relationship between husband and wife. If the man has his mind and body correctly aligned, then he will live for the sake of his wife more than for himself. And if the woman has her mind and body correctly aligned, then she will live more for the sake of her husband than for herself.

Following this, parents who already practice living for the sake of the others will surely be in a position to live for the sake of their children more than for themselves. Then, not only will this tradition be bequeathed from generation to generation, but it will also be expanded into the society, nation and world.

Furthermore, altruism and chastity till marriage are twin pillars for creating true love and establishing ideal families. This is because people who elevate the public interest above personal desires and who understand the consequences sex outside marriage (to themselves, their children, their families and nation) will not misuse love.

Therefore, these two principles-living for others and sexual purity-are truly the most essential core virtues for building individuals of good character, families of true love, nations of co-prosperity, and a world of lasting peace. They are also indispensable to each other.

For additional insights, let us look at the relationship between Nandi and the Shiva Lingam in more detail:

- *Nandi is the gate keeper found at the entrance of Shaivite temples*

This means that unless you learn to live for others, then you cannot enter into the presence of the God. Many people want to experience God but do not want to change the selfishness in their character. However, until we become completely selfless we will never be allowed to dwell in the holy presence of God, because as selfish people we do not resemble God.

- *Nandi guards the Shiva Lingam.*

This means that living for the sake of the other protects a marriage. When a husband and wife are totally living for each other, then they will be faithful to each other too and never take sex outside marriage.

- *Nandi is the main devotee or disciple of Shiva.*

This means that in order for the union of a husband and wife to resemble the dual natures of God, each spouse must first be a devotee of altruism. Father Moon has said if people realize that to benefit themselves the most, they must learn to sacrifice for others, i.e., give, not take, then this will change the entire world.

- *Nandi is the primary vehicle for Shiva*

This means that the fundamental nature of God, the principle by which God moves, is the principle of living for others. Father Moon explains it this way:

At the beginning of the Creation, God acted upon the principle of living for the sake of others. In other words, everything that He did was for the sake of His children, whom He hoped would develop into His partners of true love. The practice of true love is the nucleus of God's creative activity.[\[24\]](#)

- *Nandi and the Shiva Lingam are placed at ground level.*

This means that each person can reach divinity, but it cannot be done alone. Individually, we prepare the foundation by becoming people of goodness who learn to sacrifice for the benefit of others. But to reach our full human potential and reflect fully the nature of God, a man absolutely needs a woman and a woman absolutely needs a man. They need to build a love between them that reflects God's nature, a love that is absolute, unchanging, eternal and absolute.

- *Yoni, the image of the female sexual organ, literally means "sacred temple."*

This means that the human sexual organ is sacred. Father Moon teaches this:

The human sexual organ is sacred. It is the palace of life where the seed of life is sown, the palace of love where the flower of love is made to bloom, and the palace of lineage where the fruit of the lineage is given life.[\[25\]](#)

- *Hindu temples themselves are built in the image of the Shiva Lingam.*

This means that the very purpose of religion is to teach us about the proper use of human sexuality. If we could build families of true love, centered on the absolute unselfishness of the conjugal love between a husband and wife, then our families would become the embodiment of what these holy temples represent. As Father Moon explains, this is actually the original ideal of creation and the world that would have appeared if our first human ancestors had not fallen.

If the world were filled with such true families, that world would be one governed by the heavenly way and heavenly laws, with no need for lawyers, prosecutors or even judges... Is there anything that cannot be resolved within [such a] family? When parents and children, husband and wife, and elder and younger siblings set an example of living for the sake of one another, how could they do anything unforgivable? What reason would they have to commit crimes? A world governed by the heavenly way and the heavenly laws is a natural world, an unobstructed world of truth and pure reason...[\[26\]](#)

If our homes became such living temples we could fulfill the very purpose of religion.

## Conclusion

Through the images of Nandi and the Shiva Lingam, Hinduism teaches the two fundamental principles of living for the sake of others and the sacredness of marriage. Nandi represents selfless giving or living for others. This relates to the Dual Purpose Principle, where the more public side of our lives should always be put above the private. The Shiva Lingam expresses the Pair System Principle, and teaches the holiness and sanctity of conjugal love. This image also depicts the idea that a man and woman united in true love fully embody the nature of God.

These two principles are the eternal path of life; they are *Sanatana Dharma*. Father Moon teaches the same thing: The family is where we learn the most important lessons in life-to live for others and the proper use of human sexuality. Thus we can discover a remarkable correspondence between the teachings of Father Moon and the *dharma* of oldest religion in history.

## Notes

[1] Swami Jnaneshvara Bharati, "What is Sanatana Dharma?" Retrieved 12:28, Nov. 10, 2008 from <http://www.swamij.com/sanatana-dharma-what-is.htm>.

[2] People often ask about eunuchs, someone they say is neither male nor female. The American Heritage Dictionary defines a eunuch as, "a castrated man employed as a harem attendant or as a functionary in certain courts." In other words, eunuchs are man-made.

[3] Sun Myung Moon, "God's Ideal Family and the Kingdom of the Peaceful, Ideal World", Universal Peace Federation, September 12, 2005.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Nandi (bull), *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Retrieved 02:17, October 3, 2008, from [http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Nandi\\_\(bull\)&oldid=235971148](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Nandi_(bull)&oldid=235971148)

[6] "Bronze Ox," *Travel China Guide*, Retrieved October 7, 2008 from [http://www.travelchinaguide.com/attraction/beijing/summer/bronze\\_ox.htm](http://www.travelchinaguide.com/attraction/beijing/summer/bronze_ox.htm)

[7] "Cattle in religion," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Retrieved 11:20, October 3, 2008.

[8] "Nandi (bull)," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Retrieved 02:17, October 3, 2008.

[9] "Shiva," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Retrieved 02:55, October 3, 2008.

[10] "The Shiva Linga Images of Cosmic Manhood in Art and Mythology," Exotic India Art Pvt. Ltd. Retrieved February 7, 2008, from <http://www.exoticindiaart.com/article/shivalinga>.

[11] "Yoni," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Retrieved 03:40, October 4, 2008.

[12] "The Shiva Linga Images," op. cit.

[13] Sacred cow, *The American Heritage® Dictionary of Idioms*, by Christine Ammer. Retrieved October 06, 2008, from [dictionary.reference.com/browse/sacred%20cow](http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/sacred%20cow)

[14] "The Shiva Linga Images," op. cit.

[15] Hak Ja Han Moon, "*Blessing Marriage and Eternal Life*," Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, 16-city North American tour, April 1-16, 1996.



[16] Moon, "God's Ideal Family and the Kingdom of the Peaceful, Ideal World"

[17] M. Gallagher, "The Moral and Social Significance of Marriage in the Global Context," Interreligious and International Federation for World Peace (2000). Retrieved Dec. 23, 2002, from <http://www.iifwp.org/Activities/2000/UN/Proceedings/Gallagher.shtml>.

[18] Robert S. Kittel, "Abstinence Education: Creating Evaluation Criteria And Evaluating Curriculum," dissertation, University of Bridgeport, Connecticut, 2004, p. 108.

[19] L. Waite, and M. Gallagher, *The Case for Marriage: Why Married People are Happier, Healthier, and Better Off Financially* (New York: Doubleday, 2000), p. 88.

[20] D. D., Cole and M.G. Duran, *Sex and Character* (Richardson, TX: Foundation for Thought and Ethics), p. 126.

[21] "Ashrama (stage)," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Retrieved 08:28, October 8, 2008.

[22] The other two stages of life are *Vanaprastha*, retired life, and *Sannyasa*, complete renunciation.

[23] Sun Myung Moon, "The Family Rooted in Absolute Sexual Ethics, Which is the Model for God's Absoluteness, Peace and Ideal, and the Global Kingdom," Universal Peace Federation, November 21, 2006.

[24] Moon, "God's Ideal Family and the Kingdom of the Peaceful, Ideal World"

[25] Sun Myung Moon, "The True Owners in Establishing the Kingdom of Peace and Unity in Heaven and on Earth", Universal Peace Federation, April 10, 2006.

[26] Ibid.