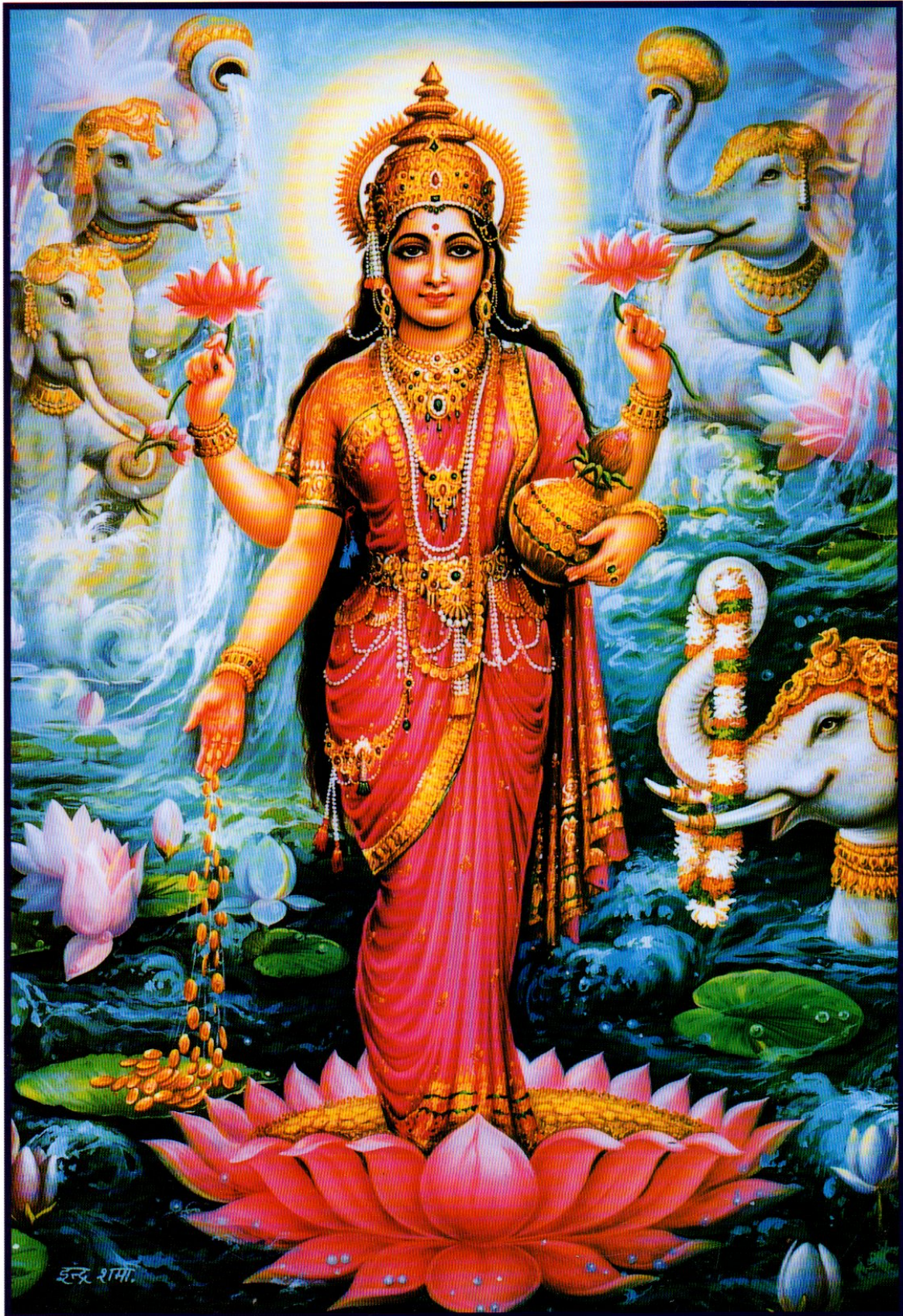


Lakshmi



- Lakshmi is the eternal consort of Lord Vishnu, and is often worshipped with him as Lakshmi-Narayana.
- She is worshipped in her own right, particularly during the festival of Diwali.
- Lakshmi is shown standing or sitting on the lotus, and she holds in two hands a lotus and a water pot. With another hand, she showers coins on the worshipper and with the fourth offers benediction. She is usually dressed in a deep pink sari and surrounded by auspicious items, including decorated elephants showering water from their trunks.
- Lakshmi is also called 'Shri' meaning 'beautiful'. Another name is 'Chanchala', meaning 'flickering' (indicating that fortune in this world is unpredictable). Despite her unsteady nature, she never leaves her consort, Lord Vishnu.
- Although Lakshmi is considered the eternal consort of Vishnu, she made her appearance from the ocean of milk when the Demigods and the Demons churned the ocean of milk. The gods, headed by Indra, thus regained their fortune in their battle against the demons.
- Lakshmi always accompanies her husband when he descends into the material world as an avatar. She specifically appeared as Sita with Rama and as Queen Rukmini with Krishna.
- Lakshmi is considered to reside on the chest of Vishnu, by which he received the name Shrinivas (the dwelling place of Shri). She is also often seen massaging his lotus feet.
- In South India, especially at Tirupati, Lakshmi is famous as Padmavati, the consort of Vishnu in his form of Vekanteshvara
- Lakshmi wherever there is virtue, truth and righteousness. However, those who are too righteous are often devoid of her mercy. She particularly cursed the genuine brahmins - but for a few specified exceptions - to be devoid of wealth.
- The great moralist Chanakya has written, "Lakshmi, the Goddess of Fortune, is present where fools are not honoured, where grains are carefully stored, and where there is no argument between husband and wife".
- Some Hindus consider the sacred plant Tulsi to be a form of Lakshmi.
- Friday is considered the most auspicious day to worship Lakshmi.
- The main festival associated with Lakshmi is Diwali. She is also worshipped during Navaratri.
- Further references: Teachers' Book: pages 49, 50, 67, 94
CD Rom: FCT-403, STO-316, PIC-051(d), TGD-04, WRK-05
<http://www.hindunet.org/god/Goddesses/lakshmi/>