



The festival marks the triumph of light over darkness and good over evil – with the significance of lights showing light over darkness and belief that good will always triumph over evil.

The night before Diwali is known as Narak Chaturdasi, and symbolises the day in which the Hindu demon Narakaasura died.

Hindu God Lord Rama and his wife Sita returned to their kingdom in northern India after being exiled following the defeat of demon king, Ravanna – as told in the Diwali story, Ramayana?

What is the Diwali story, Ramayana, about?

The use of lights is explained in the Diwali story, Ramayana (Picture: Getty Images)
Lord Rama is the main focus of the Ramayana, with the Hindu god leaving his kingdom to live in exile for 14 years.

While in exile his wife Sita was kidnapped by the demon king, Ravana (who was the king of Lanka – or Sri Lanka as it's now known).

Rama, who travelled with his brother Laxman, fought for Sita and rescued her from Ravana's clutches after defeating him.

The story tells how Ravana's sister Shoorpnakha – who was very proud of her beauty – was attracted by Laxman after passing by a forest hut where he, Lord Rama and Sita were living. She asked Laxman to marry her but he refused her proposal and cut her nose by his sword to teach her a lesson for her arrogance.

The festival also coincides with the Hindu New Year (Picture: Rex Shutterstock)
Shoorpnakha subsequently went to Ravana and told him the whole incident and asked him to exact revenge on them.

Ravana sent demons to spy on them, however the spies informed that there was a very beautiful lady called Sita – whose beauty caught Ravana's eye.

He wanted to marry her, and one day sent a demon which changed into a beautiful golden deer who passed by their hut catching Sita's sight.

Sita asked Rama and Laxman to catch that golden deer for her, but it turned out to be a ploy to distract the brothers, and subsequently, the demon captured Sita.

Sita used her intelligence to leave a trail of jewellery so that the brothers could find her – and aided by Lord Rama's trusted ally Lord Hanuman – they built a bridge famously known as Ram Setu (Adam's Bridge) to cross the island to find Sita.

Lord Rama freed Sita from the prison of Demon Ravana.

Diwali marks the day that Rama triumphantly returns to the kingdom of Ayodhya with his wife – with the story saying that the villagers welcomed their triumphant return home with thousands of glowing oil lamps on a moonless night.

This is why candles, lamps and other forms of light are so widely used to mark the festival



Happy Diwali to all.