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Margashirsha Purnima

Margashirsha Purnima is also called by names Mrigasira Purnima, Margashira Pournami, Udyatithi Purnima, Battisi Purnima, Maha Margashirsha, Naraka Purnima and Korala Purnima. Margashirsha Purnima is also the Birth day of Lord Dattatreya. Dattatreya Jayanti is celebrated on this day. Lord Dattatreya is the avatar of Trimurthi (Lord Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh).

Significance



God Vishnu is worshiped as Narayana on Margashirsha Purnima. Devotees Wake up early in the morning, take ritual bath, wear white cloths, keep fast for the whole day and recite "Om Namō Narayana" mantra the whole day. This is believed to be fasting fulfills all wishes of a person. People also perform Yagna on this day. Moon God is also worshiped on this day. It is believed that Moon was covered with Amrit on Margasira Purnima day. Clothes are distributed among the family members.

Margashirsha Purnima is considered auspicious for river baths. Devotees observe Satyanarayan Vratam on this day. By observing Satyanarayan Vrat one can be relieved from day to day problems. People perform Daan (donations) and charities today. Devotees can be seen involved in Bhajans, Kirtans etc. throughout this month. There are rallies of these devotees which can be seen early morning during this month. There is a great importance of Lord Krishna in this month. The Lord himself says that he is the Margashirsha month out of all the months.

Margashirsha month is related to Lord Krishna. It is believed that this month is related to Margashira Nakshatra. Margashira Nakshatra is one of the 27 Nakshatras and this month's Purnima comprises of this Nakshatra. This month is known as Margashira month because of the same reason. This month is also known as Magsar, Agahan and Agrahayan. Donations, baths etc are of great importance during this month. Lord Krishna told the importance of this month to Gopis and said that taking a bath in the Yamuna River during this month gets a person closer to him. Hence, taking baths in a river is considered extremely sacred during this month.

Donations and charities are considered to relieve a person of all his sins if he does so on the day of 'Udyatithi' Purnima. It is believed that doing these things on this day gives 32 time better results than usual. Hence, Margashirsha Purnima is also known as Battisi Purnima. Margashirsha Purnima is also known as Korala Purnima in honour of Korala, the sister of Chitrugupta and she is worshipped on this day.

Dattatreya Jayanti



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Margashirsha Purnima is also celebrated as Dattatreya Jayanti. It is believed that Lord Dattatreya was born on this day. According to religious texts, Lord Dattatreya is known as an incarnation of all Lord Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh. Dattatreya is believed to possess qualities of both the Lord and the Master and hence is also known as Gurudevadatta.

Birth of Dattatreya

Anusuya is quoted as the model of chastity. She was the wife of Atri Maharishi, a great sage and one of the seven foremost seers and sages. She was well established in the Pativrata Dharma, the main elements of which are devotion to husband and regard of him as God Himself. She did severe austerities for a very long time in order to beget sons equal to Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, the Hindu Trinity.

Once, Saraswathi, Lakshmi and Parvati requested their husbands (the Trimurtis) to test the Pativrata Dharma of Anusuya, by asking her to give them alms with an unclothed body. Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva came to know of the austerity and desire of Anusuya. So, they agreed to their wives' request, as they knew that by agreeing to it, they would also be fulfilling Anusuya's wish. They put on the garb of Sanyasins and appeared before Anusuya, asking her to give them alms as specified by their wives. Anusuya was in a great dilemma. She could not say "No" to the Sanyasins. And she had to maintain her Pativrata Dharma also, which she would be violating if she appeared naked before men other than her own husband. She meditated on the form of her husband, took refuge at his feet and sprinkled over the three Sanyasins a few drops of water used for washing the feet of her husband. Immediately the Trimurtis were transformed into three babies on account of the glory of her chastity.



Anasuya serving the Trimurtis

At the same time, there was accumulation of milk in her breast. She thought that these children were her own and fed them with the milk, in a nude state and cradled them. She was eagerly expecting the arrival of her husband who had gone to have a bath. As soon as Atri Rishi returned home, Anusuya related all that had happened during his absence, placed the three children at his feet and worshipped him. But, Atri knew all this already through his divine vision. He embraced all the three children. They became one child, with two feet, one trunk, three heads and six hands. Atri Rishi blessed his wife and informed her that the Trimurtis themselves had assumed the forms of the three children to gratify her wish.

In the meantime, Narada went to Saraswathi, Lakshmi and Parvati and informed them that their husbands had been turned into children through the power of the Pativrata Dharma of Anusuya and that they would not return unless they asked for their husbands as alms from Rishi Atri. Thus Saraswathi, Lakshmi and Parvati assumed the form of ordinary women, appeared before Atri and asked for their own husbands as alms. Atri duly honoured the three ladies and, with folded palms, prayed to them that his wish and the wish of Anusuya should be fulfilled. Then, the Trimurtis appeared in their true form before Atri and said, "This child will be a great sage according to your word and will be equal to us, according to the wish of Anusuya. The child will bear the name of Dattatreya." Saying this they disappeared.