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Ksheerabdi Dwadasi



Ksheerabdi Dwadasi is an auspicious day in the month of Karthik, also called as Chiluka Dwadasi, Yogeeswara Dwadasi, HariBodhini Dwadasi. It falls on 12th day of Karthik month. Lord Vishnu sleeps on Ashada Shudda Ekadasi, after four months of cosmic sleep he wakes up, this day is well known as Uthana Ekadasi which falls before the day of Ksheerabdi Dwadasi. So Ksheerabdi Dwadasi is considered as a special day.

On this day Tulasi and Indian gooseberry (amla) plants are worshipped. Like on Diwali, Goddess Lakshmi Devi is worshipped with coins. It is believed that Lord Vishnu along with Goddess Lakshmi Devi and Lord Brahma reaches Brindavan. Therefore who ever performs pooja to Lord Vishnu on this day with whole hearted dedication and Bhakthi will be blessed with good health, wealth and prosperous life.

During Ksheera Sagara Mathanam (churning of milk ocean), many things erupts out such as Kamadhenu (cow), Kalpa vriksham, Iravatham (White elephant), Amrutam (nectar) and a woman appeared. This woman is none other than Goddess Lakshmi. Lord Vishnu married Goddess Lakshmi on this day which makes it an auspicious day.

In Karthik month, lighting lamps (diyas) is considered as tradition. There is a significance to light lamps on Dwadasi, Chathurdasi and Pournami days. The lighting of lamps on this day itself gives infinite punya (virtue) to everyone.

So, performing pooja to the Tulasi plant on this day is a very pure, divine good deed.

Legend and the Vrat Katha

Dharmaraja and his brothers lost their kingdom and went to reside in Dwaitavanam. At this time, the Sage Vyasa came to visit him. Dharmaraja cordially invited Vyasa, made him seat on a pedestal, spoke to him on various issues and then said as follows, "Swami! You know all Dharmas. There is no knowledge or wisdom that you do not know. Please tell me a way, by which all desires can be fulfilled". To this Vyasa replied, "Son! This is a good question.

Once upon a time Sage Narada posed the same question to Brahma deva, and the deva narrated him two desire fulfilling penances. Those are Ksheerabdi Dwadasi Vratam and Ksheerabdi Sayana Vrata. Let me narrate you the details of Ksheerabdi Dwadasi Vratam. Lord Vishnu vowed that on karthika sukla dwadasi, after sunset, He, along with Devi lakshmi will raise from the Ocean of Milk (Pala Samudram), and reside in Tulasi Pot (Brindavanam) along with all gods and sages. On that day, anyone who comes to Brindavanam, does pooja wholeheartedly to Lakshmi, Tulasi and Shree Vishnu, read or listen to Tulsai's story and give deepadanam will get rid of "all previous birth wrong doings, and wards off any ill luck and attain the Lords sanctity forever. Hence to get your desires fulfilled, you should perform this vratam".

Hearing this, Dharmaraja said to vyasa, "O Sage! Please let me know the way to do it", to this vyasa replied, "Dharmaraja! On Ekadasi, one must keep fasting and then read dwadasi parayanam, and in the evening, take bath, clean the area of tulasi pot, decorate with colorful rangavallis, do pooja with utmost reverence to the Lord residing at the root of the brindavanam - Tulasi plant, offer coconut, jaggery, dates, sugarcane and bananas as prasadam. Then offer tamboolams and neerajanam, along with mantra pushpam, then read or listen to the effectiveness of Deepadanam, offer deepadanam to a Brahmin along with sandalwood, flowers and fruits. Thus if one performs the pooja, one can get the result of their wishes.

Hearing this, Dharmaraja, requested Vyasa to tell him the effectiveness of deepadanam, to which he replied, "O Yudhishtir! Who can ever explain completely the greatness and effectiveness of deepadanam?"

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On karthika Suddha dwadasi one must give deepadanam at the Brindavan. One such danam will clear away all the evils. If one does 100, they will reach the Lord himself. When one light one wick, he will become knowledgeable, 2 wicks - he will become a king, 10 wicks will witness the Lord himself, 1000 wicks, he will be absorbed into the great divinity. If this is done at the bridavan, it will be as effective as doing it in Kurukshetra.

Cow ghee is the best to use, sesame oil comes second, honey will be the least choice, and other oils are not preferable. Cow ghee will grant wisdom and deliverance, sesame oil will give fame and wealth, mahua oil (Ippa nooney) will give physical comforts, wild tree oils will fulfill all desires, especially mustard oil, Avisa oil gets rid of enemies, castor oil will decrease longevity, buffalo ghee will decrease the goodness one acquired previously, If even a little of Cow ghee is mixed to any of the above, then the negative effect can be removed. Indra and others got their positions by doing these deepadanam. It is very effective. If one witnesses and enjoys the sight of deepams lit on a bridavan mantapam, even all evils will be rid for him. Those, who listen to the story of the effectiveness of deepadanam, will also attain deliverance".

Dharmaraja was overjoyed hearing this and requested Vyasa to tell him the greatness of Tulasi. Vyasa continued, "Even Brahma cannot completely explain the greatness of Tulasi. But listen to what he told Narada about the greatness of Tulasi. Whoever performs pooja to Tulasi during the month of Kartika will gain their place in heaven. If anyone does not do this pooja, at least on Utthaanadwadasi, they will be born as untouchables for the next crore birth. Those who grow a tulasi in their house will live in Vishnu loka - the count of the years equivalent to the number of roots of the plant. Those who bath with the water with tulasi leaves will reach vaikuntam, the abode of lord vishnu, at the end. Whoever grows many tulasi plants as a brindavanam will attain brahmatvam. Living in a house with a tulasi plant, growing a tulasi plant, wearing tulasi beads, eating tulasi leaves will get rid of all evils. The yama kinkaras (the soldiers of God of death, Yama) will never come near a tulasi plant.

There is a story about the pooja of tulasi, listen. Once, two Brahmins from Kashmir, named Harimedha and Sumedha, were on pilgrimage. On their way, they saw a garden of Tulasi plants. At once, Sumedha folded his hands and circumbulated around the plants. Seeing this, Harimedha asked the reason for his action. Sumedha took him to the shelter of a Banyan tree and told him Tulasi story as follows, "During the churning of the ocean of milk, many valuable things have originated from the ocean, like the kalpavriksha, Airawat and kamadhenu. Then Goddess Laxmi originated. Finally came out the nectar of immortality - Amrut. Holding the pitcher of amrut, Lord Vishnu shed tears of joy, from which was born Tulasi. Lord Vishnu accepted her as his consort. He made her sit in his lap and told her that she has the capability to purify the world. Tulasi is the favorite of the Lord Vishnu. Hence I bowed to her".

While the Brahmin was narrating the story, the Banyan tree suddenly split into two and from it evolved two divine looking men. Those two men bowed to the Brahmins saying, you are our fathers and our gods. Then the elder of them narrated their story as follows, "I am a resident of deva loka. My name is Asthika. Once when I was in a playful mood with beautiful apsaras in nandavanam, the garland from our bodies fell over a sage called Romasa, who was in deep meditation. This and the noise we made disturbed his meditation, so he cursed me, "You disturbed my mediation having lost your sense, so may you turn into a Brahmarakshasa (demon)". Since the women were in my control there, he forgave them. Frightened at such a baneful curse, I pleaded mercy to the Sage, for which he conceded and said, "The moment to you hear the greatness of Tulasi and Lord Vishnu, the curse will become ineffective". I was residing in this tree, as a demon all these days. With your sympathy, today I am freed of the curse". Then he also told the story of the other man, "Once upon a time, I was a Brahmin boy, studying at a gurukul. I committed a grave mistake for which my guru, teacher cursed me to be born as a brahmarakshasa. Since then we both were residing in this tree. On hearing the story of Tulasi, we are liberated". Saying this, both of them left. Surprised at the events, the Brahmins completed their pilgrimage, praising the greatness of Tulasi, on their way. Brahma narrated this story to Narada saying, anyone who listens to this story will be liberated from all evil", So, Dharmaraja! Whoever performs Ksheerabdi Vratam and listens to the story of Tulasi, will attain good positions".