

ŠRÎ SÂI LEELA

Šrî Shirdi Sai Bâbâ Temple

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March 2016

“The grace of God is like insurance. It will help you in you time of need without any limit”- Šrî Sâi Bâbâ.”

CALENDAR OF EVENTS - March 2016

Maha Sivaratri Celebrations - Mar 5th - Mar 7th

3 days sponsorship \$504

Mar 6 Sun Magha Krishna Trayodasi - P RADOSHAM

10am and 6.30 pm Ekavara Rudra Abhishekam \$36

Siva Archana \$18

Mar 7 Mon MAHA SIVARATRI

Mar 9th to April 7th Phalgunâ Masam

Mar 13th - Sun Daylight Savings time

Mar 14th Sun Meena Sankramanam

06.30 pm Veda Patanam \$21

Mar 20th Sun Phalgunâ Sukla Trayodasi - PRADOSHAM

10am and 6.30 pm Ekavara Rudra Abhishekam \$36

Siva Archana \$18

Mar 22nd Tue Phalgunâ Sukla Poornima HOLI

10.00 AM 360 Rudra Abhishekam \$54

10.30 am Sri Ruda Homam /1 lakh bilva archane \$126

11.00 am Satyanaryana Pooja \$54

Baba Archana \$11, Mahalakshmi Kumkuma Archana \$21

Mar 26th Sat Phalgunâ Krishna Phalgunâ Krishna Chaturthi

10.00 am Ganapathi Abhishekam \$54

11.00 am Ganapathi Homam \$126

06.30 pm GA kara sahasram \$36

UPCOMING EVENTS IN APRIL 2016

Apr 4th Mon - Phalgunâ Krishna Trayodasi - PRADOSHAM

Apr 5th Tue - Masa Sivarathri

Apr 6th Wed - Amavasya

Apr 7th Thur Durmukhi Nama Samvatsara UGADI

HINDU CALENDAR

Current Year of the Earth: 1,955,885,2016

Name of the Year: Sri Jaya / Sri Manmadha

Ayanam: Uttarayanam; Rutuvu: Sisira / Vasantha

Masa: till Mar 9th Phalgunâ till Apr 7th

Krishna's Niryanam (Kali Yuga): 5116

Gregorian Calendar A.D. 2016



Sri Maha Siva Ratri Celebration Saturday March 5th - Monday 7th

Mar 5th 2016, Sat Magha Krishna Ekadasi

8.00 am - 1.00 pm Mahanyasa Purvaka Ekadasi

Rudra Abhishekam to Shri Shirdi Sai Baba Moola Vighraha and Sri Sai Rudra Yagna Purnahuti \$252

06.30 pm Shiva Bilva Archana and Maha Prasadam

All are welcome to Participate and perform abhishekam to moola vighraha.

Mar 6th 2016, Sun BHANU PRADOSHAM

09.30 am Sri Shiva Parvati Kalyanam \$54

10.30 am and 6.30 pm Ekavara Rudra Abhishekam \$36

Siva Archana \$18

Mar 7th 2016, Mon MAHA SIVARATRI CELEBRATIONS

08.00 am Mahanyasa Parayana

09.30 am 360 Shiva Linga Abhishekam & Flower Service

11.00 am Sri Sai Rudra Homam

01.30 pm Alankaram & Arati

Lunch Prasadam

05.00 pm Rudra Trisathi

06.00 pm Bhajans and Sej Arathi

Dinner Prasadam

All are welcome to participate and get Baba's blessings!

MAHA SHIVARATRI



Maha Shivaratri is a Hindu festival celebrated annually in reverence of the god Shiva. It is the day Shiva was married to the goddess Parvati.

The Maha Shivaratri

festival, also popularly known as 'Shivaratri' (spelt as Sivaratri, Shivaratri, Sivarathri, and Shivarathri) or 'Great Night of Shiva', marks the convergence of Shiva and Shakti. Maha Shivaratri is celebrated on the Krishna Paksha Chaturdashi of Hindu calendar month Maagha as per Amavasya-ant month calculation. This year it has fallen on March 7th.

The festival is principally celebrated by offerings of Bael leaves to Shiva, all-day fasting and an all-night-vigil (jagaran). All through the day, devotees chant "Om Namah Shivaya", the sacred mantra of Shiva. Penances are performed in order to gain boons in the practice of Yoga and meditation, in order to reach life's highest good steadily and swiftly. On this day, the planetary positions in the Northern hemisphere act as potent catalysts to help a person raise his or her spiritual energy more easily. The benefits of powerful ancient Sanskrit mantras such as Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra increase greatly on this night.

On Maha Shivaratri, Nishita Kala is the ideal time to observe Shiva Pooja. Nishita Kala celebrates when Lord Shiva appeared on the Earth in the form of Linga. On this day, in all Shiva temples, the most auspicious Lingodbhava Puja is performed, **which is generally performed starting at midnight.**

The worship of Lord Shiva consists in offering flowers, Bilva leaves and other gifts on the Lingam, which is a symbol of Lord Shiva, and bathing it with milk, curd, ghee, honey, sugar,

coconut water, butter, and rose-water.

How Shiva got the NEELA KANTHA (blue throat)

According to a legend of Samudra manthan, Shiva saved the world from the disastrous effects of a poison that emerged as a by product of the churning of the sea (Samudra manthan), by consuming the whole of the poison. Shiva could arrest the poison in his throat by his Yogic powers and it didn't go down his throat. His neck turned blue due to the effect of the poison on his throat and henceforth he is also known as *Neela Kantha* or The Blue Throated.

Lord Shiva's favorite day

After earth's creation was complete, Parvati asked Lord Shiva which devotees and rituals pleased him the most. The Lord replied that the 14th night of the new moon, in the dark fortnight during the month of Phalgun, is his favorite day. Parvati repeated these words to Her friends, from whom the word spread to all creation.

The Story of King Chitrabhanu

Once upon a time King Chitrabhanu of the Ikshvaku dynasty, who ruled over the whole of Jambudvipa (India), was observing a fast with his wife, it being the day of Maha Shivaratri. The sage Ashtavakra came on a visit to the court of the king.

The sage asked the king the purpose of his observing the fast. King Chitrabhanu explained that he had a gift of remembering the incidents of his past birth, and in his previous life he had been a hunter in Varanasi and his name was Suswara. His only livelihood was to kill and sell birds and animals. The day before the new moon, while roaming through forests in search of animals, he saw a deer, but before his arrow flew he noticed the deer's family and their sadness at its impending death. So he let it live. He had still not caught anything when night fell, so he climbed a tree for shelter. It happened to be a Bael tree. His canteen leaked water, so he was both hungry and thirsty. These two torments kept him awake throughout the night, thinking of his poor wife and

children who were starving and anxiously awaiting his return. To pass the time, he engaged himself in plucking the Bael leaves and dropping them down onto the ground.

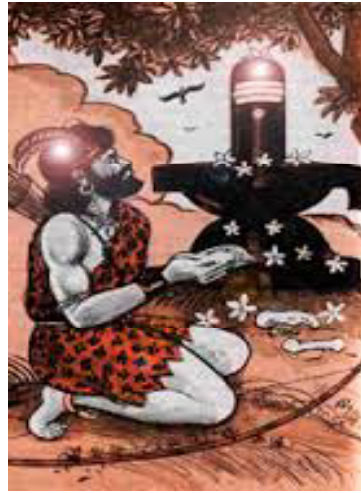
The next day he returned home and bought some food for himself and his family. The moment he was about to break his fast a stranger came to him, begging for food. He served the food first to stranger and only ate afterward.

At the time of his death, he saw two messengers of Lord Shiva, sent to conduct his soul to the abode of Shiva. He learnt then for the first time of the great merit he had earned by unconscious worship of Shiva during the night of Maha Shivaratri. The messengers told him that there had been a Lingam (a symbol for the worship of Shiva) at the bottom of the tree. The leaves he dropped from the Bael tree had fallen into the shape of a Lingam, in imitation of Shiva's ritual worship. The water from his leaky canteen had washed the Lingam (also a ritual action), and he had fasted all day and all night. Thus, he unconsciously had worshiped Lord Shiva. At the conclusion of the tale the King said that he had lived in the abode of the Shiva and enjoyed divine bliss for a long time before being reborn as Chitrabhanu. This story is narrated in the Garuda Purana.

Propagation of Maha Shivaratri

When creation had been completed, Shiva and Parvati had been living on the top of Kailas. Parvati asked: "O venerable God, which of the many rituals observed in They honour doth please Thee most?" Lord Shiva replied: "The thirteenth night of the new moon, Krishna Paksha, in the month of Magha(February–March) is known as Maha Shivaratri, My most favourable Tithi. My devotees give Me greater happiness by mere fasting than by ceremonial baths, and offerings of flowers, sweets, and incense.

"Just hear, My Beloved, of an episode which will give you an idea of the glory and power of this ritual," said Lord Shiva to Parvati.



“Once upon a time, there lived in the town of Varanasi a hunter. He was returning from the forest one evening with the game birds he had killed. He felt tired and sat at the foot of a tree to take some rest. He was soon overpowered by sleep. When he awoke, it was the thick

darkness of night. It was the night of Maha Shivaratri but he didn't know it. He climbed up the tree, tied his bundle of dead birds to a branch and sat up waiting for the dawn. The tree happened to be My favorite, the Bilva tree.

“There was a Lingam under that tree. He had plucked a few leaves and then dropped them down, accidentally forming the shape of a Lingam. The night-dew trickled down from his body. I was highly pleased with involuntary little gifts of the hunter. The day dawned and the hunter returned home.

“In time, the hunter fell ill and gave up his last breath. The messengers of Yama(Lord of Death) arrived at his bedside to carry his soul to Yamlok(abode of Yama). My messengers also went to the spot to take him to My abode. There was a vicious fight between Yama’s messengers and My messengers. The former were easily defeated. They reported the matter to Yama, Lord of Death. He arrived in person at the portals of My abode. Nandi gave him an idea of the sanctity of Maha Shivaratri and the love which I had for that hunter. Yama surrendered the hunter to Me and returned to his abode. Thereafter, Yama has pledged not to touch my devotees without my consent.

“The hunter was able to enter My abode and ward off death by simple fasting and the offering of a few Bilva leaves, even accidentally, because it was the night of Maha Shivaratri.

Such is the solemnity and sacredness associated with that night.”

Parvati was deeply impressed by the speech of Lord Shiva on the sanctity and glory of Maha Shivaratri. She repeated it to Her friends, who in their turn passed it on to the ruling princes on earth. Thus, the sanctity of Maha Shivaratri was broadcast all over the world.



With Baba’s help, anything is possible!

Baba can help us accomplish a great task in a fraction of time. At times it could take a few hours to make an impossible task possible. But we should not conclude that God does not exist

and should not stop our loving devotion to please Baba. Whatever we plead, Baba will never respond as, "nothing or not possible". He gives us an opportunity to discover and tap into our own potential. With complete faith in Baba, we must make our every little effort. In this attempt we understand that Baba is all-powerful and there is no work He cannot accomplish. We must only pray to Him with a pure heart to support our human effort.

It is with the blessings of Sri Ram that Hanuman could cross the vast ocean, which otherwise was an impossible task. Just by chanting Lord Rama's name, the monkey-army could easily lay a bridge across the great ocean. Likewise, Baba will bridge the two ends of the abyss and help us cross over to safety. This abyss might be in the form of fear, agony or even the sea of worldly life. Nothing is impossible to Baba's Will and He is capable of making the impossible, possible. When Baba is with us, our efforts will be crowned with success. We should not think that a particular work is impossible. Like a shadow, Baba will follow at every step of those who repose faith in Him.

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