

AKSHAYA TIRTEEYA

This Vrata falls on Vaishaka suddha triteeya. It is also known as Parasurama Jayanthi. Literally, “Akshaya” means “Imperishable” or “Everlasting”. Observance of this vrata is said to yield immense wealth. This usually falls on the third day of the growing phase of the moon (Sukla Paksha) in Vaisakha month according to the lunar calendar. Incidentally Asshaya Triteeya happens to be the concluding day of Gauri utsav which begins on Chaitra suddha triteeya. According to the legend, whatever, is done on this day multiplies in value and volume and ensures a lifetime of prosperity. Some people believe that this day is so auspicious that no bad periods like “Rahu Kala” and “Yama Kantaka” occur during this day.

Pooja Procedure : On this day, grains grown in greeshma ritu (summer), umbrella, pair of sandals, cow, gold and new clothes can be given. Udakumba (pot filled with water) dana is given away in honour of the forefathers.

Story of Akshaya Triteeya

Although many legends and stories are associated with this day, the well known story is that of Kuchela (also known by the name, Sudhama) a playmate of Lord Krishna, instantly catches our mind. Kuchela, not to exaggerate, was the poorest of the poor through most of his life. Stark poverty was staring at his face every moment and even after his marriage to Suseela, he fared no better. He had many children by her and life was a constant struggle. But there is a limit for everything. His wife, Suseela, had an idea. If her husband, Kuchela, could manage to visit his playmate, Lord Krishna at his palace, things may drastically change for the better. However, this idea did not catch up well with Kuchela. He began to mumble, “Krishna no doubt, was my playmate in my younger days and a close friend. But I have failed to keep up the bond of friendship. Would it be fair on my part to visit Him now and ask for help, when I am in dire straits?” So he argued.

However, he finally yielded to the pleas of his wife and children and agreed to visit Krishna at his palace. Suseela did not forget the custom of not going empty handed while paying even courtesy calls to our relatives and close friends. She packed up a handful of AVAL (Flakes of flattened rice, familiarly called ‘Pohe’ in Marathi) in a small cloth and asked her husband to carry it with him. When he visited his friend, “Considering Lord Krishna’s status this small bundle of Aval will be quite insignificant” so thought Kuchela, but that was all he could afford to take as a gift to his friend.

Kuchela aware of his limitations and the wide gulf in status, between him and Lord Krishna, was worried whether he would be able to see Krishna at all, with several guards and sentries around the palace, who may deny entry into the palace to a man like him in rags.

With trembling legs, profusely sweating Kuchela stood at the palace gates seeking entry and as expected he was denied entry. Sensing this, Lord Krishna, who came to know of this, rushed to the palace gates. Himself, saw Kuchela, his playmate, clasped him and welcomed him and took him to His bedroom inside the palace, made him sit by His side, hugged him and enquired, “Kuchela, you have not come to see me all these days. What happened to you? What have you brought for me?”

With trembling hands, Kuchela untied the cloth bundle containing Aval, which Lord Krishna snatched immediately from him and exclaimed, “Ah, Aval, I like it very much”, so saying he took a handful of Aval, put it into his mouth saying “Akshaya”.



Kuchela (Sudhama) offering 'Poha (rice flakes)' to Lord Sri Krishna

A miracle followed. The moment Lord Krishna uttered “Akshaya”, the dilapidated house of Kuchela was transformed into a palace, filled with all comforts and Kuchela’s wife and children dancing in happiness.

Yes, truly “Akshaya” means “always full, unending”. Such is the day, Akshaya Triteeya on which wealth overflows and prosperity reigns supreme. Not only should we desire prosperity and wealth but we should pledge to develop good thoughts too.

That Kuchela’s mental agony should abate was what Lord Krishna desired and the result, Kuchela’s poverty was rooted out.

So it is, that we believe that if we conduct ourselves in such a way as not to put others to agony, our efforts will bear fruit.