



श्री लक्ष्मी नारायण मन्दिर

Shri Luxmi Narayan Temple

An organisation dedicated to the dissemination of the teachings and practices of Sanathan Dharma

PBO NUMBER: 012 – 473

NPO NUMBER: 930 01120

SHRI LUXMI NARAYAN SANDESH ADHIK MAAS

In Sanathan Dharma the lunar calendar is followed. This lunar calendar operates differently from the solar calendar, which we are all familiar with. In August/September 2012, we will have an ADHIK MAAS. We foresee many questions, doubts and queries from the followers of the Hindu Dharma. We will therefore make an attempt in this article to explain as clearly as possible the difference between the lunar and solar calendars, as well as dispel our ignorance and doubts over the issue of Adhik Maas.

Prof Pandurang Vaman Kane (1974:662) informs us that Indians have been following the luni-solar calendar from ancient times, in the same way that the Babylonians, Chaldeans, Jews and the Chinese have been. The complication with regard to the calendar arises as a result of the difference between a solar and lunar year. The solar year is made up of 365 days and about 15 minutes, while the lunar year is made up of 354 days. Thus both the solar and lunar years have gaps of 11 days, 1 hour, 12 minutes and 48 seconds. (Shastri, 2001:2). So like the other ancient nations mentioned earlier, Indians (followers of Hindu Dharma) resorted to the device of Adhik Maas, or extra lunar month or intercalary month.

The gap between solar and lunar year is dealt with by the addition of a 13th month in the year. However, this 13th month, referred to by names such as Adhik Maas, Malamaas, Samsarpa, Amhaspati or Puroshotamamaas, occurs every 2 years, 8 months, 16 days and 96 minutes. (Vasishtha Siddhaanta and Jyotish Sastrasopana). Astrologically, Adhik Maas is a lunar month in which no SURYASANKRANTI takes place. Suryasankranti is the entry of the sun into a zodiac sign (rasi).

The intercalary month or Adhik Maas has been condemned from ancient times. According to the Taittiriya Samhita (Kane, 1974: 67) the 13th month is called Samsarpa or Amhaspati. The word amhas means sin in the Rg Veda. It is called Adhik Maas because it is an additional month. It is named Malamaas because this month is as it were the dirt or refuse of time.

Astrologically the 13th month is considered to be inauspicious. Indeed, even in western countries the number 13 is supposed to be unlucky. According to SS Shastri (2001:4), auspicious actions and other works of great importance are generally avoided in the 13th month. In particular, the performance of special Vratas (like Satyanarain Katha, Durga Saptashati, Luxmi Vrata), upanayan, wedding, entering into a new house (Griha Pravesh), commencement of a new building and mundan (shaving of hair of a new born baby) should

EKAM SATYA VIPRA BAHUDA VADANTI | Truth is one . . . Sages call it by many

BANKING DETAILS: ACCOUNT NO. 250 149 648, BANK: STANDARD BANK BRANCH:

CHATSWORTH, BRANCH CODE: 044126, CURRENT ACCOUNT

President: Dr LR Maharajh (0317062891), D.President: Mr AM Sewnarian (0314622698), Jt. Secretaries: Miss P Harriparsad (0314008492), Mr A Owthar (0314031431), Treasurer: Mr D H Gordhan (0315640904)



श्री लक्ष्मी नारायण मन्दिर

Shri Luxmi Narayan Temple

An organisation dedicated to the dissemination of
the teachings and practices of Sanathan Dharma

PBO NUMBER: 012 – 473 NPO NUMBER: 930 01120

be avoided during Adhik Maas. Dharma Sindhu and History of Dharma Shastra also support this.

Performance of daily routine prayer, Japa (repetition of the Lord's name), reading of scriptures, attending satsangh, ceremonies relating to birth (like Chatti) and death (Shraddha) should continue. Prof Kane (1974) asserts that one should continue with acts prescribed on certain occasions. Hence one should continue with the performance of funerary rites after a relative's death. As a general rule, one should perform obligatory acts in an intercalary month and no kaamya rite (a rite performed for securing some object or result) is to be performed in Adhik Maas.

Adhik Maas is said to be the month of Vishnu. Each month in the Hindu calendar has a particular deity attached to it. Since Adhik Maas is the 13th month in the year and there was no deity to assign to it, Lord Vishnu decided to attach himself to this month. This is why the 13th month is also referred to as Puroshotamamaas (Vishnu being called Puroshotama). Hence it is highly recommended that recitation of Srimad Bhagwad Purana and Bhagwad Gita be conducted during this month.

Even though many sankalps (resolutions) in our poojas include as an end to be achieved both fulfilment of material desires as well as attaining vaikuntha or golok, mankind runs the danger of becoming power drunk and ultimately sinful by obsessing over karma kaand rituals. Mankind runs the danger of placing too much emphasis on material satisfaction. However, for the devotee of the Lord, there is no greater and better month to aspire for liberation than the adhikmaas. Sri Krishna has renamed this month as Puroshotamamaas especially for aspiring devotees. Sri Krishna has offered a special concession for entry into golok during adhikmaas/ Puroshotamamaas. Simply by observing vrath, doing daily pooja, reading of Ramayana, Bhagavad Gita, chanting of holy names, attending daily satsangh as well as disengaging the mind from unnecessary material thoughts offers the devotee as easier passage to golok. Hence mankind is given an opportunity once every 27 to 36 months to de-stress by disengaging from material activities and engaging in activities that offer them ultimate bliss.

The issue of Adhik Maas has only recently been exposed to the Hindu public in South Africa. One could cite several reasons as to why this issue was not made public previously. However, Adhik Maas exists, and has existed for centuries. The dos and don'ts of Adhik Maas have been presented in this article. We leave it to the reader to decide what her appropriate action should be, as in Sanathan Dharma we take our cue from Bhagwan Sri Krishna who after presenting the Bhagwad Gita philosophy to Arjuna, left the final decision to Arjuna himself whether he should fight or not.



श्री लक्ष्मी नारायण मन्दिर

Shri Luxmi Narayan Temple

An organisation dedicated to the dissemination of the teachings and practices of Sanathan Dharma

PBO NUMBER: 012 – 473 NPO NUMBER: 930 01120

Summary of allowed and prohibited acts during adhikmaas

As a general rule all Naimittika (occasional pooja) and Kaamya acts (poojas performed with a definite material aim in mind) are prohibited. In our local context this prohibition will apply to the following poojas:

- Performance of sathyanarayan katha once a year
- Entry into another house for residing purposes
- Shaving of hair of a new born child (mundan)
- Upanayan
- Vivaha
- Thirtha yatra
- Murti staapna
- Buying a new car
- Anna praashan
- Naamkaran sanskaars
- Granting or accepting deeksha
- Commencement of house buildings/extensions

The following acts/poojas are allowed in adhikmaas:

- Garbhadaan Sanskar
- Punsavan Sanskaar
- Seemanth unnayan Sanskar
- Daily pooja
- Attending sathsangh

Poojas that are governed by definite time parameters or poojas that have to be performed according to natural time constraints or having to be compulsorily performed to avert life threatening events are not prohibited

Important Terminology

Sankranti

Transition/passing of sun from one zodiac sign to another.

Adhimaas/Adhikmaas

That month when the sun does not pass through a zodiac sign. The frequency of adhikmaas is once every 27 to 36 months.

Kshaymaas

That month when sun passes through 2 zodiac signs. The frequency of kshaymaas is once every 141 years. The last one was in 1983 and the next one will be in 2124.

Nitya Karma

Daily pooja

Naimittika Karma

Occasional pooja

Kaamya Karma

Poojas performed with a definite material aim in mind.

Prayaschit Karma

Poojas performed as a penance to atone for sins.



श्री लक्ष्मी नारायण मन्दिर

Shri Luxmi Narayan Temple

An organisation dedicated to the dissemination of
the teachings and practices of Sanathan Dharma

PBO NUMBER: 012 – 473 NPO NUMBER: 930 01120

Bibliography

Acharya Satyam Sharma Shastri 2001. Adhik Mass (Extra Lunar Month). Montagne-Blanche Village, Mauritius.

Dharma Sindhu Khemraj Shrikrishnadas, Shri Venkateshwar Press, Mumbai

Pandurang Vaman Kane 1974. History of Dharmasastra Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona

Kalyaan, Vratparvotsav-ank

Garuda Purana

Bhavishya Purana