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***We Dedicate this Sacred Treasure at the holy lotus feet of***

**Sriranga Mahaguru and SriMata**

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## **Transliteration followed in this book**

अ	आ	इ	ई	उ	ऊ	ऋ	ॠ	ऌ	ॡ	ए	ऐ	ओ	औ	अं	अः
a	ā	i	ī	u	ū	ṛ	ṝ	ḷ	ḹ	e	ai	o	au	am	ah
क	ख	ख	ग	ङ											
ka	kha	ga	gha	ṅa											
च	छ	ज	झ	ञ											
ca	cha	ja	jha	ña											
ट	ठ	ड	ढ	ण											
ṭa	ṭha	ḍa	ḍha	ṇa											
त	थ	द	ध	न											
ta	tha	da	dha	na											
प	फ	ब	भ	म											
pa	pha	ba	bha	ma											
य	र	ल	व	श	ष	स	ह								
ya	ra	la	va	śa	sha	sa	ha								

**Example:**

क	का	कि	की	कु	कू	कृ	कृ	क्लृ	के	कै	को	कौ	कं	कः
ka	kā	ki	kī	ku	kū	kṛ	kṛ	klṛ	ke	kai	ko	kau	kam	kah



## Utthānadvādaśī

### **The importance of Kārtikamāsa**

The most famous festival in the month of Kārtika is Utthānadvādaśī.

As is evident from the lines

“कार्तिके ज्ञानसिद्धिः स्यात्” कार्तिके तु कृता दीक्षा नृणां जन्मविमोचिनी”

the entire month of Kārtika is conducive to *jnānasiddhi* and *mantradīkshā svikāra*. And, as evident from

“ज्ञानं महेश्वरादिच्छेत्”, all the Mondays of this month are very dear to Lord Śiva who is renowned as the deity who bestows *jnāna*. Kārtika śukla navamī is the day stipulated to perform *Vishṇutrīrātra vrata*. Kārtika śukla Caturdaśī known as *Vaikunṭha Caturdaśī* is best for the worship of *vaikunṭha Nārāyaṇa*, and again well known as the day of installation of *Viśveśvara*, is

best for the worship of Śiva also. Kārtika pūrṇima known as the day of *Matsyāvatāra* is excellent for the worship of *Nārāyaṇa*, and, also known as the day of *Tripurotsava*, is excellent for the worship of Śiva. “पौर्णमास्यां तु सन्ध्यायां कर्तव्यस्त्रिपुरोत्सवः”

वरान् दत्त्वा यतो विष्णुर्मत्स्यरूप्यभवत्ततः।

तस्यां दत्तं हुतं जप्तं तदव्ययफलं भवेत्॥ (पाद्मकार्तिकमाहात्म्य)

There is also a custom of celebrating *dīpotsava* on Kārtika Amāvāsyā in some places. On Kārtika śuddha Ekādaśī, *Bhishmapañcaka vrata* is observed. This is the best month to wear the garland of beads made from the stem of *Tulasī*, after offering it to *Nārāyaṇa* and worshipping it.

निवेद्य केशवे मालां तुलसीकाष्ठसम्भवाम् ।

तुलसीकाष्ठसम्भूते माले कृष्णजनप्रिये॥

बिभर्मि त्वामहम् कण्ठे कुरु मां कृष्णवल्लभम्

Kārtika śuddha dvādaśī and pūrṇima also happen to be the holy *manvādis*. Thus, *utthāna dvādaśī* is the most renowned day in the month of Kārtika which again is excellent for *Sādhakās* of *Bhakti* and *jnāna*.

### **ii) The Name**

This day is called *Utthānadvādaśī*, and the day previous to it is called *Prabodhinī* or *Devotthāpinī* (in Hindi it is *Devathan* or *Diṭhavan*) *Ekādaśī*. *Utthāna* means getting up. Here it means waking up from sleep. This has come to be known as

*Utthānadvādaśī*, as it is the day on which Lord *Nārāyaṇa* quitting his sleep, shows the *Mudrā* of waking up to the devotees. *Prabodhana* means awakening. *Utthāpana* means waking up. The day on which devotees sing *Suprabhāta maṅgala* to the Lord and wake him up from sleep is *prabodhini* or *Utthāpini tithi*. This service of waking up is done on *Ekādaśī* by some, and on *dvādaśī* by some others. As it happens to be the day on which God gets up from his good sleep in the ocean of milk, it is also called "*Kshīrābdhivrata*."

### iii) When should this *vrata* be celebrated?

*Pāraṇa* should be done as a part of the festival on the day of *Kārtikaśuddhadvādaśī* when there is no *yoga* of the star *Revatī*. If such a day is not available, at least the fourth *pāda* of *Revatī* should be given up.

### Procedures for observance.

This *parva* is observed in different parts of the country in different ways, briefly and also in detail. The common features in all these are *Vishṇu pūja*, and the worshipping of *Tulasī* along with *Dhātrī* (the plant of gooseberry) and *Vishṇu*.

एकादश्यां तु शुक्लायां कार्तिके मासि केशवम् ।

प्रसुप्तं बोधयेद्रात्रौ श्रद्धाभक्तिसमन्वितः॥ (ब्राह्म)

पारणाहे पूर्वरात्रे घण्टादीन्वादयेन्मुहुः। (रामार्चनचन्द्रिका)

*Nirṇaya Sindhu* a treatise on *Dharmaśāstra*, renders the procedures of the *vratas* as follows:

*Ekādaśī vrata* should be observed on *Kārtikaśuddha Ekādaśī* and a *Kumbhadāna* should be done in the morning.

“प्रातर्दत्त्वा शुभान् कुम्भान् प्रयाति हरिमन्दिरम्”

If it is a *Monday* with *uttarāshāḍhānakshatra*, it is very auspicious. Some say that *Śrī Keśavasvamī* should be woken up on the night of *Ekādaśī* itself and some others say it should be done on *dvādaśī*. This can be observed as per the prevailing custom of the place.

Lord *Nārāyaṇa* should be woken up chanting “इदं विष्णुर्विचक्रमे.” Prayers of *Suprabhāta* to the Lord should be sung with the following *ślokas* -

ब्रह्मेन्द्र रुद्राग्नि कुबेर सूर्य सोमादिभिर्वन्दित वन्दनीय ।

बुद्ध्यस्व देवेश जगन्निवास मन्त्रप्रभावेण सुखेन देव ॥

इयं तु द्वादशी देव प्रबोधार्थं विनिर्मिता ।

त्वयैव सर्वलोकानां हितार्थं शेषशायिना ॥

उत्तिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ गोविन्द त्यज निद्राम् जगत्पते ।

त्वयि सुप्ते जगन्नाथ जगत्सुप्तम् भवेदिदम् ॥

उत्थिते चेष्टते सर्वं उत्तिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ माधव ।

उत्तिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ गोविन्द उत्तिष्ठ गरुडध्वज ।

उत्तिष्ठ कमलाकान्त त्रैलोक्यं मङ्गलम् कुरु ॥

गता मेघा वियच्चैव निर्मलं निर्मला दिशः ।

शारदानि च पुष्पाणि गृहाण मम केशव ॥

("O worshipful *Deveśa*, you are the one

worshipped by *Brahma*, *Indra*, *Rudra*, *Agni*, *Kubera*, *Sūrya*, *Soma* and other gods. Please wake up, O *Jagannivāsa*! please wake up pleasantly listening to the *mantras*. O *Śeṣhaśāyī*! you have created this *dvādaśī* for the well-being of all the people of the world and for your own awakening. O *Govinda*! please get up. Give up sleep. O! Lord of the world! if you sleep the whole world sleeps. If you wake up the world will be full of activity. You are the *caitanya* who causes the movement of the *Jaḍa*. O! *Lakshmīramaṇa*! Please get up, Clouds have vanished, the sky is clear. All the directions have become clear. Please accept these beautiful and fragrant flowers of this season of *Śaratkāla*). Then, in front of the Lord, the auspicious conclusion for *Cāturmāsya* must be performed.

"O Lord *Janārdana*! May the *Cāturmāsya* observed by me please you! May the deficiencies that have occurred in this (*vrata*) (get redeemed) and may (this *vrata*) become *Paripūrṇa*! by your grace.

इदम् व्रतम् मया देव कृतम् प्रीत्यै तव प्रभो।  
न्यूनं सम्पूर्णताम् यातु त्वत्प्रसादाज्जनार्दन॥

On the night of *Ekādaśī*, a blackgram sized golden idol of *Matsya* should be placed in a *kumbha*. After *pañcāmṛta abhisheka*, worship should be performed with *kuṅkuma kesari* and

*Pitāmbara*. All the ten *avatāras* such as *Matsya* should to be worshipped. Keeping awake in the night, all gods and *ācāryas* should be worshipped in the morning. “जगदादिर्जगद्रूपः जगदादिरनादिमान् । जगदाद्यो जगद्योनिः प्रीयतां मे जनार्दनः” ॥

("May Lord *Janārdana*, who is the prime cause of the world, who is *Jagadrūpa*, who has no beginning and who is the origin of the world be pleased with me.) With this prayer, he should be saluted and Brāhmins should be worshipped with the offering of *dakṣiṇā*.

"The king should install the woken up God in a chariot and take HIM in a procession, to the tune of music. He should gift those things which were chosen for the observance of *Niyamās* to Brāhmins along with *dakṣiṇā*, after informing them about those things.

चातुर्मास्यव्रतानां च समाप्तिः कार्तिके स्मृता (नारदीय)

कार्तिके शुक्लपक्षे तु द्वादश्यां तत्समापयेत् (महाभारत)

This *pūja* should be done even if *śukrā* has set. If the devotee is contracted by *aśauca*, the *pūja* should be gotten done by others.

In addition to this, *Dharmasindhu* tells us how to worship the God of Gods at the foot of the gooseberry tree.

"O *Dāmodara*, I prostrate before you. Please

accept *arghya* and grant us all our desires. Let my progeny be imperishable."

Then, with the *śloka*

अर्घ्यं गृहाण भगवन् सर्वकामप्रदो भव।  
अक्षया सन्ततिर्मेऽस्तु दामोदर नमोऽस्तु ते॥

*arghya* should be offered to the god of gods who is worshipped with *Shoḍaśopacāra pūjās*. *Dhātrī* (i.e. the gooseberry tree which is presided over by *Dhātrī devī*) should be worshiped with sandal paste and flowers etc, and *arcana* should be performed with the *Nāmaṇḍis* viz. *Dhātri*, *Śanti*, *Medhā*, *Prakṛti*, *Vishṇupatnī*, *Mahālakshmī*, *Ramyā*, *Kamalā*, *Indirā*, *Lokamātā*, *Kalyāṇī*, *Kamanīyā*, *Sāvitrī*, *Jagaddhatri*, *Gāyatrī*, *Sudhṛti*, *Avyaktā*, *Viśvarūpā*, *Surūpā* and *Abdhibhavā*. Then in the *prācīnāvīti* position, *pitṛtarpaṇa* should be done at the foot of the *Dhātrī* tree. The *mantra* for the *Tarpaṇa* is

पिता पितामहश्चान्ये अपुत्रा ये च गोत्रिणः।  
ते पिबन्तु मया दत्तं धात्रीमूलेऽक्षयम् पयः॥

Then a cord should be tied around that tree chanting the *śloka*:-

दामोदरनिवासिन्यै धात्र्यै देव्यै नमोस्तु ते।  
सूत्रेणानेन बध्नामि सर्वदेवनिवासिनीम्॥

"O *Devi*, you reside in all gods. *Dāmodara* resides in you and we offer our salutations to you. O *Dhātri*! I bind you with this *sūtra*."

There is a custom of performing *Tulasīvivāha* here, along with the celebration of the awakening of *MahāVishṇu*. *Shoḍaśopacāra pūjās* should be performed to *Śrī Bhagavān* and *Tulasī Devī*. Services should be offered to God with *Purushasūkta* and to *Śrī Tulasī* with *Śrī Sūkta* and other *ślokas*. The offering of *Maṅgalasnāna* and *haridrākunkumārpaṇa* to *Śrī Tulasī Devī* may be done by *Sumaṅgalis*. There is a custom of offering *pūja* to the Lord by chanting the *mantras* -“इदं विष्णुः, चरणं पवित्रम्” and *योजागार*”. An idol of *Śrī Kṛshṇa* is placed in front of *Śrī Tulasī Devī*, and a curtain is held between the two. The *Maṅgalāshṭaka ślokas* are recited and the *antarapata* is removed. Then *ādrākshatā* is sprinkled on both, and *Tulasī* is placed in the hands of *Damodara*, and chanting the *śloka*

देवीम् कनकसम्पन्नां कनकाभरणैर्युताम् ।  
दास्यामि विष्णवे तुभ्यम् ब्रह्मलोकजिगीषया ॥

(I am offering as *dāna* this *Tulasīdevī* who is full of gold and adorned with golden ornaments to you who is *Vishṇu* himself, for the attainment of *Brahmaloka*). She should be given as *dāna* with *Śobhanākshatā* and water. God should be requested with the words—

"May you accept this *Devī*" and then making *Tulasī* to touch the hand of God, the hymns of

marriage viz. - “क इदं कस्मा अदात्” etc should be recited?

"O *Tulasī Devi*, kindly stay on my left, on my right, in front of me and at my back. Let me attain *moksha* by offering you (in marriage to *Dāmodara*)"

त्वं देवि मेऽग्रतो भूयाः तुलसीदेवि पार्श्वतः।

देवि त्वं पृष्ठतो भूयाः त्वहानान्मोक्षमाप्नुयाम् ॥

Praying thus, *dakṣiṇās* should be offered for the virtuousness of *Dāna*. *Śanti sūkta* and *Vishṇu sūkta* should be chanted. Then *maṅgalārati* to *MahāVishṇu* with *Tulasī* should be performed, and the devotee should circumambulate four times with his retinue. Brāhmins should be offered *dakṣiṇā*, and with a *Saṅkalpa* they should be fed, in keeping with the ability (of the devotee).

There is also a *vidhi* which is observed as per the precepts in the *Brahmavaivarta purāṇa*. In that observance, a *Saṅkalpa* is made that *Shoḍaśopacāra pūja* will be offered to *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* along with *Tulasī* with the materials kept ready to one's ability, and the following are observed:— *Kalaśapūjā* and *Śrī Gaṇapati pūjā* are done and then *Praṇapratishṭā* is done in the idol and *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* with *Tulasī* is invoked and installed at the foot of the *Tulasī* plant. *Shoḍaśopacāra pūjās* are offered with

*Purushasūkta*, *Śrī Sūkta* and *Upacāra śloka*s. In the worship, *aṅgapūja* and *aṣṭottarapūjas* should be offered to *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* and *Śrī Tulasī*. (At the end) all these *karmas* should be offered to God and goddess.

Then *pūja* should be offered to *Dhātrīdevī* the presiding deity of gooseberry, *Śrī Tulasīdevī* and the presiding deity of the *Tulasī* plant, supposing them as the *Vibhutis* of *Lakṣmīdevī*. Other than offering them *pūjā* separately, they should be offered *pūja* along with *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* also.

There is also a custom of placing *Śrī Kṛṣṇa*'s idol between the *Tulasī* plant and the gooseberry stem that has fresh gooseberry fruits and worshipping it. It is excellent to light a lamp which is made by carving a cup in the gooseberry and filling it with cow's ghee. The practice of using gingelly oil is also there, when cow's ghee becomes unavailable.

There is also a custom of doing *pūjā* and *paranā* in the morning, and performing *Tulasī pūja* and *Tulasī vivāha* in the evening.

On the day of *Kārtika śuddha Ekādaśī*, *Bhīṣmapaṅcaka vrata* is observed for five days. One has to observe silence to do this *vrata* and Lord *Vishṇu* should be given a bath with *pañcāmṛta* and *pañcagavya*, and *pāyasa* should be

offered as *naivedya* and *dvādaśākshara mahāmantra* or *śaḍakshara mahāmantra* should be chanted. On all the five days one should observe *brahmacarya* and should eat food suitable for the sages, and *arghya* should be offered to *Bhīṣma*. The *mantra*

“सत्यव्रताय शुचये गाङ्गेयाय महात्मने । भीष्मायैतद्दाम्यर्घ्यं  
आजन्मब्रह्मचारिणे ॥ वैयाघ्रपद्य गोत्राय should be chanted and  
*tarpaṇa* should be offered in the *prācīnāvītī* position. As this *vrata* happens to fall on *utthānadvādaśī* also, it is included here. We would like to answer some important questions pertaining to this observance.

Question 1: The word *Utthānadvādaśī* means the *dvādaśītithi* on which Lord *Vishṇu* wakes up from sleep, and accordingly, the precept of singing the praise of *Suprabhāta maṅgala* for the Lord has been explained. If it is the day of waking up of God, it suggests that he was asleep earlier. Is this supposition correct?

Ans: Yes, it is correct. Only on the supposition that god adorns sleep for a period of four months called *Cāturmāsya*, this *suprabhāta* is sung on the above said day.

Question 2: If god were to be really asleep for four months like that, how does the activities of the

world go on? Isn't God the cause for all activities of the world?

Ans: There is no doubt that all the activities of nature go on at HIS instance and in HIS presidentship. In the present context, though God appears to be asleep for some reason, *Prakṛti Devī* herself, being bestowed with strength by HIM, and receiving HIS orders, can carry out all the activities of the world during that time. There is no contradiction in this.

Question 3: Let us agree that God bestows upon *Prakṛti* the strength and impulsion to carry out the work. But does God really sleep at that time is the question. During sleep we don't remember anything. No memory of decisions made before will be there. One can't know what is going on in the world. If God really sleeps, does he forget his responsibilities, the state of the world and other things?

Ans: It is not correct to compare divine sleep with the sleep of mortals. It is a special kind of sleep. The Lord, is ever vigilant in the protection of the world, though he sports the *mudrā* of sleep. That is why the devotees describe him thus:—

“निद्रामुद्रां निखिलजगतीरक्षणे जागरूकाम्”. There will be no forgetfulness in that sleep. No attachment, no



inertness and not an iota of ignorance. There are no *vikāras* also in his sleep.

न वै लेशेनापि प्रसरति तमो नात्र विकृतिः।

न मोहो नो जाड्यम्

In that sleep the body does not lose its lustre as is the case with mortals. His *divyamangala vighraha* keeps shining with incomparable beauty and charm. For this very reason, the *jnānis* have described that divine posture as “निद्रामुद्राभिरामम्”

In reality it is not a sleep caused by nature. It is only a posture of sleep taken by God by his own *Saṅkalpa*. If it were to be a real sleep, how could he be aware of the worship and prayer we offer at that time?

Question 4: Why should *Bhagavān* sport this posture of sleep?

Ans: The lord has to take to that posture also, as there are devotees of different tastes and different states of mind. Some devotees feel happy to see him in the sitting posture. Some feel happy to see him in the standing posture. Yet others take delight in seeing him in the sleeping posture. The Lord shows them the sleeping posture, only to shower grace on them.

भङ्गीभेदा भवतो ध्यानानन्दाय विविधभक्तानाम्

Question 5: Is there any proof in the *śāstras* to

state that he does not get inertia etc in the sleeping posture?

Ans: *Śāstra* is nothing but a delineation of the reality. It has to be understood by the experiences of the *jnānis*. The *Pāñcarātrāgama* describes the signifiante of that sleep as follows: The Lord is not affected by inertia even though he sports the sleeping posture. His sleep is not like the sleep of mortals whose minds get impure as they are overcome by nature. He is ever awake. He is omniscient, eternal, unborn and the supreme Lord. States like sleep etc are under his control and not the other way.

वासुदेवो जगन्नाथः क्रियार्थं स्वेच्छया द्विज।

सेवमानोऽपि तां निद्राम् जडतां न व्रजेत्प्रभुः॥

यथा प्राकृतिकस्मुप्तः कश्चिन्मलिनमानसः।

यतः प्रबुद्धः सर्वज्ञः नित्योऽजः परमेश्वरः।

तस्य निद्रादयो दोषाः सततं यान्ति वश्यताम् ॥

Question 6: Do *śāstras* state that he accepts *nidrā mudrā* to bless the devotees?

Ans: Yes, very clearly indeed. *Āgamaśāstra* makes us understand this through a story. The story is as follows: Long ago *yoganidrādevī* pleased God by performing a penance. She implored, “*Bhagavan*, please make me included in your person (body).” “Yes”, said the lord and looked at his own divine auspicious body. He had *Lakshmi* on his

*vakshsthala* and no place was there. The conch and the disc and others had adorned the arms. So no place was there. He thought of giving some space below his navel, but it was occupied by *Garuḍa* his vehicle. The head was adorned by the crown and the ear by the earrings. There was empty space only in the eyes. He said "come, you can happily stay here for four months." Thus he gave space to *Nidrādevī* in his eyes. She was thrilled with ecstasy and just obeyed the words of God.

पुरा तपःप्रभावेन तोषितो योगनिद्रया।

मामङ्गमानयस्वेति प्रार्थितो जगताम् पतिः॥

निरीक्ष्य चात्मनो देहे रुद्धं लक्ष्म्या उरःस्थलम् ।

देवस्य शङ्खचक्रादयैः बाहवस्सु विभूषिताः॥

अधो नाभेर्निरुद्धं च वैनतेयेन पक्षिणा।

मुकुटेन शिरो रुद्धं कुण्डलाभ्यां श्रवोर्युगम् ॥

ततो ददौ तु सन्तुष्टो नेत्रयोः स्थानमादरात्।

चतुरो वार्षिकान्मासान् वासं प्रीता भविष्यसि॥

योगनिद्रापि तद्वाक्यं श्रुत्वा हृष्टतनूरुहा।

चकार लोचनावासमत्यर्थं शार्ङ्गधन्वनः॥

In this way God blesses *Yoganidrādevī* for four months and then blesses *Jāgradavasthādevī* on the day of *Utthānadvāśī*. He blesses the devotees to offer the *suprabhāta seva* also, say the *purāṇas* and *Itihāsas*. Our National poet *Kālidāsa* also indicates this in his work *Meghasandēśa*.

शापान्तो मे भुजगशयनादुत्थिते शार्ङ्गपाणौ

Question 7: Why should the Lord choose those four months only for the *yoganidrā mudrā*?

Ans: Those four months come in the rainy season. Nature will not be conducive to external activities like travel etc. Nature will not be friendly for journey of universal conquests. It is not easy to engage oneself in farming, trade and commerce. Even the daily travel of *Sanyāsis* is also not easy. It is said that swans find it very difficult to live in this climate and they migrate to the lake *Mānasa* which is their abode. In the same way, it is the right time *Hamsas* and *Praṇahamsa sanyāsis* to stop their external journey, and to enter their *mānasa* (heart) *sarovara* and experience *yoganidrā*. It is the time for the people of all *āśramas* to have rest. So this time is earmarked for them to suspend most of their external activities and engage themselves in *pūjā* and *dhyāna*, and obtain peace in God. As God adorns *Yoganidrā* at that time, it facilitates others also to obtain a divine state by meditating upon him and worshipping him.

If one cannot afford to be in the state of rest for all the four months fully, he should rest at least for the first two months when rains are heavy, and the Lord sleeping in *Yoganidrā* should be worshipped. (A devotee) should sleep along with Him and wake up with Him. When the Lord goes to sleep, the whole world sleeps and when He wakes up, the

world also wakes up. When He is asleep, we should also restrain our senses and try to have *yoganidrā* like Him. We should practice *Yama*, *niyama* and *Samyama*, and accumulate spiritual power. During that period no celebrations such as *cūḍākarma*, *Vratibandha*, *devatāpratishṭhā*, *Upanayana* and *Vivāha* should be performed. Only the inner activities such as meditation and worship should be attended to. After *Suprabhāta* is offered to God, and after getting his permission, outward activities conforming to His *Satyakāma* and *Satyasaṅkalpa* should be begun. Thus, for the sake of the good of his devotees only, God assumes *Yoganidrā* in that distinguished period, and, opening his eyes blossomed like a beautiful flower he blesses the devotees, the *śāstras* say—

सुप्ते त्वयि जगन्नाथ जगत्सुप्तं भवेदिदम्।  
 प्रबुद्धे त्वयि बुद्ध्येत जगत्सर्वं चराचरम्॥  
 तस्यैवाग्रे स्वयं वाचा गृहणीयान्नियामान्नरः।  
 चतुरो वार्षिकान्मासान् देवस्योत्थापनावधि॥  
 निद्रादिदोषरहिते प्रसुप्ते ह्यच्युतेऽमले।  
 निर्वर्तन्ते क्रियास्सर्वाः चातुर्वर्ण्यस्य सर्वशः॥  
 विवाहव्रतबन्धादि चूडासंस्कारदीक्षणम्।  
 यज्ञो गृहप्रवेशादि गोदानार्चाप्रतिष्ठनम्॥  
 पुण्यानि यानि कर्माणि वर्जयेद्दक्षिणायने।  
 त्वयि प्रबुद्धे देवेश तवाग्रे परमेश्वर॥  
 लौकिकानीह यज्ञानि तानि निर्वर्तयाम्यहम्।

योगनिद्रां निषेवस्व देव मासचतुष्टयम्॥

सर्वलोकहितार्थाय कृतार्थी कुरु नः प्रभो।

Question 8: On the day of *Utthānadvādaśī*, the Lord is offered a garland of gooseberries. People plant and worship that tree. They pour cow's ghee into its cup, and light the lamps. They do *dīpadāna*. They take bath after applying (crushed) gooseberries to the body or water mixed with the pulp gooseberries. Preparing *Nellichettu* out of it, they offer it to God as *Naivedya* and consume it First just after *Praṇāhuti* during the meal.

Why so much of importance is given to gooseberry?

Ans: Gooseberry is highly valued as it is endowed with many great qualities. It is a very great substance when viewed from the *ādhībhautika*, *ādhidaivika* and *ādhyātmika* angles also. The very names viz., *Śrīphalā*, *dhātrī*, *āmalakī*, *amṛta*, *Śivā*, *śāntā*, *vṛshyā* and *rocanī* sing its glory. It is a true form of *Śrī* Devi and it blesses the devotee with fortunes. It is *Brahmaśakti svarūpiṇi*, and is considered a mother who bears and nourishes. It is born of pure water and it's sourness is most pure. It provides *amṛtattva*. It is auspicious. Causes calmness. It helps in enhancing virility, and is tasty—These are the respective meanings.

Question 9: The names are beautiful. How do *śāstras* describe it's glory?

Ans: The *śāstras* declare that it's glory is beyond description and give a brief account of it as follows:

"*Dhātri* in the real sense of the word, is a nurse (ie. A mother who bears and nourishes) to human beings. It has a motherly affection towards human beings. The consumption of its juice enhances the life span of a person. Taking a bath with it causes the accumulation of *dharma*. It destroys *Alakshmī* (poverty) and blesses with *Moksha* at the end. Taking a bath with it helps in crossing the hurdles. It has all the great qualities of *Tulasī* and *bilva*.

धात्री वत्स नृणां धात्री मातृवत्कुरुते दयाम्।  
दद्यादायुः पयःपानात् स्नानाद्वै धर्मसञ्चयम्॥  
अलक्ष्मीनाशनम् सद्योऽप्यन्ते निर्वाणमेव च।  
विघ्नानि नैव जायन्ते धात्रीस्नानेन वै नृणाम्॥  
बिल्वस्य च तुलस्याश्च ये गुणाः कथितास्सखि।  
ते ते गुणास्सर्व एव आमलक्यां समाहिताः॥

O *Āmalakī Devi*, you are adorned with row of leaves and others. I prostrate before you. You are dear to both *Śiva* and *Vishṇu*. You are full of wealth and your lustre is beautiful.

नमाम्यामलकीं देवीं पत्रमालाद्यलङ्कृताम्।  
शिवविष्णुप्रियां देवीम् श्रीमतीं सुन्दरप्रभाम्॥

All the three i.e. *Brahma*, *Vishṇu* and *Śiva* dwell in gooseberry. Therefore it should to be respected and worshipped. It should be revered. It is should be made famous. She is the one who blesses us with supreme bliss.

ब्रह्मविष्णुशिवाश्चापि तत्राधिष्ठानमाश्रिताः।

जाता ह्यामलकी देवी परमानन्ददायिनी॥

मान्या ख्याप्या च पूज्या च प्रणन्तव्या सखी त्वियम्''

She is dear to all *devas*, especially to *Nārāyaṇa*.

“सर्वदेवप्रिया ज्ञेया विष्णोश्चैव विशेषतः” (बृहद्धर्मपुराण. 12)

That she is dear to both *Śiva* and *Vishṇu* is elaborated in the same *purāṇa* (canto 12) in the form of a story as follows:-

To the question which tree is dear to both *Śiva* and *Vishṇu* that is equivalent to *Tulasī* and *Bilva*, *Pārvatī* the mother of the universe said. "There is only one tree which is very dear to both *Śiva* and *Vishṇu* in virtuousness just as *Tulasī* and *Bilva* are dear to them. It is *Āmalakī*. Both myself and *Śrī Lakshmī* brought it up. Once, during a pilgrimage, myself and *Lakshmī* and all the deities had assembled in the holy place of *Prabhāsa*. Both of us desired to worship God together. I wanted to worship *Nārāyaṇa* and *Lakshmī* wanted to worship *Śambhu*. I told *Lakshmi* "O *Samudra putri*, I want to worship

*Nārāyaṇa* with an object created by me. *Lakshmi* with a choked voice said "I too have a similar wish. "I would like to worship *Śiva* (three eyes) with an object I have created," Then tear drops rolled down from the eyes of both of us and fell on earth and a plant sprouted (at that spot), and that plant came to be known as *Āmalakī*. 'Ka' means water and *amala* means pure (in Sanskrit) and the one born from that (pure water) is *Āmalakī*. Then I worshipped Lord *Nārāyaṇa* with that in the presence of all the deities and sages, and *Lakshmi* worshipped *Śambhu*. Then proclamation of victory occurred from the earth. Abundant amount of flowers rained from heavens and the sound of conch was also heard.

उक्तस्त्वया महेशानि तुलसी बिल्वसम्भवः।

अनयोस्तुल्य एकः कः शिवविष्णुप्रियस्तरुः॥

अस्ति बिल्वतुलसीतरुतुल्यः पुण्य एक उत विष्णुशिवाहः।

नामतोऽमलक इत्यपि सख्यौ रोपितः कमलयाद्य मयापि॥

कदाचिद्देवयात्रायां प्रभासे पुण्यतीर्थके।

तत्राहं च स्वयं लक्ष्मीरेकस्थाने समागते॥

सर्वे देवाः समायाता दिने पुण्ये च कुत्रचित्।

तत्रावयोर्मतिर्जाता शिवविष्णुप्रपूजने॥

अहम् श्रियमवोचञ्च सामुद्रि शृणु मे मतिम्।

स्वकल्पितेन द्रव्येण पूजयेयं हरिम् प्रभुम् ॥

मामुवाच ततो लक्ष्मीर्गद्गदाक्षरभाषिणी।

ममाप्येवं मतिर्जाता त्वमवोचः स्वयम् यथा॥

स्वकल्पितेन द्रव्येण पूजयेऽहं त्रिलोचनम्।

सजये विजये देवि नावेवं भूतयोस्तदा॥

नयनेषु सुजातानि अमलाश्रुजलानि च।

जाता नौ नयनेभ्यश्च निपेतुर्भुवि हे सखि॥

ख्याता चामलकी नाम्ना जाता कादमलाद्यतः।

अथ सर्वसुराणां च मुनीनां च तदाग्रतः।

मया सम्पूजितः कृष्णः श्रीश्च शम्भुमपूजयत्।

तदा जयजयध्वानो बभूव क्षितिमण्डले॥

आकाशे पुष्पवृष्टिश्च शङ्खशब्दाश्च पुष्कलाः।

ब्रह्मविष्णुशिवाश्चापि तत्राधिष्ठानमागताः॥

जाता ह्यामलकी देवी परमानन्ददायिनी।

मान्या ख्याप्या च पूज्या च प्रणन्तव्या सखी त्वियम् ॥

How did this holy tree come to be called "*Dhātrī*?" The same *purāṇa* says that *Āmalakīdevī* experienced happiness because *Gaurī* and *Lakshmi* performed the *pūjas* of *Vishṇu* and *Śiva*, using her (i.e. *Āmalakī*) and also because of the *jayajayakāra*, the blowing of the conch and the rain of flowers that occurred at that time. And so, she came to be called *Dhātrī*.

दृष्ट्वा ह्यामलकी देवी दधारानन्दमुत्तमम्।

तेन धात्रीति नाम्नापि राजत्यामलकी शुभा॥

"The consorts of the trinity threw three seeds to wake up *Śrī Vishṇu*. From the seed thrown by

*Dhātrī* (i.e. *Brahma's* consort *Sarasvatī*) *Dhātrī* was born. From the seed thrown by *Ramādevī*, *Mālatī* was born and from the seed thrown by *Gaurī*, *Tulasī* was born" says *Śivapurāṇa*.

धात्रुद्भवा स्मृता धात्री माभवा मालती स्मृता।

गौरीभवा च तुलसी तमस्सत्त्वरजोगुणाः।

तं चापि तुलसी धात्री रागेनैवावलोकताम् ॥ (रुद्रखण्ड अध्याय 26)

The etymology of the word *Dhātrī* is also stated as, "the one by which all the *purushārthas* are preserved and sustained"

“धीयन्ते पुरुषार्था अनया इति धात्री”

"Lord *Vishṇu* gets supremely pleased if he is worshipped using *Dhātrī* and *Tulasī* on the day of *Ekādaśī*. One who wants to acquire wealth especially, should apply *Dhātrī* on his body and bathe."-declares the *Garuḍa purāṇa*.

तुष्यत्यामलकैर्विष्णुरेकादश्यां विशेषतः।

श्रीकामः सर्वदा स्नानं कुर्वीतामलकैर्नरः॥ (गरुडपुराण अध्याय 2215)

Question 10: The story of gooseberry narrated in the *purāṇas* is very interesting indeed. It is in the form of a praise. It states that gooseberry is a highly nourishing food rich with all vitamins, keeps *Tridoshas* under check, subdues *vāta* and *pitta*, increases the vital power and cures blood related deficiencies, tiredness, dropsy and ailments related to tension. All this can be accepted because medical

science also endorses that, and can be actually experienced also. Isn't the rest a mere flattery?

Ans: No, not at all. They are not just praises. Every word written there is true. Just as it cures a number of physical ailments, it is beneficial in the spheres of *ādhidaivika* and *Ādhyātmika* also.

If one receives it as *Prasāda* after offering it to the divine forms viz., *Śiva* and *Vishṇu*, those gods will be pleased by that. By consuming it and using it in taking a bath, centers which are helpful for the meditation of those deities blossom, and facilitate the accomplishment of the desires by *upāsana*. Consuming of gooseberry removes the *samskāras* related to deficiencies of virtues, intelligence riches and health. As it causes *dhātusāmya* in the dispositions, its consumption helps to secure *yoga samādhi* and *moksha*, as said earlier in the words “अन्ते निर्वाणमेव च”. Because of the imbalance of *Dhātus* alone, distraction and fickleness are caused in one's nature. When a perfect coordination of them is achieved, *samādhi siddhi* and *daivasākshātkāra* become possible.

“धातुप्रसादान्महिमानमीशं ॥

This does not mean that all those who consume gooseberry attain *moksha*. The purport is, it will be helpful for the *Sādhakas* in the visualization of God, if it is consumed as recommended.

The fact that the imbalances created as a result of fasting on the previous day i.e. *Ekādaśī* would be set right by consuming gooseberry the next day (i.e. *dvādaśī*), is established by experience. It will be highly beneficial if it is consumed with the attitude of *Prasāda* after worship. That is why the custom of desisting from eating it before *Utthānadvādaśī* even if it is available in the trees, and as a rule, having it on *Utthānadvādaśī* only after the worship as a rule, is in vogue.

If we consider the details given above, it is clear that consumption of gooseberry has profitable effects in the *ādhibhautika*, *ādhidaivika* and *ādhyātmika* spheres and grants all four fold values of life.

Question 11: Let us consume gooseberry, If is fine. But why should we worship the gooseberry tree?

Ans: *Pūjā* is not offered to the gooseberry tree, but to the deity who resides thereby with the tree as a medium. It is for this very reason that nothing is mentioned about its leaves, bark, colour, taste or the like in its worship, but only described by names such as *Dhātri*, *Jagaddhātri*, Mother of the world, *Kamalā*, *Lakshmī* etc. This *devata* has a specific form, dress, ornaments and *mudrās*. She wears

white clothes. She rides on a swan. Her hands sport a rosary and *jnānamudrās*. She has a book and a lotus in her hands. This is the description of the deity *Dhātrī* found in the *Āgamas*.

Question 12: Why should *Tulasī* also be worshiped along with *Dhātri*?

Ans: Both are indeed the representatives of *Jaganmātā*. They are equal in their qualities and *yogamahimā*. This has been explained earlier. If both of these are placed side by side and the image of the Lord is placed in between them and worshipped, exceptional benefit of the *purushārthās* is obtained.

Question 13: Why should the lamp in a gooseberry container be lighted on that day using cow's ghee?

Ans: Gooseberry itself has extraordinary powers. Cow's ghee also has the power of granting *purushārthās*. Cow's ghee helps in the accomplishment of *jnāna* and *moksha*. (Gingley oil also causes wealth and fame and helps one to get over difficulties.)

गोघृतं ज्ञानसिद्ध्यर्थं मोक्षसिद्ध्यर्थमेव च।

सम्पदर्थं यशोऽर्थं च तैलं पीडानिवारकम् ॥

In this way a lamp lighted with the *yoga* of glorious gooseberry and cow's ghee has holiness in it. Even the sight of it, meditation upon it and its

smell-all of these redeem sins, ward off torments and facilitate the accomplishment of knowledge. Even the wind that passes around the *āmalakī* tree cures diseases. Thus, it is most appropriate to specially worship the gooseberry tree on *Utthānadvādaśī*, which removes difficulties and brings about happiness.

