

= Kalpavriksha =

Kalpavriksha (Devanagari : कल्पवृक्ष) , also known as kalpataru , kalpadruma or kalpapadapa , is a wish @-@ fulfilling divine tree in Hindu mythology . It is mentioned in Sanskrit literature from the earliest sources . It is also a popular theme in Jain cosmology and Buddhism . Sage Durvasa and Adi Shankaracharya , meditated under the Kalpavriksha . The birth of Ashokasundari , the daughter of Shiva and Parvati , is attributed to the Kalpavriksha tree . Another daughter Aranyani was also gifted to Kalpavriksha for safekeeping .

The Kalpavriksha originated during the Samudra manthan or " churning of the ocean of milk " along with the Kamadhenu , the divine cow providing for all needs . The king of the gods , Indra , returned with this tree to his paradise .

Kalpavriksha is also identified with many trees such as Parijata (Erythrina variegata) , Ficus benghalensis , coconut tree (Cocos nucifera) , Madhuca longifolia , Prosopis cineraria , Bassia butyracea , and mulberry tree (Morus nigra tree) . The tree is also extolled in iconography and literature .

= = Religious beliefs = =

Kalpavriksha is an artistic and literary theme common to the Hindu Bhagavatas , the Jains and the Buddhists .

= = = In Hinduism = = =

Kalpavriksha , the tree of life , also meaning " World Tree " finds mention in the Vedic scriptures . In the earliest account of the Samudra manthan or " churning of the ocean of milk " Kalpavriksha emerged from the primal waters during the ocean churning process along with Kamadhenu , the divine cow that bestows all needs . The tree is also said to be the Milky way or the birthplace of the stars Sirius . The king of the gods , Indra returned with this Kalpavriksha to his abode , the paradise and planted it there . Tree also finds mention in the Sanskrit text M?n?sara , part of Shilpa Shastras. Another myth says that Kalpavriksha was located on earth and was transported to Indra 's abode after people started misusing it by wishing evil and wrong things . In Indra 's " Devaloka " it is said that there are five Kalpavrikshas , which are called Mandana , Parijata , Santana , Kalpavriksha and Harichandana , all of which fulfill various wishes . Kalpavriksha , in particular , is said to be planted at Mt . Meru peak in the middle of Indra 's five paradise gardens . It is on account of these wish @-@ granting trees that the asuras waged a perpetual war with the devas as the heavenly gods who exclusively benefited freely from the " divine flowers and fruits " from the Kalpavriksha , whereas the demigods lived comparatively in penury at the lower part of its " trunk and roots " . The Parijata is often identified with its terrestrial counterpart , the Indian coral tree (Erythrina indica) , but is most often depicted like a magnolia or frangipani (Sanskrit : champaka) tree . It is described as having roots made of gold , a silver midriff , lapislazuli boughs , coral leaves , pearl flower , gemstone buds , and diamond fruit . It is also said that Ashokasundari was created from a Kalpavriksha tree to provide relief to Parvati from her loneliness .

In Hindu mythology Shiva and Parvati after much painful discussions while parting with their daughter Aranyani gave her away to the divine Kalpavriksha for safe keeping when the demon Andhakasura waged war . Parvati requested Kalpavriksha to bring up her daughter with " safety , wisdom , health and happiness , " and to make her Vana Devi , the protector of forests .

= = = In Jainism = = =

Kalpavrikshas are wish @-@ granting trees which fulfill the desires of people in initial stages of worldly cycle as per Jain Cosmology . In initial times children are born in pairs (boy and girl) and don 't do any karma . There are 10 Kalpavrikshas which grant 10 distinct wishes such as an abode to reside , garments , utensils , nourishment including fruits and sweets , pleasant music ,

ornaments , fragrant flowers , shining lamps and a radiant light at night .

According to Jain cosmology , in the three Aras (unequal periods) of the descending arc (Avasarpini) , Kalpavriksha has provided all that was needed , but towards the end of the third ara , the yield from them diminished . Eight types of these trees are described in some texts , each of which provided different objects . Thus from the " Madyanga tree " delicious and nutritious drinks could be obtained ; from the " Bhojananga " , delicious food ; from " yotiranga " , light more radiant than the sun and the moon ; while from " Dopanga " came indoor light . Other trees provided homes , musical devices , table ware , fine garments , wreaths and scents .

The Tiloya Panatti give the following list : Pananga , Turiyanga , Bhusananga , Vatthanga , Bhojanga , Alayanga , Diviyanga , Bhayananga , Malanga , Tejanga with excellent drinks , music , ornaments , garments , edibles and ready @-@ made dishes , mansions to live in , lamps , utensils and garlands of flowers respectively while the last type , namely Tejanga , seems to be self @-@ luminous , serving the purpose of heavenly luminaries .

= = = In Buddhism = = =

In Buddhism a small wish granting tree is depicted decorating the upper part of the " long @-@ life vase " held by " longevity deities " like Amitayus and Ushnishavijaya . The goddess Shramana devi holds jeweled branch of Kalpavriksha in her left hand .

Worship of the Nyagrodha tree as a form of non @-@ human worship is depicted in a Buddhist sculpture at Besnagar . This sculpture in Besnagar , also known as Vidisa (Bhilsa) , is dated to third century BC and is exhibited in the Calcutta Museum .

In Myanmar , where Theravada Buddhism is practiced , the significance of the Kalpavriksha is in the form of an annual ritual known as Kathina (presenting a robe) in which the laity present gifts to the monks in the form of money trees .

= = Identification with other trees = =

In different states of India some trees are specifically referred to as the Kalpavriksha . These are stated below .

The banyan tree (*Ficus benghalensis*) , also called Nyagrodha tree , which grows throughout the country is referred to as Kalpavriksha or Kaplaptaru because of its ability to amply provide for human needs .

The coconut tree (*Cocos nucifera*) found in most regions of the country is called " Kalpavriksha " , as every part of it is useful in one way or the other . The coconut water inside the nut is a delicious drink . In dried form it is called copra and is used to manufacture oil . The coconut husk , called coir , is used to make rope . Leaves are used to make huts , fans , mats . Palm sugar is made from budding flower . The dried midrib is used to make boats .

Ashwatha tree (sacred fig tree) is also known as Kalpavriksha where the deities and Brahma are stated to reside , and it is where sage Narada taught the rishis on the procedure for worshipping the tree and its usefulness .

Mahua tree (*Madhuca longifolia*) holds an important place in the day @-@ to @-@ day life of the tribal people . It is like the Kalpavriksha wish tree called madhu (*Madhuca indica*) .

Shami tree (*Prosopis cineraria*) , found in desert areas of the country , called in local dialect as khejari or jaant is called Kalpavriksha . In Rajasthan desert area its roots go deep to a depth of 17 ? 25 metres (56 ? 82 ft) . This checks the erosion of the sandy soil of the desert . For this reason the tree stays green even drought conditions of weather . People of Rajasthan hence regard this tree as Kalpavriksha , because at the time of drought when no grass or fodder is found anywhere the animals are able to sustain by eating its green leaves .

Chyur tree in the high altitudes of the Himalayas growing at an altitude between 500 to 1000 m , known as the Indian butter tree (*Diploknema butyracea*) , is called a Kalpavriksha , or tree of paradise by the people of the mountainous region as it yields honey , jaggery and ghee . It is in the shape of an umbrella .

In Joshimath in Uttarakhand a mulberry tree , which is said to be 2400 years old , is renowned and revered as the Kalpavriksha as it was the location where , in the 8th century , Adi Sankaracharya did " penance " under the tree as he considered it an incarnation of Lord Shiva . It is also believed that sage Durvasa meditated under this tree , in Urgan . The mountain slopes of Kailasa are stated to have a profusion of Kalpavrikshas .

At Mangaliyawas near Ajmer , Rajasthan , there are two revered trees (Male and Female) which are more than 800 years old , known as Kalpavrikshas . They are worshipped on an Amavasya day in the Hindu month of Shraavana .

In Tamil Nadu 's culture , tala (Borassus flabellifer) a variety of Palmyra palm (Borassus) , also known as toddy , is referred to as Kalpataru as all its parts have a use . This tree is also native to Asia and South East Asia , has normally a life span of 100 years , grows up to 20 metres (66 ft) height ; its leaves in the shape of a fan are rough texture . The leaves were used for writing in the ancient times .

In the Harivansh Puraan , the Parijata , baobab tree , is called a Kalpavriksha , or wish bearing tree , which apart from the village of Kintoor , near Barabanki , Uttar Pradesh , is only found in heaven . The tree has mythological link with prince Arjuna of the Pandava clan who is said to have brought it from heaven . His mother Kunti after whom the village Kintoor is named used to offer flowers from this tree to worship Lord Shiva . It is also said that Lord Krishna brought this tree from heaven to please his wife Satyabhama .

Kalpalatha is another wish fulfilling tree , a creeper , which was extolled during the later part of the Aryan period . It is said that a person standing below this tree would be blessed with beautiful ornaments , dresses and even unmarried girls .

= = In iconography = =

In iconography , Kalpavriksha , the wish @-@ fulfilling tree , is painted within a picture of a landscape , decorated with flowers , silks , and suspended with jewelry . It is a pattern which has a prominent symbolic meaning . Ornamental Kalpavriksha design was a feature that was adopted on the reverse of the coins and sculptures in the Gupta period .

Kalpavriksha is also dated to the Dharmachakra period of Buddhism . The paintings of this period depicting the tree with various branches and leaves have a female figure painted on its top part . The female figure is painted from waist upwards holding a bowl in her hand . Similar depiction of female figure with tree representing it as presiding deity was a notable feature during the Sunga period as seen in the image of " Salabhanvika " in the railing pillars .

In most paintings of Kalpavriksha Shiva and Parvati are a common feature . It forms a canopy over Shiva . In one painting Parvati is paying obeisance to Lord Shiva with her hands held up in adoration when she is blessed with a stream of water from the Kalpavriksha .

= = In literature = =

A Kalpavriksha is mentioned in the Sanskrit work M?n?sara as a royal insignia . In Hem?dri 's work Caturvargac?ntama , the Kalpavriksha is said to be a tree of gold and gem stones .

In poetry Kalpavriksha is compared to Lakshmi as its sister emerging from the sea . It is born to the Naga King Kumuda , the fifth descendant of Takshaka , along with his sister Kumudavati . It emerged from below the bed of the Sarayu River challenging Kusa considered an incarnation of Vishnu just in the disguise as a son .

Kalidasa , in his poetry Meghad?ta epitomizing wish @-@ fulfilling trees found in the capital of the Yaksha king extols the virtues of Kalpavriksha as " the dainties and fineries for the fair women of Alaka , coloured clothes for the body , intoxicating drinks for exciting glances of the eyes , and flowers for decorating the hair and ornaments of various designs " .