

Mythological stories

1. Story of Dhruva

This is the story from Bhagavatam Purana of a brave boy named Dhruva. Why did Dhruva go to the jungle to worship God? How did he become the brightest star in the sky? Read this story to find the answers to these questions.

The word Dhruva means firm, someone who is firm in his intentions and never deviates from his word.

Meera, an eight-year-old girl, used to be afraid of many things. She feared going into dark rooms, sleeping alone, and was even scared of insects. The word "exams" would make her shiver. One day, her mother gave her a book of stories, and among them was the story of a brave child named Dhruva.

Would you like to know more about Dhruva? Let's read the story.

A long time ago, there was a king named Uttanapada, who had two queens, Suniti and Suruchi. Both queens had very different natures. Suniti was calm and simple, while Suruchi was clever and proud. The king favoured Suruchi more because she was more beautiful than Suniti. Queen Suniti had a son named Dhruva, and Queen Suruchi had a son named Uttam. One day, Dhruva was playing in his father, Uttanapada's lap when Queen Suruchi came and removed him, saying, "You cannot sit in the king's lap; only my son has that right." Dhruva was deeply hurt and went to his mother to tell her everything.

His mother told him, "There is great power in devotion to God. If you sincerely worship God, you can find a place not only in your father's lap but also in God's embrace."

Moved by his strong determination, Dhruva, at the age of five, set out to the forest for meditation and prayers. Sage Narada, witnessing Dhruva's determination, tried to convince him to return home. But Dhruva remained dedicated to his decision. Narada then instructed him to chant the mantra 'Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya' while meditating.

Dhruva, fearless of the jungle animals, harsh weather, and icy cold, continued his prayers without interruption for several months. Pleased with his devotion, God appeared before Dhruva and granted him a boon. However, Dhruva, content with the sight of God, asked for nothing more. God blessed him, ensuring that his name would shine like the brightest star in the sky, and Dhruva became known as the Pole Star.

2. Story of Prahlad

This is the story of immense courage and devotion from Bhagavatam Purana. Hiranyakashyap's son Prahlad was a devoted follower of Lord Vishnu, which angered Hiranyakashyap as he saw himself as a god. He tried to punish Prahlad severely, but Lord Vishnu always saved him. Finally, Lord Vishnu took the form of Narasimha and defeated Hiranyakashyap. Read the full story to learn more about Prahlad.

A long time ago, there was a demon king named Hiranyakashyap. He did a lot of meditation and got a special power from Lord Brahma. As per this power, he couldn't be killed by humans, animals, or weapons. He would not die during the day or night, neither on the earth nor in the sky, and neither inside nor outside a house.

Because of this power, Hiranyakashyap became very proud. He believed he was like a god and wanted everyone to worship him.

Hiranyakashyap had a son named Prahlad, who was a true devotee of Lord Vishnu. Prahlad refused to worship his father as a god; Prahlad only believed in Lord Vishnu.

This made Hiranyakashyap very angry, and he ordered his servants to punish Prahlad severely.

(Hiranyakashyap made several attempts to kill Prahlad. He tried throwing him off a mountain, crushing him with elephants, mixing poison in his food, and even attempting to burn him alive with the help of his sister Holika. Holika had a boon that she could not be harmed by fire. She placed Prahlad on her lap and entered the fire with him. Holika got burnt, but Prahlad was unharmed. It is advisable for parents to consider the feelings of their children before talking to them on this subject. This event of victory of good over evil is celebrated as Holika Dahan on the previous night of Holi. People lit a fire and gather around it; they celebrate by singing and dancing around the fire. The Next day, people play with colours and water and celebrate the most joyous festival, Holi.)

However, Prahlad believed in Lord Vishnu and trusted that he would keep him safe. True to his faith, Prahlad faced no harm from any of the punishments, and his devotion to Lord Vishnu deepened.

In a final attempt to convince Prahlad, Hiranyakashyap called him to the court and said, "If you want to avoid the punishment, call upon your god. Where is your god?"

Prahlad said, "My god is everywhere in the world." Hiranyakashyap pointed to a pillar and asked, "Is your god in this pillar too?"

"Yes, definitely," Prahlad confidently replied. Hearing this, Hiranyakashyap angrily attacked the pillar with his weapon. The pillar broke, and Lord Vishnu appeared in the form of Lord Narasimha – his face was like a lion, and his body was like a human. He was neither a complete human nor a complete animal. Lord Narasimha grabbed Hiranyakashyap, took him to the palace threshold, not inside or outside, and with his sharp claws, defeated him.

Prahlad's true devotion pleased god and he asked him to make a wish. Prahlad wished to always stay devoted to god and follow the path of truth. God granted his wish. As Prahlad grew up, he became a king and, while staying devoted to god, did all his duties well.

This story teaches us two things.

First, if we believe, we can see God in everything.

Second, no matter how hard things get, we should always stick to the truth and do the right thing, just like Prahlad.

3. Story of Svetaketu

When Svetaketu, whose story comes in Chhandogya Upanishad became too proud of his knowledge, his father gave him wisdom that humbled him and made him realize that God is the greatest truth. He understood that nothing in the world exists without God. Let's find out through this story how father helped Svetaketu understand the truth. Once upon a time, there was a great sage named Uddalaka. He had a 12-year-old son named Svetaketu. Svetaketu spent most of his time playing and having fun with his friends. His father was worried about his education, so he sent Svetaketu to a capable guru to get educated.

After completing his education, Svetaketu returned home. His father sensed that Svetaketu had become proud of his knowledge. Knowing that such arrogance would stop him from understanding the truth of life, his father decided to teach him a valuable lesson.

One day, the father called Svetaketu and asked, "Dear son, have you gained knowledge that enables you to hear what is unheard, think what is unthinkable, and know what is unknowable?"

Svetaketu couldn't answer his father's questions. His father explained, "Look at this piece of clay. When a potter shapes it into a pot, its form and appearance change, but fundamentally, it is still clay. In the same way, all things in this world are the various forms, colours, and shapes of the same ONE God. God is at the core of everything. Just as a pot cannot exist without clay, neither can this world nor anything in it exist without God. You too are a form of God, Svetaketu - Tat Tvam Asi." (Rishi Uddalaka told Svetaketu that by understanding the lump of clay, we can know about everything made from it because the essence of everything made from clay is ultimately clay itself. To explain this to the children, we have made some modifications to this statement.)

Svetaketu understood his father's words, but he wanted his father to prove that God is in everything. To illustrate, his father gave him a fruit from a banyan tree and asked him to cut it open. Svetaketu did as instructed.

The father asked, "What is inside the fruit?" Svetaketu replied, "It contains seeds, father." Then his father said, "Now, cut one of those seeds." Svetaketu did so and replied, "There is nothing inside, father." His father explained, "What you cannot see is the power (God) that will grow into a large banyan tree."

To further explain the concept, the father asked Svetaketu to mix a little salt in a vessel filled with water. Then, his father asked Svetaketu, "Can you see salt in the water?"

"No, Father," Svetaketu replied.

"But the taste of salt is present in every drop of water. In the same way, there is God in every small and large thing in the world. He is in me, and He is in you too, Svetaketu."

This story teaches us that God exists in every aspect of the world, and though we may not see Him, we can feel His presence in everything. As the Chandogya Upanishad says, "Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma" - everything is indeed divine.

4. How did lord Hanuman cross the sea

When Hanumanji and his friends set out to find Sita Mata, they encountered a vast ocean blocking their path. Crossing it seemed impossible. Jamvantji reminded Hanumanji of his forgotten powers. Let's relive this story from Ramayana to see the miracles Hanumanji showed with his powers.

Sarthak, studying in the seventh class, was a hardworking and capable child. There was going to be a swimming competition in his school. Sarthak also wanted to participate in the competition, but he found swimming very difficult. He felt that he would never be a good swimmer. All the children in his class were practicing swimming in the pool and he was standing silently watching them.

Then suddenly a whirlpool formed in the water and Sarthak's friend Nachiketa came there. "Sarthak, let's swim, it will be fun!" Nachiketa said while calling Sarthak into the pool.

Sarthak said, "Nachiketa, you know how difficult it is for me to swim, I get out of breath and get tired very quickly."

Nachiketa jumped out of the water and said, "You know, earlier I too was very afraid of swimming but then I heard a story of Lord Hanuman which gave me a lot of courage. Let me tell you that story too."

Once Hanumanji, along with his friends, set out in search of Mother Sita, the wife of Lord Rama, who had been kidnapped by Ravana, the king of Lanka.

The city of Lanka was across the sea. Hanumanji and his friends faced a big problem, "How to cross such a vast ocean."

Hanumanji's friend Jamvant said to him, "You can easily cross this huge ocean."

Hanumanji was surprised to hear Jamvant's words and said, "What are you saying? How can a small monkey like me cross such a vast ocean?"

Jamvant smiled and said, "Don't consider yourself small and weak, Hanuman. You are very powerful. You have received powers from many gods and goddesses, about whom you have forgotten."

"You were very naughty in your childhood and used to trouble the sages with your powers. So a sage got angry and cursed you that you will forget all your powers, but if someone reminds you, you will remember them."

Jamvant reminded Hanumanji of his powers. As soon as he remembered his powers, Hanumanji took flight in the name of Shri Ram, crossed the sea and reached Lanka.

"Do you understand anything meaningful? Hanumanji already had powers, he just forgot about them. Similarly, we all also have the power of God in us. We can do anything no matter how difficult it is," saying that Nachiketa disappeared.

Sarthak understood that if he believed in himself and worked hard, he would be able to become a good swimmer.

5. **Krishna & the fruit seller**

Little Krishna loved sweet fruits very much. One day, a fruit seller named Sukhiya came to Gokul. She asked Krishna for some wheat grains in exchange for sweet fruits. Did Krishna bring the grains? Did he get the fruits? Let's see what happened next in this lovely tale from Bhagavad Purana.

Little Krishna loved eating sweet and juicy fruits along with butter sugar candy.

Sukhiya the fruit seller used to go out every day to sell fruits in the streets of Gokul. One day she reached Krishna's door with her basket of fruits. She sat there tired and said, "From morning to evening, not a single fruit of mine has been sold, there is not even a handful of grains in the house. Hey! God help me."

Krishna was playing there. After listening to Sukhiya, he went to her and said, "Mother, please feed me these sweet fruits too, I am very hungry."

"I will give you the fruits, but you will have to pay for them, you will have to give me something in return for these fruits," said Sukhiya.

"Yes-yes, I will bring it right away," saying this Krishna went inside the house.

Wheat was kept in a pot. Krishna filled both his fists with wheat grains and went to give them to the fruit seller.

Wheat grains fell from his small fist and scattered on the way. By the time he reached Sukhiya, only four grains of wheat were left in his fist.

"Here mother, I have brought the price," said Krishna.

"Hey what is this! Just four grains", said Sukhiya.

"But I had brought a handful of grains," said Krishna.

"Look behind you, you have dropped all the grains. "Come on, no problem, take all these fruits here," said the fruit seller.

Sukhiya felt it was necessary to satisfy Krishna's hunger even if she did not get anything in return. Therefore she gave all her fruits to Krishna.

When she reached home, she saw that her entire basket was filled with diamonds and pearls.

The fruit seller thanked Krishna in her mind.

So children, did you see how the fruit seller gave all her fruits to Krishna selflessly, that is, without any desire. Similarly, we should also do our work with full honesty without expecting any reward.

6. Story of Nachiketa

This is the story from Kathopanishad of a five-year-old boy named Nachiketa who obeyed his father and went to Yama, the god of death. Impressed by Nachiketa's determination, Yama granted him three wishes. For his third wish, Nachiketa asked Yama about the secret of life. If you want to know Yama's answer to Nachiketa's question, read this inspiring story filled with Nachiketa's courage.

The story of Nachiketa is found in an ancient Hindu scripture called the Katha Upanishad. Nachiketa was an intelligent and curious boy of about five years old.

Once, Nachiketa's father, Rishi Vajashrava, was performing a yajna (a ritual sacrifice). In this yajna, he was supposed to donate his most valuable assets to the Brahmins.

However, he was giving away old and weak cows, that were neither productive nor capable of providing milk. These cows were of no use to the Brahmins.

Seeing this, Nachiketa became upset and went to his father and asked, "Father, in a yajna, the most beloved and valuable possessions should be donated. Since I am your most beloved, to whom will you donate me?"

Initially, Vajashrava did not respond to Nachiketa's question. However, upon Nachiketa repeatedly asking the same question, his father said, "Your mind always seeks answers to questions. Therefore, I am giving you to a teacher who will provide answers to all your queries. Go, I offer you to Yama." (Due to Nachiketa persistently asking the same question, Vajashrava, in anger, granted Nachiketa to Yama, who is the deity of death. Keeping in mind the sensitivities of children, we have portrayed Yama as a teacher.)

Obeying his father, Nachiketa went to see Yama at his place. There, the gatekeepers informed Nachiketa that Yama was currently not at home and would return after three days.

The gatekeepers advised Nachiketa to go back to his home. However, Nachiketa was determined and clear not to return without meeting Yama. He waited for Yama at the same door for three days without eating or drinking.

When Yama returned after three days, he was surprised to see a young boy waiting outside his door. Yama was impressed with Nachiketa's determination, and in return for waiting for three days rewarded him with three wishes, "Ask for whatever you desire."

Nachiketa, in turn, asked Yama for three wishes:

Nachiketa asked Yama for his first wish, "When I return home, I wish my father hugs me with love." (Nachiketa had asked Yama for his first wish to pacify his father's anger. Keeping children's sentiments in mind, some modifications have been made here.)

Yama answered, "I grant your wish. Your father will welcome you with love and affection when you return home.

Nachiketa asked for his Second Wish, "Tell me a way or method by which our sorrows end and we attain happiness."

Yama answered, "By doing good to others and always following the right path, we can experience real happiness." (Yama instructed Nachiketa on a ritual called Nachiketa Yajna as a method to end sorrows and achieve happiness. To make it simpler for children to understand, some changes have been made here.)

Third Wish: Nachiketa asked Yama, "Who am I?" Yama was reluctant to answer the question. But, Nachiketa insisted. (Nachiketa desired to know the mystery of death as his third wish. This topic is sensitive for children, so some modifications have been made here.)

Yama answered, "You are the atman! The atman is eternal. It was never born. It can never be destroyed. It is pure and full of happiness."

Yama further explained, "Think of the body as the chariot, and atman as the person sitting on the chariot. The atman can guide the chariot in a good direction or a bad direction. Always drive it in a good direction!"

Nachiketa became a wise sage through this knowledge. His story is recorded in Katha Upanishad! Ask questions like Nachiketa and look for their answers fearlessly

7. Story of Satyakam

Satyakam was a boy who was never afraid to speak the truth. Impressed by his fearlessness, Sage Gautama made him his disciple and gave him the knowledge of God. The story of a ten-year-old boy named Satyakam is found in the Chandogya Upanishad. Satyakam one day arrived at the ashram of Sage Gautama, he wanted to become his disciple.

The sage asked him, "What is your father's name? What is your gotra?"

The boy replied, "I do not know my lineage. My mother's name is Jabala, and she was a maid-servant. She served in many places and was always busy, so she did not know my father's name and gotra. (Taking into consideration the mental well-being of children, we have made some changes here.)

The sage was pleased to see the courage and honesty of the boy. He accepted him as his disciple and gave him the name Satyakam Jabala.

One day, Sage Gautama instructed Satyakam, "Take these 400 cows, go into the forest, and return when they multiply to 1000."

Following his Guru's command, Satyakam took the cows into the forest. He found a beautiful and clean place in the jungle and decided to stay there with the cows. Satyakam grazed the cows, served them, and protected them from wild animals.

Several years passed, and one day, a bull spoke in a human voice, "Our number has reached 1000. Now you can take us back to the ashram. You have served us well, so I will give you some knowledge."

In the form of a bull, Vayudeva (the wind deity) gave a quarter of the knowledge of God or Truth to Satyakam: "The four directions are all part of God. Further knowledge will be given to you by Agnideva (the fire deity)."

Satyakam set out towards the ashram with the cows. On the way, he lit a fire and called upon Agnideva. Agnideva said, "Earth, ocean, air, and sky are all parts of God."

The next morning, as Satyakam continued his journey with the cows, a swan flew down to him. The swan told him, "The sun, moon, and fire are all parts of God." Taking knowledge from the swan, Satyakam continued on his path. As Satyakam moved ahead with the cows, a bird from the water came near him. The bird shared, "Eyes, ears, mind, and breath are all parts of God."

Thanking the water bird, Satyakam moved forward and soon reached the ashram with the cows. In the ashram, Sage Gautama imparted the final knowledge to Satyakam, handed him the ashram's responsibility, and left. So, children, we should all be brave like Satyakam and speak the truth.

This story teaches us that everything in this world – the earth, sky, sun, moon, fire, air, water, all living beings, and even every part of our body and mind – is a part of God.

8. Why did Hanuman ji tear his chest?

After Lord Rama's victory over Ravana, something interesting happened in Ayodhya. Sita Mata gave gifts to everyone. Even Hanumanji received a gift. What did Hanumanji do with that gift, and how did he demonstrate his devotion and love for Lord Rama? Let's see in this heartwarming tale from Ramayana.

Children, you may already know how Lord Rama, with the help of Hanumanji, defeated the demon king Ravana and returned to Ayodhya with Sita Mata, Lakshmana, Hanumanji, and his other companions.

After winning the battle they all reached Ayodhya. When Lord Rama became the king of Ayodhya, Sita Mata requested him to give some gifts to those who had helped in the victory. Lord Rama agreed to her request.

Sita Mata gave valuable gifts to everyone. Now it was Hanuman's turn.

With a smile, Lord Rama asked, "What gift will you give to Hanuman? The selfless service and devotion he has shown have no equal."

Even then, Sita Mata presented a necklace of pearls to Hanumanji as a gift.

Hanumanji looked at each pearl of the necklace, broke them with his teeth, and threw them on the ground.

Sita Mata asked Hanumanji, "Why did you do this, Hanuman? Didn't you like the necklace?"

"It's not like that, Mata. But this gift is of no use to me because I don't see my Lord Rama in these pearls. If Rama is not in the pearls, their value is like that of dust for me."

"Then do you have Rama within you?" Sita Mata asked.

Upon hearing this, Hanumanji tore his chest, revealing the image of Lord Rama and Sita within his heart.

Children, we understand from this that Hanumanji did not perform the actions for the sake of any reward but because serving Lord Rama gave him joy.

9. God is our friend

One day, Shivani came home crying. Grandma asked, 'What happened? Why are you crying?' 'My friend is moving to another city, Grandma. Now I won't have any friends,' Shivani said, crying.

It's not like that, Shivani. You have a friend who will always be with you. 'What friend is that whom you know, and I don't?' Shivani asked, surprised.

'You will get the answer to that soon. Have patience. Now go to sleep. Remember, tomorrow is your grandfather's birthday, and we have to distribute food among the poor. We have a lot of work tomorrow,' Grandma said.

'Okay, Grandma,' saying this, Shivani went to sleep.

The next day, Shivani's mom and grandma, together, prepared a lot of food for the poor. They went to the temple with the food and arranged a yummy meal for all the poor people there.

Suddenly, some more poor people arrived. 'Oh no! The food is about to finish. What should we feed them?' Shivani said, worried.

Grandma said to fold hands and pray to God for help. At that moment, their driver came with a box of food in the car and said, 'You forgot this in the car.'

A smile returned to everyone's face. Grandma thanked God and fed the poor with that food.

In the evening, Shivani asked Grandma, 'You still haven't told me about my true friend?' 'Tell me, who helped us when we were in trouble this morning?' 'God did! Oh, that means God is our true friend,' Shivani said happily."

10. Joy of sharing

Chiku the rabbit was very sad today. The carrots he had collected for a week had gone bad due to insects. Mini the mouse, his friend, came to meet him.

Chiku shared all his troubles with Mini. Mini took him outside the forest to a field where Chiku found plenty of carrots. Chiku was happy now, and seeing his joy, Mini was also very happy.

As Chiku was happily hopping with the carrots, he heard someone screaming in pain. The voice was coming from the mango tree nearby. Chiku asked the tree about the cause of its pain.

The tree said, "My branches are bending due to the weight of these fruits, and it's causing me a lot of pain."

Chiku ran and brought Golu the elephant. Chiku and Golu made several mangoes fall using Golu's trunk. The tree felt relieved and thanked Golu. Chiku and Golu shared the mangoes equally.

Golu, carrying mangoes with his trunk, headed towards his home. On the way, he saw some poor children who had been hungry for days and were begging for food. Golu gave all his mangoes to those children. They happily enjoyed the mangoes, and Golu was pleased to see them happy and satisfied.

In the end, Chiku and Golu shared the remaining mangoes. Golu, the elephant, holding mangoes in his trunk, went towards his home, content and happy. He had never felt such happiness before.

Dear children, when we try to make others happy, our happiness also increases. Therefore, we should strive to keep everyone around us happy.