

# Shree Satyanarayan Katha



Shri Satyanarayan Katha (narrative) comes from the Skandha purana, Reva kaanda. Suta Puraanikji narrated these stories, in Neimishaaranya to the Rishis who were performing a 1000 year Yajna for the benefit of mankind lead by Shounakji .

Let us continue with our Satnarayan puja and kathas, but with the above understanding. The Good Lord, then, will shower us with all the choicest blessings that He has promised

**Once** Naradji went to the Lord to ask Him for a panacea for the miseries of the world. Sri Satyanarayan told Naradji that there is a fast which can be performed by anyone. The fast would result in the fulfillment of his desires and also liberation from the cycle of birth and death. Sri Narayana told Naradji how a poor, old and ailing Brahmin as well as an impoverished woodcutter, had all their wishes fulfilled, became prosperous, and ultimately attained salvation by the correct and devotional performance of the Sri Satyanarayan fast and puja.

The 2nd story consists of a childless merchant who asked a king the correct procedure of the Satyanarayan fast. After learning the same, the merchant and his wife decided to perform the fast if they get a child. Sometime later his wife Lilavati became pregnant and she delivered a girl who they called Kalavati. Lilavati reminded her husband about his promise to keep the fast, but the merchant postponed it saying that he would do so when the daughter is ready to be married. The merchant did not fulfill his promise when Lilavati, the daughter is wedded. The Lord decided to remind the merchant of his promise.

The merchant and his son-in-law went to a city called Ratnasara in connection with some business. There, a theft took place. As the thief was being chased by the concerned authority, the robber threw the booty where the two merchants were resting, and escaped.

The merchant and the son-in-law were arrested. Meanwhile Lilavati and Kalavati also lost their belongings due to some thefts and were rendered beggars. While trying to get some food, Kalavati saw a Satyanarayan puja being performed and told her mother about it. Lilavati remembered that she had not performed the promised puja and hence she was facing all these difficulties. She decided to perform the fast and the Puja. The king was informed in a dream, that the merchants were innocent so he released them after compensating them with a lot of wealth.

The merchants decided to come home to their wives. The Lord decided to test them again and came in the guise of a mendicant and asked what kind of load they were carrying on their ship. The merchant mentioned that they had only dried leaves. The mendicant said: "So be it" When the merchant saw that there were only dried leaves aboard, he asked the pious man for forgiveness. The ever merciful Lord forgave them one more time.

As the ship approached the city, the merchant sent word to his wife and daughter about their arrival. Lilavati rushed to meet her husband while telling her daughter to complete the puja. Kalavati performed the puja, but in her haste to meet her husband she did not take the parsad. When she eagerly arrived to meet her husband, she could see neither the ship nor the inmates.

The merchant realised that all the obstacles that they were facing were due to the fact that he had not kept his promise of performing the Satyanarayan puja. He decided to do it. As he was performing it, he got an insight that it was due to the neglect of Lilavati taking the parsad, that they were going through further difficulties.

Kalavati rushed back home and respectfully partook of the parsad. The family was then re-united and they lived a long, happy and prosperous life never forgetting to thank the Lord for all that they received. After their death they got the ultimate gift: 'Moksha' (Liberation from the cycle of life and death)

Suta continuing his narrative, tells the Rishis, the story of a king called Angadwaja. Once, as King Angadwaja was returning from a hunting expedition, he stopped to rest under a tree for a while. Nearby a small group of cowherd boys were playing the game of doing puja. They offered their humble parsad to the king, who out of pride left it untouched. Subsequently the king suffered great losses and realised that that was due to the contempt he had shown for those children's puja. The king returned to the spot where he had met the cowherds, and with great faith performed the puja with them. The king regained all that he had lost.

Suta now told the Rishis that the Satyanarayan fast was very effective during Kaliyuga and that whoever read or heard this story would be rid of all sorrows and difficulties.

May all those who have followed me up to this last letter, and also those who read at least part of this message with reverence, have all their wishes fulfilled and meet up in Satyaloka (Heaven) as is the promise, assured by the Satyanarayan Katha.

For those who observe the fast religiously and regularly, there are some great lessons to be learned from the 'Katha' (narration)

1. As is shown by characters who ignored their promise to perform the puja after their wish had been fulfilled. They suffered as a result. Therefore one is to deduce that one must stick to the promise given to the Lord in exchange of the desire fulfilled by His Grace. One is not to ignore or/and forget the Lord's Grace. 'Parsad' is symbolic of God's Grace which Kalavati ignored as she learned of her husband's safe return.
2. One can understand her eagerness in wanting to be re-united with her beloved, but one must understand that if one forgets to be thankful for gifts received from the Lord, one would have to go through another test until one remembers to remember.
3. When the rich merchant is asked what the boat contains, he untruthfully replies 'Only dry leaves' and the Mendicant says 'So be it' The above incident tells us that the spoken word has power. What you speak, manifests. Hence one must not speak an untruth. Specially an inauspicious untruth.
4. In the last story one learns that no one is higher or lower in status in the eyes of the Lord.  
Hence one must accord respect to whoever it may be, who is taking the name of God.