



HARTALIKA TEEJ || हरतालिका तीज का धार्मिक महत्व और कथा ||

Hartalika Teej 2024

Hartalika Teej is a significant Hindu festival primarily observed by married and unmarried women for the long life and well-being of their husbands. This fast (vrat) is associated with the union of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati. It is celebrated on the third day of the bright half of the Hindu month of Bhadrapada, which usually falls in August or September. In 2024, the festival will be celebrated on **September 5th**. It is particularly celebrated with great enthusiasm in the northern Indian states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh.

The Mythological Story of Hartalika Teej

The story of Hartalika Teej is an inspiring tale of the union of Goddess Parvati and Lord Shiva. Goddess Parvati performed severe penance to win Lord Shiva as her husband. Her father, Himalaya, had arranged her marriage with Lord Vishnu, but Parvati was determined to marry Shiva. Distressed by her father's decision, Parvati, with the help of her friend, fled to a dense forest where she continued her penance to please Lord Shiva. Impressed by her devotion, Lord Shiva accepted her as his wife. The name "Hartalika" is derived from the words "har" (to abduct) and "talika" (friend), symbolizing the event where Parvati's friend helped her escape. This day is, therefore, a symbol of women's strength and determination.

Hartalika Teej Vrat Rituals

On Hartalika Teej, women observe a strict fast, refraining from food and water (nirjala vrat) for the entire day. The rituals and traditions associated with this vrat are of great significance and must be followed diligently.

1. **Morning Bath and Purification:** Women observing the fast wake up early in the morning, bathe in the holy river Ganga or at home, and wear clean clothes. This marks the physical and spiritual purification.
2. **Preparation for Puja:** Idols or pictures of Lord Shiva, Goddess Parvati, and Lord Ganesh are placed for worship. These idols are decorated with flowers and jewelry. The puja thali includes items like vermilion (kumkum), turmeric (haldi), sandalwood paste, incense sticks, a lamp (diya), fruits, flowers, coconut, and sweets.
3. **Reading the Vrat Katha:** It is mandatory to listen to or read the Hartalika Teej vrat katha during the puja. This story highlights the dedication and sacrifice of Goddess Parvati and serves as an inspiration to all women.
4. **Night Vigil (Jagran):** Women stay awake the entire night, engaging in devotional songs and hymns, and meditating on Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati. It is believed that staying awake enhances the spiritual benefits of the fast.
5. **Sixteen Adornments (Solah Shringar):** Married women adorn themselves with sixteen traditional ornaments, symbolizing their marital status. This includes bindi, sindoor, bangles, toe rings, mehndi, kajal, and more. These adornments are meant to ensure the long life and prosperity of their husbands.
6. **Concluding the Fast:** The fast is concluded the next morning after performing the puja. Women offer prayers to Lord Shiva, Goddess Parvati, and Lord Ganesh, followed by taking the prasadam. On this day, they also distribute items like kumkum, mehndi, and other suhaag (marital) items among other women.

What to Do on Hartalika Teej ?

1. **Bath and Purification:** Begin the day with a holy bath and wear clean, fresh clothes. Pay special attention to physical and mental purity.
2. **Observe a Nirjala Vrat:** The fast should be observed without consuming any food or water throughout the day and night. It should be done with complete devotion and faith.
3. **Puja and Worship:** Worship Lord Shiva, Goddess Parvati, and Lord Ganesh by decorating their idols with flowers and jewelry. Offerings in the puja thali should include items like vermilion, turmeric, sandalwood paste, incense, lamp, fruits, flowers, and sweets.
4. **Read or Listen to the Katha:** Listening to or reading the Hartalika Teej katha is essential as it enhances the spiritual significance of the vrat and is a key part of the ritual.
5. **Night Vigil:** Stay awake throughout the night, singing devotional songs and focusing on the worship of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati.

6. **Solah Shringar:** Married women should adorn themselves with the sixteen traditional ornaments to pray for their husband's long life and prosperity.

What Not to Do on Hartalika Teej ?

1. **Avoid Food and Water:** Refrain from consuming any food or water throughout the day. This fast is traditionally observed without any intake.
2. **Avoid Disrespect:** Do not use harsh words or behave rudely with anyone. Maintain a respectful and humble demeanor throughout the day.
3. **Control Anger and Resentment:** Keep away from negative emotions such as anger and resentment during the fast. The day is meant to symbolize peace and restraint.
4. **Avoid Conflicts:** Steer clear of any arguments or disputes within the family or community. The purpose of this day is to maintain peace and balance.
5. **Do Not Neglect the Puja:** Perform the puja with full devotion and care. The significance of the puja lies in performing it correctly and with sincerity.

The Hartalika Teej fast is of immense importance to women. It is not only observed for the longevity of their husbands but also for the well-being and prosperity of their families. Unmarried girls also observe this fast to find a suitable husband. The fast embodies faith, devotion, and self-discipline, leading to a life filled with happiness, peace, and prosperity.

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