

LORD GANESHA



Lord Ganesha is the God of wisdom, intelligence, luck, and fortune. Prosperity and Success will come wherever Ganesha is, and He is the remover of obstacles. Lord Ganesha is invoked before the beginning of any auspicious work.

Ganesha, also called Ganapati, is one of the sons of Lord Shiva and the Divine Mother Parvati. His brother is called Karthikeya.

Ganesha has four hands, elephant's head, and a big belly. His vehicle is a tiny mouse. What is he holding in the picture above? One hand is raised in a gesture of peace. Another hand holds a goad. Does anyone know what a goad is? It is used to push you to go faster. In another hand, what does he hold? It is a noose. Who knows what a noose is? You can use it to slow someone down! When we worship Ganesha, he uses the goad to make us go faster if we need to. But sometimes we are going in the wrong direction. So then he uses the noose to slow us down. What does his fourth hand hold? SWEETS! Ganesha loves sweets. That is why his belly is so big. It is said his belly contains the whole universe!

An elephant is a big animal, right? It can knock over any obstacle, right? In the same, Ganesha can knock through any obstacle that is bothering us in life. We just have to pray to him.

Story: Ganesha's Birth

Once, there lived an Asura_(demon) with all the characteristics of an elephant, called Gajasura. He was an ardent devotee of Lord Shiva. Gajasura has undergone a severe penance (or tapas) for many years to receive special boons. Lord Shiva was pleased by this austerity, and decided to grant him a boon. The demon wished that he could emanate fire continually from his own body so that no one could ever dare to approach him. The Lord granted him his request. Gajasura was not satisfied with that, and continued his penance. Lord Shiva appeared again in front of him. This time the demon asked Shiva to reside in his stomach. Shiva granted his request, and he took up residence in Gajasura's belly immediately.

Lord Shiva is also known as Bhola Shankar because He is the God, who satisfies easily, and grants boon to His devotees whatever they desire without regard for the consequences. From time to time, this created complicated situations, and put Himself into some trouble. Meanwhile on Mount Kailash, Goddess Parvati, Lord Shiva's wife, was worried about Lord Shiva's whereabouts. She searched for

Him everywhere without any luck. As a last resource, she went to Lord Vishnu, requesting him to find her husband. He, who knows everything, assured her that Shiva was fine, and asked her to go back to Kailash.

Then Vishnu, the wise director of the cosmic game, staged a small play. He changed his appearance into a flutist, transformed Shiva's vehicle Nandi (the bull) into a dancing bull, and performed a wonderful dance in front of Gajasura. The enchanting performance of the bull sent the demon into intense joy, and he asked the flutist to tell him what he desired. The musical Vishnu responded: "Can you give me that which I ask?" Gajasura replied: "Who do you take me for? I can immediately give you whatever you ask." The flutist then said: "If that's so, liberate Shiva from your stomach." Gajasura understood then that this must have been no other than Vishnu himself, the only one who could have known that secret and he threw himself at his feet. Having liberated Shiva, he asked him for one last gift: "I have been blessed by you with many gifts; my last request is that everyone remembers me adoring my head when I am dead." To fulfill this wish, Lord Shiva severed Gajasura's head and freed him from the cycle of birth and death. He carries the head along with him.

Parvati at Kailash came to know of Lord Vishnu's victory and her husband's return. She was very happy, and wished to take a bath. She created a boy out of the dough that she uses in her bath, and gave a life to guard the entrance of her house. She asked him not to allow anyone inside. After saying this, she went inside to take the bath. Meanwhile, Lord Shiva returned home. When he tried to enter the house, the boy stopped him at the door as he was unable to recognize his father, Lord Shiva. In anger, Shiva cut off the boy's head with his trident (Trishul). Parvati was unaware of what had happened and received Lord Shiva with warmth, for he had returned after a long period. During the course of their conversation, Shiva mentions the incident at the palace gates and tells her about severing the child's head. When Parvati heard about that, she burst into tears. Shiva also felt sorry for his anger. In order to console Parvati, Shiva sent out his troops (Ganas) to search for the boy's head. When they couldn't find the head, Shiva attached the boy's head with that of Gajasura, and revived him. After looking at the child (Ganesha), Parvati asked Shiva that who will consider this god with the face of an elephant. Shiva blessed the child, Ganesha that everyone would worship Ganesha before beginning any work, and people will worship him first before any other God in any kind of undertaking.

Questions:

- How many hands Ganesha has?
- What is Ganesha's vehicle?
- Who are Ganesha's father and mother?
- Who is Ganesha's brother?
- What does he hold in his hands?
- What is Ganesha's other name?
- Is Ganesha's head look like a normal one?
- Is Ganesha fond of sweets?
- Why should we pray Ganesha?

Ganesh Sloka:

**Vakra Tunda Mahaa Kaaya
Suryakoti Samaprabha
Nirvighnam Kurume Deva
Sarvakaaryeshu Sarvadaa**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BchoVBsERX8&feature=related>

Meaning: O Lord with a curved trunk and mighty body, whose luster outshines a crore of suns, I pray to thee, O Lord, to remove the obstacles from all the actions I perform.

Coloring Project

