

Lord Ganesha



Vakra Tunda Mahaa Kaaya Suryakoti Samaprabha

Nirvighnam Kurume Deva Sarvakaaryeshu Sarvadaa.

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

Lord Ganesha removes all obstacles from our path. What are obstacles? They are problems in your lives that you need to face everyday, from waking up in the morning for school to graduating college. Ganesh puja is done before any great occasion, to bless the event.

This God of knowledge and the remover of obstacles is also the older son of Lord Shiva. Lord Ganesha is also called Vinayak (knowledgeable) or Vighneshwar (God to remove obstacles). He is worshipped, or at least remembered, in the beginning of any auspicious performance for blessings and auspiciousness.

He has four hands, elephant's head and a big belly. His vehicle is a tiny mouse. In his hands he carries a rope (to carry devotees to the truth), an axe (to cut devotees' attachments), and a sweet dessert ball -laddoo- (to reward devotees for spiritual activity). His fourth hand's palm is always extended to bless people.

Story of Lord Ganesha's Birth

Once when Parvati (Lord Shiva's wife) wanted to take a bath, she found that there was nobody to guard the door. So, she decided to create a boy of her own. She made a boy out of turmeric and gave him life. She then posted him near the door and told him not to let anyone inside. While she was bathing, Lord Shiva came by and tried to enter his house. But he was stopped by the boy, who did not know who Lord Shiva was.

The boy was just obeying what he was told. This angered Shiva and he got into a battle with the boy. After a fierce battle, Shiva cut off the head of the boy with his trident.

Meanwhile, Parvati came out and saw what had happened to the boy and was very upset. She said that she would be satisfied only if the boy were brought back to life. Shiva remembered the promise he made to Gajasura, the elephant demon, whom he killed recently. Gajasura asked for a boon that his head be

worshipped. Shiva granted that boon. So, Shiva sent his soldiers, the ganas, to bring the head of Gajasura. It had a single tusk, because the other tusk was lost during the battle between Gajasura and Lord Shiva. They cut off the head and brought it to Shiva, who put it on the boy's head and gave it life and presented him to Parvati. Because the boy had shown such valor during his fight with Shiva, Lord Shiva appointed him as the leader of his army. That is why He is called Ganesha. Parvati then mandated that Ganesha be worshipped at the beginning of any endeavor so all obstacles from its success be removed. That is why He is also called Vighneswara.

