

Jaya Guru Datta

Śrī Anaghāṣṭami Pūja

Benefit, History, Materials, Procedure, and Meaning

Benefits: Agha is sin. Anagha is one who removes sin. The sins that we commit throughout the day and night by thought, word and deed obstruct our path to progress. The Anagha Vratam effectively eradicates our sins. Families going through difficulties will obtain great relief by performing this worship.

The details about this pūja are given in the Datta Purāṇa compiled by Sage Vēda Vyāsa. Lord Dattātrēya Himself initiated the emperor Kārtavīryārjuna into this worship. King Daśaratha and Lord Śrī Rāma had also performed this pūja. Sri Kṛṣṇa had Dharmarāja perform it.

Now by Datta Sadguru Sri Sri Sri Ganapati Sachchidananda Swamiji's grace, it has been revived and taught to us in recent times.

In the introduction to the book Sri Datta Darśanam Sri Swamiji has stated that, “By performing this worship not only is one relieved of all worldly difficulties and miseries, but one is blessed with prosperity, fulfillment of desires, attainment of spiritual knowledge and ultimately, liberation. It gives peace to oneself and to the world. This ritual’s results are more uniquely beneficial than any other ritual”.

Items needed:

A yantra with 8 petals. (chart may be used or the design may be drawn on the altar).

10 place settings – 2 for the main kalaśas in the middle and 8 for the eight siddhis in the eight directions, set with water pots with coconuts on top or appropriate substitutes such as betel or Tulasi leaves, or idols. 2 water containers/spoons, sesame oil or ghee lamps, camphor, bell, yellow rice (white raw rice made yellow by applying lightly moistened turmeric powder – it is offered a few grains at a time while chanting the divine names), kumkum (red sacred powder), fresh flowers, sandal paste, five nectars (cow’s milk, yogurt, ghee, honey, and sugar –

these may be mixed together or offered separately as ritual bath followed by bath with holy water or sprinkled with a flower), new clothes, ornaments, fruits and/or fresh food items and panchakarjāyam (made with ghee, sugar, roasted gram flour, dates, and coconut - powdered together) to offer during worship. (any unavailable items may be substituted with yellow rice or flowers or sanctified water). Water is sprinkled with a flower as required. Tōrams are to be placed on the puja altar in the center, made with red, yellow, and white threads with a knot at the center, for tying around one's wrist after puja. Pūja is to be performed after bath, wearing fresh clothes, before a meal. Friends and relatives may be invited to witness and/or participate. The ritual may be introduced to those who are not familiar with it. The most auspicious day is the eighth day after full moon in any month. The month of Mārgaśira (usually in December) is the best. The eighth day after new moon is also acceptable. The pūja may be performed on any day if the above are not possible. At least once a year it is good to perform this pūja.