



My dear and respected devotees Jai Seeta Ram Radhe Radhe

All of us are very dear, holy and sinless children of our Divine, merciful and Supreme Lord. However each of us commit sins by our various activities while living on this world.

There are four categories of Sins.

1. Kaayik or Physical Paap. Sins committed by our physical body like something that does not belong to you without the approval of the owner.
2. Vaachik Paap- speech related sins like harsh speech, lying or speaking ill about someone
3. Mental Paap – Thinking about taking someone's wealth, or thinking of harming someone
4. Saansargik Paap ---Directly or indirectly involving oneself with bad deeds with others.

Each of us has eleven major organs in our body and in our scriptures they are called Gyan Indreyas and Karma Indreyas, sense organs and action organs. The eyes, ears, nose, tongue and touch are the five organs referred to as the sense organs. The Mouth, the hands, the legs and the two body function organs are the other five action organs while the mind is the King of all Organs and that makes it the 11<sup>th</sup> organ.

Knowingly and unknowingly we commit sins by these eleven organs. However, our saints and sages, rishes and munees, have developed some useful prayers, offerings, fastings and other austerities which when performed with true devotion and intense penance makes us sinless.

Today we are speaking about another Vrat called Ekadshi, which is a wonderful opportunity for all spiritual practitioners to intensify their devotional service and come closer to Bhagwan.

There are two Ekadashi every month and they are calculated astronomically according to the position of the Moon. The word Ekadashi literally means the eleventh day so Ekadashi generally falls eleven days after the full moon and eleven days after the New Moon.

Ekadashi is very dear to Lord Krishna, who as we all know is an incarnation of Bhagwan Vishnu. Another name for Ekadashi is Hari Vasar, the day of Lord Vishnu.

By meditating and worshiping Bhagwan Vishnu and by studying the scriptures and listening to His Glories, this day has special meaning for these devotees.

Lord Krishna said in Bhagwad Geeta that all those who observe fast on Ekadashi are very near and dear to HIM and those who read stories, corresponding to each Ekadashi leads one to salvation.

According to Padma Puran, observing Ekadashi is holier and more beneficial to the devotee who goes to Kashi, Gaya etc and more beneficial than going to have a bath in sacred rivers such as the Ganges, Godavai, Narmada etc.

Observing fasting on Ekadashi, minimizes the demands of the body and enables the devotees to concentrate on his spiritual gals and it is said to be the equivalent to the performance of many Yagnas and homas.

In Satyuga there was a demon named MURA, who defeated many Dewtas and was very powerful. Lord Vishnu went to fight Mura and a long battle ensued. Lord Vishnu decided to rest and Mura was waiting for such an opportunity and decided to attack the Lord. As Mura approached a young damsel, manifested from the body of Lord Vishnu and she slayed Mura. This was Maha Shakti and since this happened on the eleventh day of the Hindu month it was called Ekadashi

Lord Vishnu also granted Maha Shakti the boon that one who fasts on Ekadashi will attain Vaikuntha Loka and be free from sins and also accepted the name Murari, the slayer of the Demon Mura.

There are however, certain rules in fasting on Ekadashi and they include not eating any grains and beans on this day and generally means complete abstaining from both food and drink. For those who cannot do this, for various reasons including health, however, you are allowed to have a small amount of non-grain meal that day.

Ayurvedic system always recommend fasting to maintain and improve one's health and this is something that modern medical experts and sages agree on that fasting has physical as well as mental benefits.

Ekadashi observance is so powerful that one can achieve his or her goals in this lifetime and one can get freedom from the cycles of birth and death. Ekadashi also gives one a real taste of renunciation, while helping devotees to give up the illusory sense gratification.

On Ekadashi the following foods are permitted to be consumed by the devotee

1. All types of fruits, fresh or dried
2. All nuts and oils of nuts
3. All types of sugar
4. Potatoes, cassava and sweet potatoes

5. Coconut
6. Olives
7. Milk and all dairy products
8. Fresh Ginger
9. Black Pepper
10. Rock Salt

Foods that should not be consumed are

1. All kinds of Grains or food products derived from grains.
2. All kinds of peas, including chick peas, daals, all beans including tofu etc.
3. Salt baking powder, baking soda, custard etc.

So I ask of you to consider Fasting on Ekadshi and chant the names of Bhagwan as it will help you get closer to HIM and make you dearer to HIM.

May Lord Vishnu Lord Krishna Lord Rama, Bless us all and help us achieve our goals in this life.

Happy Mother's day Jai Seeta Ram Radhe Radhe and Thank you.