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The Eye of Rudra

DR E S NEELAKANTAN

THE RUDRAKSHA tree grows mainly in the Gangetic Plain of Himalayas and in Nepal. It is also found in South east asian countries (like Indonesia), Hawaii and in the Australian continent. In India this tree is also found in West Bengal, Assam, Madhya Pradesh, and Bihar. In Tamilnadu one can see this tree in the famous Sim's Park in Coonoor, a popular holiday resort.

Rudraksha means eye of Rudra. Legend says it was born out of a single tear of Lord Rudra. The Rudraksha is also used as a garland - with 108 beads in number usually - for the purpose of repetitive prayer (Japa) as well as meditation. Rudraksha is believed to have magnetic properties (as it aligns to North - South direction always) and is said to have medicinal value and is believed to control hypertension. Rudraksha tree is generally fast growing, bearing fruit in about four years.

The size of Rudraksha

Rudraksha of any size is equally powerful. But according to **Jabalopanishad**, Rudraksha of the size of Gooseberry (Amla Fruit) is most powerful, size of Ber (or Badariphalam) is moderately powerful and of the size of Chick Pea (or Chana) is least powerful. This view is endorsed by Shiva Purana which states that the power of Rudraksha varies inversely with its size.

Origin and Sanctity

In **Rudraksha Jabalopanished**, there is a dialogue between Bhusunda Maharishi and Lord Siva. The Maharishi requests Lord Siva to explain the greatness of Rudraksha. Lord Siva says, "I was meditating for 1000 years with my eyes closed. At that time a single tear drop fell from my eye. The same became the Rudraksha tree. Continuing this sermon, Lord Siva proceeds to describe the greatness and sanctity of Rudraksha in the following words :-

"Devotees who wear Rudraksha get rid of sins committed either in the day or night. When Rudraksha is worn at the time of performing good karma, the merit (or punya) accruing out of that good deed gets multiplied by one lakh times. If one touches a Rudraksha at the time of performing an auspicious karma, the merit therefrom gets multiplied by one crore times. Wearing a Rudraksha while doing good karma, enhances the merit by 100 crore times. By holding a Rudraksha garland in hand and chanting a Mahamantra increases the merit by one lakh crore times and wearing by hundred lakh crore times".

It is said that merely by reading the **Jabalopanishad**, one gets merit (or punya) which otherwise can be obtained only by chanting Gayatri Mantra six crore times. The sanctity of this Upanishad arises on account of the fact that it contains an elaborate

dissertation on the merit of Rudraksha.

While one might get bewildered by the number of times one's merit of good deeds gets multiplied by the simple act of wearing a Rudraksha, the ultimate truth or message of the Upanishad is that Rudraksha is capable of acting as an agent which has the potential to augment the beneficial vibrations emerging out of good karma.

Medicinal Properties

The botanical name of Rudraksha is "**Eleocarpus Ganitrus**". It is a refrigerant (or a herb which keeps the body cool), acts as a tonic for the body especially nerves and has sedative powers. It is used in the treatment of Rheumatism, epilepsy, wheezing and headache. In general it can cure all bilious and phlegmatic disorders.

Wearing Rudraksha

Before wearing, a rudraksha should be kept immersed in milk, cow's urine or ganga water. An auspicious time for wearing a Rudraksha is on a Thursday when Moon is in Pushya constellation. It is also said in **Shiva Purana** (chapter 25, verse 47) that all people including women can to wear Rudraksha. (Readers can note that this auspicious day falls in 2010 falls on Thursday, 25th March which happens to be a Dasami).

Legends

Once upon a time there lived a trader by name Sarvangan, who attended to his business using deceitful means. Finally he became a thief and subsequently breathed his last. The attendants of Yama drag him using ropes but are stopped by the demigods attending on Lord Siva. Yama's messengers tell them that the dead person is a great sinner. Siva's attendants say the soul of the dead person should be taken to Sivaloka and crowned with glory merely because of the fact that within striking distance of the spot where the trader passed away, a Rudraksha tree was in existence. Such is the glory and sanctity attached to this sacred tree.

It is also said that out of the 38 species of Rudraksha, 12 emerged from Lord Rudra's left eye, 16 from the Right eye and 10 from the Third eye.

Forbidden Varieties

A Rudraksha that is afflicted by insects or having fissures or sharp projections should not be worn. It is also pertinent to note that one should never wear a Rudraksha that has been previously used (or worn).

Information Sources

Much information on Rudraksha is found in works like Devi Bhagavatham Siva Purana, Padma Purana, Akshara Malika Upanishad, Rudraksha Jabala Upanishad, Mantra Maharnavam and similar works.

Benefits

Based on the number of faces a Rudraksha has, a particular property is attributed.

One faced Rudraksha: One conquers the senses and becomes one with the supreme Brahman. This rare Rudraksha is expensive and comes in two shapes - round and crescent.

Two Faced: Do mukhi Rudraksha pleases Lord Ardhanariswara or the powers of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati as a single entity.

Three faced Rudraksha pleases Lord Agni and one gets the full blessings of the lord. The three faces represent, Garhapadyam, Dakshinagni and Ahavaniyam.

Four faced Rudraksha pleases Lord Brahma.

Five faced or Pancha Mukhi Rudraksha denotes Lord Siva. It is the most abundantly available of all Rudrakshas.

The Six faced Rudraksha represents Lord Skanda and confers wealth, health and. Makes the mind steady.

Seven faced Rudraksha also has similar properties as the six faced.

Eight faced Rudraksha pleases Goddess Ganga Devi.

Nine faced Rudraksha pleases the nine deities or "Navasaktis".

Ten faced Rudraksha represents Lord Yama and effectively controls the malefic effects of the nine planets in their Dasa and bhuktis.

Eleven faced Rudraksha is very rare and is believed to have the eleven Rudras reside in it. The merits of donating one thousand cows or performing one thousand horse sacrifices accrues to one who wears this Rudraksha. It promotes all forms of good fortune.

Twelve faced Rudraksha denotes Lord Mahavishnu and it is said that the twelve Adityas reside in the twelve faces of the bead.

Thirteen faced Rudraksha is very rare and is said to please the God of Love (Kama Deva) and fulfils the desires of the wearer.

Fourteen faced Rudraksha bestows health and removes all diseases.

Gauri Shankara Rudraksha

This is a special type of two naturally coupled beads. It is believed that this Rudraksha ensures peace and comfort to the entire family.

Astrological Suitability

Astrologers advising their clients to wear Rudrakshas can ascertain the position of natal moon and suggest wearing Rudraksha suited to their birth star as below.

Constellation	No of faces
Ashwini, Makaha, Moola	9 faces
Bharani, Pooram, Pooradam	6 faces
Kritika, Uttara, Uttarashada, Gauri Shankar	1,12 or
Rohini, Hasta, Sravana	2 faces
Mrigasira, Chitta, Dhanishta	3 faces
Aridra, Swati, Satabisha	8 faces
Punarvasu, Visaka, Poorvabhadrapada	5 faces
Pushya, Anuradha, Uttarabhadrapada	7 faces
Aslesha, Jyeshtha, Revati	4 faces

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This table is merely recommendatory and not mandatory. Health problems, for instance, can be minimized by wearing a fourteen faced Rudraksha that does not find a place in this table.

To conclude, wearing an appropriate Rudraksha can contribute to the following benefits.

- Helps in meditation and is beneficial to both mind and body.
- Improves the benefits of good karma.
- Rudrakshas like Gauri Shankar foster domestic harmony.
- The ten faced Rudraksha is an effective remedy for people afflicted by planetary evils.
- The thirteen faced Rudraksha fulfills the desires and aspirations of its wearer and is a boon to people facing disappointments in life.

Since all human beings are under the sway of karma, it is said that the appropriate Rudraksha will reach a person at the appropriate time. Good deeds performed continuously optimize the benefits of the Rudrakshas. It is also said that one earns one lakh of merit by seeing a Rudraksha, a crorefold of merit by touching it and ten crore merit by wearing it on the body. Rudraksha can also be a preferred gift since texts mention that Punya (religious merit) accrues by gift of Rudraksha. ■

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