

The Goddess Shailaputri: The Divine Daughter of the Mountain King

Category: Religion

written by News Mall | April 9, 2024



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The Hindu mother goddess Mahadevi has many forms and manifestations, and one of them is [Shailaputri](#). Shailaputri is considered to be the pure form of Goddess Parvati and is venerated as the first Navadurga during the auspicious festival of Navratri. She is believed to be a reincarnation of Goddess Sati, the wife of Lord Shiva.

The Depiction and Symbolism of

Shailaputri

Goddess Shailaputri is depicted with two hands and a crescent moon on her forehead. In her right hand, she holds a trident, symbolizing her connection to Lord Shiva, and in her left hand, she carries a lotus flower, representing purity and enlightenment. She is often depicted riding on the mount Nandi, the bull.

The name "Shailaputri" literally means the daughter (putri) of the mountain (shaila), as she is believed to be the daughter of the mountain king Himavat. She is also known by other names such as Sati Bhavani, Parvati, and Hemavati.

The Mythological Significance of Shailaputri

According to ancient scriptures, Shailaputri was born as Sati, the daughter of Daksha. In a grand yagna organized by her father, Sati was not invited, but she still attended against her father's wishes. During the yagna, Daksha insulted Lord Shiva, which Sati could not bear, and she immolated herself in the fire of the yagna.

In her next birth, she was born as Parvati, the daughter of the king of the mountains, Himalaya. Parvati, also known as Hemavati, married Lord Shiva and became the embodiment of the power of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. She defeated the gods Indra and others, tearing their egotism apart.

The Spiritual Significance of Shailaputri

Shailaputri is associated with the root chakra, the Muladhara, which represents the foundation and stability. In yogic meditation, she is considered the Muladhara Shakti, the primal

energy that needs to be awakened and realized within oneself. The first day of Navratri is seen as an auspicious day to focus on the Muladhara chakra and begin the spiritual journey.

As the physical consciousness of the divine mother Durga, Shailaputri represents the essence of earthly existence. She encompasses all the hills, valleys, water resources, seas, oceans, and the atmosphere. Her energy, symbolized by the color crimson, is latent within every human being, waiting to be realized.

The Significance of Ghatasthapana

The Navratri puja begins with Ghatasthapana, a ritual that symbolizes the power of women. A shallow clay pan is used as the base, and three layers of mud and Navadhanya seeds are scattered in it. Water is then sprinkled to provide moisture to the seeds. A Kalasha filled with holy water, supari, coins, akshat (raw rice mixed with turmeric powder), and durva grass is placed in the pan.

To complete the ritual, five leaves of the mango tree are placed around the neck of the Kalasha, and a coconut is placed on top. Ghatasthapana marks the beginning of the Navratri festivities and is considered an important step in connecting with the divine mother Durga.

In conclusion, Goddess Shailaputri is the daughter of the mountain king Himavat and a manifestation of the Hindu mother goddess Mahadevi. She is venerated as the first Navadurga during Navratri and is considered to be the pure form of Goddess Parvati. Her significance lies in her symbolism and mythological and spiritual connections, making her an important deity in Hindu culture and worship.



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