**Puratassi Virtham**

Meaning of Puratassi – **The sixth month in Tamil year.**
Meaning of Virtham – **A fast undertaken.**

This month is a period in which special homage is paid to GOD in the form of the preserver who known as Lord Vishnu.

Lord Vishnu is the one that preserves us in various ways by looking after our needs. This fast is observed by all Tamil and Telugu speaking people. The most significant day of this month is a Saturday.

**Saturday** is a day where by devotees would observe the prayer dedicated to Lord Vishnu or also known as Venkateswara.

**The Legend**

Sthala Puranam (literal meaning: the legend of the place) recounts the particular legend associated with ancient Hindu temples. Accordingly, the legend of Venkateshwara's Avatara (incarnation) is believed to be as follows:

Sage Bhrugu, who according to Hindu mythology is believed to have an extra eye in the sole of his foot, once visited Sri Maha Vishnu. At that time, Vishnu was in a private meeting with his consort, Goddess Lakshmi, and failed to immediately receive and honour the sage. The sage felt humiliated and angry, and kicked Lord Vishnu in the chest. Vishnu did not react and remained silent. Lord Vishnu's chest is believed to be the abode of Goddess Lakshmi. The Goddess felt highly insulted at the sage's misdemeanour and Lord Vishnu's silence at the act. She left Vaikunta, the heavenly abode of Vishnu and Lakshmi.

Lord Vishnu, in an attempt to pacify the sage, got hold of legs of the sage and started to press them gently in a way that was comforting to the sage. During this act, he squished the extra eye that was present in the sole of Bhrugu's foot. The extra eye is believed to represent the sage's egotism. The sage then realised his grave mistake and apologized to Lord Vishnu. Lord Vishnu had then incarnated Himself as Venkateshwara and came to earth in search of Lakshmi, who had taken birth as Princess Alamelu (Padmavati) in the household of Akasa Raju. The princess's father agreed to give his daughter's hand in marriage to Venkateshwara if he provided proof of his wealth. Towards this end, Venkateshwara obtained a heavy loan from Kubera, a god (yaksha) who is considered, according to Hindu mythology, as the treasurer of the virtuous wealth in the Universe. Princess Padmavati and Lord Venkateshwara were then wed.

Lord Vishnu, in the form of Venkateshwara, and his consort are believed to have enshrined themselves at Tirumala Tirupati for the benefit of mankind. This phenomenon is called swayambhu loosely translated to mean "self-existent and established on earth of one's own accord, without any external cause".

Lord Venkateshwara's temple is at the top of the seven hills in the place called Tirumala. The temple of the Lakshmi, in the form of Princess Padmavati, is located at the foot of the seven hills at Tirupati, in a town called Tiruchanur.

**Vishnu in the form of Lord Venkateshwara at Tirumala**

Sanskrit, also known as Venkatachalapathy or Srinivasa, is the supreme God believed to be a form of the Hindu Deity Lord Vishnu.

Lord Venkateshwara means supreme God who destroys the sins of the people in this material world ('**ven+kata+eshwara=sins+destroyer+supremegod**').

He appeared in this yuga kali yuga for saving the people who have fallen deeply and are deluded in three modes of material nature. He is Vishnu, who is transcendental to the material energy, Vishnu does not have direct contact with material people, and therefore yogis carry out severe penances to have a vision of Vishnu's lotus feet. Howevere, in the kali yuga people have fallen to the point that they have even lost themselves due to ignorance in bodily consciousness. Lord Vishnu out of love towards his devotees therefore incarnated as Venkateshwara.

Adi Sankaracharya came to tirumala and placed sri chakra at the lotus feet of Lord Venkateshwara and sung the famous song "Bhaja Govindam". So Lord venkateshwara is the supreme god of this kali yuga.

**“Venkatadri Samasthanam Bramhandey Naasthi kinchana Venkatesa samo devo na bhuto na bhavishyati” – There is no place in the Universe that is as great as “Venkatadri”.**

There is no God as great as Lord Venkateshwara in past or future.
Lord Venkateshwara has His holy abode in the Venkatam hills (the hills are more often referred to as ThiruVenkatam) in Tirupathi. Thus, the main temple of Lord Venkateshwara is the Tirumala Venkateshwara Temple The Tirumala temple, where He is the presiding deity, is believed to be the richest of all the Hindu temples in the world. The temple is in southern India Andhra Pradesh in Chittoor district. It is around 120 km from Chennai, TamilNadu. The presence of seven hills influenced alternate names for the deity: Edu kondala vadu in Telugu and as Elumalaiyan in Tamil both of which mean "Lord of the Seven Hills".

He is also known as Maal, ThiruMaal, Manivannan, Balaji (though this is a more recent name), Srinivasa, Venkatesha, Venkatanatha, Thiruvengadam Udaiyaan, Tiruvengadattaan and by many other names. He is also worshiped with the name Tirupati Thimmappa all over Karnataka by traditionally Shiva-worshipping communities.

In Hinduism, Venkateshwara (also spelled as Venkateshwer or Venkatachalapathi) is a much-worshipped form of Vishnu. He is also known as Balaji or Lord Venkateshwara. He is also worshiped with the name Tirupati Thimmappa all over Karnataka by traditionally Shiva worshipping communities.

Vishnu, in the form of Venkateshwara, is much worshipped at Tirupati temple. Venkateshwara is the presiding deity at the Tirumala temple complex, believed to be the richest of all the Hindu shrines in the world. The temple is situated in southern Andhra Pradesh in Chittoor district. It is around 120 km away from Chennai. The presence of seven hills influenced alternate names for the deity: Edu kondala vadu in Telugu and as Elumalaiyan in Tamil both of which mean Lord of the Seven Hills.
***Source from: “wikipedia.org/wiki”***

**Various Symbols:**

**Thirunamam – Namam** means “Name”. The shape of the Thirunamam - The two white lines on the side represent the Lords feet and the RED line in the middle represents Laxmi.
**Sakkaram** – Wheel symbol of motion represents progress.
**Sungoo** – Conch (shell) symbol of sound which represents creation. Conch is always found in water where Lord Vishnu resides.
**Flower(Patma)** – symbol of growth to progress spiritually one has to grow in wisdom in order to reach the Lord’s feet.
**Mace (Gada, batten)** – exercise control and bring all negative energies under his control.

**Requirements for the prayer:**

* 3 Coconuts
* 1 bottle rosewater
* Borrie
* 5 betel leaves and nuts
* Flowers for garland and petals
* Camphor
* Incense Sticks
* Sambrani
* Charcoal
* 1 Pkt Namakatti (white stick)
* Red or orange powder (tirusanaum)
* Thulsi leaves
* Sugar candy
* Avaal kadaly

**Preparations for the Prayer:**

* The entire house should be cleansed (day before prayer).
* One should wash their lamp and dot it with namam and tirusanaum (day before prayer).
* A korlam should be made at the front entrance of the house using either rice flour or mealie meal (before commencing prayer).
* A garland should be made using fresh flowers and thulsi leaves.
* The garland must be hung on the door (before commencing prayer).
* The prayer should be observed once all prasadam has been made.

**Simple procedure on how to perform the Prayer(Pooja)**

**First construct a Vinayagar**

* Take some borrie (turmeric powder) mix water or rose water to form a thick paste. Mould into a mountain like shape thereafter a kumgum dot should be placed in front and sprinkle kadam podi over Vinayaga. A piece of grass having 1 stem and 3 blades of grass (Arum pul) favorite offering to Vinayagar placing it on top of the head. If you would like to mould the Vinayaga you can make two ears and a trunk in the center, kumgum may be placed on the trunk and between the ear and the trunk to form eyes. The grass (Arum pul) favorite offering to Vinayagar may be placed on the bottom of the trunk.
* If you have a brass, copper or wooden murti it may also be used for the prayer.
* Offer sugar candy avaal kadaly to Vinayagar.
* A photo of Lord Vishnu/ Venkateshwara, a mirror or a piece of wood may be place in the center where by a Namam may be drawn on.
* Place a flower, thulsi and vadaa garland around the item that is going to be used.
* Place all prasadam in front of the Namam with betel leave, betel nut, flower and a coin.
* Namam should be placed on each person’s forehead. The men a white “V” like shape with the vertical red line in the center and the women a white horizontal line with a vertical red line in the center.
* Once everything has been set up inside take Vinayagar and proceed outside.
* Vinayagar will be placed outside with prasadam (facing EAST).
* Vinayagar should be invoked first by lighting incense sticks and offering flower petals and chanting the mantra of Ganesha (Aum gam ganesha ye namaha) or (Aum gam ganesha potri) can be chanted 18 or 27 times.
* 3 Camphor must be lit in front of Vinayagar; the 1st coconut must be turned around Vinayagar and the Sun thereafter breaking the coconut and turn camphor.
* Sprinkle water 3 times over the prasadam.
* Camphor’s would be lit leading to the front entrance by chanting (Govinda! Govinda! Govinda)). Govinda means – we call out the Lord’s name in praise from who we seek protection.
* At the front entrance 3 camphor must be lit and the second coconut would be smashed on the ground to welcome the Lord into the house by chanting (Govinda! Govinda! Govinda!).
* Proceed to the prayer where everything has been place.
* Light incense sticks and burn charcoal and sambrani. Take flower petals and offer at the feet of the Lord by chanting “Om Venkateshwara ye namaha or potri.
* Turn the third coconut clockwise 3 times and break. Place 2 halves on either side of Venkateshwara.
* Turn camphor.
* Sprinkle water over prasadam.
* Kneel down and pray.
* A song or a prayer can be sung in praise of Venkateshwara.
* You should leave the prayer place for at least 5 minutes without any disturbance.

**Meaning of Mantra:**

**Om Venkateshwara namaha -** means I offer unto the supreme God who destroys the sins of the people in this material world.  **Om Venkateshwara POTRI -** means -salutation unto the supreme God who destroys the sins of the people in this material world.

**Venkateshwara Gayatri Mantra:**

**OM NAMO NARAYNA VIDMAHAE,
VASUDEVAYA DHIMAHI,
TANNO VISHNUM PRACHODADAYAT**May we realize this Narayana the indwelling being who is the spirit of all. May we meditate upon your manifested Vishnu aspect and thus become illumined ones.

**Song For Venkateshwara**

**Hari Naa-raa-ya-naa Govindhaa Jaya Naa-raa-ya-naa Govindhaa (Hari)
Naa-raa-ya-naa Govindhaa Mugundhaa Atchu-dhaa Paramaa-nandhaa (Hari)
Nandha Nandha-naa Govin-haa Hari Naa-raa-ya-naa Govindhaa
Nava Nitha Choraa Govindhaa Hari Naaraa-ya-naa Govindhaa (Hari)
Venu Vilolaa Govindhaa Viajaya Gopaa-laa Govindhaa
Vedhaantha Sara Govindhaa Hari Naa-raa-ya-na Govindhaa (Hari).**
**HARI NAARAAYANAA**
Oh hail Lord Naaraayanaa Oh Govindhaa, Victorious
Lord incarnate of Vishnu, Oh eternal bliss Oh Govindhaa
With the flute you are the essence of the philosophy of the Vedas.
Oh hail Naaraa-ya-naa