

## **Lord Dattatreya**



Dattatreya or Datta (Dattā) is an avatar (incarnation) of the three Hindu Deities viz. Lord's Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, collectively known as Trimurti. The name Dattatreya is composed of two words - "Datta" (meaning given) and "Atreya" referring to the sage Atri, his physical father. He was known as the One who gave Himself to Atri and over eons that became his name.

Various Hindu sects worship him differently, though Lord Dattatreya is considered a form of all the three deities. He is especially considered an avatar of Vishnu. However, Spiritual seekers pray to this Supreme Teacher for knowledge of the Absolute Truth. He is specially worshipped on his birthday, Datta Jayanti which generally falls in December.

Lord Dattatreya was born to the sage Atri, who had been promised by Parameshvara (the Almighty), that He, Parameshvara, would be incarnated as his son.

Lord Dattatreya is accompanied by four dogs. Scholars venture the semiology of the four dogs each of a different colour oft-depicted in Lord Dattatreya iconography as holding the valence of the four Vedas: Rigveda, Yajurveda, Atharvaveda and Samaveda. Pre-Vedic Indian dogs were regarded as auspicious symbols, and later deities assumed dog forms, became associated with dogs, and were linked with the glory and fidelity of warriors. There is other symbolism attachable here. Dogs also held the cultural significance of 'dog eaters' (Sanskrit: chandala), those who existed beyond the confines

of Varnashrama Dharma. Dogs are both wild and tame, and symbols of fidelity and devotion (Sanskrit: bhakti).

### What is the significance of chanting “**Shree Gurudeva Datta**”?

In the recent times, since spiritual practice and the rituals of shraddha (Rites for the deceased) are not performed as before, most people face problems due to the subtle-bodies of ancestors. Only evolved individuals can advise if there is a possibility of a problem in the future or if an existing problem is due to the subtle-bodies of deceased ancestors. If you are not fortunate enough to be guided by an evolved individual, then inferring that inability to find a suitable marriage partner, marital disharmony, inability to conceive, miscarriages, giving birth to a premature child, giving birth to a retarded or handicapped child, deaths in childhood etc. are problems which could be due to subtle-bodies of deceased ancestors, undertake spiritual practice as advised ahead.

### Chanting the Name of Shree Datta based on the severity of the distress experienced due to ancestral problems

1. To prevent problems or to overcome a mild problem, chant ‘Shree Gurudev Datta’ daily for one to two hours. At other times, to prevent problems arising out of destiny and for spiritual progress, an average individual or seeker in the primary stage should chant the Name of his/her Kuladevata (Family Deity) as much as is possible.
2. If the problem is moderate in nature, chant ‘Shree Gurudeva Datta’ along with the Name of your Kuladevata for two to four hours daily. Also, go to a Datta temple every Thursday and perform seven circumambulations, and chant one to two malas of ‘Shree Gurudev Datta’ in the temple. Do this for about a year. After this, chant three malas of ‘Shree Gurudeva Datta’ everyday.
3. If the problem is severe in nature, chant ‘Shree Gurudeva Datta’ for at least four to six hours daily.

**KINDLY NOTE:- MOST WON'T HAVE 2 HOURS OR MORE PER DAY TO CHANT THE ABOVE MANTRA SO I ADVISE CHANTING ‘Shree Gurudeva Datta’ 3 X 108'S DAILY IN FRONT OF THE PICTURE PROVIDED ABOVE.**

The following are some indicators of the severity of distress

Type	Example
Mild	Skin problems, marital conflicts
Moderate	Divorce, mentally challenged child
Severe	Miscarriage, death in childhood

**Note:-** If the difficulties are severe, then one could also be advised to perform specific spiritual rituals.

## Importance of chanting the Name of Shree Datta in the Pitr-paksha

By chanting the Name of Shree Datta in Pitr-paksha (The dark fortnight of the Hindu lunar month of Bhadrapad, when rites are performed for the deceased ancestors), the onward sojourn of the ancestors is faster. Hence, during this period, chant for at least as much as you possibly can daily.

### How does chanting Shree Datta's Name provide protection from distress caused by ancestors ?

#### 1. Ancestors gaining momentum

Majority of people in Kaliyug do not perform spiritual practice and hence, they are entrapped in Maya. As a result, their subtle-bodies remain dissatisfied after death. Such dissatisfied subtle-bodies get entrapped in the Martyalok (Region of the dead, situated between the earth and the Nether regions). By chanting the Name of Shree Dattatreya, the ancestors entrapped in Martyalok gain momentum. Thereafter, depending on their karma they advance to progressively higher regions. Thus, automatically the trouble caused by them to their descendants on the earth reduces.

Some people build the last resting place for their deceased family members in front of or beside their residence and regularly worship them with flowers. As a sign of affection and remembrance, their photographs are put up in the house. In some places, to commemorate the ancestors it is a tradition to keep coins in the temple at home. All these acts entrap the subtle-bodies of the deceased family members in such places. Consequently, their spiritual sojourn is obstructed and they also have to undergo suffering. King Bhagirath performed severe austerities to liberate his ancestors, and brought the river Ganga onto the earth. This is an ideal example of repaying the debt unto ancestors. If we keep our ancestors entrapped in gross objects as mentioned above and do not chant etc. to provide them with momentum, we fail to repay the debt unto the ancestors. In such cases, since they remain distressed, they create obstacles in our spiritual practice. To repay the debt unto our ancestors and to provide them with momentum, we should chant 'Shree Gurudeva Datta' and perform shraddha for them.

#### 2. Creation of a protective sheath

Energy generated by chanting the Name of Shree Datta creates a protective sheath around the individual chanting the Name. However, the extent of benefit depends on the quantity and quality of our chanting, which besides other factors, depends on one's spiritual level.

#### What does the spiritual protective chant of Shree Gurudeva Datta represent?

The protective chant of Shree Gurudeva Datta represents the Name of Shree Datta, an aspect of God. One of His functions in the Universe is alleviating distress caused due to the subtle bodies of ancestors. God carries out His mission in the Universe through the three major principles of Creation, Sustenance and Destruction. Shree Datta's ability is derived through a combination of these three major principles of God i.e. Creation 10%,

Sustenance 80% and Destruction 10%. His manifest divine energy is 10% while 90% of His divine energy is unmanifest.

The concept that our deceased ancestors can cause trouble in our lives is very alien to us. However people have experienced an immense improvement in their lives by repeating Shree Datta's holy Name of 'Shri Gurudev Datta'. It's so simple yet so effective.

### **Spiritual experiences obtained by chanting the Name of Lord Datta by some people.**

1. After chanting the Name of Lord Datta, I stopped seeing my ancestors in the form of snakes in my dreams. 'I would see snakes in my dreams everyday. It would frighten me; at times I would wake up with a sweat. Then, a seeker told me to chant 'Shree Gurudeva Datta'. The day I began chanting this Name, the snakes disappeared from my dreams. Subsequently, on 2-3 occasions, I forgot to chant, and the snakes reappeared in my dreams.' – Ms. Madhuri Vijayrav Deshpande. (Snakes and serpents often represent the existence of the pitars. – Compiler)

Some spiritual experiences upon chanting the Name of Shree Datta in the Pitr-paksha. A dairy about to be closed re-started when I began chanting the Name of Shree Datta. 'My husband has been working for a dairy for several years. Over a few months, it had come to a state of closure since there was not much inflow of milk. This created tension at home. In the Pitr-paksha I began chanting 'Shree Gurudev Datta'. Thereafter, all of a sudden, the dairy (in which there was not a drop of milk) received huge stocks of milk. Ever since I began this chanting, the atmosphere at home improved too. Before this incident, nearly everyone was saying that the dairy would close down; but the grace of Lord Datta averted this danger.' – Mrs. Rajashri Mahadev Vandare, Miraj, Maharashtra

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Jai Hind, Jai Lord Dattatreya.

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