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Thithi nirnaya Prakaranam

(Fixing of Suitable Thithi)

Translated by

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(Thithi, the nature of moon's crescent is important in fixing the time for rituals as well as festivities. But thithis do rarely start with sun rise and end with next day's sun rise. So almost every day is the mixture of thithis.(Khanda thithi) . This chapter tells us the rules for fixing the rules for the time of different rituals based on Khanda thithis)

I.Kala niroopanam

(fixing of time)

Now the form and shape of Kala is being told

1.Gargya

Being a part of the main rituals , Thithi(moon's crescent) , Vara(Day)and Nakshatra (Star) become the cause for doing sins and good deeds. Independently they do not have any effect.

II. Nimishadhi Lakshanam

The form of Nimisha and other things

The time taken for one blink is a Nimisham. Two nimishas make one Triti. Two Tritis make one lava. Two lavas are one Kshana. Ten Kshanas are one Kashta. Thirty Kashtas

make one kala. Thirty kalas make one Muhurtha. Thirty Muhurthas are a day and a night(24 hours).

III. Thithi swaroopa

The nature of thithi

The merging of Sun and Moon is called Amavasya. When they are furthest apart it is called Poornima. Chandra has 15 crescents. Entry of each crescent of the moon in to the sun are the thithis of Krishna Paksha. The coming out of these crescents after they fully enter the sun are the Thithis of Shukla paksha,

IV. Khanda thithi swaroopa

The nature of Khanda Thithis

Those Thithis which are spread from one sun rise to next day sun rise are called Shudha(clean) thithis. They get an adjective of “Shudha”. Others are called Khanda thithis.

1. Gargya

According to Dharma and Adharma, Thithis are classified in to three. If this are equal it is called Kharava, if it increases Dharma and if it decreases it is called Himsra.

2. Vrudha Gargya

Depending on the time, the rituals told in the shastras have to be observed or not observed when Shastras tell that it should not be observed. Those thithis which are good for rituals are great. It is sufficient if we know those times where performance are banned. That is there is no examination of the greatness of such thithis. In Shudha and Complete Thithis actions can be performed but only in Khanda Thithis, this needs examination. So we shall examine about Khanda thithis.

V. Thithinam veda vichara

Examination of veda regarding thithis

Veda is the relation of one thithi with the next thithi. There are of two types like Amavasya and Prathama and Prathama and Dwitheeya.

1. Kalanirnaya

If a thithi does not have relation with the next thithi it is called Shudha Thithi. If it has relation, it is called vidha thithi. Even this is of two types. If the relation is within the first three muhurthas (6 nazhikas-144 minutes), it is one type of vidha thithi. And

another type has relation with three muhurthas prior to sun set in the next day. That is that Prathama which has relation with Amavasya during sun rise is called Prathama vidha and one which has relation with Dwitheeya on the next day sun set is also called vidha .Any relation with less than 6 muhurthas is not considered as Vidha. These are respectively called Poorva Vidha thithi and Uthara Vidha thithi.

VI. Prathama thithi nirnaya

The description of Prathama thithi

In Shukla Paksha that Prathama which has Vidha with amavasya and in Krishna Paksha that Prathama which has Vidha with Dwitheeya are suitable for fasting. Shukla Prathama with Poorva vidha is better. But in the Aparahna , Prathama relation should be there. If this is not available , Prathama relation should be available in Sayahna, This type of Shukla Prathama is suitable for fasting.

The day time is divided in to five parts each with 6 Nazhigai. These are respectively called Pratha, Sangava, Madyahna, Aparahna and Sayahna. This division is considered important in shastras.

The day can be divided in to two parts, Poorvahanna and Aparahna or three parts Poorvahanna, Madyahna and Aparahna or four parts Poorvahanna, Madyahna, Aparahna and Sayahna or five parts Pratha, Poorvahanna, Madyahna, Aparahna and Sayahna. The division in to five is considered as more appropriate.

1.Devala

That thithi in which sun set takes place is very suitable for Dhana (charity), Parayana (reading scriptures) and Upavasa (fasting). That thithi should not be less than three muhurthas. It could spread more than three muhurthas. That type of Thithi only is suitable for rituals.

2.Sairepi

If a thithi is spread during sun set, it should be spread for at least three muhurthas. Elders say that only such complete thithis are suitable for holy activities.

3.Sumanthu

If we observe fast according to thithi or Nakshatra , at the end of the thithi and Nakshatra we should do Parana (eat/drink something i.e break our fast) If we do not that that Vrutha is not complete. This is applicable to those thithis which have Veda. For Shudha thithis this would not happen. For Sivarathri Vrutha or Sravana Vrutha the Parana is at the end of the thithi and not Nakshatra(Sravana in this case)

Where Parana is prescribed at the end of Thithi and Nakshatra and Thithi are Nakshatra are beyond three Yamas at night, the Parana can be performed in the morning after we get up.

If we are not able to observe in the Poorva Veda thithi , fast can be performed in Uthara Veda thithi also.

Depending on the kala (duration) prescribed for the Vrutha , it has to be observed depending on what thithi pervades during that time.

VII, Yekabhaktha nirnaya

One time food determination

1. Skanda

If we are not able to observe complete fast , yekabhakth (taking meals once) can be observed. This consists of taking food only once. This can be observed after half of the day time. 15 to 18 Nazhigai(Nazhigai-24 minutes) after that is the most important time. After that the time before sun set is the Gowna period.

2. Bodhayana

In Yekabhaktha as well as in worship of gods and fasts , the thithi which spreads in the Madyahna is mentioned. This is a general rule

In the thithi spread over Madyahna there are six types:-

1. Having relation with Madyahna only in the previous day
2. Having relation with Madyahna only in the second day
3. Having relation with Madyahna during both days
4. Having no relation with Madyahna on both days
5. Having little relation with Madyahna on both the days.
6. Having relation on both days but strong on one day and weak on the other day.

Understand that in this in case of the first two there is relation with Madyahna. In the case of third since Poorva Vidha is special and the spread in the Gowna kala is more and the thithi in the previous day only is recognized . In the fourth case also the relation in the previous day is important and is considered more suitable for rituals. In the fifth case , though there is equal relationship with Madyahna , Poorva vidha(previous day) is considered as better. In the sixth case the day when spread in to Madyahna is more is considered. Yekabhaktha has to be observed taking these in to consideration. This is also the rule for worship as well as fast.

VIII. Naktha Vrutha nirnaya

Determination of of the night only food practice

1. Varaha Purana

In the Marga seersha month in the Shukla Paksha Prathama , we have to observe Naktha Vrutha (fast in the day time and take food at night) and Lord Vishnu worshipped

2. Kala Darsa

In Naktha Vrutha, the thithi should be there for three muhurthas(6 nazhigas of 24 minutes) before sun set and also three muhurthas of thithi after sun set. The thithi before sun set which goes in to Sayamkala is the Gowna period. The thithi which is spread after

sun set is considered more important. The thithi which spreads over Pradosha is specially good for Naktha Vrutha .

Sanyasis and widows should not take food at night. So the thithi which is spread over Gowna period is suitable for them. In case of Naktha Vrutha , family people can take food at night. So for them the thithi , which is spread over Pradosha is more suitable for them.(Naktha-night, Pradosha- the beginning of night)

3.Vyasa

Pradosha is the period of three muhurthas after sun set. Naktha Vrutha should be observed then. In this case also the spread of the thithi is in 6 ways and should be taken in to consideration.

4.Skanda

If Thithi does not spread in to Pradosha, Naktha Vrutha can be observed in Sayamkala. That is the period when your shadow is twice your size and is suitable for Naktha. In Naktha Vrutha, if Sunday is involved then even a Grahashta should not take food. He should observe it in day time.

On Sunday, Amavasya and Pournami, we should not take food at night. In case of Chaturdasi and Ashtami , we should not take food during day time.

When the period of ban for taking food is over, then we can take food. In the Parva , food should not be taken at night. In case of eclipse, after eclipse is over, only you can take food. In the night if there is an eclipse, we should not take food at night.

5,Vrudha Yagnavalkya

For Snana (holy bath) and Dhana (ritual charity) the Uthara vidha period should be chosen.

IX. Dwitheeya thithi nirnaya

Estimate of the Dwitheeya thithi

Brugu

Ekadasi, Ashtami , Sashti, Dwitheeya , Chaturdasi , Thryodasi and Amavasya are Para vidha and are suitable for fasting .

X .Thrutheeya nirnaya

Determination of Thrutheeya thithi

Ramba Vrutha should be observed on Thrutheeya. That is to be observed in the Poorva vidha period. Except for this Vrutha, in case of all other Vruthas(in case of Dwitheeya) should be observed in Para Vidha time.

XI. Chathurthi Nirnaya

Determination of Chathurthi thithi

Brahaspathi

The Ganapathi Vrutha should be observed when Chathurthi is mixed with Thrutheeya. But Chathurthi should be in the after noon .If it is not there but if there is Chathurthi in the Madyahna of the next day, leave out Chathurthi with Thrutheeya and observe it on the next day .For other festivals other than Chathurthi , Chathurthi mixed with Panchami is considered as better.

XII. Panchami nirnaya

Determination of Panchami Thithi

Haaritha

Panchami is one with Poorva vidha. It is considered as propitious for rituals concerning devas and manes. What is indicated is the Panchami mixed with Chathurthi.

XIII. Sashti nirnaya

Determination of Sashti thithi

This thithi is Para vidha, It is good fore fasting. But in case of Skanda sashti , Poorva Vidha is considered as superior.

Vasishta

Vasistha says that in case of Krishnashtami, Skanda Sashti , Shiva Rathri and Chathurthi , Poorva Vidha is appropriate for observation.

XIV. Saphthami nirnaya

Determination of Saphthami

Kala nirnaya

In all Vruthas where Saphthami is involved it is Poorva vidha. If this is not properly available, one can use the Saphthami of Para vidha.

XV. Ashtami nirnaya

Determination of Ashtami

Shukla Paksha Ashtami and Shukla Chaturdasi are more suitable as Para Vidha. But the Ashtami in the Krishna paksha is observed in Poorva vidha.

XVI. Sri Krishna Janmashtami nirnaya

Determination of Lord Krishna's birthday.

Krishna Janmashtami is very much different from Sri Jayanthi Vrutha. For Janmashtami thithi is more important and for Sri Jayanthi Rohini star is more important.

In the Sravana Krishna Paksha Ashtami, Janmashtami has to be observed. If this is not observed, the person will be born as Rakshasa.

If in the Sravana month Krishnashtami, Rohini star also comes, then it is called Sri Jayanthi.. It is superior.

1.Vasishta Samhitha

If Rohini and Ashtami occur together in Sravana or Bhadrapada month, it is called as Jayanthi. If it occurs in Sravana month it is considered as special. That which occurs in Bhadrapada month is classified as Gowna.

2.Jyothisharnava

Here Sravana or Bhadra pada denotes Avani(Chinga) month InPurattasi (kanya month) or Sravana in Aadi (karkidaka) should not be considered. This is concerning Krishnashtami Jayanthi festival.

The Jayanthi in Ashtami can come in Sravana or Bhadrapada.. That is it should come in the month of Avani (Chingam). If this is not available Ashtami in Sravana month can be used for Janmashtami Vrutha. This rule is for Smarthas. Srivaishnavas determine it predominantly based on the Rohini star.

3.Varaha

Here the time of the birth of Krishna is being told.. When sun was in Simha rasi (that is in Avani (chingam)), when the sky is completely covered by clouds in the Bhadrapada Ashtami, in the midnight, when moon was about to rise, in the last pada of Rohini, in Wednesday, in Vrushabha Lagna, in the harshana yoga and in Gownava karana, I was born as the son of Vasudeva and Devaki-So told Krishna to Brahma.

4.Padma

It is opined that if Ashtami Rohini comes in the month of Sravana on a Wednesday or Monday, it is suitable for observing Vrutha of Janmashtami.

The difference of month depends on the Kalpa difference. But Rohini should be there in the midnight.

The Ashtami Rohini in the midnight has to be considered as the holy time. That is the time between the fifteenth and sixteenth Nazhigai at night.. If Rohini does not occur there at all, then the presence of Ashtami should be taken in to consideration. For Janmashtami darkness is considered as the holy time.

The Ashtami at midnight is a holy time. In this place Poorva Vidha is not considered. If any Ashtami begins after midnight and ends before next midnight , then that Ashtami has relation with both the nights. So the Ashtami has to be celebrated next day only. This is because when we chant Sankalpa Mantra Ashtami should be there. This Janmashtami has to be celebrated by every one. This is considered as Nithyam like Sandhya vandana.

We have to observe fast during Janmashtami . If Ashtami is remaining in the next day Parana (breaking of fast) should not be done on that day till Ashtami thithi is over.

XVII. Sri Rama Navami nirnaya

Determination of Rama Navami

1. Agasthya

If in the Chitra month Shukla paksha Navami is with Punarvasu star, that is a very holy time. If Punarvasu is not there during that time , Rama Navami should be observed in the Shudha Navami during Madyahna. Here also fast should be observed.

The holy time of Sri Rama Navami is superior to even one crores of solar eclipses. So any ritual done aimed at Rama , if done with devotion, would give great strength. Worship of Rama, reading the story of Rama's birth, fast, waking up at night , and Tharpana aimed at the manes could be done. All good things including getting of salvation will then happen. This also is a nithya ritual and should definitely be observed. If not observed it will lead to sin.

XVIII. Dasavathara kala nirnaya

Determination of the time of birth of the ten incarnations

1. Mathsya incarnation Chaithra Krishna Thryodasi
2. Koorma incarnation- Jyeshtha Krishna Dwadasi
3. Varaha incarnation Chaithra Krishna Panchami
4. Narasimha incarnation Vaishaka Shudha Chathurthi with Swathi star at dusk
5. Vamana incarnation Bhadrapada Shukla Dwadasi in Sravana star
6. Parasurama incarnation Marga seersha Krishna Dwitheeya
7. Rama incarnation Chaithra Shudha Navami in Punarvasu star
8. Balarama incarnation Vaishaka shudha Thrutheeya
9. Krishna incarnation Sravana Krishnashtami in Rohini star
10. Kalki incarnation Bhadrapada Shukla Dwitheeya

Knowing the dates of these ten incarnations and performing as much holy deeds as possible on such days would give great strength. That is slight good deeds would lead to results one crore times.

IXX . Dasami nirnaya

Determination of Dasami

1.Shankha

Dasami Thithi spreading in sun rise time in the Shukla Paksha is very holy. Dasami at Sun set in Krishna Paksha is holy. Look for these before following rituals.

XX. Ekadasi nirnaya

Determination of Ekadasi

1.Sanath kumara Samhitha

Fast should be observed in Ekadasi of Shukla as well as in Krishna Paksha.

2.Garuda Purana

Fast should definitely be observed in Ekadasi of Krishna and Shukla Paksha. This is also classified as Nithyam(essential). That is when we are alive, we should not disregard Ekadasi.

3.Vishnu Rahasya

If we aim at going to the world of Vishnu and want to lead a pleasant life with plenty of wealth, observe fast during both Ekadasi.

4.Sanath Kumara

Ekadasi fast should never be forsaken. There are redemptive procedures for one drinking alcoholic drinks but there is no redemption for not observing Ekadasi and so Ekadasi should definitely be observed. If we leave it we will get sin. There is no solution for it.

From these we understand that it is Kamyam(desirable), that is it can be observed for our personal welfare. If we have all we want and because of that not observe Ekadasi, we will get sin. So it is Nithyam. So Ekadasi is classified as Nithya Kamyam.

We would now tell how Smarthas should determine the Ekadasi fast day.

It is said that an Ekadasi day with Dasami on the same day is not suitable for fast,. In this aspect Vaishnavas and Smarthas differ. Vaishnavas are said to be those who have Deeksha in their Pancha Rathra Agama.

5.Brahmaikavatha

We are telling the meaning as given by Vaidyanatha Deekshithiyam. The four Nazhigai (24 minutes each) before sun rise is called Arunodaya time. Dasami in the beginning of Arunodaya time is called Veda ,if it is for half a Nazhigai (12 minutes) . If the relation is one Nazhigai (24 minutes) then it is called Adhiveda. If the relation extends up to the sun rise it is called Maha Veda. Even if there is a few seconds of Dasami left during sun rise it is sufficient. This is called Udaya veda.

If related with Dasami, Ekadasi is there during sun rise Sri Vaishnavas do not fast or worship during that day as they consider it unsuitable. So if during sunrise if there is Dasami , understand that it is not suitable for Smarthas.

6.Narada

If during sunrise, Ekadasi is seen with relation to Dasami , Smarthas should not observe Ekadasi on that day. If observed the good effect earned in hundreds of birth would be lost.

7.Vishnu Rahasya

During breaking of fast (Parana) Dwadasi should be there at least for a few seconds. If it is no there, then we can observe Ekadasi with Dasami Veda. This is applicable to smarthas.

If Ekadasi is there fully Dwadasi increases and is available in the next day also it is called Vanjuli Ekadasi. In such cases you have to leave Ekadasi on that day , observe fast on Dwadasi and break the fast next day. Widows and Sanyasis should not observe such Ekadasi. For them even if Dwadasi is not there for breaking the fast, it does not matter.

A householder if he observes complete fast on Shukla Paksha Ekadasi, it is desirable. But in case of Krishna Paksha Ekadasi, he need not observe complete fast but take some Tiffin/fruits .No fast should be observed on Sundays, Sankramana (first of a month) , Krishna Ekadasi , Vyatheepada and Sradha days .You can take palahara once during such days.

The Ashada Shukla Ekadasi is called Sayahna Ekadasi and Kruthika Shukla Ekadasi is called prabodhini Ekadasi. The householder should necessarily observe fast in the Krishna Paksha Ekadasi coming in between them. It indicates that complete fast need not be observed in other Krishna Paksha Ekadasi.

XXI. Dwadasi nirnaya

Determination of Dwadasi

1.Narada

If either Krishna Dwadasi or Shukla Dwadasi is related to Sravana Nakshatra, then you have to observe fast on that Dwadasi day also and break the fast only on Thryodasi day If your health does not permit fasting for two days, observe partial fast on Ekadasi day and complete fast on the Sravana Dwadasi day.

The last 4 muhurthas of Ekadasi and the first 4 muhurthas of Dwadasi (total 16 Nazhigai) is called Harivasaram. So breaking of fast should not be done in the beginning of Dwadasi.

2.Garuda

In case only very less Dwadasi is left, because it is very important to take meals before the end of Dwadasi, Sandhya vandana, Madhyahnikam, Brahma Yagna, Oupasana, Worship and Vaiswa devam can be begun at dawn and completed early.

3.Devala

If it is very difficult to break the fast (Parana) due to less of Dwadasi, think of God and take a sip of water and break the fast. Meals can be taken later. But for no reason we should ignore breaking of fast in Dwadasi.

XXII. Thryodasi nirnaya

Determination of Thryodasi

For the Vruthas to be observed in Shukla Thryodasi, Poorva vidha is supposed to be better. But in case of Krishna Thryodasi, Para vidha is supposed to be better.

XXIII. Chaturdasi nirnaya.

Determination of Chaturdasi

Lord Narasimha was born on a Chaturdasi at dusk. So the Vaisaka Shukla Chaturdasi which extends to night is superior. In the Shukla Chaturdasi of Sravana month Anantha Vrutha is being observed. That Chaturdasi should have connection with sun rise. So The Anantha Chaturdasi which is related to Pournami (full moon) is superior.

XXIV. Shiva Rathri nirnaya

Determination of Shiva Rathri

1.Skanda

The night of the Krishna paksha Chaturdasi of the Magha month is called Shiva rathri. This is liked by Lord Shiva. That is why it is called Shiva Rathri.

On that night Lord Shiva himself is fully present in all the Shiva lingas. In permanently fixed Lingas as well as in those which are portable, even without Avahana, Lord Shiva is present on that day. So the night of Magha Krishna Paksha Shiva Rathri is called Shiva Priya Rathri(night dear to Shiva).

2.Kamika

Sivarathri is mentioned in Kamika Sasthra. Magha Krishna paksha night is called Shiva Rathri. Any good deed done during this day would give easy benefits.

If on Magha Krishna Paksha , if Chaturdasi is fully there, without doubt Shiva Rathri should be observed on that day .If partial thithi comes Thryodasi is not desirable but Chaturdasi is. If Chaturdasi is there after sun set, it is considered as propitious.

3. Ishana Samhitha

The shiva Rathri time is determined here. Chaturdasi should be there at night. The time between 15th and 16th Nazhigai is defined as night. Chaturdasi should be there at that time. If during that time for two consecutive days Chaturdasi is there , then that day when it extends up to Pradosha is taken as Shiva Rathri.. It is impossible for this to happen on both days.

4. Nagarakhanda

On Shiva Rathri day, fast and spending awake the day and night as well as special poojas on Linga during the four Yamas should be done. The people who observe Shiva Rathri this way, would lead a life without any wants and reach the heaven of Lord Shiva. So Shiva Rathri is also classified as Nithya Kamyam.

XXV. Panchadasi nirnaya

Determination of Panchadasi

In case of both Amavasya(new moon) and Pournavasya (full moon) Para Vidha is desirable. But savithri Vrutha should be observed in Chaturdasi Poornima or Amavasya days. If any ritual has to be observed depending on star, in the star which is spread during sun rise , we can take bath and give alms. Fast should be observed during those stars which are spread till night.

Thus ends the chapter on Thithi determination in Samkshepa Dharma Sasthra.