

8.1 Rituals in Jain Temples

One can pray at anytime, anywhere. But a special sacred place, set-aside just for prayer, is the temple. Because it is a sacred place, there are special rules one should follow while in the temple. First of all, before you go to a temple, you should take a bath and wear clean clothes. For Pujä there should be special clothes worn only when going to the temple. Shoes must be removed outside the temple. When one sees the idols for the first time, the hands should be folded, the head should be slightly bowed and 'Namo Jinänam' should be recited. This means 'I salute Jin' and is a sign of respect. Afterwards, one performs Dasha -Trika, or the ten rituals that should be followed at a temple.

Ten Rituals of the Temple (Dasha-Trik)

01	<i>Nissih</i>	Renunciation of worldly matters, while in temple
02	<i>Pradakshinä</i>	Circumambulation - going around the Jin's idol for three times
03	<i>Pranäm</i>	Salutation with reverence
04	<i>Pujä</i>	Worship through verges of prayers
05	<i>Avasthä-chintan</i>	Contemplation upon the various states of the Lord
06	<i>Dishätyag</i>	Concentrate only on Jin's idol
07	<i>Pramärjana</i>	Cleaning the floor before sitting down
08	<i>Älambana</i>	Mental support
09	<i>Mudräs</i>	Postures for meditation
10	<i>Pranidhänä</i>	Remain meditative

01. *Nissih* (Renunciation)

Nissih means renunciation (giving up). It is said three times in the temple:

- The first *Nissih* is said while entering the temple to discard all the thoughts relating to worldly affairs (Sansär).
- Having entered the temple, it is the duty of the lay people to make sure temple management is running smoothly. One may help to clean the temple. After having taken care of such duties, the second *Nissih* is said while entering the actual area of the Jin idol sanctum (Gabhäro); to discard thinking of such things as the cleaning of the temple and its management.
- The third *Nissih* is said right after finishing pujä and worship with the physical substances (Dravyapuja) and at the beginning of the internal devotional worship (Bhävapujä or Chaityavandan).

02. Pradakshinā (Circumambulation)

You circumambulate (go around in a circle) the Jin idols three times, from the left to the right, keeping the Jin idols on your right side. The circumambulations remind you that there are three remedies to overcome attachment and hatred and to attain liberation:

- Samyag Darshan (Right Faith)
- *Samyag Jñān* (Right Knowledge)
- Samyag Chāritra (Right Conduct)

We have been revolving in the cycle of birth and death from eternity. When we obtain these three jewels of our faith in the teachings of the Jin, obtaining knowledge about the self as experienced and explained by the Jin, and instill these teachings into our behavior, our liberation becomes a certainty. We reflect upon these lines as we circumambulate around the idols.

03. Pranām (Salutation)

We salute the idols of Tirthankars three times.

- The first salutation is offered either when you see the *Shikhar*, or when you see the idols of the Tirthankars (usually at the time of entering temple), by placing the folded hands over the slightly bent forehead and saying *Namo Jinānam*.
- The second salutation is done with folded hands and bowed body as you enter the sanctum (*Gabhāro - place of idols*).
- The third salutation is done while touching the ground with five body parts (2 knees, 2 hands, and the forehead) before performing *Chaityavandan / Bhāvapujā* (internal devotional worshipping). This is called *Panchānga-pranipāt*.

04. Pujā (Worship)

According to the *Shvetāmbar* tradition, worship is offered in three different ways:

- The first worship is called *Angapujā*. This is done by anointing the different parts of an idol of Arihanta with water, sandalwood paste, and a flower.
- The second worship is called *Agrapujā*, which is done by placing incense, a lamp, rice, fruit, and sweets in front of idols.
- The third worship is *Bhāvapujā*, which is done by performing *Chaityavandan*.

The first and second worships together make *Ashta-prakāri Pujā* (eightfold worship). Collectively these two *Pujās* are called *Dravyapuja* (physical worship).

Ashta Prakāri Pujā (eightfold worship)

The *Ashta-prakāri Pujā* is done by offering eight different types of substances during worship. Internal devotional worship is reflected within. Jain Pujā symbolizes various aspects of our religion. One should reflect on such aspects while performing the Pujā rituals. There are different types of Pujā being performed for various religious and social ceremonies. The following eight materials are used in performing Pujā.

1. Jal (Water) Pujā:

By bathing the idol in the right manner we ask; may the impurities of our *Karmas* wash away from our soul. Let us bathe the idol of *Arihanta* with water in the form of equanimity from the *Kalash* in the form of knowledge; so that our *karmas* get destroyed.

2. Chandan (Sandal-wood) Pujā:

To achieve the tranquility (coolness) in our soul we worship the idol of *Arihanta* with the sandalwood paste because tranquility resides in *Arihanta* and his face is also tranquil.

3. Pushpa (Flower) Pujā:

We should live our life like flowers full of love and compassion towards all living beings. By offering fragrant and unbroken flowers to *Arihanta* we reflect upon to live our life like flower.

4. Dhoop (Incense) Pujā:

By placing incense (*Dhoop*) on the left side of the idol, we initiate the upward meditation to destroy the bad odor of *Mithyātva (false faith)* and manifest our pure soul.

5. Deepak (Lamp) Pujā:

The flame of a lamp (Deepak) represents a Pure Consciousness, or a Soul without any bondage, or a Liberated Soul. When we light the lamp in the right manner, our miseries get destroyed. As a result, we get the knowledge in the form of *Kevaljnān*, which illuminates the whole universe.

6. Akshat (Rice) Pujā:

Household rice is the kind of grain seeds which are non-fertile. One cannot grow rice plants by seeding household rice. Symbolically it means that rice is the last birth. By doing this Pujā, one should strive to put all the efforts in life in such a way that this life becomes one's last life and after the end of this life one will be liberated and not born again. By offering pure and unbroken rice grains in the form of *Nandāvarta*, we meditate in front of *Arihanta*, keeping all our worldly attachments away.

7. Naivedya (Sweet) Pujä:

In the course of the cycle of birth and death, I have remained hungry many times but that was transitory. O! *Arihanta!* give me the permanent state where there is no desire of food. The ultimate aim in one's life is to attain a life where no food is essential for our existence. That is the life of a liberated Soul who lives in Moksha forever in ultimate bliss.

8. Fal (Fruit) Pujä:

For the *Pujä* of *Arihanta*, the Supreme Being, heavenly gods bring fruits with devotion and ask for the *Moksha*, the ultimate fruit. Fruit symbolizes Moksha or Liberation.

The main purpose of Pujä is that by reciting the virtues of the Tirthankar we also remind ourselves that these same virtues are also possessed by us, and that by taking the path of the Tirthankars we can also achieve Nirvān.

05. Avasthä Chintan (Contemplating On The Different States of Arihanta)

After completing the external worship, you must carry out this contemplation. The male should stand on the right side of the idol of *Arihanta* (that is the left side while facing the idol) while the female should stand on the left side of it (that is the right side while facing the idol). Standing this way, you should contemplate on the three different states that *Arihantas* went through. They are

- Pindastha Avasthä (ordinary embodied souls)
- Padastha Avasthä (omniscient embodied souls)
- Rupätita Avasthä (liberated souls).

06. Dishätyag (Concentrate Only On Jin's idol)

Now you should prepare for the Bhävapujä worship, known as Chaityavandan. You should not be distracted by anything. Your eyes and mind should concentrate on the idol and you should not look up, down, sideways, or behind.

07. Pramärjana (Cleaning The Ground Before Sitting Down)

Before sitting you should clean the ground three times with your upper cloth, so that no small insect may be hurt by you sitting there.

08. Älambana (Support)

Having sat down, you must keep three supports in your mind: (1) the image of the Lord, (2) the sutras you recite, and (3) their meanings. Your mind should be concentrated on these three things.

09. Mudrä (Posture)

The correct posture is very much necessary to attain sublime concentration during *Chaityavandan*.

Yoga Mudrä: During *Chaityavandan* and the recital of the sutras, you must sit straight with both palms together and the fingers of one hand in the spaces between the fingers of the other hand, with the elbows to the sides of your stomach.

Muktä-shukti Mudrä: You must keep your hands in the posture of an oyster shell, with both hands together so that there is a space between the two palms where the fingers meet. This posture is used at the time of recitation of the sutras *Jävanti Cheyi Ayim*, *Jävanti Kevi Sähu*, and *Jai Viyaräya*.

Jin Mudrä: At the time of *Käyotsarga*, you stand up in such a way that there is a distance of 4 inches between your two feet at the toes in the front while the distance between two heels must be less than four inches. Your hands should be hanging down. Your eyes should be fixed on the tip of your nose. Jin stood in *Käyotsarga* with this posture.

10. Pranidhäna (Remain Meditative)

You should engage your mind, speech and bodily senses in *Chaityavandan*. By the correct bodily postures and senses focused on the Bhäv Pujä, by correct pronunciation of sutras, and by focusing your mind on *Chaityavandan* and not letting it wander, you complete the final procedure of *Pranidhäna*.

Members of some Jain sects e.g. *Sthänakaväsi* and *Teräpanthi* do not worship in a temple.

Precautions

Here are the precautions to be taken in respect of worship.

- You must respect the idols as living Arihantas. In case, the idol of Arihanta has to be carried from one place to another; it should be carried in reverence by holding it straight with the support of both hands beneath it.
- The flowers selected should have naturally fallen down, and should not be plucked from plants for this purpose. The buds of the flowers should not be removed. When making a garland of the flowers, a needle should not be used for stringing them together, and they should not be washed.

- While using a soft brush to clear things stuck to the idols of the Jinas, it should not make even the slightest noise. You may clean the idols with a wet thick cloth to remove sandalwood marks. Do not rub the idols roughly.
- The flowers, the decorations, and the sandalwood paste should be kept on a clean plate and should not be allowed to fall to the ground. In case they do fall, they should not be used in Pujä.
- While preparing the sandalwood paste, you must cover your mouth with a clean cloth. When you finish, you should wash your hands and the stone slab properly.
- You must recite the hymns and sutras relating to the Chaityavandan (prayer) in such a way, that you do not disturb the concentration and devotion of others.
- While reciting Chaityavandan, you should not engage in any other activities, including forming the swastika from rice.
- When you leave the temple, you should not turn your back towards the idols of Arihantas. Rather, you should walk backwards a few steps first and then leave.

The Jain religion is based on internal devotion. The Kriyä (associated outside activities) are simply to strengthen your internal devotional thought processes.

Conclusion

Going to a Jain temple is one of the most important daily essential activities in a householder's life. There are several different procedures to be observed in the temple. It is of utmost importance not to wear silk or leather articles inside the temple (or anywhere).