



Temples, Rituals, Symbols in Hinduism

Prof Raman Gokal

What is Hindu Dharma?

What is Religion?

What is the purpose of Human Life?

Why do we need rituals and symbols?

- Sanatan -eternal Dharma - laws of nature
Dhru - uphold, sustain, support, hold together, wear
- Formula or code of righteous conduct covering every sphere of activity, in every capacity or role in relation to others, by which we can in a practical way achieve harmony, based on the teachings of Vedas. Need for belief in God
- Religion – re ligare- connect = to reconnect to our basis, the science of living
- Yoga – ‘yuj’ – join; science by which we join with the Almighty



Hindu View of Life Journey of Life



Vedic
Principles
(knowledge
scientific)



Worship
(with faith
not fear)

Self Realisation
Truth/Moksha/One
With Almighty



karma
birth/death
ignorance/desire
vasanas



Soul/self



BRAHMAN GOD

Body

Blood and flesh

Mind

Mind and life-force

Intellect

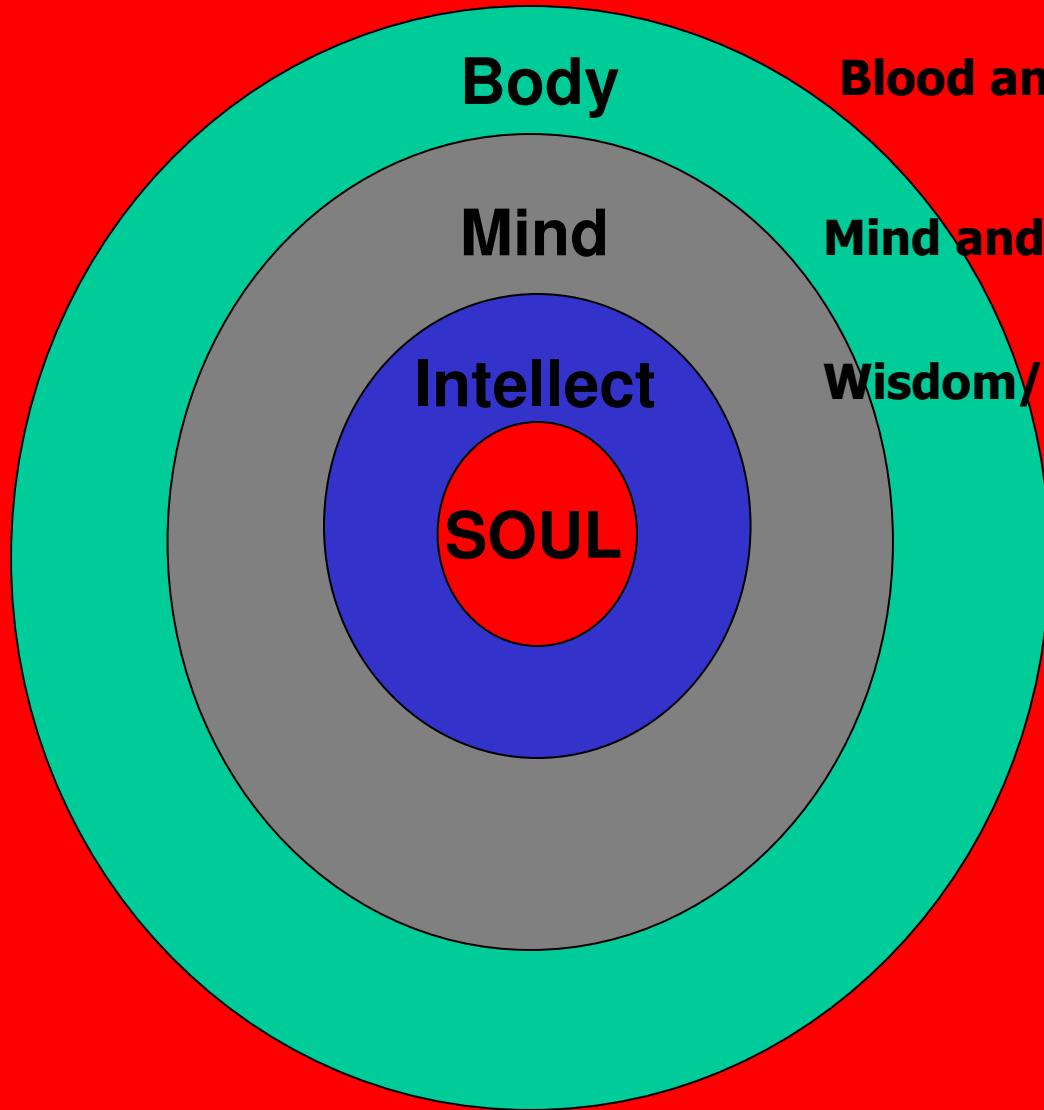
Wisdom/ever new bliss

SOUL

**BRAHMAN
GOD**

**BRAHMAN
GOD**

BRAHMAN -GOD



Some of our concepts are very difficult to grasp
Akaar, Nirakaar, Omnipotent, Omnipresent etc

LIFE OF A HINDU

Constant reminder of the purpose of existence



UNFOLD SELF + REALISE GODHEAD

See God in everything, including ourselves

Difficult

We need aids, like toys, in the early stages

Need discipline, guidance

TEMPLES MOORTI PUJA SYMBOLS RITUALS



Mind towards GOD → Steadiness → Spiritual advancement



Temples



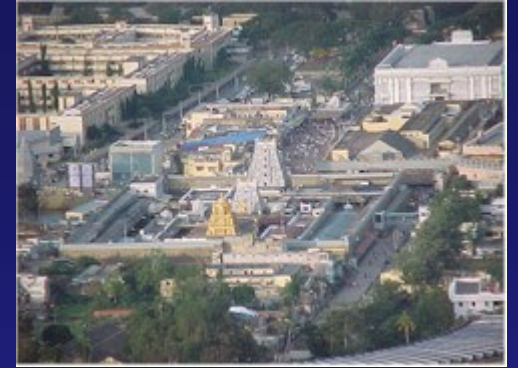
Temples – Places of Pilgrimage

- **Situated on top of a hill**
high altitude – spiritual evolution is above all
- **Path narrow and rugged**
great effort to overcome temptations and challenges
- **Pilgrims walk single file**
you are alone in pursuit of goal (guru, scriptures)
- **Pilgrims carry fruit/flowers**
represent desires or vasanas (karma)
- **Visit the temple**
exhaustion of vasanas – unfolding of inner self

Journey of Life



Tirupati Balaji



- The ancient and sacred temple of Sri Venkateswara is located on the seventh peak, Venkatachala (Venkata Hill) of the Tirupati Hill
- Typically in India, temples are at the tops of hills, as is the case with this one. Nowadays people can drive to the top, but many pilgrims will climb the hill, which is no easy or short task.



TEMPLES



- Special house of worship
- Great spiritual merit
- Symbolically designed

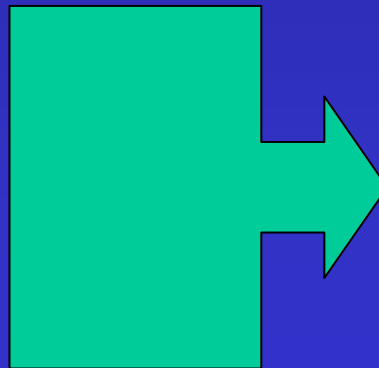
Location

Construction

Rituals

Deities

Symbols



Path man has to take



Self realisation

TEMPLES

Purpose

1. Create religious atmosphere
2. Feeling of peace and calm
3. Awakens divine thoughts and actions
4. Pray together – increases purity in community
 - builds solidarity
 - decreases quarrels
5. Deity is 'King of Kings'
6. Represents body (temple) and creation (5 elements)
7. Social and educational

TEMPLES



- **Flag** – saffron – sun’s life giving glow
 - purity, devotion, godliness
- **Moorti** (Deities)
- **Symbols**
- **Building** – tall domed shaped –
Kalash is the name for the highest part of the temple (the Dome). So Kalash represents the highest knowledge - the temple of knowledge.
 - 3 passages represent man
 - God as a cosmic person
 - Energy concentrated below it

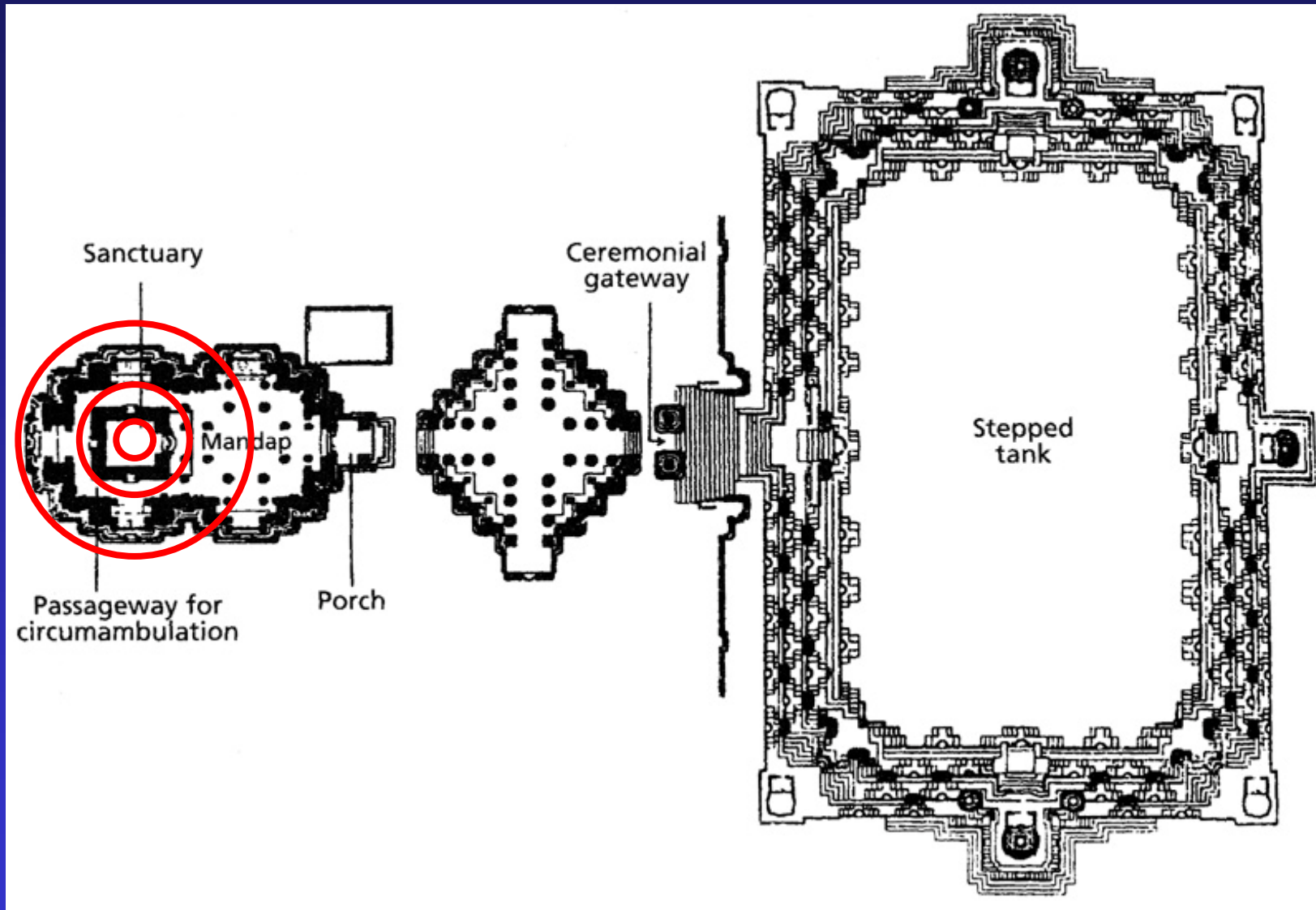
Temple Architecture is Highly Symbolic

Every temple has 3 Prakaras - surrounding walls creating passageway for *pradakshina* (clockwise)

- represent 3 bodies – gross, subtle and causal

- within these lies the Deity with a burning lamp - represents the ATMAN and everlasting light of wisdom, which can be achieved only when one has gained mastery over three physical states body, mind and intellect

HINDU TEMPLE

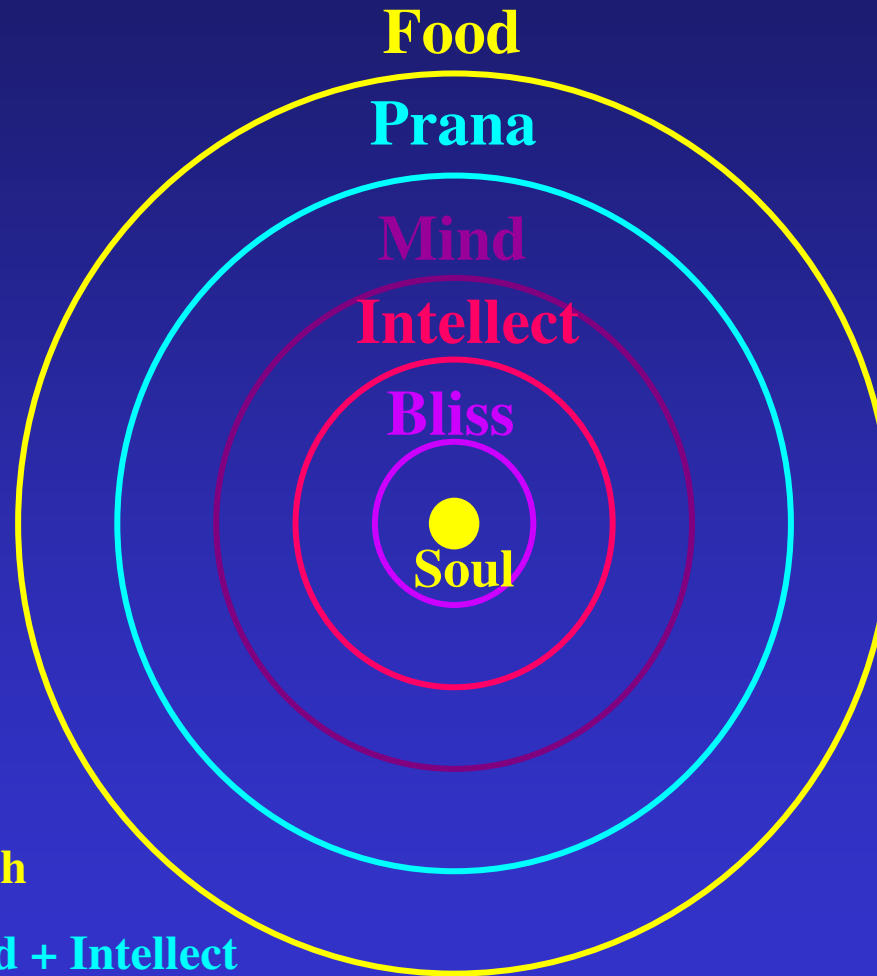


Temple Architecture is Highly Symbolic

- It represents GOD as a cosmic person
- Essential parts are
 - 'Garbhagriha' Sanctum sanctorum
 - 'Antarala' adjoining passages
 - 'Navaranga' Mandap or multi-purpose hall
- Represents man with GOD residing in his heart

Some temples have 5 walls and passages
- represents the 5 sheaths

The 5 sheaths (Panchkhosa)



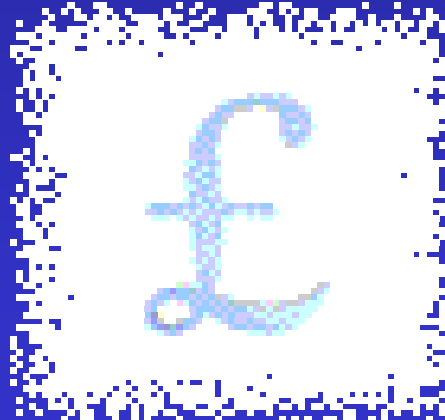
The 3 Bodies

Physical Body : Food Sheath

Subtle Body : Prana + Mind + Intellect

Causal Body : Bliss Sheath

SYMBOLS IN HINDUISM

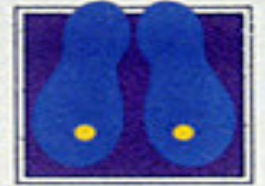


SYMBOLISM IN HINDUISM

- Religion deals with such abstract concepts as Atman, God, Creation, Self
 - Symbolism → aid in the understanding of these abstract concepts
- Something concrete ↔ something abstract

**SACRED SYMBOLS WHICH EMBODY
UNSPOKEN INTUITIONS OF THE
SPIRIT/GOD/SELF**

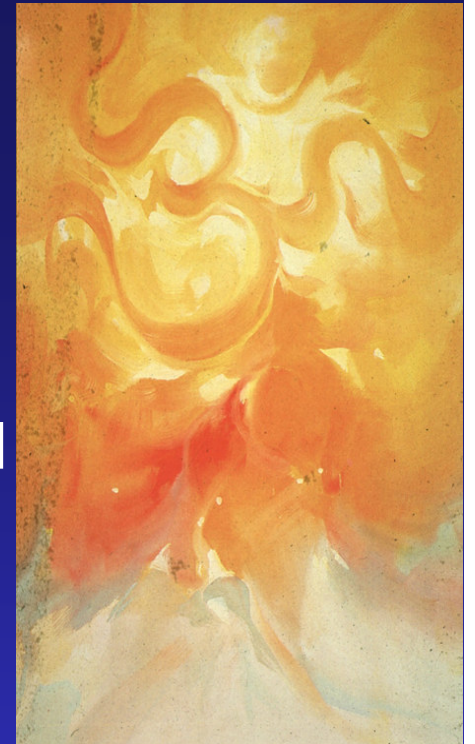
SACRED SYMBOLS



AUM – &

अ ऊ म

- Bindu Vishpot (The Big Bang) produced vibrations, radiations, wave lengths of sound – symbolic of OM
- Essence of all Mantras – gives power to all mantras
- OM – 3 sounds a – u – m : 5 syllables
vibrations – rolling, permeating
chanting – harmony, peace, bliss,
full range of sounds
- Om in Vedas – leads one upwards –
uplifts the soul



Om: Symbol of the Absolute

- Ancient teachings and modern science agree: you, I, all living things, all things in existence are made up at their most essential level of vibrating, pulsing energy.
- For millennia, mystics have recounted their experience of this energy, which is said to manifest in our hearing awareness as a humming vibration around and within everything else.
- In the Sanskrit tradition, this sound is called "*Anahata Nada*," the "*Unstruck Sound*." Literally, this means "*the sound that is not made by two things striking together*." So, sound that is *not* made of two things striking together is the sound of primal energy, the sound of the universe itself.

Om: Symbol of the Absolute

- Om or Aum is of paramount importance in Hinduism. This symbol is a sacred syllable representing Brahman, the impersonal Absolute — omnipotent, omnipresent, and the source of all manifest existence.
- Brahman, in itself, is incomprehensible; so a symbol becomes mandatory to help us realize the Unknowable.
- Om, therefore, represents both the unmanifest (*nirguna*) and manifest (*saguna*) aspects of God. That is why it is called *Pranava*, to mean that it pervades life and runs through our *prana* or breath.

Om: Symbol of the Absolute

Katha Upanishad I

“The goal which all the Vedas declare, which all austerities aim at, and which men desire when they lead the life of continence ... is OM. This syllable OM is indeed Brahman. Whosoever knows this syllable obtains all that he desires. This is the best support; this is the highest support. Whosoever knows this support is adored in the world of Brahma.”

Mandukya Upanishad

“Om is the one eternal syllable of which all that exists is but the development. The past, the present, and the future are all included in this one sound, and all that exists beyond the three forms of time is also implied in it”.

The Power of &

- While meditating, when we chant Om, we create within ourselves a vibration that attunes sympathy with the cosmic vibration and we start thinking universally. The momentary silence between each chant becomes palpable.
- Mind moves between the opposites of sound and silence until, at last, it ceases the sound. In the silence, there is no thought. This is the state of trance, where the individual self merges with the Infinite Self in the pious moment of realization.
- In this nothingness is everything
- Such is the immeasurable power of Om.



SWASTIK

**Swasti = *su*-good; *asti*-to be
= auspiciousness
Symbol of auspiciousness
(Good luck and well-being)**



- Represents the world-wheel or life-cycle
- Eternal changing world around a fixed unchanging centre or God
- Centre with 4 limbs
- Creates an impression of perpetual motion
- Symbol of welfare and spiritual development
- The fragmentation of Bindu scattered in all directions – appears like present Swastik

Hitler and the Swastika



A version of the Swastika was notoriously adopted by Hitler's Nazi Party and hence associated with racist, in particular anti-Semitic, views. Many Jews were persecuted and suffered under Hitler's tyranny and we can understand the deep pain that Jews feel in remembering those awful atrocities.

The Swastika, however, was hijacked and corrupted by Hitler, and it is unfortunate that many people now only associate it with the Nazi representation. In truth, this symbol has been in existence for more than 5,000 years. The word 'Swastika' is in the ancient language of Sanskrit and comes from two root words: *su* meaning 'good' and *asti* meaning 'to be' or 'to exist'; a literal translation would be 'let good prevail'. The symbol is held in very high regard by Hindus, for whom it symbolises auspiciousness, peace and purity. The four arms facing the four directions symbolise the eternal world wheel (life-cycle) or the eternally changing world around a fixed, unchanged centre, God.

The Plan of Journey of Life

Proposed by our Great Rishis (Seers)

- Where are we going?

4 Purushartas

- Which stages do we pass through?

4 Ashrams

- Which direction do we follow?

16 Sanskaras

**This is the basis of the Swastik –
4 has special significance**

SWASTIK

- **4 Ashramas** – Brahmacharya (youth, learning, student life – builds foundation)
 - Grihasta (family life – contribution to society)
 - Vanprastha (retirement – winding down)
 - Sanyasa (renunciation – preparing for Reality)
- **4 Purusharthas** – Dharma (rightful duty), Artha (material prosperity) Kama (enjoyment), Moksha (salvation)
- **4x4 Sanskaras** – 16 sacraments (not rituals)
 - refine and give direction from conception to death, with scientific basis
- **4 Vedas** – Rig (knowledge), Yajur (action duties), Sama (worship), Atharva (general knowledge)
- **4 directions** - space
- **4 seasons** – cyclic nature of time
- **4 Varnas** – social classes of society



KALASH - KUMBH



Spherical-based container with leaves and coconut

- Spherical shape = entire creation encloses **space**
- Leaves and coconut = fruit and vegetation product of **sun's** light (photosynthesis) and **earth** (elements)
- Contains **air** and **water** – purity and faith

Kalash represents the 5 physical elements that make up the entire cosmic creation

Rituals in Hinduism



Rituals in Temples

- **Rituals – prescribed order of performing a task or religious practice**
- **Why are rituals necessary?**
 - **give structure to our life**
 - **binds life in an organised way**
 - **discipline**
 - **binds people together (eg temples, reading scriptures together)**
 - **transform our samskaras and uplift us and bring the mind to a higher level of consciousness**
 - **transform our character**
 - **need to be done regularly**

Rituals in Temples

- **Why do people turn up their noses at rituals?**
 - do not understand meaning or place
 - no explanation of ritual
 - no feeling or faith behind ritual
 - no results seen (we live in a age where we want instant results)
 - real results are inwards
 - rituals are boring, mechanistic and repetitive
 - youth want variety and change; need science!
 - faith and knowledge – constant conflict

Rituals in Temples

- **Rituals is to man as God is to Ultimate Reality**
- **Forge a new relationship with GOD**
- **‘Devo Bhutam Devo Bhavam’**
You need to become God to know God
- **Concepts of God to underlie rituals**
 - **He is beyond mind and speech – unknown but not unknowable**
 - **He is formless with infinite auspicious qualities**
 - **He has form and qualities (whatever form appears to us that we follow)**

Rituals in the Temple

- Remove shoes – respect and cleanliness
- Ring Bell
- Namaskar – Namaste (Na aham aste – I am not here)
- Prostrate - Shastanga
- Worship, prayers and Puja to Deities (God)
- Aarti and prasaad



Ringling the Bell



- become alert, conscious of Him

आगमार्थं तु देवानां गमनार्थं तु रक्षसाम्
कुर्वे घण्टारवं तत्र देवताह्वान लक्षणम् ।।

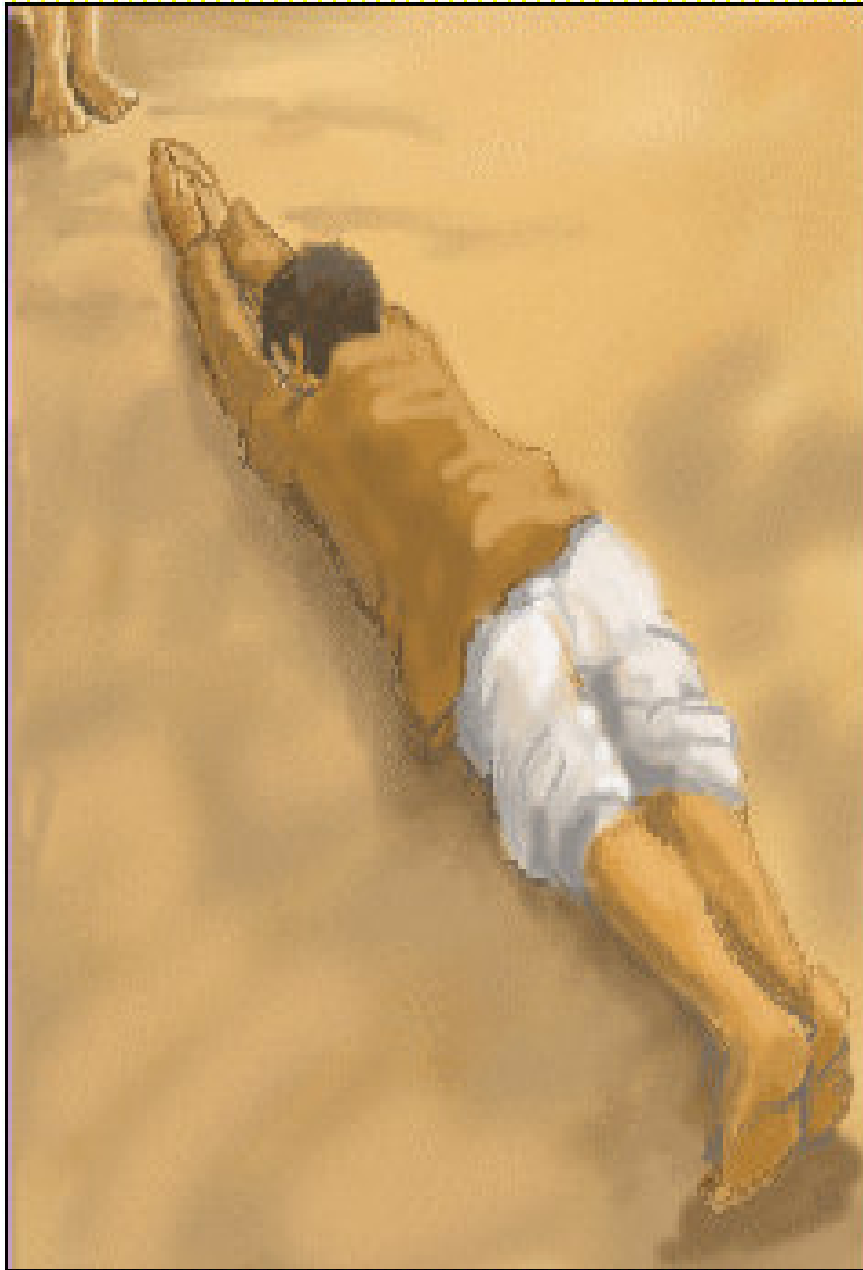
*Aagamaartbamtu devaanaam
gamanaartbamtu raksbasaam
Kurve gbantaaravam tatra
devataabvaabna laksbanam*

I ring this bell indicating the invocation of divinity
So that virtuous and noble forces enter my heart
And the demonic and evil forces
From within and without, depart

Namaskar or Namaste

Inspite of any differences between us (5 Koshas), I put these aside and with all my physical strength (folded hands) and my intellect (bowed head) I pay respect to the Atma/Divinity in you.





Shashtanga is the most reverential and solemn form of greeting.

Shashtanga

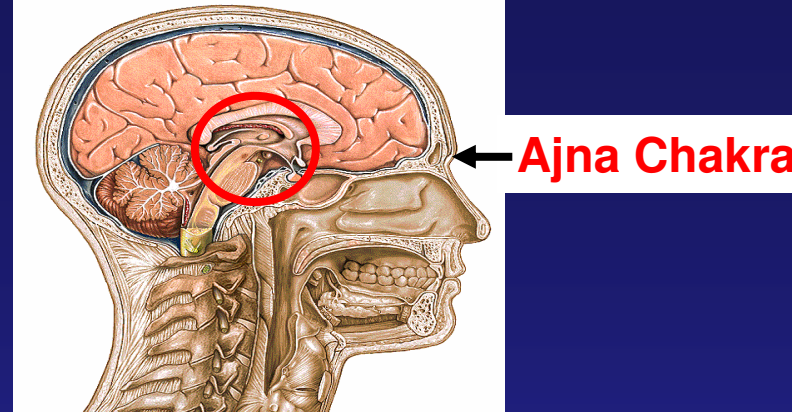
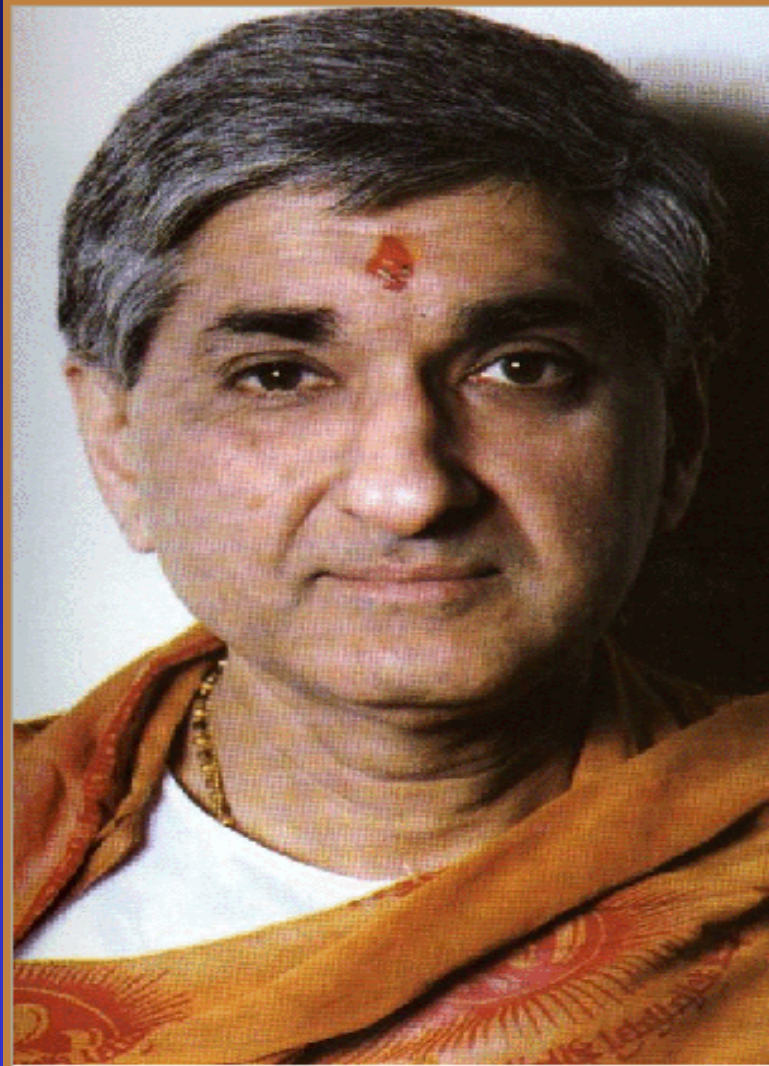
- Lies flat on his stomach, with his arms extended beyond his head and then clasps the feet of the Lord
- It is called Shastanga because eight parts of the body touch the ground. Those parts are: knees, belly, chest, chin, nose, temple, hands and elbows .
- Head (intellect) and heart (mind) are at God's feet (Reality) = Humility and mans merger with God

Upasangrahan - touching the feet of elders or teachers



- Touching the feet in prostration is a sign of respect for the age, maturity, nobility and divinity that our elders personify. It symbolizes our recognition of their selfless love for us and the sacrifices that they have done for our welfare.
- The good wishes (Sankalpa) and blessings (Aashirvaada) of elders are highly valued in India. We prostrate to seek them.
- Good thoughts create positive vibrations. When we prostrate with humility and respect, we invoke the good wishes and blessings of elders which flow in the form of positive energy to envelop us.

Tilak



- Forehead is seat of memory
- Third Eye – Ajna Chakra
- Mark of respect of higher centres in the brain
- Retention memory of the Lord
- Sandalwood – cooling properties
- pleasant smell
ones head should remain cool
and have pleasant thoughts
- Reminder of vows (Bindi –
symbolise marriage and vows)

The Third Eye – Agna Chakra

- **PITUITARY GLAND.** The pituitary gland is known as the master gland because it acts as a main control center that sends messages to all the other glands.
- The pituitary gland is called the “seat of the mind” regulating emotional thoughts, concrete thought and intellectual concepts.
- **PINEAL GLAND** is known as the “seat of illumination, intuition and cosmic consciousness”.
- It is said that the joining of the essences of these two glands in the third ventricle is what opens the **Third Eye.**
- The pineal gland inhibits the immediate discharging of thoughts into action. This inhibition causes us to look inward and to deeply ponder our actions and reactions.
- This introversion is indispensable for self-realization as it displaces our attention from the outer world to the inner. When the external world disappears, our circle of consciousness contracts because our primary attention is focused upon our inner self. It is this inner attention that magnetizes “spiritual light” into the pineal gland. When the pituitary and pineal glands are fully developed and stimulated through meditation, their vibrations fuse and activate the Third Eye.

Puja

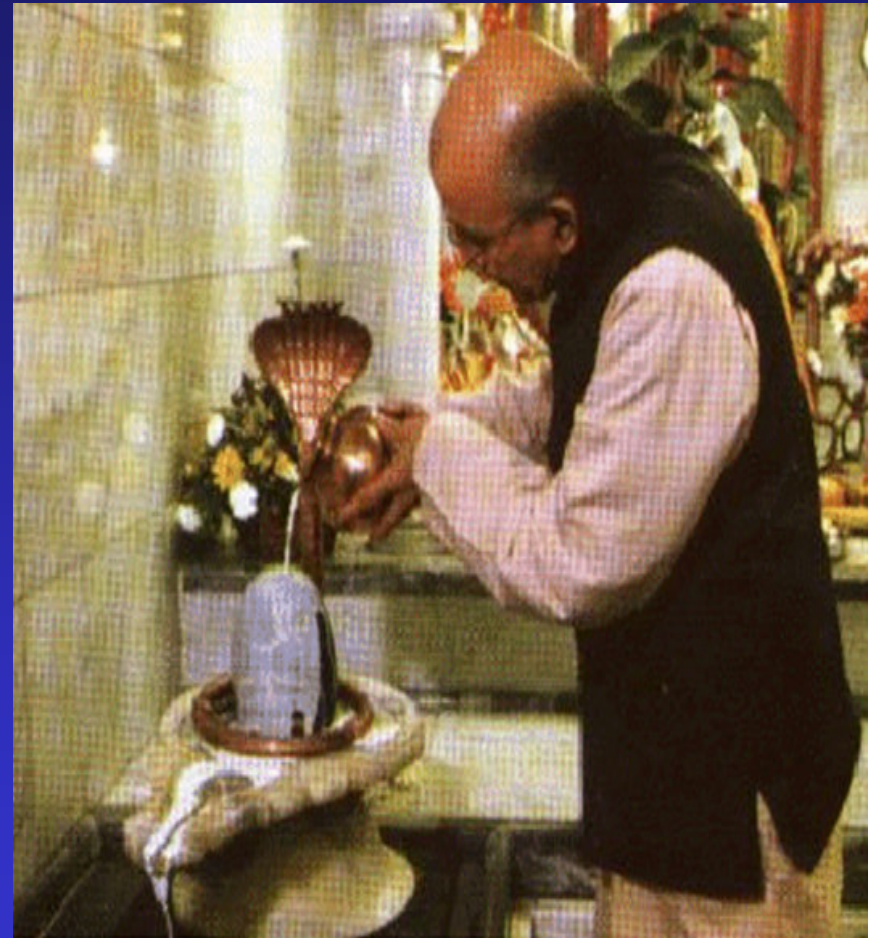


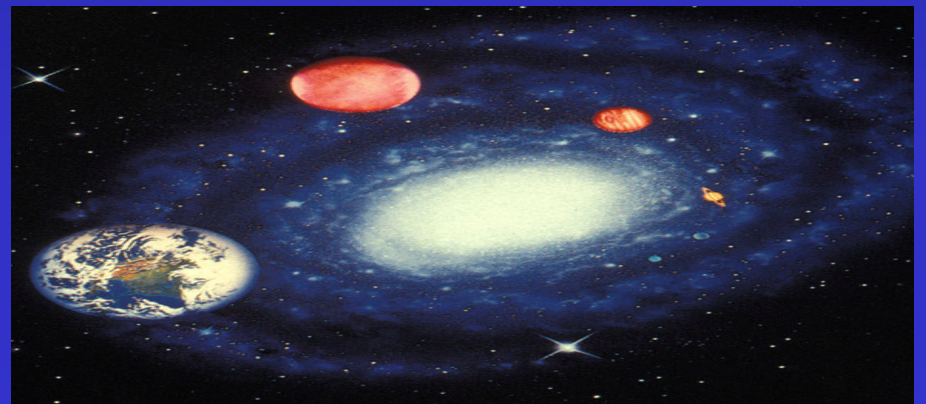
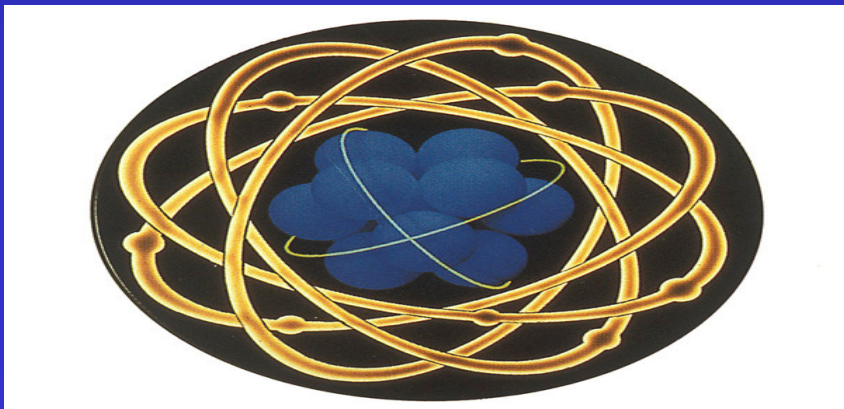
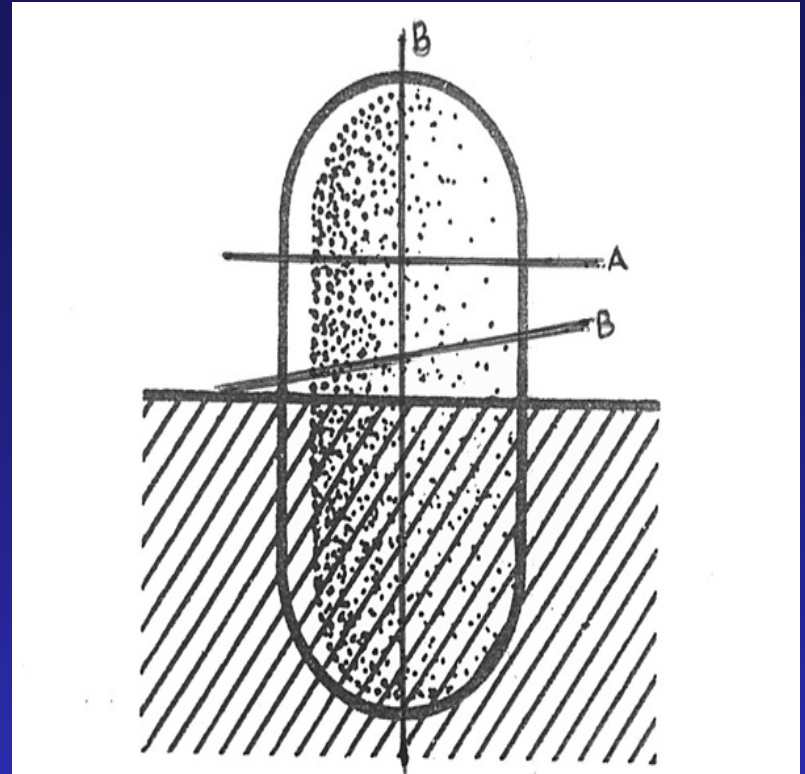
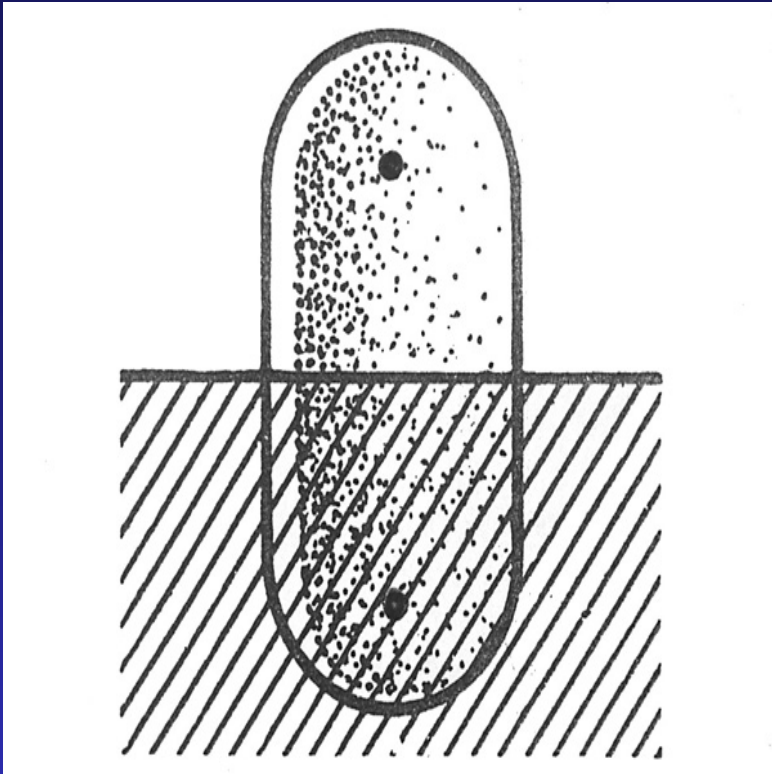
Puja is a means of direct personal communion with God by means of worship. There are many rituals.

Offering of perfumed substances, flowers, incense, lighting Diya, fresh fruits as prasaad are five elements of traditional puja, which culminates in Aarti

Pouring of Milk on Shiv Linga

- The omnipotent power of GOD is represented by the Flame of Fire. In the Vedic period this was represented by the Havan Kund and in the Puranic period by the Shiv Linga
- The pouring of milk on the Shiv Linga is the same as pouring of ghee on the sacred flames of a Havan Yajna.
- Both these acts represent selfless action





Worship and Prayer

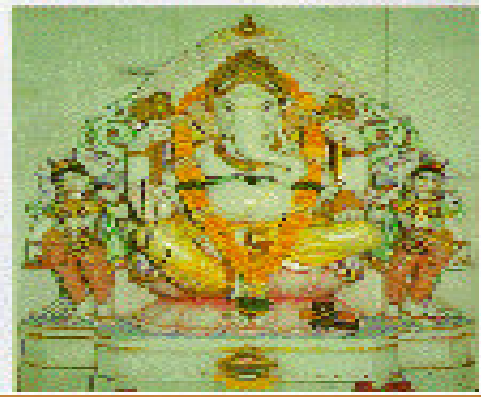
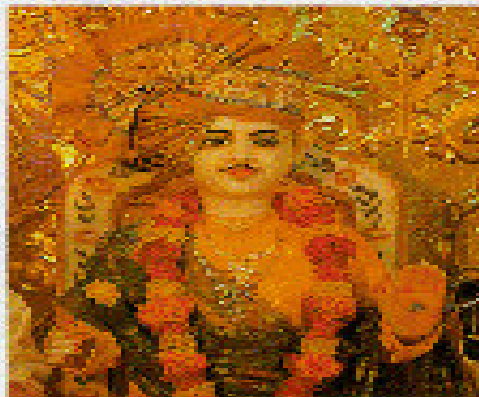
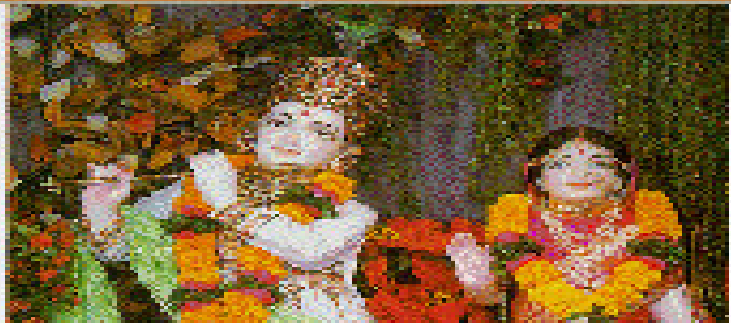
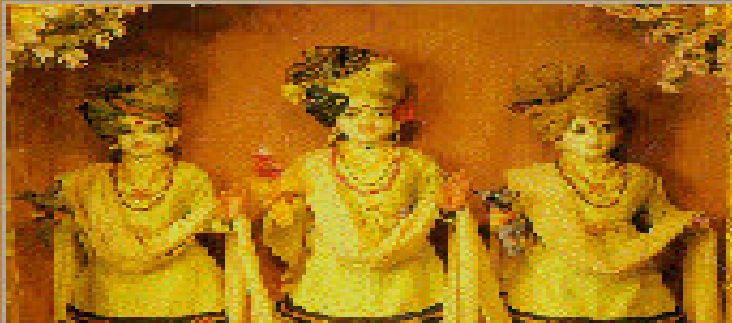
- **Methods of communion with God**
- **Common motive is love of God**
- **The rule of love is to give something to the one we love – so it is natural for the devotee to offer something to God – this act is worship**
- **There are times when our love takes the form of asking something from the one we love – make our needs known to Him – this asking is prayer**
- **The greatest form of prayer is gratitude for what we have been given**

We pray to Gods and Goddesses (Deities)

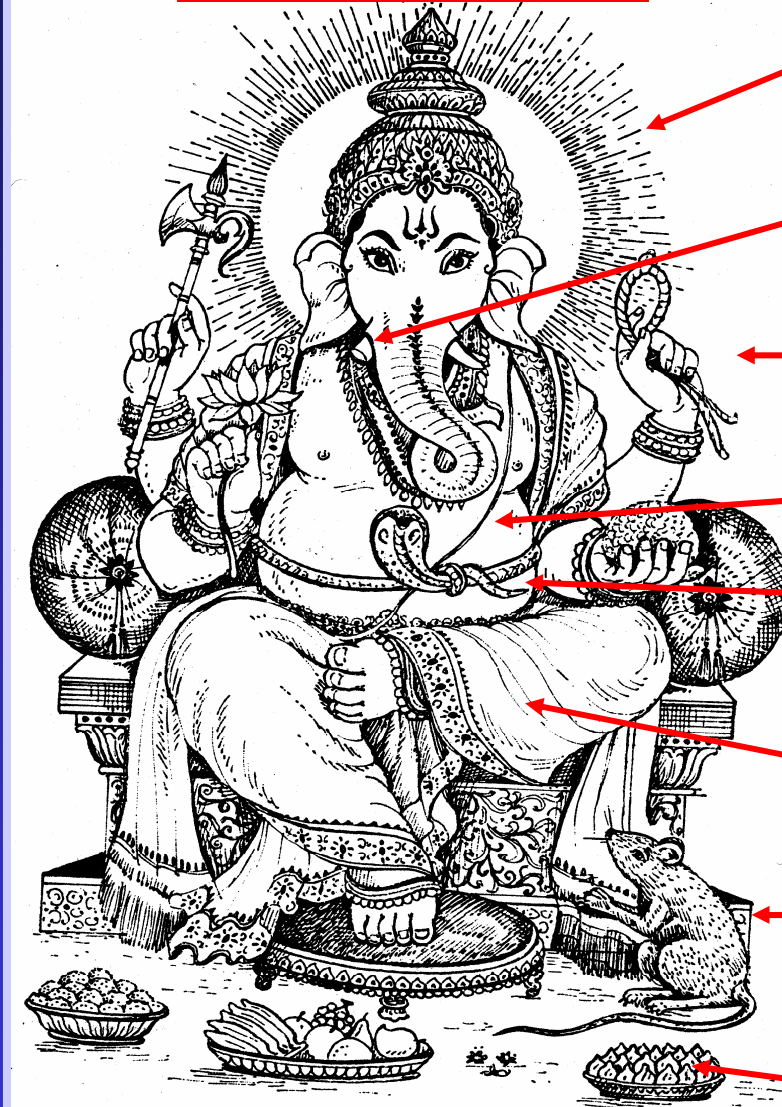
Fasting (Vrat or Upvaas)

- **Fasting has spiritual, mental and physical significance**
 - **it trains and conditions the body to be worthy of divine realisation; Hindus believe that the soul acquires a human body for this very purpose**
 - **mentally it controls passion, improves will power and self-discipline**
 - **physically it promotes good health by giving rest to the internal organs**
- **Special fasting days eg Navratri, Shivratri, Janmashthami, Karwa Chauth etc**

DEITIES IN THE TEMPLE



GANESHA



Elephant head - human form

One tusk is broken

Four arms - axe, rope, lotus and rice

Large stomach

Serpent Girdle

Sits with one leg crossed

Rat at feet - looking up

Variety of foods

GANESHA - Elephant Head



- **First step in spiritual education**
 - Sravana (ears) - listening to eternal truths
 - Manana (head) - reflecting on these truths
 - Gain wisdom through sravana and manana
- **Intellect** (trunk) - faculty to discriminate; trunk has fine movements and gross ones - man must master both
- **Perfection - absolute wisdom**
above pairs of opposites (likes/dislikes; good/bad)
man is tossed between two opposite (tusks)
one broken - overcome these pairs of opposites

GANESHA - Four Arms, Large Belly Folded Leg

- **Axe** - destruction of desires
- **Lotus** - perfection, purity (ultimate goal)
- **Rope** - pull yourself out of worldly attachments - tie yourself to the Self or God
- **Rice** - desires. When cooked, rice does not grow - do not let desires grow and control you. 'Modaka' - that which gives bliss and joy
- **Large belly** - stomach, which digests food represents ability to 'digest' experiences, desires
- **Folded leg** - one leg dealing with worldly duties
 - other concentrating on GOD
 - balance practical and spiritual lives

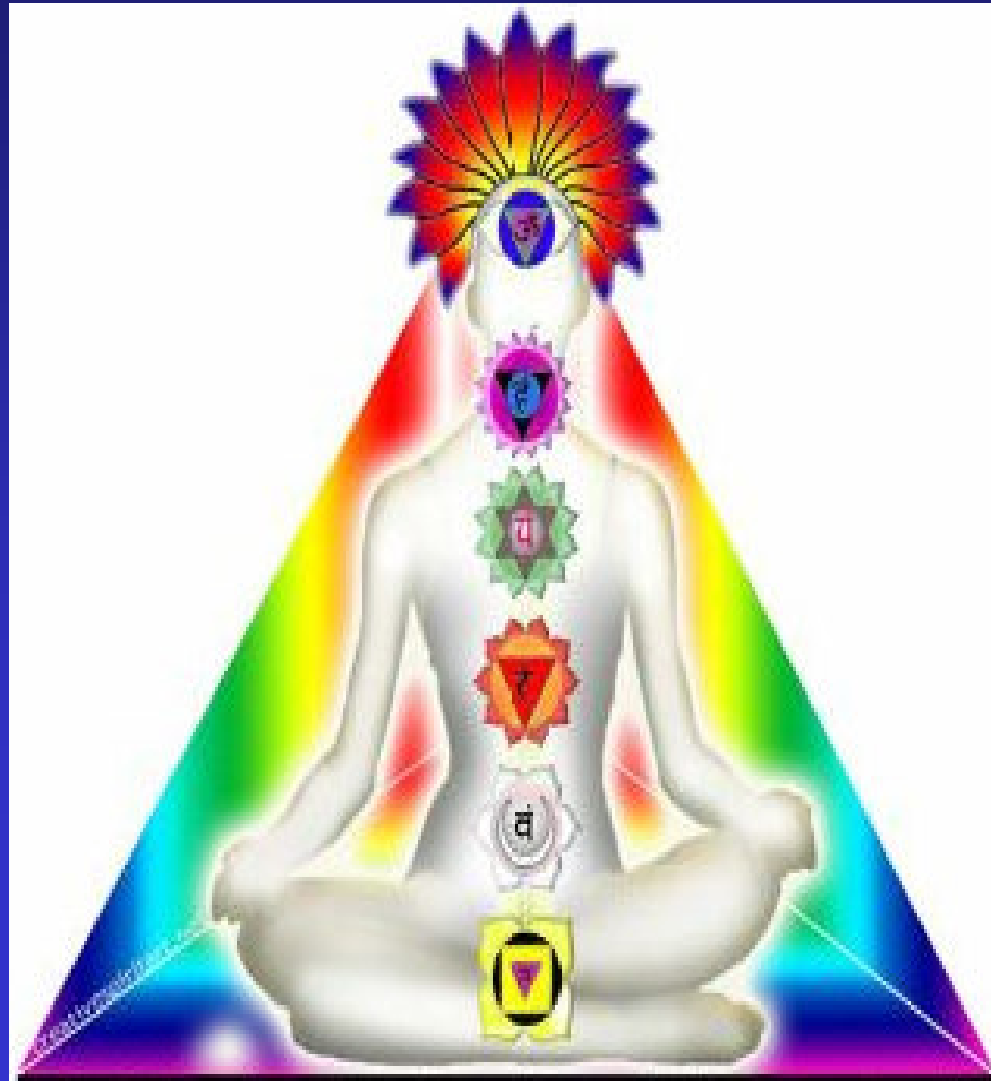


GANESHA - Food and Rat



- **Rat** - greedy and hoards food
 - Does not touch food; waits for masters command
 - Looking up = desires in perfect man are absolutely controlled
- **Food** - represents material wealth, power, prosperity
 - at his feet = command over them
= control over them

Serpent Girdle – Linked with The Chakras



Serpent Girdle – Linked with the Chakras

ParaBrahman



Sahasrara Chakra

Ardhanari



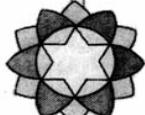
Ajna Chakra

Durga



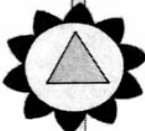
Vishuddha Chakra

Shivji



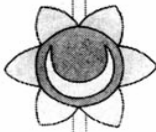
Anahata Chakra

Vishnu



Manipura Chakra

Bramha



Swadhisthana Chakra

Ganesha



Muladhara Chakra

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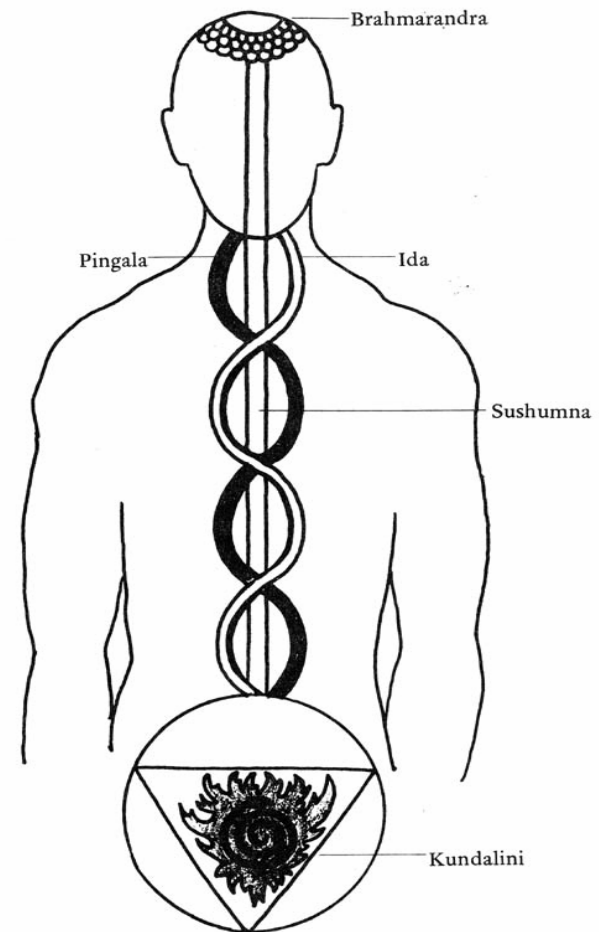
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Kundalini

- Patanjali never mentions Kundalini neither do some of the authoritative texts on Yoga (eg Yoga Yagnavalkya), who regard it 'as a hindrance in the spiritual development of a person, an impediment that needs to be removed in order to be touched and transformed by the energy from heaven.'
- Human – situated along an axis from heaven to earth and the proper inner order demands a flow of prana from above downwards. Naturally the powers from below, coiled up in the organism as Kundalini resist and try to block the entry and movement of prana from above.
- “ Kundalini is nothing but avidya (ignorance). In the same way as Avidya has become so powerful that it stops purusa (spirit, the very person) from seeing, kundalini blocks prana from entering the sushumna” (Desikachar in the Heart of Yoga page 244)

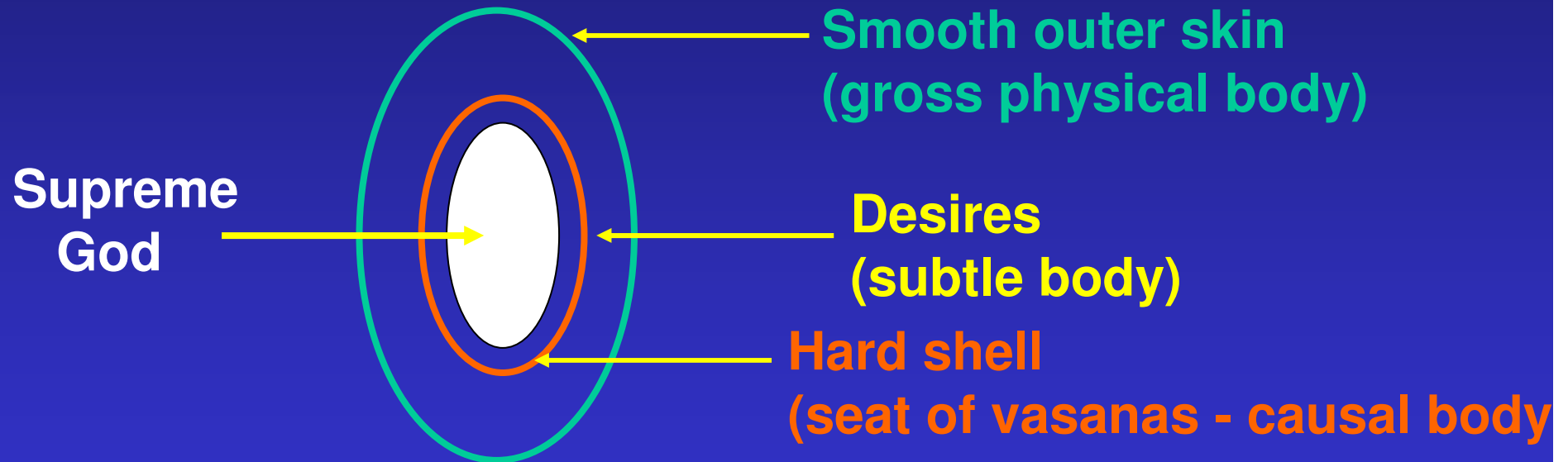
GANESHA

- **Discriminates between pairs of opposites and above them**
- **Digest all experiences and desires**
- **Think of God all the time even though involved in worldly tasks**
- **Control over desires, material wealth**
- **Represents Shabda Bramhan ie Cosmic vibratory energy or 'AADIBEEJA' or the original seed of energy, which is the egg of creation 'HIRANYAGARBA'**

Offering of Flowers

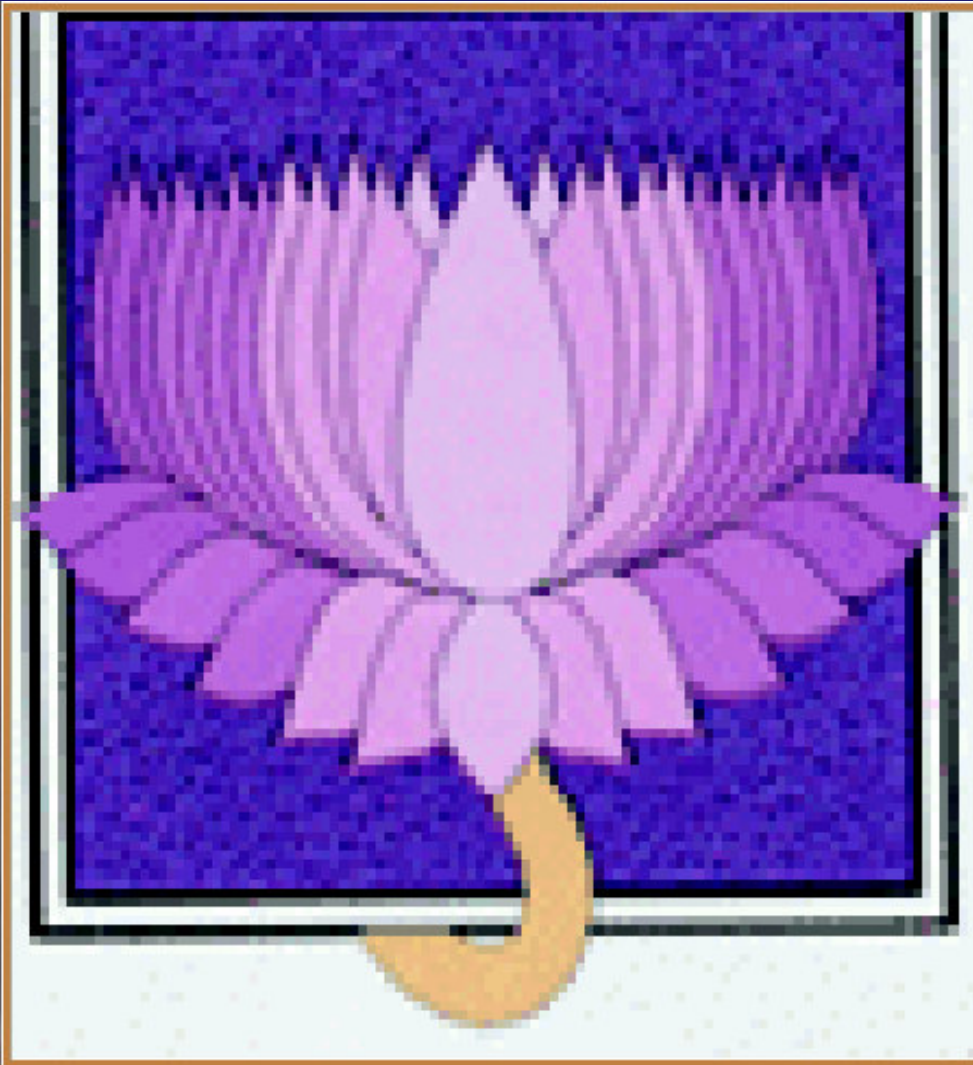
- **Flowers represent** – vasanas or desires
 - beauty and fragrance
- **Ritual of flower offering:**
 - 5 fingers of right hand pick up flower gently
 - Turn fingers with flower upwards
 - Gently offer flower to the Lord's feet
- **Offering Flowers –**
 - giving up desires and becoming one with God
 - 5 fingers – 5 sense and personality sheaths (koshas)
 - When fingers turned downwards - picking up vasana
 - If senses directed to Higher Self (fingers turned upwards) then vasanas get eliminated
- **Inner Bliss** – make life like flowers beautiful and fragrant

Offering of Fruit - Coconut



**Priest breaks the shell, tears the tuft, exposes the white kernel
End of all desires – oneness with God**

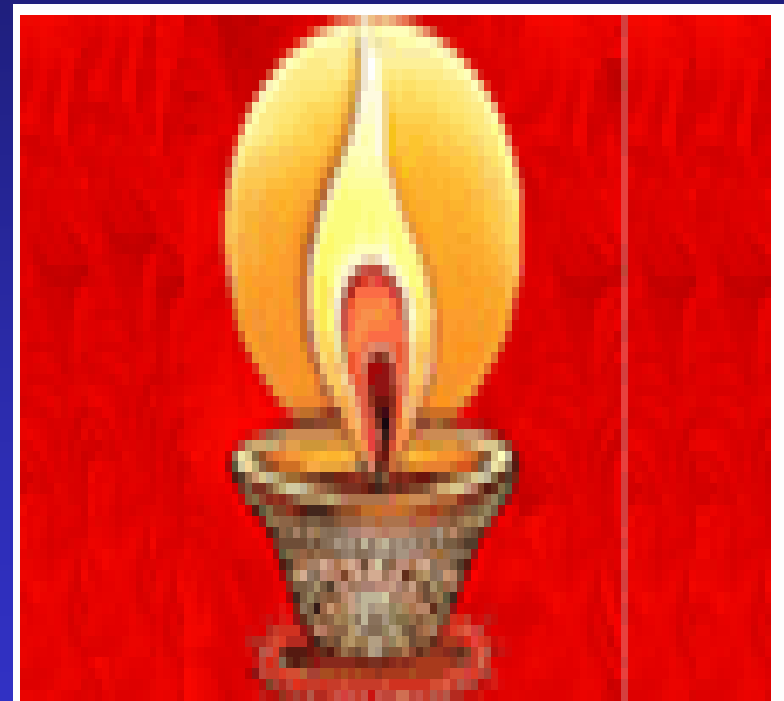
The Lotus Flower – symbols of truth, auspiciousness and beauty



- Symbol of vegetation and prosperity
- Born in mud and unfolds into beautiful flower
- Symbol of Universe coming out of Primeval waters
- Symbolises that it is possible to raise oneself out of evil to purity (journey of life)

Deep or Jyoti

- **Dispelling of ignorance** and awakening of the divine light within us
- **Depicts the Sun (Surya)** – giver of all energy for life
- **Single-mindedness towards God** – like the light of the jyoti that burns without flickering in a windless place
- **Atmosphere pure and serene** – soft glow that illumines the shrine or temple



**BASIS OF LIFE
PANCHBOOT
THE FIVE GREAT GIFTS FROM GOD**

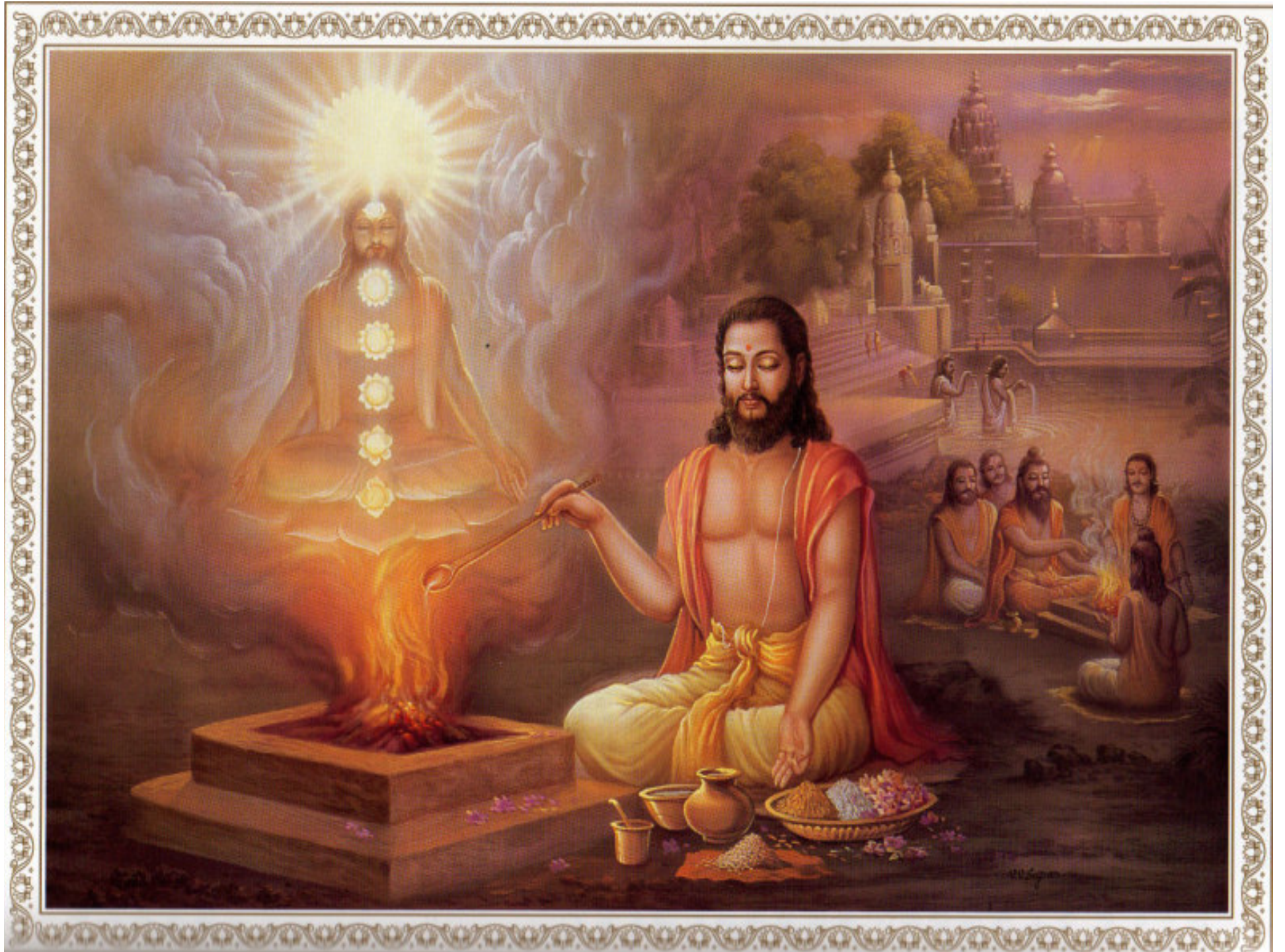
Symbols in temples	Physical Elements	
Bell	Sound	Air
Jyoti	Heat/light	Fire
Achman	Health	Water
Coconut	Vegetation	Earth
Kalash	Container	Space

Five great duties in daily life

Panch Mahayajna

Designed to remind people of obligations towards:

- **Religion/Knowledge (Brahma Yajna)**
- **Environment/Nature (Dev Yajna)**
- **Ancestors/Elders (Pitri Yajna)**
- **Society/Nation (Atithi Yajna)**
- **Animals/Life form (Bhoot Yajna)**





All karma, or effects of actions, completely melts away from the liberated being who, free from attachments, with his mind enveloped in wisdom, performs the true spiritual fire rite (yajna).

—Bhagavad Gita IV:23



“The formal rite in India of pouring into a fire clarified butter (ghee)—a form of fire-purified matter—is symbolical of uniting life energy with cosmic energy.

“The initiate in guru-given yoga meditation performs the esoteric real fire rite enjoined by the Hindu scriptures. He withdraws his life force from the sensory and motor nerves and pours that energy into the sacred fires of life gathered in the seven occult cerebrospinal centers. When the yogi switches off the life current from the nerves, he finds his mind disconnected from the senses. This act of withdrawing life from the body and uniting that energy with the light of God is the highest yajna, the real fire rite—casting the little flame of life into the Great Divine Fire, burning all human desire in the divine desire for God. Then the yogi takes his sense-withdrawn mind and casts it into the fire of Cosmic Consciousness; realizing, finally, his own soul as something entirely different from the body, he casts that Self into the fire of Eternal Spirit.”



“When the life force that is withdrawn from the senses is concentrated in the thousand-petaled lotus in the brain, that powerful effulgence burns out all samskaras (habits, impulses, and all other effects of past actions) lodged in the subconsciousness and superconsciousness of the brain, bestowing on the devotee freedom from all past karmic fetters.”

—Paramahansa Yogananda

YAJNA

- Derived from 'yuj' – prayer to God
 - collective action
 - selfless service
- Oldest ritual in Hinduism
- Worship offered through fire
 - symbolic act of giving
 - recitation /prayers in a group
 - protection of environment



YAJNA

- **Man is full of desires (vasanas) – actions need to be taken without expectations of fruits or rewards**
- **KUND – represents your field of activity**
- **AHUTIS – represents performing actions in a spirit of surrender to a Higher Cause instead of selfish motive**
- **ASH – spread on forehead in 3 stripes – Sattvic, Rajasic and Tamasic vasanas – transcend all gunas**

YAJNA

- Fire is worshipped in most rituals
- It is first of 5 elements that is seen

Space Air Fire Water Earth
In order of grossness

- Fire represents a symbol from the world, Sun giving energy



YAJNA



RITUAL

SIGNIFICANCE

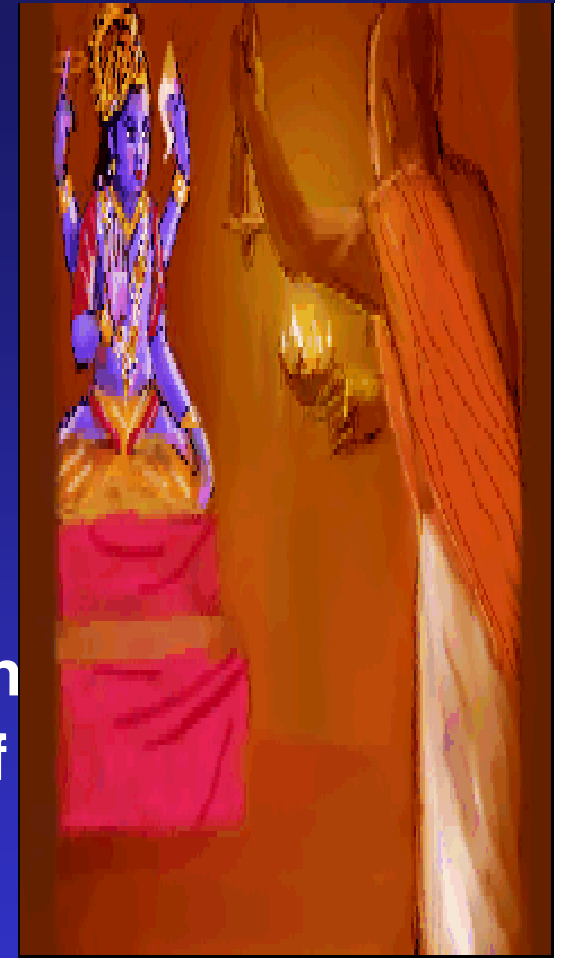
Sipping of water (Aachman).....	Importance of water
Prayer to physical health (Ang Sparash).....	Senses and body
Communion prayer (Ishwar Upaasana).....	God's powers and qualities
Benedictory prayer (Swati Vaachan)	Science
Prayer for peace (Shanti Prakarna)	Forces of nature: peace
Lighting of fire (Agni Dhan)	Fire and nature's role in life
Placing the firewood (Samidha Dhan)	Work to achieve goals
Offering of ghee and ahutis (Grit Ahuti)	God is fuel that keeps us going
Sprinkling of water (Jal Sinchan)	For strength, tolerance and intelligence
Special prayers for morning/evening	Selflessness
Offering selflessly (Ajyahuti)	'It is not for me' – id na mum
Final offering (Purnahuti)	God is perfect

Yajna

- Yajurveda
- *‘Observe minutely and perceive the acts of God. He is observing a big vratam of not interrupting the Yajna. You also do likewise and become a great worthy friend of God’*
- Gita 3-11
- **‘Cherish the Devas (one who gives) with the Yajna spirit, and those DEVAS shall in turn cherish you; thus cherishing each other, you shall gain the highest good’**
- **Yajna is a kind of exchange, giving that has all of these ingredients**

Aarti

- Singing of a special prayer to God
- It is a call from the devotees heart to God
- Obtain total refuge in HIM
- Sing His praises
- **Light a Deep** – brightness, purity, devotion
 - awaken inner dormant self
 - clear inner darkness
- **Circular motion** – circle represents perfection
 - macrocosm (Vishwa Brahmand)
 - imbibe virtues of GOD
 - see Deity in the dark



Prayers and Aarti



AARTI

*Aum Jai Jagadish Hare, Swami Jai Jagadish Hare
Bhakta jano ke sankat, kshana mein duur kare Om..*

Glory to the creator of the world, Lord of the universe
Who banishes in an instant, the agonies of the devotees.

*Jo dhare phal paave, dhuka vinashe man ka
Sukh saampati ghar aave, kaaste mite tan ka Om....*

He who prays gets the fruits he wants, minds troubles are
pacified

Peace and prosperity come home, and pains vanish

The Conch - Shankha



- Conch is a multiple spiral evolving from single point into ever increasing spheres
- Symbolises origin of universe from single point
- When blown, it produces a sound which represents the Primeval sound AUM from which creation developed

Aarti

- **Burning of camphor (kapoor):**

camphor is solid → in open → vapour, smell
↓
human personality

Man is nothing but vasanas (desires) → personality (smell)

When vasanas are burnt, the remains are Pure or Self

Atman+vasanas=man; man-vasanas=Atman

- **Sprinkle water**
 - act of purification

Aarti - Blessings



- The devotees cup their hands over the flame, then raise their palms to their forehead.
- By doing this, it is believed that the purifying blessing, passed from the Deity's image to the flame, has now been passed to the devotee



Prasaad



- Offering to the Lord – partaken after prayer usually aarti
 - what we receive in life is His alone
 - we acknowledge this by offering food to Him (*Tera tujko aarpan – I offer what is Yours to You*)
 - thereafter it is akin to His gift to us graced by His Divine touch.
- If you follow His way of life you will get back prasaad - calmness, equanimity, peace of mind

SWEETNESS BLISS REALISATION



Our Prayers to Mother Nature (Shanti Path)

- **May there be peace in heaven** (dyauh)
- **Peace in the atmosphere** (antariksha)
- **Peace across waters** (apah)
- **May there be peace on earth** (prithvi)
- **May peace flow from** (oshadh)
- **herbs, plants and trees** (vanaspat)
- **May all beings radiate peace** (vishwa)
- **May peace be every where** (sarva)
- **May that peace come to me too** (sama)
- **May there be peace, peace, peace (Aum Shanti, shanti,shantih)**

Why Do We Say Shaanti Thrice?

- It is believed that *trivarum satyam* – that which is said thrice comes true – emphasising a point
- All obstacles, problems and sorrows originate from 3 sources
 - *Aadidaivika* – unseen divine forces over which we have no control (earthquakes, floods etc)
 - *Aadhibautika* – known factors around us (accidents, human contacts, pollution, crime)
 - *Aadhyatmika* – problems of our bodies and minds (disease, stress, anger)

Essence of Hinduism

“Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this divinity within, by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or all of these - and be free. This is the whole religion. Doctrines, or dogmas, or rituals, or books, or temples, or forms are but secondary details”

Swami Vivekanand



Asking Forgiveness



Having taught me, my Guru bade me teach,
“Teach”, he said, “but do not preach”,
If perchance, I offend thee with my speech,
“Forgive me, forgive me”, I do beseech.

Dhanyawaad!

Professor Raman Gokal