

Jain Puja

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Jain Puja symbolizes various aspects of our religion. One should reflect on such aspect while performing the puja rituals. There are different types of puja being performed for various religious and social ceremonies. The following eight types of materials is generally used for pujas.

1. Jala Puja: (Water)

Water symbolizes the ocean. Every living being continuously travels through Life Ocean of birth, life, death, and misery. This puja reminds that one should live the life with honesty, truthfulness, love and compassion towards all living beings. This way one will be able to cross the Life Ocean and attain Moksha or liberation. The path of liberation is Samyak Darshan, Samyak Jnan and Samyak Charitra in Jain religion.

2. Chandan Puja: (Sandal-wood)

Chandan symbolizes Knowledge (Jnan). During this puja one should reflect on Right Knowledge. Right knowledge means proper understanding of reality which includes Soul, Karma, and their relationship. Jainism believes that the Path of Knowledge is the main path to attain liberation. Bhakti or Devotion helps in the early stages of one's effort for liberation.

3. Pushpa Puja: (Flower)

Flower symbolizes conduct. Our conduct should be like a flower, which provides fragrance and beauty to all living beings without discrimination. We should live our life like flowers with full of love and compassion towards all living beings.

4. Dhup Puja: (Incense)

Dhup symbolizes ascetic life. While burning itself, Dhup provides fragrance to others. Similarly true monks and nuns spend their entire life selflessly for the benefit of all living beings. This puja reminds that one should thrive for a ascetic life which ultimately leads to liberation.

5. Deepak Puja: (Candle)

The flame of Deepak represents a Pure Consciousness or a Soul without any bondage or a Liberated Soul. In Jainism such a Soul is called Siddha or God. The ultimate goal of every living being is to become liberated from karma. By doing this puja one should strive to follow Five great Vows: Non-violence, Truthfulness, Non-stealing, Chastity and Non-possession. Ultimately these proper conducts coupled with right faith and knowledge will lead to liberation.

6. Akshat Puja: (Rice)

The household rice is the kind of grain seeds, which are non-fertile. One cannot grow rice plants by seeding the household rice. Symbolically it means that rice is the last birth. By doing this puja one should thrive to put all the efforts in the 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 will not be reborn again.

7. Naivedya Puja: (Sweet)

Naivedya symbolizes a tasty food. By doing this puja, one should thrive to reduce or eliminate the attachment to tasty food. Healthy food is essential for survival, however one should not live for to eat a tasty food. Ultimate aim in one's life is to attain a life where no food is essential for our existence and that is the life of a liberated Soul, who lives in Moksha forever in ultimate bliss.

8. Fal Puja: (Fruit)

Fruit symbolizes Moksha or Liberation. If we live our life without any attachment to worldly affair, continue to perform our duty without any expectation and reward, be witnessed to all the incidents that occurred surrounding to and within us, truly follow ascetic life, and have a love and compassion to all living beings, we will attain the fruit of Moksha or liberation. This is the last Puja symbolizing the ultimate achievement of our life.