

GUIDING STEPS TO TEMPLE GOERS

Part of the Feature Of workshop on the General theme
Hindu Temples and Institutions: Challenges of the 21st Century. Participation
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Yajur Veda says :

deho devalayah prokto jivo devah sanatanah
Tyajet ajnana nirmalyam soham bhavet pujayet!!

It tells that the worship should be done with identity that the divine and Human are the same. One should enter the temple feeling that it is not idol or embellishments we are seeing but the god in them. Here the Abstract is brought into concrete way to help our meditation and faith and belief. Faith and Belief form the foundation of Bhakti, the sentiment of devotion. The same thought is to be tutored to the children that accompany the Elders. When we look at Hanuman' idol ,the child says it is Monkey but we should explain that it is Hanuman , divine installed in the temple or any other sacred place and add that he worked a great help to Rama in Monkey form.

1 What is a Temple and why is the temple?

A temple is a location spared for the living of Gods As we stay on earth gods too like stay on land to watch and help needy devoted. So we fix a corner sanctified as housing to the gods. In Sanskrit we name it as Devalaya, the residence of gods. Temple is a public place where all people can submit their prayers and worship by which the there will be individual and world welfare supported.

A temple is necessary to meet the gods and submit our wants and desires that they would remove obstructions for the quick fulfillment of the same. Every house has place for gods but they are private but a temple is a common centre where gods have scope to listen to mass prayers and protect people enmass wherever they are. Our prayers there are not personal but impersonal too. Purohits mention it when sankalpa is performed before honoring the deities with puja dravyas. Worship n one form or the other takes place in temples constantly everyday. In house we may not do puja everyday.

2 How is the Location of temple and installation of Deities?

The location for building a temple is specially chosen observing sanctity. Ground puja helps to evacuate all preoccupying evil spirits and then the temple is located with the installation of choicest deities of people referring to their faiths. Hinduism allows other sister religions like Jainism and other faiths on Individual saints like SaiBaba Ramnarayana and some to be installed. Thus the location of a temple is a

room for all gods like the Kasi in India. Pranaprathista is done to the deities and so they become empowered to grant our prayers.

3 who are the goers to Temple.

Bhagavan Vyasa says: ' arto jinasurarthartha... are the temple goers. Those who have physical and other such material problems, those who seek knowledge and spiritualized peace of mind and those who want to prosper and attain wealth for happiness and expansions of needs and luxuries. Etc visit temples. Also those who want to get rid of the sins and rebirth. Thus young and old at all ages visit the temple with one want or the other.. Actually there are temple goers who do not have want and desires to express, as they are full. They are only asking for blessings to run the life smooth. The longevity is ten decades. Those decades, however may they live, need be trouble free and comfortable.

4 what should one take to temple.

Our seers have advised never go to a temple with empty hands or to visit a ailing person either at home or in hospital or a house where there are children. So take something to temple. At least pure mind freed from samsaric commitments. When the mind is free god fills with the same with peace which everybody must aspire. Generally flowers fruit and some such could be taken.

5 what is dress code.

Veda says wear vasah. Meaning Unstitched garments like Dhoti and upper garment and saree etc., They are are best. If not cover the body full with clothing. That is the place of spiritual meet and so no occasion to fickle the mind more with physical attractions. The dress may be white, saffron, Yellow or any colour . It depends of the like. But priest in the temple do follow dress code. If the weather is chill one may use warm clothing too. . The dress code is optional but indian.

6 what should we do in the temple? What is the attitude when you have the darsan of the idols of deities installed?

Basically get the feeling that we are meeting the deity in person. Leave your foot ware at the footwear stand or leave them before entering beyond the Dhwaja stamha, the Victory pillar of God . That is the yellow mark, lakshmanrekha. The magnetic power of the deity spreads up to that point live ordinarily of the deities installed. Bow to the threshold of the simhadvara. Then go for darshan of the god in orderly manner when there are people already before you.. Keep your attitude free Consider that you are in a spiritual divine powered field when your ills are removed.

7 What kind of pujas ordinarily take place in that place?

There are many kinds of Pujas and Homas performed in the temple to the gods for the good of one and all. When sankalpa is made it turns persona and mixed in the group sankalpa. Sankalpa is the form and identity address to be noted by the deity. Unless we register we are marked not. Usually there will the idol of Citragupta who

maintains register of our Attendance. He marks our visit . He is deaf and so we clap to draw our attention.

There are ashottara puja harati etc kind of simple and long drawn pujas . Depending on our want and asking the purohits perform on our behalf.

8 How should our mind is disposed when we stand before the gods ?.

Generally we should be calm and neutral in our mind. Mind is the only tool with which we can reach god. Mind can travel any distance far and wide so close eyes the mind eye opens to visualize the god wherever he is live. God knows the desire and he will fulfill now and a later. He removes any hurdles for the happening of good. Delay in marriage or some happy things would be reduced or minimized.

9 Selection of deities installed and pujas sponsored

What would be the status of mind we keep before and after the visit to temple?

Generally our mind will be clumsy. We compel ourselves or compelled by others to visit the temple. At that time we may have neutral mind. But the magic is that when we enjoy the darsan of the deity in the we get relieved of the depressing mind or tension or stress of the mind. It is so because the deities are living due to the serene pranapratishtha done by the Vedic mantras and by the Brahmins versed in tapanushtana. They would have done much mantra japa and used other puja accessories to bring in life for the idols and empower them a fully framed vigraha if lying outside we look . we never offer puja but when the same is installed with consecration we salute and submit prayers with worship.

10 Would you get to take some people with you?

Yes. If they will or offer to come. It is part of merit. God shall be happy.

11 Then what and who could be they.

No discretion. They may be anybody who has faith and devotion. If not you can inspire and introduce the divinity present there.

12 What kind of prayers you submit.?

Generally for family welfare and also of the others. God will be happy if you show interest in the welfare of others.

13 Attendance could be at the special occasions, not every day.

This principle makes , the gods happy. The gods are known for mahima and in sense of helping others (paropakara). We have to befriend them, They like what is indirect in a sense some one prays for you that also is well liked and rewarding.

14 How do you regard the priests and the volunteers.

Purohits are our agents like who work for our welfare on one hand and on the other for the welfare of the town ,country . Land. They are versed with relevant mantras in the language of gods, Sanskrit.

Help to fund raising and improving the needs and decorum of the temple. The Hundi is one way to donate other than making contribution in the office of the temple. This is part of divine service,

In the temple one need go round the garbhagudi which is technically called pradakshina. That is to go from right to left and have prayer to the deity

15 How to do pradakshina.?

While pradakshni keep your wife front and you behind.

Make odd number of pradakshnias (perambulations).

When I leave the temple?

In general do not get out of the temple without taking tirtha and prasada when they are being distributed. Share the Prasad with others too if necessary..

Maintain calm mind and silence.

Soon after you cross the dwajastambha of the temple you may choose to help any needy in any manner..

16 Help any old and disabled. When you are looking at the deity feel that he is live and so avoid diversions and social conversations.

Maintain pleasant mind after devatadarsan . Sit down in the temple after darsan and then move out. Generally we wash feet before entering the temple but do not wash feet after leaving the temple immediately. You retain the vibrant energy there with.

Less talk and more attention on the sanctity and magnetic field of the temple

17 Bhakti and jnana elevates our mind. Temple is the right location to get that benefit.

If discourses are there of your like spare some time unto that.

If time constraint is there minimum make nameskara even to the gopura, of the temple. That is the vimana of the divinity. It is technically vimana Devata . He could be Swami venkateswara or any powerful to extend the benefit of that similar to the mulavirat darsana.

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