

GOING TO THE TEMPLE

Ketan asked Ravi, "What do you do in the temple?" Ravi said, "I worship Jina and do prayer and recite Rosary. It will be interesting for you to go, too. Nobody should feel shy about going to the temple. After all, it is our worshipping place". Ketan asked, "If there is any particular procedure to follow while in the temple?" Ravi said, "People do different things in different way and I will explain Dashtrik (ten essential things) which should be done by everybody."



When we go to temple, we wear simple or special clothes just for the temple. We do not wear silk or leather articles. We take a bath before going to temple, and if not, then at least be in a clean condition. As we get close to the temple, and if we could see the idols of Jinas from outside, then say "Namō Jinanam" while placing folded hands over slightly bent forehead which means "I salute Jina". Before entering the temple, we take off shoes. After this, we do the ten different things in a given sequence and each of these ten things has three different ways of doing them. Therefore, some people call them "Dashtrik". These ten things are:

1. ***Nisshihi (renunciation)***
 2. ***Pradakshina (circumambulation - going around the Jina's idol)***
 3. ***Pranam (salutation)***
 4. ***Puja (worship)***
 5. ***Avasthachintan (contemplation upon the various states of the Lord)***
 6. ***Dishatyag (do not look here and there, but look only at the Jina's idol)***
 7. ***Pramarjan (cleaning the ground before sitting down)***
 8. ***Alamban (support)***
 9. ***Mudras (postures for meditation)***
 10. ***Pranidhan (be absorbed)***
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1. **Nissih (Renunciation):** Nissih means renunciation (give 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 (Samsar). The second "Nissih" is said while entering the actual area of the Jina idol (gabharo) to discard thinking of such things as the cleaning of the temple and its management. The third "Nissih" is said right after finishing the worship with physical substances (dravyapuja) and at the beginning of psychic worshipping (Chaityavandan).
2. **Pradakshina (Circumambulation):** We keep the holy substances always on our right side. Therefore, we circumambulate (go around) Jina idols three times keeping them on our right side, that is from our left to the right. While going around, we remind ourselves that Arihants are precious, that they are our mentor, and that one day we will be like them. This contemplation of the Arihants would help us overcome attachment and hatred. Three circumambulations should also remind us that there are three remedies to overcome attachment and hatred; they are right jnan (gnan), right darshan, and right charitra. Therefore, we should also contemplate how to acquire them. Some feel as if they are going around Samavasaran itself.
3. **Pranam (Salutation):** We salute the idols of Arihants three times. 1) The first salutation is offered at the time of first seeing the idols of Arihants (usually at the time of entering temple) with placing the folded hands over slightly bent forehead and saying Namō Jinanam. 2) The second salutation is done with folded hands and bowed body as we enter the gabharo. 3) The third salutation is done while performing the glorifying prayers (Chaityavandan - psychic worshipping) while touching the ground with five limbs (2 knees, 2 hands and the forehead) bent down. This is called Panchangapranipat.
4. **Puja (worship):** There are three kinds of worships offered: 1) The first worship is called Angapuja. This is done by touching the different parts of an idol of Arihant with water or milk, sandal wood paste and saffron, and a flower. 2) The second worship is called Agrapuja, which is done by placing incense, lamp, rice, fruit and sweets in front of idols. First and second worships together make the worship by eight kinds, Ashtprakari puja. These two are called physical worship. 3) The third worship is called Psychic (Bhava-puja) which is done by chanting glorifying prayers (Chaityavandan).
5. **Avasthachintan (Contemplating on the different states of Arihants):** After completing the physical worship, one must carry out this contemplation. The male person should stand on the right side of idol of Arihant (that is the left side if facing the idol) while the woman should stand on left side of it (that is the right side if facing the idol). Standing this way, we should contemplate on the three different states which Arihants went through. They are 1) Pindastha avastha, 2) Padastha avastha, and 3) Aroopastha avastha. In Pindastha avastha we contemplate on his a) Janmavastha, b) Rajyavastha, and c) Shramanavastha.

Janmavastha: Oh Lord, during your third last life, you observed any of twenty factors to acquire Tirthankar Nam Karma like psychic compassion towards all living beings, etc. When you were born to be a Tirthankar, all of 56 goddesses of directions and 64 Indras performed oblation to you. How great you were that even at such occasion, you did not feel proud of what was happening around. Your loftiness is blessed.

Rajyavastha: Oh Lord, you had the status of a Prince. You had the princely power and grandeur, and yet you were neither attached to them nor felt hatred about them. You were like a Yogi who is detached. Glory to your self-abnegation (renunciation).

Shramanavastha: Oh heroic Lord, you renounced the worldly power and luxury without any hesitation, became a monk or nun (sadhū or sadhvi). You carried out heroic endeavors for the attainment of spiritual elevation, bearing the most bitter obstacles and calamities. At times, you carried out incomparable and arduous spiritual austerities and penance. You stood for days absorbed in deep meditation. By doing so, you destroyed all the terrible ghati karmas. Glory to your austerity. Glory to your bravery. Glory to your tolerance.

Padastha Avastha: In this, we contemplate the state of his life as a Tirthankar. As Tirthankar Arihant, you acquired the 34 super specialities (atishay) and offered us spiritual sermons on Tattvas filled with 35 virtues of the speech. You then established the four-fold Jain sangh, tirtha, and Jain Shasan.

You explained the noble doctrines of Jiva tattva and Ajiva tattva of the universe. You showed the path of salvation comprised of the right faith, right knowledge, and right character. You expounded the immortal philosophical doctrines like Anekantvad, Syadvad, and Naya, etc.

Aroopastha Avastha: In this, we contemplate on the pure form of Jina. O, Paramatma (supreme being)! You have destroyed totally all your Karmas, and you have become bodiless, formless, pure, awakened, liberated, and perfect. Having attained this state, you are absorbed in infinite knowledge and indescribable bliss. You embody countless virtues. Your state is absolutely free from stains, distortion, and agitation. In this state, death, disease, distress, or poverty, and all such adversities do not exist. O Lord, thou art blessed !

1. **Dishatyag (Do not see here and there but see only the Jina's idol):** Now we perform the Psychic (bhav) worshipping known as Chaityavandan. This should not be impaired by anything. We start the Chaityavandan in our mind and it should not be shaken even to the slightest extent. Our eyes and mind must be fixed on the idol and we shall not look around, until it is over.
2. **Pramarjan (Cleaning the ground before sitting down):** Before sitting we should clean the ground three times with our upper cloth, so that no small insect may be hurt by sitting there.
3. **Alamban (Support):** Having sat down, we must keep three supports in our mind: 1) The image of the Lord, 2) The sutras we utter, and 3) their meaning. Our mind should be concentrated on these three things.
4. **Mudra (Posture):** Among the eight steps of meditation, the right posture is the third step. The right posture is very much necessary to attain the sublime concentration during Chaityavandan.
5. **Yoga Mudra:** During chaityavandan and the recital of the sutras, we must sit straight with both palms together and the fingers of one hand in the spaces between the fingers of the other hand, and the elbows to the sides of our stomach.

Muktashukti Mudra: We must keep our 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 "Javanthi Cheyi Ayam", "Javantkevi Sahu", and "Jai Viyaraya" sutras.

Jin Mudra: At the time of Kayotsarg, we stand up in such a way that there is a distance of 4 inches between the two feet at the toes in the front while the heels almost touch each other. Our hands should be hanging down. Our eyes should be fixed on the tip of our nose. Jina stood in Kayotsagga with this posture.

6. **Pranidhan (be absorbed):** We should concentrate our senses, our body, our voice, and our mind on carrying out Chaityavandan and we should not let them wander.

The precautions to be taken in respect of pooja or worship:

1. We must respect the idols of Arihants as Jina in reality. In case, the idol of Arihant has to be carried from one place to another; it should be carried in reverence holding straight with the support of the both hands beneath it.
2. At the time of worshipping Arihants with substances, you may bring the necessary substances from your house.
3. The flowers selected should have naturally fallen down, and should not be plucked 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.
4. While using a brush to clear the things stuck to the idols of the Jinas, it should not make even the slightest noise. We may clean with a wet thick cloth to remove the saffron etc. Do not rub the idols roughly.
5. The flowers, the decorations, and the smearings which are used for various parts of the idols of the Arihants should not be allowed to fall to the ground. In case they do fall down, they should not be used again and they should be kept in a clean plate.
6. In case, we have to rub the saffron (Keshar) we must close our mouth, and when we finish we should wash our hands and the slab.
7. You must recite the hymns and sutras relating to the Chaityavandan in such a way, that we do not disturb the concentration and devotion of others.
8. While reciting Chaityavandan, we should not engage in any other activities, including forming the swastika, etc.
9. When we get out of the temple, we should not turn our back towards the idols of Arihants. Rather, we should walk backwards few steps first and then turn sideways.