

SIVA PUJA, THE PROPER

Saiva Siddhanta Peedam, Canada

www.knowingourroots.com

Siva Puja is not just a ritual (kriya) alone as many think. Agamic way of Siva Puja received by 2nd and then the 3rd Siva-Deeksha is a five-step process integrating Cariyai, kriya, yogam and jnanam altogether. Practice of this well-disciplined worship is the best way to connect and unite with the God amid our busy worldly life. Once mastered, the whole process will take about an hour a day.

The five steps of this Agamic Siva-Puja are,

1. **Anma suddhi** (The purification of soul): This is the first and the main step taking much of the time, focus and concentration. Doing Puja without his have no yield, says Agamic scriptures. The purification of soul by identifying with the God within has three components.
 - I. Internal/ Esoteric worship of the linga at the heart (mid-chest)
 - II. Fire worship by offering the nectar flowing from Brahma-rāndra as ghee to the blazing fire of siva-agni from the fire pit at the bottom of naval (mūlādara).
 - III. Meditating 36 entities/ tatwas one by one with their respective cosmic worlds, Lords, gods, deities, celestials, living beings and everything in it dissolving unto another until ultimately all to Siva and be alone with Him in that state of Bhavāna nishta meditation at the mid-brow.

Other four small steps of the Puja as follows. One may expand the last step of external/ exoteric worship of Linga as per the available resources time, place, persons (to carry out his commands and duties) and materials.

2. **Sthāna suddhi** (The purification of the spot): simply by gestures and gaze with chants;
3. **Thiraviya suddhi** (The purification of the materials): simply sprinkling water with chants and gestures;
4. **Mantra suddhi** (The purification of mantras): simply by chanting 11 mantras and the panjakshara mūla mantra once;
5. **Linga Suddhi** (The purification of Lingam by abishekam)

Then invoke the presence of Siva from your soul in that lingam by offering 36 tatwas/ entities as Sivāsana - the seat and worship with there with five or sixteen upacharāas as you like.

Sakaṛi-karaṇam (nyāsa): Meditative touching of different parts of the body with chanting respective mantras with respective mudars – hand gestures. This is the important prerequisite at the beginning of the Puja. By this process one makes his limbs, instruments and body as that of siva. One feels himself as Siva by this process is called **Sivoham bhāvana**. In this meditative state he starts doing the five-step puja. He sees his soul as linga and visualize Siva in it, first as a spark, then as a blazing pillar traversing the sky and netherworlds and ultimately as the Pure Intelligence Engulfing Everything including the self. He merges into it.

Prasāda kalā yoga: This is the highest form of **Siva Yoga** culminating into **Siva Jnāna** by the mediative envisioning of sixteen kalās arising from kosha kalā at the perineum starting from **medha kalā** at mūlādara to **unmanā kalā** at **shodhashāntha** – sixteen digits above the vertex and taking the souls there to merge with Siva. Persons initiated into this by **nirvāna Deeksha / 3rd Siva Deeksha**.

*அந்தரியாகம் தன்னை முத்தி சாதனமாய்
அறைந்திடுவர் அதுதானும் ஆன்மசுத்தி ஆகும்;
கந்த மலர் புகை ஒளி மஞ்சனம் அமுது முதலாக்
கண்டன எலாம் மனத்தால் கருதிக் கொண்டு
சிந்தை தனில் அர்ச்சிக்கச், சிவனை ஞானத்தால்
சிந்திக்கச் சிந்திக்கத், தர்ப்பணத்தை விளக்க
வந்திடும் அவ் ஒளி போல மருவி அரன் உளத்தே
வரவர வந்திடுவன் பின் மலமானது அறுமே.*

This - antar-yāga - esoteric internal worship of Siva within the heart mentally with sandal paste, flowers, fragrant dūpa, ghee lamp deepa, ceremonial bath manjana and offering of food naivēdya is regarded as the practice to perfection - mukti sādhanā, as it purifies the soul. As one thinking Him at his heart again and again with divine wisdom He will gradually manifest within your heart, as does the light comes through when the glass is cleaned. Then the darkness of fetters will sunder.