

Why and How we Perform Shilanyas

*Compiled by
Dr K. Deepika Dalal
(President, Jain Center of South Florida)*

Why Rituals?

We need a center to perform the rituals, which are the TOOLS that were created by our sages to invoke the right spiritual thinking- PURE BHAVA. We are all creature of habit. Once we form a habit, we tend to do it subconsciously like driving a car or thinking of mantra or Bhagavan when in trouble. Many rituals require us to go to the temple or Upashray. This allows us to get away from the routine life and practicing in the sacred holy environment gives us full of positive vibrations.

- Rituals provide a framework to practice religion like a school or a college, also helps the worldly education.
- Rituals serve as the source of inspiration and strength. They also act as a psychiatric hospital without the medicines.
- The center also act for the UNITY of the Community, which is a major strength for the future generations. We should strive to understand rituals, not just performing mechanically.

Shilanyas is a 2nd Step for the building a religious center or temple.

Steps of the Shilanyas and Meaning :

1. Snatra Puja:

(Sponsorship: Suggested donation 2 family-\$351/family)

Snatra Pooja symbolizes the Abhishek done on Meru Parvat by Indra Dev immediately after birth of Thirthankars (enlightened beings). To seek blessings from Jinas (liberated souls), it is also performed before beginning of any religious event. It is capable to end our infinite cycles of birth and death.

2. Kumbh Sthapana

(Sponsorship:1 family \$ 151.00)

The Kumbh is filled with water is a symbol of completeness. The divine power of a complete body leads towards good deeds. Kumbh is the confluence of all our cultures. It is the symbol of spiritual awakening. It is the eternal flow of humanity. It is the surge of rivers, forests and the ancient wisdom of the sages. It is the flow of life itself. It is the symbol of the confluence of nature and humanity. Kumbh is the source of all energy. Kumbh makes humankind realize this world and the other, sins and blessings, wisdom and ignorance, darkness and light. Holy rivers are the symbols of the lyrical flow of humanity. Rivers are indicators of the flow of water of life in the human body itself. In the human body that is an embodiment of home, nothing is possible without the five elements. The elements - **fire, wind, water, earth and sky** - symbolize the human body.

3. Deep Sthapana:

(Sponsorship:2 family \$151/family)

Deepak gives light which is a symbol of Gyan –Knowledge. The oil and cotton in the Deepak symbolizes negative deeds and Ego. Lightening the Deepak destroys both. Tirthankara has complete knowledge and they enlighten everyone.

4. Dev Vandana, Laghu Shanti, Kaussag

(from Jain Sangh / no donation)

This is for the peace, and respect to Deva. Kaussagg is for the meditation

5. Das Dikpal Puja:

(Sponsorship : 10 families, \$101/family)

All directions are governed by devas/Celestial being. , who in turn governs the respective energy of nature. The balance will bring all kind of prosperity.

Direction/ Energy Governed by

East – Indra,

West –VARUNA,

North – Kubera,

South- Yama,

Southeast- Agni (Fire),

Southwest Nirutya (land),

North-East –Eashvara (Shiva),

Northwest (air) Vayu,

Center- Space-Brahma- Akash,

Patal – below – Naag, Patal

6. Navagrah Puja

(Sponsorship : 9 families, \$101 / family)

Stars and planets affects our daily life.nav means nine (9), grah means Planets. **Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, Rahu & Ketu.** This puja is very essential to reduce the negative effects and improve the positive energy.

7. Shilanyas (Nyas= Vidhi) and Shila Ropan:

(Sponsorship : 5-10 families, 4 Disha Shila \$501/family, Center-Kurm Shila - \$2,501/family)

The foundation is first dug and below the garbhagruha, a small pot containing sacraments is ceremoniously placed. This creates awareness that nature is a dynamic ecosystem and man is to live harmoniously with other life forms.

Center Shila is called Kurm Shila; for longitivity, and harmony with other souls residing there. We will be using 4 Shila for 4 directions.

Bhadra-South, Rikta –West, Aparajiva—North, Saubhagyini-East These are Celastic Devis for the protection of the place. First we purify all Shilas

Kurma Sheela is a very powerful with lots of good qualities. It's a strength holder. It's an invisible stays away from everyone. It's a remover of negative vibration. It's a seed of the tree... This Sheela is placed directly under the Mulnaik's idol, which is supposed to carry spiritual power of the community. 4 other Sheela will be placed in 4 directions for the protection. It's a diamond in the crown of the religion. The land gets purified.

Then we do Shila Ropan for four Disha Shilas.

Tamrapatra :

Every family can participate(\$ 51/family)

We place Tamrapatra (TIME Capsule) with every participant's name.

Then we do the Shila Ropan for the center Shila. Before that, we put sacraments (5 Ratna (semiprecious stones, various metals like silver, medicine, rice and grains) in silver or copper pot. This creates awareness that nature is a dynamic echo system. . People should live harmoniously with other forms. This carries the spiritual power.

8. Shanti Kalash

(Snatra Puja sponsoring family with do Shantikalash)

During this ritual, a Kalash is filled with continuous flow of holy water while reciting shanty mantra. Shanty mantra invokes the blessings of all Tirthankara, Stars - Dev – Devis and others. The mantra wishes peace to all souls of universe.

9. Aarati and Mangal Divo

(Quick Ghee Boli – open to all)

Swaying of Deepak with devotion to Jinas during worship is called Aarti. The Deep (light) is a symbol of divinity. The light signifies overcoming negativity, fear and ignorance with virtue, courage and Knowledge.

These explanations steps will help and inspire every one to participate and become a part of the creation of the center.

Time is little - Past is a history - Future is a Mystery.

Let us join together at Present; to make a new History

Thank you

Jai Jinendra.