

Rituals and Practices

Nat chinthanai - 002

On hearing these words, immediate response is to think about those old outdated superstitions, to which some are clinging on, to-date. On the contrary, the purpose of all the rituals in Saivism is to improve our selves in every respect - health, wealth, wisdom, grace and bliss. The rituals practiced by our elders inside and outside the temple premises are all done with these five as the goal. It is true few of the old practices need not be continued; few have to be modified to suit the changing circumstances. For example, those days to light up the place at night, the oil lamp has to be placed in particular position in such a way to avoid being tripped and tipped. This undoubtedly, reduced the dangers to people and buildings while getting the best illumination possible. Now-a-days we have electricity and have to install the lights and switches according to the existing codes for prevention, safety and efficiency.

To understand and follow the rituals, we will today, look through three I-s (eyes). These are Instinct, Intellect and Intuition. We all know, to some extent , the first two I-s (eyes). The third I (eye), we will leave it for the time being, to be dealt with when we are more qualified. The first two I-s (instinct and intellect) have 5 elegant tools called senses (s e n 5 e s) to handle any situation in anywhere in any manner.

These tools are similar to any tools used in any skills by those who **will do** the job, with a **will to do**. Or misuse and fail. For instance , a carpenter can hit the nail and make the joint strong or hit his finger nail and suffer with pain for few days. Kitchen knife can be used to cut the bread or score the table or even worse, bruise the hand of the same person who holds it or another within its reach .

Our elders designed all our Saivite rituals so that we can apply these tools- the 5 senses properly.

Through the intellect, we will try our best, to find the cause and effect of the major religious rites. Most of them are easily understood; but some, we may not be able to decode with our present scientific, social and political knowledge. We will just follow them, as long as we are not hurting our selves or others. Take for instant, no one ever smokes inside the temple premises, whether be a King or a Beggar. We have been following it through out the known history and

unknown times. Now the politicians have established the same result in an elaborate form, by regulations that no smoking allowed inside the halls, offices etc. Another one to ponder: our elders and Gurus preached us to be vegetarian through out - at least on the days we attend the festivals. Now the government advocating the importance of vegetarian meals for better physical and mental health. How about spiritual well-being?

Hail to our Elders and Gurus !!!!!!!!!

We can go on like this quoting examples one after another, endlessly. Instead, we rather spend our time keep on stepping, earnestly and continuously in the path of Dharma – the spiritual journey well defined and practiced from time immemorial.

AUM SHANTHI