

homa: (Sanskrit) "Fire-offering."

A sacred ceremony in which the Gods are offered oblations through the medium of fire in a sanctified fire pit, homakunda, usually made of earthen bricks.

Homa rites are enjoined in the Vedas, Agamas and Dharma and Grihya Shastras. Many domestic rites are occasions for homa, including upanayana and vivaha. Major pujas in temples are often preceded by a homa.

See: agni, havana, yajna, homa.

(See also: Homa, Hinduism, Body Mind and Soul)

yajna: (Sanskrit) "Worship; sacrifice."

One of the most central Hindu concepts - sacrifice and surrender through acts of worship, inner and outer.

1) A form of ritual worship especially prevalent in Vedic times, in which oblations - ghee, grains, spices and exotic woods - are offered into a fire according to scriptural injunctions while special mantras are chanted.

- The element fire, Agni, is revered as the divine messenger who carries offerings and prayers to the Gods.
- The ancient Veda Brahmanas and the Shrauta Shastras describe various types of yajna rites, some so elaborate as to require hundreds of priests, whose powerful chanting resounds for miles. These major yajnas are performed in large, open-air structures called yagashala.
- Domestic yajnas, prescribed in the Grihya Shastras, are performed in the family compound or courtyard. Yajna requires four components, none of which may be omitted: dravya, sacrificial substances; tyaga, the spirit of sacrificing all to God; devata, the celestial beings who receive the sacrifice; and mantra, the empowering word or chant.
- While puja (worship in temples with water, lights and flowers) has largely replaced the yajna, this ancient rite still continues, and its specialized priestly training is carried on in schools in India.

- Yajnas of a grand scale are performed for special occasions, beseeching the Gods for rain during drought, or for peace during bloody civil war. Even in temples, yajna has its Agamic equivalent in the agnikaraka, the homa or havana ceremony, held in a fire pit (homakunda) in an outer mandapa of a temple as part of elaborate puja rites.

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2) Personal acts of worship or sacrifice. Life itself is a jivayajna.

- The Upanishads suggest that one can make "inner yajnas" by offering up bits of the little self into the fires of sadhana and tapas until the greater Self shines forth.

The five daily yajnas, pancha mahayajna, of the householder (outlined in the Dharma Shastras) ensure offerings to rishis, ancestors, Gods, creatures and men. They are as follows.

- brahma yajna: (also called Veda yajna or rishi yajna) "Homage to the seers." Accomplished through studying and teaching the Vedas.

- deva yajna: "Homage to Gods and elementals." Recognizing the debt due to those who guide nature, and the feeding of them by offering ghee and uncooked grains into the fire. This is the homa sacrifice.

- pitri yajna: "Homage to ancestors." Offering of cakes (pinda) and water to the family line and the progenitors of mankind.

- bhuta yajna: "Homage to beings." Placing food-offerings, bali, on the ground, intended for animals, birds, insects, wandering outcastes and beings of the invisible worlds. ("Let him gently place on the

ground [food] for dogs, outcastes, svapachas, those diseased from sins, crows and insects" Manu Dharma Shastras 3.92).

- manushya yajna: "Homage to men." Feeding guests and the poor, the homeless and the student. Manushya yajna includes all acts of philanthropy, such as tithing and charity. The Vedic study is performed in the morning.

The other four yajnas are performed just before taking one's noon meal. Manu Dharma Shastras (3.80) states, "Let him worship, according to the rule, the rishis with Veda study, the devas with homa, the pitris with shraddha, men with food, and the bhutas with bali."

Mystics warn that all offerings must be tempered in the fires of kundalini through the power of inner yajna to be true and valuable, just as the fire of awareness is needed to indelibly imprint ideas and concepts on one's own akashic window.

See: dharma, havana, homa, puja, sacrifice.

(See also: Yajna, Hinduism, Body Mind and Soul)

homa:

homa. Oblation to the gods, performed by offering ghee (clarified butter) on the sacred fire.

Homa: About different Homas and their purpose

Homas are powerful ancient fire rituals that have been performed in India by the Vedic sages for over 5000 years. Sri Krishna in Bhagavad Gita quotes, "This creation is a yagna". Yagna also means sacrifice and by this he meant that creation is an eternal flow of birth and death; it is a sacrifice where one's death gives way for the birth of another, continuously, something gets sacrificed for something to arise. This is how the Vedas interpret the creation and in the purview of the Vedas, the homa is but a miniature model of this Universal Sacrifice. As a sadhaka participates with all his heart and as various offerings like molten butter, herbs, sticks of certain trees are offered into the sacrificial fire along with the powerful chanting of mantras, the energy generated enables the sadhaka to tune into the Cosmic consciousness or God whereby his prayers are answered. It is well known that the presence of fire has an immediate bearing on the sadhaka's Kundalini and the energy fields of that place which makes prayer all the more easier. The time taken to perform a homa can be anything between 1hr. to 3hrs depending on the nature of the homa. Certain homas include certain rituals while certain others include a different set of rituals.

Who can benefit from a homa? Anybody can have a homa performed in his/her name. All that is needed is the name and age of the person, his/her specific problem. The more clearly the crisis is mentioned, prayer becomes more specific and divine grace also flows in better. Homas can act across time and space because even as the performer mentally holds the picture of the client and performs the homa, the client would feel the effects. It is indeed good if the client were to be physically present but if not possible, a photograph would serve the purpose. It is anyway good if the also the client were to sit in meditation wherever he/she is as the homa is performed.

About the different homas:

Sudharshana Homa - overall success

This homa is generally performed to accomplish any task successfully and also for prosperity. Other benefits include removal of negative energies, healing of the body and mind. This is a very powerful homa and a corporation aspiring for overall growth and success can opt for this homa. This homa also has a yantra (the yantra is a copper plate with special sacred symbols) that has the power to dispel all negative thoughts and attract positive thoughts essential for success.

Lakshmi Kubera Homa - financial success

This homa is a prayer for the financial well being of a person or a corporation. A corporation looking for greater economic development must go in for this homa.

Navagraha Homa - flaws in the horoscope

This homa has the power to counter flaws in the horoscope and enable a person to prosper in life in case astrological defects are the main blocks to his well-being. The homa is done to worship the nine planets i.e. The Sun, The Moon, The Mars, The Mercury, The Jupiter, The Venus, The Saturn, The Rahu, and The Ketu. Every planet has its own importance. Sun is the king of planets which gives health. Moon is the planet which rules over mind and gives success. Mars or Mangala is the planet which gives prosperity and wealth. Mercury is the planet which gives knowledge, Jupiter gives education, Venus gives the knowledge of art, music etc. Saturn gives happiness and also teaches vairagya. Rahu makes the life stronger. Ketu prospires the family.

Gayatri Homa - bad karma

This homa liberates us from negative karmas and past life vasanas. Liberates us from all karma bandhanas that affects our growth in health and wealth. It helps in setting right our relationship with family and society. Helps us to achieve high goals. The deity Gayatri is propitiated in India for centuries when it comes to inner awakening which the Hindus call ♦the rebirth of a person♦. The Gayatri mantra

has the potential to sever all karmic ties that hinder a person's awakening. Awakening or rebirth is not just restricted to the spiritual realm alone. A spiritual seeker can benefit from this homa. But a person for whom negative karma or for whom the past has been very negative and is in turn overpowering his present life, can benefit out of this homa as it is concerned with rebirth. Past life Vasanas is the karma that is carried over from past lives. Karma bandhanas means, Karmic bondages that bind a person. To a large extent, karma is accumulated in relationships and hence when one sets right his relationships within his family and with his society, the karmic burden naturally comes down. The homa is helping us to have positive relationships with our family and society, and it assists us in reaching high goals.

Dhanvanthri Homa - healing

Yes, it is true that in certain cases, this homa has healed diseases for which no doctor could offer cure because they couldn't diagnose in the first place. This homa is dedicated to the Indian God of medicine, Dhanavantri who is also the origin of the Indian form of medicine, Ayurveda.

Vidya Homa - for students

This is a homa that would specifically benefit students as the mantra of this homa directly affects the agneya chakra which is the seat of intelligence and knowledge.

Durga homa: This is a homa specifically to cleanse negative energies (thoughts, fear, etc.) The main deity is the goddess Durga, who is worshipped for ages when it comes to protection from evil forces and destruction of evil forces.

Kriya Pariharana Homa - black magic

This homa is only to redeem an individual or a family from the evil effects of black magic, voodoo etc. This homa is never performed commonly and if performed, it requires the person to be directly present for it. Also, this homa bears maximum effect only if it were to be performed at the client's residence.

Mangala Samskarana Homa - auspicious events

This homa paves way for any auspicious event in life. Mainly it generates auspicious vibrations; it cleanses the atmosphere (physically & psychically). In a family, the person who is ripe in age and seeks a peaceful end can pray for that in the course of this homa.

Maha Devi Homa - marriage and partner

This is specifically dedicated to clear the path of person who wants to get married. It also generates auspicious vibrations, which attract good alliances and ensure a happy marriage. This homa can also be performed to be blessed with children and to ensure longevity of your life-partner.

Vasthu Homa - Vasthu (or Vastu or Vaastu)

This homa is to appease the forces that control the flow of energies in a house, office or anywhere. This homa has to also be accompanied with other means of Vastu correction, which differ from place to place. The period of effect of this homa will directly be linked to the karma of a person. The lesser the karma, Vastu problems can be cleared faster and forever this homa must be repeated after a period of a year in order to recharge the energies in the place.. A plan of the house would indeed be helpful but even otherwise it would do.

Aayushya Homa - anniversaries

Basically meaning, ❖Homa for Longevity❖. This is performed during all anniversary functions like birth anniversary, marriage anniversary etc. This homa is a prayer for the healthy long life of the client.

Punyahavachana homa - naming

This is actually done during the naming ceremony after child birth. The giving of a name is a very ceremonious event because that becomes the identity of the child thereafter. This homa is for sanctifying that purpose. This homa can also be performed by someone who wishes to change his/her name at a latter stage in life.

Durga Homa - negative energies

Removes various forms of negative energies that can create negative thoughts, fears etc. Can prevent from actions causing bad karma and gives self-confidence.

Ganapathi homa - overcome hindrance

This homa is done before starting any new task or project. It will ensure that goals are attained without any hindrance.

Homas: Havan and Yagya: Procedure for purification

Havan is a procedure of eradicating inner imperfections prevalent in our being. This procedure has all the healing techniques incorporated in it beautifully. It is a rare combination of accupressure, touch healing, meditation, psychiatry, knowledge and wisdom. It is a perfect amalgamation of thought and procedure.

◆'Truth always conquers.' Truth is being one on three planes of thought, word and deed. To understand truth, to be truthful, and to become a reflection of truth, havan is a vedic procedure. It is a step towards a completely healthy body, mind and soul. In reality it is the only way to cleanse the body, mind and soul to ignite soul power.

Metaphysical Techniques: Havan and Yagya: Procedure for purification

By Meena Om

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The materials used while performing havan are all natural and also have ayurvedic properties. The first step towards performing a havan is acquiring all the materials required for it. Arranging the ingredients beautifully is FENG SHUI. The havan kund is beautifully decorated with flour, turmeric, sacred thread and all auspicious objects are meticulously placed around it. These are the symbols of deities and each one is specifically remembered along with their qualities as in healing therapies the guardian angels are ignited to get connected to them. In havan arms and hands are used with beauty and grace, while being seated peacefully with ease, at one place, performing Kriya Yog automatically

The ingredients for a havan are wooden sticks about 6"-8" long from the mango tree, ghee or clarified butter, curd, honey, flowers, fruits, ganga jal or pure water, sacred thread, camphor, turmeric, rice, roli, mango leaves and ◆'havan samagri' or special ingredients which are a mixture of herbs, incense etc. The vessel used to perform the havan is called the ◆'havan kund.'

The Havan Kund is built according to Vastu. After arranging all the materials, people are made to sit on all four sides of it. The person performing the havan is meant to face eastwards.

Firstly the red-yellow coloured raw unspun thread is tied around the wrist and a tilak made on the forehead with turmeric and rice. Both these acts are accupressure based. The nerves of the wrist are pressed and then the third eye is pressed to ignite inner powers, in readiness to perform the havan.

Then taking some water in one hand, touching it with two fingers of the other, each limb and sense organ is touched to purify and bless it so that it may see, hear and do good and remain healthy always. After this in the agni kund, camphor and ghee soaked mango sticks are burnt, with the thought that 'let my body, just like these wooden sticks obtain ghee(a symbol of nutrition) so that it is always healthy to be sacrificed to ignite the fire of truth in others, and be burnt in the process.'

This thought is empowered by mantras i.e. may Agni Dev the lord of fire bless everyone etc. After this still chanting mantras, little bits of havan samagri is added into the fire completing each offering by the call 'Swaha.' Each time this is done mental and physical shortcomings and impurities are also poured into the fire to be destroyed by Agni Dev. 'Swaha,' the wife and strength of the Lord of FIRE, assists in transporting our messages to the universal powers

Fire destroys all imperfections giving them a beautiful new form i.e. residual ash, to merge into the Earth. This is the truth behind the Havan and the Laws of creation.

Havan is a scientific procedure, which is associated with the science of mind and soul. This science was realised by our great rishi-munis or seer scientists in Vedic times, through their mind power. Now it is time that the true nature of the havan is understood to benefit humanity with its pure, true purpose. Even if all the mantras are not known chanting 'OM' or the GAYATRI MANTRA can suffice. Each offering should be made keeping the benefit of the whole creation in mind. Everyone can perform a havan.

Havan is vastly different from Yagna.

A havan is performed for internal growth, purity, health, long life and purifying the surroundings. It is also conducted to express and ignite love and respect towards all natural assets, to be in nature's surrender, to understand ones thoughts and feelings and above all to achieve and evolve a psychic state, which only thinks of the welfare of others, to expand ones thought to make it universal. All these are possible by consistently performing havan. To the ones we love the most we offer the best. Hence through the process of havan we learn to beautify our whole being, offer it to the source of our being, and surrender to it. This is the ultimate prayer.

When an individual with such a pure, universal thought evokes true wisdom he/she then becomes worthy of performing the ritual of ❖yagya.'

Yagyo vishvasya bhuvanasya nabhi

Yagya is that navel point which connects and binds the entire universe. It is a channel or medium for establishing communication between the energies prevalent in the entire universe, entire creation, all minds and souls. Through yagya, all energies that can enhance activities meant for world welfare can be attracted.

The basis of yagya is to ignite the support of visible, invisible situations and the consciousness prevalent in all being and matter, necessary for peace, happiness and abundance. The effect of each deed thus performed is not limited to the individual performing it but also the entire universe.

Yagya is performed for worldly (apara) and otherworldly (para) welfare while a mahayagya is performed for world welfare. Using the knowledge and wisdom of the rishis and living according to that, then applying it to perform a yagya is known as a brahmyagya. Through this their souls find fulfillment. To enrich and enhance the capacity and capability of the devtas, the devyagya is carried out. For the welfare of all beings in the universe the Bhutyagya is performed.

The soul is the same in all, hence satisfying the hunger of others through an offering of grains etc. is known as nriyagya. And that which is performed for world welfare and its liberation is the yagya of Ved and Vigyan. These five yagyas ♦ brahmyagya, devyagya, bhutyagya, nriyagya and mahayagya are the essential daily routine yagyas of the supreme race of the Aryans. These are also effective at the thought level (dhyana), hence are very special and reverent.

♦Ayagyeo hattvarcha bhavati'

Means that the spiritual force of the one who does not perform yagya goes waste. Therefore ♦Arise O Aryans of Aryavrata, let us re-establish the pledge of the mahayagyas, and through pure thoughts, kindle the powers of the mind and soul to realize the joy of being a real human being, so that we can reinstate the glory of the culture of Mother India to make Bharatvarsh a supreme land once again.'

Pranam says Pranam to Bharatbhumi.