



Home Deity Worship Course

Ārati items explained



ISKCON Deity Worship Ministry

Śrīla Prabhupāda defines āraṭi

Prabhupāda: Āraṭi means the āraṭi, reception; koren, doing; brahmā, Lord Brahmā; ādi, headed by; deva-gaṇe, all the demigods. That means, "To offer āraṭi reception to Lord Caitanya, all the demigods have come down, headed by Lord Brahmā." Āraṭi koren brahmā-ādi deva-gaṇe.

Spelling of Āraṭi Song -- Los Angeles, December 31, 1968

Āraṭi as dṛṣṭi

Āraṭi is also called nirjjana or dṛṣṭi, which means waving auspicious items before a person in order to dispel inauspicious influences or elements, as a means of protection. The various items offered, all representative of the material elements in pure form and the corresponding sense objects (i.e. sound, form, touch, etc.) are auspicious and purifying. Thus all āraṭi ceremonies offered to the Lord are auspicious (maṅgala), but the first āraṭi of the day, in the early morning, is considered particularly auspicious for all who participate.

Pañcarātra-Pradīpa: The Sixty-four Upacāras

Incense

*dhūpayec ca tathā samyak śrīmad-bhagavad-ālayam
dhūpa-śeṣaṁ tato bhaktyā svayaṁ seveta vaiṣṇavaḥ*

A devotee should make the Lord's temple pleasant with the scent of incense. Thus, with devotion, he may smell the incense that has been offered to the Lord."

HBV 8th Vilāsa, mantra 27

*dhūpasya vījane caiva dhūpenāṅga-vidhūpane
nīrājaneṣu sarveṣu viṣṇor nāmāni kīrtayet*

At every āraṭi one should wave incense before Lord Viṣṇu's form and chant His holy names.



Sanātana Gosvāmī comments: One should wave the incense so the fragrance is spread everywhere.

HBV 8th Vilāsa, mantra 3

*vanaspati-rasotpanno gandhāḍhyo gandha uttamah
āghreyaḥ sarva-devanam dhūpo 'yam pratigrhyatam*

Please accept this very fragrant incense made from the nectar of trees, incense that all the demigods like to smell.

HBV 8th Vilāsa, mantra 6

Lamp

*tathaiva dīpam utsrjya prāgvad ghaṇṭām ca vādayan
pādābjād ādṛg-abjāntam mudrayoccaiḥ pradīpayet*

Ringling the bell as before, one should with a mudrā offer a lamp to the Lord, beginning with His lotus feet and going up to His lotus eyes.

HBV 8th Vilāsa, mantra 37

*su-prakāśo mahā-tejaḥ sarvatas timirāpahaḥ
sa-bāhyābhyantara-jyotir dīpo 'yam pratigrhyatām*

Please accept this brilliant lamp, which removes all darkness, both within and without.

HBV 8th Vilāsa, mantra 38

Arghya

arghya—water for reception

ŚB 1.18.28 - synonyms



Literally, a valuable offering, generally symbolized by offering pure water mixed with auspicious ingredients.

Kārtikka Māhātmya – footnote page 53

According to their respective positions, they welcomed Lord Balarāma by giving Him in charity nice cows and arghya (a mixture of āratī water and an assortment of items such as honey, butter, flowers and sandalwood pulp).

KB 68: The Marriage of Sāmba

*kṛṣṇāya prathamam dadyād devakī-sahitāya vai
arghyam ṛṣi-vara-śreṣṭha sarva-kāma-phala-pradam*

O best of sages, thus one should begin by offering arghya to Lord Kṛṣṇa and Devakī, arghya that brings the fulfillment of all desires.

HBV 15th Vilāsa, mantra 487

Flowers

It is better to practice concentrating our attention by offering flowers and Tulasī to the lotus feet of the Lord. In this way, we gradually become purified by the arcanā process.

ŚB 2.2.13

Kṛṣṇa worship begins from the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. Nobody offers flowers and Tulasī on the face of Kṛṣṇa. They offer on the feet. That is the beginning...

Lecture, August 28, 1975

Better we should practice to concentrate our attention by offering flowers and Tulasī on the lotus feet of the Lord. In this way as we become purified by arcanā process gradually we dress Him, bathe Him, and all these transcendental activities help us in purifying our existence.

Letter, June 21, 1970



Cāmara

This is specially meant for driving away the flies. (laughter) Yes. This cāmara is meant for that. Even it is touching body, there is no harm.

Lecture, August 1, 1975

Bell

The sound of a bell embodies all music. If a devotee lacks instruments and kīrtana he should simply ring a bell, for that sound in itself is dear to the Lord. Thus one should worship the puja bell before worshiping the Lord, as an item of His paraphernalia that is very dear to Him. Many functions of worship require that one ring a bell with a handle.

The śāstra states that one who, while worshiping the Lord, rings a bell with a symbol of Garuda or the Lord's cakra on it attains liberation from birth and death.

Pañcarātra-Pradīpa: Gathering Items for Worship