



THE SACRAMENTS OF A HINDU MARRIAGE ARE DIVIDED IN VARIOUS PARTS

DWAAR PUJA (ENTRANCE PRAYER)

This first part of the ceremony constitutes of the welcoming of the groom and his family. A purification rite is performed at the entrance of the hall where the groom is blessed upon his arrival.

DHAG PAATH

The groom's elder brother confirms that this is the chosen bride. He plays a very important role in a couple's life, as he offers guidance and protection to the newlyweds as they embark on a new life together.

MANGAL ASTAK (EXCHANGE OF GARLANDS)

Garlands are exchanged by the bride and groom, thereafter the bride is seated on the left of the groom which symbolizes the spirit of support and mutual understanding they intend to instill in their union.

KANYA DAAN (ACCEPTANCE OF THE BRIDE)

The bride's parents offer her hand in marriage to the groom. They place her right hand in that of the groom and they are both offered blessings by the parents.

AGNI PUJA (LIGHTING OF THE SACRED FIRE)

Prayers are recited to the fire (agni), which represents one of the five manifestations of God. Ghee, rice and some other offerings are jointly offered to the fire. This signifies the spirit of sacrifice and equal partnership the couple will embark on. This prayer is also offered for long life, health and prosperity.

MANGAL FERA (ENCIRCLING THE SACRED FIRE)

The couple walks hand in hand around the fire four times whilst the priest chants mantras. Each round they offer the parched rice to the agni, representing the sacrifice of material possessions for God's blessings. Mangal fera is a vow to carry out moral duties and responsibilities towards each other, family and society.

SHILAROHANA (STEPPING ON THE STONE)

The bride places her foot on a stone symbolizing her ability to overcome misfortune and adversity and furthermore this act also signifies that all decisions made during their marriage will be solid and binding.

SAPTA PADI (SEVEN STEPS)

This part of the sacrament denotes the seven steps into married life as well as the holy seal of this union. A knot is tied between the groom and bride which indicates the fusion of two hearts and the union of two families. As they take each step, they evoke the blessings of God for:

- * May the first step lead to food that is both nourishing and pure
- * May the second step lead to strength (at the physical, emotional and spiritual levels)
- * May the third step lead to prosperity
- * May the fourth step lead to all round happiness
- * May the fifth step lead to progeny
- * May the sixth step lead to long life
- * May the seventh step lead to friendship through harmony and understanding.

SINDUR DAAN (RED POWDER ON THE FOREHEAD)

At this stage of the ceremony the groom places sindur on the bride's forehead, which is indicative of the Holy union.

MUNGAL SUTRA (THE SACRED NECKLACE)

The groom places the mungal sutra around the bride's neck, which is symbolic of the unification of their lives as husband and wife.

ASHIRVAAD (BLESSING)

The groom and bride exchange rings and they mark the end of the Hindu marriage ceremony by offering a prayer of peace.

SHAANTHI PAATH

THANK YOU FOR SHARING THIS AUSPICIOUS DAY WITH US

