

Why Do We Have A Prayer Room?

Most Indian homes have a prayer or altar room. A lamp is lit and the Lord is worshipped each day. Other spiritual practices like japa (repetition of the Lord's name), meditation, paaraayana (reading of scriptures), prayers, devotional singing, etc. is done here. Special worship is done on auspicious occasions like birthdays, anniversaries, festivals and the like. Each member of the family – young or old – communes with and worships the Divine here.

The Lord is the entire creation. He is therefore the true owner of the house we live in. The prayer room can be thought of as the master bedroom. We are the Earthly occupants of His property. This notion rids us of false pride and possessiveness.

The ideal attitude to take is to regard the Lord as the true owner of our homes and, us, as caretakers of that home. But if that is rather difficult, we could at least think of him as a very welcome guest. Just as we would house an important guest in the best comfort, so too we facilitate the Lord's presence in our homes by having a prayer room, which is kept clean and well-decorated at all times.

The Lord is all pervading. We keep prayer rooms within the house to remind us of this. Without the grace of God, no task can be successfully or easily accomplished. We invoke Him by communing with Him in the prayer room each day and on special occasions.

Each room in a house is dedicated to a specific function like the bedroom for resting, the living room to receive guests, the kitchen for cooking, etc. The furniture, décor, and the atmosphere of each room are made conducive to the purpose it serves. So too, for the purpose of meditation, worship and prayer, we should have a conducive atmosphere – hence the need for a prayer room.

Sacred thoughts and sound vibrations pervade the place and influence the minds of those who spend time there. Spiritual thoughts and vibrations accumulated through meditation, worship, and chanting done there pervades the prayer room. Even when we are tired or agitated, by just sitting in the prayer room for a while, we feel calm, rejuvenated, and spiritually uplifted.