

## **Jyotirlinga**

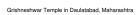
Jyotirlingam is a shrine dedicated to Lord Shiva where Shiva is worshipped in the form of a Jyotirlingam or 'Lingam of Light'. There are said to be twelve Jyotirlinga shrines in India although their location is not consistently identified. The Jyotirlingas look like any other Shiva Linga. However, it is believed that a person who has attained a certain degree of spirituality sees these lingas as columns of fire piercing through the earth.

According to a legend once Lord Vishnu and Lord Brahma were fighting to prove who was the Supreme Being. At this point, Lord Shiva appeared as a flaming Linga and challenged the duo to measure the gigantic Linga (phallic symbol of Lord Shiva). Brahma and Vishnu decided to find one end each and declared that whoever returned first would be accepted as supreme. Vishnu assumed the form of a boar and went down. Brahma, in the form of a swan, flew upwards. They searched for days but in vain and returned to the starting point tired and bewildered. At that moment, the central part of the pillar part of

Since it was on the 14th day in the dark half of the month of Phalguna that Shiva first established himself in the form of a Linga, the day is especially auspicious and is celebrated as Mahashivaratri. Worshipping Shiva on this day is believed to give one with happiness and prosperity.

In Hinduism Jyotirlinga shrines have great important	ce. There is very much significance in Puranas. It	is said that by reciting the name of 1.	2 Jyotirlinga a devotee can eliminate all the si	ns. Besides, the devotee becomes calm an	d pure as he becomes illuminated and
enlightened with supreme and divine knowledge. The	names mentioned for the benefits of all are:				

Significance of Jyotirlingas
In Hinduism Jyotirlinga shrines have great importance. There is very much significance in Puranas. It is said that by reciting the name of 12 Jyotirlinga a devotee can eliminate all the sins. Besides, the devotee becomes calm and pure as he becomes illuminated are enlightened with supreme and divine knowledge. The names mentioned for the benefits of all are:
Saurashtra Somnatham Cha Shrishaile Mallikarjunam
Ujjainyam Mahakalomkare Mammaleshwaram
Parlyam Vaijnatham Cha Dakinyam Bheem Shankaram
Setu Bandhe Tu Ramesham Nagesham Daruka Vane
Varanasya Tu Vishwesham Tribakam Gautamitate
Himalaye Tu Kedaram Ghurmesham Cha Shivalaye
Aetani Jyotirlingani Sayam Prataha Pathennaraha
Sapta Janma Kritam Papam Smaranen Vinashyati
Hindus believe that a sincere devotee who recites these 12 names regularly in the morning and evening washes all the sins committed in the previous seven births and attains all the powers and Siddhis.
The Twelve Jyotirlingas
There are 12 famous Jyotirlingas where Lord Shiva appeared in the form of light (Jyothi) lingam. These have been worshipped from time immemorial. They are mentioned in the Dwadasa Jyotirlinga Stotra and are enshrined in following temples.
Somnath Temple in Gujarat  Mallikarjun Temple in Andhra pradesh
Mahakaleshwara Temple in Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh
Omkareshwar Temple in Madhya Pradesh
Vaidyanath Temple in Deogarh, Bihar



Bhimashankar Temple near Pune in Maharashtra Rameshwaram Temple in Tamil Nadu

Vishwanath Temple in Varanasi Trimbakeshwar Temple in Nasik, Maharashtra Kedarnath Temple in Himalayas

