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Legend of Shree Shaligram Shila

Tulasi, also known as holy Basil is closely associated with the origins of Sila worship. According to the Puranas, **Lord Vishnu** had reunited with **Goddess Laxmi**, his wife. **Goddess Saraswati**, also wanted to be Lord Vishnu's consort. Once in anger Goddess Saraswati cursed Goddess Laxmi. Goddess Saraswati's curse changed Goddess Laxmi into a tulasi plant and forced her to live on earth forever. Lord Vishnu, however, intervened and modified the curse, saying that Laxmi would remain on earth as tulasi until the river Gandaki flowed from her body. In the meantime, He would wait by the riverside in the form of a stone to take her back to his abode. This stone was the Shaligram shila, which thus remained on earth as a representative of Lord Vishnu. The shila deities and the tulasi plant are thus always worshipped together as Vishnu and Laxmi.

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