

DHARMA BINDU

Essence of Dharma Shastra

Dharmo Rakshati Rakshitah

(Dharma protects those who protect it)

Compiled, translated and interpreted by V.D.N.Rao, Former General Manager, India Trade Promotion Organisation, Ministry of Commerce, Govt. Of India, Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.

Other Scripts by same Author

Essence of Puranas:-

**Maha Bhagavata, Vishnu Purana, Matsya Purana, Varaha Purana, Kurma Purana,
Vamana Purana, Narada Purana, Padma Purana, Shiva Purana, Linga Purana,
Skanda Purana, Markandeya Purana, Devi Bhagavata, Brahma Purana, Brahma
Vaivarta Purana, Agni Purana, Bhavishya Purana, Nilamatha Purana,**

Shri Kamakshi Vilasa

Dwadasha Divya Sahasra naamaa:

a) Devi Chaturvidha Sahasra naama: Lakshmi, Lalitha, Saraswati and Gayatri

b) Chaturvidha Shiva Sahasra naama: Linga-Shiva-Brahma Puranas and Maha Bharata

**c) Trividha Vishnu and Yugala Radha-Krishna Sahasra naama-Padma-Skanda-Maha Bharata-and
Narada Purana**

Stotra Kavacha-A Shield of Prayers

Purana Saaraamsha

Select Stories from Puranas

Essence of Dharma Sindhu

Essence of Shiva Lingarchana

Essence of Amaranath Yatra

Essence of Paraashara Smriti

Essence of Pradhana Tirthas

Essence of Brihadaranyaka Upanishad

Essence of Chhandogya Upanishad

Essence of Aitareya Upanishad

Essece of Katha Upanishad , Essence of Isha Upanishad (Awaiting release)

[Note: All the above Woks released on [www. Kamakoti.org/news](http://www.Kamakoti.org/news) as also Google;]

Foreword

During my recent opportunity to pay personal respects to HH Vijayendra Sarasvati of Kanchi Mutt, he emphasised the significance of 'Dharma Prachaara' or propagation of Virtues, highlighting the fundamental tenets of Hindu Dharma. While the core of thought in this perspective is strong enough- despite the abrasions of values in the contemporary Society- yet one might still not be comfortable with the knowledge of the principles, let alone the methodologies involved in observing them. He therefore instructed me to narrate a brief on Dharma and even suggested a Title called 'Dharma Bindu'. The scope and purpose of such a script has to be necessarily authenticated by Great Maharshis and Illustrative Original Works gifted down to us through generations. He handed over book named 'Samkshepa Dharma Shastram' by Dr. Gudipati Lalitha which was edited from Original Sanskrit Shlokas into Telugu, and instructed me follow the pattern and suitably edit so as to reach and suit a far larger readership in English for release vide [www. kamakoti.org/news](http://www.kamakoti.org/news).

Indeed, some of the basic principles are no doubt familiar to the general public in India due to one's own Societal customs and practices, but non- clarity of thought and hesitation to practise even the well known ideals are due to the cover of semi- awareness and partial ignorance. Authoritative support of Vedas as explained by Sages should be able to clear the ash-like cover of the Fire of Knowledge. Hence this attempt to edit some of the tenets of Vedic Dharma to assist and guide in our contemporary lives.

Commencing from 'Kaala Prakarana' or the Time Module covering Kshana-Dina-Tithi-Vaara-Paksha- Maasa-Samvatsara- Yuga-Kalpaadi cycle, Dharma Bindu seeks to deal with Varnashrama Dharmas especially of Dvijas; Rudiments of Dharma as applicable to one and all including house holders and women; followed by Ahnika Dharmas dealing in detail with Achaara-Vyavaharas or Customs as applicable to specified duties of all; 'Asouchaashoucha' Dharmas or Principles of 'Bhahyaantara Shuchi' or Physical and Mental Purity of Thought and Action.; Shraddha Prakarana detailing duties to the Departed Ones to redeem their Souls and to bestow blessings to us, and finally on Prayaschitta Dharmas or Regulation of Atonements of Lapses of Dharma-acharana or Practice of Virtue and Justice.

With the blessings of HH Vijayendra Sarasvati, two scripts of the same wavelength of Dharma, viz. Essence of Dharma Sindhu and Essence of Paraashara Smriti, had already been released vide the aforementioned website. Dharma Bindu in the series on Dharma is the latest, at the express instruction of HH; I am indeed ever grateful to him for the confidence reposed in me.

VDN Rao

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DHARMA BINDU

(Essence of Dharma Shastra)

Karmanyevaadhikaaraste maaphaleshu kadaachana, maa karmaphala heturbhuh maa te sangostva karmani/ (You have the liberty *only* to perform the duties as prescribed and have no control over the fruits of the works and hence do not neglect the responsibilities since the fruits shall be reaped as per the Nature's Laws!)- Bhagavad Gita; Saankhya Yoga, Chapter Two, Stanza 47.

Kaala prakarana

Atha Kaalo nirupyate sacha karmanyanga bhutah/ Tithinakshatra vaaraadi saadhanam punyapaapayo pradhaanagunabhevena nasvaattantrena tekshamaah/(It is only on the basis of kaalamaan- tithi- vaara-nakshatras that the executed deeds bear fruits and on their own the results are not accrued. Kaala maana or the measure of Time as defined by Gargya is that one eye-flap is a 'nimesha', two nimeshas make a 'triti', two tritis one 'lava', two lavas one 'kshana', ten kshanas one 'kaashtha', thirty kashthas one ' , thirty kalas one 'muhurta', thirty muhurthas one 'aho ratras'. 'Tithi-Paksha Swarupa' or the days and fortnights are stated as follows: *Raveendoryoga varahau kramaaddarsha Purnimaa, Kalaa pravesa niryaaanaih tidhayonyaascha pakshayoh/* (The formation of Shukla Paksha and Krishna Paksha occurs as per the union and disunion of Surya Chandras respectively and the fortnight from Amavasya till Chaturdashi is the former bright phase while that from Purnima to Chaturdashi is the waning and dark phase of Chandra.) *Sarvaahyetaascha tithiyah udayaadudaya sthitaah, Shuddhaa iti vinischeyaashashthi naadayohivaitithih/* Khanda Tithis, reckoned as from Sun Rise to Sun Set, are stated as 'Suddha' and are as clean, for performing any actions; each of these Tithis comprises six 'naadis'. Each Tithi has three characteristics : *Kharvaadarvaa tathaa himsraah trividham tithilakshanam, Dharmaadharma vashaadeva tithisraithaa vivartate/* The three are 'kharva', 'darva' and 'himsra' as per the intensity-mix of Dharma and Adhrama. Also there are two kinds of 'Viddhas', ie the day preceding Amavasya and the one following dviteeya day. Now the Kaala Nirnaya or the determination of Vedha analysis: *Shuddha viddhaa tithishuddhaa heena tithaanyayahani, Udaye purvayaa tithyaa vidhyate hitimurtakaih/ Saayamtottara yaatadvayunayaatuna vidyate, Vedhyaapi trimuhurtaiva nanyunaavedhamarhati/*(Vedha is defined if during the day time there are two tithis at Sun set and Sun Rise and the difference is of three muhurtas and not otherwise; the Viddha at the Sun rise is Purva Vidda and at the time of Sun set, it is called Para or Uttara Viddha. Based on the Viddhas, one has to determine the Prathamaadi Tithi nirnayas).

[In 'saamanya paribhasha' or ordinary usage, there are Purna Tithis and Sakhanda Tithis. PurnaTithi is called what obtains upto sixty ghadis after Sun Rise. Sakhanda Tithi is what obtains less than that time. Akhanda is divided in two parts viz. Shuddha and Viddha. Shuddha is the period time occurring from Sun Rise to Sun Set; however on 'Shiva Ratri', the time from Sun Rise to Midnight is noted as Shuddha Khanda. Now, the term 'Vedha' is the protrusion of one tithi into another and there are two kind of Vedhas viz. Praatah Vedha and Saayam Vedha. The duration from Sun Rise upto six ghadis later is called 'Praatar Vedha' and the subsequent six ghadis after Sun Set and before the commencement of the next

tithi is called 'Saayam Vedha'. But in respect of certain Tithis, the Vedha is of longer duration; for instance, Shashthi's Panchami Vedha is of twelve ghadis; Ekadashi's Dashami Vedha is of fifteen ghadis; Pournami's Chaturdashi Vedha is of eighteen ghadis. Further Vedha is applicable to different Karmas as they could be 'Nishiddhaas' or 'Graahyas' or acceptable or not. In any case, application of approval of a Karya is clear on Sampurna or Shubha tithis. Karmas are of Daiva or Pitravya.]

Having briefly mentioned of the basics as above, the details are: Samvatsara-Ayana-Ritu-Maasa-Vaasara or details of the Time Cycle Units of the Sixty Years- Two Ayanas-Six Seasons-Twelve Months- and Seven Days are relevant; the Chandra or Saura Varshas; the Tithis of Prathama- to Amavasya or Prathama to Purnima respectively and the months of Chaitra-Vaishakha-Jyeshtha-Ashadha-Shravana-Bhadrapada-Ashviyuja- Kartika- Margashira-Pushya- Maagha-Phalgunas. The months coincide approximately with March to February totalling 365 days. Ritus or Seasons approximately coincide with Chaitra-Vaishakha or end March to the last weeks of May when festivals like Ugadi, Shri Rama Navami, and Vaishakhi are celebrated. Greeshma Ritu or Summer during April-July during Jyeshtha-Ashadha when festivals like Ratha Yatra and Guru Purnima are observed and Dakshinayana or the Solar downtrend commences. Varsha Ritu or monsoon coincides with Shravana-Bhadrapadas or the last portions of July-September when Mangala Gauri and Vara Lakshmi Vratas, Raksha Bandhan, Krishna Ashtami, Ganesh Chaturthi and Onam are celebrated. Sharad Ritu or Autumn Season coinciding with Ashvin-Kartika months extending portions of September to November being mild weather the famed Sharannava Ratri and Depaavali are celebrated. Hemanta Ritu or pre-winter Season coinciding with Margaseersha and the last days of November-January, the festivals of Vasanta Panchami, Shiva Ratri and Holi are observed; and finally Shishira Ritu or winter coinciding with Maagha-Phalgun months during the last quarter of January to March is the time of Vasanta Panchami, Shiva Ratri and Holi. The Chandra maana procedure varies in the sense that the cycle of Seasons starts from the first day of Chaitra commencing from Ugadi.

Tithi Nirnayas:

The norms of determining Thithis from Prathama to 'Pancha Dashi' or Purnima/Amavasya as per Krishna Paksha, the Dark Fortnight commencing the Prathama from Amavasya in the ascending order while Chandra or Shukla Paksha commencing from Purnima to Amavasya as the case that may be are detailed: Prathama Tithi nirnaya: *Shukla paksho darsha viddhaa Krishny viddhaa dviteeyayaa, Uposhya pratipat Shukle mukhyaasyaadaa paraahnakui, Tadabhavetu saayaahyaavyaapini parigruhyaataam/* (If darsha viddha extends from Amavasya during the Krishna Paksha upto Dviteeya, then 'Upavasa' or fasting becomes fruitful; incidentally fasting on Prathama Tithi of Shukla Paksha is required to be observed up to noon on the following day; in case dviteeya occurs beyond the next noon then the fast should continue till the evening) *Praatassangava madhyaahnaa paraahnaassaayamityasau, Atrahnah pancadhaa bhago mukhyodvityaadi bhaagatah/* (It is necessary to divide the day time of a day in to five parts viz. Praatahkaala or early morning, sangava or prenoon, Madhyaahna or noon, Aparahna or post noon and Sayamkaala ie up to Sun set period; in any case it is required to divide the day time on two three parts) *Purvaahno chatu paraahnah itidvedhaa vibhaagah, Purvaahno madhyaahnoparaahnah itidvedhaa vibhaagah/ Purvaahno madhyaahnoparaahnassaayaahno iti charuvibhaahah, Praatassangava madhyahanna aparaahnassaayaahna iti panchathaa vibhagah/* (Purvaahna and Parahna are of two divisions; or there could be three units of Purvaahna-Madhyaahna-Aparahna. Purvaahna, Madhyaahna, Aparahna- and Saayaahna could be four units; or as per the five divisions mentioned above). *Devala*

Rishi states: Yaam tithim samanupraapya tvastam yaati Divaakarah, Saathihih sakalaagjneyaa daanaadhyayana karmasu/ The specific tithi when Sunset takes place would be the one when Daana-Adhyayana- Karmas or charity, scripture reading and all other deeds of virtue- be performed) *Sourepi states: Yaam praapyaastamuh iti arkassyaacchet saa trimuhurtagaah, Dharma krutyeshu sarveshu sampurnaantaam vidurbudhaah/* (Those with knowledge state that all acts of virtue be completed on that Tithi itself of Sun set with a possible extension of three ‘muhurtas’) *Sumantu Rishi* is of the view: *Tithi nakshatra niyame tithi bhantecha paaranam, Athonyadhaa paaranetu vrata bhangamavaapnuyaat/* There might be risk of failure of the ‘Vrata’ or the act of virtue performed with Shuchi-Uposha- Naivedya- Paaranas in the Dharma Karyas without reference to the prescribed Tithi- Nakshatra Regulations) *Tithyante cha bhante cha paaranam yatrachodyate, yaama trayordhva vartinaampraatarevahi paaranam/* (If three ‘yaamas’ exceed the limits of Tithi-Nakshatras, then paarana or breaking ‘upavaasa’ should be done only next morning) *Mukhya Tithyantaraayeshu tithisheshopi grihyataam, Yo yasya vihitha kaalah tatkaala vyaapitaan tithih/* (In case there is a problem of specified Tithi, then the extension of Tithi be also considered for the fasting limit; in any case, it would be advisable to decide on the preferred tithi for performing the Vrata keeping various such considerations.) Now, about ‘Eka Bhukta Nirnaya’ or Eating once a day only, Skaanda Purana defined as follows: *Dinardha samayaateete bhujyate niyamena yat ekabhuktamiti proktam atatsyaa siddhivaivah./* or eating limited meals in a formal way as per prescribed procedure that too once a full day/night after half day is known as ‘Eka Bhukta’.

Bodhayana Maharshi qualified further: *Madhyaana vyaapini graahyaa ekabhukta vrata tithih, Pujaa vrateshu sarvatra madhyaahna vyaapini tithih/* (Eka Bhukta vrata should be definitely extended to post noon, that too after the prescribed duties from morning thereafter) . In this connection there are six interpretations: *Purvedyureva madhyaana vyaapitam, Paredyureva madhyaahna vyaapitam, Ubhayatra tadvyaapitvam, Ubayatra tadavyaapitvam, Ubhayatrena saamyena tadekadesha vyaapitvam, Vaishamyena tadeka desha vyaapitvam/* (Deciding on the applications of timings in the context of ‘Eka Bhukta’ or one meal a day, there are six variations: the fasting on the basis of one meal a day be effective from the previous day’s noon meal, noon day meal extended till next noon, both kinds of meals covering noon meals of the previous day and the current noon, both kinds of afore said noon meals of yester and current days excluded, avoiding one of the previous or following day noon meals, or avoiding both these previous two alternatives. ‘Nakta Vrata Nirnaya’: Varaha Purana prescribes *Margasheershe site pakshe Pratipadyaa tithirbhavet, tasyaam naktam prakurveeta raatrou Vishnum pujayet/* (This nakta vrata is prescribed to be observed on Margaseersha Shukla Prathama and worship Vishnu on that night by fasting through out the day and breaking it by the night with prescribed food like ‘kheer’ and gram flour with classified butter; through out the day Agni Karyas be performed with appropriate mantras in praise of Agni, the representative of Vishnu followed by Vishnu Puja; normally Satya narayana Vrata is stated to be performed. Varaha Purana also describes a series of Vratas like Kanti Vrata, Siubhagya Vrata, Shanti Vrata , Arogya Vrata and so on. Reverting back to Nakta Vrata ‘Kaala Darsha’ mentions: *Trimuhurtaa - astamanaat praak paracascha tathaavidhaa, tasyaam nakta vratam kuryaad harinakta vrataadyatah/* (The Ratri Nakta named Hari Nakta is to commence three muhurtas before and another three muhurtas later) Vyasa Maharshi states: *Tri muhurtah pradoshasyaat bhaanaavastangate sati , naktam tatra tu kartavyam iti Shastra vinischayah/* (As three muhurtas after Sunset is ‘pradosha’ time, and nakta by performed at that time as prescribed by Shastras) Skaanda qualifies: *Pradosha vyapini nassaadduivaa naktam vidheeyate, Atmanodvigunacchaayaam ati kraamati Bhaskare, tannaktannakta mityaahuh na naktam nishi bhojanam/* (Day time naktam is necessarily extended upto Pradosha while over double the

length of the shadow of Surya would be the nakta time, but food in the night is not considered as nakta. More over: *Arka dviparya raatrou cha chaturdashyashtami divaa/* (When Nakta is observed the nights of Sundays, Amavasyas, and Pournamis are not appropriate for taking food and the respective previous days too food is to be unconsumed too.) Vriddha Yagjnyavalkya assures: *Purvaahnikaastu tithayah Daiva kaarye phala pradaah/* (During Deva Karyas, observance of nakta during the pre noon and day time periods would be of double the fruits) Dviteeya Tithi nirnaya: *Ekaaddasyashtamishashti dviteeyaa cha chaturdasi, Trayodasheetvamaavaasyo uposhyaassyuh paraanvita/* (Bhrigu Maharshi suggested that the day after Ekadashi, Ashtami, Shashthi, Dviteeya, Chaturdashi, Trayodashi and Amavasya are worthy of Uposhya or fasting) Triteeya Tithi nirnaya: *Rambhaakhyaam varjayitvaat triteeyaantu Dvija sattama, Anyeshu sava karyeshu ganayuktau prashastate/* (Brahama Vaivarta Purana states that excepting Rambha vrata all other acts of virtue are of ‘Para viddha’ and thus auspicious on Triteeya) Chaturthi Nirnaya: *Chaturthee Gananaadhasya Maatru viddhaa prashasyate, Mandhyaana vyaapini chetsyaatparataschetparehani/* (Brihaspati states that Vinayaka Chaturthi being of Maatru viddha if extends upto Madhyaana or post noon is considered as auspicious, but there beyond then the Vrata be performed in the next day) Panchami nirnaya: *Chaturthee samyutaakaaryaa panchami parayaa natu, Daive karmani pitrecha Shukla pakshhe tathaasite/* (Haritasa Maharshi states that Pitru karyas be performed on Chaturthi either in Shukla Paksha or Krishna Paksha on Panchami preceding Chaturthi but not in the subsequent tithi of Shasthi) Shashthi Nirnaya: *Krishnashtami Shanda Shashthi Shivaratrirchaturdashi, Yetaah puva yutaah kaaryaah tithyante paaranam bhavet/* (Vashishtha Maharshi opines that auspicious days of Krishnaashtami, Skanda Shashthi, Shiva Ratri, Chaturdashi be observed only if they are preceded by the earlier Tithis and ‘Paarana’ or naivedya be performed at the end of the Tithi) Saptami Nirnaya: *Saptami poorva viddhaiva vrateshu nikhileshyapi, Alaabhe purva viddhaayaah paraviddhaapi grihyataam/* (Kaala Nirnaya states: In respect of all the vratas on the relevant Tithi, only Saptami Purva Viddha be considered, lest it be construed as Para viddha) Ashtami Tithi Nirnaya: *Shukla paksheshtami chaiva Shukla pakshhe Chaturdashi, Purva viddhaana kartavyaa kartavyaa parasam yutaa/* (In the case of Purva Viddha occurring the Shukla Paksha Ashtami, or Shukla Paksha Chaturdashi, then para viddha or the subsequent Tithi be considered; for instance Kraishnaashtami, in Krishna Paksha Shravana month, Durga Puja on Ashvin Shukla Ashtami) Krishna Ashtami nirnaya : *Shravane bahule pakshhe krishnaashtami vratamn na karoti naroyantu bhavati krura raakshasah/ Shraavanasya cha maasasya krishnaashtaamyam Bnaraadhipa, Rohini yadilabheta janyanti naamasaa tithih//* (He who does not observe Krishnaashtami Vrata on Shraavana Bahula ashtami is destined to be reborn as a cruel demon; if Rohini nakshatra also coincides on that day, performance of the Vrata is doubly effective and victorious!) *Shraavanevaa nabhasyevaa rohini sahitaashtami, yadaa krishna narairlabdhaa saa jayantiti keertitaa/* (Vashishya Samhita is quoted: Krishna paksha Ashtami in Shravana month or Bhadrapada coinciding with Rohini Star is renowned especially as highly significant) *Shraavanyaam proushapadyaam vaayadaa simham gatoravih, Jayantyaaraadhanam kuryaannatu karkata kanyaayoriti// Yasminvarshe Shraavane vaanabhasyevaa jayantina sambhavati, Tasmin varshe Shraavana maasa yeva krishnaashtami vratamanushtheyam//* (Jyotishaarnava prescribes that in the event of Shravana or Bhadrapada, Surya enters Simha raashi the Krishna jayanti be observed then only; also in a year if there is no coincidence of Rohini and Ashtami, then Krishnaashtami be necessarily observed in Shravana month only) *Simharaashi gate Surye gagane jaladaakule, Maasiproshtha padoaushtamyam artha raatre vidhudaye, Budha vaarr vrisha lagne rohinyascharamaamshake, Shubye harshana yoge cha kaulavena yute tathaa, Vasudevana devakyaam aham jaatosmi padmaja/* (Varaha Purana states that Lord Krishna declared that he would be

born to Vasudeva and Devaki when Surya was in Simha Rashi, as the Sky looked thickly clouded, at the mid night of Bhadrapada months's Krishna Ashtami as Chandra appeared, on a Wednesday in Vrishabha lagna, Rohini's last phase in Harshanamanugraha yoga with koulamvamanukarana!) *Yaihkritaa Shraavane maasi Ashtami Rohiniyutaa kimpunarubudha vaarena somenaapi visheshatah// Ashtami Rohiniyuktaa nishyardhe yadi drishyate, Purvedyurnisheedhaaduur- dhvam aarabhyaparedyuh/ Nisheedhaadarvaak yaa samaapyte Ashtami, Tatra ubhaytra raatri samban -dhaat kutra upavaasa iti chet, Paredyureva upavaasah praatah sankalpa kaalamaarabhya pravatta -maanatvaat/* (Padma Purana explains about the great distinction of performing Krishnaashtami in Shravana month coinciding with Rohini and Monday or Wednesdays, especially if Moon is cited on Ashtami Rohini when the Vrata would yield outstanding results. Upavasa is best performed commencing from the previous night of Ashtami till the present night of Ashtami; in case Ashtami starts from the previous morning itself then the Upavas be observed on the nexr day. Navami Tithi nirnaya: *Chaitra shuddhaatu Navami punarvasu yutaa yadi, Saitra madhyaahna yogena maha punyatamaabhavet/Shri Rama navamee proktaa koti Surya grahaadhikaa, tasmindine mahaa punye Rama muddhisya bhaktitah/ Yatkinchit kriyate Karma tadbhavatyakshaya kaaranam, Uposhanam jaagaranam pitru nirdisya tarpanam, Tasmin dinetu kartavyayam Brahmavaaptimabheepsuh/* (Agastya Maharshi confirms that Chaitra Shuddha Navami if coinciding with Punarvasu nakshatra till the noon is ideal for observing Shri Rama Navami. Shri Rama Navami Vrata is far superior by a crore of observing a crore of Surya grahanas. On that day, even 'Rama maatra smarana' or memory of Shri Rama's sacred name would yield lasting significance; if Uposhana, Jaagarana and Pitru Tarpana are performed, these would result in never ending fruits!) Referring to the worship of Dashaavataaraas, each of these 'Avatara dinas' bestow enormous results viz. Matsya on Chaitra Krishna Trayodashi; Kurma on Jyeshtha Krishna Dvaadashi; Varaha on Chaitra Krishna Panchami; Narasimha on Vaishakha Shukla Charurdashi-Swaati nakshatra evening; Vaamana on Bhadrapada Shukla dvaadashi Shravana nakshatra; Parashu Rama on Margashira Krishna dviteeya; Shri Rama on Chaitra shukla navami punarvasu nakshatra; Bala Rama; Vaishakha Shukla triteeya; Krishna on Shraavana Krishnaashthami Rohini Nakshatra and finally Kalki on Bhadrapada Shukla Dviteeya. *Avatara dine punye Harimuddhisya bhaktitak, Upavaasaadi yatkinchit tadaanantyaya kalpate/* (Worshipping Maha Vishnu by observing Vratas and Upavasas in respect of any or all Incarnations of Him would indeed bestow Ananta Phala or Lasting Benefits! Dashami Nirnaya: *Shukla pakshetithirgraahyaa yasyaamabhyudite Ravih, Krishna pakshetithirgraahyaa yasyaamastamito Ravih/* (Shankha Nirnaya states: To decide on Dashami Tithi in Shukla Paksha, Sun rise be considered and in Krishna Paksha Sun set be taken into account. Vijaya Dashami in Ashviyuja Shukla paksha as also Gangavatarana snaanas be observed accordingly. Ekaadasha Nirnaya: *Ekaadashee sadoposhyaa pakshayoh Shukla Krishnayoh// Ekaa - dashyaam upavasevna kadaa chidati kramet, Nishkrutirmadyapa- syoktaa Dharma Shastre maneeshibhih, Ekaadasyannakaaasya nishkrutihkvaapinoditaa// Ati vedhaa Maha vedha vedhaasti dhishu smritaah, Savyepya vedhaa vigjneyaa vedhassuryodaye matah/* (Sanatkumara Samhita states: Ekaadashi fasting is a must both in Shukla Paksha and Krishna Paksha; this regulation ought to be observed; those who resort to Madya paana or bhojana have no excuse of pardon at all! There is no need to consider Ati Vedhaa or Maha Vedhaa while determining Ekaadasha Tithi but is adequatet to ensure vedha if any at the time of Sun Rise!) *Yadecchedvishnu saayujyam sukham sampadamaatmanah, Ekaadashyaam na bhunjeeta pakshayo rubhayorapi// Dvaadashitithiralpaayadi nasyaatparehani, Dashami mishritaakaaryaanadoshsteeti vedhanah// Ekaadasheetu sampurnaa dvaadasheetu sampurnaa dvaadashi vridhhi gaamininanjali naama saa proktaa koto yajna phalapradaa// Adityehani samkra -*

antyaam ashitaikaadashhechucha, Vyati paate krite shraaddhe putrinopavashedgruhi// Shamani bodhani madhye krishnaikaadashi bhavet, Saivoposhya grihasthena naanyaakrishnaakadaachana// (On the subject of Ekadashi, Vishnu Rahasya Grandha narrates the relevant stanzas: Those who aim at happiness, prosperity and ‘Vishnu Saayujya’ must necessarily abstain from food on both the Ekadashis. In case the following day is extended to Dvadashi or preceded by Dashami, Ekadashi fasting would be in order. If the whole day is of Ekadashi only plus some Dvadashi then the fasting is named ‘najanjuli’ and yields ‘koti yagnaphala. But ‘grihasthis’ or house holders are refrained from observing Ekadashi fasting on the days of Solar Eclipse, on shraddha days or on those who beget children on Shraddha days, on Ekadashis falling in Krishna paksha and on days of ‘Vyatipaata’. Further house holders are definitely required to observe fasting on Shayni Ekadashi, Utthaana or Bodhana Ekadashi.) *Chatusro ghatikaah praatah Arunodaya sangnakaah, Chatushtaya vibhaagotra vedhaa- deenaam kiloditah, Arunodaya vedhasyaat saardhantu ghatikaatrayam/ Athavedopi ghatikaa pramaa sandarshanaarraveh mahavedhopitartaiva drishyaterkona drishyate, Tooriyastatravihitah yogah suryodaye budhhaih// Dashami shesha samyukto yadisyaad arunodayah, Nainoposhyam Vaishnavena tadvinaikaadashivratam//*(Brahma Vaivarta Purana states that in the context of early mornings, four ‘ghadiyas’ are stated to be relevant as called Vedhaa chaturaya: three and half ghadiyas are known as Arunodaya Vedha and the rest as Surya darshana; if Surya is not seen then also Mahavedha is stated to prevail as Tureeya Yoga. Now, in case there is dashami Sesha at the Sun Rise, Vaishnavaites normally perform Vrata without fasting) In this connection Narada states: *No poshyaa Dashami viddhaa sadaiva Ekadashi tithih, Taamupohya narajuhnaat punyam varsha shato bhavam/*(Fasting on Ekadashi with Dashami Viddha annuls the fruits of hundred years!) Be that as it may the Ekadasha Vrata is outlined as follows: The Invocation states: *Dashami dinaarambha kaarsheham vratam tavaa, Tridinam Deva devesha nirvighnam kuru Keshava!* Or ‘Keshava! I resolve to observe the Ekadasha Vrata for three days of Dashami-Ekadashi-Dvadashi; do kindly bless me to perform without any hindrance!’ Then the karta should observe Eha Bhukta or one simple meal a day with no fries and grams, keep restraint on excessive quantity of eating and drinking juices, observe celibacy and abstinence, observe silence, and declare: *Ekaadshyaam niraahaarobhutvaaha maparehani, Bhakshyaami Punareekaahsha sharanamme bhavaacchryutaa/* or Pundarikaaksha! I will fast on Ekadashi and break the fast on the following day; kindly ensure my health. With *namo Narayana Mantra* ringing in the ears form, the puja be performed with Deepa-Dhupa-Pushpa-Phala-Snaana of the Murti- yagnopaveeta-vastra-naivedya-arathi- mangala vaadya-geeta- nrityaadi upacharas and Ratri jagarana with japa-dhyana-pathana- gaana-nrityaadi krama till next day with patience, calmness and truthfulness followed by Punah Puja the next morning and Brahamana-vidyarthi bhojana the next noon! Dwaadashi nirnaya: *Shuklaava - ayadivaa Krishnaa dvadashi shravanaanvitaa, Tayorevopavaasasch a trayo dashyaantu paaranam/ Chaturmuhurtam dwaadashyaam aadyamekaadashi tuthou, Ante chatur muhur - tam yattatkaalam Harivaasaram, Nakaaryam paaranam tatra Vishnuprenana tatparaih//* (Brahmaarshi Narada affirms that Dwaadashi Tithi either in Shukla Paksha or Krishna Paksha needs to be united with Shravana nakshatra worthy of observing ‘upavasa’ and also ‘Paarana’ is required to be observed only on the following Trayodashi. More over, those who are genuine devotees of Vishnu should not perform paarana during ‘Hari vaasara’ time ie. During the last four muhurthas of Ekadashi and the first four muhurthas of Dwaadashi) *Yadaatvalpaadvaadashi syaadapa -karsho bhujor bhavet, Praatarmaadhyaanikasyaapi tatrasyaadapakarshanam/* (Garuda Purana states that if Dwaadashi prevails a bit in the early morning hours, then one could quickly execute morning and noon rituals and give up dvadashi upavaasa therebefore and this kind of alternative is called ‘apkarshana’) Devala Maharshi states: ‘ *Sanghate*

vishame prapte dwaadashyaam paaranam kathaim, Adbhistu paaranam kuryaat punar bhuktam na dishakrit/ (Devala Maharshi provides a convenient alternative that in extreme situations, ‘paarana’ before Dwadashi ghadiyas be executed and ‘uopashya’ be called off too. Incidentally, there are eight kinds of Maha dwadashis: that tithi which is predominantly Ekadashi but extends into Dwadashi is called Unmeelani dwadashi; that which is Shuddha or of Shukla paksha extending to the next phase of krishna paksha is called ‘Vaangjuli; if Ekadashi occurs at Suryodaya and extends upto the next morning’s Trayodashi then the Maha Dwadashi is called Tridarshi Dwadashi; if Dwadashi extends towards Darshani/Amavasya or Pournamithen that is named Paksha vardhini; if it is with Pushyami then it is called Jaya dwaadashi; with Shravana then Vijaya, with Punarvasu then Jayanti and with Rohini then paapanaashani! Upavaasaas on these Dwadashis are stated to be extremely fruitful! Trayodashi nirnaya: *Trayodashi prakartavyaa dwaadashi sahita Munaih/* Dwadashi extending to Trayodashi is of significance to Sages. Not only that: Trayodashi falling before Shukla Paksha and after Krishna Paksha are of significance. Beginning from a Shukla Paksha Trayodashi falling on a Saturday, pradasha kaala pujas to Bhagavan Shiva as also nakta bhojana executed on twenty four Shukla Tradodashis would lead to Shiva Prapti! Chaturdashi nirnaya: *Madhu Shravana maasasya Shuklaayaa cha Chaturdashi, Saa raatri vyaapini graahyaa paraapurvaahna gaamini/* Extending from the night of Shravana Shukla Chaturdashi upto the following day’s pre noon, performance of AnantaVrata is fruitful. Chaturdashi is counted as occurs before Purnima in Shukla Paksha, or alternatively on a day before Amavasya in Krishna Paksha. Pournami-Amavasya nirnaya: Except Savitri Vrata which can be observed on both Pournami or Amavasya, all other vratas are scheduled on both the days; the principle is that even there is a vedha from chaturdasi to the next tithi by eight ghadis: *Bhuta viddhaa na kartavyaa Amavasyaa cha Purnima, Varjayatwaa Munishreshtha Savitri vratamuttamam/* (Purva viddhas are not to be considered as a hindrance to perform any Vrata excepting that of Savitri Vrata as a single exception). In fact, Amavasyas coinciding with Mondays and Tuesdays are considered as very auspicious for snaana-daanas!

Tarpanas on Amavasyas: Deva tarpana of Vasu-Rudra-Adityas; Rishi tarpana to Kashyapa- Atri-Vasishtha- Vishwamidraadis; Divya Manushya Tarpana of Sanaka Sanandanaadi- Kapilaadis; Divya Pitru Tarpana, and the three generation of Pitru devatas is stated to be a grihasthi dharma. Maha Bharata Anushasanika Parva-125 Adhyaaya states that Amavasya Phala Shruti is as follows: *Amaavaasyastu ye martyaah prayacchanti tilodakam, paatramoudumbaram graahyam madhu mishram tapodhanam/ Kritam bhagavati taih shraaddham sahasram yathaa vidhi, hrishta pushtamanaastesham prajayante prajaa dhruvam/ Kula vamshasya vridhistu pindadasya phalam bhavet, shraddhaayutastu yah kuryaatritrinaa manrunnaa manruno bhavet/* (Pitru devas assert: Amavasya tila tarpana from a honey mixed aoudumbara patra is as fruitful as a formal Shraaddha Kriya; this would bestow the fruits of excellent progeny and vamsha vridhhi besides fulfillment and happy life ahead) Yama tarpana is to be performed on Ashvini Krishna Chaturdashi or on Krishna Paksha Chaturdashi coinciding with Tuesdays: the relevant Mantra is as follows: *Pretotsava chaturdashyaam kaaryantu Yama tarpanam, Krishnaagaara chaturdashyaapi kaaryam sadaigva vaa/ Yamaaya Dharma Raajaaya Mritave chaantakaayacha, Vaivasvataaya Kaalaaya Sarva bhuta kshayaayacha/ Ouodumbaraaya Dadhnaaya Neelaaya Parameshtine, Vrikodaraaya Chitraaya Chitraguptaaya te namah/* Such is the significance of Tarpanas! Shiva Ratri nirnaya: *Maghasya klrishna pakshe yaa tithichet chaturdashi, raatri tasyaamaakhyaataa Shiva raatrissivapriya/ Tasyaam sarveshu Lingeshu tadaa samkramate Harah, Yaani kaanyatra lingaani charaani sthaavaaranicha/ Teshu samkramate Devi tasyaam raatrau yatoharah Shivaraatristitah proktaa tenasaa Haravallabha! Aditya - astamaye kaale tvastichedvaa Chaturdashi tadraatrisyaat saa bhaveduttamottamaa/* (Skanda Purana states that the night of Maagha Krishna Chaturdashi be noted as the auspicious austerities as being very dear to Bhagavan Shiva. It is believed that Shiva would enter into all the Shiva lingas, be they stable or

mobile; since on that night of Maagha Krishna Chaturdashi, it is popular as Shiva Raatri. In the event of Sunset when Chaturdashi is extended, then that most auspicious night is worthy of high veneration) *Purvedyura paredyurva Maha nishi Chaturdashi vyaaptaa saa drushyate yasyaam tasyaam kuryaat vratannarah, Mama priyakarihyeshaa Maagha Krishna Chaturdashi Mahaanishyanvitaa yatra tatra kuryaadidam Vratam/* (Ishaana Samhitastates: Maha Shiva Ratri Vrata be observed if the midnight of that Chaturthi Tithi occurs either before or later. Lord Shiva is stated to have stressed that the Outstanding Night of Maagha Krishna Chaturdashi is indeed very dear to him.) *Upavaasa prabhaavena balaadapi cha jaaganam, Shivaraatrasthaa tatra Lingasyaapi prapujanam, Akshayaan labhate bhogaan Shiva saayujyamaapnuyaat/* (In Naagara Khanda of Skanda Purana, it is declared that along with Shiva raatri Upavasa, if 'Jaagarana' or engaging oneself the whole night with the prayers and worship of Bhagavan Shiva is executed then one would be eligible for endless fortunes and Shiva saayujya thereafter!)

Rudiments of Dharma

Dharmo Vishvasya jagatah pratishthaa/ Vidvadvibhinsevitassadbhih nityamadvesharaagibhih, Hridayenaabhyanu jnaatoyastam Dharmam vyavasyata/ (As Veda and Manu Shastra define, Dharma or allround Virtue and Justice is such as earnestly and heartily practised by persons of erudition and balance) *Nadharmaadharmou charatah aavaasyah iti na devaah, na gandharvaah, sa pitarah ityaachakshate ayam dharmo amayadharmam iti, Yastvaaryaah kriyamaanam prashamsantisa dharmah, yadgarhane so adharma iti/* (Aapastamba states that those high practioners of Dharma have no special considerations as being 'mine' or 'thine', be they Devas, Gandharvas, Pitru Devas and so on. Those who have been practised from the days of yore through generations is named Dharma and that which has not been so is defined as Adharma) *Vedokhilo dharmam mulam smritisheelecha tadvidaam, Aachaaraschaiva saadhunaam Atmanashtustirevacha/* (Manu also states that the Principles of Dharma are such as those as practised by 'Sadhus' or who were replete with it as its traditional followers and attained proven fulfillment) *Sarvavarnaanaam swadharmaanushthaane parama parimitam sukham, tatah parivritttau karma phala sheshena jaatim rupam varnam balam, medhaam pragjnaam dravyaani Dharmaanu – shthaanamiti pratipadyante tacchakravadubhayorlokayoh sukha eva vartate/* (Aapastambha adds further that irrespective of 'Varnas' or classes of the Hindu Society of Brahmana-Kshatriya-Vaishyas etc. all should pursue 'Svadharmam' or their own established principles of the concerned class and as such secure the respective kinds of form, colour, strength, intellect, wisdom, wealth, and so on and enjoy aspirations of their respective lives) *Chatunaamapi varnaanaam Aachaaro Dharmapaalakah, Aacharabhrashtha dehaaam bhaveddhatma paraanmukhah/* (Paraashara Maharshi stressed that 'Dharma Palana' or Observance of the Principles of Dharma would just be to follow the defined principles of each class of Society and deviations are marked as Adharma or the negation of Virtue) *Vedovaa Hari bhaktirvaa bhaktirvaapi Maheshware, Svaachaaraatpatitam mudham na punaati dvijottamam/ Punya khsetraabhigamanam punya tirtha nishevanam, Yagjnovaa vividho Brahman tyaktaachaaram na rakshati/Aachaaraat praapyate swargah aachaaraat praapyate sukham, Aachaaraatpraapyate mokshah, Aacharaat kim na siddhati/* (Maharshi Narada emphasises that those 'dvijas' - or twice born are who undergo the Sacred Thread Ceremony and observe the concomitant principles thereof - and those who are devoid of Vedaadhyana or recitation of Vedas, devotion to Hari, devotion of Shiva, visits of 'Punya Kshetras' and 'Tirthas' and execution of sacrifices like yagjnas are disqualified to be dvijas and as such deserve to be declared against! Indeed it is the 'aachaara' or the tradition which gains heavens, happiness and Salvation finally; would be there anything that is unattainable from 'Aachaara'!) Now, Dharma Shastra Kartas are detailed as follows: *Manurbrihaspatirdaksho Gautamoyamongeeraah, Yageswarah Prachetaa*

-scha Shaataatapa Pasaasharou, Samvartoshanasau Shankha Likhitaavatrirevacha, Vishnava -astamba, Haareetaa Dharma shastra pravartika/(Manu, Brihaspati, Daksha, Gautama, Yama, Angirasa, Yogeshwara, Prachetasa, Shaataatapa, Parashara, Samvarta, Ushanasa, Shankha, Likhita, Atri, Vishnu, Apatamba and Haaritas are the eighteen Dharma Shastra Pravartakas or the eighteen Interpreters of repute). Further the Aparas Sutras or Outstanding Principles of Dharma are as follows viz. *Bodhayanam Apastambam Satyashadham Drakshaayanam Aagastyam Shakalyam Ashvalaayanam Shambaleeyam Katyayanam iti navaani purva sutrani/ Vaishnasam Shounakeyam Bharadvaajam Agni Veshyam, Jaimineeyam, Maadhunyam, Maadhyandinam, Koundinyam, Kaushetikam navani apara sutrani/* The purva and apara sutras were scripted by the respective Maharshis! The Places worthy of Dharmacharana are stated as follows: *Krishna saarairyavairdabhescha aturvarna ashramaistathaa, Samruddho Dharmadeshasuyaadaashrayeranvipaschitah/* (Smriti Chandrika states: Those places where there is ample availability of Krishnasaara, Yava, Darbha and all the four Varna persons as also well read and knowledgeable Vidvans are indeed worthy of residence!) *Na mleccha vishaya shraaddham kuryaat nagacchet mleccha vishayam/ Kaaveri Tungabhadraa cha Krishna venicha Gautami, Bhaageerathi vikhyaatataah Pancha Gangaah prakeertitaah /* (Vishnu Purana suggested that Shraddha Karmas be avoided in Mleccha Deshas nor even visit those places. The Sacred Rivers of Kaveri, Tungabhadra, Krishna Veni, Gautami, Bhagirathi are however deemed as Pancha Gangas) Referring to Yuga Dharmas, Parashara Maharshi narrated that Krita-Treta-Dvapara-Kali Yugas each of twelve thousand divya years each yuga and Tapas or High Meditation was of significance in Krita yuga, Jnaana in Treta Yuga, Yajna Karyas in Dvapara yuga while ‘*Daanameva Kaliyugau*’ daana alone is of high priority in Kali Yuga. The Maanava Praanas or Vital Forces of Human beings are essentially ‘Asthigatas’ are oriented to the essentiality of bones during Krita Yuga, Maamsa gata or dominated by flesh in Treta yuga, Rudhira gata or dependent on blood while in Kali Yuga the praanas are based on the food intake in Kali Yuga. *Krite sambhashanaadeva Tretaayaam sparshanaivacha dvaaparetv annama -adaaya Kalou patati karmana/* A human being is subject to down fall due to conversation during Krita Yuga, due to sparsha or mutual touch in Treta Yuga, due to food in Dvapara Yuga and due to ‘Dushkarma’ or evil acts in the Kali yuga) Vishnu Purana: *Sarve Brahma vadavyanti sampraptetun Kaloau yuge, Naanu tishthanti Maitreya shishnodara parayanaah/ Yada yadaasataam haanish Vedamargaanu saarinaam, Tadaa tadaa Kaler -vridhiih anumeyaa vichakshanaih// Veda Vyaasaauvaacha: Yatkrate dashabhirvarshaih tretaayaam vaayanenatu Dvaapare tacchamaasena hyahoraatrena tatlalou/ Dhyaayan Krite yajan yagnaih Tretaayaam Dwapare archayan, Yadaapnoti tadaapnoti Kalou samkeerta Keshavam/ Naaradiye/ Hare Keshava Govinda Vaasudeva Janaarddana, Iteetayanti nityam sahitaan badhate Kalih// Shiva Shankara Rudreti Nilakantha Trilochana, Iteerayanti ye nityam sahitaan baadhate Kalih/ Shiva Shankara Rudreti Neelakantha Trilochana, Iteerayanti ye nityam sahitaan baadhate Kalih/* (Vishnu Purana details Yuga dharmas as follows: In Kali Yuga, every one discusses about Brahma Jnaana but none is really interested in it since they are overwhelmed of selfishness, centric psyche and sex but none really is serious in favour of Brahma Jnaana; as and when there occurs a danger to the Virtuous, there is the upgradation of evil forces and infringement of virtue, and the signs of Kali Yuga become prominent and clear. Vyasa states: What ever deeds of virtue are performed in ten years in Krita yuga are as dispensed with or equal to those performed in one Ayana on Treta Yuga, one month in one Dvapara yuga and even in single day-night on Kali Yuga. The rewards of virtue by of Tapas during Krita Yuga are as good as Yagnas in Treta yuga, worships in Dvapara Yuga and even ‘Samkeertanas’ rendering Sacred Songs in Kali yuga) Narada Brahmaarshi that states the soulful singing of Narayana as: *Here Keshava Govinda Vaasudeva Janardana*

Iteerayanti nityam sahitaan baadhate Kalih/ Or alternatively as Shiva Shankara Rudreti Neelakantha Tricochana, Itirtayanti ye nityam sahitaan baadhate Kalih/ That is either render Hari Smarana or Hara smarana as above! Kali Yuga would never ever torment sincere prayers with the naamās as mentioned above. Such indeed are the Yuga Dharmas! Mentioning briefly about the process of Creation Manu described as follows: Yosaavateendriyah agraahyah shukshmah avyaktah sanatanah, Sarva bhutamayah achintyassayeva swayamudbhayouh/ Sobhidyaaya shariraraatsvaat sisrukshuh vividhaaprajnaah, Apa yeva sasarjaadau taanu beejamavaasrujat/ Aaponaaraa iti proktaa aapovai narasunavah, taayadasya ayanam purvam tena Narayana smritah/ Udbabarhaatmanaschaiva manah sadasadaatmakam, Manasa -chaapya hamkaara mabhimantaara meeshwaram/Mahantameva chaatmaanam sarvaani trigunaanicha, Vishayaanaam graheetruni shanaih panchendriyaanicha/ Sarveshaantu sanaamaani karmaanicha prithakprithak, Veda shabdebhya yevaadau prithak samsthaash -cha nirmame/ (He who is unseen, unvisionable, unimaginable, ancient yet in-resider among each and every being was Self-Manifested! He desired to create several impulses and at the outset created water and planted seeds therein. He named 'Aaapa' or 'Naara' and named the resultant Beings as 'Nara' and as such the Supreme Creator of the Naara and Nara became to be the cause of the Creation as Narayana. Then from the Supreme Soul the impulse called Pure Consciousness which led to the creation of 'Ahamkara' or Self Consciousness and that led to 'Manas' or Thinking Phenomenon. Now from this emerged three types of 'Gunas' or Characteristics named Satvika-Rajasika-Tamasika and Panchendriyas or Five Limbs which readily absorb the Gunas as also the corresponding physical responses thus together called as Pancha Jnanendriyas and Pancha Karmendriyas. The names, functions and the mix of the Gunas have thus come to varied acts of positive and negative actions and reactions as directed under the command of Manas or the Mind!)

Varna Dharmas : Brahmana Dharma: *Brahmanyaam Brahmanaajnaatah samskruto Brahmano bhavet, Evam Kshatriya vitshudraajneyaasvebhyah svayonija/ (Devala Maharshi defines a Brahmana born of the same parentage just as of Kshatriya, Vaishya and others) Adhyapanam cha adhyayanam yajanam yaajanam tathaa, Daaam prati grihaschaiva shat karmaanyagrajanmah/ (Manu Smriti prescribes Vedaadhyayana and Adyaayana or learning and teaching of Scriptures, performing and letting to perform yajnas, and giving and accepting Charities are the six duties of Brahmanas.) Parashara Smriti details another set of Shatkarmas by Brahmanas: Shatkarmaabhiraou nityam Devaathithi pujakah, huta sheshaantu bhungnaano brahmano naavaseedati/ Sandhyaa snaanam japo homo Devarchanam pujanam, Vishva Devaathithi yaamcha shatkarmaani dine dine/ (Parashara Smriti emphasises observing Six Duties every day besides Deva Puja, Atithi seva, eating Yagjna sesha or the left over of Yagjnas; the six daily duties are Sandyha vandana thrice a day, Snaana, Japa, homa, Devarchana, and Atithi Puja) Naasikyaadathavaalasya agneenaa dhaatumicchati, Yajeta vaana yajjina sayaati narakaan bahun, Tasmaatsarva prayatena Brahmanohi visheshitah Aaadhaayaagninvishuddhaatamaa yajet paramesh varam/ (Maadhaveeya details that those Brahmanas either due to negative mentality of Nastikata or non significance of the Supreme, or due to sheer lethargy, if the prescribed Agni Karyas are not performed, then they are destined to suffer in narakas and hence the caution that Agni based Satkaryas be observed with clean conscience and purity of thoughts!) Shroutam karmanachet cchaktah smaartam karma samacharet, Tatraapua shaktah karane kuryaadaacharamantatah/(Gargya Muni exempts shrouta karma and if that is not possible, smaarta karma be performed and even if that is not possible then 'Sadaachara' or Good Behaviour be observed definitely) Pratigrahaadhyapana yaajanaanaam pratigraham shresh - thatamam vadanti, Pratigrahasshudhyati Japya homau yaajyastu paapaat punaanti vedaah/ (Yama*

Dharma Raja prescribes three major duties of Prati graha, Adhyapana and Yaajana: Japa homa and Yajana are significant and Parigraha or acceptance of alms purifies) *Tapovishairvidhaih vrataischa vidhichodidaih, vedahkrisnobhi gantavyah sa rahasyodvijanmanaa/Yah svashakhaam parityajya paara - kyamadhighacchati, Sa shudrra vadbahish -kaaryah sarvasmaat dvijakarmanah/ Vedameva sadaabhyasyet tapastapsyandijottamah, Vedaabhaasohi viprasyatapah paramochyate/* (A dvija or twice born-and this is applicable to Brahmana-Kshatriya- Vaishyas- is required to learn such Tapo Vrata based ‘rahasyas’ or hidden meanings of Vedas by the practice of meditations and vratas. Whosoever follows another Veda Shakra too becomes ineligible for dvija karmas. Every dvija is required to pursue one’s own heritage and pursue that very Dharma of Adhyayana, Tapas and related virtues vigorously as the golden duty) *Vedasveekaranam purvam vicharobhyasanam japah, Taddaanam chaiva shishyebhyaha Vedaabhyaaso panchadhaa/* (Daksha Prajapati defined the five duties of a Brahmana as Acceptance of a Veda, Veda Vicharana or Intra- section of that specific Veda, Abhyasa or repetitive memory, Japa or concentrated meditation and Veda Daana to one’s own followers are the Five Principles of Vedaabhyaasa!) *Satata pratarutthaaya danta dhaavana purvakam, Snaatvaa hutvaacha shishyebhyah kuryaadhyaapanam narah/* (Yama details the Five Principles a Brahmana range from morning ablutions, snaana, ‘homaadi pratakala vidhis’ including homa vidhi and Vedabhyasa to disciples!) *Acharyaputrah Shushrushuh Jnaanadodharmikah Shuvhah, Aaptah Shaktah Ardhadah Saadhuhsvodhyaapaadasha darmatah/ / Vriddhaou cha Maata Pitarao saadhvi bharyaasutah shishuh, Apyakarya shatam kritvaa Bhartavyaa Maurabraveet/* (Manu Smriti also states that one could assess the character and conduct, the physical and internal cleanliness and the depth of knowledge of companions like Acharya Putras, shishyas, friends and such others. Another principle of Manu underlines the golden principle of up keeping and maintaining the elderly parents, devoted wife and young children.) Yet another principle of Brahmana Dharma as enunciated by Prajapati is: *Yah svadharmam parityagi paashandityuchyate budhah, Tatsanga kritthah samasyaattaavu bhavapi paapinou, yetu saamaanya bhavena Manyante purushottamam, tevai paashan - dino jneyaah narakaarha naraadhamah/* (Those who desert their Svadharmam or the Principles of one’s own family background are worthy of desertion of the Vamsha. Such persons who might be very knowledgeable still become irresponsible and are called sinners; further whosoever esteems Purushottama as normal and none too great are fit cases of abode in hell after their deaths!)

Kshatriya Dharma: *Dushtaanaam shasanaadrajaa shishtaanaam paripalabnaat, Praapnotyabheepsitaan lokaan varna samsthaakaro nripah/* (Dushta shaasana and shishta paalana or punishing the evil and safeguarding the virtuous are the fundamental duties of a Ruler, says Vishnu Purana !) Manu Smriti presents a good deal about the Kshatriya Dharma although considering the prevalent age of democracy when the Prajas are stated to be Raajas, these Kshatriya Dharmas suffer from current relevance and sound archaic. All the same, the Dharmas are being mentioned for the sake of the record: Kings should execute Vratas in favour of Indra, Surya, Vayu, Yama, Varuna, Chandra, Agni and Prithivi. Just as Indra enables good rains for four months a year, Kings by performing Indra vrata most sincerely must help his subjects keep happy with normal rains. Just as Sun God by the power of his rays collects taxes from his Subjects for eight months a year by the blessing of the Arka Vrata that a King performs. By bringing about happiness to his Subjects in his Kingdom, the King should perform Maruta Vrata and have the Subjects blessed with even temperature always! The King should execute YamaVrata to seek blessings to his Subjects so that those who are virtuous as also otherwise be treated at the time of death just as the King should like to treat the Subjects equitably at the time of their punishment or reward! The King also should

perform Vaaruna Vrata to bestow restraint to him to deal with his Subjects without favour or fear! The King must also perform Chandra Vrata so that the King might be imbued of natural equanimity and fulfillment towards his Subjects! Also a King must perform Agneya Vrata to the Agni Deva deal with his subordinates with appropriate harshness as and when required. Having detailed the concerned Vratas, a Kshatriya for sure should be fully aware of the following instruction of Manu: *Yathaa sarvaani bhutaani dharaadhaarayate samam, Tathaa sarvaani bhutaani bibhratah Parthiva Vratam/* (A kshatriya by birth should pay high consideration in favour of the son of one's own teacher, servant, provider of knowledge, Dharmatma, the one with high practice of Shuchi or Cleanliness of Body and Mind; a very near and dear companion, a person of moral courage and physical support, provider of wealth, an extremely docile and virtuous Sadhu and a Teacher- these are the ones a Kshatriya needs to always stand by and depend!)

Vaishya Dharma: *Pashunaam rakshanam daanam ijyaadhyayanamevacha, Vanik patham kusheedam cha Vaishyasya krishi mevacha/* (Manu Smriti is quoted again: Vaishya dharmas include pashu rakshana, daana, puja, adhyayana, business, and trading)

In sum Parashara Maharshi aptly describes: *Kshatriyopi krushim krutvaa dwijam devampujayet, Vaihyah anyastathaakuryat krishi vaanijya shilpikaan/ Chaturnaamapi varnaamsha dharmasanaatanah/* (Kshatriyas display their industriousness, valor and courage and serve Brahmanas for their involvement and dedication in Deva Pujas; Vaishyas earn out of their trading and business skills and so do the other class of Society due to their ability in crafts. Thus the Four Varnas are engaged in their own respective duties as their contributions to the Society as per their own prescribed Dharmas!) Common Dharmas to all Varnas: *Kshamaa satyam damah shoucham daanamindriya samyamah, Ahimsaa Guru shushrushaa tirthaanusaranam dayaa/ Aarjavam lobha shunyatvam Deva Brahmmana pujanam, Asabhyasuyaacha tathaa Dharmah saamaany uchyate/* (Common Dharmas, irrespective of Varnas as prescribed by Vishnu Maharshi include truthfulness, patience, control of emotions, cleanliness of body and mind, disposition of charity, self control, non violence, service to teachers, visits to Tirtha Places, kindness and generosity, straightforwardness, broad-mindedness and worship of Brahmanas and Devas)

Grihastha Dharmas: *Grihastu dayaa yukto dharmameva anuchintayet, poshya vargaartha siddhyartham nyaayavartaa su buddhiman/* (Parashara states that Grihastis or house holders should be always engaged in compassion, just conduct and observance of virtue as also the upkeep of the family members on the path of worthy upbringing, training and justice) *Nyaayoparjita vittena kartavyam hyata rakshanam, Anyaayena tu yo jeevat sarva karma bahishkrutah/* (The Grihasthi is never ever to deviate from the practice of living with well earned money within his means and maintain his family with uprightness being aloof of undeserving temptations of life) *Vivaahena pitrunarchan yagjardevaam stathaatitheen annairmuneemscha svaadyaayairapatyena prajapateem, Balinaahiva bhutaani vatsalyenaakhilam jajat, Prapnoti purusholokaan nijakarma samarjitaan/ Bhikshaa bhujantuyekchit parivraabrahmacharinah, Tepyatraiva pratishthante gaarhasthyam tenavaiparam, Yastu samyak karotyevam grihastah param vidhim, Svadharma bandhamuktosao lokaanaapnotyanutamaan/* (Once wedded, a house holder should take up the responsibility of satisfying Pitru devatas; Devatas by yagnas and sacrifices, bhojanaadi facilities to Atithis, by svaadhyaya make Munis happy, by progeny with Prajapati, Bhutas by Balis, and the entire Society with rapport and good will. By observing these duties a householder would certainly attain higher lokas. Grihasthashrama is ideally blessed to help the begging Parivrajakas to satisfy their hunger as also help Brahmacharis, besides performing their own duties and finally reach high lokas)

Grihashramaat paro dharmo naasti naasti punah punah, Sarva tirtha phalamtasya yayoktam yatsu paalayet/ (Vyaasa Smriti adds further dimensions to Grihasti Dharma: This truism needs to be stressed again and again that there could be no better dharma as evidenced in Grihastha Ashrama; those who observe Ashrama Dharmas with conscience are rewarded with the fruits of Sarva Tirtha Darshana) *Guru bhakto bhrutya poshi dayaavaannasuyakah, nityajapi cha homi cha Satyavaadi jitendriyah/ Swaadaro yasya santosha para daaraa nivartanam/ Apavaadopi no yasya tasya tirthaphalam gruhe/*(Those Grihastis who pay great attention to Gurus, followers, servants and dependents, are of kindly disposition, without being querrelsome and non complaining, observing nitya gayatri japa homaas, being satyavaadis or highly truthful, self restrained of his physical limbs, fully contented with his own wife and respectful to other females, and of impeccable character and reputation would reap the fruits of Sarava Tirtha darshana even being stable in one's own residence) *Pratishrayam paada shoucham Brahmanaancha tarpanam, na paapam samprushyatasya balim bhikshaam dadaati yah/* (Those grihastis who invite Brahmanas, wash their feet, offer 'neeraajana' while standing with esteem and serve bhojana and satisfy them along with other services would be completely unreachable for any kind of sins!) *Paadodakam paada ghritam deepamannam pratishrayaam, yo dadaati brahmanebhyo nopasarpatitam Yamah/*(Those grihastis who wash the feet of Brahmanas with water and ghee, offer deepa, anna, and respectful hospitality shall be indeed be out of bounds even of Yama dharma Raja) *Yat phalamkapilaa daane kartikyam jyeshtha pushkare, tatphalam Rishayah shreshthaa vipraanaam paadashouchane// Svagatena agnayahpreetaa aasanena Shatakratuh, Pitarah paada shouchenaannaa- dyena Prajapatih//*(The punya that would accrue from Pushkara Tirtha Snaana and Go daana on a Kartika Pourami day would approximate the 'paada prakshaalana' or cleaning the feet of an Atithi Brahmana Vidvan! The Grihasti welcoming a Brahmana Atithi would have pleased Agni deva, the guest beingseated comfortably would have made Indra happy too! Pitru devas would have been delighted and Prajapati himself would have been contented by Brahmana Bhojana!) *Maataa Pitrou poaram tirtham Ghangaa gaavo visheshitaah, Brahmanaat parama tirtham na bhutam na bhavishyati/* (Any house holder would normally consider his parents as Punya Tirthas and especially so in the case of cows; but Brahmana as the Atithi is the parama tirtha as never in the pasdt nor in the future!) Any person might as well stay in one's own home if only his physical parts and mental faculties are controlled utmost; indeed his own house is as good as Kurukshetra, Naimisha and Pushkar Tirthas! *Varnaam ashramaanaan chatur varnasya bho Dvijaaah, Daanadharmaan pravikshyaami yathaa vyaasena bhaashitam/* The utmost moral that anyone of the Chatur Varnas should follow and observe that Vyasa Maharshi emphasises is that one's own home be considered as any Tirtha, provided he or she could control one's own faculties!) Vyasa Smriti also stresses: *Nityam svaadhyasheelasyaat nityam yagnopaveetivaan, Satya vaadee jitakrodho Brahma bhuyaaya kalpate/ Sandhyaasnaana rato nityam Brahma yajna paraayanah, Anasuyah mridurdaantah grihastah pretyavardhate/ Veeta raaga bhaya krodhah lobhamohavivarjitah, Saavitri japy niratah shraaddhakrunmuchyate grihee/ Maataa Pitorhite yokto go braahmana hiteratah, Yajyaacha Deva Bhaktascha Brahma loka maheeyate/* (Nitya Svaadhyaya, nitya yagnopaveeta, nitya sathya bhashana and nitya shanti vrata are the principal qualities of a noble house holder. He should be devoid of 'raaga bhaya krodhas' or free from desires-fears-angers; he should be ever interested in performing Savitri Vrata, and be dutiful in Shraddha Karmas so as to qualify himself for attaining salvation. He must be dutiful to his parents, cows, guests; be in the regular habit of performing 'Satkarmas' or Acts of Virtue such as Shraddhas etc. to qualify for Brahma Loka) Manu Smriti observes too similarly: *Shuti smrityuditam dharmamanutishthan hi Maanavah, Iha keerti mavaap -noti pretyachaanuttamaam gatim/* Those who dutifully observe the principles enunciated on

Veda Shastras do fulfill their aspirations and glory, besides accomplishing the Upper Worlds!)

Sanyasa Dharmas: Yama Deva defines Sanyasa: *Yena santaanajaa doshah ye chasyuh karma sambavaah, Sanyaasastaan dahet sarvaan tushaadagniriva pratimaadikam/*(Either due to the problems created by progeny or due to the deeds done by the Self, the discontentment experienced by a person burns off like burnt rice husk to gold) Dakshan Prajapati affirms: *Trimshatparaamstrim shadaparaan trimshacchhapara-tah paraan, Sadyassannyasanaa deva narakaattraayete pitraan/* (On account of Sanyasa of a person in a vamsha, Pitru Devatas of thirty generations before and another thirty generatins ahead would be saved from narakas!) Samvarta Grandha classifies four types of Sanyasa viz. Kuteecha, Bahudaka, Hamsa and Paramahamsa. Bodhayana explains that Kuteecha after taking to Sanyasa retains shikha-yagnopaveeta and tridanda while practising Sahasra Gayatri would take food from relatives and friends. He should be absorbed in Japa- Dhyana-Pathana and concentrate on Paramatma always. Bahudaka after assuming sanyasa should sever family connections, take to bhiksha from seven houses and abstain from evening meal. Hamsa might retain yagnopaveeta, danda for self defence, and minimum cloth and spend most of the time in loneliness and meditation as food is non-significant. Parama hamsa is described by Atri Muni as follows: *Koupeena yugalam kandha danta ekah parigrahaah yateh, Parama hamsasya naadhikastu vidheeyate, Parah Parama hamsastu turyaakhyah Shriti shaasanaat/ Daantah Shaantah Satvasamah Pranavaabhyaasa tatparah, Shravanaadiratasshuddhah nidhi dhyaanatatparah/ Brahma bhavena sampurya brahmandamakhilam sthitah/ Atma triptaschaatmaratah samaloshtaashma kanchanah tatvam padaika boddhaacch Vishnu rupam svayam sadaa nivaset paramahamsastu yatrakvaapi kathamchana/* A Sanyasi named Parama hamsa has no possessions except a 'koupeena' or loin cloth piece, a sheet to cover in winter and a danda or stick. As per Shruti's instruction he is named 'parama hamsa turi' and is of outstanding feaures as a Danta-Shanta-Satvaguna-Pranava japi-Shudda, Satva guni, Pranava japi, Shddha, Nidhi dhyana tatpara, Atma Tripta, Atma ratha, and Tatvagayana!) Yagnyavalkya describes: *Dhyaanam shoucham tathaabhiksaa niytamekaanta sheelataa, Bhikshaschatvaari karmaani panhamam nopapadyate/* (To a bhikshu, there are four objectives of existence viz. Dhyana, Shoucha, Bhikshatana and Loneliness; there is no other fifth feaure except meditation to Paramatma) Kanva Muni instructs: *Ekaraatrim vasetb graame nagare pancha raatrakam, Varshaabhyonyatra varshaasu maasaamcha chaturvaset/* (A Sanyasi should be on contant move, spending one nigh in a village or five nights in a town, but during the rainy season, he should chaatur maasya) Vyasa Maharshi states: *Mokshaashramam yascharate yathoktam Shuchissusankalpim buddhiyuktah anindhanam jyotiriva prashaantamsabrahma bhaavam vrajet dvijaatah/* (Duly purified in body, mind and thought, a dvija having turned into a sanyasi should be like a burning wood covered with ash and finally absorb himself into Brahma Jyoti!)

Stree Dharmas: *Ashta varsha bhaved Gauri nava varshaa tu Rohini, Dashavarshaa bhavet Kanya atha urthvam Rajasvala/* Samvarta Muni defines: an eight year old girl is called Gauri or the Fair one, a ninth year old is known as Rohini or a Cherry, a ten year aged is a Kanya or a maiden and thereafter a Rajasvala) *Maata chaiva Pitaachaiva jyeshtho bhraataa tathaiva cha, trayaste narakam yaani drushtvaa kanyaa rajasvala/* (In case, the mother, father and elder brother of the girl has come of age an still remains unmarried the three are desined to visit hell) Manu Smriti is quoted: *Pitaarakshati Kaumare Bhartaa rakshati yovane, Putrastu sthaavire bhaave na stree swaantryamarhati/ Sookshmebhyopi prasangebhyah striyo rakshyaa visheshatah, Dvayorhikulayoh shokamaavahed arakshitaah/ Imam hi sarva varnaanaam pashyanto dharmamuttamam/ Paanam durjana samsargah patyaacha virahotanam, Svapnonyageha vaasascha naaree sandushanaani shat/* (During the 'Kaumara dasha' before wedding, the

father takes the responsibility, whereafter the husband and in old age the sons, thus a female is always protected though not independent! Even minute expressions might not offend a female and be safeguarded lest there might be unhappiness in either of the families of father and husband, and indeed a female plays a significant yet sensitive role of both the families and hence the need for her balancing act! However, a female is normally repudiated for six shortcomings: viz. suspicion of weakness for alcohol, bad company, aloofness from a husband, wandering and touring, dreaming away from reality, and staying lonely and living independently in other's houses.) Manu Smriti also explains: *Naasti streenaam pridhagyanona vratam naapyuposhanam, Patim shushrushate yattutena sarge maheeyate/ Kamavrittevaa gunairvaa parivarnitah, Nastriyah parivarjyasyaat satatam daiva vatpatih/ Sadaa prahaashtayaa bhavyam grihakaaryech dakshayaa, Susamskrutopaskarayaa vyayechaamuktahastayaa/* (As women have no yagnas, vratas and such other acts of virtue, they are happy to share such acts along with their husbands. Notwithstanding the shortcomings of their husbands the wives would do well to with faith to them and concentrate more on their domestic chores with expertise and run the family with wisdom and dedication and be the major force of maintaining peace and happiness home) Vyasa Maharshi gave the instructions as follows: *Haridraamkumkumamchaiva sindhuram kajjalam tathaa, Kurpaanakam cha taambolam mangalaabharanam shubham/ Keshha samskaara kabari kara karnaad bhushanam, Bhartur aayushyami -cchanti dooshayenna Pativrataa/ Praatah kaaletu yaa naari dadyaadarghyam vivasvate, Sapta janmaani vaidhavyaam saa naari naiva pashyati/* Those women who are interested in the longevity of their husbands should not to ignore the high significance of turmeric powder, kumkuma, eyetex, vastra, jewellery like ear studs, bangles, necklaces etc. As at the early mornings, women offering Arghya or water for worshipping Surya Deva would avoid widow hood for seven births ahead! *Krutvaa mandalakam Braahme tooshneem evaakshataabhih pujayet satatam yaa tu tasyaastupyanti Devataah, Yadgriham raajate nityam mangalairanulepanaih, Tadgrihe vasate Lakshmeernityam purnakalaanvitaa// Pativrataa tu yaa naari bhartru shushrushanotsukaa, Natasya vidyate paapam ihaloke paratracha, Pativrataadharmarataa Rudraanyeva na samshayah, Tasyaah paraabhavam kartum shaknoti najanah kashchit/* (Devas would be delighted to visit the houses where the home fronts are decorated with 'manadalaakara' or auspicious designs of varied colours at the Braahmi Muhurta time of early mornings even without mantras! Such home fronts appear that Devi Lakshmi along with her companions has arrived in the house for good enlivening with auspiciousness and brightness! A pativrata who sincerely serves her husband shall qualify with attainment of her current and ensuing lives and eventually attain the status of a Rudrani or Devi Parvati.) In defence of good wives at the hand of evil husbands, Daksha Prajapati states as follows: *Adushtaam vinataam bharyaam youvane yah parityaje, Sapta janma bhavestreetvam vaidhavyam cha punah punah/* (Husbands who discard wives of good character and discipline would be cursed with widowhood and womanhood for the subsequent seven lives!) *Na mangalyam vadedvaakyam na cha haasyadikim chana, kuryaachhvashurayornityam pujaam mangala tatparaa tishthet prasanna vadanaa bhartru priya hite rataah/* Smriti Ratna cautions *Sandhyaayaam nava bhoktavayam garbhinyaat prayatnatah, nasnaatavyam na gantavym vriksha muleshu saevada/* (Gabhini Strees or women in confinement not to take food at Sandhya timings or the intervals of night-day nor day nights of any day, nor take bath or go near tree foundations) *Naa maangalyam vadevyaakyam na cha ghaasyaadikimchana, Kuryaat shvashurayornityam pujaanmangala tatparaa, tishthetprasanna vadanaa bhartru priyahite rataa/* (Strees should not utter inauspicious words even for fun; they must always worship father and mother in laws and be pleasant with husbands for ever!) Yagnyavalkya stresses : *Dao hridayasyaa pradaane nagarbhe doshamavaapnuyaat, Vairupyam*

maranamapi tasmaatkaaryampriyam striyaah/(In case the wishes of a Garbhini woman then the garbha would suffer such blemishes that might deliver babies of physical problems or even abortion and that is why every wish of the woman in confinement be fully fulfilled!) Paraashara Smriti elaborates a few more Stree Dharmas: In the event of married women desirous of shortening their hair for reasons of religion and faith as example of ‘Veni Samhara’ at Sangama of Rivers, then the husband himself is required to perform the Vrata by scissoring the hair by two inches. Tirtha yatra, temple visits and religious places are congregations if unaccompanied by husbands are considered as a waste and fruitless. Similarly husbands performing any activity of religion without the presence of wives is considered purposeless. Vyasa Maharshi explains of some features of widows: *Patyaomritepi yo yoshivaidhavyam paalayet kvachit, Saapunah praapya bhartaaram svarga bhogaan sameeshnute/ Vidhavaa kabari baddhah bhartru bandhaaya chaayate, Shirasovasanam tasmaat kaaryam vidhavaatathaa, Ekaahaarah Sadaa kaaryah nadviteeyah kadaachana/ Gandhadra –vyasya sambhogonaiva kaaryastathaa kvachit, Tarpanam pratyaham kaaryam bhartuh kushatilodakaih/ Vishnostu pujanam kaaryam patibudhaana chaanyadhaa, Patimeva sadaa dhyayedvishnu rupa dharam param, Evam dharma paraanityam vidhavaap shubhaamataa/* (As a husband passes away and the widow observes the regulations of widowhood, the woman concerned shall most certainly enjoys a high level of conjugal happiness in her ensuing life. Since a widow is distinguished as being one, it is preferred that her head hair is removed forever, takes a single meal a day and refrain from a second meal that day! She should not use fragrances and not utilise flowers; every day she should perform tarpana with ‘tilodakas’ or black Tilas with water using ‘darbhas’. Those women who are widowed should consider as the diseased husband as Vishnu himself and then her remaining life would be spent peacefully without problems and even though as of a woman of auspiciousness).

Daana Mahima: *Daatavyam pratyaham paatre nimittetu visheshatah, Yaachitenaapi daatavyam shraddhaa putam cha shaktitah/* (Maharshi Yagnyavalkya described the feature of ‘Daana’ or Charity: every human being should resort to daana dharma on each and every day as per one’s own capacity, especially on the days of Solar and Lunar Eclipse days. Charity is indeed to be given to those asking for it as per one’s ability!) *Vaaridah triptimaapnoti sukhamakshayamannadah, Tilapradam prajaamishtaam deepadaschakshuruttamam/ Bhumido bhumi maapnoti deerghamaayurhiranyadah, Grihadograaniveshmaani rupyado rupamuttamam/ Vaasodaschandra saalokyam Ashviptaalokyamashvadah, Anaduddhaha shriyam pushtim godobadhnascha vishtapam/ Yaana shayaaprado bhaaryamaishvarya mabhayapradah, Dhaanyadah shasvatam soukhyam Brahmado Brahmasaashtitaam/* (Those who provide charity of water begets satisfaction, food yields Lasting happiness, tila daana bestows excellent progeny, charity of Light gets vision, Bhu dana begets lot more of Bhumi, Suvarna Daana provides longevity, Griha daana yields huge buildings, charity of cash bestows excellent beauty of physique, vastra daana provides Chandra loka, Ashva daana bestows Ashvini Deva Loka, charity of ox yields affluence, Go daana provides great health and body strength, he who gives away a comfortable bed is blessed with a wonderful wife, offering shield and protection begets opulence, dhanya daana bestows lasting happiness and tracing Brahma Vidya bestows Brahma Saakshatkaara!) *Sarveshaameva daanaanaam Brahma daanam visishyate/* (Indeed Brahma Vidya daana is the ultimate among all the types of Charities!) *Ayaachtaani deyaani sarva daanaani yatnatah, Annam Vidyaaha Kanyaachahyanarthibhyona deeyate// Dvaamimau purushaa loka swargasyopari tishthatah, Anna pradaataa durbhikshe subhikshe hema vastradah/* (Shandalya Muni mentions that all types of charities be offered without being asked for and with clean conscience or with

no view of securing returns; however Vidya, Kanya and Anna must not be offered without being asked for as a rule! Indeed, there are two types of charity givers who attain Swarga for sure: those who heartily give away Food during Durbhiksha and also those who happily give away gold and clothing during the days of general prosperity!) *Naalpatvam vaa bahutvam vaa daanasya abhyudaavaham, Shraddhaa Bhaktischa daanaanam vriddhikshayakare hite// Ishta dattam adheetam cha pranyanukirtanaat, Shlaaghaanu shochanaabhyaam na vridhaa parikeertayet/* (Devala Maharshi clarifies: Charity given in small or large quantities is irrelevant but whatever is handed over with Shraddha bhakti or reverence and sincerity are given and the recipient too should truly desire and deserve it! Contrariwise, there might be negative impact! If charity given out of expectation of appreciation is futile but the result is really needful and genuinely appreciated then that type of charity goes a long way!) *Samabrahmanyee daanam dvigunam braahmanbruve, praadheete shata sahasram anantam Veda paarage/* (Daksha Prajapati describes that charity to less deserving Brahmana has double the impact to that of one who is given to a genuine Brahmana; in case that very daana is given to a Pandita or a learned Brahmana; but indeed the charity to a Veda Pandita bestows Ananta Punya or of Lasting Fruits!) Vyaasa Smriti elaborates the concept of Daana further: *Svaantah krudhdastamandhovaa kshutpipaasaa bhayaadhritah, daanam punyamakrutvaa cha praayaschittam dinatrayam/Anaahateshu yaddhaanam yaccha duttam ayaachitam, bhavishyati yugassyaanantah tasyaantato na bhavishyati/* (When a person gives away a charity to a quality Brahmana, while in a mental frame of tiresomeness, anger, ignorance, hunger, thirst or under compulsion, then such a charity would be ineffective and warrants for a three day prayaschitta) The type of Daana that is offered by special invitation and that which is given when asked for has considerable difference till the end of yugas, but there is no end of the concept of daana ever!) *Adrushte chaashubhe daanam bhoktaa chaiva na drushyate, punaraagamanam naasti tatra daanamanantakam/* (Daana with the apprehension of having to face inauspiciousness to the donor is of artificial nature, but nishkaama daana with no expectation of return is of lasting value especially when the daana karta would request for ‘punaraagamana’ or please come again! *Samam abraahmane daanam dvigunam Braahmana bruve, Sahasragum aacharye hyenanantam veda panditaa/* (To give charity to an undeserving Brahmana is not out of order and minimal, and so is one who claims as Brahmana by birth, yet daana given to an Acharya is thousand times better but to a Veda Vidwaan daana, is stated to be of endless fruits!) *Maata pitrushu yadyayaad bhraatrushu shvashureshucha, Jaayaapatyeshu yaddadyaad sonatah svarga samkramah//Pituh shatagunam daanam sahasra Maaturuchyate Bhaginyaam shata sahasram sodare duttamakshayam/* (In the current times, what Veda Vyasa states is indeed applicable: Charity that is provided to parents, brothers and father-in-law, own wife and children would pave the way to heavens. If the charity that is given to father is hundred folded, that given to mother is thousand folded, to sisters it is of lakh times more and to brothers is countless!)

Samskaraas

Garbhaadaana Pumsavana Seemontonnayana Jaata karma naama karana annapraashanaashchoulopa nayanam chatvaari Veda Vrataani snaatakam sahadharma chaarini samyogah, panchaanaam yagnaanaamanushthaanam Deva pitru Manushya Bhuta braahmanaa meteshaam cha Ashtakaa paarvanah Shraddham Shraavanyaagrahaayani Chaitraashvayujeeti sapta paaka yajna samsthaa agnaadheyamagnihotram Dharma purna maasaagrayanam chaaturmaasyaani nirudha pashu bandhasoutraanameeti saptahaviryajna samsthaa/ Agnishtomotyagnishtoma ukthyasshodashi vaajapeyaati raatro aapnoyami iti sapta soma samsthaa ityete chatvaarimshat samskaaraah

athashtaavaatma gunaah dayaasarvabhuteshukshaantiranashyaashouchamanaayaasomangala kaarpanyaheti/ (There are forty Samskaaras viz. Garbha daana, Pumsavana, Seemantonnayana, Jaata Karma, Naama karana, Anna praashana, Choula, Upanayana, Four Veda Vrataas, Snaataka, Saha dharma charini samyoga; Pancha yajnaanushthaana viz. of Deva-Pitru-Manushya-Bhuta- Braahma; Ashtakaa paarvana, Shraaddha, Shravani, Agrahaayani, Chaitri and Ashviiyuji being Seven Paaka Yajnas; Seven Haviryajnas viz. Agnyaadheya, Agni hotra, Darsha purna momths, Agraayana, Chaturmaasya, nirudha, pashubandha and Soatramani; and Seven Somas viz. Agnishtoma, Atyagnishtoma, Ukthya, Shodashi, Vaajapeya, Atiraatra and Aapteya: all these totalling forty!

GARBHAADHAANA: *Shosha riturnaanaashaa streenaam tasmin yugmaasu samvishet, Brahmachaar - yeva parvaanyaadyah chatasrascha varjayet/* (Yagnyavalkya instructs that husband and wife could copulate during fourteen 'rithu' nights, but during the 'Parva dinas' or days of Sacred Festivals and four days when she is in menses period the husband should practise celibacy only) *Prathamehani chandali dviteeye brahmaghataki, tritiye rajaki proktaa chaturthehani shudhyati/* (Parashara describes the four days of menses period as those of chandali, brahmaghataki, rajaki and shuddhya) *Tisro raatree vratam charet prajaayai gopekshaaya/* (Shruti states that to secure progeny it is necessary to observe the Vrata for three nights) *Nagacchedgarbhineem bharyaam malinaam sitamurdajamrajasvalaam rogavatim naayonou na bubhuksheetaah, Suvastra veshadharayaa snaatayaa shuddha chitrayaa, Arogayaa dayitayaa svamevam vidhah svapet/* (Shandalya Muni totally negates the idea of union with carrying women, or unclean, white haired, diseased, reluctant and menstuous women, but endorses the woman who is well dressed, nicely bathed, clean and healthy and engagingly active.) *Mithunibhutvaan shoucham prati vilambet/* (Gautami Maharshi states alertingly that after the act of union, both must clean without laziness) *Shashtyashtamim panchdashim dvadashim cha chaturdashim, Brahmacharee bhavennityam tadvarjyatrayehani/* (Kurma Purana requires abstinence on Shashthis, Ashtamis, Purnimas, Amavasyas, Dvadashis, Chaturdashis)

PUMSAVANA: *Pumsavanam vyakte garbhetishyena/* (Aapastamba Rishi instructs to perform Pumsavana as soon as conception is declared) *Triteeya vaa charurdhe vaa maasi pumsavanam bhavet, Garbha vyaktousmritim tacchaloka siddhaastriyaa hisaa/* ('Kaala Darsha' instructs that once conception is confirmed, the Pumsavana samskaara be observed either in the third or fourth month) *Maasi triteeye dviteeya vaa yadahah, Punnakshatrena chandramaayuktasyaat/* (Paarashara opines that either in second or third month of the garbha, Pumsavana be performed coinciding with 'Pum' nakshatra and Chandra!

SEEMANTONNAYANA: *Shashthevaa saptame maasi seemantonnayanam bhabet, Ashtame Navame vaapi yaavadvaa prasavo bhavediti/* (Kashyapa Muni suggests Seemanatotsava in the sixth or the seventh months of the conception; in fact, till such time delivery does not take place, even the eighth or the ninth month may be in order to celebrate seemanta!) However Apastamba observes: *Seemantonnayanam prathama garbhe chaturdhemaasi/* (Seemata be performed in the fourth month, in the case first conception) *Yadi seemanatah purvam prasuyate kathamchana, Tadaaneempetake garbham sthaapya samskaaramaacharet/* (Gargya Muni says that even well before the delivery the garbha box gets shaped and from there onward the samskaara time would have to be observed!)

JAATAKARMA: *Praagjnaabhivardhanaat pumsah jaatakarma vidheeyate, Mantravat praashanam chaasya hiranyasya madhusarpishaam/* (Manu Smriti instructs that even before the navel of the child is severed after the time of delivery, the Jaata karma Samskara of the newly born be formally done with

mantras while a honey dipped gold is applied to the child's tongue) *Kumara prasave naabhyaamacchi – nnaayaam guda tila hiranya, Govastra dhaanya pratigraheshva doshastadaharityeke/* (Shankha Maharshi expressed that even before severing the protruded navel, a mixture of jaggery, til, gold, cow product, clothing and pre-husked rice be applied) *Jaate putre pituh snaanam sachelantu vidheyate/ Raatre snaanetu sampraapte snaayaadanala sannidhou!* (Samvarta Muni expresses that as soon as a son is born, the father of the newly born must take full bath even while wearing the same dress; in case the delivery takes place during the night hours, then the bath be performed before Fire as an evidence!)

NAAMAKARANA: *Ahanyekaadashinaama charudhe maasi nishkramah, Sashtennapraashanam maasi chudaakarmayathaakulam/* (Yagjnyavalkya instructs that pursuant to the new arrival, namakarana be done on the ekadashi of the fourth month; and anna prashana and chuda karma or removal of head hair at the birth time be observed during the sixth month as per one's own family tradition) *Sharmaanam Brahmanasyoktam Varmaanaam Gupta- Daasa padaantousyadabhidhaa Vaishyashudra yorititu/* (Ashvalaayana Maharshi suggested that the name of Sharma for Brahmanas, Varma for Kshatriyas, Gupta for Vaishyas and Daasa for others be duly incorporated for male issues) *Streenaam sukhodyam akruram vispashthaardham manoharam, Mangalyam deergha varnaantam aasheervaadaabhidaanavat/* (The names to be provided to a she-child must be easy to pronounce, unoffensive, meaningful, auspicious and the last word to be elongated, said Manu.)

ANNAPRAASHANA: *Janmanodhi shashthe maasi brahmanaan bhojaitvaa aashishovaahayitvaa dadhi madhughrita modanamiti, Samsrujya uttarairamantraih kumaaram praashayet/* (Aapastamba Sutra requires that food intake to a child be initiated by blessings and with a mix of honey, curd and ghee during a suitable day during the sixth month of the birth with appropriate mantras followed by Brahmana-bandhu bhojana)

CHUDAKARANA: *Janmanodhi triteeyo varshe chaalam punarvasyaah iti Adhi triteetga ardhaadika triteeye// Soono maatari garbhinaam chudakarma nakaarayet// Soono Maatari garbhinyaam chuda karma nakaarayet/* (While the former stanza by Aapastamba requires that the first hair-cut be executed either on the first or third year, the same be done to those born during the punarvasu after three months; Narada Brahmarshi states that in case of another confinement the samskara of the earlier birth be postponed)

STREE JAATA KARMA: *Tooshnimetaah kriyaam streenaam vivaahastu samantrakah/* (Yajnyavalkya instructs that the Jaatakarma etc. for girls be done without mantras on informal basis, excepting in respect of weddings)

VIDYARAMBHA: *Praaptetu panchame varshe hyaprasupte janaardane, Shasthim pratipadam chaivarjayitvaa tathaashtamim/ Riktam panchadasheem chaiva Sourabhouma dinetatha, evam sunishchite kaale vidyaarambhantu kaarayet//* (On the attainment of five years, Vidyabhyasa be initiated on an auspicious time, leaving however the Chaturmaasya viz. from Sukla Ekadashi Ashadha till Kartika Shukla Ekadashi as also avoiding Shasthi, Prathama, Ashtami, Rikta, Pournami and Amavasya besides Sundays and Tuesdays.)

ANUPANEETA DHARMA: *Jaata maatrah shishustaavadyaava dashtasamaavayaah, Sopi garbhasamojjeyo vyakti maatra prakaashitah/ Bhakshyaa bhyakshe tathaapeyo vaachaavaachya*

tathaanrite Asminkaalena doshosti kriamaanairgarhitaih/ (Daksha Prajapati observed that a child should be considered as an unborn kid till eight years of age; till then there are issues valid like eating or drinking materials worthy of consumption or not, nor what is right to talk by way of truth and untruth.) *Tathaapi shashthaadvarshaatpraageva kaamaacharaadidrashtavyam, Tatah param pitraadibhih varnadharmeshu niyoktavayah/ Na brahmaabhivyaahaarayet anyatra svathaa ninayanaat iti/*(Mitaakshara felt that even before the sixth year, the elders should notice the faculties and habits of the children and accordingly instruct and train them to the right ways, thoughts and actions as per the Varna Dharmas. Yet, till such time that ‘upanayana’ has not been completed, the boys should recite Veda Mantras although Apari Karma mantras of parents be encouraged to be learnt and practised.) Paraashara Smriti details Anupaneeta Dharmas as follows: *Praagupanayata karmaacharakama vaada kaama bhaksha, tena mutra purushot-sargaad avaacha manaadyaacharo naasti/ Laghupataaka hetulashuna paryushitoccvhishtaadi bhakshae doshaabhaavah/* (Before the Upanayana samskaara, a person might be in the practice of unbridled behaviour of speech, action, eating habits, lack of purification of body parts, ignoring blemishes of eating and drinking forbidden food like garlic- mix, left over and polluted food, casual way of speaking untruth, carrying taes, even meat meeting, contacting women in menses and keeping company with bad elements!)

UPANAYANA: The Sacred Act of Upamnyana is a clear water-shed of the life of the three Varnas of Brahmana, Kshatriya and Vaishya. The term of Upanayana is defined as : *Guhyotta karmaana yena sameepam neeyate Guroh, Baalo Vedaaya tadyogaad Baalasyopanayam viduh/* (Upanayana literally means that a Guru sits in the physical and visual presence of a boy and initiates Vedas such as yogas in the Form of Gayatri Mantra. Now the Guru who performs the Upanayana is stated as father, paternal grand father, father’s brother, elder brother, or Sagotra sapindaka or close paternal relatives, maternal uncle or Agotra Sapinda or Sagotra Asapinda. The Purohita or Shrotritya in whose presence the Upanayana is to be performed by the Guru is defined: *Brahmano jneyat samskaarai dwija uchyate, Vidvadvaachaapi vipratvam tribhissrotriaya uchate/* (A Brahmana by birth becomes a dvija after the Samskaaraas like upanayana are applied to him; he then becomes a vipra once he is a learned person; only then a Brahmana becomes a Shrotriya; He who is eligible to perform as this Shrotria should have recited Gayatri Mantra twelve times of thousands each! *Garbhashtameshu brahmanamupanayeeta, Garbhekaada sheshu Raajanyam, garbha dvadasheshu Vaisyam, Vasanto greeshmah sharadityutsavo varnaanu purvenu iti/*(Apastamba Sutra states that upanayana be performed by the eighth year to Brahmanas, eleventh year to Kshatriyas and twelfth year to Vaishyas; the suitable Seasons for performing Upanayana are Vasanta, Greeshma and Sharad Seasons respectively) *Aashodhashaad Brahmanasya Saavitri naativartate, Advavimshaat Ksahtra bandhora chaturvimshatervishah/* (Manu Smriti requires that the outer limits to leave as Brahmacharis without upanayana should be sixteen years to Brahmanas, twenty two to Khatriyas and twenty four to Vaishyas) *Ata urthvam Savitri patitaavratyaassyuh, teshaam cheerna praayaschittaanaam upanayaa- dayassuh iti/* (In case upanayana dates exceed as above then Savitri patitaavrataa be executed and ‘prayaschitta’ be performed formally as an apology, clarifies ‘Smrityardha Saara’!) *Patita Saavitrikah uddaaka vratam charet, Dvou maasou aamikshayaa Ashta raatram ghritena, Shadraatram ayaachitam triraatramanna bhikshah, Ahoraatram upavaset Ashvamedhaavabridham vaagacchet vraatyastomenavaa yaget/* (Those who step beyond the age limits should not only perform the Patita Savitri Vrata but also Uddalaka Vrata by consuming raw cheese for two months, eight nights only with ghee, six nights with whatever is food available as unsolicited, three nights plain cooked rice, and one full day and night without any thing to consume; moreover, one also has to accomplish the

ashvamedha yajna phala or Vratyastoma yaaga! This is the instruction of Vasishtha of the age limits of Upanayana are crossed!) Yagnopaveetam: *Kaarpaasamupaveetam syat viprasyordhvavritam trivrit, Shonasutramayam raagjno vaisyasyavika sutrakam*/(Manu Smriti describes the three types of Yagnopaveetam viz. that made of raw cotton for Brahmanas, red thread made of horse hair and sheep hair thread for Vaishyas) *Yagnopaveetam kurveeta sutramtu navatantukam, Trishta dhuravatvam kaayam tantutraymentadhovritam*/(Maadhaveeyam states that yagnopaveeta should be of nine sutras, as three threads made of each cluster, of which three such clusters are woven up and three more of such clusters are woven down.) *Upaveetam vatorekam dvetadhetarayoh Smritao, Ekameva yateenaam syaaditi shastrasya nishchayah/ Triteeyam uttareeyam syadvastraabhve tadipyate// Sadopaveetinaa bhaavyam sadaabaddha shikhena cha, Vishokhonupaveeta -scha yatkaroti natatrutam/* (Bhrigu Maharshi instructs one Yagnopaveeta that for Vatus, to others two and to Yatis one; the third thread serves as Uttareeya or the upper cloth to cover the bare body. One should always wear yagnopaveeta with veneration and any ‘Satkarma’ or deed of virtue is valid only by wearing it with respect; similarly a tuft too is a must to perform Karmas lest these are called Rakshasa Karmas otherwise!) As an integral part of Upanayana, ‘Danda Dharana’ is required. Manu Smriti states as follows: *Brahmano bailva palaasho kshatriyo vaata khaadiraa, Paippaloutumbarou Vaishyah dandaa narhanti dharmatah/* The danda or stick be made of bilva or palaasha trees for Brahmana vatus, for kshatriyas vata or khadira while for Vaishya vatus the danda be made of Pippala or Aodumbura trees. Vyasa gives the specifications: *Shiro lalaata naasaagraa pramaana yupavannataah/* (The danda should be of the size of the Vatu’s head, or forehead or nose in the shape of the wooden piece holding the Sacrifice Animal tight) Another material required would be ‘Vastrajina’ or a pair of clothes one as actual body garment and another as loin cloth: Vasishtha Muni prescribed white cotton cloth for draping Brahmana boys, munji grass woven cloth for kshatriyas and Kusha darbha woven cloth for Vaishyas while a similar loin cotton cloth to all the three classes. Besides an upper covering be worn by all as krishnajina or the dried and treated skin of deer. Manu prescribed a ‘kati sutra’ or loin thread: *Mounji trivrit samaashlaokshou karya viprasya mekhala, Kshatriyastu mourveejyaa vaishvasya shaanataantavi* ie, three stringed mounji grass material to Brahmanas, twisted string made of mourvi material and to Vaishyas a shaana made string. Samvarta stated that without a kati sutra, no male is qualified to perform Shrouta Smaarta Karyas! Manu Smriti instructs that without kati sutra, danda, yagnopavita, kamandala with water be secured as soon as possible!)

Brahmachari Dharmas: Manu prescribed the following Brahmachari dharmas: *Prati grihyepsitam dandam upasthaaya cha Bhaskaam, Pradakshinam pareetyaanim charet bhaikshyam yadhavidhi/Bhavatpuram charedbhaikshyam upaneeti dvijottamam, Bhavanmadhyatu Rajanya Vaishyastu bhavaduttaram/ Bhaikshena vatravennyam naivaannaashi bhavedvrat, Bhaikshena vratinovrittih upavaasa samaasrutaa/ Samaahatyatu tadbhaiksham yaavadardharmamayaaya, Nivedya guraveshneeyaat achamyam prangmukhah shukhih/* (A Brahmachari should first worship Surya deva with his danda as also perform pradakshina or circumambulation around Agni and proceed for bhikshaatana. A dvija must use the expression of ‘bhavati bhikshaam dehi’ while a kshatriya should say ‘bhiksham bhavati dehi’ and a Vaishya brahmachari should utter ‘bhiksham dehi bhavati’. While requesting for ‘bhiksha’, only that much of bhiksha be solicited and not to hoard for another day; if bhiksha is accepted in larger quantity than one’s requirement, then that is considered as worse than an upavasa without returns. What ever is so cooked is accorded to guru as naivedya and eaten quietly facing the east) Vasishtha defined that Sages should consume eight fistfuls, Vana vasis or forest dwellers sixteen fist fulls, Grihastas thirty two while

Brahmacharis with no limits. Jaimini Maharshi's instruction is: *Yaavadbrahmopadeshastu taavat sandhyadi kanchana, tato madhyaahna sandhyaadi sarvakarma samaacharet/ Aarabhedbrahma yagnantu madhyaahentu parehani/* (Till such time Brahmopadesha is not executed, Sandhyavandana etc. are not required, but all the other deeds including the afternoon and evening like Brahmayajna need to be executed. Manu Smriti also requires the following to follow: *Dooraadaahritya samidhah sannidhyaad vihaayasi, Saayam praatascha juhuyaat taabhiragniratandritah/ Naprokshita mindhanam agnaaada – dhyaat/ Agneendhanam bhaiksyha chayaamadhasshayaam Gurhitam, Aasamaavartanaat kuryaat kritopanayodvijah/ Choditogurunaanityam aprachodita yevavaa, kuryaadadhyayane yhatnam Acharyasya hiteshu cha/ Shareeram chaiva vaacham cha buddheendriya manaamsi, Niyamy praanjali stisithedveekshamano gururmukham/ Nityamudhrita paanisyaat saadhvaachaarah samaahitah, Anya - taami iti choktah sannaaseestabhinukham Guroh/ Guroryatra pareevgaadah nindaavaapi prayujyate, Karnoutatrapi dhaatavavou gantavyam vaatatonyatah/* (Samidhas or the wooden pieces be fetched and duly dried with which homa karyas in the mornings be executed after 'samprokshana' or water sprinkled with mantras and no homa karya be done without prokshana. All the dvijas after upanayana are required to observe agni karyas, bhikshatana, sleeping on the ground, and complete the vidyaabhyaas from the Guru; what ever is taught by Guru, self taught or acquired is recited and absorbed. He should always follow Guru's instructions with no exception by totally surrendering by way of his physique, tongue, mind, and thought and seeing him with rapt attention and folded hands. Being ready to observe every action and movement of the Guru the student should be ready to follow each and every utterance. Let alone any confrontation with the Guru but any 'Guru Ninda' or criticism by a third party be abhorred by closing his ears, if not defended against or just leave the place!) *Varjayen madhu maasaanigandhamaalya rasaam shriyah, Shukraani chaiva sarvaani praaninaam chaiva himsanam/ Abhyanga manjanam chaakshyoh upaanacchatra dhaaranam , Kaamam krodham cha lobhamchanartanam geetaa fvaadanam, Dyutam chan parivaadam cha jana vatam tathaanritam, Streenaama prekshanaalambhamupaghaatam parasyache/* (The Bramachari must abstain from consuming meat and alcohol, scents and fragrances, feminine influences, oil baths, footwear, umbrellas, dance and music, betting, anger and selfishness, unthutfulness, and any kind of excesses). *Dharma shastrantu vijnryam shabda shastram tathaiva puraanaani Iti haasascha tathaakhyaataani yaanicha mahaatmaanaam cha charitam shrotavyam nitya mevacha/* (Chaandrika suggests learning and hearing Dharma Shastras, Shabda Shastras, Puranas, Itihaasas, Akhyaanas, Mahatma Charitas etc. always.) *Upaadhyayah pitaajyeshtho bhraataa chiva Mahipatih, Maatulah shvasurah traataa maataa mahapitaamahou, Varna shreshtho pitruvyascha pumsyate guravah smritaah/ Maata Maataamahi Gurvi Piturmaatuscha sodaryadh, Svashruh pitaamahi jyeshthaa dhaati cha guravah striyaam/ Ityukto Guruvaroyam Maatrutah Pitrutadvidhaa, Gurunaamapi Sarveshaam pujaah pancha visheshatah/ Yobhaavayati yassuteyena vidyopadishyate, Jyeshtha bhraataa cha bhartaa cha panchaite guruvah smitaah/* (Devala Maharshi defines Gurus or respectful teachers and revered elders and well wishers: among males: teachers, father, paternal grand father, father's elder brothers, Kings, maternal uncle, father in law, life savers, maternal grandfather, paternal uncles, elder bothers and so on; among females: mother, grand mothers, Guru's wife, maternal and paternal aunts , elder sisters and so on. Like wise all elders on maternal and paternal side and from among the side of Guru.; most significant Gurus are those who have given birth, existence, Guru who has provided knowledges and elder brother) Manu states: *Imam lokam Maatrubhaktyaa pitru bhaktyaatu madhyamam, Guru shushrushayaa tvevam Brahma lokamsamashnute/ Utpaadya putram samskrutya vedamadhyapya yah pitaa, Kuryaadvrittim cha sa mahaa guruh pujiyatamah smritah/* (All the brahmacharis are blessed in

this present life by their mothers, with devotion to their fathers in the Pitru loka and with devotion to their Gurus in Brahma loka; the father who gave birth, provided training, Veda knowledge and job opportunity needs to be acknowledged as the ‘Maha Guru’ or the Highest Teacher and the most worshipworthy!) Vyasa on the other hand exclaims: *Maasaan dashodarastham yhaadhritvaa shulaissamaakulaa, Vedanaa vividhair dukkhaih prasuyeta vimurchita/ Praanairapi priyaan putraan manyate sutavatsalaa, kastasyaa nishkrutim shakto varshashatairapi/*(Who could redeem the debt of for hundred of years by carrying ten months in her womb, experiencing most severe pains like of ‘shulas’ and finally giving birth by sheer torture tightly holding the the edges of ‘Pancha Pranas’ besides bringing up with extraordinary care, sheer dedication and selfless love!) *Pandhaadeyaa brahmanaaya gave raagnhya chakshushe, Vriddhata Bhara taptaaya garbhinyah durbalaayacha/* (Bodhaayana prescribes that Brahmacharis ought to help vipras, cows, the blinded including the shortsighted kings, the old aged, those carrying lot of weight, the expectant mothers and the helpless!) Manu states: *Abhivaadana sheelasya nityam vriddhopasevinah, chatvaaritasya vardhante hyaayuh pragjnaayashobalam/* (Those Brahmacharis who greet elders, especially the aged would attain blessings viz. longevity, assertive ability, reputation and physical strength.) *Smrityardhasaareupasangahana naama amuka gotrah Devadattaaamahambho abhivaadaye ityuktaa karnou sprushtvaa dakshinena uttaana paaninaa guroh dakshinam paadam savyena savyam griheetvaa shirovanamanam/* (Upakramana is described as announcing one’s own gotra and name, greet the Guru, touch the ears of the self, bend to touch the feet of the right foot of the Guru with right hand of the self with bent of own’s own head, when the Guru blesses saying: *Ayushmaan bhava- ssoumyaa!*

Upakarama: *Pratyabdam yadupaakarmaasotsarga vidhivadvijaih Kriyate chhanda saantena punara – apyaayanam param/* (Katyayana says that along with upakarma, daana dharmas too are accorded then Vedas are doubly satisfied) *Paarvanyoudayike kuryuh shraavanyaam Taittireeyakaah, Bahrachaah shravanyachaiva graha samkraanti varjite/* (Gargya states that Taittiriya perform Upakarma in the early morning of Shravana Purnima and Bahruchas or Rigvedis perform the same on a day when there is no graha samkramana during Shravana month) *Parvanoudayike kuryuh shravanyaam Taittiriyaakaah, Bahruchaah shravanakshe hastakshe Saama vedinah/* (Gokhila states that Taittiriya perform Upakarma in the morning of Shravana Purnima, Rigvedis in Shravananakshatra and Saama Vedis in hasta nakshatra.) The substance of the above interpretations is the same that Upakarma be performed on Shraavana Purnima. Tithi Darpana states: *Aoudayike sangavaspase Shrutao parvanichaarkam, Kuryur – nabhasyupaakarma Rigyajussaamagaah kramaat/*(If Surya grahana touches Pournami morning in Shravana month then Rigyajussaama Vedis should perform Upakarma.) *Rigyajujussaamaatharveshaa Jeeva shukra kujendujaah, Kaalatrayerpi doshetu shraavanyaamevakaarayet/* (Rig-Yajur-Saama-Atharva Vedis should preferably perform Upakarma on Thursday, Friday, Tuesday and Mondays ; however if this is not possible, Upakarma be performed during Shravana month only.) Shandilya Muni’s instruction is: *Aardra vaasaanakurveeta karma kinchit kadhanchana, Raakshasam tadvijneyam tasmaadyatnena varjyayet/ Upaveetaadi dhaaryam Upakarmani tannavam, Anavamvaa navam vaapi puraataana miha - tyajet/* (Upakarma or any small deed of auspiciousness be never performed by wearing wet clothes as that tantamounts to Rakshasa Karma and be avoided certainly. New yajnopaveeta be worn for the purpose!)

Vivaaha: *Adheetya vidhivadvedam Vedardhamabhighamyacha, Vrataani kramashah kritvaa samvartana- maacyaharet/ Vedamekam samabhyasya kritvaa Vedavrataanicha, Gurave dakshinaamdatvaapya shaktastadanuginayaa/Samaavrityodvahetkanyaam sanyasmathavaa vrajet/* (Veda Vyasa explains as follows: A brahmachari having completed Vedaabhyaasa after absorbing the meaning of Vedas should

execute ‘Samavartana’; proficiency in one Veda be achieved on completing training, receive formal blessings from Guru, give Guru dakshina and execute ‘samavartana’ formally as the introductory step to vivaha. [The word Samavartana basically means taking snaana and achieving approval to perform three snaatakas viz. Vidya snaataka, Vrata snaataka and Paripurna snaataaka; the brahmachari then completes Upanayanadiksha, Savitri vrata diksha and Vidya Vrata-dikshobhya snaataka.] *Vainaveem dharaye drishti mantarvaasastadhottareem, Yagnopaveetadvitayam sodakam cha kamandalam/Chatram choshtisha malalam aaduecha pyupaanahou roukmecha kundale Vedam krita keshanakhassuchih/ Svaadhyaaye nitya yuktassyaadbahir maalamcha dhaarayet, Shuklaambaro nityam sugandhah priyadarshanah/* (The prospective bridegroom should sport danda, koupeena, uttrareya, twin yagnopaveeta, kamandala with water, umbrella, headgear, paaduka or footwear, silver earrings, Veda, with neat hair and nails and engaged in Svadhyaaya, necklaces, clean clothes and all in all be as a presentable personality.)

Manu differentiated eight types of Vivahas: *Braahmodaivastadaivaarshah praaajaapatyastathaasurah, Gandharvo raakshasaschaiva paishaachoshtamothamah/* (Brahma, daiva, aarsha, prajapatya, asura, gandharva, rakshasa, paishachika, the last being the least in importance)Manu further explains further: *Aacchaadya archaitvaacha shruti sheelavate svayam, Aahuya daanam kanyaah Brahmodharmah prakeertitah/ Dasha purvaan paraanvamsyanaatmaanam chekavimshakam, Brahmiputra sukrutakrumo - chaye denasah pitrun/Yagjnetau vitate samyagritvije karma kurvate, Alankrutya sutaadaanam daivam dharam prachakshate/ Ekam gomidhunandvevaa varaadaayaa dharmatah, Kanyaapraadaanam vidhivat Aarshodharmah sa uchyate/ Sahobhoucharataam dharmamiti vaachyaanu bhaashyacha, Kanyaapraadaana -mabhyarchya Praajaapatyovidhah smritah/* (Brahma vivaha is defined as inviting a person well versed in Veda vidya and good family background and performing Kanya daana in the typically traditional manner is Brahma Vivaha. Such ideal wedding would redeem ten generations in the past and twenty generations of pitru devatas by the son resulting in such a noble wedding. A ritvija who would have performed extensive yagna karyas offering a well behaved daughter is called Daiva Vivaha. If one or two gomidhunans or considerations are accepted from the bridegroom and a wedding is performed, then that type of wedding is called ‘Arsha Vivaha’. If both the bride and bridegroom like each other and elders too consider the wedding is as per tradition and thus are agreeable, then that type of wedding is named Praajaapatya.) *Braahmaadishu vivaaheshu chatushvevaanu purvashah, Brahmavarchashvinah putraah jaayante shishta sammataah/ Rupa satvagunopetaah dhanavantoyashasvinah, Paryapta bhogaah dharmishthaah jeevanticha shatam samaah/ Itareshu tu nrishamsaanrita vaadinah, Jaayante durvi - vaaheshu brahmadharmadvishah sutaah/* Brahma-Daiva-Aarsha-Praajaapatya vivahas shall certainly be good successes resulting on the progeny of brightness and behaviour; indeed they would be of virtue, presentability, wealthy, reputed and happy with longevity oh hundred years of healthy life. But, the children born of disapproved weddings would be Asatyavadis or untruthful, nonviruous and evilminded) Yagnyavalkya prescribes the criteria for choosing a woman for wedding: *Avipluta brahma charyo lakshanyaam striya mudvahet, Ananya purvikaam kaantaam asapindaamyaveeyaseem/ Aroginem bhratruatim asamaarsha gotrajaam, Panchamaat saptamaadurdhvaam maatrutah pitrutastadhaa/* (Any disciplined Brahmachari deserves to wed a well featured, unmarried or already carrying woman, younger in his age with good health with unquestioned family background with different Rishis of five generations from her parents side and of different gotras for seven generations). Shataatapa Munifurther prescribes: *Hamsvaraam meghavarnaam madhu pingalalochanaam, Taadrusheem varayan kanyaam grihastah svayamethate/* (The bride is preferred with sonorous voice of a swan, cloud coloured and honey eyed). Vishnu Maharshi states that if a domestic horse is required to be passed by a father, a bride needs to the

examined by the groom's mother, a just as the earth has to approve of the grass and the 'Kula' or caste has to be tested by tradition: *Ashvam pitraa parikshet maatraa kanyaam pareekshayet, Trinaad Bhumim pareeksheta Aachaarena kulam tadheti/ Vishnu Muni further says: Brahmanasya kulam graahyam Savedaa na cha sampadah, Kanyaadaane tathaa shraaddhe na vidyaa tatrakaaranam/* (Indeed, Brahman is signified by his 'Kulaachara' of his family tradition but not his wealth, just as in the context of 'shraaddha karma', high standard of vedic knowledge is not a necessary criterion!) *Kulam cha sheelam cha vapurvayascha vidyaam cha vittam sanaadhataamcha, Etaani gunaassapta parikshya kanyaadeyaa budhah sheshamachintaneeyam/Vivaaham chopaneeyam streenaam aahapitaamahah, Tasmad garbhaashtamashreshtho janmatovaashtavatsarah/ Maataachava Pitaachaiva Jyeshtho bhraataa tathaiivacha, Trayaste narakam yaanti drushtvaa kanyaam rajaswalaam/* (Yama Dharma Raja decides that seven major characteristics be signified in the context of Kanyadaana viz. Kula or family, Sheela or one's own conduct, Rupa or Physical appeal, Vayas or age, Vidya or level of learning, Vitta or wealth and, Sanaadhata or good parentage and relatives. Yama further suggested that what Upanayana is important to males is as significant as the institution of wedding to females) Recalling the Section of Stree Dharma aforementioned as of Samvarta's caution that a Rajasvala if unmarried at the age of about ten years then the parents would visit Rourava Naraka, Shaunaka Maharshi prescribed the procedure of 'prayaschitta' or atonement to such Kanyas before the wedding: *Kanyaam rutumateem shuddhaam krutvaa nishkruti maatmana, Pitaa rututsva putryaastu ganayedaaaditah sudheeh/ Daanaavadhi gruhe yatraaplaalayet charojavateem sudheeh, Dadyaattadritu samkhyagaah Kanyaa pitaa yadi/ Daata - vyaikaapi yatnena daane tasyaa yadhaavidhi, Dadyaadvaa brahmaneshvannamati nisvah sadakshinam/ Tasyaateetartu samkyeshu varaay pratipaadayet, Uposhya tridinam Kanyaa taatrou gavaam payah/ Adrushta rajase dadyaadvaa ratnabhushanam, Taamudvahanvaraschaapi kushmaandairjuhuyaat ghritam/* (The father has to recount the number of times that the Kanya has had menses and give away charity of as many cows (or equivalent) from the father as also treat a good number of Brahmnas for 'bhojana' and the wedding. The bride needs to take fast for three days and consume milk in the nights. The bridegroom has to perform Kushmanda Homa with ghee in turn. Now General Regulations pertaining Vivaha are as follows: *Eka maatru prasutaanam ekasmin vatsdareyadi vivaahonaiva kartavyonirgatetu rututraye graamaantarepi kartavyah kartavyo naikaveshmani, Desha bhedaatkulaachaaraadime Dharmah prakeertitaah/ Sodarye tishthati jyeshthe na kuryaaddaara samgraham, Anavasyam tathaa dhaanam patitastvanyathaa bhavet/* (The daughters of same mother should not be wedded in the same year; however, if three menses of the girls have been completed then the weddings could be performed at different places but not in the same house. In case there is an unwedded sister in the home, the brother should not go in for his wedding) Atri Muni stressed : *Janmakhe janma divasi Janmamaase shubham tyajet, Jyeshtha maasyaadya garbhasyashubham varjyam striyaa api/* (No auspicious deeds be performed on one's own birth star, birthday and month of birth; during Jyeshtha month, auspicious deeds be also avoided for women if in expectant stage.) Vyasa Maharshi emphasised that during the Chaturmasya period, no auspicious deeds be performed including Upanayana, Vivaha or celebrations since that is Vishnu's 'shayana / utthaana kaala': *Vishnoh prasvaapanotthana madhenaivopanaanam, Vivaaham naiva kurveetanaiva kuryaanmahotsavam/ Devala Maharshi forbids: Devotsave pravritetu manushyotsavo matah tasmin graame na kurveeta/* (No celebrations pertaining to human beings like weddings and such when 'Utsavas' or celebrations of Devas are there are in progress)

Aahnika Prakarana

Brahma muhurte buddheta Dharmardhaovanuchintayet, Kaayeleshaamscha tanmulaan Veda tatvaardhamevacha/ (Manu prescribes that one should rise from the bed at Brahma Muhurta, cogitate about Dharma-adharmas, one's own physical weakness, their causes and remedies and the Veda 'Tatvaartha') *Brahme muhurte yaa nidraasaa punya khsaya kaarini/* (Not waking up at Brahma Muhurta would be an infringement of Punya) Vishnu Purana defined Brahma Muhurta: *Raatrena paschima yaamaasya muhurto yastrutiyakah, sa Brahmaa iti vigneयो vihita sa prabodhane/ Pancha pancha Ushakkaalah saptapancha arunodayah, ashta pancha bhavet praatastah Suryodayah smritah/* (Considering that Brahma Muhurta is from 4.08 am to 4.56 am and Ushodaya or Sunrise is at 5.44 am. The first view that a person on opening eyes is the right palm saying: *Karaagre vasate Lakshmi karamadhye Sarasvati, Karamule sthito Brahma prabaate karadarshanam/* (Lakshmi on top of the palm fingers, Sarasvati in the middle of the palm and Brahma at the bottom of the palm) Vishnu Purana also states: *Utthayotthaaya bodhavyam kimadya sukrutam, Dattama vaadaapitam vaapi vaaksatyavaapi bhashitaa/ Utthayotthaaya bidhavyam mahad bhayamupasthitam, Maranam vyaadhi shokaanaam kimadya nipatishyati/* (On rising the first thoughts should be to cogitate about that day's program such as which virtuous tasks be performed like a charity to be done or organised, resolve to be truthful and renew the fear and faith in Almighty that everybody is ever prone to the vicissitudes of life like disease, distress and death!)

Vishnu Purana further states that one should pray to Brahma, Vishnu, Maheshwara, Surya, Angaraka, Budha, Guru, Shukra, Shani and Rahu Ketu to bless them; and like wise invoke Bhrgu, Vasishtha, Kratu, Angirasa, Manu, Pulasya, Pulaha, Gautama, Rauma, Marishi Chyavana, Daksha; Sanatkumara, Sanandana, Sanaatana, Aasuri Samha, Sapta Swaras, Sapta Rasaalas, Sapta Samudras, Sapta Parvatas, Sapta Rishis, Sapta Dvipas, Bhumi, Kurma, Sapta bhuvanas, Bhumi with gandha, Water with rasa, Vayu with sprasha, Agni in flames, Sky with shabda or sound, Mahat with Suprabhata, and glory to Earth, cows, Saraswati, Brahmanas, Keshava, Dharma Raja, Devi Sita and Janardana. Shandilya Muni suggests: *Ucchaaih svarena yah praatahstotu micchedananyaadheeh, Vaasudevaadi naaanaam naama samkeertanam charet/ Shrotriyaam Shubhagam gaamcha hyagni magni chitam cha, Praataruthhaaya yah pathedaapabhyassapramuchyate/* (One should take Vaasudevaadi naamas in the early hours of the morning loud the naama 'sankeertana' of Vaasudeva. One should also view a Shrotriya, Satpurusha, Cow, Agni and Bhasma to ensure that the day ahead would be hassel free).

Soucha Vidhi: *Divaa sandhyaasu karnasha Brahma sutra udanmukhah, kuryaassutra purushetu tatra chedakshinaa mukhah/* (Yagnyavalkya suggested that both during the morning and evening, the ablutions be done with one's yagnopaveeta be worn around the ear facing towards south in nights and in the north in the day time) Angira Muni prescribes: *Kritvaa mutra purishamvaa yadhaa -naivodakam bhavet, Snaatvaa labdhodakah paschaat sachelam tu vishudhyati snaanam/ kritvaa Ardravaasaastu vinmutre kuruteyadi, Praanayaamarayam kritvaa punassnaanena shudhyati/ Tailaabhyange tathaa vaantaao kshurakarmani maithune, Anaachamyottaran viprastriraatramashuchir bhavet/* (In case there is no access to water for ablution, then later 'sachela-snaana' along with discarding clothes to be done thereafter to self purify one's self. Later, after discarding the earlier clothes 'Shudda Snaana' be formed and thereafter, perform three prana yaamas. Similarly after oil massage and hair cut too a Vipra should perform three Praana Yamas) Manu states: *Na mutrampathi kurveeta na bhasmani na govraje Vaavyagnim vipramaadityam apah pashyamsthaivagaam/ Na kadaachana kurveeta vinmutrasya visarjanam, Na phaalakushte najalena chityaam nachaparvate/ Na jeerna Devaayatane na valmeeke kadaachana, Na*

sasatveshu garteshu na gacchaannaapi cha sthitah/ Na nadeiteeramaasaadya na cha na parvatamasteke, Pratyagnim prati Suryam cha prati Somodakadvijaan, Pratigaam prati vaatam pragjnaa nashyati medhatah/ (Ablutions are prohibited to be performed in water flows, ash, with cows around, facing Fire, in between plough draggings, facing cows, mountains, dilapidated temples, pits with snakes or other beings, while standing, walking, on river beds, facing Agni, Sun, Moon, Dvijas etc. as such acts would retard mental capabilities.) Also while wearing footwear, umbrellas, and facing ‘Gobrahmana streets’, one’s ablutions be avoided. Devala Maharshi prescribes Shuddhi as follows:*Maanushaasthivavasaam vishtaam, Artavam mutra retasi, Majjaanam shonitam vaapi parasyayadi samsprushet/ Snaatvaapamrija lepaadeena- achamya sashuchirbhavet, Taanyava svaani samsprushya pu tasyaat parimaarjanaat// Gangaa toyena kritsnena mribhaarischa nagopamaiah, Amrityoraacharan shoucham bhaavadushtona shudhyati/* (On touching bones, cough, stools, menses, urine, blood, and such other material, one must purify by bath; of course an evil minded person could never be purified even if the entire Ganges or a hill like quantity of earth are applied!) *Kaalognih manasasshuddhihi udakaadyanulepanam, Avigjanancha bhutaanaam shadvidham shouchamuchyate/* (Bodhayana Maharshi describes six sources of Shoucha or ‘Baahyaantara Shuchi’ viz. passage of time, Agni, mental cleanliness, water resources, outer paint like coverage and significantly enough a fund of ignorance!) *Shouche yatnah sadaakaaryam shouchamulo dvijaskrutah, Shouchaachaara viheenasya samastaa nishphalaa kriyaa/* (Boudhaayana emphasises the paramount significance of Shuchi or cleanliness especially to a ‘dvija’ who ought to be always purified as without ‘Shouchaachaara’ or Purity and tradition as prescribed, what all he desires to perform is a waste!)

Gandusha Vidhi: *Kritvaadha shoucham prakshaalya hastou cha mriijalaih, nibaddha shikhakacchastu gandushaachamanam charet// Viprasya dakshine bhaage devaastishthanti nityashah, Aassena yevagandushaan Vaama bhaage visarjayet/ Apaam dwadasha gandushaan purushotsarjane dwijah, Mutretu chaturah kuryaat bhojhaantetu shodasha/Paraashara Maharshi describes Shoucha after ablutions as cleaning the feet and hands with eartha and water, tighten the tuft, arrange the dhoti by way of drawing down the feet and lifting from the rear side, arrange the upper garment on the shoulders, and clean the mouth with water thrice over. Vyasa Maharshi states that Devatas prevail on the right side of Vipras and that is why one should never throw mouth water on that side but do so only to one’s left side. Vyasa also states that a dwija should clean up twelve times after stools, four times after ‘mutra visarjana’, and after meals clean the mouth sixteen times; this is the Gandusha vidhi to cleanse the limbs and rinse the mouth!*

Achamana Vidhi: *Prakshalya paadou hastou cha mukhamadbhissamaa hitah, Dakshinam baahum-uddhrutya krutvaa jaanvantare karou, Achamya praangmukhah pashchaaddanta dhaavaa maacharet/ Dakshinam karam kritvaa gokarnaakritivat punah, Trih pibed dakshinaambu dviraasyam parimarjatet/ Samhataangulinaa toyam griheetvaa paaninaa dwijah, Muktvaaangushtha kanishthetu sheshena achama - nam charet/ Musha majjana maatraastu sangrahya trih pidepah/* (Vyasa delineates the Achamana Vidhi in detail: wash the hands, legs, and face, slowly raise the right hand seated east faced and clean the teeth with water and perform ‘achamana’; drink water from the cup shaped right hand palm thrice and clean up the face twice over; take water from the right palm with closed fingers thrice over and with the the three right palm fingers leaving the thumb and the little finger, sip water thrice of the small size of a ‘maasha’ seed or black gram and this is the process of ‘Achamana’). *Anushtaabhih apenaabhiradbhisteerena dharma vat, Shouche psu sarvadaachamedekaante praanmukhah/ Hridgaabhi puyate viprah kanthagaabhistu bhumipah, Vaishyadbhih praashitaabhistu shudrassaprishtaabhirantah/* (Manu suggests that while doing bath in a water body, one should be clean standing at a place which is warm,

preferably inside water without froth and alone faced either east or north. A Vipra could dip and stand in water upto heart level, a Kshatriya upto neck, a Vaishya up to the mouth level while others could bathe standing upto the buttocks!) *Na bahurjaanuraachamet naasanasthona chotthitah, Bhuktvaasanasthopya achaame anya kaale kadachana/ Naanteerayaika deshasya krutvaachavottareeya kam, Aacchanna dakshinaam sastu naachaametthu kadaahana/ Vinaa yagjnopaveetena tathaadhoutena vaasanaa, Muktvaa shikhaam vaachantena kritasvaiva punah kriya/Yaabhya pratyagmu khatvena kritama - achamanam yadi, Praayas- chityai tadaa kuryaat snaanamaachamanam kramaat/* ('Achamana' is required to be performed without being seated or stretching hands outside the knees. Only after bhोजना, one can seated on a seat but not otherwise. Achamana should not be done with dhoti or the main garment and the upper garment together, or covering the right shoulder. Without yagnopaveeta and open up the tuft while performing 'achamana' is banned. Achamana should not be performed west faced and if so done prayaschitta or atonement is required by taking bath and perform 'Punara-achamana') *Taavannaapa -sprushed vidvaan yaavadvaamenana sprushet, vaamehi Dwaadashaadityaah Varunaascha Jaleshwaraah/ Kaamse paatre chayattoyam yattoyam taamra bhaajane, Souvarnam raajate chiva naivaashuddham tu karhichit/* (Yama Dharma Raja mentions that learned persons are aware that they are restrained to touch the left side of the body as that side Dwadashadityas, Varunas and Jaleshwara are there; he further certifies that water in the vessels of bronze, copper, silver and gold are pure) *Manu Shastra* describes about Brahma and other Tirthas: *Braahmena viprasteerthena nityakaalamupasprushet, Kaayatraidashikaabhyaam vaana pitrena kadaachana// Angushtha mulasya tale Braaham teertham prachakshate, Kaayamanguli moolegre Daivam Pitryam tayorathah/* (One should be in touch with Brahma Tirtha and three sides of one's body regularly although the Pitru Tirtha be touched occasionally. Brahma Tirtha exists at the right thumb bottom, Agni Tirtha at the finger bottoms, Daiva Tirtha on the top of the fingers and Pitru Tirtha under the fingers)

Shounaka Muni prescribes the procedure of Achamana: *Prakshaalya paadou hastoucha tripibed -ambu veekshitam, Maashamagnantu tadvaari hridgatantu vishudhyati/Samvritaangushtha mulena vidvih pramrujyaattadhoshthakou, Sangulaambhiih samyak avaacheenah sprushenmukham/ Angushthaanaa - mikaambhyaantu chakshushi samupasprushet, Angushtena pradeshinyaaghraanam spurushyad ananta - ram/ Kanishthikayaangushthena shrotrou samyagupasprushettatah, Andushtha madhyamaabhyaantu baahu samyak sprushet/ Angushthaagrena naa bhintu hridayam tisribhistatah, Sarvaabhistu shirah paschaat evamaachamanam charet/ Jaanorurthvam jale tishthanaahaantah shuchiyaamiyaate, Adhastaa -chhata krutvopi samaachaanto na shudhyati/* (After washing hands and feet, consume a drop of water from the right palm thrice to clean up one's heart and soul, clean up the thumb twice, touch the face with all the fingers together westward. Touch the eyes with thumb and ring finger, then touch the thumb and the pointing finger with nose, the thumb and the smallfinger with ears, thumb and the middle of all other fingers touch hands; thumb and navel; heart with three fingers and finally touch the head with all the fingers and perform Achamana finally. Till the time of Achamana , one should be seated in water upto knees and in the same position perform hundred achamanas for shuddhi or pure cleanliness.) Paraashara Maharshi describes: *Prabhaasaadeeni tirthaani Gangaadyaassaritastataha, Viprasya Dakshine karne santeeti manurabraveet/ Adityo Varunah Somah Vahnirvaayustadaivacha, Viprasya Dakshine karne nityam tishthanti devataah/* (Prabhasa and such other Tirthas and Ganga and other Sacred rivers exist in the ears of a Vipra as stated by Manu, while Surya, Varuna, Chandra, Agni, Vayu Devas too are stationed in the right ear as believed by Paraashara). Parashara further states: *Satyamaachamana -*

ashaktou abhaava salilasyavaa, Purvokteshu nimitteshu dakshinam shravanam sprushet/ (In the event of inability or when worthy water is unavailable, then as an alternative one's own the right ear be touched).

Snaana Vidhi: Vyasa opines: *Praatah kaaletu sampraapte kritvaa chaavashyakam budhah, Snaayaannadeeshu shuddhaasu shoucham kritvaa yadhaa vidhi/* (A virtuous person would perform his morning routine and then take bath in rivers or running waters) *Balam rupam yashodharmam jnaanamaayussukham dhritim, Arogyam paramaapnoti samyak snaanena maanavah/* (Satyavrata assures that a full bath provides a person good strength, body form, reputation, virtue, knowledge, longevity, happiness, courage and health) Atri explains further: *Asnaataasheemalam bhuktehyajapah puyashonitam, Ahuutaashee krimim bhuktehyadaataa vishamashnute/ Snaana mulaah kriyaa sarvaah shrutismrityudिता nrinaam, Asnaatastu pumaannaarhah japahomaadi karmasu/ Praatar madhyaahnoh snaanam vaanaprastha grihasthayoh, Yatestrishavanam snaanam sakruccha brahma chaarinaam/ Sarvepi sakrit kuryuh Ashaktaochodakam vinaa, Saamardhyechaambu sadbhaave yathaa shastram hitat bhavet, Snaanam cha sarva varnaanaam kaaryam shochaparassaram/* (A person who is not bathed but eats food, that food is as bad as excretion, just as a person does not meditate and eats food that food is as horrible as consuming blood; food without performing Agni Homa is stated to eating worms and food without daana is to be considered as poisonous! Both Grihasthaas and Vaanaprasthaas ought to take bath twice in the morning and evening, Sanyasis thrice and Brahmacharis on 'sakrit' basis or as when water is unavailable or not possible physically beyond the minimum a day. In fact, this clause of Sakrit is available to all, but subject to one's own ability and shortage of water the escape clause is not applicable. In any case, the first bath in the morning is compulsory!) *Jala madhyesthito viprah shuddha bhaavo harim smaret, Snaatva achaanto vaari magnah trih pathedadhamarshanam* (Shaunaka Muni states that a vipra should go deep enough into water, pray to Shri Hari and after snaana, achamana and drowning thrice perform 'Agahamarshana' thrice.) Daksha explains details: *Dhaayennaaraayana Devam snaanaadishu cha karmasu, Brahmalo kamavaapnoti na chaih jaayate punah/ Sankalpah Suktapathanam maarjanam chaaghamarshanam, Devataa tarpanamcheti snaanam panchangamuchyate/ Apravaahodaka snaanam viprapadaavanejanam, Gayatri japamarghyam cha Aadityaabhimukha scharet/ Srotasokhimukhah snaayaan maarjane chaaghamarshane, Anyatraarka mukhe raatrou praagudanmukha yevavaa, Sandyhaa muhkastu sandhyaayaamk daivedaivonmukhastathaa/ Shikhaam badhvaachamyata tam prakshalya xdarbhaannidhaaya darbha paanish, Jalam natwaa prayataanjalih praagmukho avagaahya kakshaadi, Nimrujya snaatvaadviraachamy darbha paanina raapohishthaadyaih/ Abdevataih maarjanam kritwaaghamarshanam kurvaat punah snaatwaa dwiraachamy tarpanam kuryaat/* (While taking bath Narayana Smarana and dhyaana puts one on the path of Brahma Loka. Sankalpa, Purusha Sukta Pathana, Marjana, Aghamarshana, Devata tarpana are stated to be the 'Panchaangas'! Jalapravaha snaana, vipra paada prakshalana, Gayatri Japa must be performed facing Surya Deva. Jalapravaha marjana and aghamarshana snaana must be facing the flow of water, while the other acts like snaana and worships need to face Surya only. While in the water flow, the tuft be twisted, achamana be performed, carry darbhass and on greeting with folded hands, get into the waterflow facing east, clean the armpits and body parts, perform Achamana twice, recite the mantra: 'apohishthaa mayobhavah' etc. to please 'Jala Devatas' while doing 'maarjana', 'Aghamarshanas', repeat snaanas and tarpanas) Skanda Purana prescribes: *Udayhaatpraak chatasrastu naadikaa arunodayah, tatra snaanam prashamsanti sahi punya tamah smritah/ Nityam naimittim kaamyam trividham snaanamuchyate, Tarpanam tu bhavettasyaam gatvena prakeertitam/* (Four ghadis before Sunrise, bathing is stated to be the best and of assured Punya.

The three kinds of snaanas are known as Nitya Snaana, Naimittika snaana, Kaamyasnaana and tarpanas ought to precede the snaanas.) Vishnu Purana prescribes that the Tarpanas directed to Deva, Rishi, Pitru Devas ought to be performed with wet clothes after the snaanas only. Bharadvaja Maharshi provides many other details about 'Snaanas': *Tarpanam Devataadibhyah svasva tirthena tarpayet, Goshringa maatramudhrutya tarpane jalamstrijet/ Yaina tirthena grihneeyaattena dadyaajjalaanjalam, Anya teerthena grihniyaat tattedyo rudhuram bhavet/ Purvaashaabhimukho Devaanuttarabhi mukhastrusheen, Dakshinaasyastu pitrunaam jalamadhyetu tarpayet/ Devarshi tarpanam kritvaa Yakshaanaam tarpayettate, Yanmayaa dushitam toyam shareera mala sanchayaat, Taddosha parihaaraardham Yakshaanaam tarpayaamyaham/* (Deva tarpana is to be performed by the same water as fetched by the Karta and not with any other water resource as tarpana done with any other water would be like that of blood! Tarpana to Devas is to be directed to eastern side, to Rishis directed to north, and Pitru Devatas to the Southern side and all these are to be performed within the water flows only. After performing Deva-Rishi tarpana in the water, yaksha tarpana is to be done on the banks stating that since the body was unclean due to the water flow, the yaksha tarpana is being performed on the banks. Even as the clothes are wet on the banks, the Karta should try to drip out the water of his clothes and perform Pitru Tarpana with the mantra: *yekechaasmakule jaataa/* or may all the souls of the deceased in my Vamsha be blessed.

Snaana bhedas: *Snaanatu dvividham proktam gounamukhya prabhedatah/* Shankha Maharshi made broad classification of Snaanas viz. Gauna and Mukhya. Daksha Prajapati defined eight kinds of Snaanas: *Agneyam Vaarunam Braahmyam Vaavyam divyamevacha, Maanasam Paarthivam chivatvashtamam navamam snaanamuttamam/* Bharadvaja suggested: *Praangmukhascharanouhastou prakshaalyaachamyam purvakam, Praanaanaayamyam sankalpya bhasma snaanam samaacharet/ Aadaaya bhasitam svetam Agnihotra samudbhavam, Ishaanenatu mantrena svamurdhani vinikshipet/ Tatah aadaaya tadbhasma mukhe tatpurushenatu, Aghoraakhyena hridaye guhye vaamaahvayenacha/ Sadyojaataabhidhaanena bhasma paadadvaye kshipet, Sarvangam pranavenaiva mantrenodhdalayettatah, Yetadaagneyakam snaanam uditam paramarshibhih/* (There are eight kinds of Snaanas viz. Agneya, Vaaruna, Brahma, Vaavya, Divya, Maanasa, Paarthiva and Kaapila; the ninth being Saarasvata. One should face east, wash hands and feet, after Achamana, Praanaayama and Sankalpa, perform 'Bhasma Snaana' or the Sacred Ash Bath by picking up adequate Bhasma from Agnihotra and by reciting Ishana mantra place it on one's head. Then apply the bhasma on face reciting Tatpurusha mantra, on the heart area with Aghora mantra, at the guhya pradesha with Vaama Deva mantra and on both the feet with Sadyojaata mantra. By reciting the Pranava mantra apply all over the body and this is called Agneyaka snaana by Saints.) Vyasa defines Vaaruna snaana for executing Pitru tarpana by dipping into the water flow reciting Abdevata mantras: *Snaanam abdevatairmantraih jalemajjana gaahanaih, Tarpanam Pitru devataanaam snaanam Vaarunamuchyate/* Katyayana defines Brahma Snaana: *Apoishthaadibhirbaahyam mantra snaanam hitatatsmatam, Kushaagrairmaarjanam kuryaaddeva tirthenavaadvijah/* (Braahmya snaana is to perform 'maarjana' with 'kushaagraas' by reciting 'apohishthaadi' mantras and dipping into water flow) Brihaspati describes the rest of the Snaana vidhis: *Vaavyam gorajah proktam astam gacchati gopatou, Vidvat sarasvati praaptam snaanam Saarasvatam smritam/ Uttaraayana madhyetu yadaa varshati Vaasavah, Aatapena saha snaanam Divyam snaanam taduchyate/ Chaturbhujam Maha Devam shankha chakra gadaadharam, Manasaadhyayate Vishnum Maanasam snaanamuchyate/ Shuchideshaanmrudam gruhya kuryaat gatropalepanam, mantraih pardhiva samyuktaih Bhoumam snaanam taduchyate/* (As Sunset approaches, snaana by smearing godhuli on the body is called Vayavya Snaana. After attending to

‘vidvadgoshti’ of learned persons of Sarasvati Swarupa is called Sarasvati Snaana. Sometime during mid ‘Uttarayana’ when there occurs rain with sunshine and bathing at that time is named Divya Snaana. Snaana while praying in one’s mind about Maha Vishnu with four hands sporting shankha-chakra-gada-sarangas is illustrated as Maanasa Snaana. Smearing earth from a clean and sacred surrounding on one’s body parts and performing bath is known as Bhouma Snaana) Snaanas at well deserved Places: *Nadeeshu Devakhaateshu Tataakeshu Sarassucha snaanam samaacharennityam gartaprasravaneshucha/* (Manu says that Snaanas be taken among the water bodies like Jeeva Nadis or ever flowing rivers, divine water bodies like Pushkar and Manasarovara, and wells and deep water pits) *Puraanaanaam Narendraanaam rishinaamcha mahatmanaam, Snaanam kupatataakeshu devataanaam samaacharet/Bhumishthamudhru-taatpunyam tatah prasravanodakam, Tatopi Saarasam punyam Gaangam punyantu sarvatah/* (Markandeya describes that in the past there were some water bodies dug up in which Kings, Rishis and Mahatmas bathed and performing snaana at such places are worthy indeed. Water dug up from the depths of earth is sacred and so are the water falls and of flows; reputed Sarovaras and Rivers like Ganga are highly sacred) Yoga Yagnyavalkya prescribes that whenever one has to take bath elsewhere, then snaana be done by discarding palmful of water seven times first and then proceed. Also, wherever there is a running River of Sacredness nearby, one should prefer bathing in it rather than in any stored water!

Samudra Snaana: The general saying is: *Ashvattham manda vaaretu Saagaram parvani sprushet, Ashvattha Saagara sevyo kadaachana/*(Ashvattha tree is worthy of touch on Saturdays and so is Samudra on Pournamis; indeed both these are worthy of worship and not to be touched indiscriminately) Bharadwaaja Muni instructs: *Krishnaangaara chaturdashyaamyobdhou snaanam samacharet, Tasya janma sahasreshu sarvam paapam pranashyati/ Seturnaapekshate kaalam nityam snaanam prashasyate, Nishedhah kaalabhedasya setoranyatra karhichit/* (Samudra Snaanas on Tuesdays of Krishna Paksha and Chaturdashis would destroy sins of thousands of previous births. However Setu snaanas could be done without any restrictions of days or times.) Vyasa Maharshi describes: *Kurukshetram Gayaam Gangaam Prabhaasam Naimisham tathaa, Tirthenyetaani sarvaani snaanakaale smaredbudhah / Aapayeva putaah taasaam vahnirvishodhakah, Tasmaatsarveshu kaaleshu ushnaanbhah paavanam smritam/* (All the persons of virtue should bathe at Kurukshetra, Gaya, Gangaa, Prabhasa, Naimisha and while so bathing announce the Sacred names of the Places concerned. While water purifies and is clean, Agni purifies far more and hence hot water baths are stated to be more preferable at all the places and times)

Naimittika Snaanas: *Tatopsumagnah triraghamarshanam tadvishnoh paramam padam, Iti vaa Savitreem Vaayumjate mana ityanuvaakam/ Vaa Purusha suktam vaa japitvaa Snaatvaa vaa japitvaa snaatvaardra vaasaa devarshi, Pitru tarpanam ambhasthaha eva kuryaat/* (Vishnu Maharshi instructs that one should perform Naimittika Snaanas by dipping fully into a water body, perform Aghamarshana thrice reciting ‘Tadvishnoh paramam padam’ or ‘Saavitreem yunjate manah’ or ‘Purusha Sukta’ Japa, and then observe Pitru Tarpana Vidhi while being in water itself!) *Divaa keertimudakyaam cha sutikaam patitam tathaa,, Shavam tatsrishtinam chaiva sprushtyaa snaanena shudhyati/* (Manu prescribes that sparsha or touch of a barber, a woman in the stage of menstruation, a woman in the immediate post delivery period, a fallen woman, or a corpse or those who would interact with a corpse would require purification by discarding the clothing and taking bath for purification) *Dussvapnam yadi pashyettu vaante cha kshura karmani, maithune preta dhume cha snaanameva vidheeyate/* (Bad dreams, vomiting, hair cuts, union with women, smoke of dead bodies would most certainly demand naimittika snaanas, says Parashara) However, Smaarta view is some what relaxed: *Sankate vishame chaiva durge chaiva visheshatah, Hatta*

pattana marge cha yadhaa sambhavimishyate/ Trina kaashthaadi ghaatena kudye naantarite tathaa, Gibaala vyajana vaapi snaanam tatra na vidyate/ (At the times facing difficult and fearful situations, visiting places of high altitudes, market places etc. snaanas are not compulsory but optional. Snaanas are also not called for by touching grass heaps, wood, walls, cows and children.) But Apastamba Sutras require that formal bathing is compulsory when dog bites, wash the place affected, draw fire nearby the affected area, wash the feet and perform sachela snaana and ‘Aachamana’. However the Sutras exempt snaana in a few other contexts: *Na snaayaadutsaveteete Mangalyam vinivartyacha, Anuvrajya suhrud bandhun archayitveshta devataah, Na snaanamaacharet bhuktvaa naa turonamaha nishi/*(No bathing is called for after attending Celebrations, Shubha Karyas, seeing off friends and relatives, after worship to Devas, while in illness, after taking meals and at mid-night times!) Manu underlines the need for snaanas even at the late nights in specified contexts: *Raahu darshana Sankraanti vivaahaatyaya vriddhi - shu, Snaana daanaadikam kuryaansishi Kamy Vratashu cha/* (Ratri snaanas are specially called for in the context of Grahanas or Eclipses, Vivaha dosha graha yoga kaala, and in connection with ‘Kamya Vratas’ and the adjunct activities of ‘grahanas’ viz. Snaana Daanas.) More is stated about Grahanas by Maha Bharata, Vyasa Muni and Vasishtha respectively: *Gangaa snaanam prakurveeta grahane Chandra Suryayayoh, Mahaa nadishu chaanyaasu snaanam kuryaat yadhyadhya dhaa vidhih/Sdarvam gangaa saam toyam sarve brahma samoddvijaah, Sarvam Bhumi samam daanam grahane chandra Suryahoh/ Gavam koti pradaanenasamyak dattena tatphalam, Gangaasnaane tatphalam syaadraahugraste Nisha kare/ Chandra Surya grahechaiva yovagaaheta jaahnavim, Sasnaatah sarva tirtheshu kimardhamatate Maheem/* (At the Solar and Lunar eclipses, one must perform formal baths in Ganges or other Sacred Rivers, states Maha Bharata. Vyasa states that in connection with the eclipses, all the waters assume the significance of Ganga in all the rivers, while all the dvijas turn out to be equivalent to Brahma and any charity would be as good as Bhudaana! Vriddha Vasishtha assures that Ganga Snaana at the time of Chandra Grahana bestows the fruits of koti godaana! He further exclaims that any person performing Ganga Snaana during the Chandra-Surya Grahanas would reap the benefit of Sarva Tirtha Snaanas.) Shaataatapa Maharshi assures: *Snaanam daanam tathaa shraaddham anantam Rahudarshaney!* (At the time of Rahu darshana, all virtuous deeds like snaana- daana- shraaddhas would attract endless fruits!)

Samkramana: *Samkraanyaam yaani dattaani havya kavyaani Maanavaih, Taani tasya dadaatkaryah sapta jhanmasu nischitam/* (Whatever beneficial fruits of havya-kavya-daanas at the time of Samkramana are stated to be directly received by Surya Deva and are repaid back for seven births ahead!) *Samkraanti samayah sukshmah durjeyah pishitekshanaih, Tadyogaadapyadhah cha urtham trimshannaadayah pavitritaah/ Ayanedve vishavedve chatasrasshada sheetayah, Chatusro Vishnupadyas -cha samkraantyo dwaadasha smritaah/*(Devatala Maharshi explains that the precise time of Samkranti is difficult to ascertain and that is why a margin of thirty nadis to and fro is reckoned as sacred. Of the two Ayanas, there are two Vishus, Shadsheetis two, Vishnupadis four and Samkrantis twelve). *Ayane vimshatih purvaa Makare vimshati paraah, Vartamane tulaameshe naadayastoobhayato dasha/ Ayane koti punyam cha sahasram Vishave phalam, Shadashetyaam sahasrantu phalam Vishnupadepicha/* (Brihaspati explains that in the dakshinayana time, the samkramana is to be reckoned as twenty ghadis before and twenty ghadis ahead in respect of Uttaraayana kaala; in the case of the latter after Samkramana, the Punya Kaala is twenty ghadis and during Tula Mesha Samkramana the punya kaala is of ten ghadis. Whatever deeds of virtue are performed during the Ayana are rewarded by crore times, thousand times during vishu time as also the ‘shadasheeti’ and vishnupada timings too).

Rajasvalaa Snaana: Katyayana Maharshi defines the shuddhi for menstruation: *Rajasvalaa chaturdhehni snaatvaa shuddhi mavaapnuyaat// Prathamehani chandaali dwiteeye sutikaa bhavet, Triteeyehi svadharasthaa chaturdhe patito yadhaa/ Sangavaante chaturdhehni snaanaacchuddhi mapaapnuyaat, Ekavimshatithaalipyaa sarvaanam shuddhayaamrudaa/ Kritaa snaana shatam pashcaachuchirbhavati naanyadhaa, Snaanaante Bhaskaram drushtvaa putram praardhya sumangali/ Trivaaram praashye - dannam nacheddoshavati bhavet/* (A female on the first day of menstruation is known as a Chandali, second day as Sutika, third as Svadharmastha, fourth day as Sankramana and the fifth day as Patita; on the fourth day would be Shuddhi or Purification as the body needs to be cleaned up twenty one times with ‘mrittika’ and take bath hundred times. Thereafter she should greet Surya Deva worshipping him to bestow ‘Sumangalitva’ or long life for her husband and sons and eat food thrice, or otherwise it would not balance her body) *Rajasvalaaaam snaataayaam punareva rajasvala, Ashtaadasha dinaadarvaaga shuchitvam navidyate, Unavimshati dinaadarvaagekaaham- ashuchirbhavet/*(Once the bath is performed as above, till the eighteenth day there is no ‘Ashuchi’ which commences there after.)

Kaamyaa Snaanasa: *Deva yatraa Vivaaheshu yagjnesu prajkruteshu cha, Utsaveshu cha sarveshu sprushtaasprishtirna dushyati/* (The general ruling is the criterion of touch or no touch restriction is not applicable to Deva Yatra, Weddings, Yagjnaadi Sacrifices and Celebrations) Pulastya Rishi defines Kaamyaa Snaanasa as follows: *Pushyecha Janma nakshatre vyateepaatecha Vaidhrutai, Amaayanacha nadi snaanam punatyaa saptamah kulah/ Ravyangaarashanervaa snaanam kurvantiye naraah, Vyaadhibhiste napeedyante mrigaih kesarinoyathaah/Chaitra krishna chatur dashyaam yah snaayaacchiva sannidhou, Na pretvamavaapnoti Gangaayaam cha visheshatah/*(Pulastya Muni states: Baths in Sacred Rivers on Janma Nakshatras, in Pushya month, vaidhruti vyatipaata graha yogaas, and Amavasyas would provide salvation for seven past generations. Persons performing snaanas on Sundays, Tuesdays, Saturdays would be free from physical diseases as intense as hurt by lions and deers. One should consciously take sacred baths in the premises of Lord Shiva on Chaitra Krishna Chaturdashi, possibly in the Ganges to avoid ‘pretatva’ for ever.) *Amavasyaa bhavedvaare yadaa bhumi sutasyavai, Jahnavi snaanamaatrena gosahasraplalam bhavet/ Kaartikam sakalam maasam nitya snaayi jitendriyah, Japan havishyabhuk snaatvaa sarva paapai pramuchyate/ Tulaayaam Makara meshe praatah snaayi sada bhavet, Havisham brahmacharyam cha maha pataka naashanam, Tushyatyaamamalakai Vishnurekaadasyaam visheshatah/* (Shataatapa Muni prescribes Amavasya Mangala Vaasara snaana in Ganga to qualify for the fruits of charity of thousand cows. During the entire Kartika month, regular snaanas in rivers, performance of japa-homa-havish bhojana would bestow total annulment of all accounts of past sins. Early morning snaanas during Tula-Makara-Mesha Rashis followed by havirbhojana and celibacy should destroy ‘Maha Paapas’. Worship of Vishnu and naivedya of Amla fruits on ‘Eakaadashis’ would fetch blessings of the Lord.)

Malaapakarshana Snaanasa: Bharadwaaja Maharshi details these snanas as follows: *Abhyanga snaapane yogyaa vaaraaye tithibhissaha, Kathyate tethunaa spashtam pushtaye balavridhdhaye/ Indorbudhasya sourescha vaarebhyangam prashasyate kaantim, Shriyam tathaa dadyuh bhogaan vaaraadhipaah kramaat/ Dwiteeyaadyaashchatastrascha prashastaah Saptami tathaa, Navami Dashami chaiva Trayodashyapi cha smritaah/ Bhaanu bhoomaamaraachaarya Shukravaareshu sankrame, Vyatipaatecha Janmakshenaabhyangam snaanamaacharet/ Ekadashyaam charurdashyaam Ashtamyam pratipadyapi, Shashtyaam Parvaani chaabhyanga snaanamnaiva samaacharet/Uttaraa phalguni jyeshthaa Shavanaardraasu raatrishu, Abhyanga snaapanam dheemaan sukhardhi varjayettathaa/ Shishurogarta vridhdhaanaam yathaakaalam shareerinaam, Abhyangoshnodaka snaanam naiva doshaavaham smritam/*

(Abhyangana Snaanas prescribed for health and strength are prescribed as follows: Monday, Wednesday and Sunday are excellent for these as they grant brightness, opulence and enjoyment respectively. Tithiwise, Dviteya-Triteeya-Chaturchi-Panchami, Saptami, Navami are Trayodashi auspicious. But, Sunday-Tuesday-Thursday- Friday, Samkrmana timings, Janma Nakshatras, Vyatipata timings are avoidable. Also, Ekadashi, Chaturdashi,Ashtami,Prathama,Shashti and Pournamai are unworthy. Uttara Phalguni, Jyeshtha, Shravana, Ardra nakshatras are to be avoided. Children, persons suffering from diseases and old aged are exempt from the above restrictions and might bathe with hot water)

Naraka Chaturdashi Snaana: *Aashvayu krishna pakshetu chaturdashyaaminodaye, Tailaabhyangam cha kartavyamsnaanam ushna vaarinaa/* (One must perform ‘tailaabhyanga’ or oilbath with hot water in the early morning hours of Ashvini Krishna Chaturdashi.) *Chaturdashi yaashvayuja sya krishnaa svaatyarkayuktaa cha bhavetprabhate snaanam samabhyajya naraistu kaaryam, Sugandhitailena vibhuti kaamaih taile Lakshmirjale Gandaa Deepaavai dinevaset Alakshmi parihaaraartham abhyanga snaana maacharet tata Aabharanam vastram dhaarayet sarva sampadah labhet/* (Naraka Chaturdashi coincides with the Swati Nakshatra yukta Ashvini Krishna Chaturdashi in the morning. Those who are fond of gaining opulence have to exucute formal perfumed oil bath at that auspicious time as the belief is that Lakshmi resides in oil and Ganga turns water all around. The oil bath is a must to obliterate poverty and unhappiness. There after, one wears new clothing and jewellery to signify the arrival of Devi Lakshmi! It was that very Krishna Chaturdashi when Lord Vishnu in the incarnation of Krishna freed humanity from the evils of Narakaasura and hence all those who are afraid of Naraka and hell ought to perform ‘Abhyanjana Snaana’ and secure fulfillment of one’s life!) Yama Dharma Raja certifies: *Ghritam cha saarshapam tailam yattailam pushpavaasitam, Na doshah pakva taileshu snaanaabhyangeshu nityatah/* (Ghee, Sarshapa oil, flower oils are always worthy of boiling before use for ‘ abhyangana’)

Nadee Snaanaas: Brahmanda Purana signifies the following most famed Sacred Rivers: *Godaavari Bheema Rathee Tungabhadraa cha Venika, Taapipayoshnikaa Vindhya Dakshinetu prakeertitaah/ Bhaaeerathi Narmadaa cha Yamunaa cha Sarasvati, Vishokaa cha Vitastaa cha Vindhysyottara sanjnataa, Dwaadashaitaa Mahaa Nadyo Devarshi kshetra sambhavaa/* (The following Sacred Rivers down the Vindhyas are Godavari, Bheema Rathi, Tungabhadra, Krishnaveni, Tapati and Payoshnika; in the northern Bharat are the noted Bhagiradhi, Narmada, Yamuna, Sarasvati, Vishoka and Vitasta are among the Maha Nadis in Uttara Bharat.) *Gangaa cha Yamuna Godaavareesyaa- tthungabhadraa, Kaveri cha Maha Punya Maha Nadyaah prakeertitaah/Aadou karkatake sarvaa Maha Nadyoh rajasva - laah, Tridinantu chaturdhehni shuddhaasyurjaahnavi yadhaa/ Chatram cha harat paadam Ardham harati paadukou, Yaaam heretripaadam tu sarvam harati dolikaa/ Yescharyallobha mohaadva gacchedyaana abhistuyah, Nishphalam tasya teertham tasmaadyaanaadi varjayet/* (The Maha Nadis are stated to be Ganga, Yamuna, Godavari, Tungabhadra, and Kaveri and during the first three days of Karkataka Rashi, these rivers are stated to be affected by menses and on the fourth day they attain Shuddi or Purity. While one proceeds on Tirtha Yatras, the Yatris carrying umbrellas get discounted of thier ‘Punya’ by a quarter, carrying foorwear lose half of it, going by a ‘Vahana’ lose two thirds and nil going by the comfort of a ‘Palki’ carried by human beings! Thus the genuine yatris should note these facts!

SANDHYA VANDANA

Prerequisites for Sandhya Vandana: Vastra Dhaarana: After taking the bath as prescribed, one should wear

a white 'dhoti' and 'uttareeya', tighten the head hair, clean the feet with water and leave the 'snaana vastras' in the water flow. Bhrihu Maharshi disallows wearing deep red and black clothing, wet clothes and without borders. *Kati sutram vinaa shroudam Smaartam Karma karoti yah, Sarvam tannishphalam vidyaatsopi nagna iti smritah/Sapta vaataahatam vastram shushkavat pratipaaditam, Shuchivohavyaa maruta ityuktvaa shuddamambaram/ Samprokshya Devasyatveti griheetvaa chaavadhutayet, Taraniru dutyamiti vaava vahanteeti chaadayet/* (No Punya Karma of 'Shrouta- Smaarta' nature be even performed without 'Kati Sutra' as all such deeds are invalid; so is a person desirous of performing such deeds without 'kaccha' or 'uttareeya' is as bad as nude and thus disqualified. Before wearing the dhoti and uttareeya, one should recite the mantra viz. 'Shucheevohavyaa maruta', then perform 'samprokshana' or sprinkle water, then show the vastras to Surya Deva saying 'Avadhutam raksha' and again state 'aava hanti' and then cover the body) *Snaanam daanam japam homam svaadhyaa -yamapi tarpanam, naika astrodvijah kuryaat shraadhahojana satkriyaa/*(No dwija must ever perform snaana,daana, japa, homa, svaadhyaa, tarpana, bhojanadi acts without uttareeya wearing a single cloth as this is typical blemish . **Pundra dharana:** Padma Purana states: *Griheyasya sadaa tishthet gopichandanamrittikaa, Dvarakaa vihita tatra Krishnena sahita Kalou/ Gopichandana lipyaangoyam yampashyati chakshusha, tamtam putam vijaaneeyaatnaatra karyaa vicharana/*(Which ever home there is 'gopichandana dharana' in Kaliyuga is blessed as Dvaaraka along with Krishna. There is no doubt that whosoever is smeared with gopichandana is seen into his eyes is called a beloved friend) Adhrvana Veda affirms that who so ever wears on his forehead the imprint of Lord Krishna's Sacred Feet as signified with an 'Urthva Pundra' is most certainly a loving friend and an undoubted devotee worthy of ready veneration. The devotee of the Lord after formal bathing would address Gopichandana greeting it as having been born of Vishnu's own body and after 'abhimantrana' stating *Shankha chakra gadaa paani Dvaraka nilayaachyuta Govinda Pundarikaaksha rakshamaam sharanaa gatam/* and then apply on the forehead. A grihasta should apply with the ring finger on twelve spots reciting Vishnu Gayatri and/or Keshavaadi naamaas. A Brahmachari or a Vanaprastha should apply on the fore head, throat, heart and armpits reciting Vishnu Gayatri or the Five names of Keshavaadi namas. A sanyasi would apply the Urthva Pundra with his pointing finger on his head, forehead and heart. Vishnu Smriti states that without the Urthva Pundra no acts of virtue like Yaaga, japa, daana, homa, svadhyaa and pitru tarpana would be effective.

Bhasma Tripundra dharana: *Kaalagni Rudropanishadi Agneyam bhasma Sadyojaatamiti pancha brahma mantraih pratigruhya Agnirityanena abhimantrya/*(Kaalagni Rudropanishad gives the procedure of 'Agni bhasma abhimantrana' of taking the bhasma into hand reciting the mantras: *Sadyojaatam prapadyaami Sadyo jaataayavai namo namah, Bhave bhavenaati bhava bhavaavamaam namah/* and performing *Agniriti abhimantrana;* then take the bhasma and water drops and apply on one's head, forehead, chest and hands reciting: *Maaastoke iti samaadhrutya jalena samrujya Shiro lalaata vakshaskandheshutryaayushyaih Triambakaistirvakai trishro rekhaah prakrveeta vratametacchhabhavam sarvavedeshu vedavaatibhiruktam bhavati/* This procedure of Tripundra Bhasma Dharana in three lines across the forehead ensures that there would no rebirth. Those who possess 'bhasma tripundra' - be he a brahmachari, a grihasta, vaanaprastha or yati, would absolve all kinds of sins, and is taken as having worshipped all the Devas and Tirthas. A Vaidika Brahmana needs to apply bhasma tripundra across the forehead, two shoulders, navel, head, heart and both the sides. Kaatyayana assures that shraaddhas, yagnas, japa, homa, Vaishva -deva, Suraarchana and daanas become doubly fruitful with 'bhasma tripundra' and ineffective otherwise.

Procedure of Sadhya Vandana : Commencing from the brightness of the Stars on the Sky till the Sun Rise is stated as Praatah Sandhya; it is said that the last fall of night during two ‘naadis’ heralds the Praatah Sandhya when the first ray of Sun becomes visible. Yoga Yagnyavalkya states: *Sandhou sandhyaamupaa seetanaastange nodate Ravou, Brahmanopaasyate sandhya Vishnavaa Shankarena cha, Kasmaanno - paasayed deveem shriyaskamodvijottama/* (A dvija should perform ‘Sandhya Vandana’ just about the Sun Rise and Sunset along with the Upaasana of Shiva / Vishnu and not only to Devi alone. Atri Muni as also Shankha insist on tri-sadhya: *Sadhya trayam tu kartavyam dvijenaatma vidaa sadaa/ Pratah Sandhyaam sa nakshatraam Madhyamaam snaanakarmani, Saadityaam paschimaam sandhyaam upaaseeta yadhaa - vidhi/* (A dvija of virtue requires to execute three Sandhyas daily; Pratassandhya even while stars appear in the sky, Madhya Sandhya during Snaanaadi karmas, and Saayam Sandhya when Surya is almost disappearing) Vyasa Maharshi warned: *Yonyatra kurute yatnam dharmakaaryepivai dvijah, Vihaaya sandhyaapranatim sayaati narakaayutam/* (Those dvijas who ignore performing ‘Sandhyopaasana’ and seek to perform other deeds of virtue would have to depart to Naraka instead) *Atikraamat yo mohaat Sandhyaamanyaparaayanah, Sa Saadhubhirchahishkaaryah sarvasmaaddvija karmanah/* (By neglecting Sandhya, a Brahmana attempting other Karmas need to be ostracised). Yamadharma Raja assures : *Sandhyaamupaasante yetu satatam samshritavrataah, Vidhuta paapaaste yaati Brahmlokam sanatanam// Yadahnaakurute paapam karmana manasaa giraa, Aaseenah pashchimaam sandhyam praanaayaamaistu hantitat/ Yadraatyaa kurute paapam karmanamanasaa giraa, Purvaam sandhya - mupaaseenah praanaayaamaamairyapohati/ Aparetu arghya daanam Sandhyaadhyaanam Gayatri japah upasthaaamcha pradhaanamiti vatanti/ Dvighatitodayaadarvaak praharaardham tethopari, Sandhya kaalasya vigjneyo hyanyathaa langhanam smritam/ Tadraashtra kshobha jalaabhaavaa shaktyaadypatsu Anukalpaabhyanuajnaaparam//* (As one always performs Sandhyopaasana regularly and as a devotion, he would be eligible for achieving Brahma Loka. Whatever blemishes that one accrues during the day time by way of deed, thought, or conversation are destroyed by the ‘Praanaayama’ performed during the evening Sandhya Worship. Similarly whatever sins are committed during the nights are washed out by the Pratassandhyas. Arghya pradana, Sandhya Vandana, Gayatri Japa and worship on daily basis thrice are defined as prime qualifiers of the day. Yama further prescribes that two ghadis before sun rise and mid day time for the worship should be never crossed. Indeed, the ever auspicious practice of Veda Vidhana, is compulsory even overcoming difficulties such as those faced in the Society, lack of water supply and lack of physical ability) Atri Maharshi states that when there are no hindrances, and when person is in good health, ignoring the regulation on dvijas and not observing the duties would surely land the person in great troubles. Atri also cautioned that while performing ‘Sandhyopaasana’, the Sacred deed should not be executed with a forceful flow of water as Devas/Pitru Devas would not appreciate the same: *Dhaaraachyutena toyena Sandhyopaastirgarhitaa, Na prashamsanti Pitro na prashamsanticha Devataah/* Vyasa Muni also prescribed: *Upaveete baddha shikhah svaachaantodviranaakulah, Prangmukhassataam Viprah sandhyopaasanamaacbharet/ Karaabhyaam toya maadaaya Gayatrya cha abhimantritam, Adityaabhimukhastishthan trmurtvamathachokshipet/ Dvouhastou yugmatah kritvaa purayodekamanjalim, Goshringa maatra mudhrutya jala madhya jalam kshipet/ Jaleshvarghyam pradaatavyam jalaabhave shuchisthalam, Samprokshya harinaa samyak tatorghyaani pradaapayet/ Praatarmadhyaahnayostishthan saayamaaseena evacha/* (Sandhyopaasana be formally performed with yagnopaveeta in position, tuft duly tied up, and with steady mind and thought. One should be seated facing Surya Deva in the East and with ‘Achamana’ done thrice. Again, holding water in both the palmsful facing Surya, sprinkle it up and down thrice over, purify one’s body parts and

then initiate sandhyopasana'. Then, palmfuls of water be raised a little high to release the water first in the flow and subsequently give 'arghya praadana' to Surya in the standing position. Both in the morning, midday and the evening the same procedure be followed.) Shankha Muni states: *Grihetveka gunem proktam Nadyaadou dvigunam smritam, Gavaam goshthe dashagunam Agnyaagaare shataadhikam, Siddha khestrshu Tirtheshu Devataayaascha sannidhou, Sahasram shata koteenaam anantam Vishnu sannidhou/* ('Sandhyaavandanaadi karyaas' fetch twice over the fruits as performed in rivers than in one's house; ten times more significant executing in cow sheds; hundred times more in Yagnya shaalas, thousand times better at Siddha Khetras or Tirthas in the presence of Devaalayas but indeed one would secure Ananta Punya in the presence of Vishnu himself!) Brihaspati prescribes the procedure: *Badhvaasanam niyamyasoon smritvaacharyaadikam tathaa, Sannimeeatadrik mouni praanaayaamam samabhyaset/* (The Karta should be seated controlling breathing, memorising Arsha mantras with closed eyes in silence.) *Saptavyahriti samyuktaam Gayatreem shirasaa saha namaskrutya, Dasha vaaram japiravyam Gayarteemtu tato japed/* (Imagining the Sacred Face of Gayatri Devi with 'sapta vyahritis' and sincerely greeting her with head down, recite Gayatri Mantra ten times within the Self) Now Yama Dharma Raja describes as follows: *Gayatreem Vedaamshca tulayaatolayat prabhuh, Ekatah Chaturo Vedaan saamgaamscha sapadakramaan, Ekataschaiva Gayatreem tuly rupaatusaasmritaa/* (Paramatma weighed Deva Gayatri on one side and the Vedas on another; as on one side the Four Vedas with 'Padakramas' and 'Angaas' and Gayatri alone on the other side of the Balance, the latter should be of the same result). Manu states: *Purvam Sandhyaam japam tishthet saavitreem arka darshanaat, Paschimaam tu samaaseenah namyagaarakshavibhaavanaat/* (Before the Sunrise, worship is performed to Savitri while standing and at the Sunset in the west, the worship be as seated) *Grihastho brahmachaareecha shatamashtottaram japed, Vaanaprastho Yatischaiva japedashta sahasrakam/ Uttaam maanasam japyam Upaamshu madhyamam smritam, Adhamam vaachikam praahussarvemantreshu vaidvijaah/* (Samvarta suggested that Gayatri Mantra be rendered hundred times by Grihastis and Brahmacharis, while Vaanaprasthas and Yatis should do the japa thousand times. Sarva mantra japas be performed best by Manasika Vidhana, Upaamshu or without 'shabdocchaarana' or vocal pronunciation is of medium type and the least one is by vocal way). Ratnaavali states: *Parvabhistu japedeveem anyatraa niyamah smritah, Gayatrya vedamulatvaat Vedahparvasu geeyate/* (Gayatri Japa is stated as extremely important, whether on other days is done or not, since Gayatri is the root of Vedas and hence it is so essential.) Bharadvaja Maharshi described the details of various Devatas to be worshipped: *Upasthaaya namaskrutyaat chatussandhyaadi Devataah, Sandhyaa purastaat Savitri Gayatri cha Sarasvati, etah sandhyaadayah proktaah chaturo devataah kramaat/ Praachi cha Dakshinaachaiva Pratichee - chottarordhvakaa, Adharaacchantarikshamcha Bhumischaashtoditaa dishah/ Etaah pradakshinenaiva pranametsvamantratah, Yama Vishnu Virupaaksha savitrunaamupasthitam, Kuryaattalligakairmantraih dvijo yaamyaaai dingmukhah/* (One should worship the Sandhya Devatas viz. Sandhya, Savitri, Gayatri and Sarasvati. The dvija should greet and self-circumambulate Ashta Dikpalakas reciting appropriate mantras commencing from Dakshina, further followed by Yama Deva, Vishnu, Virupaksha and Savitru Devatas). Japa vidhana: *Pavitrairmaarjanam kurvan Rudraikaadashanim japan, muchyate sarva paapebhyo mahatah paataadrute/* (While performing 'maarjana' with darbhas, 'Rudraikaadashani Japa' be executed so that the person concerned would be freed from heaps of sins, assures Bodhaayana Rishi) *Ekadasha gunaanvaapi Rudraanaavartya dharmavit, Mahaa paapairapi sprushto muchate naatra samshayah/* (Atri Maharshi emphasises that if a person of virtue were to recite Ekaadasha Rudra eleven times should for sure attain Mukti.) Vishnu Maharshi states : *Snaatah pavitraani yaha shakti japedvishatah, Saavitreem*

Purusha Suktam chanaitaabhyaam sadrushamasti/ (There are no equivalent mantras worthy of reciting Purusha Sukta after ‘shuchi snaana’ some two hundred times addressed to Savitri) Similar is on the lines of what Samvarta states: *Shanmaasam pancha maasam vaa niyato niyataashanah, Japtvaatu pourusham Suktam muchyate sarva paatakaih/* (Those who recite Purusha Sukta some five or six months regularly while observing a regulated food intake regime would secure redemption surely) *Harernaama padam japyam dhyeyam geeyam nirantaram, Keertanaayamcha satatam nirvrittim bahudhecchataa/*(Jaabaali assures that Hari naama dhyana-japa-stuti-gaanaadis would take fast steps ahead of salvation) *Hitvaa sakala paapaani labhdhvaasukriti sanchayam, Suputo jaayate dheeman Murajinnaama keertanaat/ Krishna Krishneti Raameti sajanam Haritatparah, Raajasuya sahasraanaam phalamaapnoti Maanavah/ Nitya karmaaviruddheshu kaaleshu japa ishyate/ Shri shabdapurvam jayashabda madhyam jayadvayaa-duttaratah, adaivatrissaptakrutvo Raghunadha naamajaptam, vihanyaadvijakoti hatyaam/* (Vasishtha Muni emphasises that Murahari Naama Samkeertana is the ideal solution to destroy the heaps of sins to get converted to funds of Punya and lead to an exemplary life ahead. Non-stop ‘japa’ of ‘Krishna Krishna Rama Hari’ bestows the fruits of thousand Rajasuya Yagnas, without disturbing the daily schedule of Dharma. Raghunadha nama smarana with Shri shabda initially followed by ‘Jayarama Jayajayan Rama’ all the times would demolish ‘Koti Brahmahatyas’) *Koti shomanu jaanaamvai bheetidam samupasthitam, Rama Rameti sankeertya sannaashayati maanavah/* (Bhrigu Maharshi assures that fears and mental instabilities in crores get cleared with intense ‘Rama Sankeerana’ continuously). Narada Brahmarsi states that the intensity of Kali Yuga is gradually diminished with Nitya Keertana: *Shiva Shankara Rudresha Neelakantha Trilochana, Iteerayantiye nityam na Kalirbhaadhyate chataan/ Mahadeva Virupaksha Gangaadhara Mridaavyaya, Iteeranti ye nityam te kritaadhona shamshayah/* (Nitya keertana of ‘Shiva Shankara Rudresha Neelakantha Trilochana’ or ‘Mahadeva Virupaaksha Gangaadhara Mrida - avyaya’ assuages the severity of Kali Yuga, reduces its impact and bestows fulfillment of one’s life!) **Significance of Darbhas:** *Kusha moole sthito Brahma kushamadhyetu Keshavah, Kushaagre Shankaram vidyaat Sarve Devassamantatah/* (At the bottom of darbha, Brahma is situated while Keshava is in the middle and Shankara at the top, where as all the devatas reside throughout) *Kusha hastena yagnaptam daanam chaiva kushaissaaha, Kushahastastyuyo bhungte tasya sankhya navidyate/*(Harita Muni states that all the tasks holding darbhas including yagnas, charities and even bhojana helps longevity) Kaushika Muni opines: *Kushaasanam paramam putam Yateenaantu visheshatah, Kushaasanopavishtasya siddhate yogamuttamah/*(Darbhasana especially to Yatis is stated to lead to results of Sacredness and Virtue) *Kushaalaabhe dvijasshreshthah kaashaih kurvati yatnatah, Tarpanaadeeni karmaani kaashaah kushasamaah smritaah/*(Shankha Muni states that if kusha is unavailable, kaasha or grass near water flows might be substituted while performing Tarpanas and such other tasks) Vasishtha defines darbhas as follows: *Vishvaamitraah Kushaa kaashaah durvaaveeha evacha, Valvajaaschayavaaschaiva sapta darbhaah prakeertitaah/ Kaasham tu Roudram vigjneyam kousham Braahmam tathaa smritam, Arhantu dourvamaakhyaatam Vaishvaamitram tu Vaishnavam/ Kusham PavitramTaamram vaa Rajatam Hemachaivavaa, Bibhrayaaddakshine paanou pavitramchottarottaram, Kushakaashaadya bhavetu anye darbhaa adhocchitam/* (There are seven types of Darbhas viz. Vishvamitraas, Kushas or Darbhas, Kaashas, Durva, Vreeha, Valvaja and Yava grass. Kaasha is Rudra sambandhi, Kausha is of Brahma’s significance, Daurva is signified by Rishis and Vishvamitras are Vishnu related. A kusha or darbha is normally twisted and worn like a ring on the right ring finger, along with copper or silver or gold ring, and each of these combinations is superior as per the value of metal; any of these darbhas is as good as another; but when worn with copper it is not used)Harita Muni states: *Maaghenabhasyamaa yaatu tasyaa darbhocchayo*

matah, Ayaatayaamaaste darbhaah niyojyaa - ssuh punah punah/ Maasimaasyuddhrutaa darbhaah - maasi maasyeva choditaah, Samitpushpa kushaa- deeni shrotriyah svayamaaharet/ (The ideal time for securing darbhas would be Amavasyas of Maagha and Shraavana; till they are reused till completely worn out; in fact these darbhas would grow month after month. A Shrotriya or a puritan is normally expected to collect samidhas or fire wood, flowers and darbhas all by himself).

HOMA PRAKARANA

Tena dravyaanya sheshaani prokshyaachamya punargruhe, Tatah karmaani kurveeta satkriyaascha dvijottama/(Pulastya Muni prescribes that a noble dwija when fetches material from outside must first sprinkle water and get ready to take up acts of virtue; he should first perform ‘achamana’ and then proceed to execute the deeds) *Upaasyavidhivatsandhyaam upaasthaaya Divaakaram, Saayam Praatar - upaaseeta Vivaahaagnim dvijottama/*(Having formally completed ‘sandhyopaashana’, the Dvija should then proceed with the rekindling of ‘Vivaahaagni’ both in the mornings and evenings, states Harita Muni.) ApastamaMuni prescribes: *Saayam Praatarata urtvam hastenaiva aahutee tandulairyavairvaaju huyaat, Shtaalipaakavaddevatam Souri purnaahutih praatarityeke ubhayatah parishechanam yathaapurastaat// Yatrakvachanaagnimupasamaadhaasyan, Tatra praacheerudeescha tisro rekhaa likhitvaadbhiravo - kshya Agnimupasamindhyaadu titschaitamudakamuttarena purvena vaanyadupadadhyaat/* (Both in the mornings and evenings, the ‘aahutis’ of offerings to Fire God need to be performed with one’s hands either with rice or yavaas and as one does for ‘Sthaalipaaka’, the ‘aahuti’ or offering be made in favour of Surya Deva and then follow up with ‘parishechana’ or water sprinkling. After drawing three lines each in the eastern and northern sides from the place of where Agni is to be installed at the centre of the Fire Place, Agni be deposited and while standing sprinkle water towards East/North) *smaartamoupaasane kuryaat shrotam vaitaanikegrugi, Loukeke vidhuraanam tu vidhiresha puratanah/ Bahavoyatra hotaarah Shantike poushtike tathaa, Loukaagnou tathaa kuryaat grihaagnouna kadaachana/ Shrotam karma nache - cchaktah kartum smaartam samaacharet, Atraapya shaktascha karane sadaachaaram labhed buddhah/* (Vishnu Maharshi explains that smaarta karma be executed in ‘Auopaasanaagni’ and ‘shrotakarma’ in ‘yajna shalaas’. A widower normally performs in the Lokikaagni. Those who are desirous of executing homa prakriya when there is a gathering witnessing the homa, then they should do so in Shantika, Poushtika and Lokaagnis but not in the ‘Gruhyaagni’. In case Sroutha Karma is not possible to perform, then Smarta Karma be executed; if even that is not possible, then ‘Sadaachara’ be done.) *Home mukyho yajamaanah patni putrascha Kanyakaa, Ritvik shishyo Guru bhraataa bhaagineyaassutaapatih/Etareva hutam yatthu tadhutam svayamevatu, Paryukshanamvinaa patni juhuyaat kanyakaapiva/* (In any homa, one yajamani or master of ceremony is essential; now, his wife, son, daughter, Ritvik or Chief Priest, sishya, elder brother, sister’s husband, son in law might be deputed. Wife and daughter too might perform with a proxy in their absence.) Garga Muni states: *Krita daaronam vaitishthetbkshanamavyagnaa vinaa, Tishtheta ched vijovraatyah tathaa chapatetito bhavet/*(A person who is much married with his wife alive should never leave Agni Karya, as he might be even known as a Brahmana without Samskaras like Upanayana) *Yohitvaa vivaahaagnim grihashta iti manyate, Annantasyana bhoktavyam vridhaa paakohisasmritah/* (Vyasa declares that in case a person feels that he is a Grihasthi or a sincere house holder then he should not leave the habit of Vivaahaagni and his eating food is a mere waste.) Katyayana Maharshi prescribes atonement of non executing Aoupaasanaagni for as many years as he should have performed after his wedding, then a compensation of sixty measures of a ‘Prastha’ of rice and three prasthas of ghee be given away as charity for as so many years: *Shashthi prasthamitam dhaanyam*

triprsthavitam ghritam, Aoupaasaasanaagnou nashthetu vatsarasya vidheeyate/ Alternatively, nonperformance of Griha Agni by a householder as prescribed attracts a penalty of Dravya Daana to a good Brahmana in the measure of the non performance: *Yaavakaala mamahomeesyaat taavaddravyam tvasheshatah, taddhaanam chaiva viprebhyah yathaa homastadhaivatat/* Further, Brihaspati suggests that if a Brahmana is unable to perform Shraddha due to Sutaka or Ashuchi of any kind, no proxy is allowed to perform Agni Karya on his behalf.

Homa Kaala and Homa Dravya: *Adhi ruksha Surye Avissuryevaa, Anastamiti Aaditye saayamagnih praadushkarana manudite praatah/ Praatarhome sangavaantah kaalasadrudita hominah, Saayamastamite homa kaalastu nava naadikah/* (Shroutaagni needs to be kindled at the timings of Sun Rise and Sun Set; Agni homa kaala is at the Sun set and before Sun rise; at the Sun Rise the homa prakriya be completed before Sangava and in the evening, nine ghadis after Sunset.) Eligible samidhas for the homa are : *Palaasha khadira ashvattham shamyudumbarajaa samia, Apaamaargaarka durvaascha kusha chettyapare vidhuh/* (The homa samidhas are Palaasha, Khadira, Ashvattha, Shami, Umbataja, Apaamarga, Arka Durvaasa, and Kusha). Tulasi wood is stated to be excellent bestowing immense returns. Katyayana Maharshi further describes: *Havistu trividham jneyam kritam chaiva kritaakritam, Akritam cha ktramaadeshaam lakshanam samyaguchyate/ Kritamodanasa -katvaadi tandulaadi kritaakritam, Vreehyaadi chaakeritam proktam iti havyam tridhaa budhaih/* (The Havis or the material for the homa karya is mainly classified as Krita, Kritaakrita, Akrita; Cooked and beaten Rice is of the Krita variety; raw rice and such other material is of the kritaakrita while akrita is paddy.) Apastamba states: *Payasaapashukaamasya, jaahuyaat dadhrendriya kaamasya, yavaagyaa graama kaamasya, odanena annaadyah kaamasya, tandulai rojas kaamasya balakaamasyeke/ Maamsena yashakaamasya, somena brahma varchasa kaamasya, Aajyena tejaskaamasya, payasonityasnaaina satikaamo phalavachanam/* (Those who desire to attain cattle wealth would perform the homa with milk, for good physique with curd, lot of graama sampada with Yava dhanya, plenty of food with cooked rice, for achieving youth with raw rice, for great name and fame homa with meat, for Brahma teja with ghee and one desirous of wife should perform with milk always!) Vyasa Maharshi opines: *Kapilaayaastu payasaayegnihotraanyupaasate, Aditya mandalam bhitvaayaanti Brahma sanaatanam/ Yena saayam juhuyaat tena praatah/* (A person who worships Agni Deva with the milk of Kapila Cow would break into Surya mandala and gets absorbed in Sanatana Brahma himself! As he performs the homa in the evenings be also done in the morning too.) ‘Smrityartha saara’ gives a detailed account of the homa vidhana: *Shaalishyaamaaka neevaara vreehi godhuma yaavakaah, Teshaam tandulaa homyaah yavanaalaah priyam gavah/ Neevaaraah shaalayaishaiva godhumaavreehayoh yavaah, Svaruopenaiva homyaassyussvarupainaava vai tilaah/ Dravam sruvena hotavyam paaninaa kathinam havih/ Payodadhi yavaaguccha sarshishodana tandulaah, Somo maamsam tailamaapodashaitanyagni hotrake/ Syaadagni -hotra vadgaarhye samskaaro mantra varjitah, Yadvatr prokshanam teshaam maamsa moupaasanena cha/ Yadyagnihotra homaardham payonasyaat kadaachana, Tadaavreehi yavou graajhyaavoshadhya - ntaramevavaa, na graahyam sarvadhya maashavara kodaarkodravam/nPrasthadhaanyam chatuh – shashtheraahutateh parikeetitam, Tilaajnaantu tadardham syaattadardham syaad ghrutasyatu/* (Shaali or rice, shyaamaaka, neevaara, vreehi or red dhanya, wheat, yavaadi be offerd in the Homa. Neevara, rice, wheat, vreehi, yava, and tilas be offered as they are without being husked or cooked. Drava padardhas like ghee be offered with ‘sruva’ or ladle. The main ‘homa dravyas’ are ten viz. milk, curd, yava, mustard, cooked rice, raw rice, soma rasa, oils and water. There is an ‘Agni samskaara’ without mantras viz.

offering meat after three times of prokshana or sprinkling of water. In case milk is not available, vreehi-yava and such other seeds could be used, but maasha, vara, kodaara be avoided. There must in all be sixteen 'ahutis' or offerings to Agni with ghee, tila of thirty two offerings, and sixty four ahutis of dhaanya, measured as a large quantity of a 'prastha'). Bodhaayana Maharshi provides further details: *Vreehaanaam vaayavaanaam vaa shatamaahutiripyate, Odanodviguno graahyo mayuraadaakritisthatha, Kukkutaandam pramaanastu pinda ityabhidheeyate, Angushta parva maatram syadava daanam tatopicha, Jyaayah svishtakridaadyantu chaturangula sammitam// Angulyagrairnahotavyam sa kritvaanguli bhedanam, Angulyuttara paashvena hotavyamiti smritih/ Uttaanenatu hastenaanguli paanistu vaagyaho - juhuyaadvijah/ Vastrenavaatha parnenaavaa paanirupavadbhidaarubhih, Vyajanenaagni madhanam na kuryaaditih smritih/ Dhamani mantare kritvaatrinam vaa kaashtamevavaa, Mukhaadagnim samintheeta mukhaadagnirajaayata/ Bahu shushkendhano chaagnou susamiddhe hutaanane, Vidhume lenihane cha hotavyam karmasiddhaye/(Aahutis to Agni are of vreehi, yava, and odana or cooked rice in double the quantities and some two hundred pinda pramanas or of the thumb size egg like quantities. The Ahuti karya should not be done by the finger tops but with all the fingers and thumb together towards the northern side. The ahutis be done in silence with raised right hand making a fistful quantity presdsed by all the fingers. It is cautioned that Agni in the fire pit should not be quickened to flame up by fanning with cloths, dried leaves, wooden pieces or hand fans. Using small pieces of wood or dried grass, the fire be installed and using the mouth air through a metal tube enabled to flame up. The tongue be stretched out and enable dried leaves and small figs to gradually raise the fire.) Apastamba suggests that the homa karya be executed according to one's own 'Vamsaachaara' and carry with him the 'nithya mandhana' material or fetch from the house of a co-shrotriaya. He also states: *Chaturatramahutognih loukikah sampadyate/* (In case Shrotriyas do not perform homa in their homes for four nights, then it becomes Lokaagni!) Shounaka Muni states: *Agnaavanughate yatra homa kaaladvayam vrajet, Ubhayorvi pravaasecha lokaagnirvidhheyate/* (As per the timing of the morning and evening homa prakriya, a Shrotriya should plan the daily programme; in the event of Anugataagni and Dhaaraagni are missed then lokaagni be initiated and enflamed). Bodhayana Muni explains the seriatum of failures of Agni Karyas and prayaschittas: *Arvaaktri raatraadayasegnaye syaattatah param Tantumateechankaaryaa, Aaa Sapta raatraan manase cha hutvaa/ Advaadashaahaat punaraadadhee ta/ Dvadasha dina paryantam Agnyanugati praayaschitta me vaktam Naagni sandhaanam atra yadhaa svagrihyaam vyavasthaa/(For three nights of discontinuing the regular daily Agni Karyas for what ever reason, there exists iron Agni; to revive the Grihagni again the process called 'tantumati' be followed; for a week's absence of Agni, the person concerned should execute homa in one's own mind and revive the Agni on the twelfth day; then thereafter a Prayaschitta programe be taken up as per the domestic custom. Bodhayana also describes three ways of Samaropana or revival: *Ekaagneh trividha samaaropanam Atmasyaarayorvaa samitsuvaava/* The three ways are as follows viz. repentance in one's own mind and heart, performing homa prakriya again in forests and with Samidhas. Maharshi Veda Vyasa cautions: *Snaasyato Varunasshobhaam juhvatognih shriyam haret, Bhojane mrityumaapnoti tasmaanmounam trishu smritam/* Conversation while bathing is disliked Varuna Deva and in the course of Homa prakriya the God of Agni detests it just as while taking food Mrityu Deva is annoyed; hence during these three acts of snaana-homa-bhojana, silence needs to be observed strictly.) Angira Maharshi exclaims: *Yo dadyaa kanchanam Merum Prithveemvaa sa Saararaam, Tatsaayam pratathomasya tulyam bhavati vaanava!(*Could unparalleled charities of golden Meru parvata and entire Earth along with the Oceans equate the returns of Homa Karyas in the morning and evening daily!) Manu Shastra describes similarly: *Agnou praastaahutih***

samyak Adityamupatishthate, Adityaajjaayate vbrishtih Vrishterannam tatah prajaa, Daivekarmani yukto hi bibhartedam charaachar am,/(The ‘ahutis’ offered to Agni as would reach Surya Deva, the latter is pleased and help bestow optimal rains on earth which in turn provides plentiful food and prosperity to one and all; thus indeed the Daiva Karmas set the cycle of blessings to humanity!)

Brahma Yagna / Swaadhyaya: *Brahma yagnena yakshyamaanah praachyaamdishi graamaada cchadiddarsha, Udabhyaam praagudeechaam vodita Aditye/ (A person desirous of performing Brahma Yagna, should proceed far from his house towards east, or north or north east and select a clean place for the purpose. Kaala Darsha instructs as follows: Pratarmadhyandine vaapi Brahma Yagno vidheeyate prataryadi tadaa praaraahutyah parato bhavet, Madhyaahne chettarpanaat praagvaishva devaat parutravaa/ (Brahma Yagna could be executed in the morning or afternoon. If planned for the morning then this should be followed by the morning ahutis and if planned in the afternoon then it should precede Tarpanas or follow Vaishvadeva) Paithinasi states: Swa shastraadhyayanam yattat Brahma yagnam prachakshate, Brahma yagna paro Vipra Brahma loka maheeyate/(Swashastra-adhyayana is considered as Brahma Yagna; a Vipra who practises Brahma Yagna achieves Brahma loka) Harita Maharshi states: Darbhaaseenah darbhapaanirbrahma yagna vidhatatah, Braahmano Brahma yagnantu kuryaacchadraa samanvitah/(Brahmanas should perform Brahma yagna by seated on darbhasna and holding darbhas and formally practise Brahma Yagna.) Brahma yagne japetsuktam Pourusham chintayan Harim, Sa sarvaan japate Vedaan sangopaangaan vidhanatah/ (Brahma yagna be executed by reciting Purusha Sukta and Vedopanagas) Yagnyavalkya instructs as follows: Hutvaagneen Surya daivatyaan japednmantraan samahitah, Vedardhaanadhigaccheccha Shastraani vividhaanicha/ Tulasyamrita sambhute sadaatvam Keshava priye, Kehavaardham lunaami tvaam varadaa bhava shobhane/ Moshaika heto dharani prabhute Vishnoh samastasya guroh preeyete, Araadhanaardham Purushottamasyalunaami patram tulasi kshamasva/ Praseeda mama Deveshi praseeda Harivallabhe, Ksheeroda madhanodbhute Tulasi tvam praseeame/Aaravaare Shukrecha Manvaadishu yugaadishucha, Naahaherettulasipartam madhyaahnaat paratohani /Samkraanyaam pakshayorante Dvaadashyaam nishisanyayoh, Tulasim ye vichinvanti krudanti te Hareh shirah/ (While rendering ‘ahutis’ to Agni, one should recite Surya deva related mantras and absorb their essence, besides improving the knowledge of Veda-Shastras. Then plucking the leaves of Sacred Tulasi, address her with salutations as Amrita Sambhuta, Sada Keshava Priya, Shobhana, I am plucking these leaves with the express desire of worshipping Vishnu! Even as you are born to Bhu Devi, you are the beloved of Vishnu as generated at the time of Samudra Mathana. Do consider my salutations. Tulasi leaves should not be plucked on Tuesdays and Fridays as also in the afternoons, and Tulasi Vrata should not be performed in the ‘Manvaadis’ and ‘Yugadis’. The leaves of Tulasi should not , repeat not, be plucked on Sankrantis, Amavasyas, Dvadashi nights, and Sandhya times as that would tantamount to plucking Hari’s head!) Hareeta Maharshi insructed as follows: Sanchityapopyavargasya bharanaardham vichakshanah, Ishwaram chaiva kaaryaaardham abhigacchedvijottamah/ Maata pitaa Gururbharyaa prajaa daasasamaashritah, Abyaagatothichaaginih proshya varga udaahritah/ Jnaatir bandhu janaksheenah tathaanaathah samaashritah, Anyopi dhanahenatu poshya varga udaahritah, Bharanamposhya vargasya prashastam swarga saadhanam/ Sajeevati ya evaikobandhubhischopa bhujyate, Jeevantopimritaastyane Purushaah svodaram bharaah/ (A dvija has to deeply cogitate as to how to balance his income-expenditure account intelligently on account of the expenses for his parents, Guru, wife, children, servants, dependents, guests and ‘Agni poshya varga. The last category includes ‘saha vamsheeyas’, relatives, patients, Anaadhas or the Helpless ones, the extremely poverty stricken*

persons and these are all the Poshya Varga! It is he who eats along with his kinsmen and women all together and those who look after themselves only are as good as dead!) Vyasa Muni instructs that is he who is a genuine Dvija who performs Sandhya vandana early morning when Stars still appear on the sky, then performs Snaana Karmas, Madhyaanika Sandhya, and Sayam Sandhya! After ‘aachamana’, he should perform ‘Svaadhyaaya’, Deva-Pitru-Rishi tarpana stating ‘pranava’ and ‘tarpayaami’ to all.

Tarpana: Tarpanas are to be performed as prescribed with Akshatas and water to Deva-Brahma-Rishis and with ‘tilas’ and water to Pitru devatas. Deva tarpanas with Savya Yagnopaveeta and Pitru tarpanas on ‘praacheenaaveeti’. Harita Maharshi again instructs: *Vasitvaivasanam shushkam sthale visteerna arhishi, Vidhjanastarpanam, kuryaat na paatreshukadaachana/ Yadyashakto grihe kuryat tarpanam salilam tathaa, Tilaan prakshipya praatasthe jale vyaamishritaistilaih/ Paatraantarekshipedatra mrinayam tu vivarnayet, Nishiddhepi tathaa kuryaat tandulaissah tarpanam/ Devataah Pitaraschiva kaamshanti salilaamjalim, Adattetu niraashaaste pratiyanti yathaagatam/* (A person of some knowledge knows that he offers Tarpanas by being seated on darbhas in an open space wearing dry clothes but does not offer inside vessels. However, if unable to do so, one might perform tarpanas in one’s residence by mixing water with black tilas in one vessel and perform tarpana in another vessel, but not in a mrittika vessel or earthenware. Though prohibited, the last resort could be to perform tarpana with raw rice. Both Devatas and Pitruganas look forward to secure tarpanas, but would get disappointed otherwise and return.

Deva Puja: *Svashaabhokta kriyam kriva hutva chaivaagnihotram, Kuryaadaaraanam Vishnoddeva devasya chakrinah/* (Whatever is prescribed in one’s own ‘Veda Shakha’, he is duty bound to perform all the duties including Agni Karyas and worship Vishnu the Devadeva Chakri) *Kurveeta Devataa pujaam japayagnayad anantaram/* (Hareeta Muni stipulates that Deva Puja is a must after japa homa duties.) Vignyaneshvara details the procedure of Deva Puja: *Madhyaane tarpanaanantaram gandha kusumaakshatai Harihara, Hiranya garbha prabhritinaam anyatamayamyathaavaasanam, Rigyajurssaama mantraih svanaama bhirvaa tatprakaaraihi, Chaturdhanyair namaskaara yuktairaadhayet/Aarogyam Bhasaraadicchet shriyamicchet moksha micchejjanardanaat/* (After performing mid-day tarpanas, a Brahmana should invoke Brahma-Vishnu-Maheshwaraadi Devas with gandha-pushpa-akshatas reciting Rik-Yajur-Saama Veda mantras or so ending with chaturthi vibhakti naamaas like Haraye namah om, Vishnave namah om or Brahmane namah om etc. He should pray Surva deva for health, Agni of prosperity, Ishwara for knowledge and Janardana for Salvation) Manu assures: *Adityamnadhavaa Vishnum Isham Brahmaanamevacha, Archayed Vaidikairmantraih grihastah prayato bhavet/* (Grihasta could worship Surya, Vishnu, Ishwara or Brahma with suitable mantras to accomplish purity of mind and thought) *Adityamambikaam Vishnum Gananaadham Maheshwaram, Pancha yagnya paro nityam Grihastah Panchapujayet/* (A grihasta who is engaged in Deva- Pitru-Manushya- Bhuta- Brahma Yagnyas should worship five Swarupas of Paramatma the Almighty viz. Surya-Devi-Vishnu-Ganesha- and Shiva)

Vishnu Puja: Narada Brahmarshi details the worship of Vishnu: *Agnou kriyaavataam Devah Dividevo Manishinaam, Pratimaa svalpa buddheenam yoginaam hridaye Harih/ Saalagraama shilaa yatra yatra Dvaaravati shilaa, Ubhayossangamo yatra tatra muktir nashamshayah/ Saalagraama shilaayatra pujyate bhagavanmayaah, Taddeshyojanaa darvaakmrityo nirvaana mashnute/ Vedeshu Pourusham suktam architam guhyamuttamam, Anushtubhasya suktasya trishtubantantasya devataa/ Purushoyo Jagadbeejam Rishirnaaraayana smritah, Chandonushtup cha bhavati Tisrunaam trishthu bantatah/ Devaa Ashtaadasha proktaah pujaam vakshye yathaakramam, Aavaahanaasanam paadyam arghyamaachamaneeyam/Gandhampushpam dhupam cha tathaa deepam prakalpayet, Naivedyam chaiva*

taambula pradakshina namaskruti, Usvaasanam chakramnashah kuryaat pujaaparaayanah/ (Those persons of virtue worship Vishnu by executing Agni Homa to reach him beyond the Skies, the ordinary devotees pray to him in the form of Pratimas or idols, but Yogis retain Him in their minds and hearts. Indeed wherever Saalagraama Stones and Dwaravati Mandira converge to a person of faith, he attains Salvation undoubtedly; it is strongly believed that as sincere worship to Vishnu in the form of Saalagrama Stone is performed, which ever Souls departing from their lives around many yojanas would achieve Vaikuntha! Recital of Purusha Sukta while performing Puja to Vishnu is undoubtedly far reaching as that Sukta is the hidden essence of Vedas. This Purusha Sukta is bound by three significant bonds of Vishnu as Purusha, Universe as Narayana and Anushtup as the Chhandas or prosody in meters! Vishnu Puja is famed as of eighteen steps comprising in Avahana or Invocation, Aasana or Seat, Padya or wash of feet, Arghya or water on arrival, Achamaneeya or welcome drink, Gandha or perfume, Pushpa or flowers, deepa or lamp to brighten the worship Area, Naivedya or Food by way of Bhakshya, Bhojya, Lehya, Choshya, Paaneeyas, proverbially called Pancha Bhakshya Naivedyaas; Tambula, Pradakshina, Namaskaara, Udvasana or Send off by Geeta-Nritya-Vaahanaadis. All these Eighteen Upacharas or Services are destined to please the Lord!) *Ashtaaksharena Devesham Naraayana manaamayam, Gandha Pushpaadibhirmityam archayedachyutam narah/ Gandhapushpaadi sakalam anenaiva niveayet, Anainevaarchito Vishnuh preeto bhavati takshanaat/ Kimtasya bahubhirmantraih kintasya bhubhir-mukhaih, Namonaaraayanetimantrah Sarvaardha saadhakah/* (Bhagavan Narayana is known by innumerable names and titles like Anaamaya, Achyuta, Devesha and so on. He is stated to be pleased with the mantra of ‘Om Namonaaraayanaaya’ and as He is worshipped with Gandha-Pushpa- Naivedyas, he then instantly becomes mighty happy. Why indeed so many Mantras and Services are required! He is happy when a single salutation uttering ‘Namonaaraayana’ with heart and Soul which indeed is an all purpose way of winning him over!) Pulastya Muni describes: *Dadyaadeenaam vikaaraanaam Ksheeram tassambhavo yathaa, Tathaivaasheshakaamaanaam ksheera snaapanato hareh/ Kumkumaagaru shri kantha kardamam, acuyhytaa kritim, Aalipyaa Bhaktvaa devesham kalpa koti vaseddivi/* (Even as milk could lead to several types of formulations like curd, butter milk, butter and so on, the base material of milk if used for an ‘Abhisheka’ or ‘Mantra yukta Snaana’ of Vishnu, then that ‘Ksheeraabhisheka’ is sure to fulfill several desires of the devotees. Given staunch faith and devotion, application of Kumkuma-Agar- Chandana on the Lord’s body would certainly reserve comfortable stay in His place and His presence for crores of Kalpas!) *Sveta rakta sarojaani neelarakto tathotpale, Sitopalancha krishnasya dayitaani sadaa hareh/ Neeparjuna kadambaischa vakulaischa sugandhibhih, Kalhaarairvishnu mabhyarchya Vishnu loke maheeyate/* (Aachaara Saara describes: Thousand and eight wives of Lord Krishna were present in various combinations of coloured lotus-like ones, some red, some black, some white and so on. Now such wide variety of lady-like lotuses mixed with further fragrances of a variety of other flowers too like Kadamba, Kalhara, Vakula and so on are all worthy of Vishnu Puja; indeed sincere worship to Maha Vishnu with such flowers and fragrances should most certainly lead the path to Vishnu Loka!) Maharshi Moudgalya assures that Sacred Tree Leaves are not far behind in the service Lord Vishnu: *Sakrudabhyarchya Govindam bilva patrena maanavah, Mukti gaami niraantankah Krishnasya anucharo bhavet/ Sugandha tulasi patraih pratimaayaassamantatah, Nishchidramaa -charedyastu sonantaphala -maapnuyaat/* (Those sincere bhaktas who worship Govinda with ‘bilva patras’ even occasionally would enjoy followership of the Lord Krishna without any hindrances. A true devotee of Madhava earnestly covers up the Lord’s ‘Vigraha’ full body with Tulasi Leaves while reciting his varied names and titles would achieve eternal fruits as his returns) *Devaagaare dvijaanaam cha deepam datvaa*

chatuspadhe, Medhaavee Jnaaa sampannah chakshushmaan jaayate narah/ Havishyaalodanam divyam aajyayuktam sasharkaram, Naivedyam devadevasya yaavalam paayasam tatha/Samskrutam cha annamaajyayuktam dadhi kheera madhuuni cha, Phala moola vyanjanaani modakam cha nivedayet/ Havirdhaanam trikaalamtu utaamottamamuchyate, Dvayoscha madhyamam proktam ekakaaledhamam havih/ (Samvarta states: Those who give away in charity by way of Deepa daana in temples, to Dvijas, at four road points would be blessed to become great ‘medhavis’ or highly learned ones with knowledge, mercurial brain and instant grasp. The naivedya or heart felt offering to Deva Deva, especially of ghee cooked sweet rice or of yavas with milk as ‘havis’, is mention worthy. So is the sacred offering of rice cooked in ghee, besides curd, milk, honey, fruits, and modakas. To perform ‘Havis daana’ three times a day is indeed most significant, twice a day of significant too, but a Dvija is stated to give away the havis in charity is the least that could be done!)

Shiva Puja: Kurma Purana lays stress on recital of appropriate Mantras while performing Rudraabhishekas and worship: *Aaraadhayen Mahadevam bhavaputo Maheshwaram, Mantrena Rudra Gayatryaa pranavenanaadhavaa punah / Ishaane naathavaa Rudraih Triambakena samaagatah, Punyaih patrairadhaa Adbhirvaa chandanaadyair maheshwaram/ Tathonnamashivaayeti mantrenaanena vaayajet/* (Mahadeva Maheshwara is pleased with Rudra Gayatri or Pranava Mantras besides ‘Tatpurushaaya vidmame Maha devaaya dhemahe; Aghorebhyo thagorbhyo ghoraghora tarebhyaha; Sadyojaatam prapadyaami Sadyo jaataayavai namah; Vaama devaaya namo Jyeshthaaya namah shreshthaaya namo Rudraaya namah; Ishaanassarva vidyaanaam Ishwarah sarva bhutaanaam and so on or Triambakam yajaamahe sugandham pushti vardhanam, urvaarukamiva bandhanaat mrityor muksheeya maamritaata’ as also gandhaanulepana and abhishka with Sacred waters; alternatively perform yagna with ‘Namasshivaaya’ mantra!) *Yah prayacchedgavaam laksham dodhgreenaam veda parage, Ekaahmar chayellingam tasya punyam tatodhikam/* (The maha punya that one could attain in giving away in charity to a Veda Pandita of a lakh of milch cows excels that of worshipping a Shiva Linga for a day as prescribed, states Nandishwara) *Linga darshanam punyam darshanaat sparshanam param, Sparshanaad archaam shreshtham archanaaddhyaana vandane, Maase maasetumamshneeyaad yaavajjeevam dwijottamam, yastvarchayet sakrillingam satyame tanna samshayah/* (Linga darshanam by itself enables one to reap punya; linga sparsha or touch of a Shiva Linga is better than darshana; Lingaarchana would be far more effective while dhyana vandana besides lingarchana indeed yields highest possible returns as equivalent to treating a dwijottama to life long facility of bhojana with veneration as described in Chandrika Grandha) *Ayutam yo gavaam dadyaat dodhghreenaam Vedaparage Vastra hemaadi yuktaanaam ksheera snaanasya tatphalam/ Dadhnaayah snaapayellongam krishnaashtamyaam uposhitah Kula saptakamuddhrutya Shiva loke maheeyate/ Kalpakoti sahasrena yatpaapam samupaarjitam, Ghrita snaanena tatsarvam dahatyagnirivendhanam/ Payodadhi ghritakshoudra sharkaraadyanukramaat Ishaadi mantraih snaapya Shivam muktimavaapnuyaat/ Gandha chandana toyena yo Lingam snaapayet sakrit, Gandharva lokamavaapnoti sagandharyascha pujiyate/ Vaasaamsi suvichitraani saaravanti mriduni cha, Dhrupitaani Shevaadadyaat vikleshaani navaanicha/ Punyairaranya sambhutaaih patrairvaa giri sambhavaih, Atmaaraamodbhavairvaapi punyaisapujyayecchivam/ Yaavantastandula -asmin naivedyo parisamkhyayaa, Taavadyuga sahasraanui swarga loke maheeyate/ Gudakhanda ghritaanaam cha bhakshanyaam nivedane, Ghritena paachitaanaam cha daanaacchhaata gunam phalam/* (Smriti Ratna describes that charity of ten thousand milch cows, vastras, gold and other material gets far outweighed by a single ‘Ksheeraabhisheka’ of Shiva Linga. Observing complete fasting on Krishna -

ashtami and performing Rudrabhisheka with curds yields the fruits of Kailasha of seven generations. 'Shiva Lingaabisheka' would dissolve the heavily stored sins of 'kalpakoti' births of one's existence as though fire gradually turn the heaps of wood. One is sure to attain 'mukti' by performing 'Shivaabhi - sheka' with Ishaanaadi Mantras with milk, curd, ghee, honey, sugar and such appropriate materials. Abhishekas with chandana and such other fragrant materials would bless the performer with Gandharva Loka prapti. After the 'Abhisheka' dressing up the Shiva Linga with attractive clothing of coloured, soft and flawless variety. Also varieties of multi coloured flowers and tree leaves of freshness and aroma from wild forests and hill tops, apart from one's own gardens, be utilised to decorate the Shiva Linga profusely. Naivedya of cooked foodgrains of as many numbers as possible would bestow 'Swarga Loka prapti' for the same number of centuries of years. Also the naivedya of 'Bhakshyas' prepared with devotion and faith would yield hundred fold more.) A word of caution by Parashara Maharshi is sounded however as follows: *Martya buddhirgurou, yasya Shiva Linga shilaamatih, Shabda buddinstu mantreshu sa khalu Brahma haa bhavet/* (Those persons who consider one's Guru as but a human being, Shiva Linga as a mere piece of stone and the Sacred Mantras as sounds of cacophony are equated to those who have committed Brahmahatya sin!

Vaishvadeva homa: *Dvijah Purusha Suktasya vidhinaa Vishnumarchayet, Vaishvadevam tatah kuryaat balikarma vidhanatah/* (A perfect example of a dvija is so qualified as having performed 'archana' as per Purusha Sukta and then take up Vaishvadeva homa and Bali Karma as prescribed, states Harita Muni). *Yasminnagnou bhavetpaakah Vaishva devastu tatraiva, Tatraahutvaa yo bhunkte kilbisham narah /* (Chandrika is quoted stating that the Agni in which 'Vaishvadeva homa' is performed is to be the same as the food cooked and offered to Agni besides the left overs eaten later by the Kartas.) Tatparya Darshani states: *Panchamaaha yagnebhyah prithagvaishva devam prakaranaantaraat, sanjnyaabhedaaccha karma bhedaavagateh ata eva/ Bhashe Vaishvadevasya teshaam cha prayogah prithagevopapaaditah/* (Vaishvadava is distinct and different from Pancha Maha Yagnas and elsewhere Pancha Yagnas are already described) *Pancha soonaa grihasthasya vartateharahassadaa, Khandine peshini chullee jala kumbha maarjani/ Etaabhirvaahan Vipro badhyatevai muhurmuuhuh, etaasam pavanaardhaaya Pancha Yagnaa prakalpita/* (Yama Deva states that in every household there are five instruments of 'Jeeva Himsa' viz. 'Khandini' or kitchen cutter made of iron or sharp metals, 'peshani' or pounding and pasting appliances, chulli or cooking hearth, jalakumbha or water storage vessel and maarjani or washing and sweeping appliances; it is to atone these sins of violence that Pancha Yagnas are performed.) *Vaishva - devam balihutim pratyaham grihamedhinah Saaya praatascha kurveeran soonaadi paapanuttaye/* Prajapati states that to save oneself from the sins committed as above, every Grihastha would be required to perform Vaishvadeva every morning and evening. But before performing Vaishvadeva homa, 'shakala homa' needs to be performed. Apastamba Sutras prescribe the procedure as follows: *Aoupaasane pachane vaashadbhiraadvaih prati mantrya hastena juhuyaat, Ubhayatah parishechanam tathaa purastaat, Shadbhiraadyaih Agnaye svaaha, Somaaya svaaha, Vishvebhyo Devebhyo svaaha, Dhruvaaya Bhumaaya svaaha, Dhruva nakshatraye svaaha, Achyuta ksjitaye svaaha itetyaih Agnaye svishta krite svaaha iti saptamam juhvati/* (The Vaishvadeva homa has six mantras for Aoupaasana and Pachana and each of these are to be initiated after 'parishechana' or of water sprinkling in the formal manner followed by the svaha mantras of: Agnaye svaaha, Somaaya svaaha, Vishvebhyo Devebhyo svaaha, Dhruvaaya Bhumaaya svaaha, Dhruvakshitaye svaaha, Achyuta kshitaye svaaha, Agnaye svishta kshitaye svaha; this is how the homa is to be performed) Goutama describes : *Agnaavagnirdhanvatarir*

Vishva devaah prajapatih svishtakruditi homaah/ (The Svishta krit homas in Agni are required to be executed to Agni, Dhanvantari, Vishva devas, Prajapati and svishtakrit) Katyayana prescribes the method of the Homa in one's own residence commencing with invocations seeking the 'Anumati' or approval of Brahma, Prajapati and Kashyapa Muni: *Atha yadhaa svashastra vyavasthaa Vaishvadevam prakur - veeta, Svashastraabhihitam tahaa yasya yaavat svagrihoktam svalpam vaa yadi bahu vaa, yasya svagrihoktam svalpa vaa yadi bahuvaa, tasyataavati Shastraargha kreite sarvam kritam bhavet/ Iti Vyasa smaranaat/* (This is the method of performing Vaishva Deva, especially whatever is prescribed for doing it in one's house, neither less nor more, as said by Veda Vyasa.) Vyasa Deva states that this needs to be performed with full flames as the Karta would go blind! Vyasa further describes: *Juhu yaatsarpishaa - bhyaktam tailakshaara vivarjitam, Dadhyuktam payasaabhyaktam tadabhavembu naapivaa/* (In this homa, the 'homa dravyas' are ghee, mustard seeds, curd, milk or even water, but not oil or chillies) Apastamba states: *Aryaah prayataah Vaishvadevenna samskartaarassyuh Aryaah trivatikaah/*(Aryas of trivarnas viz. Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishyas are normally required to perform Anna homa in this connection. Yagnyavalkya further prescribes that the remainder of 'Devata homaanna' be utilised for the purpose of 'bhuta bali': *Devebhyastu hutaadannaat sheshaad Bhutabalim haret, Annam bhumou chandaala vaayasebhyas cha nikshipet, Samkshaalana madhavaanneninayet praagugadishi/* (The bhuta bali is meant for the lowest and very poorest class of the Society and crows to be kept in the east and north directions of the house) Vyasa further describes: *Vaishva devastu kartavyo Deva Yagnyassavaismritah, Devebhyastu hutaadannaaccheshadbhuta balim haret/ Bhuta yagnyassavigjneyah Bhutidah sarva dehi - naam, Shraaddham vaa Pitru yagnyasyat Pitrya balirathaapiva/* (It is essential that Vaishva deva is required to be done as that is Deva Yagnya; The left over Anna needs to be utilised for bhuta bali as that is considered as Bhuta yagnya as that assures prosperity; Shraaddha is considered as Pitru yagna or Pitru Bali.) *Ekapaakena vastaam pitrudeva dvijaarchanam, Ekam bhavedvibhaktaanaam tadevasyaad grihe grihe/* (It is adequate that cooking of Anna be done once a day, as that is commonly utilised for Pitru, Deva, Dvijarchana. Also the Shraaddha karma be done first, and there after having formally sent away the Vaishvaadi Karmas be executed later.)

Aatidhya vidhi: *Abhyaagato jnaata purvastvagjnaatotithiruchyate/ Ajnaata kulagotrastu adhvashraanto bubhulkshitah, Sampraapto Vaishvadevante sotithi swarga samkramah/ Atithim pujayeddyastu shraantam chaa drushtamaagamam, Savrisham goshatam tena dattam syaaditime matih/* (Veda Vyasa defines Atithi as a person who arrives at one's door step is unknown even while 'Abhyaagata' is the person already familiar. As soon as the Vaishvadeva is concluded in anybody's home, any Atithi arriving at the house with hunger and thirst must necessarily be given food and water without seeking to ascertain his family credentials etc. as a bounden duty as that act of consideration would lead to heavens) Apastamba Sutras require the following duty: *Atitheenevaagre bhojayedbaalaan vridhaan rogasambaddhaan streeshchan - tarvatneeh/*(Food be provided to Atithis, children, the elderly, the sick, carrying women and 'Suvasinis' on priority basis)Vishnu Purana prescribes: *Tatassuvaasini duhkhi garbhini vridh baalaka, Bhojayet satkritaannena prathamam tu param gaihi/*(Well cooked hot meal be first served to Garbhinis, the aged and kids first and then the Grihastas eat later) Paraashara details as to how the guests be treated: *Atithim tatra sampraaptam pujayet svaagataadinaa, Tathaaaa pradaanenapaada prakshaalanenacha/ Shraddhaa aachaanna daanena priya prashnottarenacha, Gacchataschaanuyaayena preeti mutpaadayet grihi/ Na prucchet gotracharanena swaadhyayam Shrutam tathaa, Hridaye kalpayeddevam sarvadevamayoh sah/* (Grahasthis are required to welcome with respect, provide a comfortable seat, give food with a feeling of

being at home, converse with freindliness and send off with a sense of satisfaction, without show off and arrogance considering that an Aththi is a Devata. Manu Smriti cautions: *Athitiryasya bhagnato grihaatrati nivartate, Pitarastasya naashayanti dasa varshaani pancha cha, Kaashtha bhaara sahasrena ghrita kumbha shatena cha, Athithiryasya bhanaashah tasya homo nirasthalah*/(In case genuine and needy guests are turned out from one's house with impudence then his Pitru Devas would curse the Grihasthi to be punished by having to carry loads of thousands firewood and hundrds of ghee tins for fifteen years and all the homa karyas and other brahmanical duties are made to badly affect their good returns.) On the other hand, Vyasa assures: *Atithim pujayedystu shraantam chaa drushtamaagamam, Sa vrisham goshtam tena dattam syaaditi mematih*/ (In the event of an unexpected guest arriving home suddenly and fortunately, the Guest be honoured whatever difficulties are faced on one's own home front, then for sure the fruitful returns far exceed expectations as equivalent to the receipt of hunderd cows and oxen) Hareeta Muni states: *Bhaktyaacha Shakti to nityam Vishnumabhyarchya saadaram, Bhikshaancha bhikshave dadyaat Parvraak Brahmacharine, Vishnurerava yatischaa- yam iti nischitya bhaavayet, Yatiryasya grihe bhunkte tasya bhunkte jagatrayam*/(If a grihasthi after Vishnupuja provides hearty meals to Brahmachari and Yati considering him as Vishnu shall certainly reap life long fulfillment of worldly desires in toto!

Bhojana nirnaya:

Panchaardre bhojanam kuryaat prangmukho mounmaasthitah, Hastou Paadou tathaa chaasyameshu panchaadrataa mataa/ (A dvija is to face east and be seated with 'Panchaadrata' or maintain wet on both the palms, two feet and the mouth, says Vyasa) Devala Maharshi prescribes: *Padou prakshalya hastou cha dvirachamyaa vaagyatah, raangmukhonnaani bhumjeeta sdhuchi peethamadhishthitah*/ (one should wash the feet and hands and be seated down on a 'peetha', a wooden plank, to perform two 'Achamanas' or taking water from the right palm and commence the bhojana). *Achamyaiiva cha bhumjeeta bhuktvaa chopasprushedapah, Anaachaastu yoshneeyaata prayaschitteeyatehisah*/ (A bhojana without achamana and touching water calls for a Prayaschitta or atonement). Atri Muni requires to keep one's feet on ground but on the seat while eating with cleanlines and silence and that type of an ideal bhojana yields 'atiratra phala'. But, to keep on one's feet on the seat is forbidden as that tantamounts to 'Go maamsa bhakshana'! Manu states: *Ayushyam prangmukho bunkte Yashasyam Dakshina mukho, Shriyam pratyamukho bhunkte rutambhunkte hyudanmukhah*/ (Taking bhojana facing East bestows longevity, facing South provides good reputation, facing West yields opulence and facing North fetches 'Varchas') Apastamba suggests : *Yatnena dharayed viprah pavitram dakshine kare, bhunjaanastu visheshena chaanna doshairna lipyate*/ (Wearing a darbha tied to right hand while taking food would demolish all types of deficiencies of the food consumed) Bhojana paatras or food vessels be made of gold, silver, bronze or aluminium. A brahmachari, or widow or Yati is disallowed eating in bronze plates nor resort to oil baths and betel leaf consumption. Pracheta Muni states: *Panasaamra naalikera kadali bilva patrake, Bhojanam kaamsya paatrena chandraayana phalam labhet/ Palasha padma patreshu grihi bhukvaindavam charet, Brahmachari yateenaantu chandrayana phalam labhet*/ (Pracheta Muni explains that eating in panasa, mango, coconut, plantain, and bilva leaves fetches the blessing of having performed 'chaandraayana vrata'; but bhojana in palaasha and lotus leaves demands performing the same vrata! If this kind of positive type of bhojana is consumed, brahmacharis and sanyasis are stated to have performed chandrayana vrata's punya.) Manu prescribes 'bhojana karana vidhana' or the method of good eating: *Pujayedashanam nityam adyaacchaitada kutsayan, Pujitam- hyashanam nityam alamurjam prayacchati*/(

Always bhojana is worship-worthy and should never be found fault with! This type of proactive way of eating-without expressing criticism or personal preferences of taste, form and colour would secure satisfaction and strength) Sumantu states: *Annam nidhaapya darvyaatu na hastena kadaachana, Pujayitvaa tadannam cha aaposhanantu samantrakam/* (Annam should never be served with hand but only with a ladle or server; it should be worshipped with mantras and eaten after duly performing ‘Aouposhana’) Vyasa details the following: *Annam drishtvaa pranamyadou praanjalih kathayettaatah, Asmaakam nityamastvetat iti bhaktyaathavandayet/* (On seeing food, first greet it with hands and say: ‘Asmaaka nitayamastvetat’) After reciting the Gayatri Mantra, ‘abhimantra’ and ‘Satyamdvartena parishanchaami’ during the day time and for night bhojana : ‘Rutamtvaa satyena parishanchaami’ be uttered. Gokhila Muni is quoted here: *Vyahriti bhirgaayatryaa- bhimatrasya rutam twaam satyena parishinchaameei saayam satyam tvartena pareeshinchaamiti praatah parishenchaameeti praatah parishichet/*(Parishechana or sprinkling of water be done along with Gayatri Mantra with vyajhritis or extensions, and perform ‘Abhimantrana’ reciting Satyam tvartena parishin- chaami / Rutamvaa satyena parisinchaami.) *Svaahaantaah pranavaa -dyaasha naamnaamantraastu Vaayavah, Jihvayaitatgrasedannam dashanaistu na samsprushet/* (Shaunaka muni says that at this juncture, the dvija should commence taking ‘Anna’ in the fingers reciting: Om pranaya svaaha, om Apanaya svaaha, om vyanaya svaah, om udaayanaaya svaah, om samaanaya svaaha or the Pancha Pranas, om Brahmane svaaha the sixth word, without yet touch the teeth) Smriti saara describes further: *Madhya- maanaamika angushthaih grihetaannam mitam punah, Pranaaya chetya paanaay vyaanaayacha yathaakramam/ Udaanaaya Samaanaaya svaaheti juhuyaat kramaat/* (Anna be picked up in small morsels by right middle and ring finger pressing the thumb and take in reciting Pranaya svaha, Apanaya svaha, Vyaanaya svaha, Udaanaya svaah and Samaanaya svaaha as though performing homa into the mouth of fire!) *Ravissomastathaa chaagnirvyaayuh parjanya evacha, Param Brahma tathaitaascha Devataah parikeertitaah/ Vaamena paatram sprushtvaat praanaahut yathaa charet, Praanena vishta ityaadi svaahaachaivaahutir bhavet, Evam praanaahuteerhutvaa tathaa chaatmaahutih tadaa/* (Touching tthe jalapatra with his left hand, the bhokta should glorify Surya Chandras, Agni, Vayu, Varuna and Parabrahma and perform ‘ahutis’ in their favour with the mantra of Pranenivishta Suryaya svaaha, Chandraya svaha and so on and then the Atmaahuti to the Self, as detailed by Krishmna Bhatta in Ahnika saara sangraha) Atri Maharshi states: *Shabdenaapah peetvaa shabdena ghrita paayasam, Shabdenaaposhanam kritvaa suraapana samam bhavet /* (While in the process of the bhojana, the slurp sounds of water, milk, ghee paayasa and the like are as satisfying as ‘Suraapaana’!) Vyasa describes that during the course of Bhojana, the dvija is to maintain silence: *Mounam vaacho nivritti syaat naatra bhaashaana samskritam, Naanya daiveranam Vishnum sadaa dhyaayeccha keertayet/ Devataabhidaanam cha prayatah ityaoastamba vachanam devataantara vishayam/ Kabale kabale chaiva kuryaadgovinda keertanam, Naashoucham keertanetasya pavitram Bhagavan harih/*(The silence that one has to maintain during the bhojana is neither to hold the tongue, nor to dis-use the language, but mainly to be engaged in ‘dhyaana’ or meditation of Vishnu with his several names like Keshava, Narayana, Madhava, Govinda and Madhusudana. Each gulp of food that the bhokta takes in, would purify the intake and glorify the Lord! But at the same time Shandilya Muni says that since one has to ask to break the silence occasionally as to what items of food were to be served as repeats, it is not always possible but to break the silence as and when required!) Markandeya proiritizes the eats at the bhojana: *Ashneeyaattanmanaa bhutvaa purvantu madhtam rasam Lavanaamlou tathaa madhve katutiktaadikam tatah/ Praak dravyam purusho - shneeyaan madhyetu kathinaashanam, Ante punardravaashetu balaarogyena munchati/* (While

commencing the bhojana, the first item for consumption should be a sweet juice, then savouries, in between try bitter and sour items, hard eats, liquids etc.) Vyasa forbids eating as follows: *Hastashvya rathayaanoshtramaa sthitonaiva bhakhayet, Smashaanaabhyamtarasthavaa Devaalaya gatopiva/ Shayanastho bhunjeeta na paanisthamna chaasane, naardravaasaa naadrashirana chaayagjnopavee-tavaan/ Na veshtita shiraschaapi notsanga krita bhajanah, Naika vastro dushta madhye sopaanata – ssapaadukah/ Na charmopari samsthasha charmaa -vestita paarshvavaan/ Graasa sesham na chaashneeyat peetga shesham pibennara, Shaaka mula phalekshunaam danta chhedaainna bhakshayet/ Bahoonam bhunjataam madhyena chaashneeyaata -varaavitah, Vridhaanavikaredannam nocchishthah kutrachit vrajet/* (One should not eat seated on an elephant, horse, chariot or camel, nor in a burial ground, a temple or in a bed; food is also forbidden to be consumed on a seat, with wet clothes, wet hair or without yagnopaveeta the Sacred Thread. Bhojana is forbidden with stretched legs, with hands on the feet or thighs and in a bed. Meals should not be taken with wet clothes, or wet hair and without yagnopaveeta. Bhojana is also forbidden with covered head, with a single vastra, keeping a plate on the thighs, in the company of bad elements, on steps, with footwear, and seated on skins and leather items. One should not eat from others plates nor drink other's water or drinks. Half cooked items be avoided and teeth should not be strained trying hard fruits and sugarcane .One should try to keep pace with co-eaters, not disorder the amount served and never consume 'ucchishtha' or half consumed items of others much less carry it elsewhere.) *Yastveka panktoushisham dadaati snehaadbhayaadyadivaardha hetoh Vedeshu drishtaa mrishibhischa geetaam taam Brahma hatyaam munayo vadanti/* (Yama states that in case a grihastu serves food better and partially to a person in a 'pankti' or a line of guests either due to friendship or fear or any other consideration then Vedas and Rishis warn him of the great sin of Brahma hatya!) Parashara Muni declares: *Eka panktyupavishtaanaam dushkritam yadduraatmanaam, Sarveshaam tatsamam taavad yaavadpanktinnabhidyate/Agninaa bhasmana chiva stambhena salileni cha, dvaarenachaiva margena pankti bhedo budhai smritah/* (In case there is even one element of mischief in a 'pankti' or a line of guests, then the blemish would have to be shared by all in that pankti! This is so because even if there are fires, or ashes, or a pillar, or a threshold or a demarcating lane; this is what wise men believe!) Smrti Ratna describes certain do's and don'ts in the context of bhojanas: *Shayanasthona bhunjeeta na paanistham na chaasane, Sakuryaat skandanam shabdham krodhamanyatra chintanam/ Shishunaam bhartrunam chaapi shvachandaalaadi darshanam, Ashuchinaam tathaa madhye prekshataamapya nashnataam, Naakale vishayuktamchanaashnee yadahutam tathaa/ Ucchshita sparshanam jnaatvaa tat paatram parihrityacha, Tatah paschaadgomayena Bhumim samanulipyacha/ Anyatpaatram nidhaayaiva tadannam pariveshayet, Parishyaamchyaatha bhunjeeta bhojanetuna doshabhaak/Eka panktishu bhunjaano braahmano brahmanamsorushet, Tadannamatyajan bhuktvaa Gayatrashtakam japet/ Uddhrutya vaama hastena trishaartah salilam pibet, Vaamenavapibettoyam bhojaner paatramatyajan Tyajan pibettu rudhram atyagannamritam pibet/* (It is forbidden to be seated on a bed, keep food on it and eat; do not make sounds while eating; never eat with anger nor while frightening children; do not eat in the presence of dogs and low class persons. Do not eat amid persons not eating or gazing at those as they eat. Do not reject food at late timings and also that food which is not offered in 'naivedya' to Bhagavan. Once having realised that a glass of water in which already somebody drank in it is provided to a person, then that patra be replaced but not the bhojana. While in one pankti or a lane of eaters, one brahmana should not touch a co brahmana and having done so perform Gayatri hundred and eight times but need not reject the bhojana already served. In the course of a bhojana, drink water with left hand without leaving the patra; it is stated that so drinking without leaving the patra in one go is like drinking 'amrita' but other wise it is

like drinking blood!) Vyasa Maharshi cautions as follows: *Shleshma bhrumhvyachani kotsargo na annakale prashasyate, Bali maangalya japyaadou na home na mahaajane/* (Acts like heavy coughing, loud cleaning or gargling of throat with ‘sheshma’, loud yawning are forbidden and uncivil at public eatings, japa homa groups and in the midst of congregations). Referring to ‘Bhakshya-abhakshya’ or material worthy of consumption or otherwise, Apararka detailed as follows: *Jaati dushtam kriyadushtam kaalaashraya vidushitam, Samsargaashraya dushtam vaa sahrullekham svabhaavatah/ Lashunam grunjanam chiva phalaanu kavakaadicha, Vaartaaka nalikaa laabu hyave yaajnaati dushtam/ Nabhakshayetkriyaa dushtam yaddushtam patitaabhih, Kaala dushtam tu vigjeyam asnaahaaktam chirasthitamk, Dadhi bhaksha vikaarascha madhu varjam tadishyate/Suraalashuna samsprushtam peeyushaadi samanvitam, Samsargaaddhushya -tetaddhi shudrochishthavadaacharet/ Vichiktsaasu hridaye yasminnaanne pajaayate, Sahullekham tu vigjneyam peeyushaadi svabhaavatah/* (It is always advisable to discard any thing or anybody which is spoilt by way of the background of Jaati or nativity, kriya or action or samsarga or association. Material worthy of discarding due to ‘jaati’ are among onions, lissan, brinjal etc. Whatever is procured or cooked by the characterless and conductless men or women who suffer from ‘kriya dosha’ too are worthy of discard. Another variety of material that suffer from ‘Kaala dosha’ or invalidated by time like old curd, milk and vegetables etc. too must be rejected for use. Yet another category suffering from ‘Samsarga dosha’ or wrong association and interaction with persons of fallen sections of the Society should be dispensed with instantly. Should there be any prick of conscience, food or related material be rejected.)

Parashara Maharshi prescribes atonement for the consumption of questionable food items: *Piyusham shveta lashuna vrintaaka phalagrinjanam, Phalaandu vriksha niryasa Devasya kavakaanicha/ Ushtri ksheeramaviksheera magjnaad bhunjate dvijah, Triraataramupavaasena panchagavyena shudhyati/ Shveta shabdah lashina vrintaakaabhyaam sambadhyate tena, Krishna vaartaa ka raktalashunaadaa nedam vratamityuktam/* (Consumption of peeyusha or beaten cheese of cow milk after delivery, white onion called ‘lasun’, hing or asafetida, round brinjal, clove, camel milk or sheep milk, and such unworthy material calls the atonement or ‘prayaschitta’ by way of fastings of three nights and ‘pancha gavya sevana’ or eating the mix of five cow products of milk- curd- ghee-dung and urine. However, black brinjal and red lasan are exceptional for consumption) Manu Smriti prohibits the consumption of the following: *Shuktaanihi dvijonnaaninabhumjeeta kadahana, prakshaalitaani nirdoshaanya apaddhamoyadaa bhavet/ Veeryahaaniryashohaanih pragnaa haanistadhaivacha bhavettasmaattato raatrau dhaatreem yatnena varjayet/ Dhaanaa svaadennacha divaa dadhisaktomstathaa nishi, Sarvaamcha tila sambandham naadyaadatamayam prati/ Trikaardraka dadhishroun aa tilashaakaani nishyadan, Tyajyate rupavaan –chhreebhih pushpita stree rataadyathaa/ Sakaamsyam naarikelaambu kaamsyecha rasamaikshghavam, Taamra paatra yutam gavyam ksheeram cha lavanaanvitam/ Ghritam lavana samyuktam Suraakalpam vivarjayet, Praktyaksha lavanam naadyaat pakvam para grihaagatam/* (Stored and sour of cooked rice should not be consumed by dvijas unless as ‘aapaddharma’ or the very last resort. Dhaatri or Amla fruit products be certainly avoided in the nights as there is a risk of losing masculinity, name and fame. Dhaanaa or Coriander seeds, curds in the nights and frequent fried items are avoidable. Ginger, curd, and tilas are forbidden to women in menstruation periods as they are likely to affect brightness, speech and prosperity. Coconut water in bronze utensils, sugarcane juice in copper and salted milk or ghee act as high intoxicants. Eating salt alone without dissolving with other items affects the body organs. Similarly cooked items from others are avoidable) Vyasa describes the bhojana niyamas

further: *Asati Tulasi chaiva Dhatri phala mathaachyutam, Yasodare pravartante tasya sannihito Harih/ Bhakshyam bhojyamcha lehyamcha Namu Naraayantiyah, Abhimantrva sprushan bhuntey sa yaati paramaamgatim/Yatyannam yatipaatrastham yati naaproshitam chayat, Annatrayam nabhoktavyam bhuktvaa chaandraayanam charet/ Apalipatasya murkhasya dushra vrittasya durmateh, Annamashraddhaanasyayobhunkte bhruna haasvai/Tyajedanupaneetaannamandhasya patitasyacha, Vedaadhyayana heenasya kanyaa vikrayinastathaa/ Daridrasyacha murkhasya yati nindaa parasyacha, Ayaajyam yaajakasyaannam nrmaryaadasya karshinah/ Devadroha parasyaanam tathaa vigjnana dooshinah, Dagdhaanga syaayasair divyaih soma vikrayinastathaa/* (He who has in his belly the ‘Asati’ or a typical sweet cake of rice flour, tulasi leaves and dhaatri or amla is stated to be near and dear to Shri Hari. He who does ‘abhimantra’ with ‘Namo Narayanaya’ to the ‘bhakshya-bhojya-lehya’ varieties of food as offering to Vishnu and then consumes along with co- devotees is destined to attain ‘parama gati’. In the event of robbing the exclusive food kept for a Sanyasi, preserved by him to eat and ready for his prokshana before consumption, then the thief would have no remission at all except by undergoing chandrayana vrata. If the food meant for a handicapped, foolish, below average, and careless person is robbed then he is stated to have committed ‘bhruna hatya’ or killing an embriyo! One should never consume the food offered by one who has no yagnopaveeta, a blind one, a characterless person, one who does not practise Vedaadhyayana, a dealer of brides, a poverty stricken one, a below par intelligent, a critic of the holymen, one who performs evil- oriented agni karyas, a critic of the learned and a dealer of intoxicant liquors and one with an iron-burnt body parts. Bharadvaja and Parashara expressed views of an act of omission and of commission each as follows respectively: *Niraachaarasya viprasya nishiddhaacharanasya cha, Annam bhuktvaa dvijah kuryaaddhi namekama bhojanam/- Sadaacharasya viprasya tathaa Vedantavedinah, bhuktvaannam muchyate paadahoraatra antaraan narah/* (In case a learned dvija consumes food served by a faithless vipra of least principles and scruples, then the dvija should better forgo a daily meal. On the other hand, if a dvija enjoys the food from a principled vipra then even overnight the former is rid of the burden of his own sins!) Vishnu Maharshi stipulates that whosoever of dvijas accepts and eats Paarvana shraddha bhojana has to execute six pranayamas, recites Gayatri Mantra ten times and consumes water ten times too as also perform sandhyopaasana in the evening when only he assumes ‘Shuddhatva’ or purity of body and mind. Another imporant regulation of bhojana is prescribed by Vyasa in connection with Solar and Lunar Eclipses: *Suryagrahetu naashneeyaata purvam Yaama chatushtaym, Chandragrahetu triyaamaam stree baala vridhaaturairvinaa/Grastodaye vidhoh purvam naaharbhojana maacharet, Grastodite tathaa Suryena raatrao bhojanam charet/ Samvatsaryaikamapi charet kruccham dvijottamah, Agjnata bhukta shudhyartham jnyaatasyat visheshata/* (With the exception of the aged, women and children, dvijas must follow the principle of ‘no food’ during the four yaamas preceding the solar eclipse and three yaamas before Chandra grahana. The general principle is that the day before Chandra grahana and the night before the Suryagrahana, bhojana is avoided. To purify one’s body and mind, the blemish of bhojana knowingly or other wise, it is better that one kruccha vrata is performed annually in any case!)

After bhojana, the conclusion would be: *Amritaapidhaana maseetya vashipyam jalam pibet, tachesham rouravetyuktvaa baliprante visarjayet/* (After saying ‘Amritaapidhaanamasi’ and then drink up the remainder water in the drinking vessel and continue reciting the Rourave mantra that follows, while leaving water drops at the ‘bali sthaana’ keeping some morsels for the negligible praanis like ants and flies) *Rouravepunya nilaye padmaarbudani vaasinaam, Ardhinaamudakam dattam akshayyamupatishthi/*

(The mantra means : may these water drops be plentiful to relieve the tortures being experienced by the padmaarbuda nivasis of rourava naraka) *Apasrutya tatah paschaat gunushaan shodashaacharet, Viprasya dakshine bhaage Devaastishthani yatnatah, Aaseena eva gandushaan vaamabhage visarjayet/* (Now, clean the mouth gargling sixteen times and throw out the mouth water to the left as Deva ganas would be present to the right side of the vipra.) Gautama Muni states: *Aaachantah punaraachaamedayam Gow ritimantratah, Dripadaam vaa triraavartya sarvapaapa pranaashineem, Hastou nidhrutya angushthaabhyaam aknorambu vinikshipet/ Sharvaatim cha Sukanyaam cha Chyavanam shakramashvinou, Bhukta maatram smaredyastu chakshstasya naheeyate/* (Then, perform ‘aachamana’ thrice with the drupada mantra or that of ‘Ayam gouh’ and with raised hands press the eyes and the right thumb with water; this act would help improve vision by the grace of Sharvaati, Sukanya, Chyavana, Indra and Ashvini Devatas) Vyasa desires that after the bhojana prakriya, the Vipra should take up ‘adhyayana’ of Itihasa Purana Vedas to enable proper digestion of food consumed: *Bhuktaavai sukhamasthaaya tadannam parinaamayet, Itihaasa puraanaakhyaam Vedardhaanupa brumhayet/* Shankha Muni warns as follows: *Divaa svaapam na kurveeta gacchennaiva divaastriyam, Aayuh khayakari nidraadivaa stree punya naashani, Vridhaa vividha vaakyaani parivaadaashcha varjyayet/* (None should neither sleep nor have a woman as daytime sleep reduces longevity and physical contact of a woman destroys punya and lead to avoidable problems) *Supugam cha supatramcha churnena cha samanvitam, Pradadyaaddvija varyebhyaha taamboolam charvayedbudha/ Aayuh pragnyaabalam buddheeretah shaktirvinashyati, Jihvaa rasam na gruhnaati sadaa taambulacharvanam/* (After the bhojana, one should offer ‘taambula’ or betel leaves and betel nuts to those having the bhojana including the self as taambula provides satisfaction, but repetitive tambula bhakshana destroys mental alertness, physical strength and self-confidence.) After bhojana and adhyayana, Daksha prescribes: *Itihasa puranaabhyaam shashtha saptamakou nayet, Ashtame lokayaatraatu bahissandhtaam tatah param/* (After the sixth to eighth ghadis, Sandhya vandana follows) *Hutvaagnim vidhi vanmantraih bhuktvaa yagjnaavashishtakam, Sabhrutyu bandhavajanah svapecchushka padonishi/* (Vyaasa states that as prescribed the dvija should perform homa karyas and the remainder bhojana be enjoyed along with his family and followers.) Bodhayana compares the punya of performing ‘Sayamkaala Agni’: *Merukanchana daanaani vaajapeya shtaanicha, Kanyaa koti pradaanam cha samam saatsaayamaahuteh/* (The Agni karya performed in the evenings is as effective as Meru kaanchana daana, vaajapeya yagnya shata phala, and koti kanya daana) *Nishaayaam prathame yaame japa yagjnaarcjhanaadikam, Svaadyaayo bhojanam proktah varjayitvaa mahaanishaam/* (Shaunaka Muni prescribes that the first ‘yaama’ of the night be spent with japa, yagnya, Archana, Svaadhyaya and bhojana, leaving midnight free.) Gargya Muni describes: *Sukhaanukule shayane vaama paarshvena samvishet, Aayurvaamakar proktam uttanam balavardhanam/ Svagruhe praankcchi-raasshete shvaashure dakshinaa shiraah, Pratyakcchraah pravaase tuna kadaa chidudakcchiraah/* (One might comfortably sleep as per convenience on the left side of the bed; a slightly raised head with left hand gives long life and stamina. Sleeping in one’s own house is eastward faced, in the house of in-laws as southward and elsewhere west ward but never on the northern side) As about to sleep, Ratnaavali states: *Raatri suktam japet smritvaa sarvaamscha sukha shaayinah, namaskrituyaavyayam Vishnum samaadhistaah svapenishi./* (While sleeping, one would do well reciting Raatri Sukta and greeting Lord Vishnu sincerely, sleep off still till early traces of Stars on the Skies.) Manu provides the advice: *Rituka laabhigaameesyat svadaara niratassadaa, Parvam varjya vrajecchaanaam anruto ratikamyaya/* (A dvija as also all males of dharma ought be contented as ‘Svabharya niras’ or be faithful to one’s own wives; on ‘parva dinas’ and during the periods, they too be excused but none else indeed, in any case).

Shouchaashoucha prakarana:

Daanam pratigrahomam svaadhyayah pitru karmacha, Preta pindakriyaa varjamaasiuche vinivartayet/ (Shankha Maharshi emphasises that the deeds of virtue like giving and accepting charities, homa karmas, svaadhyaya, Pitru karma, and preta pinda kriyas should not be executed during 'Ashuchi') *Nimittam pindadaanaadeh purushasthamashuddhi krit, Kaalasmaanaapanodyah yatthad aashoucha miteeryate/*(Ashuchi is defined as purifies the body and Soul by way of snaana arising out of situations and acts applicable to Dvijas) *Upaasane cha Vipraanaam angashuddhistu jaayate, Brahmachari grihe yshaam huyate cha huaashanah, Samparkam chenna kurvanti nateshaam sutakam bhavet/* (Vipras attain physical purity by constant meditation. There would be immunity in those households where brahmacharis perform homas with faith) *Sutake mritakechaiva Sandhyaakarma samaacharet, Manasocchhaarayet mantraan praanaayaamaadrute/* (Sandhyopaasana needs to be performed both during 'Jaataashoucha' or 'Mritaashoucha' or Ashuddhi on account of births or deaths, by maanaso - cchaarana or recitation of mantras mentally without resorting to pranaayama, confirms Pulastya Maharshi) Vyaasa too states: *Prakshipet sutaket arghyam Gayatreem samuccharam, Datvaa pradakshinam kuryaat Suryam dhyayet dvijottaamah, Dasha krutastu Gayatreem manasaiva Shuchih smaret/* (During Jaataashoucha too, a Dvija could recite Gayatri and perform by way of Surya dhyana pradakshinas. During the ten days of Ashuchi, Gayatri be recited by one's own mind) Manu instructs: *Ubhayatra dahaahani kulasyaannam na bhujyate, Daanam prati griho homah svaadhyaya yascha nishiddhate/ Ashouchetu dasahaantam na kuryaaddevataarchanam, Na kuryaatpitru kaaryaani daanam homam japam tathaa/*(In both the kinds of Ashuchi due to births and deaths, daana-pratigrihahoma-svaadhyaya karyas are forbidden for ten days; also during the ten days of Ashoucha, Devataarchana- Pitru kaarya-daana- homa-japas are forbidden too.) Kanva Maharshi states: *Agnihotra havbam kuryaadanyaabhaave svayam dvijah, kuryaat snaatvaadravaasaastu tasmatkaalaa- drute ashuchih/*(If alone, a dvija needs to perform Agnihotra homa by himself, after taking bath with wet clothes, but at the required time for the homa, lest he would get ashuchi.) *Sutake mritakechaiva ashaktou shaaddha bhojane , pravaasaadi nimitteshu haavayennnatu haapayet/* (Brihaspati instructs that during Ashuchi either on account of births or deaths or in the situations when shraddha karmas are not possible to perform or when away from one's home then homa karyas may not be done by the self but by a proxy) *Shouchaamanam snaanam niyamam bhojanaadishu, Asprushya sparshane snaanam kuryaadaashouchavaan dvijah/ Dravyaani Swaami sambhandhaatta dadhetyashucgheenivai, Swaami shuddhyava shuddhyanti vaarinaa prokshitaanyapi/ Dadhiksheram ghritam shaakam patu pushpam tiloushadham, Kaashtha mulam phalam maamsam madhu kupaambu chaajinam, Panyaanyathaapi griheeyaate svayamtu Swaamyanyayayaa/* (Kanva Muni prescribes that in reference to activities like Aachamana, Snaana, Shoucha and Bhojanaadi restrictions, if any shoucha dvija touches an 'Asprushya' or untouchable or vice versa, then the dvija has to perform snaana and change of clothing. All the material related to Deva Vighras are indeed subject to 'Ashuchi' but with 'prokshana' or sprinkling of water, the material would be purified. However the dvija is preferably required to carry the Puja material himself on securing the approval of the Devata such as curd, milk, salt, flowers, tila, honey, well water, and mriga charma.) Paraashara lists out auspicious contexts to give away charities: *Khale yagne vivahecha sankraante grahanemritou, Putre jaate vyatipaate dattam bhavaticaakshayam, Sharvaryaam daanamasteeti naanyatra tu vidheeyate/* (Charities at yagnyas, weddings, sankramanas, eclipses, deaths and births or graha yogas bestow far reaching fruits, even if such charities are made on the nights, but on other occasions night charities are forbidden).

Sadyassoucha: *Sadyasshoucham tathaikaah traihaschaturahastathaa, shat dasha dvaadashaah pakshaascha dasha sutake/* (Daksha prescribes ‘sadyassoucha’ for a day or three days, four, six, ten, twelve or fifteen days) Yagnyavalkya defines ‘sadyassoucha’ vidhi to Ritvijas or those in deeksha or vratas, brahmacharis, donors, or those involved in daana- vivaaha-yagna-yuddha or great risks) *Naishthikaanaam vanasthaanaam yateenam brahmacharinaam, naashoucham sutake proktam shaavevaapui tathauvacha/*(Brihaspati exempts from Ashoucha to naishthikas or those in deeksha, vanaprasthaas, sanyasis, brahmacharis even in their deaths.) *Kruccha devotsava shraaddha daana homa tapodvare, prarabdhe tat pravrittaanaam sadyasshoucha madhaagame/* (Sadyassoucha is applicable to those engaged in the course of Kruccha vratas, Devotsavas, Shraaddha- daana- homa- tapas- yagna karmas as these are in progress, as quoted from Sangraha Grandha) *Aarambhe varanam yagne Sankalpo vratasatrayoh, Naandimukham vivaahaadou shraaddhepaakakriyaa- statdha/ Niyantrateshu vipreshu praarabdhe shraaddha karmani Paakaarambhaata param kartrun daatrun bhoktrun na sprushayade/* (Smrityardha saara explains that one should not touch those engaged in the varana at the beginning of yagnas, Vrata Satras, Sankalpas aVivahas, Naandi mukhas, shraaddhas, paaka kriyas, or to those organising these acts, karya kartas, karya daatas and bhoktas) Bodhayana Maharshi states: *Pranava vyaahriti purvakam Vedaadimaarabhya satatamadheeyaata, naantaraa viramet vyaaharedvaa naanyantaraa janana maranaashoucham/* (Once Vedadhyayana commencing from Pranava vyahritis is on, then this ‘adhyayana’ should not be interrupted in between and ‘ashoucha’ if any is not applicable in that situation.) *Udvaahaakura aarabhde maatraapitormriti yadi, Tatkaale sakalam kritvaa shesha hom,a, samaacharet/ Vivaaha sheha madhvetu dampatyormaranam yadi, Karma shesham tathah kritvaa pashchaaddhanamaacharet//* Smrityantara states that once ankuraarpana is performed and one of the parents is no more, then too the sheha homa be completed first; similar would be the case that during the course of the weddings too, the karma shesha be fulfilled first and then attend to the duties next!) *Bhunjaaneshu tu vipreshu hyantaramrita sutake, Anyagehodakaa chaantaa ssarvete huchayah smritah/* (Shatrimshanmate states: Even while Vipras are taking food, they obtain the Ashuchi then they could secure water from else’s house and perform ‘Achaanta’ to get them purified) Vishnu Purana warns: *Udakyasutikaa shuchi mritahaaraischa veekshite, Shraaddhe Suraana pitaro bhunjate purusharshabha/* (As shraddha karma is in progress, if a Rajasvala, a mother with days long child or persons carrying a dead body enter the scene, even Devas and Pitru Devas refuse to accept the offerings) Parashara Muni confirms: *Bhrugvagni marane chaiva deshaantaramrite tathaa, Baaleprete cha sanyaste sadyasshoucham vidheeyate/* (Sadyassoucha sutra is followed in case there might be a death on account of fire, or in a foreign land or of a child or sanyasi) Sadyassnaana is also performed on the death of father- mother in laws, Ritvijas, Teacher or enemies; the same is also applicable to those who die in national calamities, thunder strikes and battles. Paraashara Smriti also states: *Baale deshantarasthe cha patite cha yatou mrite, sadyasshouchanam tathecchato jalaagnyudbandhanaadishu/* Sadyasshouchana be also prescribed in connection with deaths of children, deshantara vaasis, patitas, yatis and of fire accidents and suicides) Vyasa Muni prescribes: *Ye mritaah paapamargena tesaam samvatsaraatparam Narayana balim krutvaa kuryaadoordhva kriyaam dvijah/ Tatra triraatramaashoucham dviteeyevasthisanchanah, triteeyetooda – kam datvaa chaturdhe shraaddha maacharet/* (When a dvija ends up in a ‘durmarana’ in an unnatural manner of death, then ‘Narayana Bali’ be performed followed by ‘urthva kriyas’; the Ashoucha would be for three days, as the second day would be for ‘asthi sanchayana’, third day to offer ‘Udaka’ and fourth day of ‘shraaddha’). Angira Maharshi too suggests the same procedure of Narayana Bali in the cases of ‘durmarana’ or suicides and either after three months, or six months or a year later, the Karta requires to

perform Praajaapatya vratas like Kruccha or Tapta kruccha or chandrayana vratas and Narayana Bali. Paraashara prescribes a few Nimitta Shouchas: ‘Garbha sraava’ sutaka would be for as many days as the month of the incident: the garbha sraava is upto four months, five and six months to be considered as ‘Patana’ or fall of the garbha and thereafter ‘prasuti’; the ‘sutaka’ is upto ten days. In case the Garbha sraava is upto three months, then the Ashoucha is for three months for the mother and snana for the father. *Navama maasamaarabhya prasava nimitta dashaahaadi sutakam, Sarva sapindaanaama sheshena bhavati ttrahi prasavo mukhyah/* (Dashaka grandha clarifies that the Ashuchi would be applicable to all the ‘Sapindas’ or what colloquially stated as ‘Jnaatas’) In this connection, the Sangraha Grandha explains in great detail: *Kanyakaajanane bhraatru pitru tadbhraatru tatsutah, Pitaamahashchatadbhraataashuddha -nti dasha raatratah/ Pumsi jaate sapindaanaam striyaam pitroh pituh pituh, Sodaraamaam pitruvyaa -naam tatsutaanaamagham bhavet/ Jananaashoucham dvididham, Asprushyatva lakshanam, Dharmaa nadhikaara lakshanam cheti, tatra asprushyatva lakshanam naasi kintu dharmaanadhikaara lakshana meva/ Janou sapindaasshuchayah maataa pitropi sutakam, Sutakam maatureva syaadupaspru -shya pitaashuchih, nirastu pumaan shuklamupasrushyavaiva shudhyati/ Vritssvaadhyaaya saapekshamagha sankochanam tathaa, asprushyatvaadi hetubhutam dashaahaparyantameva/ Daana dharmaanadhikaara lakshanantu putrajanane, vimshatai taatra paryantam stree janane maasaparyatamevacha/* (As a baby girl is born, Sutaka shuddhi is attained after ten nights to brothers of the baby, father, his brothers and their sons, paternal grand father and his brothers. In the event of arrival of a boy, all the Sapindas, maternal grand father, father’s brothers and their children would attract Sutaka. ‘Jananaashoucha’ is of two kinds viz. ‘Asprushyata lakshana’ and ‘dharmaanadhikaara’ lakshana: in the even of a birth, mother has asprushyata lakshana or forbidden of touch but father is free after bath but suffers from dharmaanadhi -kaara. As the birth takes place, the ‘sapindas’ remain unaffected but the parents have ‘sutaka’ although the father is freed after Shuddhi snana. In case the father touches the mother then only he gets affected but gets back ‘shuchitva’ after bath or even by the touch of silver. In any case the cause of this ‘asprushyata’ is for ten days, although the ‘daana dharmaanadhikara’ or the right to perform dharmika duties gets revived after twenty nights if a boy is born or after a month if a baby is born.) There are a few more do’s and don’ts in the context of ‘ashuchi’: one dvija is forbidden to touch during ashuchi with another dvija in a similar situation. In the event of death of a boy within ten days of his life, his relatives are unaffected but the father retains sutaka for ten days. If the boy passes away till he gets his teeth that sadyassoucha be observed, till his chhola ceremony then one night’s asuchi be observed; till upanayana samskara three nights and ten nights thereafter. Karma Pradipika states that if a boy or girl of less than three years dies, then kshana samskara or ‘bhu sthapanam’ be done and one day’s fasting be observed. Madhaviya however states: *Anateetaddivarshastu preto yatraapi dahyate, ashoucham braahmanaantu tritram tatra vidhyate/* (If a two year child dies then ‘Agni dahana’ in the normal course and three days of ashuchi be observed.) In case of death of a three years, then udaka-pinda daana be done as also three day of ashoucha. *Shastha varshaadaarabhya upanayana paryante karchavidhinaa samskritya tilodaka pinda daana nava shraddha, shodasha shraaddhaani mantravarjyam tantrata yevakuryaat/ Upanayanaat pitrupedha vidhinaa samskritya mantravat kuryat/* (From the sixth year to upanayana, the procedure would be by the ‘Ekarcha vidhi samskara’ with tilodaka, pinda daana, nava shraaddha, shodasha shraddha but without mantra but with tantra. After upanayana, the procedure is of ‘pitru vedha’ and also of mantra purvaaka vidhana. *Kanyaa balakumaareenam tryaham pindokaka kriyaah, Kuryaad dashaahamaashoucham vartate naatra samshayah/ Tathaa baalasya kanyaayaasshandasya patitasya cha, Narayana balih kaaryaahyanveshaam mokshakaankshinaam/* (To Kanyas and baala kumaaris on

death, pindodaka kriya is to be executed on the third day and ashoucha is prescribed for ten days. But in respect of boys, virgins and vagabonds, Narayana bali is required to be performed.) Apastamba says that when a girl dies even before the hair at the time of birth is intact, then Sadyah shoucha is prescribed and otherwise the ashoucha would be for three days. Once married the ashoucha is for three days and so would be if she had menses. If kanya daana is done and the girl delivers or dies in her father's house then the parents get Shuddhi after three days, says Vyasa Muni. Paraashara Muni refers to a boy whose upanayana had been performed dies then the dispensation would be as follows: *Ekaahyaat shuddhyate viproyo Agni Veda saanvitah, trayaat kevala Vedastu, nirguno dashabirdinaih/ Janmakarma pari - bhrashtah Sandyhopaasana varjitah, Nama dharak Viprastu dashaaham sutake bhavet/* (A vipra who observes Agni Karya and sandhya vandana daily should regain 'shuddatva' within a day, while he who knows Vedas should observe the same for three days but he who who is a Brahmana only by birth has to observe Ashuddhi for the full ten days; similarly a 'karma bhrashta' vipra who does not even perform Sandhya vanadana has necessarily to observe the 'ashutva' for full ten days as per established practice.!) As regards 'dutta putra shoucha', the family from whose father the adopted child takes place is not eligible to the gotra, property and other features while that into which the adopted child goes becomes eligible to the gotra , property and so on., as Manu instructs. Similarly all the shoutra, smaarta duties too get transferred. At the same time, Smrityantara clarifies: *Yadyamaantardashaa hyesyaaouraso dattha - krittimou, pindodakam dashaahnedadhyranyetvamaa tithoau/ Maataapitroh kriyaa uryaadouraso yadiputrakah, kulaantara pravishthaanaam ashoucham tryahamevatu/* (The 'pindodaka kriyas' of both the natural father and the adopted one, be duly performed even Amavasya occurs in between. This is applicable to both the parents. In case however, the adopted son goes to a new 'kula' or caste, then the ashuchi due to the death of the natural father would only be for three days.) *Janayituh putra poutraa praputraabhaave datta evaad aahakam, Sarvam kritvaa pratyabikam tanmritaah paaranam kuryaat/* (As the adopted father dies, the Datta Putra and later his progeny should perform all the 'Dashaahanaadi' duties and the annual duties) However, as a rule, the elder son of any father should not be given away in 'duttata' or adoption: *Na jyeshtham putram dadyaat pratigrihni yaadvaa/* Also, if the adopted son begets a son further, then the original grand father or family being of a different gotra has no 'ashoucha' but a formal snaana would purify.) As regards 'Tri Raatraashoucha' or 'ashuchi' for three nights, Brihaspati stipulates: *Tryaham maataa mahaa aacharya gotriyeshva shuchirbhavet, maatrupyaa saamaatulayoh shvashu shvashurayor gurau mrite chartviji yaajye chatri raatrena vishudhyati/* (Death of maternal grandfather, one's own guru and sva-gotreeyas would have 'ashuchi' for three day-nights). Angira Muni provided details: 'Tri Raatraashoucha' is applicable to maternal grand parents, maternal uncle / his wife, father-in-law, mother-in-law, paternal brother and sister, mother's sisters and their sons, daughter and children. Pakshini Ashuchi or for a day and half is applicable for the following: Mother's sister's daughter and son; father's sister's children; niece; father's sister's children etc. However Pakshini is not applicable to births in one's family. More over, pakshini vidhi which is applicable in the case of wives is not applicable to the husbands such as her father's brothers and their children; her father's sisters and son. Aneka-ashoucha krama: *Antaraatu dashaahnasya punarmarana janmani, Taavatraaad ashuchirviproyaa-vattsyaadanirdasham/* (Paraashara Maharshi instructs that during the 'dashaah' or the ten day long period of ashuchi, if there occurs another birth or death, then from that day onward, a vipra needs to observe ashuchi for further ten days.) Angira Muni however states that this procedure is applicable only to deaths occurring during the period and not to births; that is: mritaashoucha and not sutakaashoucha. He states further: *Svalpaashouchasya madhyetu deerghaashoucham bhavedyati, tatpurvena vishuddhisyaat*

svakaakaalenaiva shuddhyati/ (In case a long duration spell of Ashoucha is to happen along side a shorter spell, then there would be shuddhi or relief from the shorter duration ashuchi and the longer spell of ashuchi would take its course) Vyasa mentions of further dimension of ashoucha within another ashoucha: *Triraatra mrita madhyetu dashaaham jaataka bhavet, Mritaashochena shuddisyadityaah Bhagava Yamah/*(Assuming that a ten night long jaataashoucha during the course of a three night mritaashoucha, then Yama Raja is quoted by Vyaasa saying that the vipra concerned would be freed from the mritaashoucha) Manu also stated: *Atikrante dashaahetu tritaamashichirbhavet, Samvatsare vyateetetu sprushtaivaapovishudyati/* (As one becomes aware of a death of sagotra after ten days, then instead of ten days, one needs to observe Ashuchi for three Triratras) Vashishtha states: *Masatraye triraatram syat shanmaase pakshni tathaa, Ahastu navamaadarvaak urthvam snaanato shuddiyati/*(As the intimation of death reaches late then the Vipra needs to observe ‘tri-ratras’ after three months, pakshini after six months, one day after at the delayed intimation of over a year, and thereafter by a shuddi snaana!)

Shraaddha Dharma Prakarana

Asaamardhyaaccharirasya Vaishamyaaddesha kaalayoh, Snaanantyetaani tulyaa nimantraani yadhaa - balam/(Yagnyavalkya states that in the evolution of time when human beings gradually dwindle in their body strength and resistance, even ‘mantra japa snaanas’ as per one’s own capacity are indeed ideal) He further says that when they display Urdhvapundras or wear bhasma rudraakshas, ultimately they have to reach the destination by air anyway at the end! *Tulasidala sammishram api sarshama maatrakam, Gangaajalam punaateva kulanaamekavimshati/*(One tulasi leaf with a drop of Ganges water with faith could bestow salvation to twenty one generations!) *Vyaadhiviyasanani nishraante durbhikshe daamare tathaa, Upavaasovratam homah dvijaissampaaditaaniva/ Brahmanaa jangamam teertham teertha bhutaahi saadhavah, tesham vayodakenaiva shuddhyanti malinaa janaah/ Braahmanaa yaani bhaashante manyantetaani Devataah, Sarva Veda mayo Vipra na tadvachana manyathaa/ Yo mrityu kaale samprapte gaam dadaati payasvineem, Gavaadarshita maargena Brahma lokam maheeyate/ Sangjnyaa –haanou marananepi sannihitah dadyaaditi, Vyaasah : Aaturovaadha putrova dadyu - raasanna bandghavaah/ Maha paatakayuktovaa sarva paatakaaih, Parampadam prayaatyeva mahad- bhiravalokitah/ Yathaa kathamchit Govinde keertitevaa shrutopivaa, Paapinopi vishuddhassyuh shuddhaa mokshavaap- nuyah/ Shiva Shiva Shiva cheti vyaaharanvai trivaaram tyajati nija tanuh, yasvaayushonantyakshane- smin bhavati bhava bhayaanaa, Chhedakah purva shabdo na bhavata itaroudvou kalpitaatyopakarou/* (Paraashara Muni explains the Mumursha prayaschitta vidhi as follows: As dvijas are subjected by the Adhi daivika- adhi bhoutika- adhyaatmika difficulties, then only upavaasas, vratas and homa karyas set to Daamara Shiva Tantra are the singular refuge points. Indeed the steps taken by Brahmanas and Jangamas are the unique Tirtha Places and their auspicious expressions are such as to purify the great sins of the ordinary classes of the Society instantly. The words of Brahmanas are such that Devatas pay attention to respectfully. Similarly, Vipras are Sarva Vedamayaas and their expressions would never fail! As one approaches death, charity of a milk yielding cow leads to Brahma Loka. Parashara further quotes Vyasa Muni assuring that as a person’s death is round the corner unable to recognise, then go daana on behalf of the person would go a long way and as the charity is given away even a sinner of magnitude would jump the ways towards Paramapada. Some how if the dying person is enabled to sing in praise of Govinda or atleast hear the hymn would most positively purify his heart and soul. Pronounciaton of Shiva-Shiva- Shiva shabd as thrice over should destroy the fears of death and serve as the pointer to Moksha!) Vishnu Maharshi desires that the sons and relatives ought to whisper into the

person's right ear of *Punya Suktas* and *Mantraksharaas* as they realise of risk of life. *Vaishtha* strongly advises: *Pitrumarana kaaletu runamochanaat, Mastakastu samaadaaya dakshinasyatu jaanuni/ Shraavayetpunya sultaani punya mantraaksharaani, tatastu nirgate vaayou kushaagreshu vinikshipet/*(To secure 'Pitru runamochana' the sons should keep the father's head on their right thighs and enable him to hear *punyasuktas* and after the *praana* *vayu* and breathing stops ticking then rest the body on *darbhas*!) This above indeed is the *mumoorshu prayaschitta vidhi*. Now, *mumoorshoh daana vidhi* as follows: *Maha Bharata* describes that the distance between *Bhu loka* to *Yama loka* is 86000 *yojanas* (13 km in one *yojana*) and in that *loka* is full of hot sand, thorny, with no water and shade. *Pracheta Muni* therefore pre-warns that what ever *daanas* are given before one's life or at its end could see through the way suitably and hence the significance of *mumursha daana*. *Gobhutila hiranyaajya vastra dhaanya gudaani cha, Roupyam lavana mityaahurdasha daanaani panditaah/Etaani dasha daanaani naranaammrityu janmanoh, kuryaa dabhyudayaardham cha pretepi paratra cha/ Vidyaa pravasato mitram, bhaaryaa mitram gruhe satah, Aturasya bhishak mitram daanam mitram maripyatah/*(The *dasha daanas* to be made during one's life time or atleast at the end of life's journey are the ten viz. cow, land, tila, gold, ghee, *dhaanya*, jaggery, coins and salt to facilitate the post-death journey. Indeed, knowledge and education is the essential friend while abroad or elsewhere other than one's village or township; in one's own household, wife is the best friend; a physician is the best friend in illness; above all *daana karma* is the saviour at the time of death!) Following is the *Paryushita prayaschitta*: A person who dies before *Brahmi Muhurta* is called *paryushita* and to accord *shuddhi*, a *prayashitta* is required to be performed. *Gargya Muni* states that '*pretasamskara*' is required to be performed before twenty five *ghadis* of day time; if for any reason, the body is not disposed off, then that is called for '*paryushita*' *prayaschitta* which includes *kruccha traya vrata* and *pancha gavya snaana* of the body before '*dahana karma*'. *Bodhaayana* emphasises that in the event of death in nights, it is preferred to perform the next *dahana* next day. *Smrityantara* states : *Kumbha meena sthite chandre maranam yadi jaayate, mritastu sadgatim gacchet anyeshaam ashubkam bhavet/* (When *Chandra* is in *kumbha-meena* *rashis*, the one so dead would be blessed with '*Sadgati*'). *Jamadagni* prescribes: *Pituh putrena kartavyaah pindadaanodaka kriyaah, Ashaktopyadagnudah putrah shesghamanyassmaapayet/* (As *pindadaanodaka kriyas* as also *Agni karyas* are required to be executed by sons, but if unable, they might only perform the '*dahana*' and the rest be deputed by a proxy). *Smrityan - tara* states that *Nava Shaaddha*, *Sapindatva*, *Sixteen Shraaddhas* be preferably done by the same *karta*. *Bhinna maatrukaanaam putraanaam samavaye yojanmato, jyeshtha ssayeva piruh kuryaat namaa - truto jyashthah, Sarvatra janma jyeshthasvaivagrahanaat/* (Even if there are different mothers, the eldest by birth only should perform the *Pitru karya*.) *Manu* states: *Vananam daha - nam vaapi pretasya nyasya garbhavaan, Na kuryaadu bhayam tatrakuryaadeve pitussadaa/* (A person whose wife is in a family way should not perform *dahana kriya* to any body else except to his own father) *Jyeshthasya chaanapatyasya maatulasyya sutasyacha/* (A person could perform *dahana kriya* to his elder brother without sons or a maternal uncle without sons) *Bhrigu Maharshi* states: *Ashaktastu daahamaa -tram mantravadeva kuryaat anyatsarvam, Pratyasaannena kartaantrena darbha pradaana anujnayayaa kaarayet/ Deekshatopyeka putraschenmaataapitromriti yadi, darbha Samskrutyashaalaamaagatya yajna shesham samaapayet/* (If a person is unable to perform the *Pitru/ Maatru Karma* might execute the *dahana* with mantras formally and authorise a proxy by giving *darbha pradaana* while being in his presence. Even if during a *vrata deeksha*, if a person's mother or father dies, the *deeksha* be set aside for the being and resumed as he is freed from the duty to re-enter the '*Yagnya -shaala*'). *Marichi Muni* describes the approved practices of the following: *Putrah poutrascha tajjascha putrikaa putra evacha, Patni bhraataa cha tajjascha*

pitaamaahaa snushaa tathaa, Bhagini bhaagineya scha sapindo dhanaha - aryapi purvam purvam vinaashesyu ruttarotara pindadaah/ (In the absence of son, grandson, great grandson, daughter's son, brother in law ie. wife's brother, his son, father, mother, daughter in law, sister, nephew and so on, then the relevant further generations are required to provide 'pindapradaana') *Pitra douhitrayolloke visheshonaasti dharmatah, Douhitrohyakhilam aputrasya piturharet, Sayevapa - dadyaat dvou pindou pitre mataamahaayacha/ Dhana grahanaa bhavepi douhitro dhikaari, Douhitra apeksha yaa patnuaah praadhmyamaaha sangraha kaarah/ Putrah kuryaat pituh shraaddhe patnicha tada sannu - dhou, Dhana haaryadha douhitrastato bhraataa cha tatsutah/ Aprajaa -yaam ateetaayaam bhartureva tadipyate, Patireva kriyaam kuryaadaputraayaamrita striyaah/* (Manu further states that there is no difference in the douhitra or the daughter's son or own son, as in the absence of a son, the property would go to douhitra and douhitra has to perform pinda pradaana to the previous generations of daughter's parents. If even douhitra is not in place, then one's own wife gets primacy as decided by sangraha kaaraka. It says: 'In the absence of father, priority would be a son, or the son's wife in the absence of the son, or douhitra, or brother of the deceased or his son. If there are no children, the wife has to perform the or vice versa)

As regards the kind of Agni in which the body is to be consigned, it is said that in case the departed one was an 'Ahitaagni', then three Agnis be utilised; an 'Anahitaagni' or that Vipra be consigned in 'Aoupaasanaagni' or Ekaagni, and others in 'loukikagni'. Vasishtha states that in case wife dies earlier to husband, he should be consigned to Aouposanaagni with 'paitrumedhika samskara'. If wives outlive husbands, the relevant type is 'Uttapanaagni' and if the reverse happens then the 'Agnisangraha'.

Referring to Upaveeta niyama, one knows that Upaveeta is required to perform Praanayama, Namaskara, Snaana, Pradakshina, Pitru karya and Preta Karma. Bharadvaja states: *Karmaavaasane karmaadou mritaa -vaamachanam punah kuryaat svakarma shddhyardham sarvadaa sarvakarmasu, Tatobhyantara shuddhyardham praanaayaamaan samacharet/ Praacheenaaveetinaa karyam pretakarmacha paitrukam, niveetino vaheyustejnaatinonyecha vaahakaah/ Aavaahanerghye sankalpe pindadaane tilodake, Akshayaa sanayoh paadye gotram naamacha keertayet/* (In connection with the karma after death, the Karta has to perform 'aachamana' before and there after. To enable Siddhi or proper conclusion of the Karma, he would have to perform praanaayama. Either at a preteta karma or pitru karya, one has to wear the yanopaveeta in 'praacheenaaveeti' or reverse position, while the jnaatas or near dear seeking to carry the body must wear the Sacred Thread as a garland. As and when the acts of Aavaahana, Argjhya, Sankalpa, Pinda daana, Tilodaka, Akshshaya, Aasana and Paadya are to be taken up then it becomes incumbent to announce the gotra naamas of the Kartas)

Preta nirharana prakaraa: Manu prescribes that the 'preta' or the body be shrouded by a new but torn cloth as Rigvedis follow but Yajurvedis cover with a new cloth in full. Pracheta Muni describes: *Snaanam pretasya putraadaih vastraadyaih pujanantataha, Pretam dahet shubhairgandhascharchitam sragva bhushitam/* (Sons or other intimate persons perform snaana, vastraadi puja and 'alankaara' with sandalwood paste and flower garlands) Vasishtha prescribes that a temporary wooden ladder made of aoudumara tree as adequately strung to bear the weight of the body be arranged and the body be placed with the face looking to the sky and hands tied to with the head on the southern side; it should not be head reversed nor look back to the village or town) *Vridhaah pretasya puratahstriyo baalascha prishthatah, Atha kritottareeyaassyuh pravimukta shiriruhah, Gaccheyur baandhavaah paschaanaagnyeh pretasyachaantaraa/* (The old, women and children should wear their 'uttareeyas' or the upper cloths hanging down and hairs untied as they should stay back and none should cross the 'pretaagni' being

carried by the karta.) ‘Pitrumethasaara’ stipulates the materials to precede the funeral procession to the burial ground and not to follow: *Agnenimadha sambhaaraamstilas- tandulaam charum, Palaasha shaakhaam hirany shakalaanyaajyam patraani darbhaasma sikataascha prasthaapyaatha pretam haryurna graamaabhi mukham pretam nirhareyuh/* (Even before the body and the pretaagni leads the procession, the relevant material required for the funeral must precede separately well ahead of the arrival of the body and the material should include tila, raw rice, wooden pieces, palasha tree’s branch, gold, pearls, ghee, darbhas, stone, sand and so on.)

Dahana prakara: Vyaghrapada Maharshi instructs: *Naadhomukham nanagnam cha daheranmala dushitam, Ayagneeya samidhascha chandaala patitaahritaih/Krimikeetaadi dushaischana dahettu charantanaih, Vastram parityajedardhamb ardhantu paridharayet/*(The body as kept on the pyre should not be kept reverse faced, naked, uncleaned and unbathed. The quality of wood utilised for the pyre should be worthy of use at Yagnya karyas, but not with wormed, spoilt and uncouth wood. The body be draped half naked and half covered) Apastamba Sutras stipulate: *Athainam chitaavuparyadh puhadyathaasya praanaayataneshu, Hiranya shakalaan pratyasyat aajya bindunvaa/* (As the body is suitably arranged on the pyre, then gold, pearls and ghee drops be placed at the heart and nose.) Bodhayana suggests: *Dadhyaaajya tila tandulaan pretasya aasyetu nikshipet/* (At the mouth of the body be placed curd, ghee drops, black tilas, and rice) Vasishtha details: *Agni ksheponaadhi shavah Shrutaavaahuti darshanaat, Aahutyupari vikshepaattatkarma viphalam bhavet/ Sarvata eva sahasaa prajjvaalayet, Brahma lokamajaisheedityenam jaaneeyaaditi/ Vastram samshodhayedaadou tatah snaanamaacharet, Sachelastu punah snaatvaashichih prayatamaanasah/ Anugamyamritam pretam jnaateenapyanusrutyaacha, Snaatvaa ghritam cha bhakshitvaa punah snaanam samaacharet/* (Vedas emphasise that the body should not have ‘Aahuti darshana’ or the sight of Agni by the body, as that karma would become futile. At the same time the fire on the fire should at once be made to blaze as the preta should have the awareness that he or she would soon arrive at Brahma Loka! Having patiently waited till the Fire consumes the body fully, then the Karta should perform ‘sachela snaana’ or with the same clothes as the deed was performed and remain clean in body and mind. Those who accompany the body should take repeated baths to remove the ‘ashuchi’ of the body and consume ghee.)

Vapana Vidhi: *Akrutvaa vaoanam mudhah preta karma pravartate, Udakam pinda daanam cha shraaddham chaivahi nishphalam/ Vapanam dhahanaatpurvam kuryaacchetpitru ghatakah, Tasmaat sarva prayetnena vapanam dahanaat param/*(Without ‘vapana karma’ or head shave, the karta is not authorised to perform Udaka-Pinda daana-Shraadha karmas after the preta karma and all these deeds would be fruitless otherwise. Again, ‘kshura karma’ before the ‘dahana’ is stated to be a ‘pitru ghaata’ and is equally condemnable.) The ‘Sangraha’ stipulates that who so ever undertakes the ‘dahana karma’ - be it a brother, or his son, any ‘Sapinda’, or ‘Shishya’, even young of age ought to shave off head and moushtache. If the ‘dahana karma’ would necessarily have to be performed in the nights then ‘udaka kriya’ be performed and the vapana karma be postponed to next morning. Vapana or Head shave would be a ‘must’ to the kartas, even if the death takes place on a Friday night, on the tenth day, or otherwise but definitely in connection with the death of one’s own parents. Vapana vidhi is also prescribed at the deaths of grand fathers, father’s brothers, maternal uncle, elder brother, father in law, paternal aunts, mother’s sisters, sisters etc. even if one’s wife is in the family way. On the twelfth day when ‘sapindee karana’ would have been done, then vamaana karma should not be done.

Dashama dina kartavya: Akhanda Darsha states that the duty of the Karta would be to give away daana of vasrta, raw rice, ghee, and a vessel to Brahmanas to offset the 'nagnatva dosha' or the blemish of nakedness to the departed. *Navamvaasa - stilaaka darbhaaka kumbhamiti sambhrutya tirtham gatvaa snaatvaa teerakrite kunde kartaa sankalpya preta maavaahya, : 'Ayaahi preta' iti shilaa sthaapayet/* (The karta should take bath preferably in a water body, carry with him new clothes, tila seeds, darbhas and pot full water and invoke the 'Preta swarupa' stating 'aayaahi preta' and welcome it into a stone. As long as the Kartha is freed from the 'ashoucha', this stone as represented by the Preta should be offered water and 'Pinda'.) The Karta should be south faced, keep the darbha corners south ward and without entering a temple near the water flow keep a pinda on the threshold and leave the 'pinda shesha' into the water flow quietly. Two sizeable pindas of the size kapittha or bilva fruits be kept in 'paarvana' and a small pinda of dhatri phala size be given away at Gaya shradda during Mahalaya paksha / fort night so dear to Pitru devatas. 'Ekoddhisha Sapindana' or meant only to one viz. the departed Soul be made of coconut size and offer the rest of egg size pindas at the rest of the shraddhas. *Vastra paashaana kumbhaanaam sthaalyaah karturvyiparyaye, purvadatto- dakam kuryaatpunarityeha Devalah/* (Smrityantara quotes that Devala Muni stated that the vastra-shila- ghata-sthaali be returned by karta only after installing them with respects with 'udaka' after the Ashuddhi period. The 'Preta paashaana' or the stone into which the preta had been invoked into, should not be disturbed for ten days.) *Adhaikottara vridhhi shraaddham purvoktam dadyaat, Yasmin dine yaavanti uda- kaanjali daanaani, taavanti shraaddha nyaasa rupena pratyaham deyaani/ Pradhamehni triteeyehni panchame, Saptame tadhaa Navamaikaadashe chiva shannava shraaddhamuchyate/* (Smrityantara continues to explain that ekottara vridhhi shraaddha having been performed, each of the days of Ashuddhi demands 'udakaanjali daana' as per 'shraaddha nyasa'; the first, third, fifth, seventh, ninth and eleventh days of the death be observed for the 'shannava' or the six shraddhas.) Apastamba desires: *Aaparedyustriteeya syaam panchamyam saptamyam vaastheeni sanchanvanti/* ('Asthika sanchayana' be executed on the third, or fifth, or seventh days of 'Ashuddhi') YogaYagnyavalkya prefers the 'asthi nimajjana karma' to be preferred in Ganga or Yamuna or Kaveri or Sarasvati and such other sacred rivers. He states further: *Dashamehni pretasya mahaateekshudbhavati tannivrittijh, prabhuta balinaa bhavati dashama dina pindodakanaat/ purvam kaaryah tilodakecha pindecha pradatte dashamehani ashmano sthaapanam krutvaa tatah pretam visarjayet/* (On the tenth day the preta would get extremely hungry and to assuage it bali or sacrifice is to be executed and that needs to be done before pindodaka daana, tilodaka and raising the shila as represented by the preta and finally the preta is released free.) If within the ten day period, Amavasya intervenes, then pinda karya be done therebefore.

Kartu niyamas: Till such time that the Karta attains 'Shuddhata' or relief till preta vimo -chana, he has to consume only limited bland food with no salt or sweet taste and sleep on the ground with minimum comfort. *Nashte shavaagnou tad bhasma samspru- syaarani mandhanam, Loukikaagnya ahutih Smarte sarva chittam dvayossamam/* As the shavaagni is lost, the Sacredness of that ash is as much as that of 'araani manthana-agni' or that of 'Loukikaagni'! While the elder brother- the Karta- would be with Asthi sanchayana, the younger brother might attend to performing Samskaras and Udaka Kriyas. Once the elder one returns, he would return to Ateeta Udaka pinda daanas, Svakaala kandodaka daana, and ekoddishta. Dampatya saha mritoukrama: In the event of both husband and wife ending up at the same time, Harita Muni instructs: *Dampatossaha mritioutu saha daakriyaahhaadikaah, Pragdaahaadanyana ashecha tadurdhvantu punahkriyaa/* (In case of death of the Couple, Daahaadikas are to be done simultaneously or

other wise after the ‘dahana kaarya’ at the relevant times of death be performed accordingly) Pitru medha Saara emphasises that in the event of separate deaths, the following be practised: *Hiranya shakala nagnapracchhadana vaasastilodaka pindai- kottara vridhhi nava shraaddha sodha kumbha vrishorsarga shodasha shraadhani prithak pridhaghbava- nti charu karyam chitih kundamasthi shamchayanam shanti homascha tantram edoddishta sapindeekara -naadishu nimitta varana homou pridhabhavatah paaka homa aishvaadevaadikam tantram*/(All the related deeds like suvarna daana, vastra to shroud, tilodaka, nava shraaddhas with separate Pindas, Charukarya, Chiti / funeral kumbha/ pot, Asthi sanchayana, Shantihoma, Ekoddishta sapindeekarana at the Varuna - homas and so on be segregated twice all over.) But in the event of simultaneous deaths, Harita Muni instructs: *Sanghata marane pitror dvaadashaaha sapindanam, kuryaat putrastadanyeshaam tripaksho kaarayebudhah*/(In the event of simultaneous ends, the son as the karta should perform ‘sapindikarana’ on the twelfth day; to other simultaneous deaths of Sapinda Persons if any, the sapindikarana be done in ‘Tripakshas’ or three fortnights thereafter)

Shodasha Shraaddhas: *Shodashaadeeni sarvaani kuryaadekaadashehani, Sapindeekaranaam chaapi kuryaa- dvaadashaadehani*/(The ‘Shodashaas’ are required to be performed on the eleventh date of the death, when ‘sapindeekarana’ too could be executed on the same day or on the twelfth day.) Gokhila Maharshi explains the details of the Sixteen Shradhas: *Desha kaalaadi vaishamyamrityu rogaadi shankayaa, Ekaadashehi kaaryaanhiyapa krishyaapi shodasha*/(On the eleventh day of the death, the Karta takes the precaution of performing Sixteen shradhas in advance, as any of the limitations like sudden death, disease or such eventualities might occur there after) *The list of sixteen shraaddhas as scheduled during the course of the year after death and to be performed in advance on the eleventh day following the death are as follows: Ekaadasho bhavedyaam maasyune hyuna maasikam, Traipakshakam Tripakshakam tripakshesyaadhunashaan maasikam tatdaa/Prati maasam mritaaheeshu unaabdam cheti shodasha*/(The first masika is on the eleventh day, then Unamaasika at less than one month, Traipaakshika or on the 45 th day, Unashaanmaasika or before six months, the day/ tithi of death each month and Una abdika ie before the conclusion of the first year) Paithinasi Muni stipulates: *Sapindeekaranaadarvaak kurvan shraaddhaani shodasha, Ekoddishta vidhaanena kuryaatsarvaani taanitu/ Sapindeekaranaad urdhvam yadaakuryaattada punah, pratyabdam yo yadhaa kuryaat tathaakuryaataadaa punah*/(After sapindeekarana while performing shodasha shraaddhas every thing is to be done on ‘ekoddishta’.) Yama Dharma Raja prescribes: *Sapindikaranam naiva kuryaadevou - rasassutaah, Ekoddishtam nakurveeta yatee- naamchiva sarvadaa, Ahannekaadashe praapte paarvan shraaddha maacharet*/(Yama Raja stated that aurasa putras are forbidden to do sapindeekarana and similarly ekoddishtas are not to be done to ‘yatis’; on the eleventh day, paarvana shraaddha needs to be done)

Sapindeekarana: Sapindikarana is to be done on the twelfth day after death or on the day after a year, says Ashvalayana. *Samvatsare sapindee- karanam ekaadashe maasi sheshthaavaa chaturdheva dvadashe - nivaa*/(Bodhaayana states that sapindeekarana be performed within one year of death on the day of the eleventh month or the sixth month or the fourth month failing the twelfth day.) *Saagnikastu yadaakartaa preta shyaapyagnimaan bhavet, Dvaadasheha tathaa kaaryam sapindeekaranaam pituh/ Ubhayoranagni katve dvaadashaahaada- yah kalaah vikalpante*/(Sapindeekarana to father is to be done if both the Karta as also the departed father were of Agni karyas daily, then sapindikarana be better done on the twelfth day of the father’s death.) Shridhara Maharshi opines: *Ekaadasha ha maarabhya yaava daashodashaaddi naat, Sapindeekaranaam kuryaat tatha saptadashehneevaa*/(Sapindeekarana could be performed on any day between eleventh to sixteenth or even on the seventeenth) Garga Muni states : *Krishna pakshetu*

panchamyaam ashtamyaam darsha yevavaa, Ekadashyam tu kartavyam svaalaa karanesati/ (Sapindeekarana be performed on krishna paksha panchami, Ashtami, Amavasya or Ekadashi in case not possible on the twelfth day of death). Smriti Ratna instructs: *Amaayaamchakshayhahe preta pakshe tadhaivacha, Shraddham sapindanam kuryaattithi vaarou nashodhayete/*(Shraddham and Sapindanam can be performed on Amavasya, day of death and Mahalaya Pakshas and there need not be discussion further). Now, Saapindya Adhikaara: *Pituh putrena kartavyam poutrenaapi sapindanam, Tadabhaavet patnisyat patnyabhava sodarah/ Aputraayaa mritaayaantu patihkuryaatsapindnam, Vayovasta - avisheshamanaa- drityasapindanam/ Vayovasthaa visheshamanaadritya sarvatra purushaanaam, Streenaam cha vivaahaadurdhyam sapindeekaranam karyameva/*(Shankha Muni states that Sapindana could be performed to a father by a son, grandson, and if need be by wife or her brother. If there is no progeny, husband can perform to wife. In fact, any body married either a husband or wife might perform sapindikarana without reference to age or relationship) Having dealt with thus, the Saapindya prakara is explained by Brihadvishnu as follows: *Piturmarana maarabhya dvaadashe divase charet, Preta bhaavani nirmoha pretasyavai pituh/ Pitaamahaadibhissardham saapindasya pasidhyate, Samaadoaka bhaavasya siddhyardhe cha pitussutah/ Yashaam pitaamahaadeenaam vidhinaa parvanenatu, Svapituh preta bhutasyatvekoddhishta vidhaanatah/*(As one's father dies, the Karta on the twelfth day performs sapindikarana to demolish the 'preta bhava' and as such the act needs to be done to the departed father by way of Ekoddishtha vidhana and to the Grand father by 'paarvana vidhi'.) Smrityantara also states: *Shraaddha dvaya mupakramya sapindikaranam bhavet, Paarvanam tatra purvam syaat ekoddhishamathaacharet/ Sapindikarana shraaddhe Devam purva niyojayet, Pitrunniyojayet paschat tatah pretam vinirdhishet/ Iti Devalam praaha Shandilyascha mahamunih, yatkinchitpaarana shraaddham tatra siddhyati naanyathaa/* (On initiating the Shraaddha dvaya and sapindikarana, first perform Paarvana and then Ekoddishtha. In the sapindikarana shraddha, the Karta should first address to Devas, then Pitru Devatas and then the Preta. Whenever parvana shraddha is to be done, a dvija should worship Vishnu foremost and then only the Shraddha phala would be reaped best, as both Devala and Shandilya Munis assert unanimously)

Pinda samyojana vidhi: An authority on this subject viz. Pitrumedha Saara is quoted: *Huta shesha mishrai - ranyaistila yuktaissapta pindaan kritvaa, Ucchishtha sannidhou agnerdakshinaha tredhaa dakshinaagaraan dcarbhaan samsteerya dakshinaa mukhah savyam jaanvaabhyateshu madhyama darbheshu maarjayantaam mamapituh pitarah ityaadibhah, paschima darbheshu maarjayantaam mama maatarah iti maarjayatryaa, maarjana kramena yetatatte pitustata ityaadibhah shadpindaan datvaa ye chatvaa manuyaashachatvaamanu iti prati pindam darbha muleshu lepam nimrujya, maarjayantaam mama pitaa pretah maarjayantaam mama maataa prtetyaapodatvaa amuka gotra amuka sharman pretayetam pindam upatishtheti preta pindam pradaaya, amuka gotre amuka naamipreta iti striyaah/* (Now the huta shesha-anna or the remnant cooked rice, mixed with tilaas be mixed and seven pindas be prepared and placed at 'ucchistha' or remnants of food to the South of Agni. Three each of darbhas be spread out, with tops facing south. 'Maarjana' or wash with water drops be sprayed saying ' maarjayantaam mama pituh pitarah-pitarah/ maarjayantaam mama maataa maatruh-maatah etc. Six pindas be placed following maarjana of each of the pindas and having announced the name and gotra of the concerned persons, the pindas be placed.) *Brahmanaabhyanujaatah samano mantrah, samaaneeva, iti dvaabhyaam, pretaarghyam pitraadarghyapaatre nineeya tushneem preta pinda -maadaaya trethaa vibhajya atbhaagatrayam pitraadi pindaanaam, purastaaannidaaya vaitarani godaanam krutvaanujnyapto, Madhumateebhah sangacchadhvam samaano mantra samaaneeva, Iti chaturbhispindaih sahatrayam*

hastaabhyaam yuapatsam srijet/ (While reciting ‘Braahmanaabhyanujaatah samaano mantrah samaaneena’, the karta should hold ‘pretaarghya’ with both the hands into the pitraaraghya paatra, take preta pindas, make three parts and place before the pitraadi pindas, perform vaitarini go daana and lift three of four pindas with both the hands and mix them up reciting the mantra: ‘Anugjnaptomadhu matee - bhiih sangacchadhvam samano mantrassamaneeva’. Now, the pitraadi pindaas and the preta pinda are mixed up with the mantra: ‘Ye samaanaaye sajaataa’ and with the ‘arghyodaka’ perform ‘maarjana’) Smrityantara states that when the gotra of any person is not known, then one could safely assume the gotra to be of Kashyapa as indeed the ‘sarva praja’ originated from Kashyapa Maharshi, as pe Vedas. When the names of Pitru-Pitaamaha- Prapitaamaha are not known then the father, grandfather and great grand father are called Prithivishat, Antarikshasat, and Divishat respectively. Jamadagni firmly believes that Vaitarini river flowing with unimaginable speed, full of putrid and unbearable smell with bones, hair and blood is impossible to cross but for godaana!

Soda kumbha vidhi: Katyayana Maharshi explains: *Prati maasam darshaadouvaa maasikaadyaanya dineva, Ateeta sodakumbha shraadhaanyaahatya dadyaat/ Sa pindeekaranaadurdvam varsham varshaardhamevaa, na kuryaatpaarvana shraaddham ashtakaana vihanyate/ Ashoucham dvaadasha - ahaantam nakuryaaddevataarchanam, Sakuryaat pitru kaaryaani daanam hoam japam tathaa/*(One can perform Soda kumbha shraddha at the beginning of every Amavasya day, or before each Maasika, along with any left over Agni karyas. But sapindeekarana or parvana shraddha are discounted as the left over Agni karyas. *Since Asoucha persits till the twelfth day of Ashuichi after a death in the family, and Devatachana, Pitru karyas, daana, homa and japas are not allowed.*)

Abdika Shraaddha: *Yasminmaasi mritih paksheya syayasyaam tithou bhavet, Tasyaameva tithou kuryaa daabdikam vichakshanah/* (Dharma Sudhaa nidhi states that those who possess even normal awareness of Dharma would perform Abdikas on the tithi, paksha and maasa of death of a person concerned every year) Chandrika Grandha too having confirmed the same explains about the Souramaana and Chaandra maana: *Darshaaddarshashcchaandrah trimshaaddhivasaastu saavano maasah, Ravi sankrama chihnou - sou Soura maaso nigadyate tajnaih/ Darbhantah purnimaantasha chaandhro maasod vidhaayatah, Jaatibhedaaddesha bhedaat toucha maasou vyavasthitiu/ Narmadaa dakshine bhaage darshaanto maa ityate, Narmadottara bhaagetu purnimaanta iti sthiti/ Tratechaandramaasam shastam nashraaddeshu prashayate, Asthiraachaandra maasasyaat shtira siurotra kaaranam/* (The persons with knowledge affirm that from Amavasya to Amavasya be reckoned as Chaandramaana, and thirty days from Saavana maasa occurs Solar Eclipse and hence Soura maana. From Amavasya to Purnima, Chandra maana is divided in two parts. Due to differences of Jaati and Desha, two months have come to be counted; the area down South of Narmada, Amavasya is considered as the last day of a month where as the land up beyond Narmada, Pournami as the last day of a month. It is stated that Chaandra maasa is fruitful to perform vratas, but not shaddhas; chandra maasas are unsteady while Soura maasaas or firm and steady.) *Aaditya gatimupajeevyaayana nishpatteh Souramevaitat/* (Thus, divisions occur as Soura maana and Chandra maana, due to the movement of Sun) In case during the Souramaana, there occur two tithis, then Masika Abdikas be performed on the subsequent tithi. If on that tithi there occurs Solar Eclipse then the Abdika be performed after ‘aparahna’ or if the eclipse takes place after aparahna, then the ceremony be done next tithi. Gautama Muni states: *Madhyaahna vyaapini yasyaatsaikodhishthe tithir bhavet, aparaahna vyapini syaat paarvanesaa tithir bhavet/*(If the shraddha is of ‘ekoddishta’ type then one should reckon the ‘madhyaahna vyaapi tithi’ while ‘paarana shraddha’ be ‘aparaahna vyaapi’) Vyasa clarifies: *Muhurta*

tritayam praatah taavaanevatu sangavah, Madhyaahnah trimuhurtasvaadaparaahna- api taadrushah, Saayaahnastri muhurtastu sarva karma bahishkrutah/ Roudraschatrastadhaa maitras - tadhaa saalakatah smritah, Savitrascha jayantascha gaandharvah kutapa tathaa/Rouhinascha virimhas- cha Vijayonairatasthaa, Maahendro Varunaschaiva bodhah panchadashasmritah/ (There are three muhurtas in a day viz. three muhurtas in praatah kaala, three muhurtas in sangama kaala, three in madhyahna kaala and three in saayam kaala. No shraddha karmas be done in saayam kaala. During the day time, there are 15 muhurtas vix. Roudra, Chaitra, Maitra, Saalakata, Jayanta, Gandharva, Kutapa, Rouhina, Virinchi, Vijaya, Nairuta, Maahendra, Varuna and Bodha) Kaala nirnayakara says: Almost all of the Shrutis and Smritis reckon the day time into five divisions and normally this method is accepted.) Bodhayana clarifies: *Aparaahnadvaa vyaapinyateetasyacha yaatithih, Kshaye purvaat kartavyaa vriddhyokaaryaa tadhottaraa/* (If there are two ‘apararahnas’ on the same tithi, Shraddha karma be considered for the following day). *Pitrumritah pitrupitaamaha prapitaamahaanaamuddeshyatam, Maatru Pitamahi prapitaamahinaam uddeshyattam/* In the abdika for the father, the grand father and great grand father be too addressed while the Maatru abdika, the pitamahi and pra-pitamahi too are included in the list of three generations. Vishnu Rishi further clarifies that in the mother’s abdika: *Maaturmritah pitradeen homa pindaih prapujayet/Ekoddhishteshu sarveshu sapindeekarantathaa, Maasikesvaabdikeshu chava na kuryaattila tarpanam/* (In the mother’s abdika, Pitraadis be offered homa pinda puja. Another caution is that Tila tarpanas are forbidden in ekoddishtha in maasikas, sapindeekaranas and Abdikas)

Mala maasa or Adhika maasa: *Chandromaasohya samkraanto mala maasa prakeertitah, Yadaadvi sankraa - ntiyukto maaso bhavet tadaa kshayamaaso varjaneeyah/ Amhaspatiryadaikasmin chandre dvaa sankra -mou tathaa, Darshadvayam yadaikasmin Siure samsarpako bhava/*(Mala maasa is defined as has no Solar Eclipse during Chaandra mana and is also called Adhika maasa. If during one month, there occur two Solar Sankramanas, that is called Akshaya maasa, said Amhaspati. In the event of two Surya Sankrantis occurring in one chandra maana then that month be discarded too. Again in one Soura maasa if two Amavasyas occur, then that is called Samsarpaka. Incidentally, during the Mala Masaa, digging of wells, water bodies, yagnya karmas and daana vratas are forbidden.) However, Kaala Nirnaya endorses Jaata krama, Pumsavana, Seemanta and such acts could be approved during the Adhika maasa if need be.

Darsha Shraaddha: Vishnu Purana describes this in detail: *Shraddham shraddaanvitah kurvan preena yatyakhilam jagat, Maasi maasyaite pakshhe pancha dashyaam Nareshwara/ Nanirvapati yah shraddham prameeta pitrukodvijah, Indukshaye maasi maasiprayashchitteeyatehi sah/ Pitrun Maataa mahaamschiva dvijah shraaddhena tarpayet, Amaashtakaasu samkraantou paataadou grahaneshu cha, Snaatvaa tilodakam datvaa tatah shraddham samacharet/ Aparaahnah pitrunaantu yaapahaarnaanu yaayini, Sagraahyaa pitru karyeshu na purvaastanuyaayini, Alpaaparaahnyaatyajyaamaagraahyaasyad adhika bhavet/* (One should actually perform shraaddha on every Amavasya tithi with devotion and faith to truly please Narayana. A dvija who failed to perform shraaddha to his dead father could atone by shraddhas every Amavasya. Even otherwise, he is instructed to satisfy the Pitru-Maata ganas with regular Darsha Shraddhas on Amavasyas. Besides Amavasyas, Tilodaka Shraaddhas be offered on Ashtakas, Sankrantis and Grahanas. It is essential to reckon suitable Tithis and ‘Aparaaparaahna’ considerations properly.) Narada Maharshi states that in case Amavasya extends Aparahnas then preference be accorded to Shraddha karmas and then take up Shubha Karyas.

Ashtakaa Shraddhas: Shounaka Muni describes the Ashtaka Shraddha vidhi: *Hemanta shishira*

yoshchaturnaama para pakshaanaam Ashtameeshu ashta - kaah/ Yaamaaghyaah pournamaasyaa uparishtaadvyashtakaa tasyaam, Ashtami jyeshthayaa sampadyate- taamekaashtaki tyachakshate/ Tilodakam pradaatavyam nirdhanenaapi bhaktitah, Ashtakaashraaddha sidhyardham proushtapanmaagha maasayoh/ (The krishna paksha Ashtami tithis of the hemanta and shishira months of Margashira-Pushya-Maagha-Phalgunas are called Ashtakas. Of the two Ashtakas followed by Maagha Pournami, the one with Jyesta is called Ekashtaka. It is required that a vipra, even if not so well to do, must offer tilodakas with faith for the fulfillment of Ashtakaa shraaddahs during Bhadrpada-Maagha months.)

Mahalaya Shraaddha: Markandeya Maharshi instructs all the Vipras: *Kanyaagate savitari dinaani dasha panchacha, aarvanaiva vidhinaa tatra shraaddham vidheeyate/*(As Surya enters Kanya Raashi's first fortnight, parvana vidhi shraaddha be performed daily.) Jaabaali gives further details on the subject: *Aagatepi Ravou kanyaam shraaddham kurveeta sarvadaa, Aashaadhyaah panchamah pakshah prashastah pitru karmasu/ Putraanaayustathaarogyam Aishvaryamatulam tathaa, Prapnoti panchame datvaa shraaddam kaamaanstathaaparaan/ Raveh Kanyaagatvena pakshoyam puja ipyate, Aadou vedaantarentaavaa shastah kanyaagate Ravou/ Kanyaagate Savitari itaroyantvai Sutaan, Shunyaa preta puree sarvaa yaavadrischika darshanam/Daivam pitaatato mataa sapatni janani tathaa, Maataamahaas - satapatnekaah pitruvyaa bhratarassutaah/Pitrusyha saamatulaascha, tanbhaginascha jaamaatah, Bhagini duhitaa bhaaryaa shvashuro bhaavukasnushaa/Syaalako gururaachaaryassvaami sakhyadayah kramaat, Bhojyam Mahaala shaadde ete kaarunikaahvyoh/ Pitrormrta dinaat purvam natanmaasi mahaalayam, Pitroh shraaddhantu nirvartya pashchaat kuryaan mahaalayam/* (As Surya enters kanyaa Raashi, Mahalaya Shraaddha is to be performed; Ashadha Panchami is ideal for Pitru Karmas and those who do so would surely attain good health, longevity, opulence and fulfillment of desired wishes. As Surya enters kanya raashi the Pitru Paksha is reckoned as extremely sacred; shraaddhas are best done in the beginning, or midway or at the end. The belief is that Surya's entry heralds the presence of departed pitru devas amid their progeny on earth and till such time that Surya enters Vrishchika Raashi, the pretapuri elsewhere would get emptied. The relatives who should partake in the Mahalaya Shraaddha bhojana include Daivam, and all others if departed viz. father, mother, step mother, maternal grandfather, his wife, father's brothers, brothers, children, father's sisters, maternal uncles, son in law, sister's daughter, wife, sister's husband, father in law, daughters in law, son in law, Guru and friends as these are all such would shower blessings to the karta (s). If father's annual shraaddha precedes in the Pitru Paksha, then the priority is to the annual ceremony first and then perform mahalaya shraaddha.)

Vridhi Shraaddhas: Vishnu Purana prescribes: *Jaatasya jaata karmaadi kriyaa kaandamasheshatah, Putrasya kurveeta pitraa shraaddham chaabhyudayatmaam/ Naamaanna choula godaana somoopenayana pumsave, Snaanaadhina vivaaheshu naandi shraaddham vidhiyate/ Purvaana eva naandisyat aparaahnetu paitrukam/* (As a son is born, Jaataadi karmas be performed significantly and at the same time the Pitru karyas too assume considerable importance. Naama karana, Anna praashana, Choula, Godaana, Soma, Upanayana, Pumsavana and so on. All these deeds are to be initiated with 'Naandi Shraaddhas' or opening ceremonies; these are all common to snaana-aadhana-vivaahadi deeds of high auspiciousness and fulfillment. Always the Naandi Shraaddhas are required to be done in the pre-noon timings while the paitru karmas are to be initiated after the noons.) Devala Muni feels: *Sthaaleeshu giri-prishtheshu teertheshvaayatanesu cha, Vivikteshu cha tushyanti pitarastathaa/* (Shraaddha Karyas performed on mountain slopes, tirthas, temples and Lonely Places provide great happiness to Pitru

devatas) *Pushkarepyakshayam shraddham japahomatapaamsicha, Mahodadhau prayacecha kaashyaan cha kurujaangale/* (Vyasa Maharshi states that Shraaddha-japa-homa-tapas performed at Nadee pushkara timings, Great Oceans, at Prayaga-Kashi-Kurujangala deshas would bestow infinite Punya) ‘Pitra Gaadhaa’ expresses the fond wish of Pitru Devas that if only some one in our vamsha could excute Shraaddha under the Sidha Vata Vriksha at Gaya, they would attain redemption! Padma Purana instructs that at the Sacred Tirthas, there might not be great need to test the abilites of the Bhoktas, but the hungry Brahmanas must be definitely fed properly; this indeed is and Instruction of the Elders).

Smrityantara states: *Amaapaatas - cha Samkrantistadhaa Vaidritirevacha, Ashtakaashchaiva Manvaai Yugaadischa Mahalayah/ Chandra Suryoparaagascha Gajacchhaayaa tathaivacha, Dravya Brahmana sampattih shraaddha kaalaah prakeertitaah/ Na Brahmanyam pareeksheta daive karmani dharma vit, Pitre karmani tu praapte pareeksheta prayatnatah/Ashrotriyah pitaa yasya putrasyaadvedapaaragah, Jyaayaam samavaayor – vidyaadyasya syaat shrotriyah pitaa/Shrotriyaayaiva deyaani havyakavyaani daatrubhih, Arhattamaaya vipraaya tasmai dattam mahaa phalam/* (Shradhas along with daanas are appropriate on Amavasyas, Solar and Lunar Eclipses, Vaidhruti yoga timings, Ashtakas, Manvaadis, Yugadis, Mahalaya Pakshas, and Gajacchhaayas or when Chandra is in Makha and Surya is in Hasta nakshatras. Normally one might not test the depth of Brahmanas durng the Deva karyas but certainly do so in the Pitru karyas. Now when the father might not be a Shrotriya but a son is or vice versa; in such situations, the ‘karma phala’ weighs higher to putras or vice versa. The ‘daataas’ or donors while offering ‘havya kavyas’ must keep in mind as to who is the best among the Vipras, as in that case the returns of the charities would indeed be the best.) The Smrityantara is quoted further: *Yasmin maasi mritaaha syaattanmaa saknkshepamevavaa, Kshura karma na kurveeta paraannam ch ratim tyajet/ Gomayodakair- bhumi bhaajana bhaanda shoucham kuryaat, Yava vreehisa godhumaastila mudgaassasarpashaah, Priyangavah kovidaaraa nishpaavaashchaatra shobhanaah/ Vinaa maashena yat shraaddham kritamavyakkritam bhavet, Annantu sa dadhi kheera ghritam sharkaraanvitam/ Maasham preenaati sarvaanvai pitrunityaaha Keshavah, Madhunaa parama preetaassarvaan kaamyaaan dishanticha, Yadhaa vibhavaasaarena vastramdadaattu paitruke/ Vasunvadanti pitrun Rudraaneva pitaamahaan, Prapitaa – mahaamstathaa aadityaan shrutireshaa sanaatani/ Trinaani vaa gavedadyatg pindaanvaadhaapi nirvapet, Tilodakaih Pitrunvaapi tarpayet snaana purvakam/Shraddaanu kalpam yah kuryaat jaatyavas – thaadyapekshayaa, Shraaddhaangaam shepyavaapnoti mukhya shraddha phalam narah/* (Persons who are to perform ‘Abdikas’ in a specified Paksha or Maasa should refrain from kshura karma or shaving or head hair, eating out and copulation. All the surroundings and vessels for cooking and eating must be washed well with cow dung. Yava, wheat, rice, tilas, moong, priyangava, kanchana etc. are auspicious. ‘Maasha made bhakshyas’ are inevitable. Curd, ghee, cow’s ghee, cooked sweet rice and plain rice are what the eats lapped up by Pitru devatas and fullfill the desires of the Kartas. Honey satifies pitaraas most. Vastra daanas are donated the best. Pitru Devas are Vasudevas, grand fathers are Rudra swarupas and Prapitaa-mahaas are Aditya Swarupas. After pinda pradaana puja and naivedya, bhoktaa bhojana and tilodaka tarpanas, cows be treated with grass, fruits, and pindas. In this manner, even a part of Pitru shraddas is performed with devotion and faith, humans irrespective of varnas and ashramas would certainly reap the fruits of worshipping Pitrus for their redemption and blessings for one’s own fullfillment of desires.) Sressing the supreme duty of Shraddha karma, Yama Dharma Raja avows: *Ye yajanti pitrun devaan brahmanaan sahutaashanaan, Sarva bhutantaraatmaanam Vishnumeva yajantite/ Aayuh putraan yashah swargam keertim pushtim blam shriyam, Pashuun sukham dhanam dhaanyam praapnuyat pitrupujanaat/*

(Those who worship devetas, pitru devatas and learned brahmanas are such as having worshipped the Vishnu Himself. More specifically, Pitru Puja bestows longevity, health, fame, strength and prosperity).

Praayaschitta Prakarana

Praayo naama tapah proktam chittam nishchaya uchyate, Tapo nishchaya samyuktam praayaschitta – mihochyate/ Angira Maharshi defines the word Praayah or Tapas and chitta is resolution. Manu explains: *Akurvan vihitam karma ninditam cha samaacharan, Prasaktaschaendriyaardheshu praayas- chiteeyate narah/* (As human beings do not perform the prescribed deeds but tend to detract due to undue and disapproved desires of body and mind but realise sooner than later, then the acts of atonement are described as prayaschittas) Yagnyavalkya warns that in case, such acts of atonement are not followed properly and timely, then at the termination of the life's balance sheet of one's deeds is made and the negative results are necessarily to be suffered at the main hells named as follows: Taamishra, Lohashanku, Maha niraya, Shalmali, Rourava, Kumbhila, Puti Mrittika, Kaala Sutra, Sanghaata, Lohitoda, Savisha, Samvratavana, Maha Naraka, Kaakola, Sanjeevana, Mahapatha, Aveechi, Andhataamishra, Kumbhee - paaka, Asiparavana and Tapan. Yagnyavalkya further describes: *Mahapataka jaan ghoraannarakaan praapya daarunaan, Karma khayaat prajaayante mahaa paatakinastviha/* (Persons who have committed crimes and sins of varying intensity would indeed necessarily undergo the off-setting punishments and are reborn in their ensuing lives in manifold forms in the Creation as per their own's karma phala in the framework and final decision of the Supreme Lord.) The examples cited by Yagnyavalkya include: birth of deer, dog, pig, or camel for Brahma hatya; donkey, nishada or hunter to Brahmanas for 'Suraapaana'; thief of gold as krimi-keetaka-patangas; and one who forces a guru's wife to bed as a bush, grass or creeper! The Maharshi further lists out a person killing a Brahmana to be reborn as Kshaya Rogi; Sura paana as one with black teeth; a thief of gold as one with awkward hand nails, and a Guru Patni spoiler as a leper. Yagnyavalkya apprehends: *Atyutkataih punya paapairihaiva phalamashnute, Tribhirvarshaihi tribhir maasaaih tribhih pakshaihi tribhirdinaihi/ Punya paapa phala could be paid off in one's own life time within three years, three months, three fortnights and even within three days!* Besides the sins of persons as mentioned, one who publicises other's blemishes would have a lasting foul smell in the mouth and nose; the thief of Dhanya loses his body parts; the one who mixes other harmful materials would be born with some part of the body or another; a thief of cooked rice would be born with stomach ailments; a thief of books would be reborn as dumb or deaf; a thief of clothes as a 'Shaitya rogi' or a thief of horses as a lame one. *Yevam karmavisheshena jaayante sadvigarhitaah, Jada mookaandha badhiraah vikritaakritayah tathaa/* (In this manner, the resultant sins of one's life might end up rebirths or the same births with appropriate retributions like the fools, the blind, the deaf, the dumb or the ugly.) The thieves of precious stones could be born as pot makers; the thieves of dhanya, metal, water, honey, milk, juices and ghee could be born again as mice, swan, crane, krimi keetaka, crow, dog and mongoose respectively. Similarly the thieves of meat, oil, salt and curd would turn out respectively as kite, bat, crane and black sparrow. Such examples abound. *Yadvaatadvaah p; aradravyamapahritya balaanarah, Avashya yaati tirvyaktvam jagdhaachavahutam havih/* (Even if one performs Sacred homa karyas, yet he resorts to stealing, he would receive retribution soon or obtains rebirths as 'pashu pakshis'!)

Sarva vidha paapa: The nine kinds of serious sins as described by Vishnu Maharshi are: *Purushasya kaamakrodha lobhaakhyaam riputraya ghoram bhavati, tenaam akraanto mahapataka ati paataka, samapaatako papaataakeshu pravartate samkeernakaraneshu, malinikareshu jaati bhramsha karaneshu*

prakeenakeshucha/(Every human being is subjected to Arishad vargaas viz. ‘Kaama Krodha Lobha Moha Mada Matsaras’ of which three types of the worstv three arev Kaama-Krodha-Lobha; being subjected by these are the victims of Maha Paataka, Atipaataka, Samapaataka, Upapaataka,Sankeernakarana, Malini karana, Apaatreekarana, Jaati bhramsha karana and prakeernaka) Manu defines Maha Patakas:

Brahmahatyaasuraapaanam steyam Gurvangana- gamah, Mahaantipaatakaanyaahuh

samsargaschaapitaissah/ (Killing ofBrahmanas, drinking intoxi - cants, thieving, and sleeping with Teacher’s wife as also keeping company with any one of these extreme sinners is the worst of sins) Yama Raja declared that the Atipatakas are to sleep with mother’s sister, brother’s wife, daughter, father’s sister, maternal uncle’s wife, or her sister and mother in law are the Atipatakas. Yagnyavalkya talks of a woman sleeping with a low class male, garbha patana and killing one’s own husband are Ati Paatakas too.

Defining Sama patakas, Yajnyavalkya states: *Gurunaamadhih – shepah Vedanindaa suhrudvadha,*

Brahma hatyaasamam jneyam adheetasyacha naashanam/ (Criticising Guru, criticising Vedas, killing a close friend, conciously ignoring and forgetting and even destroying Scriptures are as severe as Brahma hatya.) Drinking coconut water in bronze vessels or salted cow milk; taking bath in washer men’s water flows, drinking gavya or cow’s urine in a copper vessel as intoxicating as Suraa paana. Upa paatakas include Gohatya, endorsing yagjna saadhana by ineligible person, sleeping withelse’s wife, sale of the Self, discarding parents and Guru, discontinuing svaaddhyaaya and agnihotra karyas; discarding sons, giving away svaaddhyaayaagni to an unwedded maid, kanya dushana, money laundering, selling of wife and children; accepting money to teach adhyayana, sale of unsaleable items, depending on the earnings of women,cooking for eating all by himself and none else, eating or serving rotten cooked rice, pilferages, negation of Gods and so on. Sankarikaarana is yet another heinous deed of killing donkeys, horses, camels, deer, elephant,goat,sheep, fish, serpents and buffalows. ‘Malineekarana’ includes the killing of krimikeetakas, consumption of food after alcoholic drinks; stealing flowers and timidity. ‘Apaatri karana’ includes taling loans from questionable persons, practising commerce and trade by Brahmanas , Serving low caste persons and constant practice of ‘asatya’. ‘Jaatibhramsha karana’ is when Brahmanas are harassed and molested, consuming alcoholic drinks and ‘Svalinga samparka’.

Prayaschittas: *Prayaschittamakaamaanam kaamaavaaptouna vidyate/* There might be penitence for wrong actions done out of ignorance but conscious deeds of vice are unpardonable.Manu defines:

Akaamatah krite paape prayaschittam vidurbudhaah, Kaamakaarakritepyaahureke Shruti nidarshanaat/

(The Learned ones vouchsafe the conscious and unknowing lapses as equal and demand the same kind of Prayaschitta.) But Smrityantara clarifies: *Vihitam yadakamaanam kaamaattu dvigunam bhavet/* (Sins on account of conscious misdeeds have double the effect of the ones unknown). The Grandha also states that Prayaschitta is prescribed to those who made killings, proposed the misdeeds, besides endorsing, guiding, encouraging, assisting, providing arms, giving food, shielding , denying and finally breaking down to have witnessed the act. Paraashara Muni states: *Veda vedaanga vidushaam Dharma shastram vijaana -*

taam,Svakarfma rata Vipraanaam svakam paapam nivedayet, Yatpaapam kartru vyatiriktana kena chidapinajnaatam,Tadrahasyam tasya praayaschittamapirahasya kartavyam/(Veda vedaanga vidas and experts in Dharma Shastras too are at some points of time might perform misdeeds surreptitiously; in that case, prayaschittas too are required to be performed secretely) ‘Praajaapatya kriccha praaschitta’ as Manu prescribes states: *Tryaham praatah tryaham saayam tryaha madyaachitam, tryaham parastu naashni yaat prajaapatyam charan dvijah/* ‘A dvija who undergoes this procedure has to observe it for three days with ‘ dina bhojana’, three days ‘saayam bhojana’, another three days of ‘ayaachita bhojna’ or unsolicited

meals and finally no bhojana for three days in a go'. 'Paada kriccha praayaschitta: Yagyavalkya Muni prescribes: *Eka bhuktena naktena tathaivaayaachtena cha, Upavaasenachaikena paadah kricchhah parikeertitah/* (Eating once in the night on the first day, another night of unsolicited bhojana and the third night no meal at all is called Paada kriccha vrata.) Ardha kriccha prayaschitta: *Saayam praatah tathai voktam diva dvayamtu naashneeyaatkricchhaardham tadvidheeyate/* (Eating only in the evening on one day, one day in the morning, two days of unsolicited meals and two days of 'upavaasa' is called Ardha kriccha) Ati kriccha prayaschitta: Parashara Muni: *Navaahamati kricchasyaat paanipuraanna bhojnah, Tritraatra mupavaa seesyaadati Kricchaashya uchyate/* (Eating fistful bhojana for nine days, then fasting three nights is termed Ati kriccha) Bodhaayana describes Kricchaati kriccha prayaschitta: *Ababhaksha striyahaanetaan vaayu bhakshastatah padam, Esha Kricchhaati kricchhastu vigjneyassoti paavanah/* (For three full days one should survive on water only, and another consequent three days only vaayu bhakshana is defined as Kricchaati kriccha prayaschitta).

Chaandraayana vrata is described by Maha Muni Vasishtha as follows: *Chaandraayanam dvididham pipeelika madhyam yava madhyam cheti/* (Two kinds of Chandrayanaas are defined, one is pipeelika madhyam and another Yama madhyam) *Maasasya krishna pakshadou graasaanadya chaturdasha, Graasaa pachaya bhojeesan paksha shesham samaapayet/ Tathaiva Shukla pakshaadou graasamekam bhunjeeta chaaparam, Graasopachaa bhojeesan pakshashesham samaapayet/ Shuklapratipadi graasamekamupakramya pratidinamekaika graasa vriddhaya, Purnimaayaam panchadasha graasaah evam pratidinaa ekaika graasahaane sati/ Amavaa syaayaam upavaasa iti, Madhya sthalyaadava madhya chandraayanam bhavati/* (Eat one fistful of cooked rice a day on an increasing scale for fourteen days in a fortnight from prathama tithi in krishna paksha till Purnima and the fistfuls on a decreasing scale day by day till purnima in the next Shukla prathama again. This is the course of Chandrayana Vrata called 'yava madhya chandraayana vrata').

Brahma hatyaadi maha patakas: *Setum drishtvaa samudrasya Brahmahatyaam vyapohati, Setum drishtvaa vishuddhaatmaa tvavagaahet saagaram/* (Soon on visioning Rameshwara Setu, the Brahma hatya sin would get destroyed. After seeing the Bridge built by Shri Rama, sacred bathing in the Samudra, the sinner's body and heart get purified instantly) Thereafter, the sinner concerned should set up a hut in the nearby forests and continue to stay there with a skull as a flag, and beg for food to attain purity and peace of mind. He should shave his head, take three baths, spend nights amid the cow herds, and with stand the onslaughts of wind, rain, Sun heat and so on. Then one should recall how the cow was killed and then practise the relevant vratas: if killed by sticks then 'saantavana' prayaschitta; by stones then Praajaapatya, by builders then tapta 'kriccha' and if killed by arms and metallic items then the redemption by way of 'ati kriccha'. Further, Yama prescribes: *Taamra paatrashitam gavyam, naalikerodakam tadaa, Lavanaasaktam payaschivv madhya gandham tadhaivacha, peetvaa dwijascharet chaandram praaja - patya kaamatah/*(Contained in a copper vessel, mix of Cow's urine, coconut juice, salted milk, and gandha mixed alcoholic drinks should be served to the dvija performing chandrayana or praajaapatya vratas) To redeem the sins of stealing gold or drinking intoxicants, charity of gold be given away to a learned Brahmana, prescribes Yagyavalkya. Jaabaali suggests: *Kupodakena saptaaham snaanamushne vaarinaa, Mritthikaabhirvimaashoucham kritvaa saptaahamevacha/ Praajaapatyam vishuddhyardham charet pooto bhaveddvijah Pancha gavyam tatah peetvaa putobhavati naanyadhaa/*(If a dvija has served a cruel tyrant, he should bathe with ground-well water on seven days continuously, with hotwater with as many days, followed by praajaapatya. Thereafter he should be served with Pancha gavya for Shuddhi!)

Rahasya paapa praayaschitta: Manu suggests: *Vedaa bhyaasonvaham shaktyaa mahaa yagnya kriyaa kshamaa, naashayantyaatu paapaani mahaa paatakajanyapi/ Yathaindhastejasaa vahnih paapam nirdayatikshanaat, Savyaahriti praavakaah praanaayaamaastu shodasha, Api bhrunahanam maasaatpunnantyaharah kritaa/* (Nitya Vedaabhyaasa, yagnya kriya, kshama lakshana in their intensity are most certainly worthy of demolition of Maha Patakas. Even very serious ‘maha paatakas’ like ‘bhruna hatya’ are sure to evaporate with the daily practice of sixteen pranaayaamas each time with vyahriti yukta pranava as many a time as possible daily!) Paraashara is convinced: *Chandraayanam yaa vakam cha tulaa purusha evacha, Gavaamchaivaanugamanam sarvapaapa pranaashanam/* (Yavamadhya chandrayana, Tulaa purusha and ‘Gavaanugamana’ or following herds of cows with ‘shraddha’ would demolish any volumes of Great Sins). Paithinasi Rishi is confident: *Sarva prasaktopi dhyaayannimishamachyutam, Punastapasvi bhavati panki paavana paavanah/* (Despite having perpetrated innumerable and serious sins, basically a Tapasvi could surely revive himself with Achyuta Dhyana) Bhrigu Maharshi emphasises: *Kotikotimanujaanaam vai bhitidam samupasthitam, Raama raameti sankeertya tannanaashayati maanavah/ Sarveshaameva paapaavaan prayaschittamidam smritam, Naatah parataram punyam trishulokeshu vidyate/* (As crores of human beings have in their life times incessant troubles and tribulations daily which appear as never ending, the unique solution is only the ‘Prayaschitta’ that demolishes all these instantly and that indeed is the ‘Rama Nama Sankeertana’ which has no parallel in the trilokas among the Punya Karyas of mortals!) Brahma Vaivarta assures: *Sarva paapayuto vaapi keertiyannarim Haram, Shuddyantahkarano bhutaa jaayate pankti paavanah/* (Even he who is replete with unforgivable record of blemishes would most certainly redeemed with purity and excellence, once the self-absorbing hymn of Harihara is sung from his heart and soul then he would accomplish the status of Pankti Pavana or the grant purifier of one and all who are ahead and behind in the line.) Atri Muni too assures: *Ekaadasha gunaanvaapi Rudraanaa vartya Dharmavit, Mahaa paapairapi sprishto muchyate naatra samshayah/* (As no human being could claim perfection and is most certainly liable to commit flaws in one’s life, the most effective remedy which would never ever fail to redeem is indeed the outstanding Japa of reciting Rudra Namakam Chamakam eleven times a day and for sure this is the most effective and never failing opportunity open to all ever! Hemadri Rishi suggests: *Krucchoyutantu Gaayatraah Vipra dwaadasha bhojanam, Tila home sahsram vaa samameta chatushtayam/* The four magnificent redeemers of one’s gravest sins are the execution of Kriccha vrata, ten thousand numbers of Gayatri Japa, mrishtaanna bhojana of twelve Brahmanas daily and thousand tila homa prakriyas.) Parashara too pledges as follows: *Kruccho devya yutam chaiva praanaayamashatadvayam, Punya tirthenaardra shira snaam dvaasasha sankhyayaa Dviyojanam teertha yaatraa krucchamekam prakalpitam/*(Kruccha vrata, daily Gayatri Devi Japa, ten thousand prana yaamas, and Tirtha yatra of two yojanas and punya snaanas at the Sacred Places are all indeed of great significance).

Vedah Smritah Sadaachaarah Svasyacha priyamaatmanah, Etad chaturvidham praahuh saakshaat Dharmasya lakshanam/ (The four corner-stones of Dharma are Veda, Smriti, Sadaachaara and above all, one’s own Inner Conscience.)