ESSENCE OF PARAASHARA SMRITI

Dharma rakshati rakshitah/

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Other Scriptures 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, Nilamata Purana;
Shri Kamakshi Vilasa

Dwadasha Divya Sahasranama:

a) Devi Chaturvidha Sahasra naama: Lakshmi, Lalitha, Saraswati, 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 Saaramsha

Select Stories from Puranas

Essence of Dharma Sindhu

Essence of Shiva Sahasra Lingarchana

Essence of Brahma Sutras (awaiting release)

[Note: All the above Scriptures released on www.Kamakoti.org/news as also on Google by the respective references]
Preface

Human nature being what it is, perfection is a delusion and absolute virtue is non existent. Inter actions with ‘Maya’ or Untruth are daily occurrences. The pulls of ‘Arishad Vargas’ or of Kama-Krodha-Lobha-Moha-Mada- Matsaras or of Desire-Anger-Greed-Infatuation-Arrogance and Envy are regular, real and over powering. Dharma is a scale of measure from one to ten digits but total infallibility among mortals is perhaps is non-existent. It is in this virtual struggle for existence, mortals are exposed to influences that are at once virtuous and vicious alike.

In the arduous navigation across the dark Ocean of Life, the Veda-Vedangas, Smritis and Puranas are like the flood-lights guiding the boat of ‘Samsara’ and Paraashara Smriti is one of such beacon lights. As in respect of various Scriptures handed down through the ages, this Smriti too seeks to revive, sustain and promote Dharma; it guides onto the path of righteousness as also provides safeguards and correctives.

Paraashara Smriti, a massive digest of Dharma, provides innumerable guidelines on the do’s and don’ts as also lapses for remedies. This squirrel like effort reminiscent of Setu Bandhana of Ramayana is the outcome of the present Essence of Paraashara Smriti. It seeks to highlight the Shat Karma Vidhi of Dwijas or the twice born varnas of Brahma-Kshatriya-Vaishyas, especially the Vipras. These Duties as so aptly boiled down by the Maharshi to a number Six as preceded by Snaana and these are Sandhya Vandana and Gayatri Japa-Homa-Tarpana-Brahma Yagna- Devatarchana-and Vaishwa Deva Yagna. The subsequent coverage is on Ashoucha Nivritti or absolving Physical and Internal blemishes consequent on occurrences in the course of one’s Life Time. An assimilation of the Principles of Dharma is attempted thereafter. An overview on ‘Shraddha Karmas’ to be performed, in favour of and to secure the blessings from, Pitru Devatas is endeavoured next. The concluding chapter is devoted to ‘Prayaschittas’ or remedies of sinful deeds that humans commit knowingly or unknowingly. While attempting this script, Paraashara Madhaviya, Vyasa Smriti, Vishnu Maharshi Smriti, Gautami Smriti and the like are referred to and the allusions are given at appropriate contexts. Care has been taken that the Desha-Kaala-Vyavahara-Sthitis of the contemporary Society are taken into account without diluting the basic tenets of Dharma and the interest of general readership is sustained.

The Essence of Dharma Sindhu was already released vide the website on kamakoti.org/news. This Essence of Paraashara Smriti may somewhat serve as a post-script of that former work; certain aspects of Dharma are underscored and some are signified further while seeking to avoid duplication even as ‘homa prakriyas’ and ‘prayaschittas’ are added.

It is with devotion that heart felt ‘pranaams’ are being expressed to my spiritual guide HH Vijayendra Saraswati of Kanchi Mutt seeking his continued encouragement and blessings.

VDN Rao

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## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preface</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shat KarmaVidhi</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snaana Prakarana; Sandhya Vandana;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homa PrapraKarana- Agnoukarana; Brahmachari homa;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Auoposhana Vidhana; Alternate Homa Vidhana;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahma Yagna Vidhana;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tarpana Vidhana;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devataarchana;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaishwa Deva</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashoucha Nivritti Prakarana</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principles of Dharma Rakshana</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shraaddha Prakarana</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prayashchitta Prakarana</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ESSENCE OF PARAASHARA SMRITI

GANESHAAYA NAMAHA

Saraaga loka durlabham viragiloka pujitam, Suraasurairnankritam jaraapamrityu naashakam/ Giraa gurum Shriyaa Harim jayanti yatpadaarchikaaah, Namaami tam Ganaadhipam kripaapayah payonidhim/
(Shri Ganesha Pancharatna)

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Paraashara matam puraayam pavitram paapa naashanam,

Chintitam Braahmnaarthaaya Dharma samsthaapanaya cha/

(This Outstanding Treatise on Dharma composed by Maharshi Paraashara is highly sacred and sin destroying; it is a Standard Authority that ought to be observed meticulously by Brahmana and other Classes of the Society for the sustenance of Virtue). Source: Paraashara Smriti (Chapter I, Stanza. 29)

Introduction

After performing the duties till the afternoon and the evening, Sages are normally engaged in activities like preaching and discussions on Dharma. Once, the Sages who assembled in a forest on the peaks of Himalayas approached Vyasa Maharshi requesting him to enlighten them about the shifts and possible amendments of the stern frame work of Dharma, as Kali Yuga was round the corner. Vyasa advised the Sages to settle down at Badarika Ashrama to comparatively lower levels of Himalayas and accompany them to approach his father Paraashara Maharshi since the latter was an authority of Dharma in its essence, especially since there would be likely changes during the times ahead in Kaliyuga with approved dilutions of the Principles of Dharma. As the Sages accompanied Vyasa to Parashara Maharshi, the latter accepted to explain the trends and broad principles of Dharma. Vyasa expressed his gratitude to his father that he learnt a lot about the principles of Dharma from stalwarts like Manu, Vasishtha, Kashyapa, Gaargi, Gautama, Ushasana, Atri, Vishnu, Samvarta, Daksha, Angirasa, Shataatava, Haarita, Yaginyavalkya, Apastamba, Shankha, Katyaayana, Praachetasa and such glorious Maharshis. He had absorbed the trends as witnessed in the same Manvantara in the course of Yugas of Krita, Treta and Dwapara and the gradual slide-down of the levels of Dharma; the evolution was bound to further erode the setting Yuga of Kali and therefore the request to Parashara was to detail the outlines of Dharma as would now be relevant as applicable to the Chatur Varnaas viz. the Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and the Other Class. The gist of what Maharshi Paraashara taught in this context is as follows:

In the ever revolving Cycle of Time of Maha Kalpas and Kalpas, each Kalpa comprising the four Yugas, the Values of Dharma varied substantially. Krute tu Maanvo Dharmah Tritaayaam Goutamah Smritah, Dwaaparey Shankha likhitah Kalou Paraashah Smritah/ In Krita Yuga, Manu Smriti was stated to be the Authority on Dharma, in Treta, Guatama Dharma was followed, while Dharma was observed as per Shankha’s Treatise, and now in the Kali Yuga, Parashara Smriti needs to be pursued. Tapah param Krita Yuge Tretaayaam Jnaanamuchyate, Dwaapare Yagnamityuh daanamekam Kalou Yuge/
The values of Dharma got evolved substantially over the Yugas: human beings gradually experienced loss of physical energy and mental forbearance. As such ‘Dharmaacharana’ or practice of Virtue too reflected Societal values: in Krita Yuga the supreme observance of Dharma was by way of performing ‘Tapas’ by way of ‘Kruccha Chandraayana’ and such Vratas; in Treta Yuga the index of Dharma was ‘Jnaana’ or high quality of Spiritual Knowledge; in Dwapara Yuga, the criterion was performing Yaginjas or Sacrifices; and now in Kali Yuga, offering Danaas or charities of various kinds has come to assume significance as means of Dharma. But charity too changed its context: in Krita Yuga, charity was given by approaching the person concerned, in Treta Yuga the donor would request the person for giving away the charity, while in Dwapara Yuga donations were sought for but in the Kaliyuga, charities are provided in lieu of services rendered!

Abhigamyottamam daana maahootanchaiva madhyamam;Adhamam yaachamaanam syaat sevaa daanancha nishphalam/Personally approach the person to be donated would indeed be the best recourse, beckoning a person and offering the donation is of medium type, while a needy one requesting for charity is at least the passable alternative but donations against services rendered are a mere waste!

Krite chaa sthita gataah Praanaastretaayaam maasa samsthitaaah, Dwaapare rudhiram yaavat Kalivaannaadishhushthitaah/ Body strength depended on the bone strength in Krita Yuga, while it came to be assessed on the retention of flesh in the body in Treta Yuga, got reduced to the retention of flow of blood in Dwapara Yuga, and now in Kali Yuga, the criterion would be the strength of food that retains in a person as the real cause of Praana or the Life Force. Indeed, more than anything else, the strength of the Inner Consciousness is of paramount significance! Slippages into ‘Adharma’ and ‘Varna Sankarana’ were treated with ‘Desa Bahishkarana’ or deporting from a Kingdom in Krita Yuga, while in Treta and Dwapara Yugas were punished with expelling from the native place and out-casting respectively. In Kali Yuga, the retribution is to ban social activities like weddings and co-meals from the same caste. Sinners in the three Yugas were not allowed to with mingle, touch, converse and much less dine with persons of the same class of the Society while in Kali Yuga those observances are not that stringent but avoidable. The usual restrictions followed in the earlier Yugas are neither observed nor even in the boundaries of awareness! Even when the Regulations are familiar, observance is a far cry and Adharma is abysmal. The impact of Non-Virtue and Injustice is rampant and further decadence is measured by the passage of time. Hence the application of Dharma as enunciated by Paraashara to mitigate the further onslaught of Viciousness and Injustice and infringement of Varna Samkarana. Of the Four Varnas as listed on the Hindu Dharma viz. Brahmana-Kshatriya-Vaishyas or the Vipras, Royalty/Administrators, and Vaishyas or Business class, besides the Lower Class or the Work force. The first three categories engaged in ‘Dharmaacharana’ are the Practitioners of Dharma, the Protectors of Dharma, and the Facilitators of Dharma and finally the fourth or the lower category relates to that of Service Providers of Dharma.

Veda Vyasa explained in Vyasa Smriti: Brahmanah Kshatriyo vaishyastayo varnaa dwijaayayah, Shruti Smriti Puranaokta Dharma yogaastu neterey/ (Brahmana, Kshatriya and Vyaishyas are called dwijas or twice born due to the samskaras that they would have been provided from their respective life’s evolution). Even the Lower Class is indeed a part and parcel of Hindu Dharma: Varnaschaturthopi varnatawadharmamarhati, Veda Mantra swadhaa swaahaa vashatkaraaaddibhirvinaa/ (For all practical purposes, the Lower Class is eligible to Dharmacharana except however Veda Mantra, Swadha, Swaha, and Vashatkara and such homa kriyas). Various ‘Samskaras’ or observations of mile stones of life and
customs signifying Weddings, Nama Karana, and so on are all performed as per the customs of individual Varnas. The Samskaras are however distinctly different for dwijas. *Garbhaadaanaam, Pumsavanan seemanto jaata karmacha,* *Namaa kriyaav, Nishramanenmaashanam vanama kriyaa/ Karna vedho vraadesho vedaarambha kriyaa vidhih, Keshaanantah snaamamudvaaho Vivaahagni parigrahah/ Treyaagni sangrahashcheti sanskaaraah shodasha smritaah* (Garbhaa daana, Pumsavana, Seemanta, Jaata Karma, Naama karana, Nishkramanaka, Anna praashhana, Mundana, Karna vedha, Upanayana, Vedaarambha kriyaa vidhi, Keshanta, Snaana, Vivaaha, Agni parigraha, Tretaagni or Dakshna- Garhapatya and Ahavasyya Agnis are sixteen samaskaraas). 

*Garbhaadhaanaam prathamam tritiyya maasi Pumsavah, Seemantaschaastame maasi jaate jaatakriya va bhavet, Ekaadashhena naamaarka syekshaa maasi chaturthake/ (After wedding, Garbhaadhaanaa is the first Samskara followed by pumsavana after three months, then the arrival of a baby whereafter soon the jaatakarma / naamakarana on the eleventh day and in the fourth month ‘nishkramanaka’ or Suryadarshana are celebrated). Shashthe maasyannashaneeyaah choodakarma kulochitam, Krita choode cha Baadey cha karna vedho vidhheeyaye/ (In the sixth month, the child’s Anna praashana, Choodara karma or hair removal and tuft keeping as per the family custom followed by ear piercing). Vipro garbhaashtame varshe kshatramekaadashe tathaa, Dwadashe Vaishya jaatistu vratopana kriyaa/ (To Brahmanas upanayana is prescribed in the eighth year, while to Kshatriyas and Vaishyas the age is eleventh and twelfth respectively). Tasya praaptavratasyaayam kaalah syaat dwigunaadhikah, Veda vratachyto vraatyah sa vraatyastomaah/ (In the event of exceeding the limit of the prescribed age of eight years for performing the Upanayana upto double that age, then there would be lapse of Vedaadhyana Vrata and that is why Vraayastoma Yagjna would need to be executed as a prayaschitta. Dwe janmani dwijaatinam Maatru syat prathamam tayoh, Dwiteeyam Chhandasaam Maatugrnga hanaavidhidhivad Guroh/ (Dwijati has two births viz. firstly his own mother and maternal grand mother, besides Gayatri Maata). Upaneto gurukule vasennityam samaahitah, Bibhruyaddanda koupeenopaveetajaajina mekhalaa/ (After the Upana - yana samaskaara, the boy has to assume a placid and attentive mind and stay at the Gurukula and wear danda, kaueena, yaginopaveeta, deer skin and girdle) Punyehni Gurvangjnaatah krita mantraa sudeesha kriyaa, Smruto mkaarancha Gayatromkaarabhedvedamaaditah/ (On an auspicious day after securing the blessings of his Teacher, the boy should gradually learn to perform oblations into Agni, recite Omkaara and learn gayatri upasana well). Souchaachaara vichaaraartham dharma shastramapi dwijah, Pathet Gurutah samyak karma taddishamaacharet/ (This Brahmachari should then be trained into Shoucha and Aachara or External and Internal Purity besides the traditional knowledge and training). Brahmachari should also refrain from enmity, narrow mindedness, violence, wasteful gazing at Surya, dance-dramatics in wrong companies, untruthfulness, obsession, undesirable criticisms of others, hypocrisy, company of fair sex, vagabonding, dissatisfaction and negativism. *Ekaannamanyavirodeh vrataanaam prathamaagrami, Bhuktiwa Gurumupaaseet krutwaa sandhukshanaadikam/ (In view of Brahmachari dharma, he should eat a single meals a day, be engaged in daily chores including Agni karya and engage himself with service to Guru). These indeed are the vidhis of Brahmachari dwijas till such time; they enter the subsequent phase of Grihastas or House- holders.

General guidelines to Dwijas include performance by the selves of, and motivating others to, undertake Yagnya Karyas, Veda Pathana and encouraging others to do likewise, giving and encouraging Daanas, Deva Puja and Atithi Puja, Agnihotra kriyaa and consuming Sesha Prasaada or the left over Naivedya offered to Agni Devas and so on. As regards Veda Pathana, care be taken to avoid nitya and naimittika
timings; the nitya kaalas are Paadyas, Ubhaya Ashtamis, Ubhaya Chaturthis, Pournamis and Amavasya Tithis while Naimittikas include hearing of inauspicious sounds like those of barking of dogs, braying of donkeys, growls of fox or owls or desperate cries of humans as also at impure places like cremation grounds, sights of corpses, lightnings, cloud sounds and bursts etc. Some also opine that Anaadhyaa is also observed on Yugadis, Vishuvat kaala/ Sankrantis etc. In respect of Yagnya Karyas, Devatas are satisfied by partaking the ‘Havi sh’ and blessing all round happiness by way of good crops and prosperity in general. The Yagnas are of Satvika, Rajasika and Taamasika nature: the Satvika yagnas are performed out of social welfare; the Rajasika ones are of pomp and show while the Tamasika Yagnas are either targetted for selfish motives or even of negative benefit. Daanas or Charities too are performed aiming at specified benefits or of Nishkaama nature without expecting returns. Deva Puja is either aimed at three hundred or thirty or three. The number of thirty three is arrived at Ashta Vasus –comprising Pancha Bhutas of Earth, Water, Air, Fire and Sky- besides Sun, Moon, Stars and Swarga; Ekadasha Rudras consisting of Rudra known for Rud or Rodana- always Crying- besides Dasha Pranas viz. Prana, Apana, Samana, Udana, Vana, Naga, Karkara, Kurma, Devadutta and Dhanjaya; Dwasha Adityas viz. twelve months; besides Prajapati, and Indra. Atithi Devo Devo bhava -Welcome to guests: Whether one likes or not, respecting and receiving well any guest at door is to be considered as a duty even if he or she were an opponent or of foolishness, an intellectual or of abnormality, especially arriving at Vaishwadeva or other Pujas and this gesture needs to be observed as a good reason for going to heavens. This is particularly relevant to those who arrive after a journey, or those who are tired even according priority to those already arrived. There is no need to enquire of the background of the arriving guest even before asking to be seated with respect. On making the guest feel at home with refreshments, then the host may initiate the conversation with politeness about the purpose of the visit or in the case of visitors already familiar with the guest, then the host shoud normally engage in further talk with no signs of annoyance whatsoever.

Shat Karma Vidhi

The above guide lines apart, following are the essential duties of a Brahmana as in Paraashara Smriti:

Shatkarmaaahihrou nityam Devaatihi pujakah, Huta sheshantu bhungagno Brah mano naavaseedati/ Sandhyaa snaanam japo homo Devataamancha pujanam, Vishwa Devaatihi yaam cha shatkarmaani diney diney/(Regular observance of six essential duties every day, besides Deva Puja and Atithi Seva and eating Yagna Sesha or the left overs of Yagnas would pull down a Brahmana to descend to lower worlds. The six duties are specified as Sandhya Vandana, atleast twice a day, Snaana that precedes ‘Bahyaantara Shuchi’ or Cleanliness of the body and mind, Japa, Homa, Devaarchana or Deva Puja, Atithi Seva or paying respects and attention to the guests who are already familiar or unknown especially the unknown. On waking up at Brahma Muhurta or four ghadias before Sun Rise, Deva Smrarana; pratama darshana of Shrotrias, cows, Agni, and avoidance of sinners, digambaras, and beggars; Ablutions with yagnopa -veeta worn around the left ear; praatah snaana as bathing in the morning absolves the evil effects of bad thoughts, deeds and dreams in the bed; recitals of Jala devata/ Aaruna mantras in the course of the bathing; pratah snaanantara Deva Rishi Pitru Tarpana; Vastra dharana; and Vibhudi-Gandha-Kumkuma dharana on the forehead. Now, a digression is made on ‘Snaanas’ before detailing Sandhya Vadana karya.

Snaana Prakarana: Snaanaani pancha punyaa vikeerintaani manishibhihi, Agneyam vaarunam Braahmam Vaayavyam divyamevachcha/ Agneyam bhasmanaa snaanamavagaahamtu vaarunam,
Apohishtheticha Brahmaam Vaayavyamgorajsmrutam/ (Maharshis classified punya snaanas in five categories viz. Agneya, Varuna, Brahma, Vayavya and Divya). While performing aachamana before commencing snaana, both head and neck should not be covered nor koupeena is removed, nor also the hair on head kept unpleated and certainly not without yagnopaveeta. After performing snaana or drinking water, or after waking up from sleep or while concluding bhojana or while walking on roads or even while dressing up, one should refrain from sneezing; but if inevitable, the person concerned must perform two achamanas. It is stated that as an alternative to aachamana, one could touch the right ear; the same could be done after spitting, yawning or mouth watering. As the water flows tend to touch Sun rays early in the mornings, snaanas at that time are stated to purify best but snaanas in the nights, especially around late night are prohibited, excepting if there were a Lunar eclipse. This exception for snaanas at Chandra grahana timings as prescribed is considered as a duty since Vasu-Rudra-Aditya-Devatas would be yearning for ‘Soma Paana’ and hence snaanas are essential after the eclipse. It is further stated that night bathings are approved at Khala Yagna while taking Dhanya home from the agricultural fields, at the Vivaha timings, Sankraanti as sankramana of Chandra takes place, but not otherwise.

Nityam namimitikam kaamyamiti karma tridhaa matam, Tividham tachaa vakshyaami grihastyaa--vadharyataam/ (There are three kinds of Snaanas as explained by Veda Vyasa viz. Nitya Naimittika and Kaamya for Grihasthas). Nitya Snaana is the prerequisite of Nitya Karmaacharana viz. Sandhya Vandana, Homa kriya and so on as prescribed. Similarly, the Madhyaahnika and Saayam kaala snaanaas are a must to qualify the daily duties. Madhyaahnika snaana especially in running waters is done with kusha-tila-phala while reciting appropriate mantras is beneficial. Ratri snaanas are purpose-less. Brahmana-Kshatriya-Vaishyas need to recite mantras while women need not do so. Veda Vyasa explains in his Smriti: Snaanamabdaivataih kuryaat paavanaishchaapi maarjanam, Mantrai h praamstriraayamya Souraishchaarkam vilokayet/ (Snaanas are better performed with appropriate marjana Mantras like : Apohishthamayo bhuvah ta na oorje dadhatana, Maheranaaya chashase yo vah shivatamorasah, Tasya bhajayateha nah, Usateeriva Matarah, Tasmaa arangama vah yasya bhajayateha nah usateeriva Matarah,Tasmaa arangamaamavah yasya kshayaya jinvatah, Apo janyatah nah/ Om Bhurbhuva -ssuvah/). Vyasa further explains: Tikshthan sthitwaa tu Gayatreem tatgah swadhyaayaaarambhet, Ruchaanyacha Yajushaam Saamnaayaamatharvanangirasaamapi/ Itahasapuraanaam vedopanishidaam Dwijah, Saktyaa samyak pattenithamalpa mantra madhyamalpamapamyasamaanaaat/ (While standing and reciting Gayatri, the dwija at the bath might commence Swadhyaya albeit in parts of the three Vedas!).

There are also standard instructions like Grahana snaana, Pitru Karya snaana, Tirtha Snaana, Snaanas by the touch of Rajaswala, Shava yatra and Smashana visits and so on. Now, Agneya Purana classified Kaamya Snaana, Malaapakarshana Snaana and Kriyaanga Snaana too among the Naimittika Snaanas. Kaamya Snaana in Holy River on Pushya Janma Nakshatra, besides Vyatipaata Vaidhruti Amavasya timings yields the benefit of satisfying seven generations of Pitru Devatas. Chaitra Bahula Chaturdashi Ganga Snaana or near in any Sacred river where a Shiva Temple is situated would yield Kailasa Nivasa. Pushkarini Snaana on Kartika Pournami or Prayaga Snaana on Maagha Pournami would wash off all the Sins of the past. Hasta nakshatra yukta Jyeshtha Shuddha Dwadasi Ganga snaana too has similar phala of total sin destruction. Surya grahana on Maagha Shuddha Saptami snaana in the early morning yields Maha Phala. On Chaitra Shukla Ashtami snaana in running flow of any river if coincides with a Wednesday and Punarvasu would bestow Ashwamedha phala. Kartika snaanaas during the entire month
to be followed by Japa-homa karyas with purity of heart and faith would destroy the long standing fund of sins for sure. Similarly snaanas during the months coinciding Tula-Makara-Meshha Rashis, daily pratih kala snanaas would yield similar results, especially observing Brahmacarya Vrata. Pratih snaanas during the four month period of Ashadha till Kartika coupled with Anna daana concluding Vishnu Vrata thereafter should certainly bestow Vishnu Sayujya. Tila Snaana on any day yields offers fruitful results.

Maagha snaanas in Punya Tirthas are highly fulfilling with desires as emphasized in Dharma Shastras and Puranas. Some do’s and don’ts of Malaapakarsha Snaanas are as follows: Abhyanga snaanas or oil baths are prohibited on Sundays as also meat eating on Tuesdays and Fridays, Stree sambhoga on wednesdays are prohibited; Jyotisha Shastras emphasizes that Sundays, Pourami-Amavasya-Chaturdashi-Ashtamis and on Solar Eclipse days, Taila Sparsha and oil baths be avoided unless such baths are tempered with scents or of cooked oils. Tila oil should be always avoided for oil baths.

Sandhya Vandana: Sandhya is the intermission of ‘Ahoraatras’ or day and night as signified by Sun Rise and Sun Set. Poorva Sandhya tu Gayatri Savitri madhyaa smritaat, Yaa bhavet paschimaa sandhyaaa saa Vigneyaa Saraswati/ The pre-noon is dominated by Devi Gayatri, noon time by Devi Savitri and the Sun set by Devi Saraswati and hence the respective Goddesses need worship. Gayatri is of blood red complexion, Savitri of pure white Varna and Saraswati of black colour and they represent Brahma-Rudra-Vishnu Swarupas of Paramatma. Meditation of these forms of Almighty is basically through the representation of Aditya: Udyantamastam yantamaadityam/ (Taittiriyaa Brahmana Upanishad). Broadly speaking the format of Trikaala Sandhya Vandana as as follows: Aachamana, Anga Nyasa- Karanyasa, Dhyana, Praanayaama, Sankalpa, Arghya Pradaanam, Prayaschitta Arghya, Atmaanusandhaanam, Tarpana, Prarthana, Gayatri Sankalpa, Pranaayama, Gayatri South, Brahmasammitam Gayatriim chhandasaaam Maatedam Brahma Jushhaswanah/ Gayatrim avahayami Saraswatimavahayami/ Nyasa, Dhyana viz. Muktaa vidruma hema neela dhavalah chhaayair mukhaistryakshanaaahh yukttaam Indrakulaa nibuddha ratna makutaam tatwaartha varnaatmikaam, Gayatreeem varadaabhaya ankusha kashaah shubhraam kapaalam gadaamchakramathaaara vinda yugalam hastairvahanteem bhajey/ Gayatri Mantra: Om bhurbhuvah suvaha saviturvarenyam bhargo devasya dheimahi dhiyo yonah prachodayaat/ The Japa is performed preferably 108 times in the morning, 32 times in the afternoon and 64 times in the evening [ the count of Gayatri Mantra each time to commence from the right ring finger middle (1) to the lower finger portion (2), to continue to the bottom of the little finger (3), to the middle little finger (4), to the top of the little finger (5), to the top portion of the ring finger again (6), then to the top of the middle finger (7), to the top portion of the pointing finger (8), the middle portion of pointing finger (9) and finally to the lower portion of the pointing finger (10)]

[Taittiriya Upanishad offers fourfold explanation of the Mystic Utterances as follows: (I.5.1-4): Bhur bhuvah suvah iti vaa etas tiro vyahritayah, taasaam u ha smaitaam chaturthim, Mahaa cha mayah, pravyayate,Maha iti, tad Brahma, sa Aatmaa, anuagaani anya Devataah, Bhur iti vaa ayam lokah, bhuvah iti antariksham, suvar iti antariksham, suvar iti asau lokah, maha iti aadityah, aditenna vaa vasantokaa manaya/ ( These are the three utterances viz. Bhuh or this Earth, Bhuvah or the Atmospheric, Suvah or the yonder world, Mahah or the Sun by whom Brahma is known and the latter’s limbs are the various manifestations of Devas). Bhur iti vaa Agni, bhuvah iti vaavah, suvar iti Adityah, Maha iti chandramasaa vaa va sarvaani jyotishmi mahayanteey/ (Bhuh is Agni, Bhuvah is Vaayu, Suvah is Aditya, Mahah is Chandra, and by Chandra indeed all the Luminaries shine magnificently); Bhur iti vaa Ruchah, 10
Bhuvi iti Vaayuh, Suvar iti Adityah, Maha iti Brahman, Brahmanaa vaa va Sarve Veda mahiyante/ (Bhu is Rig Veda verses, Bhuvah is Saama chants, Suvah are the Yajus formulas and Mahah is Brahman by whom all Vedas become outstanding); Bhir iti vai praanah, Bhuva iti apaanah, Suvar iti vyaanah, Maha iti annam, Aamena vaava sarve prana mahaayeyante/ (Bhuh is inbreath, Bhuvah is outbreath, Suvah is diffused breath, Maha is food, and by Food indeed all the vital breaths become grand)

Pranaayama again, followed by Gayatri upasthaana sankalpa as applicable to the morning viz. Mitrasya charshani dhrutah shravo Devasya saatamasi Satyam chitra shrivastamam Mitro janana yaatayati Prajaananj Mitro dadhaara prithiveemam Mitrah kushtheera nimishaa abhichastey satyaya havyam ghrutavaddhvidhema/ Prasamitra marto astu prayaswaan yasta Aditya shikshati vratena, na hanyate na jeevay twoto nainamah ho ahnottantito na duraat/ In the afternoon the Gayati upaasthaana mantra states:

Gayatri Upasthaana as above in respect of Tri Sandhyaas would follow Dig Devataa vandana as relevant to Mornng and Afternoon to East-South-West-North- East again and in the evening to West-North-East-South and West again saying Sandhyaayai - Savitrai - Gayatrai - Sarasvatai - Sarvabhyo Devataabhyo namah and finally say: Kaamo (A) kaarsheen manyurakaarsheet namo na mah/ This would be followed by Pravaraa bhivandana ; Dik Vandana (Praachai-Dakshinaayai-Pradeechai [Evening as appropriate] and Udeechhaa-Urdhvaayai-Adharaayai-Adharaayai-Bhumiya-Brahmaney- Vishnavey- Shivayai namah. Yama Vandana to Yama, Chintakaaya-Kaalaya-Aoudumbaraaya-Dadhnaaya-Paremshetii- Vrika-Chitra-Guptaya vain namah. Finally Kshamaa Prarthana of Kayenavaacha manasendriyarvaa budhyaatmanaa aa prakruteh swabhaavaat, karomi yadyat sakalam parasmaiNarayanaayeti samarpayaami/ Om tat Sat/ Brhamparnamastu/ [Note: More details given vide Essence of Dharma Sindhu by the same author especially Taittiriya / Katyaayana versions vide the website of Kamakoti.org/news]
appointed like sons or Sishyas or Brahmans on one’s behalf. However proxy homas are effective in yielding far less phala than by one self! As regards Homa Dravyas, the dictum states *kritam akritam kritaakritam/* that is the Homa material is of three kinds: Annam or cooked rice or wheat flour are Kritam; akritas are ‘dhanya’ or non husked cereals and ‘kritaaakritas’ include tilas, yavas, milk, curd, ghee etc. Samidhas include unkinned twigs of Arka, Palaasha, Apamarga, Peepul, Gular, Shami, Durva, Bel, Vata and such other trees of normally ten to twelve inches long. Infringements or interruptions of Nitya Homa karyas need to be revived with appropriate ‘prayaschittas’ or self imposed punishments by way of purifications. In any case, dictates of one’s own conscience are the best judges, especially depending on the Desha-Kaala exigencies. In any case, the suggested outline of the procedure of homa is as follows:

**Agni Mukham:** The Homa Kunda or the Fire Pit is to be a cubic meter square size and before use the raised platform of sand is dressed with white rice flour. All acts inside the platform are to be performed from left to right in respect of devas and from right to left in respect of Pitru Devatas. Kunda rekhas or lines on the surface of the platform are drawn from west to east with a spoon handle bisecting the lines from south to north. The platform is sprinkled with water, twigs are arranged at the center of it and fire is kindled with camphor in a copper plate circling thrice on the twigs by way of Agni Sthapana reciting the mantra: *Chandramaa manaso jaatah, Chakshus Suryo ajaayata, Mukh Indraschaagnischa praanaad Vayur ajaayata/* (Chandra is created from Almighty’s mind, Surya from His eye; Indra is born from His mouth and so is Agni while Vayu is created by His breath). *Om bhur bhuvassuvah* --*(Chandra is created from Almighty’s mind, Surya from His eye; Indra is born from His mouth and so is Agni while Vayu is created by His breath)*. Then ‘Agnim Prajvalanam’ is done by adding twigs. Darbha paristarana: Darbha grass is laid and spread in 3 or 5 layers around fire as the grass ends are kept in east with points to north, in the south with points to east, in the west pointing to north and north with points to east. Paatra saadhanam: To the north of Agni on a layer of darbha grass, pairs of vessels to be used in the homa are to be arranged: spoons, ahya patra or ghee vessel and prokshani patra or the vessel with which water is sprinkled. Brahma varanam or the priest is to be seated to the south of Agni. In his absence, a kurga or the bundle of darbhas or a flower is plaed on his seat. Prokshani paatra saadhanam or the vessel to sprinkling water is filled in again and again. ‘Parishinchana’ is taken up with *Om Aditenumanyaswa/* *(to South), Anumatenu manyaswa *(to west), Saraswatenu manyaswa *(to north)* and finally to all sides: Then Deva savitah prasuva to all sides. After ‘parishechanam’ meaning ‘May earth be pleased to bestow me the kingdom, may the wives of Devas bestow me what all I desire, may the Goddess of speech, intellect and knowledge grant me what I ask for, may Devi Saraswati fulfill all my wishes for excellent speech and knowledge and may Devi Savita impel us to fructify our sacrifices and oblations’. With these parishachanas, Agya samskaras follows as in respect of Nityagni by Brahmacharis or Grihastas as also various other Agni Karyas. Incidentally, besides the Brahmachari homas or Grihasta homas performed on daily basis, these Karyas are also preceded by various other Samkaras: These Samskara Agnis are called: Yojaka for Vivahas, siki for chaturthiis, marutah for garbha daana, Chandra/ pavamana for pumsavana, paarthiva for naama karana, Shuchi for anna praashana, sabhya for chala samskara, Surya for godaana and Kshaya for samvarthana.

**Brahmachaari Dwija homa vidhana:** After purifying Homa Kunda with cow dung and waters of Sacred rivers like Ganga, be seated near the Kunda as ‘purvaabhimukha’ or facing the east, sprinkle water and molten cow’s ghee for the purpose of the homa, perform tri-achamana and Anga nyasa, Ganapati Dhyana, ‘Praanaayama’ with Pranava Mantra and Sankalpa assuming the ordain of Maha Vishnu by reciting the Shubha Muhurta of Dwiteeya Paraatha, Kali Yuga Pratham Paada, Jambu Dwipa, Bharata Varsha,
Bharata Khanda, Meroh dakshina dik bhaaga, specified Pradeshha, specified disha, in the august presence of the Sacred feet of Samasta devataas, Brahmanas, Gurus and others at specified Samvatsara-Maasa-Paksha-Tithi-Vaara-Nakshatra and so on and declare the Praatah/ Sayam Homa. After the Sankalpa, initiate the Homa by repeat tri-achamana: *Om Amritopastarana masi swaha* (the first) *- Om Amritaspadhaanamasi swaha* (the second) *- Om satym yashah Shrimayi shrih shrayataam swaha* (the third); this shall be followed by the sprinkling of water and touch the body parts with: *Om Gangmayaschaayastut (face), Om nasome praanestu (both openings of the nose), Om akshorme chakshurastu (both the eyes), Om karnayorme shrotarastu (both the ears), Om baahyonge balamastu (both the hands), Om uruvomme ojostu (both the thighs) and Arishtaani mekaangaani tanustanvaa me saha santu/ Thereafter perform Agnyaadhana brought on a plate, use camphor to sustain the fire kindled with wooden fags with the following mantra: *Om bhurbhuvah swadyorivam bhunmha Prithiveeyam vyarinmava, Tasyaamaste Prithivi Deva Yajjaani pushtegni mantraddaa maatraadaya dadhe/ While inflaming the following mantra is rendered: *Om udbhavam budhyaaagne pratiin jaargruhi twaamishtaa-purti swayam srujetaay mayam cha, Asmin samidhasye addhyuttaarasmin Vaishva deva yajamaanascha seedata/ (Yajur Veda). Agni prarathana: Pariitwaa Agne parirjraamai aayushaa cha dhanena cha, Suprayaanhaa prajayaa bhuayaasgam suveero veeraihi suvarcha varchasaa suposhah poshaih sugruho grhuho supathih patraya sumedhaaya su brahmabrahamacharibhiih/ Then ‘parishachana’ or sprinkling water around the homa kunda in clock wise direction stating the Mantras: *Aditenu manyaswaa, anumateny manyaswaa, Saraswatenu manyaswaa, Deva savitah prasuva/ where after ‘Samidadhana’ or offering Samidhas to Agni reciting ‘Swaha’ each time as follows twelve times after each mantra:

1) Agnya samidhaa-maahaarshhir brhihataa jatavedase, yathaaw twagraame samidha samidhayasa evam mamaayushaa varchasaa sanyaa medhaaayaa prajayaa pashubhii brahmavarchasena annaadyena samedhayaa swaahaa/ 2) Yaedho asi yaedhisheemahi swaahaa/ 3) Samidasi samedhishhemahi swaahaa/ 4) Tejo asitejo mayi dhehi swaahaa/ 5) Apto adyaanvachaarishghagum resena samasrukshamahii payasswaagumagna aagamam tammaa sagurruja varchasaa swaahaa/ 6) Sam maa agnae vaarhass sruja prajayaa cha dhanaena cha swaahaa/ 7) Vidhyaaee asya devaa Indro viditat saahsrrshibhiih swaahaa/ 8) Agnyaee bruhatae naaakaaya swaahaa (8)/ Agnyaee bruhatae naaakaaya swaahaa/ 9) Dyaa Prithivi bhyaam swaahaa/ 10) Yeshaa te agnae samit tayaa vardhaswa cha aapyaayasvaa cha tayaa aham vardhamaanoo bhuysaasam aapya maanascha swaahaa/ 11) Yo maagne bhaaginsagum santamathaa bhaagam chikeerushati, Abhaagamagnetaam kuru maamasnae bhaaginam kuru swaahaa/ 12) Samidhaaamadhaaayagnae sarva vrato bhuyaasagum swaahaa/

The ‘samidhaana homa’ concludes with ‘parishachana’ or circling water sprinkling around the homa kunda in clockwise direction with the Mantras: *Aditenu manyaswaa, Deva savitenu manyuswaw, Saraswatenu manyaswaa, Deva savitah prasuva/ This would be followed by the mantra: Agnerupasthaanam karishye/ Following the ‘Upasthaana’, supplication mantra to Agni Deva to be recited in standing position as follows: *Yatte agnae tejastenaaham tejasvi bhuyaasam, yatte agnae varchastenaaham varchasee bhuyaawam/Yatte agnae harastenaaham haraswi bhuyaasam, Mayi medhaam mayi prajaam mayaghii tejo dadhaatu/ Mayi medhaam mayi prajaam maenndra indriyam dadhatu, mayi medhaam mayiprijaama mayi Suryo bhraajoo dadhaatu/ Agnyaee namah/ Finally the Kshamaa Prarthana would be as follows: *Mantra heenam kriyaan heenam bhakti heenam hutaashana, Yaddhutam tu mayaa Deva paripurnam tadastute/ Praayasychitthaani asheshhaani tapah karmamikaani vai, Yaani teshaaam asheshhaaan Parameshwara manusmanam/ Maha Deva Maheshwaram/*
Grihasti Brahmana homa vidhaana: Connected with Agni Mukham detailed after the Section of Brahmachari Dwija homa above including the Sankalpa therin, the rest of the following be continued as Grihasti Brahmana homa vidhi. (This is as per Apastamba Prayoga)

Sankalpa: Om poorvokta guna visheshena visisthaa asyaam shubha tithou bhagavad aajgnyaat bhagavad preetaartham ripena praatar/ saayam aoupaasaas homam karishye/ This is followed by parisechanam:

Agni Dhyaana: Om ram Agnaye namah/ Meshaaroodham cha vakraangam Jaatavedh samanvayam, Dwi seersham sapta hastam tri paadam sahaa jhvikam, Varadam shakti paani cha bibhraanam sru sruvaatathaa/ Abheetidam charma dharma vaame-chaajya-dharam kare/ ( I contemplate Agni Deva who rides a ram whose limbs are twisted, who has two heads, and seven arms, three feet and seven tongues. He displays the gesture of munificence, bears a Shakti weapon, two ladles, shows the signal of protection and carries a vessel full of ghee). Chatvari shringa trayosya paada dwe sirhe sapta hastasosya, Tridhaa baddho vishabho roraaveeti maho devo martyaagum aaviveshaa/ Eeshaa hi devaah praadishonu sarvaah purvo hi jaatassa u garbhe antaah, sa vijaayaamansassaa janishyamaanaaha prattyaa prataanvakhaa stishtiishthi Vishvata mukhaaha/ Hey Agne praan mukho Deva maamaabhimukho bhava/ (The illustrious Agni has come down to men and is attended by sacrifices; He has four Vedas as his horns, three swaraas as his feet, Brahma and Pravargya are his two heads and seven Vedic meters as his hands. He is regulated by Mantra, Kalpa and Brahmana; he is the bestowere of fortune. He is sung with and without music by the hymns of Rig, Yajur and Saama Vedas by the sacrificial priests such as the Hota. The Unique Paramatma realized by the Wise having been present in all quarters was born as Hiranyagarbha at the beginning of Creation. Indeed He is the same Hiranyagarbha who will be born as such in future too. He is the indweller of thehearts of all the beings, the witness to all and the inciter of action. Agni Deva of divine magnificence! Do kindly be seated in the eastern direction and be well disposed to us).

Now, akshatas and flowers are to be offered to ‘Ashta dishas’ or in eight directions as follows: East: Om Agnaye namah; South East: Om Jaatavedhase namah; South: Om sahojase namah; South West: Om Ajiraa-prabhave namah; West: Om Vaishvaanararaya namah; North West: Om naryaapase namah; North: Om Panktiradhase namah; North West: Om Visarpine; Centre: Om Yagjna Purushaaya namah/ This follows Alankaara or worship to Dishaadhipatis or Heads of Directions situated around Agni by placing flowers in the respective directions: East: Indraaya namah; South East: Agnaye namah; South: Yamaaya namah; South West: Niruttaaya namah; West: Varunaaya namah; North West: Vaayave namah; North: Somaaya namah; North East: Ishaanaaya namah/

This would be followed by Samidhaa daanam: Karta stands and faces the Brahmana saying the following and tendering the bundle of Samidhas in his hands for further placing on Agni: Asmin homa karmaani Brahman idhmam aadhaasye/ Aadhatswaa!/ Then ‘Aaghaara’ is followed as the Karta meditates Agni Deva silently and offers Ajya/ ghee in streams from North East to South East and recites: Om Prajaapataye swaalaa, Prajaapataye idam na mama/ Then offers Ajya again to Indra from South West to North East reciting: Om Indraayaa Swaalaa, Indraaya idam na mama/
Aajya bhaagam: Karta then makes two oblations, one to Agni and another to Soma:  
*Om Agranye swaahaa, Agranye idam na mama, Om Somaaya swaahaa, Somaaya idam na mama*/  
Vyahriti homa is continued: Towards South:  
*Om bhuvasswaahaa, Agranye idam na mama/ Towards North:  Om Bhuvasswaahaa, Vaayaye idam na mama/ At the center:  Om Suvaswaahaa, Suryaya idam na mama/  
Prayashchitta homa sankaalpa: Asmin----homa karmani sankaalpa prabhriti etat kshana paryantam madhye sambhaavita samasta dosha prayaschitthartha sarva prayaschititam hoshyami/ Om bhur bhuvas swaahaa—Prajaapaaye idam na mama/  

Pradhana homa: Now proceed with main oblations: [Refer to the next section of Aoupaasana homa]

Uttaraangam or conclusion:  
*Prajaapate na twad etaanyanyo vishvaa jaataani pari taababhuvu, yat kaamas te jhumas tanno astu vaayagum syaama patayo rayeenaagum swaahaa/ Prajaapataya idam na mama/ (Prajapati the Lord of Beings, you alone comprehend all these created forms and nobody else. Do grant us our heart desires as we invoke you; may we become the chiefs of rich possessions)  Om bhussuvaahaa Agranye idam na mama/ Om Bhuvassvahaa, Vaayaye idamna mama/ Om Suvaassvahaa, Suryaaya idam na mama/ Yad asyaaya karmaano tyareericham yad vaa nyunam ihaakaram, Angishtaaat svishhtaakrad vidwaan sarvagum svistagum suhutam karotu swaahaa, Agranye swishtakrutedam na mama/ (Whatever that has been done that is superficial or deficient in this sacrifice be please accepted as complete, Agni swistakrita!)

Paridhi parihararam: Paridhis or boundaries of the homa kunda are offered to Agni the ghee dipped samidhas commencing from the middle one first to the rest. Samsraava homa: Sruva or the sacrificial ladles are filled up with ghee flow offering to Agni covering the ladles reciting Swaahaa, Vasubhyo Rudrebhya aaditebhyah samravaa bhaagebhyah idam na mama/ (May there be glory to Ashtaavaus, Ekaadasha Rudras and Dwadasha Aditya Devas as these oblations are offered to them through Agni Deva);  
*Om bhur-bhuvas-suvas-swaahaa, Prajaapataye na mama/ (May this offering be made in the glory of Prajapati the Lord of Creation as a testimony of physical-mental-spiritual realms)  Prayashchitta or atonement: Sankalpa-  
Om poorvokta guna visheshena visishthaayaam asyaaam shubha tithou bhagavadajnaaya bhaagebhyah idam na mama/ (May I make the atonement offerings in this rite as to be specified- on this day of auspiciousness signified with astrological qualifications, with the approval by and in service to Almighty). Anaagjnaatam yad agjnaasya kritaye mithu, Agne tadasya kalpayaa twagum hi vetta yathaa tathagass swaahaa/ Agneyedam na mama/ (Agni Deva! What all imperfections that have been committed by me either knowingly or unknowingly be pardoned in the course of this Sacrifice).  Purusha sammito yajno yajnah Purusha sammitah, Agne tadasya kalpayaa twagum hi vetta yathaa tathagass swaahaa/ Agneyedam na mama/ (Almighty too is coequal with this Sacrifice as with Agni Deva and may all my indiscretions and lapses in the procedure of this Sacrifice be too ignored keeping in view the best that we indended to perform with sincerity)-  
*Om Bhussuvaahaa, Agranye idam na mama/ Om bhuvassvaahaa, Vaayaye idam na mama/ Om suvasvaahaa, Suryaya idam na mama/ Om bhurbhuvassvahaa swaahaa. Prajaapatyaye na mama/ Om Shri Vishnavey swaahaa, Vishnave Paramatmene idam na mama/ Om Rudraaya Pashupatyaye swaahaa, Rudraaya Pashupatyaye idam na mama/  

Purnaahuti or the Final Offering:  
Sankalpa:  
*Om Purvoktaguna visheshena visishthaayaam asyaaam Shubha tithou bhagavad aaginayaa bhagavad kainkaryaarupena asmin--- homa karmanaah sampurna phala*
praapyartham---naamagnou purnaahutim hoshyaami/ tadantaram saangata siddhyartham vaasordharam hoshyaami/ (May this final offering called Vasordhara be concluded successfully!) Om purnaahutim utamaam juhoti, Sarvam vai purnaahutih, Sarvam evaapnoti, atho iyam vai purnaahutih, asyaam eva prati tishthathi swaaha/ Agnaye vausath/ (Our final oblations conclude herewith; Totality is the Final Oblation; through that everything is obtained. Hence may this final obation and worship now be firmly established).

Vasordhaara homa: Om sapta te agne samisdhaassapata jihvaas sapta rishayah saptadhaama priyaani, Sapta hotraa sapta dha twaa yajanti saopta yonir aapranasva ghritena swaaha// (Do protects us with this oblation of ghee Agni Deva along with these seven samidhas, your Seven Tongues, Seven Rishis, Seven Sacred Dhaamas, Seven Priests who assist our oblations, and Seven Origins from where Creation is effected). Praanaayama and parishechana: Aditenvangasthaah, Anumatenvangasthaah, Sarasvatenvangasthaah, Deva Savitah praaasaaviih/ (Aditi Devi granted us permission, Anumati Devi granted it and so has Devi Saraswati while Devi Savita impelled us to take up this Sacred Homa.

Now to farewell to Varuna Deva: Varunaaya namah sakala araahanai swarchitam, Yathaa sthaanam/ (Varuna Deva! My reverence to you; do return later as you are invited as required again). Then while pouring water recite the following: Prachyaam dishi devaa ritiwijo maarjyantaam/ Dakshinsuya dishi maasah pitaro marjyantaam/ Pratichyaam dishi griha pashavo marjyantaam/ Udeechyaam dishyaapa oshadhayo marjyantaam/ Urdhvaayaam dishi yagjna samvatsaro yagjna patir marjyantaam/ Om Vaishwaanaraaya vidmahe Lalitaaya dhimahi, tanno agnih prachodayaat/ (May Devas and Brahmans be blessed in the Purva /Eastern Disha; may the months and Pitru Devas make us famed in the Southern side; may our homes and cattle be safeguarded in the western front; may waters, plants and trees be made illustrious on the northern side; may the Sacrifices and years be fructified from the antariksha or the higher lokas; indeed we do take cognizance of Vaishwanara or the mystic fire within the Inner Soul which enlightens all of us).

Reverence and Prayers to Agni Deva: Agne naya supathaar raaye asman Deva vayunaani vidwan, Yayodhasmaj-juhaaraanaam eno bhuyissthaante nama uktim vidhena/ Om Agnaye namah agnim Aatmanyudvaasaayam/ (Agni Deva! You are a repository of knowledge and thus the resultant wisdom; do lead us to the richness of bliss and take us away from the easy paths of sins and evil. These are our salutations to you and pleadings to return to us whenever solicited). Namaste Garhapatyaaya Namaste Dakshinaagnaye, Nama Aahavaniyaaya at the high altar and our repeated obeisances!)

Aoupaaasana homa: The homa prakriya commences with clean feet and palms, Aachamana wearing pavitra of darbhas twisted and tied to the right ring finger followed by Sankalpa: Om purvokta guna visheshena visithhaayaam asyaam shubha tithou bhagavadaaginayaa bhagavad preeyataarthham rupena praatah Aoupaaasana homam karishyey/ The Sankalpa would be followed by parishechana, Agin Dhyana, Agni Alankaara, Punah parishechana and then to the oblations. The Grihasta asks his wife hoshyaami as the wife replies juhudhi/ He takes a handful rice in the left hand, sprinkles water on it with the right hand, and takes half the quantity with the following Mantras allowing the rice to trickle through the fingers; the first mantra for the morning : Om Suryaaya swaahaa, Suryaaya idam na mama/ Om Agnaye idam na mama/ The first mantra for the evening is: Om Agnaye swaahaa, Agnaye idam na mama/ The second
mantra which is common to both morning and evening is: To the South: *Om bhusswaahaa Agnaye idam na mama/* To the North: *Om bhuvasswaaha Vaayave idam na mama/* To the Centre: *Om suvaassvaahaa Suryaya idam na mama/* The final offering of rice states: *Om bhur-bhuv-suvas- swaahaa---Prajaapataye idam bna mama/* (Note: The rice offerings should not be allowed to mix with Agni). The rice oblations would be followed by parishechanam and Purna huti comprising a samita and two blades of darbha grass while reciting: *Om Shri Vishnave swaahaa, Vishnave Paramaatmaane idam na mama/*

Now salutation to Agni with folded hands: *Agni naya supathaay raye asmaan Vishvaani Devaani vidwan, Yuyodhymasmaj- juhuraanam eno bhuyishthaante nama uktim vidhema/* Mantra heenam bhakti heenam Hutaashana, Yad hutam tu mayaa paripurnam tad astu te/ Praayaschitta anya sheshaa tapah karmaatmaka kaani vai, Yaani tehaam asheshenaam Krishna anusmaranam param/ Vicchhinna – aoupaasana Agni sandhaanam: After cleaning feet and hands, aachamana, pavitra dharana, akshata grahana, offer akshatas and dakshina to brahmanas, and after their approval, repeat sankalpa on behalf of wife also to revive the vicchhina Agnihutra reciting: *Aavaaho auopaasanaaagnim aadhaaye vicchhina sandhaanaartham/ Kritancha—Now Agni mukha/*

**Pradhaana homa:** Agnih hiddyartham vyahrutii homam karishye/ Pick up the main dharvi or the bowl like ghee container and offer the Vyhritis: *Om bhussuvah, Agnaye idam na mama* –to the South; *Om bhuvasswaaha Vaayave ida na mama*—to the North; *Om Suvaassvaahaa, Suryaya idam na mama*—to the centre; *Om bhur-bhuv-suvas swaahaa—Prajaapataye idam na mama/* This would be followed by Sankalpa for opening oblations to *Agni Deva:* Harihi om tat sat/ ...Anekakaala saayam Praatar aoupaasana aakaarana praayasicsittaartham sarva praayasicsittam hoshyaami/* Three oblations be offered with each of the following mantras: *Anaagjnaatam yad agjnaatam yagjnaa sya kriyate mithu, Agne tadasya kalpaya twagum hi vettha tathaagass swaahaa/* *Agnayedam idam na mama/*(Agni Deva, I may have committed mistakes on this Sacrifice either knowingly or unknowingly; do kindly ignore these and keeping in view my sincerity, and consider my flaws as rectified); *Purusha sammito yagjnaa vyahriti Purusha sammitah, Agney tadasya kaalpaya twagum hi vettha yatha tathaagass swaahaa/Agnayedam na mama/*(Indeed Almighty is as much involved in this Homa Prakriya as you are and as such do kindly amend my shortcomings and have the act of homa be got perfected). Yat paakatra manasaa deena dakshaa na, Yagnasya manvate martaasah, Agnistaad hotaa kratu-vid vijaanan yajisoho devaagum kratuso yajaati swaahaa/* (Agni Deva! We humans are indeed fallible and of immature minds not quite acquainted with the perfect procedures of Sacrifices; may the mystic fire itself which is well versed with the methodology of Sacrifices offer the ideal means of the acts and grant necessary adjustments to bless!) Sankalpa regarding the oblations to Agni by *Aditya-Rudra-Vasu-Brahnanas:* *Upavaasa vikalpena choditaayaascha homam karishye/ Aayaashaagne syan abhishasticha satyam iva mayaa asi, ayasaa manasaadhrutoyasaa havyam uuhiseyaano dhehi bheshaagass swaahaa, Agne ayase idam na mama/* (Agni Deva! You are our refuge to us and the devotees like all of us; you are the unique medium and bearer of all oblations and the sure conveyor of all remedies to humanity.) *Punastwaadityaa Rudraa Vasavaas samindhitam, Punar Braahmano vasunia yagjnaah/ Ghritena twaam tanvam vardhayasva, Satyaah santu yajamaansa yaa kaamaah swaahaa Agnye vasunthaayedam/* (May Adityaas, Rudraas, Vasus, Brahmanas kindle you with their rites ad fulfill their wishes). *Mano jyotir jusataam aajyam vicchhinnam yagjnaagum-saminam dadhaatu/ Yaa ishta ushaso nimruchascha taah sandadhaami havisha ghritena swaahaa/* *manase jyotishie idam na mama/* Yanna aatmano mindaabhud agnih tat unar
aahaar jaatavedaavicharshinh swaahaa/ Agnaye jaatavedasaa idam na mama/ Punaragnih chakshuradaat punar Indro Brihaspathih, punar me Ashvinaa yuvam chakshur aadhattam akshyoh swaahaa/ Agni ndra Brihaspatyah vibhyaam idam a mama/ Tantum tanvan rajaso bhaanum anvii jotishmatah patho rakshadyaav kritan/ Anubalam vayata joguvaamapo manur bghava janayaa Daivyam janaggah swaahaa, Agnaye tantumata idam na mama/

Kshamaapana Sankapa: Asmin Agni sandhaana homa karmaani madhye sambhavita mantra tantra devataa viprayaaah nunaatireka swarakshara pada bhresha samasta dosha praayasthitaartham sarva praayacchittam hoshyaami/(I now seek final atonement for all shortcomings); Om bhussvaahaa, Agnaye idam na mama, Om Bhavaaswaahaa, Vayave idam na mama/ Om suvassvaahaa, Suryaaya idam na mama/ Dosh prayaschitta Sankalpa: Asmin agni sandhaana homa madhye sambhavita samasta dosha praayacchittartham sarva praayacchittam hoshyaami/ (May I tender atonement to all the blemishes that would have occurred during the course of the homa karma) Anagjnaatam yad ajnaatam, Yaagjnaasya kriyate mithu, Agne tadasya kalpayaa twagum hi vettaa yattaagasah swaahaa/ Agneya idam na mama/ (Agni Deva! Do kindly pardon my shortcomings executed knowingly or unknowingly and treat my wrong doings as ratified). Purusha sammito yagino yajnah Purusha sammitah, Agne tadasya kalpayaa twagum hi vettaa yathaas tathaagasah swaahaa/ Agneya idam na mama/ (Agni Deva! You do indeed assume great significance in the context of homas and yagjnas, yet Paramatma the Supreme has the greatest role and as such may your prowess and strength be fortified by each act of yagjna homas executed in the Universe and may Almighty grant you that magnificence for ever!)

Imam me Varuna shrudhi havam adyaacha mridaya, Twaaam avasyuraachake swaahaa/ Varunaayedam na mama/ (Varuna Deva! Do kindly receive my invocation and be gracious enough to attend out entreaties as we seek your protection) Tat tvaa yaami brahmanaa vandamaanas tadaa shaaste yajamano havirbhih, Ahedamaano varuneha bodhyurushaagum sa maa na aayuh pramoshih swaahaa/ Varunaayedam na mama/ (Varuna Deva! You are extolled by Vedas always; may we too reach you by our sincere oblations as we do very sincerely offer our salutations to appease your characteristic fury and sound and reveal your inner Self of tranquility and repose to those you hold you in great esteem!)

TwannoAgne Varunasya vidwaan devasya hedo vayaasai sisthaah, yajishtho Vahni tamah shoshucchaano Vishwa dwesaagumsi praman ugdhyasmat swaahaa, Agni-Varunaabhaama idam na mama/ (Agni Deva, do mollify the fury of Devas especially of Varuna deva. You are indeed the most worshipful and the best conveyor of all and the most resplendent too of Devas. With these oblations do be pleased with our earnest entreaties and protect us from all those evil forces who are jealous of us due to our dictet approaches to you and the like minded Varuna deva too)/ Sa twanno Agne vamo bhavoti nedishtho asya Usasaos vyustau, Avakswaano Varunagum raraano veei mridikagum suvavo na edhi swaahaa/ Agni varunaabhyaam idam na mama/ (Agni Deva! You are indeed the foremost of Devatas; do protect us in the morning, day and night. It is so easy for all of us to approach you and hence one feels comfortable to offer our invocations to you always; do also provide shelter and daily succor along with Varuna Deva too; our sincere oblations to you both herewith). Twam Agne ayaasya yaasan manasaa hitah, ayaasan havyam uuhishe yaano dhhehi beshajagghaah swaahaa, Agni-ayase idam na mama/ (Agni Deva! You are ou fal refuge and shelter to keep us peaceful and contented; Indeed you are the unique carrier of our oblations to any destination and concerned Devatas without hesitation and meticulousness so that the remedies sought from them are granted to us instantly. We are ever grateful for your grace Agni Deva! This is our special oblation to you Deva!)
Final oblations: *Om bhussvaahaa, Agnaye idam na mama/ Om Bhuvassvaahaa, Vaayave idam na mama/ Om suvassvaahaa, Suryaaya idam na mama/ Om Bhur-Bhuvas-Suvas-Swaahaa, Prajaapataye idam na mama/ Om Shri Vishnave-swaahaa, Vishnave Paramatmane idam na mama/ Om Rudraaya Pashupataye swaahaa, Rudraaya Pashupataye idam na mama/ Praanaayaama and Parishechana: Adiienavamagasa sthaah, Anumatenvamagas sthaah, Sarasvatenvamagas sthaah, Deva Savitah praasaavih/

Vasordhaara homa: *Om Sapta te Agnesamidhaah Sapta jihvaah Sapta Rishayah Sapta Dhaama priyaani, Sapta Hotraa Sapta dhaa twaa yajanti yonir aapranaswaa ghritena swaahaa/ Hiranya daana: Harih om tat sat---aneka kaala saayam praatar aoupaasana akarana praysaccittraatham homa dravya daanam yat kinchit hiranya daanam cha naaata gotrebyho Braahmanaabhyah sampradade, nama, na mama/

II. Alternative Grihasta Homa : Note: The procedure is as per Maharshi Dayananda and Shatapata Brahmana:

Agni Deva Samidhana is performed with Samidhas dipped on ghee with the Mantra : *Om ayam ta idhma Atmaa Jatavedastenedhyaswa vardhasya chendra vardhaya, chasmaan prajayaa pashubhi Brahma varchasenaanayadyana samedhaya swaahaa/ Idamagnaye Jatavedase-Idanna mama/ This first oblation is made with the above Mantra in the north side of the homa kunda starting from west to east. The second oblation is made with the following Mantra: *Om samidhaagnin durvasyat ghriteh bodhayutaantitham, Asmin havyaa juhotan swaahaa/ Idamagnaye idanna mama/ (This ahuti is done in the South side from west to east)The third oblation’s Mantra is: Su samidhaaayah shochipem ghritam teevram juhotana, Agnaye Jatavedase swaahaa/ Idaagnaye Jatavedase-idanna mama/ (This ahuti is performed in the middle of the homa kunda) The fourth oblation is made with the following mantra: *Tatwaam samidhabharanghiro ghrutena vardhayaamasi, Bruhatecunchhaam yathishtadya swaahaa/ Idamagnayengirasy idanna mama/ (This ahuti too is to be done in the middle of the homa kunda)

Jala prokshana/ Jala sinchana: Water is taken in an anjali or cupped palm and sprinkled in all the directions of the Havana kunda: the first sprinkle in the Purva Disha or the east direction from south to north; the second sprinkle is in the Paschima disha or the west direction commencing from south to north again; the third sprinkle is in the Uttara Disha from west to east and finally then fourth should be a complete circle from starting from South East corner of the Homa Kunda with the following mantras: 1) *Om Aditenumanyaswaa/ 2) *Om Anumatenumanyaswaa/ 3) *Om Saraswatenumanyaswaa/ 4)Deva savitah prasuvah/Then the Mantra continues: Prasuva yagjnam pra suvam Yagjnapatim/ Bhagaaya/ Divyo Gandharvah, Ketapuh Ketou nah punaaatu Vaachaspativaamcha nah Vidvat/

Now further oblations to continue: *Om Agnaye swaha, Agnaye idanna mama- (Sprinkle gandha in the north side of the homa kunda); *Om Somaya swaha, idam Somaya, idanna mama (ghee now onward) – at this stage Agni to be re- kindled; *Prajapataye swaha, Prajapataye idanna mama; *Om Indraaya swaaha, idamindraa ya, idanna mama/ (The oblations to Prajapati and Indra to be performed at the center of the Homa kunda).

Note: So far the Homa Vidhi is common: Praatah kaala ( Morning): *Om Surye jyotirjyotih Suryah swaahaa/ Om Surye varche Jyotirvarchah swaahaa/ Om Jyothi Suryah Surye jyothi swaahaa/ Om Sajurdevena Savitraa sajurupasendravatyaa/ Jushaanah Suryo vetu swaaha/ Saayamk kaala (Evening):
Om Agnirjyoti jyoti jyotiragnih swaaha/ Om Agni varcho jyotiragnih swaaha/ Om Agnirjyotiragnih swaaha/ Om sajurdevena Savitraa sajurendratvaya/ Jashano Agnirvetu swaah/

Note: Keeping the above in view, the execution of homa is continued further: Om Bhuragnaye Praanaya swah, idamagnaye Pranaya-idanna mama/ Om Bhuvar Vaavepaanaaya swaha/ Om swaraadityaya vyanaaya swaha vyanaaya swaha, idamadityaya vyanaaya-idanna mama/ Om bhurbhuuvah swaragni Vayavyaadityeybyhay, idanna mama/ Om aapo jyoti rasonritam Brahma Bhurbhuvah swarom swaha/ Om yaam medhaam Devaganaah pitaraschopaasate, Tayaa maamah medhaagne medhaavina kuru swaha/ Om Vishwaani Deva savitur duritaani paraa suva, yadbhadram tanna aa svygam swaha/ Om bhurbhuvaswaha tat saviturvarenyam bhargo devasya dheemahi swaha/ Om Vishwaani Deva/ Upasthaanam/ Agnerupasthaanam karishye/ Purnamadah Purnamidam Purnaat puranamudachyate, Purnasya Purnamaadaaya Purnameva vashishyte/ Om Shantih Shantih Shantih/ Om tat sat Brahmaarpanamastu/

Homa Prakriya regarding Brahmachari Homa and Grihasti Homa is thus concluded.

After observing homa as above, the Shat Karma Vidhi is continued with the instruction that a Brahmana should perform daily Sandhya and Homa as prescribed, followed by Brahma Yagna: Brahma Yagjna Vidhana: Swa shaakhaadhyanam Vipra Brahma yagjna iti Smrutah/ As per one’s own branch of Veda, Adhyana/ reading or recitation of Ruk-Yajur-Saama Veda Stanzas is called Brahma Yagjna. This Vidhana is mentioned in Taattiriya Swadhyaya Brahmana and as clarified by Brihaspati that it can precede or follow the Tarpana karya or after Praatah homa or Vaishwa Deva. A person who executes this Yagjna is expected to be seated in ‘Padmaasana’ facing east, preferably on the banks of a water flow, perform tri-achamama, initiate Savitri Mantra of ‘Pacchordhancchraashra’ along with Vyahritis, keep the Yagjnopaveeta in the normal position of Savya, and recite within the self. The method of Brahma Yagjna is detailed in Swadhyaya Brahmana. Apart from reading the Ruk-Yajur-Saama- Adharvana Vedas, one can read excerpts of Itihasa-Purana-Kalpas as per one’s own convenience.

Even on the days of Anadhyaya or on those days like Amavasya etc. the restriction of Anadhyaya is not applicable for Brahma yagjna, expecting that only one Ruk might be read out on such days, but otherwise the Anadhyaya restriction is nor applicable otherwise. As regards the ‘phala’ or the fruit of observing Brahma Yagjna on each day, the resultant outcome is stated to be that of the positive account of performing that specific Kratu: Yam yam kratumaddheyata tasya tasyaatpnuyaat phalam/ iti/ Vitta-Purna-Prithivi-Daanascalah phalamashrute iti/ Vedas approvingly praise the excellent result of Brahma Yagjna everyday as follows: Uttamam Naakamadhirohati Uttamah samaanaam bhavati yaavantam ha vaangmaam vitasya purnaam dadat Swaga lokam jayati taavantam Lokam Jayati bhuvaayaamsams chaakshavya chaupapamrityyum jayati Braahmanah saayujyam gacchati/ He who practises Brahma yagjna daily would eventually turn out to be superior to others, would be blessed with land property and prosperity, would certainly avoid Apamrituy or untimely death and would surely reserve abode in Swarga).

Tarpama Vidhana: Ruk Saamaadhrthva Vedoktaan Japya mantraan yajushim cha, Japitaavivam tatah kuryaaddevarshi pitru tarpanam/ Tava Vashishtah/ (Vashishtha Maharshi affirmed that even after studying Ruk-Saamaadhravana Vedas, it is essential to recite Pranava and perform tarpana to fructify the knowledge of Vedas. Vishnu Purana emphasized: Shuchhi Vastradharah snaato Devarshi Pitru tarpanam, Teshameva hi tirthena kureet susamaahitah/ (Only on wearing clean clothes after bathing and poised with unperturbed conscience, Tarpana is to be undertaken thereafter). To Devas only one tarpana/
Jalaanjali each be executed, while to Rishis twice and to Pitru Devas thrice respectively for their satisfaction. Praaggeshu Suranstarpenmanushyaanchaiva madhyatah, Pitramstu dakshinaareshu chaika dwi trijalaanjaleen/ (As prescribed for example in Agni Purana: Tarpana Karya needs to be performed facing East in the Savya Yagnopaveeta position to Devas; to Rishis facing the East again with yagjnopaveeta as a garland but to Pitru Devatas the tarpana should be performed facing south with the yagnopaveeta worn as ‘apa savya’ or ‘Pracheenaa veeti’ or in the reverse position reciting ‘Swadhaanamah tarpayami’. While performing nitya tarpana, both the hands can be used while Shradhaadi tarpana needs to be performed with one hand only. Pitru Devas would not be contented of tarpan is performed from a higher plane position into water flows nor with wet clothes. In fact, Pitru tarpana needs to be performed with dry clothes only preferably seated on spread over darbhas. Also tarpana be done with water drawn from one vessel and transferred to a smaller vessel into a lower plane but due to the apprehension that a lower plane on the ground might be sullied with hair, ash, coal particles, thorns, and even bones on the ground and hence the tarpana is preferably done on a clean place with darbhas are spread over. Alternatively, tarpana may be done in a large flat plate or container. For performing tarpana only vessels of gold, silver, copper, brass, bronze or any metal vessels may be used but not earthen pots; however neither metal vessels nor hands without darbhas be used for the tarpana. Deva tarpana and Rishi apana needs to be performed along with water mixed with plain rice grains or white tilas. Pitru tarpana needs to be necessarily done with water mixed with black tilas. One theory is that tila tarpana should be avoided in house holds on Saptami Sundays keeping in view the welfare of wife and sons. Also for one year after weddings and half a year after Upanayanas, tila tarpana be avoided in the house holds but on water banks. Now, tarpana needs to be dne in favour of one and all: Maharshi Yaginavalkya confirms: Brahmaanam tarpayet purvam Vishnum Rudram Prajapatim, Vedaan Chhandaamsi Devaamscha Rishem chaiva tapodhanaan/Tathaa Devaam Gandharva Naagaan Saagaraani Parvataanapi, Saritotha Manushyaamcha Yakshaan Rakshaamsi chaivaah/ Pishaachaamscha Suparmaascha bhutaananyatha pashumstathaa, Vanaspatinoshadheemscha bhutagraamaamscha turvidhaan-----sarvaan pitrugamaamscha Maataamaahaamscha satatatam shraddhayaam tarpate Dwija/ One needs to perform Tarpana to one and all right from Vishnu Rudra Prajapati, Vedas, Chhandas, Devataas, Rishis, Gandharvas, Nagas, Saagaras, Parvatas, Saritas or water flows, Manushyas, Yakshas, Raakshasaas, Piscachaas, Suparnas, Bhutaas, Pashus, Vanaspatis, Ouashadhis, and so on).

**Deva Tarpana:** This tarpana is to satiate Devas and the Devatva or the Divinity that is microcosmically present in all Beings in the Universe. Seated facing the east direction with the right knee kept in contact with the ground, placing the left leg over the right leg so that the knee is above the ground, keeping Akshatas in the water pot, holding the water pot on the right hand palm, covering it with left left hand palm reciting Brahmaadaya Suraah Sarvey Rishayah Kashyapaadayah, Aadacchantu Maha Bhaagaa Brahmaandodaravartinaah/ Now pour water with the left hand into the opne right palm releasing water from the tips of four fingers; three darbhas need to be placed on the right palm with the tips of darbhas aligned with finger tips while reciting the following in favour of each Devata: Om Brahmaa tripyataam, Om Vishnum tripyataam, Om Rudraah tripyataam, Om Prajapath tripyataam, Om Devaaah tripyataam, Om Devyah tripyantaam, Om Vasavah Tripyantaam, Om Rudraah tripyantaam, Om Adityaag tripyantaam, Om Chhandaamsi tripyantaam, Om Vedaah tripyantaam, Om Rishayah tripyantaam, Om Gandharvaah tripyantaam, Om Apsaraah tripyantaam, Om Devaanugah tripyantaam, Om Naagaah tripyantaam, Om Saagaraah tripyantaam, Om Purvataah tripyantaam, Om Saritah
tripyantaam, Om Manushyaah tripyantaam, Om Yakshaah tripyantaam, Om Rakshaamsi tripyantaam, Om Pishchaachaah tripyantaam, Om Suparnaah tripyantaam, Om Bhutaani tripyantaam, Om Pashavah tripyantaam, Om Vanaspatayah tripyantaam, Om Oshadhayah tripyantaam/


Rishi tarpana: The same procedure as in Deva Tarpana above to be followed. Om Kashyapah tripyataam, Om Atrih tripyataam, Om Vasishthah tripyataam, Om Vishwaamitra tipyataam, Om Gautamah tripyataam, Om Bharadwaajah tripyataam, Om Jyagnih tripyataam, Om Asvapah tripyataam, Om Jayantah tripyataam, Om Kutsah tripyataam, Om Bhriguh tripyataam/

Divya Manusha tarpana: The revised procedure requires change of sitting postion to face the northern direction and wearing the Yajnopaveeta like a garland and with raised knees and making two oblations in respect of each : Om Sanakah tripyataam Om Sanakah tripyataam, Om Sanandah tripyataam Om Sanandah tripyataam Om Sanantah tripyataam om Sanatanaah tripyataam, Om Sanatkumarah tripyataam om Sanatkarumarah tripyataam, Om Kapilah tripyataam om Kapilah tripyataam, Om Aasurih tripyataam om Aasurih tripyataam, Om Odhuh tripyataam om Odhuh tripyataam, Om Pancha Sikhaah tripyataaam om Pancha Sikhaah tripyataaam/

Divya Pithi Tarpana: The revised procedure for tarpana to the Divine Devas and Manes requires change of sitting position to face the Southern direction and wearing the yajnopaveeta in reverse position as ‘praacheenaa veeti’, with left knee to be in contact with the ground while the right knee to be above the ground yet not touching it with left leg on the ground and the right leg on top of left leg; pour some black tilas (sesame seeds) in the water pot; now the offerings would be made thrice each time to Agni-Soma-Yama and Aryama ie. Agni the Divine Fire God who carries the soul of the burnt body, Soma the Water God who carries the soul of the drowned body, Yama the Maintainer of Dharma and the Judge of Karmas of the deceased and Aryama the Ruler of the Domain of Souls : Om Agnih tripyataam idam salilam jalam tasmai swadhaa namah, tasmai swadhaa namah, tasmai swadhaa namah Om Somah tripyataam idam salilam jalam tasmai swadhaa namah, tasmai swadhaa namah, tasmai swadhaa namah Om Yamah tripyataam idam salilam jalam tasmai swadhaa namah, tasmai swadhaa namah, tasmai swadhaa namah Om Aryamaah tripyataaam idam salilam jalam, tasmai swadhaa namah, tasmai swadhaa namah/ The next three mantras are for the three Divine Manes-as were associated with the souls who were burnt or drowned and carried to the Skies till the latter are tendered to their destinations: Om Agnishu aatth Pitarah idam salilam jalam tebyah swadhaa namah,tebyah swadhaa namah, tebyah swadhaa namah/ Om Somapaah Pitarah tripyantaam idam salilam jalam tebyah swadhaa namah,tebyah swadhaa namah
namah, tebhyah swadhaa namah/ Om Barhishadah Pitarah tripyantaam idam salilam jalam tebhyah swadhaa namah, tebhyah swadhaa namah tebhyah swadhaa namah/

**Pitri Tarpana:** Om aagacchantu me piratah imam gruhnantu jalaanjalim/ (May my ancestors present themselves here and receive my oblations) Mama Sarva jannmeshu Pitarah/ Pitaamahaah/Prapitaamahaah/trupyantaam idam tilodakam swadhaayibhyah tebhyah swadhaa namah, tebhyah swadhaa namah/ Pitri Tarpana:

Mama Sarva janmeshu Pitarah/ Pitaamahaah/Prapitaamahaah/trupyantaam idam tilodakam swadhaayibhyah tebhyah swadhaa namah, tebhyah swadhaa namah/ Pitri Tarpana:

Mama Sarva janmeshu Matarah/ Pitaamahyah/ Prapitaamahya/ trupyantaam idam tilodakam swadhaayibhyah taabhyah swadhaa namah, taabhyah swadhaa namah/ Pitri Tarpana:

Mama Sarva janmeshu Maataraah/ Pitaamahyah/ Prapitaamahya/ trupyantaam idam tilodakam swadhaayibhyah taabhyah swadhaa namah, taabhyah swadhaa namah/ Pitri Tarpana:

Mama Sarva janmeshu---/

Now in reference to the Karta’s own Pitru ganas: Aadou Pitaa tathaa aataa saapatni janani tathaa, Maataa mahi ssapatnikaa Atma Patnyastwanantaram / Sutabhraatru Pitruvyaascha Maatulaascha Sabharyakaakah, Duhitaa Bhagini chaiva Douhiro bhagineyakah/ Pirushvasaa Maastrushvasaa Jaamaataa Bhaukah Snushaa, Shwashurah Syalakaschiva Shwashrushascha Guru rikthinah/ (Following is the line in which Pitru Tarpana is to be performed: Foremost to father, grand father, Great grand father, mother, father’s mother, father’s grand mother, Co mother if any, datta / adopted putra’s parents if any, mother’s father, mother’s grandfather, mother’s mother and the latter’s mother in law, wife, sons, self’s brothers, father’s brothers, mother’s brothers and their wives, daughters, sisters, grand sons, father’s sisters, mother’s sisters, son-in-law, brother’s-in-law, and their wives, daughter-in-law, mother’s brothers, wife’s brothers, mother-in-law, Guru and the Trader, the Supplier of household goods)

Tarpana prayoga: Achamya; Mamopaattha durita kshaya dwaaraa Parameshwara preetyarthat evam guna Pituh Pitrunaam akshayya punyaloka phalaavaapyartham darsha prayukta maha punya kale tila tarpanam karishye/ –Iti sankalpya, praacheenaaveeti dakshinaabhimukhah savyam jaanaa-vachya/ ( After achamana and sankalpa, assume praacheenaaveeti, face Southern direction and bend the left knee being seated and commence the tila tarpana). Brahmanas should address the Pitru Devatas as sharmaanam, Kshatriyas as Varmaanam and Vaishyas as Guptam/ Following is the order in which the tarpans is made: Pitaram-gotram-sharmanam-Swadhaanamah tarpayaami-Swadhaanamah tarpayaami Swadhaanamah tarpayaami/ Pitaamaham-----/Prapitaamaham----- /Maataram-gotram-daam-Swadhaanamah tarpayaami (three times)/ Pitaamaheem-gotramdaam-Swadhaanamah tarpayaami (three times); Prapitaamahim-gotramdaam-Swadhaanamah tarpayaami(3 times)

Likewise, Sa-patni maataram or step mother-gotraaamdaam-swadhaa-(3); as also Janaka pitaram/ Janaka Mataram. Maataamaham or mother’s father-gotram-swadhaanamah tarpayaami (3); Maatuh pitaamaham—Maatuh Prapitaamaham----; Maataamahim or mother’s mother- gotramdaam-Swadhaanamah tarpayaami (3); Maatuh Pitaaahim- gotram daam-Swadhaanamah tarpayaami (3);
Maatuh Praptahim-gotramdaam-Swadhaanah tarpayaami (3); Atma patnim or karta’s wife-gotramdaam swadhaanah tarpayaami (3); Sutam or sons/ bhraataram or brothers; Pitrumyam or father’s brother; Matulam or mother’s brother; duhitaram or daughter; bhagini or sister; Douhitirah / douhitri or daughter’s son/ daughter; bhaagineyam or sister’s son; Pitru bhagini father’s sister; Maatru bhagini or mother’s sister; Jaamaataram or son-in-law; bhaavukam or brother-in-law; Snushaam or wife of brother in law; Swasura or father in law; Swashrum or mother in-law; Syalakam or wife’s brother; Gurum; Rikthinam or House hold trader.

After duly performing tarpana to all the relatives, the rest of the tilodaka on the vessel be released reciting: Narakeshu samasteshu yaatanaasu cha ye sthitaah, teshaam aapyaayaaayatit eayate salilam mayaa, Ye bandhavaa baandhavaascha yenya janmani baandhavaa, te triptimakhisaayantu yaschaasmatobhi vaanchati/ Ye mey kuley lupta putra daara vivarjitaah, tesaam hi datthamakshayyam idamastu tilodakam, Aabrahmastamba paryantam Devarshi Pitru maanaavah, Trupyantu Pitarah sarve Maatru Maataa mahaadayah, Ateeta kula koteenam Sapta dwipa nivaasinaam, Aabrahma bhuvanaat lokaat idamastu tilodakam/ There after recite the following: Yekechaasmat kule jaataa Aputra agotrinomritaah, Te gruhnantu mayaa dattam sutra nishpeeda -nodakam/ (In our Vamsha among our gotra dharis, those who died without sons and thus could not perform obsequies, may I offer due homage by way of ‘sutra nishpeedanam’ or pressing water out of my yagnopaveeta which is being worn as a garland now before wearing normally!)

At the end of the Tarpana Kriya as described above, the remaining water meant for tila tarpana be thrown away, fill up the vessel with fresh water, sit in eastward and perform Deva Tarpana by looking at Surya Deva and recite: Om Suryaya namah,Om Agnaye namah, Om Prithivya namah, Om Varunaaya namah, Om Shivaaya namah, Om Vishnave namah/ Anena yathaa shakti kritena Devarshi Pitru tarpanakaahyena karmanaa Bhagavan Pitru swarupi Janaardana Vaasu deva Parameshwara preeataam na mama/ Om tat sat/ Om Shri Krishnaapanamastu/ Om Lokaah samastaa sukhino bhavantu/ Om Sarve Janaah sukhino bhavantu/ Amaaavasya Tarpana Phala Shruti: Amaavasyastu ye Martyaah prayacchanti tilodakam, Paatramoudumbaram graahyam Madhu mishram tapodhanam/ Kritam bhagvati tait Shraddham sarahasyam yathaa vidhi, Hirishtha pushhtamnasaasthamet Seshaan prajayante prajaa dhruvam/ Kula Vamshasyya Vriddhistu pindadasya phalam labhet, Shraddhaayutastu yah kuryaatritrunaa manrunaa manruno bhavet/ (Maha Bharata Anushaasanika Parva-125 Adhyaya) (Pitru Devas asserted: Amaavasya tila tarpana from a madhu misha Aoudumbara Paatra is as fruitful as a formal Shraddha Kriya; this would bestow the fruits of excellent progeny and Vamsha Vriddhi besides fulfillment and happy life ahead!)

Yama Tarpana: This tarpana is to be performed on Aswiyaja Krishna Chaturdashi or on Krishna Paksha Chaturdashi coinciding with Tuesdays: Pretotsava Chaturdashaayam kaaryantu Yama tarpornam, Krishnangaara Chaturdasyayamapi kaaryantu sadaiva vaa/ Yamaaya Dharma Raajaaya Mrityave chaanta kaayacha, Vaivaswataaayya Kaalaayya Sarva Bhuta Kshayaaya cha/ Oudumbaraaya Dadhnaaya Neelaaya Parameshhtiney, Vrikodaraaya Chitraaya Chitruguptaaya tey namah/ (Yama tarpana is to be performed on Aswiyuja Krishna Chaturdashi or on Krishna Paksha coinciding withTuesday. This has to be addressed to: Yamaaya namah, Dharmaraa Rajaya namah, Mrityave namah, Antakaya namah, Vaivaswataa namah, Kaalaaya namah, Sarva BhutaKshayaaya namah, Oudumbaraaya namah, Dadhnaaya namah, Neelaaya namah, Parameshhtiney namah, Vrikodaraaya namah, Chitraaya namah, Chitra guptaya namah); Dakshinaabhi mukho bhutwaa tilaih sayam samaahitah, Daiva tirthena
Devataattilaih Pretaadhipaaya cha/ (the tarpana is to be executed facing South in Savya Yagjnopaveeta position with ghee and tilas and each oblation needs to be done thrice against each name).

Devataarchana Prakarana

Parashara Smriti’s Shat Karma Vidhana quoted in the earlier pages is recalled: Shatkarmaabhi nirato nityam Devataathithi pujakah, Hutashehentu bhunjao Brahmaan naavaseedati/ Sandhyaa staanam japo homo Devataanaamcha Pujanam, Vaishvadevaatitheyancha shatkarmaani diney diney/ In fact, the day time if divided into eight parts, Deva Puja- Tarpana, Brahma Yagjna or Veda Pathana, Vaishwa Deva, are all integral parts excluding the Bhojana Kaala.

Devataarchana is an integral part of the Shat Karmas. Agneya Purana emphasizes that daily worship of Sarva Devas with appropriate Mantras is a daily duty: Mantrai Vaishnava Roudrestu Saavitraih Shaktivaistathaah, Vishnum Prajapatim vaapi Shivam vaa Bhaskarantathaa/Tasmin gairarchaye mantrai Shatkarmaabhi nirato nityam Devataathithi pujakah, Hutasheshentu bhunjao Brahmaan naavaseedati/ Sandhyaa staanam japo homo Devataanaamcha Pujanam, Vaishvadevaatitheyancha shatkarmaani diney diney/ In fact, the day time if divided into eight parts, Deva Puja- Tarpana, Brahma Yagjna or Veda Pathana, Vaishwa Deva, are all integral parts excluding the Bhojana Kaala.

Vishnu Puja: Lord Krishna taught the method of Vishnu worship to Yudhishtara in the context of Ashwamedha Yagjna as per Vaishnava Darshana: The Puja Sthala or the Place of worship be improvised an ‘Ashtaadasha Padmaakaara’or a Lotus with eighteen petals with rice flour and having placed eighteen Deva Pratimas reciting Ashtaakshari, Dwaadashaakshari Mantras, Purusha Sukta, Vishnu Panjara Stotra and so on and execute the worship: Saha Pushpodakena Maha Purusha maavaayayaami, Om Bhuh Purushamaavaahayaami, Om Bhuvah Purushamaavaahayaami, Om Suvah Purushamaavaahayaami, Om Bhurbhuvavssuvah Maha Purushamaavaahayaami/Bhagavan Maha Purusha ityenaabhinandatvi, swaagatam snaanaam kalpatadadasana snaanaani kalpayatya Shankhaayakalpayayaami, Shankhaaya kalpayayaami, Chakraaya kalpayayaami, Gadaayai kalpayayaami, Vana-maalai kalpayayaami, Shri Vatsaayai kalpayayaami, Garu mate kalpayayaami, Uttartah Shriya kalpayayaami, Sarasvati kalpayayaami, Pushai kalpayayaami, Tushai kalpayayaami----snaanaantaram sthaapitwaai pujaam kuryat: Keshavam Narayanam Maadhavam Govindam Vishnum Madhusudanam Trivikramam Vaamanam Shridharam Hrishikesham Padmanaabham Damodaram tarpatiwaayitaaii Vastraayagnipaveetaa-chamaniyaanam dhupam, Naivedyam, Shankhaayakalpayayaami, Chakraaya kalpayayaami, Gadaayai namah, Vana-maalai namah, Shri Vatsaayai namah, Garutmate namah, Shriyenumah, Sarswathiyai namah, Pushou namah, Tushtao namah, Nirmalya-Pratimaa visarjana-Punaraagamana praarthaana/ Vishnu Puja: As in the case of Vishnu Puja, Bodhaayana Maharshi also prescribed Shiva Puja as detailed in Paraashara Madhava. After snaana and physical-mental cleanliness, create a platform, wash it around with
‘Gomaya’ jala, recite Shiva Panchakshari and Rudra Stuti and invoke Maha Deva: Saha pushpodakena Maha Devamaavahaayet/ Om Bhurmahaademaavamaavahaayami Om Bhuvo Mahaa Devamaavaaahayaami Om Suvah Mahaa Dvamaavahaayami Om Bhurbhuvasuvah Mahaa Devamaavahaayameetyavavaaham aayaatu Bhagavanmahaadeva ityatha swaagatenaabhinandati; Swagatamadhunaa bhagavate Maha devaaya, Suvarna sthaanaani kalpayatyagrato Vishnave kalpayyaami, Brahmane kalpayyaami, Dakshinatah Skandaaya kalpayyaami Vinaayakaaya kalpayyaami, Paschimatah Shulaaya kalpayyaami Mahaa Kaalaaya kalppayaami, Uttaratah Umaayai kalpayyaami Nandikeshwaraaya kalpayyaamiti/ Then by reciting Maha Rudra, perform snaana- paadya, proceed with tarpana: Tarpaayami Shayarvam Devam tarpyayaami Ishaanam Devam tarpyayaami Pashupatim Devam tarpyayaami Rudrasya Devam tarpyayaami Ugrasya Devam tarpyayaami Bhoomam Devam tarpyayaami Mahaantam Devam/ After tarpana, Maha Deva be provided vastram-yagnopaveetam-achamaneeeyam- Namaste Rudra manyava iti gandham dadaat, Sahasraani sahasraaksha iti pushpam dadaat, Ishaanantwaa Bhuvanaadhipathi metalikshataan dadaat, dhupamu deeyasweti deepam/ Bhagavate Maha Devaaya justham charum nivedayaamet naivedyam/ Athaashtabhirnaamadheyairashtraashhthou pushpaani dadaat: Bhavaaya Devaaya namah, Sharvaaya Devaaya namah Ishaanaya Devaayananmah Pashupataye Devaaya namah Rudraya Devaaya namah Ugraya Devaaya namah Bheemaaya Devaaya namah Mahate Devaaya namah Vishnaye namah Brahmanye namah Skandaaya namah Vinaayakaaya namah Shulaaya namah Mahaa kaalaaya namah Umaayai namah Nandikeshwaraaya namah iti/ On completion of the ‘Shodasho-pachaara’ or the formal sixteen service worship to Maha Deva on reciting Shiva Gayatri and Shiva-related mantras, udvaasana, nirmalya gandha dharana and ‘punaraagamana prarthana’ or welcome back again prayers, the devotee is indeed blessed even with one such complete performance and is bestowed with the returns of a lakh of charities of cows to a veda pandita Brahmana!

Devataarchana viz. worship of Divinity (of one’s own Ishta Devata-be it Vishnu or his forms or Shiva or his extensions or Shakti / Devi in her innumerable forms of Lakshmi-Gauri-Saraswati basically representing Prosperity-Power-Knowledge) constitutes a significant part of the Shad Vidhis of Dwijas, especially of Brahmanas.

Vaishwa Deva Prakaranas:

Panchame cha tathaa bhaage samvibhaago yatharhatah, Pitru Deva Manushyanaanaam keetakaanaam chopaa dishyate/ Deva Yagnah Pitru Yagno Bhuta Yagno Manushyayagno Brahma yagnah/ Devaarchanaaantara Karya or the Duty mentioned among the Six Daily Duties of Brahamana following Deva Puja is called Vaishwa Deva comprising Deva-Pitru-Bhuta-Manushya-Brahma Yagnas, Vaishwa Deva needs to be performed as per one’s own family tradition in Shalaagani or Loukikagni; Angira said: Shaalaagnou vaa pachedannam Loukike vaapi nityashah, Yasminnagnou pachedannam tasmin homo vidhheyate/ The ‘pachaanna’ or the cooked rice is offered to the fully enflamed Agni either in Loukikagni or of on-going nature while shalaagani is improvised. Also, Vaishwa deva karya needs to be performed to appease Pancha Suna: Pancha soona Grihastasya vartanteyarah sadaa, Khandani peshani chulli jala kumbha upaskarah/ (Normally house holders commit five sources of ‘Jeeva himsa’, viz. khandani or cutting vegetables by the kichen appliances, peshani or pounding and pasting implements, chulli or water containers and cleaners and maarjani or washing utensils, floors etc).

26
Whatever shortcomings and sins are committed daily in one’s house holds are rooted out by the end of the day with the Vaishwaanara Vidhi. Anaahitaagni Vaishwa Deva vidhi includes Deva Yagna, Bali haarana, Bhuta yagna, Pitru yagna, Manushya yagna or Atithi Bhojana. Hence is the significance of Vaishwa deva vidhana as a part of the Shat Karma Vidhi. Incidentally, those who have not fulfilled the daily Vaishwaanara including Athithi Puja are stated to end up on termination of one’s life as a crow! Fuller details are given in the Essence of Dharma Sindhu by the same Author vide www.kamakoti.org/news and Vipra Yuva.org/ books.

Ashoucha Nivritti Prakarana

Following are the general regulations applicable to ‘Ashoucha’ to the ‘Chatur Varnaas’ of Brahmana-Kshatriya-Vaishya and Lower Classes or ‘Chatur Ashramas’ of Brahmachari-Grihastha-Vanaprastha-Sanyasins of the Hindu Society. In reference to the demise of Mother-Father-Brothers and close relatives of ‘Sagotra-Sapinda’ classification, Brahmanas are required to observe Ashuchi for ten days, Kshatriyas for twelve days, Vaishyas for fifteen days, and for the lower class one month: Jaate Vipro Dashashahena dwaadashaahena Bhumipah, Vaishyah panchadashaahena Shudro maasena shuthyati/ Special dispensations for Brahmanas are as follows: Ekaaahachudhyate Vipro yogniveda samaavanvita, Tyahaat kevala Vedastu dwi heeno dasaabhi dinou/ Those extreme Brahmanas who practise daily Agni Homas and Veda Paatha would be exempt from Ashuchi within a day while only those who observe only Veda Paatha without daily Agni Homa might observe Ashuchi for three days only. Janma karma bhrashtah Sandhyopaasana varjitah, Naamadhaaraka Viprasya dashaaham sutakam bhavet/ Those who need to observe ‘samaana pi, ‘daaya bhaagyadaari and in reference to wife’s close relatives like her parents and brothers are all in the similar scope of Ashoucha). Ubhayatra dashaahani kulasyaannam na bhujyate, Daanam pratigruho homah swaadhyaayascha nivrittate/ In either of these cases as mentioned above, cooking and eating bhojana by those subjected by Ashuchi is forbidden and also are disallowed to give or accept Daana or charities, let alone perform homa, swaadhyayaa and Veda pathana. As regards the general restriction that Asoucha requires forbidding of normal duties of a Brahmana, there is a view that except Sandhya Vandana and perhaps Nityagnihotra in essential forms, which might secure time-bound temporary dispensation, all other activities are forbidden, especially Pancha Yagnas viz. Deva Yagna, Brahma Yagna, Pitru Yagna, Bhuta Yagna, and Nara Yagna. During Jaataashoucha and Mritaashaucha, Sandhya Vandana and Ishti Charu movement should not be dispensed with; as regards, pranayaaa be avoided and other Mantras be uttered mentally. During ‘Shutaka Asoucha’, Gayatri Mantra Japa –Arghya pradaana-Pradakshina-Surya Dhyana-Namaskara are allowed as per Sage Paitheenasi. Marjana Mantras be recited mentally and Arghya Pradaana by way of Vaachaka or vocally; but certainly not homa and swadhyaayana. During the Ashuchi period, saha bhojana by those with other gotras are forbidden to eat. Praaptena sutakam gotrey chaturtham puruyshe na bhuyate, Daanam pratigruho homah swadhyayayscha nivrittate/ (In fact the ‘gotra
daayatwaa’or of the links of gotra get thinned down by the Ashuchi observance from ten days to eight to six and so on and the further generations would not be eligible for Shraaddha bhojana. Deaths in foreign countries, as also those of children and Sanyasis too would attract instant Ashuchi. In case, the news of death after the prescribed ten days is communicated thereafter within a year, then the Ashuchi has to be observed. However, after a year this late news would ask for immediate bathing with the same clothes as that would suffice Shuddhi Snaana or Purifying Bath. In case, a sagotriya Brahma is stated to have died without knowing the details of the death, then tarpana and panda be offered on any Krishna paksha Ashtami, Amavasya or Ekadashi. In case there is a death of a child just born or upto the time of teething, no Agni samskara, or Ashuchi or jala kriya is warranted. In case there would be ‘garbha nashta’ or ‘garbha sraava’, Ashuchi is called for as many days as the months of the pregnancy. If a child dies in the birth itself, only the mother needs to observe Ashoucha or otherwise if the child survives some days, and then the Ashuchi happens for the entire period as prescribed. Birth of a child in the night and survival after Sun rise, the ten day restriction becomes valid for the Ashoucha. Death of a child after teething and after chooda karma or prathama kasha khandana on the completion of the first year or of the Samskara there after whichever is earlier, there would be the requirement of Agni Samskara and three days of Ashuchi. From the time of Chooda Karma till Upanayana, the Ashuchi is for three days. Brahmacaari grihey eshaam hyuyate cha Hutaashane, Samparkam na cha kurvanti na teshaaam sutakam bhavet/ (In any household, where there is a Brahmacari and the house holder both are in the regular observance of daily Agni homa, then in that household, there cannot be any Ashuchi as long as there is no contact with those who have Ashuchi! Samparkaadi dushyate Vipro naaanyo doshosti Brahmane, Samparkeshu nivritthasya na pretam naiva sutakami/ (It is only any kind of contact that a pure Brahma suffers, otherwise there could be neither Pataka nor sutaka!)

Shilpis, workers, physicians, servants, barbers and Kings would secure instant Shoucha or purification. Ashouchaantara Ashoucha: Antaraa tu dashaahasya punarmaana janmani. Taawat syaaadashuchih vipro yaavattah syaadanirdeesham/ While already during the Ashoucha of the full or part duration of Ashoucha, if another Ashoucha occurs either on account of death or birth, there is no need to observe another Ashoucha and Sudhi or purification would take place on the tenth day itself. Anaadham Brahmanam pretam ye vahanti dwijaatayah, padey padey yagina phaloamaanupura- llabhante/ (Those dwijaas or twice born on account of Upanayana Samskara viz. Brahmana, Kshatriya, and Vaishyas perform the respect of carrying a dead body of a poor and helpless brahmana, then such a dwija reaps the fruit of the yajgna phala for each step of his carrying the body till the cremation ground! Such dwijas in return from the cremation grounds would purify themselves with mere praanayam after bathing on the return. Even if such dwijas merely accompany a dead body—whether related or not— to the cremation and return thereafter would have to be purified with snaana, Agni sparsha and some eating. In the event of a dwija touches or so accompanies a dead body of a lower class, then snaana and Surya darshana would purify him. Atimaanaad atikrodhatsnehaadwvaa yadi vaa bhayaat,Uandhandaneeyaat stree pumaan vaa gatireshaa viddheeyate/ (Either on account of respect, anger or friendship or even out of fear, anybody is responsible any to have a person directly or otherwise lead a person to gallows and death would receive the same fate, besides shassthim varsha sahasraani narakam or experiencing hell for six thousand years!

Vishesha Ashoucha Nivritti: Nashoucham nodakam naagnim naashrupaatamcha kaarayet, veedhaarogni pradaataarah paashaccheda karaaastatha/ Tapta krucchhena shudhhyantevamaaaha Prajaapatii/ (Prajaapati states that one’s Ashuchi is countered by Tapta krucchha Shuddhi or fasting on three days by
consuming hot water, hot milk and hot ghee in the daily measures of a pala – six-three-one measures respectively). Praayaschittas in general: Triratram prathame pakshe dwitiye krucchaamaacharet, Triteeye chaiva pakshe tu kruccham santapanam charet/ Chaturthe Dasha raatram syaat paraakah panchame matah, Kuryaa chhaandraayanaam shashthie sapitme tvyandadwayam/ Shuddhyarthamashthame chaiva shanmaasaat krucchaamaacharet, Paksha samkhyaam pramaanena suvaryaapi dakshina/ (Depending on the severity of Ashuchi or impurity, the prescription of Prayaschitta ranges from Upavasa or fasting three nights, or secondary kind of Prayaschitta involves Krucca vrata, the third one Saantapana Prayaschitta viz. bhakshana or consumption of Pancha Gavya viz. five cow products of milk, curd, ghee, cow’s urine and dung, besides kushodaka or purifying water of kusha grass for two days or seven days or a fortnight or three weeks; the fourth prayaschitta comprises fasting of ten nights in a go, the fifth prayaschitta is observance of paraaka vrata or fasting of twelve days from Amavasya; the sixth prayaschitta is chandrayana vrata or increasing fistful meals a day from Amavasya to Purnami and decreasing fistful meals from Purnima to Amavasya; the seventh type is to perform two chandrayana vratas; the seventh and eighth prayaschittas is to observe kruccha vrata for six months and a year respectively). For each fortnight, gold coins are required to be given as Daana to deserving Brahmanas).

Pancha gayva vidhana: Panchagavya: Gomutram gomayam ksheeram sarpith kushodakam, Nirdrushtam pancha gayantu pavitram papa naashanan/ (Cow’s sacred urine, dung, milk, curd and ghee besides kushajala constitute the Panchagayas which uproot multiple sins). These items are to be mixed in the prescribed proportion of one pala or eight tolas of urine, three palas of curd, one pala of ghee, half-ring finger measure of gomaya, one-seventh of the mix to be added by one pala of ‘kushodaka’. Gayatraya gruhya gomutram gandhadwaaret gomayam, Aapyaayasweti cha ksheeram Dadhikraavneti vai dadhi/ tejosi shukramotyaajyam Devasya twaa kushodakam, Panchagavyaamruchaa putam syapayedagni sannidhou/ Aapohishtheti chaalodya maa nastoketi manrtayet/ (Explanation of the above is as follows: Cow’s urine along with Gayatri mantra; cow dung with Gandhadwaaraam dhuraadarsheem nitya pushtaam kareeshineem Ishawreeegum Sarva bhutaanaam taamihopahvayeshriyam/ Cow’s milk: Aa paaayaasya sametute te vishwatahy soma vrishniyam, bhavaa vaajasya sangadhe/ Cow’s curd: Dadhikraavinno akaarisham jishnorasvasya vajina, Surabhi no mukhaar karat Prana ayoogumshi taarishat/ Cow’s ghee: Tejosi shukramasi jyotirasi Devovah savitotpunaatwachidrena pavitrena vasoh Suryasya rashmibhih/ Kushodakam: Devasya twaa savituh prasave Ashwinoh baahubhyaam pushno hastaabhyaan/ All these are mixed reciting: Aapohishthaa mayobhuvah taana urjyedadhaatana maheranaaya chakshuse yovasshiva tamorasaah tasaya bahayatehanah ushiteeriva maatarah tasmaa aranga maamavo yasya kshayaaya jinavadha apojana yathaachanah/ Then perform ‘abhi mantra’ to the mix and recite: Maana- stoke tanaye maana ayushimaahno goshumaano ashwureerishah veeraamnaano Rudrabhaamito vadheer havishyanto namasaa vidhematey/ Later on, the upper portion of the mix likened to a parrot of bright green of about the size of seven kusha grass pieces be lifted up and be offered to Homaagni with the Mantras of Rig Veda like Iravati, Ivam Vishnurvi chakramey, Maana nesteke tanaye etc. and the remaining portion be consumed by the Karta by reciting Pranava Mantra. On entering the body of the Karta, the Pancha Gavya should dissolve his hardened mass of sins from his bones, blood stream and skin pores like the offering made to Agni Deva by of the Homa thus performed! Pavitram trishu Lokeshu Devataabhiradhiphitam, Varunaschiva domutrey gomayey Havyavahanah, Dadhin Vaayuh Samudrishtah Somah ksheere dhruyet Ravih/ (The Devas who are present in all the Tri-Lokas are
represented in the Pancha gavya as follows viz. Varuna in Go mootra, Agni in cow dung, Vayu in the curd, Chandra in the milk and Surya Deva in the ghee!

A few corrective measures: *Duswapnam* yadi pashettu vaante vaah khurakarmani, Maithuney preta dhume cha snaanameva vidheetate/ (In the cases of viewing disturbing dreams, after vomiting for whatever reasons, after shaving and haircuts, after the act of feminine congress, and nearing and touching a dead body, one ought to purify by Snaana. Snaanaani pancha punyaani keertitaanui Maneeshibhih, Agneyam Vaarunam Braahhmam Vaayavvyam Rajasaa smritam/ (Five kinds of Sacred Bathings are stated as Agneyam with Bhasma or with Ash, Varuna by entering deep into the running stream of water, Brahmanas bathe as the former approach them in the form of Vayu and this kind of bathing is called Divya snaana.). Snaatvaa peetwaa kshute supte bhukte shayopasarpine, Achaantah punaraachaamedwaaso viparidhaayaa cha/ (Perform Achamana twice after bathing, drinking any liquid or even water, throat clearing, sleeping, after eating, outing on roads, and changing dresses.) Kshute nishtheevite chaiva daantcchishte sambhaashe dakshinam shravanam sprushet/ (Always one should touch one’s own right ear, after sneezing, loud spitting, throat clearing, teeth cleaning, gossiping and telling lies too). Brahmmah Vishnuscha Rudrascha Somah Suryonilastathaa, Tey Sarve hyapi tishthanti karney Viprasya dakshinam shravanam sprushet/ (Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Chandra, Surya and Vaayu all reside at Brahmana’s right ear!). Divaakara karaih putam diva snaana prashasyate, Aprashastam nishi snaanam Raahoranyatra darshanaat/ (Bathing during day time or the early evenings is commended but not in late nights unless when Surya Grahan takes place and Rahu Deva is sighted). Maruto Vasavo Rudraa Adityaah cha adhdevataah, Sarvem Somey vileyeyante tasmaat snaanantu tad graheyy/ (Forty nine Marut Ganaas, eight Vasu Devatas, eleven Rudra Devas, twelve Aditya Devas, and the rest of all other Devas are all present when Chandra Deva is absorbed in Rahu Deva and it is essential to take sacred bath at the time of the elipses). Khala yagne Vivahecha Sankraantou grahaneshucha, Sharvayyaam daarameteshu naanyatreti vinischah/ (It is compulsory to perform purificatory Sacred Bath in connection with Khalihana yagna, at the time of weddings, Sankranti and Solar or Lunar Eclipses surely). Putra jamaanani, Yagne cha tathaa cha atyayakarmaani, Rahoscha darshane daanam prashhata naanyathaa nishi/ (Even in the nights, Sacred bathing becomes essential when there is a child birth, Yagnas, death related news and deeds, eclipses, any daana prakriyas, bathing becomes inevitable.) Mahaa nishaatu vigjneyaa madhyastha prhara dwayam, Pradosha paschimou yat somapaana samam smrutam/ (There is a distinction between night and post mid night say at the time of two praharas and in the latter case, bathing be postponed till early mornings. Asthi sanchayanaat purvam ruditwaa snaanamaacharet, Antar dashaathe Viprasya hyurdhva maachhamaam smrutam/ (Purificatory bathing be undertaken after ‘Asthi Sanchayana’ or collection of the burnt bone remains and after the session of cryings on the deaths as also on the tenth day duties as prescribed). Kusha putantu yatsnaanam kushonopaspursed dwijah, Kushonodbhata toynam yat somapaana samam snrumatam/ (Kushagraasa snaana is considered as sacred and hence dwijas or the twice born Brahmana-Kshatriya-Vaishyas are advised to keep the kushas on the head for bathing as that kind of bathing is as purificatory as consumption of Soma Juice!). Agni karyaat
paribhrashtaah Sandhyopasana varjitaah, vedanchyaivaan dheyaanaah sarve te vrishalaah smritaah/
(All the dwijas are required to observe to Yagnya karma, Sandhya Vandana and Vedaadhyana and those
who do not observe these are Vrishalas or those belonging to very inferior class; literally meaning bulls).
Tasmad vrishala bheetena Brahmanena visheshatah, Adhyetavyopyekadesho yadi sarvam na shakyte/
(Those are ashamed of being dubbed as Vishalas, especially among the Brahmanas of the dwijas ought to
learn at least a little of Vedas if not much). Those belonging to the dwija community ought not to mix
socially, nor dine and much less marry into the low class society! Bhaajaneshu cha tishthisdtei swasti
kuvanti ye dwijaah, Na Devastripyati maanaasti niraashaah Pitarasthataah/ (Those dwijas who dine with
the other classes could neither please Devatas nor receive approval and blessings of Pitra ganas).

Principles of ‘Dharma Rakshana’ or sustenance of Virtue:

Grihasti Dharma Vivarana: Atah param Grihastasya Dharmachaaram kulou yuge, Dharmam
saadhaaranam shaktyaa chaaturvarnaashwaramaagatam/ Sampravakshyamaham bhuyam
Parasharavacho yatha, Shatkarmanirato VipraKrishi karmaapi kaarayet/(Parashara Maharshi describes
the Grihasti Dharmas in Kali Yuga as regulatory duties to all the house holders among all the Four
Varnas; Brahmanas especially need to meticulously observe the Shat Karmas [as detailed above] besides
agricultural activities too). Kshuditam trashitam shaarantam baleerrvedham na yojayet, Heenaangam
vyadhitam kleevam Vrasham Vipro na vaahayet/ ( Oxen which are hungry, thirsty and tired as also
diseased, lame and listless are not to be driven in carts). Japam Devarchanam homam swadhyayaam
saangamabhyaset pashchaat snaanaa/ Dwijas are required to daily observe japa, DevaPuja,
Homa, Veda-Vedanga adhyayaa after Shuchi snaana and atleast provide bhojana to deserving Brahmans
of at least one or two or three or even four in numbers every day). Swayam krushte tathaa kshetre
dhaanouscha swayamaarjitaih, Nirvepeta Pancha Yagyaamscha kratu deekshaancha kaarayat/
(In this manner, the Grihasthi should also undertake the tilling of his own land, procure his own food, besides
execute the Pancha Yagnas of Deva-Pitra- Bhuta-Nara-Atithis on daily basis). Tilaa rasaas na vikreyaa
dhaanyatatsamaah, Viprasaivam vidhhaa vrittistruna kaashtaaad vivikraha/ (Sale of Tilas and juices
should not be resorted but sale of dhaanya and wood would be in order; Brahmana should eke out his
lively hood likewise). Halamashtagavam dharam shadgavam vrittistruna kaashtaa/ Dwijas are required to daily observe japa, DevaPuja,
Homa, Veda-Vedanga adhyayaa after Shuchi snaana and atleast provide bhojana to deserving Brahmans
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Homa, Veda-Vedanga adhyayaa after Shuchi snaana and atleast provide bhojana to deserving Brahmans
of at least one or two or three or even four in numbers every day). Swayam krusht...
peshani chulli udakumbhatha maarjani, Pancha suna grihastasya ahanyakani vartate/ (As it is, in each house hold there are five killing places viz. a pounder, a gastric mill, a cooking stove, a water pot and a sweeper). Vaishwadevo balibhikshaa gograaso hantaararakah, Grihasthah pratayaha kuryaat sunaa dorsharna lipyate/The five relieving remedies absorbing the five places of killings in a household happen to be the Vaishwadeva Yagjna, bali karma, bhiksha pradana, giving grass to cows, and these offsetting the daily killings otherwise). Vrikshaan chitwaa Maheem bhitwaa hatwaa tu mirga keetakaan, Karshakah khalu yagjena sarvaa paapaat pramuchyate/ (The farmer is saving himself by performing yajnas from the sins committed by cutting trees, digging earth, killings of animals and ‘krimi keetas’)

Yon a dadyaad dwijaatibhyo raashi mulamupaagatah, sa chourah sa cha paapisithho Brahmaghn tam vinirdishet/ (Those farmers seated near the heaps of foodgrains without parting any to Brahmans would be aptly named thieves and sinners, worth being called Brahma ghaatis!)

Kshatriyopi krushim krutwaa Dwijaan Devaamscha pujayet, Vaishyah anyastathaakuryat krushi vaanijya shilpikaan/ (Indeed, Kshatriyas display their industriousness and courage and serve Brahmans for their involvement and dedication in Deva Pujas, Vaishyas earn out of their trading and business skills and so do the other class of the Society due to their ability in crafts).

Chaturnaa mapi varnaamsha dharma sanaatanah/ (Thus the Four Varnas are engaged in their own respective duties as per dharmas).

Samaamanya (Normal) Dharmas of husband and wife: Adushtaapatitaam bharyaam youvane yah parityajet, Sapatanka bhavet streetwam Vaidhavyancha punah punah/ (In case a husband abandons a youthful woman without any blemish, he would become a widow for successive births again and again).

Dariidram vyaddhitam murkham bhartaaram ya na manyate, Saa mrutaa jaayate vyaali vaidhavyamcha punah punah/ (In case a wife abandons a husband on account of poverty, disease, or idiocy, then she turns out to be a serpent or widow again and again. Patyo jeevita yaa naari uposhya vrataamaacharet, Ayushyam harate bhartrah saa naari narakam vrajet/ (Even as a husband is alive, if a wife observes fasts and vratas without his knowledge, then the life span of her husband would be reduced). Yat paapam Brahma hatyaayaa dwigunam garbhapaatane, prayschittam natasyasti tasyaastyaago vidheeyate/ (Abortion is as doubly heinous as that of Brahma hatya which has no prayaschitta as cited above otherwise! The only possible retribution would be rid of that woman by out casting or otherwise!) Na karyamaavasatyena naagnihotrena vaa punah, sa bhavetkarma chandaalo yastu dharma paraangmukhah/ (That house holder who has no respect for Dharma, especially if a Brahmana, is as fallen like the worst human being).Oagha vaataahatam beejam yathaa kshetreprarohati, Kshetri tallabhate beejam na beej bhaagamarhati/ Tadwat parastreetyaa putrow dwou kundagolakou, Patyou jeevati kundah syaanmrite bharthaari golakah/ (Just as a seed thrown by fierce gale from one field to the neighbouring field that crop of that seed basically belongs to the neighboring woman only).

Kubja vaamana shandeshu gadgadeshu jesdeshu cha, jaatayaghe baadhire mukey na doshah parivedany/ (There is nothing wrong that a junior son marries earlier, in case an elder son happens to be a ugly, too short, stupid, impotent, eunuch, blind, deaf, dumb, etc). Also: Nashte mrite prrajite kleeve chapatite patou, Panchasaapatsu naarinaam pattiranyo vidheeyate/ (If one’s husband is lost for long, reckoned away for dead, turned as a Sanyasi, impotent, or immoral, then the woman concerned could rightfully select another person for wedding again). Mrite bharthaari yaanaari brahmacharye vyavasthitaa, Saa mritaa labhateswargam sadbrahmachaarinah/ (On the expiry of husband, if the woman maintains her celibacy, she on her death would reach heaven for sure!).
In reference to purification of house-hold material, kitchen utensils can be cleaned by unpolluted water and so also the yagjna and puja material. *Rajasa shuddhyate naari vikalamb ya na gacchati, Nadi vegena shuddhyeta lepo yadi uadi shudhyati/* (Females in courses are cleaned up by running flows of waters say of rivers or water bodies provided they are other wise not ill). Vaapi kupa tadaakeshu dushiteshu kathanchana, Uddrutyaa vai ghatastham panchagavyena shuddhyati/ (Tanks, wells, water reservoirs when look and smell, then hundreds of water pot fulls are thrown out and add mixes of Pancha gavyas or of cow products-milk, curd, ghee, dung and urine-be sprinkled into the wells and so on). *Ashta varsha bhaved Gauri nava varshaa tu Rohini, Dasa varshaa bhavet Kanyaa ata urthavram rajaswala/* (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 maiden and thereafter a Rajaswala). *Prapte tu dwadashe varshe varsha ah kanyaa na prayacchati,Maasi maasi rajastasyaah pibanti pitarah swayam/* (In case the Kanya is not married on attaining of age, then pitru devatas are required to consume the menses material). *Maataa chiva Pitaa chiva jyeshtho bhataa tathaiva cha, Trayaste narakam yaanti/ (In case, the mother, father and the elder brother of the girl who has come of age still remains unmarried are destined to go to hell). *Yah karotyekaraanetrena vrishalasevananvisojah, Sa bhaikshubhugjapannityasya tribhi varsher vishudyati/* (If a dwija or Brahmana-Kshatriya-Vaishya were to serve a low caste person in a night, then the atonement would be to beg alms and perform japa for three years!) *Astaam gate yadaa Suryesta nimna jatyam pattim striyam, Sutikaam sprushate chaiva katham shuddha vivardhheyate/ Jaata vedam suvarnamchha Somamargam vilokyacha, Brahmanaanugatashchaiva chiva snaanam krutwaa vishuddhyati/* (If a dwija happens to touch a degraded person, a characterless woman or a woman in confinement especially in the nights or darkness, then the method of purification would be to look at Agni, Gold, Moon’s movement on the sky, follow a brahmana and take a Shuddhi Snaana or bath).

*Spushtwaa rajaswala yaa tu chaturthehani shuddhyatii, kruyaadrajonivrittoo tu Daivapitraaya karmacha/* (Those females on the fourth day of the periods are required to take Shuddhi Snaana and perform the normal duties to Devas and Pitru Devas as usual) *Rogenaa yadrajah streenaamanvahantu pravartate, Naashuchih saa tatatakena tata syadvai kaarikam matam/* (For the reason of illness, in case the “rajotpatti” persists, then too the Ashuchi Period time is stated to have terminated on the fourth day) *Prathamehani chandali dwiteeya Brahma ghatini, Triteeye rahaki praktaa chaturthehaini shuddhyati/* (On the first day of the period the female is reckoned as a chandaali, on the second day as a Brahmacide, the third day as a washer woman and on the fourth day she gets purified). *Aature snaanamutpanee dashakrutvyodyaauturh, Snaatwaa snaatwaa sprushedenam tatah shudyet sa aauturah/* (In case a person is extremely ill, then another person who is heathy takes his snaana many times and then touches the person who is sick, then the latter would get far better!) Now the ways in which purification of metallic and other household items is achieved is as follows: bronze items like utensils are cleaned by ash powder normally unless spirituous material is not involved and in the case of the latter cleaning by fire and scraping the smoked layer with a sharp metal. Bronze items again when smelt by cows or sniffed by dogs or even by touched by low class persons lose their acceptability and rendered unworthy of reusage unless they are cleanedby ash several times. *Aayase shwapasaarena seesasyaagnow viseshodhanam, Dantamayiswa tatha shrinda roupyam souvarnaabhaajanam/ Mani paashaana stringacha etaan prakshaalayejjitali, Paashaane tu punar-
As regards iron-steel vessels are concerned, these need to be rubbed one against another and or better burnt in Fire; ivory, bone, horn, silver and gold, Ratnas, Precious stones and ivory articles concerned they are either exposed to fire and get melted while rock-made items a purified ny rubbed again). Earthen vessels are rendered clean by being burnt; paddy is cleaned by scouring; bamboo vessels, rags, linen, cotton clothing, woollen clothing, are purified by sprinkling of water; similarly leather and hide, grass of various kinds, wood, ropes etc. are purified by sprinkling of water after sun drying. Bhumim spushtavaa gatam toyaam aschaapyanyonya viprushah, Bhuktvochchishtam tathaa sneham nocchishtam Manurabraveet/ (Manu says that running water falling on the ground, flying saliva while in conversation with other albeit respectfully, remnant ghee and cooking oil is not impure!).

When ever, ‘Madhuparka’ or clothing offered to the guests after bhojana as a gesture of respect, the remnant fruits, juices, tamboola or betel, etc. are never unclean or impure. Adushtaa santataa dhaaraa Va toddhutaascha renavah, Striyo vriddhaascha baalaascha na dushyanti kadaachana/ (A continuous stream of water flow, dust by passing wind, women, elderly persons and children can never be considered as unclean). Desha bhange pravaase vaa vyaadhisthu vyasaneshvapi, Rakshodevaswadehaadi paschhaaddharmam samaacharet/ (When there is a crisis in the country or in ‘pravasa’ or in exile, or in illness, or in a state of self control, or due to extreme difficulties, then one’s duty is of self-protection and ‘dharmaacharana’ be postponed for the time being!). Ye na kena cha dharmena mrirdunaar daaarunen cha, Uddhareddeena maatmaanam samartho dharmaa samaacharet/ (Be it a hard or none too soft duty of dharma, it is essential to first pull up one self and get strong enough to practise Dharma).

Whenever there is an emergency, do not get concerned regarding the practice of ‘Shoucha’ and ‘Aachara’ till such time that one gets stabilized to normalcy). But this indeed is not an escape route!

Grihastu dayaa yukto Dharmamevaanuchintayet, Poshya vargaartha siddhyartham nyaayavartaata su buddhiman/ (It is expected of Grihasthaas or house holders to 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 of justice). Nyaayoparjita vittena kartavyam hyatam rakshanam, Anyaayena tu yo jeetet 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 far aloof of undeserving temptations of life). Agnicchit Kapila Sareet Rajaa Bhikshur Mahodadhih, Drushta maattraah punantyete tasmaan pashyettu nityashah/ (Even the visions of those who observe nitya Agni homas, Kapila cows, performers of Satra Yagnya, kings and nobilities, Bhikshus or those who renounce the worldly activities and the profound Oceans would inspire and motivate such right minded persons).

Arani Krishna marjaalam chandanam Sumanim ghritam, Tilaan, Krishnaajinam, Chhagam gruhey chaitaani rakshayet/ (Every house holder is advised to keep an Arani or double stones with which to create fire, black cat, chandanam, good quality gem stone, ghee, tilas, black deer, thick butter milk and a goat for the security and auspiciousness in his house). Also bulls and cows are of immense benefit and even a place to let a pair of these stand if given as a charity to a good Brahman would bestow the fruits of warding the most heinous sin of Brahma hatya perpetrated by way of mere thought, speech and the worst still by a deed! In fact such a daana if given to a very poor and helpless but ‘Vedaadhyaayi’ would instantly add several years of healthy and contented on going life itself! But he who mismanages to gain houses, fields or even barren land by foul means from another party would not recompense by acts of digging wells, performing yajnas, and giving away charity of several cows! Even a touch of a low caste person, a
woman of a just born child, a woman during the menses period and a fallen woman would warrant impurity for two, four, six, and eight days respectively. *Tatah saannidhyamatrena sachailam snaanamaacharet, Snatwaavalokayet Suryajajnanaat sprushatyeyadi* (Even going across such a person requires bathing with the dress as worn and thereafter look at and greet Surya deva.) Drinking water from a well, or a water body straight into the mouth without using palf fulls would land up the person as a dog in the next birth. A person out of anger shouts and declares that at his wife was unfit for him even privately and then once again seeks to approach her for rapprochment, then there should be a public apology to remove the blemish; this is equally applicable both ways! *Swaantah kruddhastamondho vaa khsutpipaasaa bhayaadhritah, Daanam punyamakrutwaa cha praayaciasittam dinatrayam* (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 no only ineffective but warrants a three day prayaschitta or sin retriever as prescribed below); the payaschitta includes Nadi Snaana and Brahmana bhojana and Go daana. *Duraachaarasya Viprasya tatha Vedanta vaadinah, Bhuktaannam muchyate paapaada horaatrantu vai narrah* (If a Duraachaari Brahmana or the sinful Brahmana due to any type of sins, regrets his sin, observes a day-night abstinence of food besides entertains with food to a sadachara Brahmana and gets him contented, then the former should be free from all blemishes!).

Vyasa Smriti adds further dimensions to Grihasthaashrama Dharmas as follows: *Grihashramaat paro dharmo naasti naasti punah punah, Sarva tirtha phalantasya yayoktam yastu paalayet* (This truism needs to be stressed again and again that there could be no better dharma as evidenced in Grihastha – ashrama. Those who observe these Ashrama Dharmas with conscience are rewarded with the fruits of arva Tirtha Darshana) *Guru bhakto bhrutyaa poshi dayavaanmasuyakah, Nitya japi cha homi cha Satya vaadi jitendriyah* (Those grihastis who pay great attention to Guru and elders, take full care of servants with sincerity, essentially of kindly disposition, being of non-complaining nature, observing nitya gayatri japa homas, satyavaadi or highly truthful, self restrained of his physical limbs, fully contented with his own wife and respectful of other females, and of impeccable chatacter and reputation are doubtless the recipients of the Sarva Tirtha phala without visiting none and being totally home bound)

*Para daaraan Paradravyam harate yo dine dine, Sarvatirhaabhishekena paapam tasya na nashtati* (Those grihastis who have no desire for other females and other’s money at any time make the Sarvatirtha-abhhsheka punya into insignificance!) *Griyashu sananeeyeshu sarvatirtha phalam tatah, Annadasya trayo bhaagaah kartha bhagena lipyate* (In those house holds where Soma-Savana and other yagjnas are duly and daily executed the Sarva tirtha phalas are reaped readily and totally. Those house holds which provide Anna daana always secure three fourths of the rewards while who perform other duties of Grihastas the rest of it.) *Pratishrayam paadshoucham Brahmanaancha tarpanam, Na paapam samprushetasya Balim Bhikshaam dadaati yah* (Those house holders who invite Brahmanas, wash their feet, offer ‘neeraajana’ while standing with utmost esteem and serve bhojan and satisfy them along with other services would be completely unreachable for any kind of sins.) *Paadodakam paada ghritem deepamannam pratishrayam, Yo dadaati Brahmanebhyo nopasarpitam Yamah* (Those grihastis who wash the feet of Brahmanas with water, ghee, deepa nirajana, Anna and restful hospitality
shall indeed be out of bounds by Yama dharma Raja even!) Vipra paadodaa vilannaa yaavat tishhati modini, Taavat pushkara patreshu piganti Pitaromritam/ (Till such time the ‘paadokaka’or the water washed by both the feet of the Brahmana keeps wet, the lotus feet of the Grihastha’s Pitru Devatas would be enjoying ‘Amrita paana’!) Yatphalam kapilaa daane Kartikyaam Jyeshtha Pushkare, Tatphalam Rishayah shreshtaa vipraanaam paadashouchane/ (Hey great Rishis! The Punya that would accrue from the Pushkara Tirtha Snaana and Go daana on a Kartika Pournami day would approximate the paada-prakshalana of the Brahmana guest of the grihastha respectfully performed by the latter!) Swaagatena -agnayah preetaa aasanena shatakrutah, Pitarah paada shouchenaanadyena Prajaapathi/ (The grihasti welcoming the Brahmana-atithi itself would have pleased Agni Deva, the guest being seated comfortably would have made Indra Deva happy too, Pitru Devatas would have been delighted by the ‘Paada-prakshalana’ and indeed Prajaapati himself would have been contented by the Brahmana’s contentment with the bhojana!) Maata Pitrou param tirtham Gangaa gaavo visheshitah, Braahmanaat Parama tirtham na bhutam na bhavishyati/ (Hey great Rishis! The Punya that would accrue from the Pushkara Tirtha Snaana and Go daana on a Kartika Pournami day would approximate the paada-prakshalana of the Brahmana guest of the grihastha respectfully performed by the latter!) Swaagatena -agnayah preetaa aasanena shatakrutah, Pitarah paada shouchenaanadyena Prajaapathi/ (Hey great Rishis! The Punya that would accrue from the Pushkara Tirtha Snaana and Go daana on a Kartika Pournami day would approximate the paada-prakshalana of the Brahmana guest of the grihastha respectfully performed by the latter!) Swaagatena -agnayah preetaa aasanena shatakrutah, Pitarah paada shouchenaanadyena Prajaapathi/ (Hey great Rishis! The Punya that would accrue from the Pushkara Tirtha Snaana and Go daana on a Kartika Pournami day would approximate the paada-prakshalana of the Brahmana guest of the grihastha respectfully performed by the latter!) Swaagatena -agnayah preetaa aasanena shatakrutah, Pitarah paada shouchenaanadyena Prajaapathi/ (Hey great Rishis! The Punya that would accrue from the Pushkara Tirtha Snaana and Go daana on a Kartika Pournami day would approximate the paada-prakshalana of the Brahmana guest of the grihastha respectfully performed by the latter!)
If one ekes life for self sustenance alone, then he or she is considered as an animal only; what is the purpose of that kind of animal life even if lived for long?) Adaata Prurushastyaagi dhanam samtyajya gacchati, Daataaram krupanam manye mrutopyartham na muchyati/ (A person who would not perform Daana has the psyche of being a wise one since he feels that he leaves behind that money and that is wiser since that much of money would be available with him, feeling self-deceptively though- that would be as his carry forward in his next life, anyway!) Praananaashastu kartavyo yah kritaartho na so mrirah, Akrutaardhatu yo mrityupraaaptah kara samohi sah/ (Those who leave the life are indeed well deserved and fulfilled once they have the satisfaction of having lived contented and indeed such persons are acclaimed as Amarajeevis or persons everliving! But, those who merely exist without ‘satkamas, are as bad as donkeys!) Anahatah sughuntuena balinaa chirajeevinaa/ (If one ekes life for self sustenance alone, then he or she is considered as an animal only; what is the purpose of that kind of animal life even if lived for long!) Adaata Purushastyaagi dhanam samtyajya gacchati, Daataaram krupanam manye mrutopyartham na muchyati/ (A person who would not perform Daana has the psyche of being a wise one since he feels that he leaves behind that money and that is wiser since that much of money would be available with him, feeling self-deceptively though- that would be as his carry forward in his next life, anyway!) Praananaashastu kartavyo yah kritaartho na so mrirah, Akrutaardhatu yo mrityupraaaptah kara samohi sah/ (Those who leave the life are indeed well deserved and fulfilled once they have the satisfaction of having lived contented and indeed such persons are acclaimed as Amarajeevis or persons everliving! But, those who merely exist without ‘satkamas, are as bad as donkeys!) Anahatah sughuntuena balinaa chirajeevinaa/
him claiming to be a Brahman due to his birth is minimal, but the daana given to an Acharya is far better by thousand times, but to a Veda Vidwan, the daana punya is stated to be endless) Agnihotri tapaswi chaVedaadhyayapayechha yah, Sakalpam sarahasancha tamaachaarya prachakshate/( He who is a practitioner of Agni homas, a tapaswi or daily Meditator, well conversant of Kalpa- Aranyakas and of confidential mantras as also a teacher of Vedas is known as an Acharya.) Ishtabhih Pashu bandhaischa chaaturmaasyaistathiva cha, Agnishtomaadi bhiryagnaina cheshtam sa Ishtawaan/ (He who is an expert of performing Ishtis like Pashu bandha, Chaturmasya and so on, Agnishtomaadi Yagnas and others is titled as an Ishtimaan or well versed with such Sacred Homa) Meemamsate cha yo Vedaan Shadbhirangaah savitsaraihi,Itiheasa Puraanaani sa bhavedpaaragah/( It is he who is described as the Veda Pararaga who besides Veda Jnaana is also versatile in the Six Vedangas of Siksha, Vyakaranas, Nirukta, Chhandas, Jyotisha and Kalpa as also Meemaamsas; he should also have the knowledge of Puranas and Itihasa) Brahmanah sa bhaveccheva Devaanaam api Daivatam, Prakshanchaaiva lokasya Brahmatejo hi kaaraman/ (Such a Brahmana is indeed a Deva Deva or the evidence of, and reason for, Brahma teja in the universe). Brahmanasya mukham kshetram nishkarkaramakuntakam, Vaapayetatra beejaani saa krushih saarvakamaamikii(Brahmana’s bright face is like a pebble free and thornfree agricultural field in which human beings themselves are the seeds to be sown and the resultant crops are like the various desires fulfilled by them) Sukshetre vaapayedbeejam supatre daapayedwanam, Sukshetre cha Supaatre cha kshiptam naiva vidshhyati/ (The seeds must be sown in ideal and fertile fields only and in such fields the seeds or various forms of yields or prosperity emerge) Vidya vinaya sampanne Brahmane gruhamaagate, Kreedanyoshadhayah sarvaa yaasyamah paramaaam gatim/(It is only in the households of Brahmanas that Vidya and Vinaya or knowledge and discipline could thrive and by the entry of oushadhis or anna / food would become playful and lead to total fulfillment) Nashtashouche vratabhrashtithe vipre veda vivarjite Deeyamaanam rudayatannam bhayaadhvai duyshkrutam krutam/( Those Brahmanas who are ‘apavitraas’ or of unclean physiques and characteristics, who are of depravity and meanness, who are Vedaheen and least enlightened are prone to fear, sadism and timidity). Vedapurna mukham vipram subhuktamapi bhojayet, na cha murkham niraaharam shaddraatra mupavaasinam/ (A Veda Brahmana only richly deserves fulfillment of food, instead of feeding a ‘murkha’ or an idiot who starves even for six nights!) Yasya gehe sadaashnanti havyaani tridivoukasah, Kavyaani chaiva Pitarah kimbutamadhidham tatath/ (Who else is called an ideal Brahmana in whose house ‘Devata havya shesha’ and ‘Pitru kavya shesha’are eaten!) Vedalaangala krushhteshu dwija shrestheyu satu cha, Yatpuraa patitam beejam tasyaaih sasyasampadah/ (During the days of yore, the seeds that Brahmana’Sajjanaas’ of virtue sowed by the ‘veda swarupa hala’ or tillers of Vedic features yielded ‘sasya sampada’ or the opulence of rich crops) Shateshu jaayate shutrah sahasreshu cha panditah, Vaktaa shata sahasreshu daataa bhavati vaa na vaa/(It is probable that among hundreds of persons, there might be a valiant and intrepid person born, among thousands there might be a Vidwan Pandita, among lakh of them an orator of fame, but nobody knows as to how many of persons that a ‘Daata’ (donor) or one with the great qualities of munificence and selflessness might emerge!) Na raney vyayahacchuroh adhyanaamna chapanditah, Na vaktaa vaakpatutvena na daataa chaartha daanata/(By winning a battle one does to become a hero of all battles, a Shastri who teaches Shastras can become a Vidwan of all Vidyads, a person with facility of expression cannot be acclaimed as a great orator cannot, but he who sincerely and selflessly donates with respect and in humility is indeed designated as a data!) Indriyaanaam jaye shuro, Dharmacharita panditah, Hitapriyoktibhir vaktaa daataa sammanma daanataah/(A person who possesses physical and mental control is a truly gallant hero, a meticulous practitioner of Dharma or Virtue is a genuine Vidwan, a
soft spoken convincer in arguments and persuader of proactive actions is a real Orator, and he who donates as per the reciever’s needs and necessities with respect and politeness without seeking a return is an authentic data!). Yadye kapatam krutyam vishamam dadaatisnehaadbhaadwaa vaarthahetoh, Vedeshu drushtam Rishhibhiscgha geetam tad brahmahatyaam Muniyo vadanti/ (Any charity given out of compulsions of money returns, or fear, or publicity and providing Brahmanas excellent bhojana by way of ‘saha pankti’ or equal status is as motivated as committing ‘Brahma hatya’ as stated in Vedas and amplified by Rishis!) Upare vaapitam beejam bhinnabhaandeshu goduham, Hutam bhasmaani havyancha murkham daanam sahayam dadaatisnehaadbhaadwaa vaarthahetoh,

Vedeshu drushtam Rishhibhiscgha geetam tad brahmahatyaam Muniyo vadanti/ (Any charity given out of compulsions of money returns, or fear, or publicity and providing Brahmanas excellent bhojana by way of ‘saha pankti’ or equal status is as motivated as committing ‘Brahma hatya’ as stated in Vedas and amplified by Rishis!) Upare vaapitam beejam bhinnabhaandeshu goduham, Hutam bhasmaani havyancha murkham daanam sahayam dadaatisnehaadbhaadwaa vaarthahetoh,

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physical contact, Resolve or the decision to mate and finally the copulation. These misdemeanors too would qualify for atonements!

Some Prayaschittas: Urthwaryocchishtamagah antarikshhareer mrutao tathaa, Krucchatrayam prakurveetaashoucharane tathaa (In the event of a death who dies as a result of illness due to the failure of body parts of upper or lower limbs, the witnessing dwijas present at the time of death not placing the dead body down to earth are required to perform three Kruccha Vrataas as a penalty.)

Krucchhe devayutanchaiva praanaayaama shatatrayam, Punya teerthem naardra shirah snaanam dwadasa sankhyayaa, Dwiyojanam tirha yaatraa krucchamvevam prakalpitam/ (The Kruccha Vrata comprises Gayatri japa ten thousand times, a dozen snaanams with shaved head in Punya Tirthas at least of two yojana radius).

Grihasthah kaamatah kruyadretasa h sechanam bhuvi, sahasrantu japerdevyaah praanaayaamaistribhih sahaa/ (If a grihasti Brahmana out of extreme passion spills his virility on the ground, then he is required to atone by three hundred pranayama and thousand times of Gayatri japa).

Chaturvedyopapannasu Vidhivad Brahma ghatake, Samudra seta gamana prayaschittam vinirdeshet/ (A Brahmana who is an erudite pandita of Four Vedas commits Brahma Hatya or killing of a co-Brahmana, then he is required to pay a visit to Sethu bandhana at Rameshvara Kshetra and perform the Prayaschitta as prescribed).

Savanastaam striyam hatvaa Brahmahyatya vratam charet, Madyapascha dwijah krutyaaninadeem gatwaa samudragayaam/ (For killing a woman engaged in the performance of vrata, the atonement is as per the procedure of Brahma hatyaa sin, while if involved in drinking intoxicants, the expiation would be bathing in a river flowing into the Ocean).

Chandraayane tatashcheerny krutyad Brahmana bhojanam, Anangut sahitaangam cha dadyaat Vipreshu dakshinaam/ (Thereafter, Chandraayana vrata, Brahmana bhojana and daana of a cow and bull with dakshina to a Pandita Brahmana be provided).

Madya paana Prayaschittam: Madyapascha dwijah kuryaanadim gatwaa Samudragayaam, Chaandraane –tatsaksheerena kuryadbrahmana bhojanam/ (Dwijas who resort to Madyapaana of draksha, kurjuraadi juices with fermentation have to perform bathing in a Sacred River and the Ocean besides observe Chandraayana Vrata and Brahmana bhojana dakshas).

Self-confession of sins:Self-confession of sins committed: As an important component of ‘Dharmaacharana’vide Ashtamodhyaya of Parashara Smriti, ‘Sad- Brahmanas’ are by themselves confess about their own sins: Vedavedanga vidushhaam Dharma Shastra vijaanataaam, Swakarmarata vipraanaam swakam paapam nivedayet/ (Those superior and distinguished Brahmanas who are experts in Veda Vedangas and well versed in Dharma Shastras and ideal practitioners of Dharma Shastra, do declare themselves voluntarily to co-Brahmanas about their own shortcomings and misdeeds!)

Krutwaa paapam na gruet guhyamaanam vivardhate, Swalpam vaatha prabhutam vaa Dharmavidbhyo nivedayet/
(Whether the sin committed is minor or major, one’s own conscience demands to confess to Vidwans who in turn would judge its intensity). After all: *Te hi paapey krute veda hantaaraschiva paapmanaam, Vyadhistasya yathaa Buddhhimanto rujaapahaah* (To enable the nature of illness, the patient who is affected would indeed have to convey the details of it and similarly the Karta of the sin committed has to describe its details to enable the Vidwat Sabha to prescribe the remedial medicine!) *Praayashchitte samutopanne lajjaaman Satya paraayanah, Muhuraarjava sampannah shuddhim gacchet maanavanah* / (Once such a virtuous and forthright person who owns a sin fulfills the prayaschitta or atonement is performed and condoned after exercising it, he becomes far cleaner person once again!) **Dharma Parishad:** Definition of a true Brahmana who is qualified to be a member of a Dharma Parishad to determine the kind of Prayaschitta to the sinners among Dwijas or Brahmana-Kshatriya-Vaishyas: *Saavitrayaashtyaapi Gayatraah Sandhyopaastyagni karyaho, Aginaanaat krishikartaaro Brahmana naama dhaarakaah* / (Without the worship of Savita Devata comprising Gayatri mantra, Sandhyopasana and Yagjna karma, a person who merely exists and carries on by eking livelihood is a Brahmana by birth only). **Graama – sthaanam yathaa shunyam yathaa kupastu nirjalah, Yathaa hutamanangnow cha amantro Brahmanas-tathaah* / (Like there is a dwelling home in a village without inhabitants, like there are wells without water, like fire without homa karya, so is a Brahmana without Mantras) *Yathaa shandopalah sreeshu, yathaa gourushara phalaa, Yathaa cha aagjnepahalam daanam tathaah Vipronruchophalah* / (Just as a ‘napumsaka’ among women, a useless fruit called ‘Vaagjna gao’ among fruits, a valuable daana to a stupid, so are Brahmanas without the Ruchas or stanzas of Vedas) **Chitram karma yathaane kairangourunamulyate shanai, Brahmanyamapi tadvat syaat saskaararairvidhi purvakam* / (Just like drawing a picture and embellishing it with appropriate colour combinations gradually, a Brahmana too evolves with formal ‘samskaaras’ into a glorious and charming flower!) *Prayaschittam prayacchanti ye dwijaanaama dharakaah, Te dwijaahpaapakarmaanah sametaa arakam yayuh* / (Those so called Brahmanas for name sake tenders prayaschitta to other ignorant persons go to hell together!) *Ye pathanti dwijaa vedam Panchendriya rataashcha ye, Trailokyam dhaarayanye panchendriyarataashrayaah* / (Those genuine Brahmanas who teach Vedas and are constantly engaged in performing ‘PanchaYagnas’ and control their own ‘Panchendriyas’ are those who bear the brunt of Three Lokas!) **Charurvedyo vikalpi cha anga vidharma paalakah, Prapashchaashramino mukhyaah parishad syu dashaavaraah* / (He who is an exponent of Four Vedas, Meemaamsa Darshana Vidwan, Vedanga vettai, Dharma paalaka is indeed the one qualified to be a proper member of the Parishad). The announcement of whatever prayaschitta is decided by the parishad needs however to be made by the King. *Praayashchittam sadaa dadyad devataayatanaaagratah, Atmaanam paavayet pashchhaarajyapan vai vedamaataram* / (Normally, there is a place earmarked to announce ‘prayaschitta nirnayas’ announced by the Royalty as approved by the Dharma Parishad. The affected party is made to be seated by reciting Gayatri Mantra). *Sashikham vapanam kruwaa trisandhyaamvagaaahanam, Gavaam goshte vasedraatrou diva taah sumanovrajet* / (Even as retaining the tuft, the dwija concerened is made to bathe in a river or water flow nearby and having stayed in a Goshala or a cow shed is then followed by othere to the temple premises. Now the prayaschitta for ‘Go Hatya’ would be ‘Prajaapatya’: *Govadhasyaanurupena Praajaapatyam vinirdeshaat, Praajaapatyantye yatraamcham vibhajettacchaturvidham* / (Prajaapatya Kruccha Vrata is distributed in four ways) *Ekaahameka bhaktaashti ekaaham nakta bhojanah, Ayachitaa shyekamaharekaaham maaruta aashanah* / (Eat onyale once a day, the next day eat only in the nights, one day eat whatever is available without asking, and on the ne next only Vaayu bakhshana or nothing at all!); this is the first kind of Praajaapatya krucchha. **Dinadwayam chaika bhaktio dvidiaam nakta bhojanah**,
Dinadwayamayaachi syaada dwidinam marutaashanah/ (Only simple cooked cereal on two days, on two days nakta bhojanam or evening such meal, two days what ever is available without asking for and the next two days only vayu bhakshana or simply nothing at all except vayu bhojana). Tridinam chaika bhaktaashi tridinamnakta bhojanah, Dina trayamayaachi syaatra dinam maarutaashanah/ (Eating three days of cooked cereal, three additional days of nakta bhojana, three additional days of available and unsolicited food and on three days further). Chaturahantweka bhaktaashi charurah nakta bhojanah, chaturdinamachaachi syaacchaturaham maarutaashanah/ (Four days of cooked cereals, four evening such meal, four days of unsolicited food and four days of vaayu bhakshana in a row); these are the four kinds of Praajapatya krucchha vidhi. Praayas chittey tatashcheerney kruyyad brahmana bhojanam, Vipaaya dakshinaam dadyaat pavitraani japed dwijah/ (On the completion of the Prayaschitta procedure, Vipras are required to be treated with a feast, ‘dakshina taamboolas’ are tendered and thus dwijas attain purification finally).

Shraddha Prakaran

As per Paraashara Madhaveeyam, the purpose of Shraaddha is to portend Shuddhi of Ashoucha and to cleanse off all sorts of impurities especially consequent on relatives from deaths as also to prepare oneself to initiate all types of auspicious acts. In fact, after a death in any family, the Ekoddhita Shraaddha is compulsory among the ‘Chatur Varnas’ on the termination of Ashoucha after a death on the eleventh day only after ‘pinda daana’; to Brahmans the Shuddhi is on the eleventh day after the death while it is the twelfth day to Kshatriyas, the fifteenth day of Vaishyas and the thirtieth to others. There would be however be full Shuddhi to Brahmanas and temporary Shuddhi to others on the eleventh to enable the performance of Ekoddhishta Shraaddh Vidhi. The word Shraaddha as explained in Brahmanda Purana is: Deshe kaalecha paatrey cha shraddha yaa vidhinaa cha yat, Pitrunuddishya Viprebhyo cha/ (Depending on the availability of a learned and deserving Brahmana and an appropriately auspicious time, one’s offering good bhojana and daana aiming at and in the pious memory of Pitru Devas is defined as Shraaddha). Such shraddhas could either be of Ekoddhishta or Parvana type, besides Nitya-Naimittika-Kaamy nature. Ekoddhishta as explained above on the terminal periods of Ashuchi and Paarnana Shraddhaas are in favour of three generations consequent on the demise of father or mother.

Sage Vishwamitra lists twelve types of Shraddhas: Nityam naimittikam Kaamyam Vriddhi Shraadda mapindanam, Parvanam cheti vigneyam goshtiyaam Shuddhirthamashtakam/ Karmangam navamam proktam Daivikam dashhamamsmrutam, Yatrasvedekasham proktam Pushtyardham dwadasham matam/ (Nitya Shraddha is the one performed regularly on Amavasyaadi days or coinciding with Solar and Lunar eclipses; Naimittika or the Shraddhas on sacred days coinciding with select days of one’s choice of Tithi-Vaara- Nakshatras; Kamy Shraddhas are at Upanayana- Vivaha-Janmaadi Samskaraas; Vriddhi Shraddha or for longevity, Sapindkarana Shraddha or involving fistful cooked cereals, Parvana or as explained above the Pindas offered to the departed generations, goshti shraddha at Vidwamsa sabhas or collective shraddha in Pitru paksha or the second fortnight of Bhadrapada month ending Amavasya; Shuddhi shraddha or the one to signify the termination of Ashuchi for various reasons like disallowed personal contacts; Karmanga or as parts of certain Karmas or actions involving inappropriate acts or when there are obsessions of extreme affection to the dear ones; Daivika Shraaddha or occasions relevant to natural events like quakes, storms, fire related happenings etc. as also on dwadasi tithis; Yatra shraddhas connected with places like Gaya, Brahma kapala, etc. and Pushti Shraaddha aiming at recoveries of health
or warding of epidemics etc. Nitya Shraddha is with cooked food or atleast with water; Namittika is the offer of cooked food to one or three numbers of Brahmana bhoktas and so on.

Yatra Shraddhas: are specifically related to visits of Punya Tirtha Kshestras like Gaya sheersha, Akshaya Vata, Brahma Kapaala, Gangaasaagara Sangama Kushaavarta, Bilva, Neela Parvata, Prayaga, Kubjaagra, Bhrugutunga, Kedara, Mahaalaya, Amarakatakata Narmada, Yamuna, Ganga, Ganga dwara, Lalika, Sugandha, Shakambri, Phalguni Tirtha, Maha Ganga, Tantu vikaashrama, Kumara dharva prabhava, Saraswati, Kuru Kshetra, Naimishaaranya, Varanaasi, Agastya Ahrama, Kanvaashrama, Pushkarini, Gokarna, Narmada, Godavari, Krishna, Kaveri, Gomati,Vetravati, Vipasha, Vitasti, Shatadu, Chandrabhaaga, Iravati, Kaanchi, Pancha nadi teera, Kaushaki, Saryu, Shona, Jyoti ratha, Uttar Manasa, Badaba, Saoptarcha, Vishnu Paada, Swarga maga pradesha, Sindhu and so on besides Samudra Snavas. Shraddha along with Snana-Homa- Daana- Tarpana are expected to be not only of repaying Pitru Runa but for the fulfillment of personal desires too. Gaya Pinda Phala is considered as of the prize Shraaddha.

Darshaada Shraaddha timings: According to Parashara Madhaveeyam, Maharshi Yangjnyavalkya opined that when there is not much of a constraint for money and material, Shraddhas be comfortably planned on Amavasyas of Margashira and three subsequent months of Pousha-Maagha-Phalguni; on Bahula Ashta tithis; Putra janma tithis; Utaarayana ad Dakshinaayana tithis, Tula Mesha Sankranti Vishuvat kalas; Surya samkramana days, Vyatipata, Gajacchaaya, and Surya-Chandra grahana days. Vyatipata Lakshana: Amavasya coinciding with Sundays and further coinciding with the Stars of Shravana, Ashwin, Dhanishtha, Ardra, Aasrasya, and Mrigashira is called Vyatipata and in case that day further coincides with a ‘Punya Dina’ then that day is reckoned as a Maha Vyatipata. Shraddha must be performed on that particular day, lest prayaschitta is to be executed. Gaja chhaaya: When Chandra coincides with Star Makha, or Surya coincides with Hasta Nakshatra on any Trayodashi Tithi that Tithi is called Gaja Chhaya and that is the appropriate and auspicious day for performing Shraddha. Surya-Chandra Grahana Shraddha: Tridashaah: Sparsha samaye trupyanti pitaraatathaa, Manushyaa Madhya kale tu moksha kale tu Rakshasaah/ (Just when the eclipse commences, Pitru Devatas are happy with the Shraaddhas, Manushyas are blessed when the Grahana is midway but it would be Rakshasas who rejoice the act of shraddha if over at the termination of the eclipse! Lord Yama is quoted to have stated that on the Pournamis of Ashadha-Kartika-Maagha months, shraddhas if performed by satisfying three or five Pandita Brahmans with bhojana-danas would be most rewarding. Also, coincidences of Vaishakha Shukla Tritiya with Rohini Nakshatra, or Bhadrapada Krishna Trayodashi with Makha Star, Vaishakha Shukla Tritiya with Star Rohini and Kartika Shukla Navami with Shatabhisha are stated to be ideal for Gaja chaaya or Vaidhruti Shraddhas. Additionally, Vishnu Purana suggests shraddhas or atleast Jala Tarpana mixes with Tilas would please Pitru Devatas on Vaishakha ShuklaTriteeya, Kartika Shukla Navami, Magha Krishna Amavasya, and Bhadrapada Krishna Trayodashi with Makha Star, Vaishakha Shukla Navami, Magha Krishna Amavasya, and Bhadrapada Krishna Trayodashi being the Yugadis. Matsya Purana also suggests Shraddhas for pleasing Pitru Devatas on Manvadis on Ashwiyuja Shukla Navami, Kartika Shukla Dwadashi, Chaitra Shukla Tritiya, Bhadrapada Shukla Tritiya, Phalguni Krishna Amavasya, Pushya Shukla Ekadashi, Ashadha Purnima, Kartika Purnima, Phalguna Purnima, Chitra Purnima, and Jyeshta Purnima.

Kaamya Shraddhas are fruitful as per Vaara-Tithi- Nakshatras. As regards Vaaras, Kurma Purana states:

Aditya vaaret vaarogyam Chandre soubhagyamevacha, Kuje sarvatra Vijayam sarvaan kaamaan Budhasyatu/ Vidyaam vishishtaancha Gurou dhanam vai Bhargave punah, Shanaischare
bhavedaayuraarogyancha sudurlabham/(Shraaddha Phala on Sundays provides health, Mondays Sowbhagayam or Auspiciousness, Tuesdays all round victory, Wednesdays fulfillment of desires, Thursdays Vidyaa Laabha or success in Studies, Fridays profits and wealth, and Saturdays longevity). As per Manu, the Tithi phalas of performing Kamya Shraddhas are as follows: Kurvan Pratipadi Shraaddham rupaan vindite sutaan Kanyakaantu dwiteeyaayaam tritteyaantu sampadah/ Pashun kshudraan chaturthantu Panchamaam shobhanaan sutaan, Shashthaam dyute krishischaiva saptamyaaam labhate narah/ Ashhtamyaaamapi vanijyaam labhate shraaddham sadaa, Swaanaavayaam ekakhurstam dashamyaam dwikhuram Pashum/ Ekadashyaam tatha ruptyam brahma varchaswinah sutaan, Dwadashyaam jaataruptantu rajatam rupamevachha/ Jnata shreshtham trayoddhayaam Chaturthha - shyantantu suprajaa, Shraaddhadamaavaasyayam sarvaan kaamaan samashruye/ (Shraaddhas on Pratipadi Tithi would bestow handsome sons, on Dwiteeya pretty daughters, prosperity on Triteeya, cattle on Chaturthi, illustrious sons on Panchami, success in gambling on Shasthi, Agricultural profits on Saptami, Business profits on Ashtami, Horse based profits on Navami, Vrishabha Laabha on Dashami, Gain of Silver on Ekadashi, Golden jewellery on Dwadashi, Superiority and Pride to Swajana or close relatives on Chaturdashi; Yogya Santana or well deserved progeny doing the parents proud, and all round fulfillment on any Amavasya). Similarly, Shraddhas performed during the various Nakshatras from Krittika to Bharani provide following results: Kritthika Shraaddha would result in Swarga, Rohini good progeny, Mirgashia Brahma Varchas, Ardra Karma Siddhi, Punarvasu Bhu laabha, Pushyta Deha Pushti, Asresha Sampada, Makha fulfillment of desires, Purva phalguni Sowbhagya, Uttara Phalguni Dhana Prapti, Hasta Swajaati Shreshthatwa, Chitta Soundara Tanaya or handsome sons, SwatiVanijya laabha or commercial profits, Vishakha Suvarna Laabha, Anuradha Mitra laabha, Jyeshta Rajya prapti, Moola Krishi laabha, Purvashadha Desire fulfillment, Abhijit Sreshthatwa or Superiority, Shravana samasta Vaanchaai Siddhi or realization of all kinds of desires, Dhanishta bala, Shatabhishka Arogya, Purvabhadra Samudra yaana, Uttarabhadra Bharyagriha laabha, Uttarashadha Pashu laabha, Revati Go laabha, Ashwini Ashwa laabha, and Bharani provides longevity. Such would be the results of Shradhas oriented to Kamyaartha.

Ekoddishtta Prakaara Shraaddhas: Apastamaba Sutraas prescribe that in case of brothers or sisters without children pass away then Ekoddisha vidhana on Mahalayaadi Tithis without paarana vidhana be followed. Anyway after Sapindeekarana, the demised body would become rid of ‘pretatwa’ and join Pitru varga ranks. In other words, only after Sapindikarana, the departed Soul would join Pitru Varga and then only the validity of Ekoddhishita method. Otherwise whoever takes upon the responsibility to perform the ‘Antya kriyas’ of the departed brother or sister, should be cautioned of the need to execute the Parvana vidhana. In case this is not so executed, the Karta is stated to have committed Brahma hatya! In case, there is any difficulty in taking up the responsibility, Sutakaantara or after the Ashuchi days in the next month on the Mitra Tithi of either Shuka paksha or even Krishna Paksha would be in order. Sutakantara Maasika is required to be executed with all the components including Agnoukarana, Pindapraadaana, Brahmanaa bhojanaadi Pitru puja. Amashraaddha: In case there is any limitation of performing Shraddhas on Amavasyaadi Tithis afore mentioned due to the non presence of wife for reasons, then Anna Shraddha might not be essential and Amashraddha would suffice.

Mahalaya Paksha Shraddha Phalas: The fortnights following Ashadha Shuddha Purnima or that of Bhadrapada Krishna are stated to be of Punya Tithis which are of significance to Pitru Devas and those fifteen days are called Pitru Pakshas. The fruits of performing Shraddhas on each of the Tithis are as
follows: Prathama Tithi-Dhana Laabha; Dwiteeya: Sataana Prapti; Triteeteeya: Vishesh Laabha; Chaturthi: Shatru naashana; Panchama Tithis: Sampada; Shashthi: Pujiyata; Saptami: Senadhipatya; Ashtami: Budhi; Navami: Putrika pradaana; Dashami: Ichhaa Purnata or fulfillment of desires; Ekaadasha: Vedabhyasa; Dwadashi: Suvarna Laabha, Puhti, Pashu laabha, Vriddhi sheshhtata; Trayodashi: Deerghaayu and Ishwarya; Chaturdashi : Mukti of those who died young or during accidents; Amavasya: Swarga phala.

Mahalaya Pakshas are also stated to refer to the fortnight when Surya enters Kanya Raashi during Bhadrapada Krishna Praapitada to Amavasya and this fortnight is called Gajacchhaaya. During these days, it is stated that parvana shraddhas would be effective. Also, on Aswiyuja Prathama Tithi and the following fortnight too is good for Shraddhas. There is also a view that from Bharapada Krishna Paksha to Ashadha Purnima even if Surya has not entered Kanya Raashi, shraddha prakriya would be beneficial to sons for their good health, longevity and prosperity, as stated by Jaabaali. On the entry of Surya and during Bhadrapada Krishna Paksha, Pitru Devas would be awaiting atleast Jala tarpana as pointed by Brihanmanu. In fact Adi Purana emphasises that during this period when Surya enters Kanya rashi, Shraddhas would yield definite and positive results. In fact Gautama Maharshi stressed that on this specific day, Shraddhas have far reaching phala tantamount to Yagjna karya. Even as Bhadrapada Krishna paksha is terminated and as Surya enters Vrischika Raashi, Pitrus in the state of pretatwa are stated to be badly affected by thirst and hunger and shraddhas with payasaadi padarthas would gratify them fully. Now, till Surya leaves Kanya raashi and Tula Raashi and enters Vrischika Raashi, Pitr devatas would be waiting for the Shrraddas and once disappointed without relief, then they would have to transport to Yama Loka while cursing the progeny. Once satisfied with ‘bhakshya bhojyas’ during the shraddhas, they attain mukti and bless the progeny responsible for the Shraddhas for Dhana Dhanya Arogyaadi fulfillments. In case Shraddhas are not performed daily but on certain days only, then the avoidable days are Janma Tithi- Vaara- Nakshatras, Fridays, Tayodashi, and Rohini-Makha-Revati nakshatras. Also, in this context, Shraddhas are required to be performed to Pitru varga and Matamaha varga too. Another precaution would be that Mahalaya Shraddhas in favour sister/ brother, son, maternal uncle, Guru or one’s own Master are required being as per Ekoddishta Vidhana.

Now, some do’s and don’ts before performing shraddhas: The Brahmanas to be appointed as ‘bhoktas’ are to be well versed in Veda Vedangas, well behaved, healthy with no physical disabilities, coming of good family background, infallible, and trained well in performing Parvana shraddha and /or ekoddishta as well. Such ideal bhoktas be invited in advance by the Karta or his brother or son or disciple. The ‘nimantrana’ or invitation should be done with ‘Apasavya’of ‘yagnopaveeta’ in respect of ‘Pitru sthaana bhokta’ and ‘savya’position to Vaishwanara bhokta. The prescribed number of Pitru Sthana and Vaishwadeva Sthana is three and four but as per Desha-Kaala-Parishithis or convenience and availability a minimum of one each would be a must. Vaishwa Deva Brahmanas are to be seated Purva Mukha or east facing and Pitru Deva brahmanas are Uttara mukha or facing north. The respective Brahmanas of Pitru and Vaishwadevas are not mingled nor even touch each others.

Vishwedevas are stated to be ten in number: Kraturdaksho Vasuh Satyah Kaalah Kaamasthaivacha, Dhunischa Rochanaiva tatha chaiva Pururavaah/ Ardrraascha darshete tu Vishwada vaah prakourtitaah/ (Kratu, Daksha, Vasu, Satya, Kaala, Kaama, Dhuri, Vilochana, Pururava and Ardrava are the Vaishwadevas). Daksha and Kratu are engaged in Ishti Shraddhas, Satya and Vasu are into Naandi.
Shraddhas, Dhuri and Vilochana into Kamya Shraddhas, Pururava and Ardra in Parvana Shraddhas, Naimittika Shraddhas are to be invoked in Kaala and Kaama. Daksha and Kratu devas are invoked in Ishti Shraddhas, Satya and Vasus in Naandi Shraddha, Dhuri and Vilochana in Kamya Shraddhaas, Pururava and Ardras are invoked in Parana Shraddhaas, Kaama anad Kaala in Naimittika Shraddhas. Ishti Shraddhas are a part of Samskaras like Seemanta, Pumsavana, Soma and so on. Naandi Shraddha is relevant to Putra Janma Vivahas, Anna Praashana, Chooda Karma and so on.

In the present context, two ‘Arghya patras’ or water vessel with ‘gandha-akshata-darbhas’ are placed at the seat of of the Vishwa Devas and are to be handed over with reverence to the representative Brahmanas and perform a pradakshibna around him. The arghya patras / vessels could be of bronze or copper or palaasha leaves. Similarly at the Pitru sthaana Brahmana too has to be circumbulated but in an ‘apradikshina’ manner or the reverse manner changing the yajgnopaveeta in the ‘praachhenaaveeti’ manner. All the tasks concerning the puja of the Brahmanas need to be done including that of his puja with black tila to be ornamented on his head downward to his feet, while puja to similarly be done tp the Vaishhe deva with akshata white rice grains from head to feet. After puja to both the Viashwanara and Pitru Devata representative- Brahmanas with gandha-pushpa-dhupa- deepas, the next task would be Agnoukarana with the concurrence of the Brahmanas.

This task is to make two homas after keeping Agni in the homa kunda twice reciting: 

_Saamadhyaamupaasa Somaaya pitru matey Sadhaanamah/ Agnaye kavyaavanahanaya swahaananamah/_

These homa kriyas need to be performed as of Pitru yagna vidhaana homa and since Pindapitru yagna is of two fold nature of Daivikatwa and Paitrukatwa the yagopaveeta might either be in Savya or Apasavya manners as per one’s own shakha manner. In any case, the remaining ‘anna’ needs to be disposed off in Agni itself and no remainder of it be retained.

The next step is Pariveshana or purification of the cooked bhojana or bhakshya-bhojya-shaaka-soopanaadi padartha with right hand wearing darbha followed by ‘ghritaabhirakara, then holding the right hand thumbs of the Brahmanas representing the Vaishwa Deva and Pitru Devas of three generations with naamagotras , taking care of savya-praacheenaaveti precautions, showing them around the padarhas placed in circles – in savya or apasavya manner respectively- and request them to commence the bhojana after performing ‘Aaposhana’ making the bhoktas feel completely comfortable discarding what ever they do not like. The karta would address the bhokas saying: _Anna heenam kriyaahenam mantra heenam yadbhavet, Sarvamacchidramiyutkaa tato yatrena bhujayet/_ Even as the bhojana starts, there should be _Swaadhyaayaam shaavayet Pitrye Dharma shastraani chaiva hi/_ Anna Suktaadi Shravana is to be taken up during the Bhojana kaala. Also before the bhojana itself, the remainder of anna at Agnoukarana is to be placed as three small pindas along with ghee and tilas.

After the bhojana follow the tasks of _Sapindeekarana and Pinda pradana- puja karmas_. As regards, ‘Madhyma Pinda viniyoga Vidhana’ or the matter related to be disposal of the middle pinda of the three pindas, it is customary that the wife of the Kartha if childless receives it with reverence in her hold with both palms from her husband as the Mantra is recited: _Apaamtvoushshadhonaa gum rasam praashhayaaami bhutakrutam garbhham dhatwa/_ As the house wife eats the Madhya Pinda, the Mantra is to be recited: _Adhatta Pitaro garbamanta sartaana vardhaman/_ Manu states: _Pativrataa dharma patnou pitrupujamnapatraa, Madhumantu tatah pindamadhyaatsamyak sutaaarthinow Ayushman tam sutam_ 

46
vindet yasho medhaa samanvitam, Dhanavantam prajaavantam dhaarmikam saatwikam tathaa, iti/ In the event of wife not consuming the Madhyama Pinda, or even otherwise, the Tri Pindas be eaten by a Brahmana, or Agnihotra or cow or running water. In case a Karta cannot perform Parvana Shraddha for any reason of inability due to any reason he could perform the same as Sankalpa Shraddha. In case a person whose wife is diseased cannot perform Agnihotra, he could be a Vidhuraagnihotra yet parvana vidhaana is acceptable. If otherwise unable and would wish to perform Sankalpa Vidhana, then Aavahana, Agnoukarana, Vikira pinda, panda pradana, Patra poorana, Swadhaaninayaa etc. are not necessary. In Ekoddishta Vidhana, Vaishwa deava nayama is not applicable, nor Avaana and Agnoukarana/

Maatru/Pitru saapindya gotra niyama: In the event of sons not being born or available, then the husband himself can perform the sapinda shradhha. Similarly if the husband dies without sons, and no other relative like his brothers, their sons are available; nor any other members of his sagostras, then wife’s father if alive could do the needful; in case that too is not possible, the next resort could be the douhitra or her daughter’s sons are allowed; but even that possibility is unavailable then the dead husband’s own wife could herself perform the Antya kriya herself without mantras but with parvana vidhana: Putraabhaave sapindastu tadhibaave sahodakaah, Maatruh sapindaaye vaa syurye vaa Maatrusahodakaah/ Kuryena vidhim samyak aputrauya Shrutaah Smritaah/ KuryaanMaataamahaajaiva putrikaa tanayaastathaa, Sarvaabhavey Striyah kuryah swabhatrunaam amantrakam/ Parshara Madhaveeyam states: when women and men die without sons, one view is that Ashoucha nivaarana would take place when the Antya kriyas are to be performed only on Ekoddhishta basis, that is after Udaka Pindodaka-Daanaadi kriyas only, without resorting to Sapindeekarana; but indeed that is not ‘perhaps’ the justified view but the basic idea is that sons should have taken up this task! Incidentally, in respect of all Dwijas, even when sons are indeed qualified to perform the full obsequies of their parents even if their Upanayana and Gayatri ‘Vanadanaadhikaara’ has not been accomplished; Manu emphasised that a boy among dwijas without Upanayana would have attained the status of dwija or twice born. But Sumantu Rishi clarified that once the Samskaraas Chooda Karma would have been performed by a boy of three years and above, he would as such be certainly eligible to perform the shradhhaa karmas with mantras in a fullfledged manner!

[More details on the coverage of Shradhas are available in the Essence of Dharma Sindhu by the same author released by kamakoti.org/news as also Vipra yuva.org/books.

Prayaschitta Prakarana:

[Some prayaschittas like kruccha vrata in reference to Brahma Hatya and Go hatya have already been discussed in the Chapter on Principle of Dharmaacharana above] Maharshi Angirasa defined Prayaschitta as follows: Praayo naama tapah proktam chintam nischaya ucchyate, Taponischayasamyuktam Prayaschittam taduchyate/ (‘Tapo nischaya krutya’ or any act as firmly resolved in one’s inner conscience by deep meditation is known as Prayaschitta). This act is to undergo penance as prescribed by Scriptures; this is to offset nitya-naimittika-kaamya papa krityas or of lapses of regular duties, incident oriented momentary and emotional offences of very serious nature and degree as also blemishes due to non performance of desirable acts. Now, atonement of such actions do involve sacrifices of considerable physical, mental and psychological endurance, proportionate to the sins committed; some of the prayaschittas might entail extreme penances, total loss of social respect and of even existential circumstances ranging from boycotts to deaths! Thus prayaschittas are proportionate penances some being
even comparable to experiences of Narakas or hells! Manu and great Rishis like Yagnyavalkya asserted that prayaschittas executed on earth might somewhat appease the impact of far worse and severe tribulations in hells after the termination of the lives of the sinners: Akaraney pratyavaascha Manunaa darshatat: Charitavyamantonityam prayayashchitam vishudhaye, Nindourhi laxhanouryuktayaayante nishkrutainasah/ Further Yagnyavalkya described ‘eka vimshati’ or twenty one narakas as follows: Prayaschitam urvachitam pachchitam na pratyavaaschitam manunaa darshatah: Charitavyam aitonityam prayayashchitam vishudhaye, Nindourhi laxhanouryuktayaayante nishkrutainasah/

The retributions are on account of non-performance of ‘Vihita Karmas’ or prescribed duties and perpetrating ‘nishiddha karmas’ or prohibited acts. For example, avoiding Garahana Snanas involves attacks of leprosy for seven births. Committing ‘Brahma hatya paataka’ and such grave sins and not resorting to prayaschitta would definitely lead to payback reprisal like being pushed down from mountains of high altitudes or being consigned to engulfing poisonous flames mercilessly. Persons who are normally susceptible to continuous attacks by ‘Arishad Vargas’ viz. Kama-Krodha-Lobha-Moha-Mada-Matsaras viz. Deep desires, terrible anger, passionate possessiveness, excessive attachments, incorrigible arrogance and unpardonable jealousy; one’s misdoings of serious nature are therefore sure to lead them to Ati Pataka, Maha Pataka, Anupataka Upa, Paataka, Upa pataka, Jaati bhramsha types of retributions as also Sankarikarana, Apaatri karana, Malaavaha, and so on. Matru-Putrika-Swashru-Sunsha gamana are considered as Atipatakas and Brahma Hatya-Suraapaaa-Brahmana Dhana haranasteeya or stealing-guru bharya gamana are Maha patakas. Rajaswala-Garbhini-Asphuta baala gamana and Sharanaagata Shatru vadha are as dreadful as Brahma hatya; providing wrong or misleading evidences and murder of friends are as heinous as Suraa Paana; Para daaraa gamana especially with closely related women is stated to be as appalling as Guru Bharya gamana; ‘Sharanaagata stree gamana’ is stated as Anupataka or as deplorable as Maha Pataka. Go Vadha, Para Stree vikraya, Matri-Pitru dushana and bahishkarana, Brahmana Vidhi parityajana, Vrata parityaga, Kanya dushana and nastikyata are of the rank of Upapaata dosha. Para ninda, Madyaadi vikraya, Neecha sahavaasa and such other traits demand Jaati bhramsha. Pashu samhara and Heena vritti demand sankarikarana. Asatyamambhaashana, nishkarana nindaarpana, kriki keeta pakshi jalachara vadha are considered as Malaa vaha; heena jaati seva, nindita dhanaarjana and such acts of depravity including Urbandhana manaras or forced deaths and anti-social activities are called prakeerna-avikeerna paapas. Among the Atipatakas are listed Matri-Putrika-Sahodari gamana or with such other blood relations both knowingly or ignorantly, the Prayaschitta is Sishna-chedana and three Krucca prayaschitta and three chandrayana vratas. Para stree gamana demands a series of Chandrayana Vratas like Rishi Chandrayana-eating three fistful havishaanna a day for a month, Sishu chandraayana or consuming a one year old boy’s four-fistfuls of cooked food a day for a month or Yati.
chandrayana or eight fistfuls of cooked bhojana on a mid-day for ever! There after, a cow and calf are to be donated to a Veda Brahmana.

Paraashara Smriti in the Prayaschitta Kanda takes up the description of prakeerna-avikeerna papas now. Prayaschittas for ‘Urbandhana marana’ or forced deaths or suicides occur due to extreme anguish, frustration, self-pity and hatred due to problems created by one’s own family members or associates; it is stated that such deaths end up in the most abject existence of thousands of years in Andhatamisra Naraka full of blood, raw flesh and pus. The prayaschitta vidhana in such cases of Atma hatya would be that the dead body is to be buried but not burnt as such deaths do not deserve Agni dahana, Udaka daana, Ashru paata or tearful cries, Asthi sanchayana, udaka nimajjana, Anteshti Pinda udaka daanaadi kriya, shraaddha and so on. However if a person of very old age who is extremely diseased being unbearably pained and forces own death, then the Kartha- a son or any one eligible to perform obsequies should perform the Agni daahadi Antya kriyas, observe Tri-Ratraa Asoucha, Asthi sanchayana on the second day, Udaka daana on the third day, Shraadhaadi kriya on the fourth day and perform ‘Tapta krucchayenaiva tasya shuddhirna chaanyathaa/’ to redeem the soul; Yetaani patitaanantu yah karoti vimohtih, Tapta krucchayenaiva tasya shuddhirna chaanyathea/ In the event of such antya kriyas are not done by the sons or whosoever eligible, then the ‘preetaatma’ would be hovering around like birds on the sky for several years, cursing the eligible Kartas and their families to face similar situations or worse. Also if for reasons of deaths in wars, or in foreign lands and such other reasons when persons eligible to perform the antya kriyas properly, then the karta would have to formally perform the antya kriyas like dahana-pindadaana daanaadi karmas, asoucha Narayana bali, Shraaddha kriyas etc. with retrospective effect as per advice of the Purohitas and also perform Praajapatya prayaschitta, which can be performed within a period from first upto six years. Till the prayaschitta is not performed, the preta swarupa is retained on the Antariksha and perish thereafter without redemption.

Durmarana Shava vahana Prayaschitta: Those dwijas who happen to carry dead bodies, take part in Agni samskaraas or untie the ropes of the bodies get surely purified by observing Kruccha Prayaschitta as assured by Prajapati. Minor blemishes like Shava sparsha can be purified by oneday’s upavasa or fasting, but to those who partake in the preta kriya of those who committed suicide out of affection or respect would get purified only by observing Tapta kruccha prayaschitta.

Tapta kruccha swarupa: Fasting by way of consuming hot water for three days, hot milk for three more days and hot ghee for yet another three days successively and observing complete fast on the following day is called Tapta kruccha prayaschitta. Similarly ‘Seeta kruccha’ is fasting as above by consuming cold water, milk and ghee likewise on three consecutive days. The measures for water is six ‘palaas’ while milk and ghee are to be one pala each a day. Praajaapatiya swarupa: Eating food in the mornings only for three days, in the evenings only for three evenings, one meal a day each for three days by begging and three more days by keeping total fasting thus observing the food restrictions for a fortnight in all is called Praajaapatiya kruccha prayaschitta. Saantapana swarupa: This has duration of two days, or seven days, fifteen days and three weeks in each case. Yagnyavalkya explained the ‘dwi raatra santapana’ or of two nights by consuming Go mutra-Gomaya-Go ksheera-Go ghrita-Go dadhi-kushodaka on a day-night basis and full fasting till the next night; the ‘sapta raatra santapanas’ is like wise for seven day- nights till the seventh night followed by fast on eighth night. Yama Dharma Raja mentioned about Maha Saantapana comprising ‘Pakshaashana’ or consumption for fifteen days by way of consuming three days of Go Mutra,
three days of Gomaya, three days of Go ksheera, three days of Go dadhi, and three days of Goghrita. But Jaalali amended Maha Saantapana as of Eka Vimshati Ratra ie. for eighteen days of consumption by adding Kushodaka too and the last three days of ‘Purnopavaasa’ or total fasting! Tapta Krucca might be for Sapta Ratra, Dasha Ratra or Dwadasha Ratra too.

Paraaka krucca swarupa: Manu Smriti suggested Paraaka Krucca or the Tapta Krucca for Dwadasha Ratra; Paraaka denotes ‘Indriya nigraha’ or Self restraint of Indriyas / Physical restraint; Yataatmaano – pramatthasya Dwadahaahamabhojanam, Paraakonaama kruccheyam sarva papa pranaashanam/ (Paraaka krucca prayaschitta with utmost self-control for a period of Twelve days without bhojana but for the prescribed eating of cow products is sure to destroy all sins.

Prayaschittas for family lapses: Ritu snaana tu naari bhartaaram nopasarpati, Saa mritaa yaati vidhavaa cha punah punah/ Ritu snaanaantu yo bharyaam samnidhou nopagacchati, Ghorayaam bhurna hatyaayaam ujjatey naacha samshayah/ Dadram vyaadhitam dhurtam bhartaaram yaavamanayatey.Saa shuni jaayate mrutwaas sookari cha puna punah/ Patyo jeevati yaa naari uposhyaa vratamaacharet, Ayushyam harate bhartruh saa naari narakam vrajat/ Tripushthaa chaiva bhartaaram naari kurute vratam, Sarvam tadraakahasaan gacchedityevam Manuravreeta/ Baandhavaaanaam sujaateenaam durvrittum kurite tu yaa, Garbbha paataska cha yaa kuryaana taam sambhaashayet kachit/ Yata paapam Brahma hatyaayaa trigunam garbhapaataney, Praayaschittam na tasyaah syaat tasyasyaagovidheeyate/ Nakaaryaa maavasathyaena naamagnihotrena vaa punah/ Sa bhavet karmachandaalastostu Dharma paraangmukhah/ ( In case a house wife consents for union with her husband during her menstrual period, the woman on her death would surely experience Naraka and experience widowhood for several ensuing births. If however she does not consent for congress with her husband after the period even as he is healthy and desirous, then she would be liable with ‘bhrutaa hatyaas dosha’ and in her ensuing births would become the wife yet again to a ‘daridra murkha bharta’ with diseases during several successive births! If the wife maltreats and nags her husband consistently, then after her death she would be a bitch or a pig in successive lives. If a housewife resorts to perform a Vrata without the husband or without his consent, then not only his longevity would be affected but she would have to suffer narakas after her death. If a woman tries to harm a relative on her husband’s side or her own, she should be not only kept boycotted always and if she resorts to abortion, she is liable to attract Brahma hatya dosha. In case a house holder seeks to exist without snana-sandhya vandha-agnihotraadi vidhish he is to be rightly called as a karma chandala and ‘Dharma paraanmukha’ and is indeed unavailable for prayaschitta).

Otherwise the prayaschitta for the woman who refuses union with her partner soon after the period or vice versa must resort to Artha Krucca prayaschitta; alternatively, the husband would have to perform two hundred Pranayamas, besides thousand tila homas; the wife is however liable to perform hundred Prana yaamas and join half the homa with the husband. This atonement is only for healthy persons. Para purasha gamana by a house wife demands a krucca prayaschitta. Garbha patana prayaschitta however requires the saasntapana krucca vrata for a year. In the event of the elder brother not marrying before the wedding of the younger brother, then the latter is called Parivetta and the non marrying elder brother is known as Parivitti. Now both Parivetta and Parivitti are both need to undergo prayaschitta by way of two Kruccchas; not only that: the Kanya being married to the younger brother who is called Paravedi, the Kanyakadaata or the bride’s father called Paridaayi, the Yagnika or the Brahmana who performs the wedding called Pariyashta also need to undergo Prayaschitta of Kricchhaatikrucca and chandraayana.
Krutyaatikruccha is to fast twenty one days by way of consuming milk only. Similarly Agre didhishhaadi prayaschittha meaning that the younger sister marrying before the elder sister too demands prayaschitta; the jyeshtha kanya is called didhishu and the younger kanya is Agredidhishu. The bridegroom of the younger sister is called Agredidhishu pati.

Dispensations of Prayaschittas in respect of various other Prakeerna Papaas pertaining to relatives as also other human beings have been enumerated fairly exhaustively in the Parashara Smriti as annotated further in the Parashara Madhaviya Bhashya.

A few more Prakeerna Papaas related to the touch and even attack by biting etc. of some animals like dogs, fox, pigs and so on and their Prayaschittas have also been enumerated in the Parashara Smriti: Vrikascha shrugaalaadrashtoyastu Dwijottamaah, Snaatwaa japet sa Gaayatrim Pavitraam vedamaataram/ Gavaam shrungodake snaanam mahaanadyastu sangamey, Samudra darshanaadyaami shunaadashtah shuchirbhavet/ Vedavidyaa vrata snaatah shunaa dashto dwijo yadi, Sa hiranyodake snaatwaa ghrutam praashya vishuddhati/ Suvratastu shunaa dashto yastriraachamatapavavaset, Ghrita shrungodakad peetwaa vrataesam samaapayet/ Avratah Suvrato vaapi shrunaa dashto bhavedwijah, Pranitapatya bhavet pooto Vipraschakhurnireekshatath/ Shunaa ghraataavaaleedhasya nakhour visnaswitasyaha, Angih prakshaalaam proktamagninah bhuri taapitam/ Shunaa tu Braahmano dashtaa jambukena vrikena vaa Utitam graha nakshatram drushtaa sadyah shuchirbhavet/ Krishna pakesh yadaa Somo na drushe kadaachana,Yaan disham vrjate Somastaam disham vaavalokayet/Asad Braahmanake graame shunaa dashto dwijottamaah, vrisham pradakshaneet krutya sadyah snaatwaa shuchirbhavet/ (In the event of attacks and bites of fox, dogs etc. a Brahmana should at once bathe and recite the Veda Maata Gayatri Mantra hundred and eight times. Dog bites are purified by cow horn full of water or better still bathing in Maha Nadis or Samudra darshana-snaana. Those who are unable to do so ‘Goshungodaka snaana’ atleast. Prajaapatiya Agneya Soumya Vaishwa deva Vrata or atleast ‘Snaanantara Ghrita praashana’ and hundred times of Gayatri Mantra Japa would surely bring about purification as per another view. Severe dog bites call for fasting for three days, Ghrita-kushdaka praashana, cleaning of the place of bites with application of fire burning, Chandraadi Graha darshana, Nakshatra darshana and pancha gavya praashana are stated to be the remedies and prayashchittas. Pradaksina of Sadbrahmana should be done around atleast of Vrishabha with shuchi and faith). ‘Malini karana paapa prayaschittha’ deals with the killing of birds like cranes, swans, hen, parrots, doves, sparrows and so on. The atonements range from day long fasting for the killing of cranes and hens; fasting till night in the case of parrots, doves and kites, go daana for killing swans; performing pranayama till evening while in water for killing crows and garuda; killing of sheep, goats, pigs etc. call for godaana with calf, besides fasting for three days except eat for uncooked food like raw vegetables and so on. ‘Sankalikarana prayaschitta’ is demanded in the case of killing rats, mongoose, cats, frogs, serpents, and so on. The prayaschittas range from Brahmana bhojana with tilas and dals called ‘Krisraanna’ and daana along with iron rods in the case of serpents besides observing sapta raatra vrata or bhojana at seven nights. Prayaschitta for killing frogs, rats, mongoose, cats etc. requires Dwadasha raatra kruccha vrata, while killing domestic animals like cattle, horse and donkey besides daanas including iron rods and homa prakriya and gayatri japa as also brahmana bhojana and daanas.

Parashara Smriti also described many other prayaschittas such as follows: ‘Suryodayaadikaala- astama kaala shayana’ -or waking up after Sun Rise and sleeping at the Sun set- Prayaschitta; this sin is as
imperfect as ‘Brahmana dhana harana’ or like stealing the material of a Sadbrahmana. This blemish requires to undertake Gayatri Japa by ten thousand times and observe Upavasa till the evening for Sunrise in respect of late rising and upavasa and japa for sun set sleeping. In case of failure to perform Sandhya vandana and anigikarya, the atonement would be double of Gatri Japa in addition to the lapse of late rising and Sunset sleep. ‘Veda Vedangaadi Vikraya’ or sale of Scriptures demands Chandrayana Vrata; Vedanga vikraya requires Kruchha vrata; Purana Itihaasa vikraya demands Saantapana-Pancha raatra vratas. ‘Anruta vacanaadi upapataka’ or the habit of speaking lies is stated by Manu as also Yaginyavalkya Maharshi to be as serious as ‘Brahma Hatya’ and ‘Suraapana’ and the prayaschitta should be on similar lines. ‘Veda-Smritiadi Ninda’, ‘Nitya Karmanushtha tyaga’ and ‘Veda Pramaana tiraskarana’ tantamounts to ‘Nastikata’ and as severe as a Maha Pataka and the only Praayaschitta could be ‘Sangha bahishkarana’.

Prayaschittas once performed in faith always certainly yield results and Rishi Vakyas can never go fruitless; the person Committing the sin of small or huge nature gets his or her conscience clear and clean. But the atonement so performed must be under the direction of a dharmaachara and learned Brahmana as affirmed by Apastamba; indeed, in the tasks of Japa-tapa-homa-daanas with the blessings of a Brahmana would attain perfection, guidance and inspiration. More so, if the performing Karta is not physically fit and psychologically untuned to the prayaschitta vidhana, the entire effort might really get wasted. The Karta need not be egoistic to feel that he knows everything but needs moral support even to a Pandita and subjecvity must be replaced with objectivity any way! In the performance of a Prayaschitta, there has to be evidence even to Almighty, besides his own conscience! Vedas emphasize that Agni-Brahmana-and Kavi are always pure and sacred and can not be rejected! Devatas too approve the Brahmana Vaakya since they are the only Agents of Dharma who can interpret as per Desha-Kaala maana-achaara vyavaharas in the contemporary Society!

A brief sum up of Vishnu Smriti on Prayaschittas is as follows: The person with blemishes seeking penance is to start with performing ‘upavasa’ or fasting for a day or more as per the intensity of the sin as per one’s own self-assessment. He or she may perform three snanaas a day by muttering ‘Aghamanshana’ mantra three times: Hiranya shringam Varumam prapadye teerthammy dehi yaachitam, Yanmayaa bhukta masaadhunaam pratigrahah/ Tanne Manasaa Vaachaa Karmanaam dushkrutam kritam, Tatra Indro Varuno Brithaspathi Savitaacha punantu punah/ Namognepsumate Nama Indraaya namo Varumaya namo vaarunyai namadhibiyah/ Then the person may eat in the evening only for three days, for three another day times and another three days by way of unsolicited food and finally undertake fasting for additional three days as this kind of penance is called Prajapatya. Then let the person drink hot water for three further days; for three other days’ hot ghee, for three days more fast totally which is called Tapta Kriccha. Taking the same kind of consumption for the same duration is known as ‘Seeta kruccha’. Subsisting on milk for twenty one days is called ‘Kricchaatikriccha’; sustaining for a full month with barley water is called ‘Udakakruccha’; eating nothing but Lotus fibres for a month is ‘Moola kruccha’ while eating only ‘bel’ fruit for a month is ‘Sriphala kriccha’. Eating a month of lotus seeds is called Paraaka kriccha. Subsisting for one day on ‘Pancha gavya’ or of Cow’s five products as boiled in Kusha grass is noted ‘Saantapana’ vrata to be concluded by fasting on the next day. Swallowing each of these for three consecutive days is ‘Maha Santapana.’ Swallowing oilcakes, boiled rice foam, butter milk, water and ground barley, each for one day with a fasting in between—every two days— is called ‘Tula purusha’ or the weight of the person concerned performing the penance. Drinking
water boiled with kusha grass, leaves of Palaasha (bastard teak), Udumbara (fig) tree, lotus, Shankha pushpi a herbal medicine for mental development, besides the leaves of banyan tree is called ‘Parna kruccha’ each day for three days. The Krucchas concerned need to be observed with shaven heads and beard, three snaanas a day and lying on ground with Brahmacharya without conversing with women, low caste persons, observing silence and reciting mantras. Apart from these Kruccha Vratas, the Prayaschittas also refer to Chndrayana Vratas viz. eight mouthfuls of cooked barley food a day for a month called Samamanya Chandrayana, or eight mouthfuls a day and night for a month known as ‘Yati Chandrayana’ or four mouthfuls in a day as also in night a month called ‘Sishu Chandrayana’; the Vrata involves the rate of consumption a day at the rate mentioned above depending on the increased or decreasing the rate at which the Moon travels from each fortnight from Pournami to Amavasya and vice versa. Maha Vratas are required to be observed in respect of major sins for twelve years and these involve dwelling in forests, carrying out tri snanas daily, collecting alms declaring the sins, sleeping on grass, and strict brahmacharya. Unintentional killings of Brahmanas, of Kshatriya-Vaishyas in the course of Sacrifices, pregnant women or women in courses or even in women otherwise and of close relatives and friends demand observance of Maha Vrata for the full period of twelve years normally. Unintentional killings of Kings require the observance of two Maha Vratas viz. for twenty four years. Such killings of Kshatriya, Vaishya and of Lower sections call for the Vratas for nine, six and three years respectively. But in all these prayaschittas, the Karta needs to be duly publicized to all in the concerned Societies especially in his neighbourhood and relatives; they have to necessarily derecognised as notorious as the Karta has to carry the skull of the victim, if not a stick or flag or placard with the description of the sin. The offender is also required to be unshaven, serve the family members of the killed and a herd of cows during the period of the Maha Vrata, and besides subsist on Pancha Gavya for a month in each year. While serving the cows, he has to stand as the cows stand and rest when the animals do; he has also to safeguard from the attacks of tigers etc. and during winters, rains and diseases. Killing of elephants intentionally or otherwise demand charity of black bulls to Vedic Brahmanas; garments against killing of horse; charity of a bull against killing of an ass or a goat; gold against a camel; three days fast against killing a dog; charity of milk dishes, sesamum, rice and an iron hoe besides a day’s fast against killing a mouse, cat, frog, non poisonous snake; three days fasting in a row and go daana against killing an owl or crow, or fish; go daana against killing a swan, crane, ape, falcon, vulture, or a duck; charity of an iron spade against a poisonous snake; a load of straw against cattle or birds; a pot of butter for killing a boar; sesame against a partridge; a two year old calf for killing a parrot; a milch cow against killing wild animals; hundred times of Gayatri Japa be performed against cutting trees, shrubs, plants with fragrant flowers; and daana of butter for killings of flies, and insects.

Prayaschittas for performing Gupta-Doshas or secret sins: Molestations of under-age or old women demand Ati Kruccha Vrata Brahma hatya sin requires Aghamaharshana Snaana in a running water flow, Pranayama sixteen times, single meal a day for a month, daana of a milch cow and so on as above. Drinking spirituous liquor and stealing golden items require Aghamarshana Snaana and Gayatri Japa by a thousand a day for ten days. Illicit relationship with Guru’s wife calls for fasting for three days, reciting Purusha Sukta and Praaschitta homa. In fact, Ashwamedha Yagnya removes all kinds of Maha Patakas. Even as a routine, Brahmanas are advised to perform aghamarshana snaana, pranayaamas, Gayatri japa and paakayagnas daily as per Vishnu Smriti. Griha Sutras of Kaushika, Paraashara and Sankhyayana
under-score, the need for Paaka Yagnas in favour of Devas, Pitrus, Manushyas, Bhutas and Atithis besides Baliharana.

Conclusion: The opening and the concluding stanzas of Gautami Smrita are as follows: *Vedo Dharma mulam tadvidaancha mahataam, na tudrushtortho varadorbalyaat tulya balavrodhe vikalpah/* (Those who know and practise Dharma as per the precepts in Vedas and Smritis do transgress Dharma. Yet, basically those who on balance veer back to Dharma resisting the powerful pulls otherwise do return back in course of time and do opt for Dharma in the long run) *Anaajnaate dashaavaraish shishtairu havadbhiralubdhaih prashastam kaaryam, Chatvaaraschaturnaam paaragaa Vedaanaam praaaguttaamaatraya ashraminah prutthugdharma vidasastraya etaan dashaavaran parishadityaa chakshate/ Asambhave tweteshaam shrotriyo Veda vicchishto vipratipattou yadaaha yatoyamapramavo bhutaanam himsaanugraha yogeshu Dharminaam visheshana swarga lokam dharma vidaapnoti jnaanaabhi niveshaabhyaamiti Dharmo Dharman/* (In respect of that which is not properly absorbed, intelligent persons who cogitate well should decide by the opinion of Chaturvedis, vidwans, the learned ones of the Chaturashramas of Brahmacharya, Grihasta etc. together constituting a Parishad. Alternatively, the majority of the opinion of Shrotriya, Vedavid, Sishtaas must prevail especially in controversial matters related to sins and their correctives; these are the steps to Swarga; that is Dharma indeed!)

*Om Purnamadah purnamidam purnaatpurnamuchyate,*

*Puransya purnamaadaaya purname4vaavashishyate,*

*Om Shantih shantih shantihi/*