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ANCIENT INDIA 16 SAMSKARAS



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ABSTRACT

Sanskara (IAST: sa? sk ra, now and then spelled samskara) are soul changing experiences in a person's life depicted in old Sanskrit writings, and in addition an idea in the karma hypothesis of Indian theories. The word actually signifies "assembling, making immaculate, getting prepared, to get ready", or "a hallowed or blessing function" in antiquated Sanskrit and Pali writings of India. With regards to karma hypothesis, Sanskara are manners, character or behavioral qualities, that exist as default from birth or arranged and culminated by a man over one's lifetime, that exist as engravings on the subliminal as per different schools of Hindu theory, for example, the Yoga school. These idealized or default engravings of karma inside of a man, impacts that individual's tendency, reaction and perspectives. In another connection, Sanskara alludes to the differing soul changing experiences in Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism. In Hinduism, the sanskaras change in number and subtle elements as per provincial conventions. They extend from the rundown of 48 sanskaras in the Gautama Dharmasastras from about the center of first thousand years BCE, to 16 sanskaras in the Grhyasutra writings from hundreds of years after the fact. The rundown of sanskaras in Hinduism incorporate both outside customs, for example, those denoting a child's introduction to the world and an infant's name giving service, and additionally internal ceremonies of resolutions and morals, for example, sympathy towards every living being and inspirational disposition.

KEYWORDS :old Sanskrit writings , Indian theories , behavioral qualities.

1.GARBHADHAN SAMSKARA :

Garbhadhan Samskara is the primary Samskara among sixteen Samskaras endorsed in our sacred writings. In the wake of going into a social and common life, this Garbhadhan Samskara is performed. Principle target of the wedded life is to have the best youngsters and to proceed with the progression of the family.

At the point when an understudy finishes his studies and education and leaves Ashram of his Guru, his Acharya explains him Dharma of Grihastha (obligations of wedded life) and requests that him not end the progression of his family. Folks expecting the best kids ought to as a matter of first importance clean and bless their body and mind and with a specific end goal to keep the body and psyche unadulterated and devout this Samskara is performed. Amid the Vedic Age, this Samskara was given the most extreme significance. Garbhadhan Samskara is performed by articulating the following Shloka:

2.PUNSAVAN SAMSKARA

After Garbhadhan Samskara, when side effects of a lady getting to be pregnant are watched then for mental improvement and decontamination of the youngster in the womb of the mother, this Punsavan Samskara is performed. The time recommended for performing this Samskara is second or third month after the manifestations of pregnancy are watched. This Samskara is viewed as vital by our Acharyas for general advancement of the kid. This Samskara, which is identified with a tyke, who is yet in the womb of the mother, is performed in Shubh Nakshatra. This Punsavan Samskara is performed with a perspective that a solid and splendid youngster may conceived.

3.SIMANATONAYAN SAMSKARA:

Simantonayan Samskara is otherwise called Simantkaran or Simanta Samskara. The goal of this Samskara is to get Saubhagya (to get good fortunes and life of spouse). The primary target of this Samskara is to avoid untimely premature birth and to protect all the while the pregnant mother and the development of the youngster in the womb of the mother. This Samskara is performed in fourth or sixth or eighth month of pregnancy. In Ashwalayan Gruhya Sutra it is expressed to perform this Samskara in the fourth month. Amid the execution of custom of this Samskara, a supplication to God is performed to the gods.

In this Samskara, while petitioning the god for the strength of his kid, the spouse brushes the hair of his wife to satisfy her. Other old and young women of the honorable families favor the pregnant lady. There is additionally a forbidden to serve and eat hotchpotch in this Samskara.

4.JAAT KARMA SAMSKARA:

In the Scriptures, it is expressed to perform this Samskara before removing the navel string of the recently conceived kid from that of its mom. For intellectual advancement, quality and long existence of the recently conceived kid, who has encountered this heavenly world interestingly, a devout blend of nectar. Sugar and Ghee is put on the tongue of the kid with a brilliant stick and around then exceptional Vedic Mantra is droned. This Samskara is performed with exceptional Mantras and rituals. In the wake of purifying with Mantras the blend of two drops of Ghee and six drops of Shahad, the blend is put on the tongue of the kid and from there on the father performs the custom of Yagna. From that point the father whispers in the left ear of the kid "Your mystery name is Ved". From that point the father cuts the navel string of the tyke and favors him:

Amid this Jaat Samskara, the custom with milk-shower is performed to the kid with a perspective to favor him for physical, mental and profound advancement. Through this Samskara, whatever is eaten by the tyke from the stomach of his mom while in the womb is purified from such sins.

5. NAMKARAN SAMSKARA :

Following ten evenings, on eleventh day, this Samskara is performed. In our Scriptures, ten days instantly after the introduction of a tyke are considered as Asauch (Sutak). Furthermore, hence, it is expressed in the sacred writings to perform this Samskara on the eleventh day. Indeed, even Rishi Yagnavalkya suggests it. However, some other Karm-kandi learned persons trust that this Samskara can be performed on eleventh day as well as on some other devout day from that point according to respectable position of the stars and planets. Subsequent to performing Pooja of one's own personal god, this Samskara is performed either by the eldest male individual from the family or the father himself. The individual who performs this Namkaran Samskara, expresses the name of the youngster in his ears. Indeed 'Janmang-Chakra' is additionally sung. At the time Namkaran Samskara, Purohit or Brahmin performs Sankalp.

6. NISKRAMAN SAMSKARA:

The fundamental goal of this Samskara is that, a kid might be presented with this incredible and immense universe made by the Lore Brahma and the youngster may likewise pick up development from this great formation of the world and he may ensure Dharma and Samskruti and appreciate this world for a more extended timeframe.

The assessment of Niskraman is that : "To turn out." This Samskara is performed in the fourth month immediately after the introduction of a tyke. It is expressed in the sacred text to enhance the kid with valuable decorations and garments and to have him Darshan of Surya. There-after the youngster is set lying on the floor in home before the icon picture of the god. It is expressed in the Scriptures to appear to the youngster the Light of the Sun and the Moon. The primary target behind it is to have him encounter the splendor of the Sun and the coolness of the Moon. The assessment of the Rishis behind this custom is to make the youngster splendid and humble. On this day, the kid ought to be taken to the sanctuary for Darshan and to look for the endowments of the Lord for cheerful and prosperous existence of the kid. It is expressed in the Scriptures to perform this Samskara in the fourth month promptly after the introduction of the tyke. Since the body of the tyke is not suitable to external light, warmth and atmosphere, a kid ought to be kept in home painstakingly. From that point the kid ought to be brought out of home gradually. The fundamental goal of this Samskara is that the youngster may come in contact with the general public and may figure out how to recognize the circumstances of the general public.

7. ANNA-PRASHAN SAMSKARA:

Purpose of this Samskara is to concentrate upon the physical and mental development of the child. Meaning of Anna-Prashan is that so far the child was nourished only upon the milk of his mother and now the child should be given some quantity of the food. When the child takes the first ever meals in his mouth, this Samskara is called Anna-Prashan Samskara. The scriptures have identified the meals as Life. By taking the meals, physical and mental development of the child is achieved expeditiously. To strengthen and develop the body and the mind, the meals have the maximum contribution. Pure and

nutritious meals is the key to healthy body. If the meals are pure then only the inner self gets purified. Mind, intellect and soul are purified only through the meals and therefore, importance of this Samskara is much in human life.

Our Dharmacharyas have considered the 6th month from the date of birth, as the proper time for this Samskara. Even Lord Manu has also asked to perform this Samskara in the sixth month or as per the taboos of the family because after six months, digestive power of the child develops. Observing the best position of the planets and ominous day, this Samskara should be performed. It is considered ominous to offer 'Khir' and the sweet to the child in Annaprashan.

8. KARNA-VIDH SAMSKARA:

After achieving success in scientific experiments, our Rishis have started observing these Samskaras in practical human life. This Karna-vidh Samskara has both religious as well as scientific importance as it helps in remaining healthy. As per Ayurved, by making a hole at the bottom of the ear, a specific Nadi gets holed and one is prevented from the disease Hernia. Karnendriya has direct contact and effect with Virya- Vahini of a child. By making a hole into it, one is prevented from all the aspects which destroys the siemens of man. Therefore, this Samskara is performed to protect the child from all these difficulties. This is an important organ of the body consisted of the five elements of nature. An ear is an important organ of the human body. One can listen through the ears. With Karna-vidh, the body is protected against many diseases and listening capacity increases. After Karna-vedha, we wear the ornaments in it. We all know that ornaments are the symbol of beauty of our body. This Samskara can be performed from 6th month upto 16th month of the birth. It can be performed even as per the taboos of the family; however, it is essential that Karna-vedh is performed within five years because it is stated to perform this Samskara before Yagnopavit Samskara. As per the astrology, it is the best time to perform this Samskara in Shubh Muhurt in Shukla Paksha.

This Samskara is performed either through Swarna-Shalaka or Rajat-Shalaka. If the child is a boy then hole should be made first in his right ear and if the child is a girl then hole should be made first in her left ear. For the girl, hole should be made even in her nostril. At the time of performing this Samskara, father may perform Sankalp through Purohit:

9. VIDYARAMBH SAMSKARA:

Acharyas have different opinions about the chronological place of this Samskara. Some of the Acharyas believe that, Vidyarambh Samskara should be performed after Annaprashan Samskara. Whereas other Acharyas believe that, this Samskara should be performed after Chudakarm Samskara. But generally at the time of Annaprashan, a child cannot speak and therefore it is not possible to perform Vidyarambh Samskara. Moreover, by the time Chudakarm Samskara is performed, the child becomes curious to learn and therefore it is proper to perform Vidyarambh Samskara after Chudakarm Samskara.

It is the opinion of Acharya that, it is the best time to perform Vidyarambh at the age of five years. The word 'Ved' -which is created from Dhatu 'Vid'- is Gyan. And without Gy an Yatra (journey) of life does not become easy. And therefore in order to make the journey of the life of a child easier, the child should be taught all Vidyas. It is the opinion of Vidyarambh Samskara that a child should be introduced about the priority of education. At the time of this Samskara, Acharya may ask the child to perform Sankalp:

10. CHUDAKARM SAMSKARA:

Chudakarm Samskara is also known as Mundan Samskara. It is directed by Acharyas to perform this Samskara either in 1st, 3rd or 5th year. In Manu-Smriti it is stated to perform this Samskara in 1st or 3rd year. As per this ritual, hair of the child are divided into three parts, a Shikha is kept and the remaining hair are removed from the head while chanting Mantras. The removed hair are kept on the seat of straws and then they are sanctified with Gau-Mutra and they are buried beneath the land either on the bank of the river Ganga or the land of Gau-shala.

Acharya Charak considers it good to remove the nails, hair etc. as the same helps in increasing longevity, purity and beauty. As stated by our Manishi, the purpose of this Samskara is piety, intellectual development and beauty.

11. YAGNOPAVIT SAMSKARA:

Yagnopavit or Upnayan Samskara is the most important Samskara for intellectual and mental development of a child. Through this Samskara, practical and spiritual progresses are established in the life of a child. After performing this Samskara, the Mother of the Vedas- the goddess Gayatri is pleased. Even the modern science believes that Gayatri Mantra is the most powerful Mantra.

When Yagnopavit Samskara of Ghanshyam Maharaj was being performed, he was shaved of the hair of his head. There was Shikha on his head, a Palas-Danda and Munjni Mekhla in his hand. On completion of this ritual, the child has to run towards the forest and his uncle (on maternal side) has to catch him.

12. VEDARAMBHA SAMSKARA:

This Samskara is relating to obtaining knowledge. After performing this Yagnopavit Samskara, the child stays in the Gurukul and studies the Vedas in the pious company of his Guru. Veda means 'Gyan'. And therefore through the studies of the Vedas, a child obtains and acquires knowledge. It is stated in the scriptures that, nothing is better than knowledge in human life.

Therefore during the ancient times, this Samskara was very significant in obtaining knowledge. After Yagnopavit Samskara, the child was used to be handed over to an appropriate Acharya with a view to introduce him with the studies of the Vedas. Four types of Veda-vratas are started. Mahanamni, Mahavrata, Upnishad and Godan.

These four are called Vratas. At the time of performing this Samskara, Guru makes his disciple seat beside Havan-Kunda and aahuti of Ghee is offered to Agni for a particular deity. Simultaneously for spiritual and divine knowledge Prajapati Hom is also performed. There after studies of all the branches of Vedas are started. Prior to Vedaram, Guru makes his disciple take oath to lead a disciplined life while performing austerity and restraint. After taking an appropriate test, this Samskara is performed. A student who lives a disciplined and austere life, is considered eligible to study the Vedas.

13. KESHANTA SAMSKARA:

On completion of the studies of a student in Gurukul, this Samskara is performed in the pious company of Acharya. This Samskara is also called Keshant or Godan Samskara and it is performed on attaining the age of 16 years. In fact it is stated to perform this Samskara, when the hair of the chin and moustache start growing. Now the child attains the youth. In fact this Samskara is a natural link between leaving Gurukul and entering Gruhasthashram. After obtaining expertise in Vedas-Puranans, various skills and branches of knowledge, the hair are purified through Kesh-Samavartan Samskara.

The young child takes bath and he is offered the formal degree of graduation.

Keshanta Samskara is performed on the pious day in Shubh Muhurt. In this Samskara, poojan of the Lord Ganesh as well as the deity of the family is performed and thereafter the father performs this Sankalp.

14. SAMAVARTAN SAMSKARA:

Samavartan means to come back home. On completion of the studies of the Vedas and other scriptures in Gurukul when a student takes leave of his guru and Gurukul, this Samavartan Samskara is performed. Prior to this Samskara, Keshanta Samskara is performed and the student takes bath. This bath is like Samavartan Samskara. It is stated to take bath of eight different pots filled with water with various flavoured things and Aushadhis and Ayurvedic herbal items. This bath is taken with chanting of special Mantras. Thereafter Brahmchari forsakes Mekhla and Danda (while performing Yagnopavit Samskara, the child is offered Mekhla and Danda). After Samavartan Samskara both of them are forsaken. After performing this Samskara, Acharya bestows a degree upon the student and then only a student acquires the eligibility to enter Grihasthashram. The student wears beautiful clothes and ornaments, obtains the blessings of Acharya and the elders and leaves Gurukul to go home. While performing this Samskara, the father performs this Sankalp.

With this Sankalp this Samskara is concluded and the student may offer Dan-Dakshina to his Gyanguru and may obtain his blessings.

15. VIVAH SAMSKARA:

Vivah is the most important Samskara of human life. During the ancient times, this Samskara is most important for both men and women. It is stated in our scriptures to observe Vrata of Brahmcharya from Yagnopavit Samskara to Samavartan Samskara. On completion of the study of the Vedas when a student becomes young he understands the social traditions and becomes mature. At that time he is made to enter Grihasthashram. During the ancient time, after 25 years, a student on completing his studies used to get married. This is such a Samskara wherein people of all the four Varnas perform the ritual in similar manner. Vivah grants social approval to the relationship of a man with a woman and simultaneously it also prepares background for companionship between the two in life.

This Samskara has unique importance in human life. Through this Vivah Samskara, a responsible right is granted to a bride and bridegroom. Just as the Lord Vishnu nourishes all souls of this universe, through this Vivah Samskara bride and bridegroom accept the responsibility of nourishing and taking care of each and every member of his family.

Among all sixteen Samskaras, Vivah Samskara is the most important Samskara. This Vivah Samskara is performed differently with different rituals in different castes and communities. But in our scriptures (the Hindu Scriptures) there are references of eight types of Vivah.

16. AGNI SAMSKARA:

There are two extreme points of human life. One is birth and the other is death. The cycle of life exists between the two. Those who have abolished these two points, they have attained emancipation in their lives. But without emancipation, these two points are inevitable in human life. There is no family on this earth, wherein there has not been any death. Death is the last stage of life and everyone has to reach there.

In the first stage of human life, there should be obtaining knowledge in Brahmcharyashrm and

after Grihasthashram he should become Vanprasthi. By awakening Vairagya (renunciation), Vivek (humility) and through Swadhyay (Satsang), Tapa, Dhyan (Medi-tation) and Sadhana, a person should make his death noble. It is stated in the scriptures that on attaining the age of fifty (50) years, one should forsake all affec-tion of this worldly life and he should enter Vanprasthashram and should perform Bhagwat Bhakti.

It is stated in Shrimad Bhagwat - "Just as metals are purified through fire, body through bath and mind through satisfaction, evil thoughts and deeds spoil our body and mind. The nature of our inner self is very strange. Our inner self gets more involved in thinking when we try to abstain from thinking. This is called Samskara of our inner self. This Samskara is devel-oped consciously as well as unconsciously. Con-sciously it is done through thinking and action whereas unconsciously it is done in imagination and in dreams.

Good Samskara make us religious and grant us happiness which is divine in nature whereas bad Samskara lead us to wrong action and make us un-happy in life. Therefore cause of our happiness and misery are our Samskara. It is this Samskara which is at the root of progress or degeneration, happiness or misery of our life. Therefore in order to get freedom from misery, we should perform noble deeds and to perform noble deeds, as stated in our scriptures, we should perform Dharm, Gyan, Vairagya and Bhakti in our life. Only Samskara which is saturated with Bhagwat Bhakti can grant emancipation to a person and therefore Samskara has much importance in human life.

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