

Vivāha Saṁskara

The Marriage Ceremony

Marriage (*Vivāha*) means a state of life in which the husband and the wife love each other in unison (as if both are one single self), live together, and carry on the affairs of life together to a successful end. Marriage is not an arrangement, not a contract, not a convenience, it is a union like the integration of two streams into one—once the two waters join, they become one, you cannot distinguish one from the other.

The Vedic marriage ceremony is unique: “Nowhere in the whole world, nowhere in any religion, is there a nobler, a more beautiful, a more perfect ideal of marriage than you can find in the early writing of the Hindus (i.e., in the Vedic tradition).” (Annie Besant)

The boy and the girl should carefully know each other and then take a conscious decision to marry. Having married, they should carry out their obligations with full responsibility.

The boy and the girl may also take the help of senior people who may interview either or both parties and advise. But the final decision should rest with the boy and the girl.

The form of the wedding ceremony as observed these days has gone far too far from the ancient practice. This has happened because of our modern ways of living. We follow what Swami Dayananda calls “lokachara”, that is social practice.

Groom Swagat

ओं साधु भवानास्तामर्चयिष्यामो भवन्तम् ॥

Om Sādhu Bhavān Astāmachayishyāmo Bhavantam.

The wedding ceremony these days starts with the arrival of the Bridegroom’s party at the door of the Bride’s home or the hall or the ‘pandal’ which is a makeshift structure erected for the purpose. There the Bridegroom’s party is received by the host (Bride’s) party. It is suggested that there, before the guests are led in, the parties should chant the eight mantras of

'Īśvaropāsanā' from 'Om viśvāni deva.... upto Om Agne naya supathārāye...'.
After prayer the groom party is led in and seated properly.

इश्वरस्तुतिप्रार्थनोपासनामन्त्राः

Īśvara Stuti Prārthanā Upāsanā Mantrāḥ (*Mantrās of Divine Praise and Prayer*)

१. ओं विश्वानि देव सवितर्दुरितानि परा सुव।
यद्भद्रंतन्नऽआ सव ॥ ३॥
Om Viśvāni deva savitar-duritāni parā suva.
Yadbhadraṁ tanna'ā suva.
२. ओं हिरण्यगर्भः समवत्ताग भूतस्य जातः पतिरेकऽआसीत्।
स दाधार पृथिवीं द्यामतेमां कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम॥४॥
Om Hiranyagarbhaḥ samavarttatāgre bhūtasya jātaḥ
patireka'āsīt. Sa dādharma pṛthivīm dyāmutemām kasmai
devāya haviṣā vidhema. Yaju. 13, 4
३. ओं यऽआत्मदा बलदा यस्य विश्वऽउपासते पशिष यस्य देवाः।
यस्य छायामृत यस्य मृत्युः कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम॥१३॥
Om Ya'ātmadā baladā yasya viśva'upāsate praśiṣaṁ yasya
devāḥ. Yasya cchāyāmṛtaṁ yasya mṛtyuḥ kasmai devāya
haviṣā vidhema. Yaju. 25, 13
४. ओं यः प्राणतो निमिषतो महित्वैकऽइद्राजा जगतो बभूव।
यऽईशऽअस्य द्विपदश्चतुष्पदः कस्म देवाय हविषा विधेम॥३॥

Om Yah prānato nimiṣato mahitvaika'idrājā jagato babhūva. Ya īṣe'asya dvipadaś-catuṣpadaḥ kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema. Yaju. 23, 3

५. ओं येन द्यौरुग्रा पृथिवी च दृढा येन स्व स्तभितं येन नाकः।

योऽन्तरिक्ष रजसो विमानः कस्म द्वाय हविषा विधेम॥६॥

Om Yena dyaurugrā pṛthivī ca dr̥ḍhā yena sva stabhitam yena nākaḥ. Yo'antarikṣe rajaso vimānaḥ kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema. Yaju. 32, 6

६. ओं प्रजापते न त्वदेतान्यन्यो विश्वा जातानि परि ता बभूव।

यत्कामास्ते जुहुमस्तन्नो अस्तु वयं स्याम पतयो रयीणाम् ॥ १० ॥ Yaju. 23, 65

Om Prajāpate na tvadetānyanyo viśvā jātāni pari tā babhūva.

Yat kāmāste juhūmastanno astu vayaṁ syāma patayo rayīṇām.

७. ओं स ना बन्धर्जनिता स विधाता धामानि वेद भुवनानि विश्वा।

यत्र देवाऽअमृतमानशानास्ततीय धामन्नध्यैरयन्त॥१०॥

Om Sa no bandhurjanitā sa vidhātā dhāmāni veda bhuvanāni viśvā. Yatra devā'amṛtamāna-śānāstrīye dhāmannadhyai-rayanta. Yaju. 32, 10

८. ओं अग्न नय सुपथा रायेऽअस्मान्निश्वानि देव वयुनानि विद्वान् ।

ययाध्युस्मज्जुहुराणमेना भूयिष्ठां ते नमऽउक्तिं विधेम ॥१६॥

***Om Agne naya supathā rāye'asmān viśvāni deva
vayunāni vidvān. Yuyodhyasmaj-juhurāṇam-eno
bhūyiṣṭhām te nama uktim vidhema.*** Yaju. 40, 16

After greetings and preliminary hospitality, the hosts take the bridegroom to the vedi. The bridegroom sits facing east, his parents and party sit facing north. The bride's party sits in front of the groom.

Asana Dana:

ओं विष्टरो विष्टरो विष्टरः प्रतिगृह्यताम् ॥

Om Vishtaro Vishtaro Vishtarah Pratigrihyatām.

Here is the seat. Please kindly accept it.

The bridegroom replies:

ओं प्रतिगृह्णामि ॥ ***Om Pratigrihnāmi.*** Thank you. I accept it.

Bride now enters the Mandap led by her friends

Madhuparka:

Of the traditional items of hospitality, normally the *Madhuparka* survives.

Note: Here one difference of 'lokāchār', general practice, should be noted and accordingly followed. In some communities the *madhuparka* and other items of bridegroom hospitality are offered by the bride. That would imply that the bride first comes to the vedi along with the groom and the *madhuparka* is offered by her. In others, the bride joins the vedi after the groom. Hence the hospitality, *madhuparka* etc. is offered by the family. You may follow either way according to social practice.

Offer of Madhuparaka to the Bridegroom By the Bride:—

Offer a bowl of *madhuparka* to the bridegroom with the following words:—

ओं मधुपर्को मधुपर्को मधुपर्कः प्रतिगृह्यताम् ॥

*Om Madhuparko madhuparko madhuparkaḥ
pratigrhyatām.*

Here is medhuparka. Please accept it.

ओं प्रतिगृह्णामि ॥

Om Pratigrhṇāmi.

(Thanks,I accept it.)

The bridegroom takes the bowl into his hand, and while doing so, chants the following mantra:—

ओं देवस्य त्वा सवितुः प्रसवेऽश्विनाबाहुभ्यां पृष्णो हस्ताभ्याम्।

अग्नय जुष्टं गृह्णाम्यग्नीषोमाभ्यां जुष्टं गृह्णामि॥ १०॥

*Om Devasya tvā savituh prasave'svinorbāhubhyām pūṣṇo
hastābhyām.*

Agnaye juṣṭam grhṇāmya-gnīṣomābhyām juṣṭam grhṇāmi.

Par. 1. 3. 17. Asva.1. 20. 4.Yaj. 1, 10.

Meaning:—I take the *madhuparka* for the sake of the glory of Lord Creator of the universe, for the light and beauty of the sun and the moon, and for the health and regularity of the flow of pranic energy.

While observing he holds the *madhuparka* in his left hand, observes it carefully and while doing so chants the following mantra:—

ओं भूर्भुवः स्वः । मधु वाताऽऋतायते मधु क्षरन्ति सिन्धवः ।

माध्वीर्नः सन्त्वोषधीः ॥ १ ॥

*Om Bhūrbuvaḥ svaḥ; Madhu vātā'ṛtāyate madhu
kṣaranti sindhavaḥ; mādhvīrnaḥ santvoṣadhīḥ.* – Yaj. 13/27.

Meaning:—Lord Omnipresent, Omnipotent, Omnificent, may the winds blow honey sweet, may the rivers flow honey sweet, may the herbs be honey sweet for us all. May everything existent be honey sweet.

Taking the Madhuparka:—Now the bridegroom takes the madhuparka with Chanting this **mantra thrice**, the bridegroom should take a **helping once for each of the three chants:**—

ओं यन्मधुनो मधव्यं परमंरूपमन्नाद्यम्। तेनाहं मधुनो मधव्येन परमेण
रूपेणान्नाद्येन परमो मधव्योऽन्नादोऽसानि ॥

*Om Yanmadhuno madhavyam paramam rūpaman-
nādyam; Tenāham madhuno madhavyena parameṇa
rūpeṇānnādyena paramo madhavyo'nnādo'sāni. – P. G.S.
1/3/20. Par. I. 3, 20.*

Meaning:—Honey is sweet, the best form of food as it contains the nectar of the sweetest of life. May I, by virtue of that very sweetness, ever have the best and sweetest of nourishment, and may I be blest with the sweetest of life and discourse, manners and behaviour in my dealings with people.

Preparation for the ceremonial Yajña:— Someone has to collect the materials for the *yajña* (*Samidhās, comphor, ghee, water etc.*). One person from the bridegroom's side should have a jug full of water, go round the vedi, clockwise keeping it on his right, and sit south of the vedi, facing north, the jug well-placed. He has to be sitting there until the ceremony is over. The bride's brother or cousin has to sit with four liberal handfuls of roasted rice or millet. He has to sit a little back of the bride's seat. One slab of stone has to be kept close to the seats of the bride and the bridegroom. The stone is a symbol of firmness and determination, and the roasted rice a symbol of plenty, prosperity and happiness.

Family consent and Offer of the Bride:

The father of the bride or any other senior member who has to perform the ceremony should offer the bride's hand. He should sit with the bride and groom facing north. He should then hold the right hand of the bridegroom with his hand, keeping his palm upward. Then he should hold the right hand of the bride, palm

upward, and place it onto the hand of the bridegroom. That is how the hand of the bride is to be given to the bridegroom.

While the bride's hand is thus offered, the following mantra is chanted by the giver:—

ओम् अमुक गोत्रोत्पन्नमिमाममुकनाम्नीम् समलं कृता कन्यां प्रतिगृह्णातु भवान् ॥
*Om Amuka gotrotpannām imām amuka-nāmnīm
samalaṅkṛtām kanyām pratigrhṇātu bhavān.*

(Here use the name of the gotra and the name of the bride in place of the word 'amuka' (such and such) in the mantra.

Meaning :—Please to accept this girl of such and such name, born in such and such gotra, and well educated and cultured of manners.

The bride-groom says:—

ओं प्रतिगृह्णामि ॥

Om Pratigrhṇāmi. Par. I.26.

(I accept her hand and feel most grateful.)

Jai Mala:

Now the bride and the groom should chant and proclaim the following mantras together:—

ओं समञ्जन्तु विश्वे देवाः समापो हृदयानि नौ ।

सं मातरिश्वा सं धाता समु देष्ट्री दधातु नौ ॥ ४७ ॥

Om Samañjantu viśve devāḥ samāpo hṛdayāni nau.

Sam mātariśvā saṁ dhātā samu deṣṭrī dadhātu nau.

Rg. 10. 85. 47. Par. 1. 4. 14.

Meaning:—Ye learned and the wise gathered here, please know we have accepted each other and decided to join in wedlock for a life time by our own free will. Our hearts are one like the waters of two streams joining together. We shall be dear to

each other just as the very breath of our life. Just as the Lord God holds and sustains the world, so shall we support and sustain each other. Just as the teacher or the preceptor holds his disciples (audience) to heart, so shall we hold each other.

Now the bridegroom holding the right hand of the bride in his right hand, both should come close to the Vedi. **The bridegroom should pronounce the following mantra:—**

ओं यदैषि मनसा दूरं दिशोऽनुपवमानो वा ।

हिरण्यपर्णो वैकर्णः स त्वा मन्मनसां करोतु असौ ॥ २ ॥

*Om Yadaīṣi manasā dūram diśo'nupavamāno vā;
Hiraṇyaparṇo vaikarṇaḥ sa tvā manmanasām karotu
asau.* Par. 1. 4, 15.

The name of the bride should be pronounced in place of “asau”. Similarly, the bride should also address the bridegroom in these very words using the name of the bridegroom in place of “asau”.

Meaning:—O Bride (O Bridegroom) just as the wind, or the sun, purifying all, and drawing the resplendent water unto itself with its rays or waves, attains to all the directions and the farthest planets such as the earth, so do you come unto me of your free will and choice.

Now, still holding the hand of the bride, the bridegroom pronounces the following two mantras:—

ओं भूर्भुवः स्वः । अघोरचक्षुरपतिघ्न्येधि शिवा पशुभ्यः सुमनाः सुवर्चीः ।

वीरसूर्देवकामा स्योना शं नो भव द्विपदे शं चतुष्पदे ॥ ४४ ॥

*Om Bhūr bhuvah svah; Aghoracakṣur-apatighnyedhi śivā
paśubhyaḥ sumanāḥ suvarcāḥ. Vīrasūrdevakāmā syonā
śaṁ no bhava dvipade śaṁ catuspade.* Rg. 10. 85, 44.

Meaning:—O Bride, by the grace of God who loves us, protects us from misery and grants us bliss, may your eye be inspiring to your husband. May you be agreeable, kind and giver of strength to us! May you be kind to the animals, noble of mind, heroic in character; mother of brave progeny, affectionate to the seniors,

gentle, sweet and kind to all in the family, men, women, children, and all the animals.

Going round the Vedi:

While the bridegroom is holding the bride's right hand in his. they go round the Vedi and then sit on the asanas meant for them, the bride on the right, the bridegroom on the left, both facing east. When they are seated the bride pronounces the following prayer:—

ओं प्र मे पतियानः पन्थाः कल्पतां शिवा अरिष्टा पतिलाकं गमेयम् ॥

Om Pra me patiyānaḥ panthāḥ kalpatām śivā ariṣṭā patilokam gameyam. – Man Br. 1. 1. 8. Go. 2. 1. 21.

Meaning:—May I follow the path of my husband throughout my life. May I be free of all hardships of life and join the household of my husband in all happiness!

Yajña: The general part:

(Follow the general procedure upto four *Āghārāvājyabhāga Āhuti*s, four *Vyāhṛti Āhuti*s, eight *Aṣṭājyāhuti*s.)

अग्न्याधानम् (Agnyādhānam)

ओं भूर्भुवः स्वः ॥

Aum bhūrbhuvah svah. – G.G.S.1/1/11.

With this light the fire.

Now place the fire in the middle of the kunda with the following mantra—

ओं भूर्भुवः स्वर्द्यौरिव भूमना पृथिवीव वरिम्णा ।

तस्यास्ते पृथिवि देवयजनि पृष्टेऽग्निमन्नादमन्नाद्यादधे ॥ १ ॥

Aum bhūrbhuvah svardyaauriva bhūmnā prithivīva varimṇā, Tasyāste prithivi devayajani priṣṭhe'gnim-annādam-annādyāyā-dadhe. – Yaju. 3, 5

Raising the fire:

ओं उद् बुध्यस्वाग्ने प्रति जागृहि त्वमिष्टार्त्ते संसृजेथामयं च।
अस्मिन्त्सधस्थऽअध्युत्तरस्मिन् विश्वे देवा यजमानश्च सीदत ॥५४॥

*Om Udbudhyasvāgne prati jagrhi tvamiṣṭāpūrte saṁ
srjethāmayam ca. Asmintsadhasthe'adhyuttarasmin viśve
devā yajamānaśca sīdata. Yaju. 15, 54*

Offering of Three Samidhas:

The first *Samidhā* with the following mantra:-

ओम् अयं त इध्म आत्मा जातवेदस्तेनेध्यस्व वर्द्धस्व चेद्ध वर्धय चास्मान् प्रजया
पशुभिर्ब्रह्मवर्चसेनान्नाद्येन समेधय स्वाहा ॥ इदमग्रये जातवेदसे इदन्न मम ॥ १ ॥
*Aum Ayamta idhma ātmā jātavedas tenedhyasva vardhasva
ceddha vardhaya cāsmān prajayā paśubhirbrahmavarca-
senānnādyena samedhaya svāhā. Idamagnaye jātavedase -
idamna mama. – A.G.S. 1/10/12.*

Now, with the following two mantras, offer the second *Samidhā*:—

ओं समिधाग्निं दवस्यत घृतैर्बोधयतातिथिम् । आस्मिन् हव्या जुहोतन ॥१॥
ओं सुसमिद्धाय शोचिषे घृतं तीव्रं जुहोतन। अग्रये जातवेदसे स्वाहा ॥ इदमग्रये
जातवेदसे इदन्न मम ॥ ३ ॥
*Aum Samidhāgnim duvasyata ghṛtairbodhayatātithim.
Āsmin havyā juhotana. Yaj. 3. 1-2.*

*Aum Susamiddhāya śociṣe ghr̥taṃ tīvraṃ juhōtana.
Agnaye jātavedasen svāhā. Idamagnaye jātavedase -
Idamna mama.*

Now offer the third *Samidhā* with the following mantra:—

ओं तं त्वा समिद्धिरङ्गिरो घृतेन वर्द्धयामसि । बहच्छाचा यविष्ठ्य स्वाहा ।
इदमग्रयेऽङ्गिरसे इदन्न मम ॥ ३ ॥

*Om Taṃ tvā samidbhirāṅgiro ghr̥tena vardhayāmasi.
Bṛhacchocā yaviṣṭhya svāhā. Idamagnaye'ngirase idanna
mama. Yaj.3. 3.*

Five Āhutis with ghee:

Five ghee *Āhutis* are offered with the following mantra (repeated five times):—

ओम् अयं त इध्म आत्मा जातवेदस्तेनेध्यस्व वर्द्धस्व चेद्ध वर्धय चास्मान् प्रजया
पशुभिर्ब्रह्मवर्चसेनान्नाद्येन समेधय स्वाहा ॥ इदमग्रये जातवेदसे इदन्न मम ॥ १ ॥

*Aum Ayamta idhma ātmā jātavedas tenedhyasva vardhasva
ceddha vardhaya cāsmān prajayā paśubhirbrahmavarca-
senānnādyena samedhaya svāhā. Idamagnaye jātavedase -
idamna mama. – A.G.S. 1/10/12.*

Water Sprinkling

ओम् अदितेऽनुमन्यस्व ॥ १ ॥

Aum Adite'numanyasva. - On the east side.

ओम् अनुमतेऽनुमन्यस्व ॥ २ ॥

Aum Anumate'numanyasva. - On the west side.

ओं सरस्वत्यनुमन्यस्व ॥ ३ ॥

*Aum Sarasvatyanumanyasva. - On the north side. -
G.G.S.1/3/1-3.*

ओम् देव सवितः प्र सव यज्ञं प्र सव यज्ञपतिं भगाय।

दिव्यो गन्धर्वः कतपूः केत नः पुनातु वाचस्पतिर्वाच नः स्वदतु ॥ १ ॥

*Om Deva savitaḥ pra suva yajñam pra suva yajña-patiṁ
bhagāya. Divyo gandharvaḥ ketapūḥ ketam naḥ punātu
vācaspatirvācam naḥ svadatu. - Yaj. 30/1.*

Four Āghārāvājyabhāga Āhutis:-

This one in the north side

ओम् अग्नये स्वाहा ॥ इदमग्नये इदं न मम ॥

Aum Agnaye svāhā. Idamagnaye - Idamna mama.

Then one in the south side:

ओं सोमाय स्वाहा ॥ इदं सोमाय इदं न मम ॥

Aum Somāya svāhā. Idam Somāya- Idamna mama

Then two in the centre:-

ओम् प्रजापतये स्वाहा ॥ इदं प्रजापतये इदं न मम ॥

*Aum Prajāpataye svāhā. Idam prajāpataye -Idamna
mama.*

ओम् इन्द्राय स्वाहा ॥ इदमिन्द्राय इदं न मम ॥

Om Indrāya svāhā. Idamindrāya - Idamna mama

Four *Vyāhṛti Āhutis* of ghee.

ओं भूरग्रये स्वाहा ॥ इदमग्रये इदं न मम ॥

Aum Bhūragnaye svāhā. Idamagnaye - Idamna mama.

ओं भुवर्वायवे स्वाहा ॥ इदं वायवे इदं न मम ॥

Aum Bhuvanvāyave svāhā. Idam vāyave - Idamna mama.

ओं स्वरादित्याय स्वाहा ॥ इदमादित्याय इदं न मम ॥

Aum Svarādityāya svāhā. Idam ādityāya - Idamna mama.

ओं भूर्भुवः स्वरग्निवाखादित्येभ्यः स्वाहा ॥

इदमग्निवाखादित्येभ्यः इदं न मम ॥

Aum bhūrbhuvahṣ svaragnivāyvādityebhyaṣ svāhā.

Idamagnivāyvādityebhyaṣ - Idamna mama.

Jaya Homa:

With the following mantras thirteen ajyāhutis are to be offered with ghee:—

ओं चित्तं च स्वाहा ॥ इदं चित्ताय इदन्न मम ॥ १ ॥

Om Cittam ca svāhā. - Idam cittāya -Idamna Mama.

ओं चित्तिश्च स्वाहा ॥ इदं चित्त्यै इदन्न मम ॥ २ ॥

Om Cittisca svāhā. - Idam Cittyai -Idamna Mama.

ओम् आकूतं च स्वाहा ॥ इदमाकूताय इदन्न मम ॥ ३ ॥

Om Ākūtam ca svāhā. - Idamākūtāya - Idamna Mama.

ओम् आकूतिश्च स्वाहा ॥ इदमाकूत्यै इदन्न मम ॥ ४ ॥

Om Ākūtiśca svāhā. - Idamākūtyai - Idamna Mama.

ओं विज्ञातं च स्वाहा ॥ इदं विज्ञाताय इदन्न मम ॥ ५ ॥

*Om Vijñātam ca svāhā. - Idam Vijñātāya - Idamna
Mama..*

ओं विज्ञातिश्च स्वाहा ॥ इदं विज्ञात्यै इदन्न मम ॥ ६ ॥

Om Vijñātiśca svāhā. - Idam Vijñātyai- Idamna Mama.

ओं मनश्च स्वाहा ॥ इदं मनसे इदन्न मम ॥ ७ ॥

Om Manaśca svāhā. - Idam Manase- Idamna Mama.

ओं शक्वरीश्च स्वाहा ॥ इदं शक्वरीभ्यः इदन्न मम ॥ ८ ॥

*Om Śakvarīśca svāhā. - Idam Śakvarībhyaḥ- Idamna
Mama.*

ओं दर्शश्च स्वाहा । इदं दर्शाय इदन्न मम ॥ ९ ॥

Om Darśaśca svāhā. - Idam darśāya- Idamna Mama.

ओं पौर्णमासं च स्वाहा ॥ इदं पौर्णमासाय इदन्न मम ॥ १० ॥

*Om Paurṇamāsam ca svāhā. - Idam Paurṇamāsāya -
Idamna Mama.*

ओं बृहच्च स्वाहा ॥ इदं बृहते इदन्न मम ॥ ११ ॥

Om Bṛhacca svāhā. - Idam Bṛhate- Idamna Mama.

ओं रथन्तरं च स्वाहा ॥ इदं रथन्तराय इदन्न मम ॥ १२ ॥

*Om Rathantaram ca svāhā. -Idam Rathantarāya- Idamna
Mama.*

Meaning:— (1-2) —For the sake of success and honour in life, these ahutis are offered for all those acts and faculties of action which ought to be performed and guarded as well as advanced in life. These ahutis are therefore offered for the acts of the mind (the seat of awareness and memory) and the mental faculty (1-2), the decisions and the faculty of decision-making (3-4), the acts and contents of knowledge and the faculty of knowing in a scientific manner (5-6), for thought and the thinking power and the senses (7- 8), for the acts to be performed on the last day of the dark and the bright fortnights, i.e., amavasya and purnima (9-10), and for all those higher and greater acts, knowledges, achievements and means of successful living which a pious and active life can possibly command with the grace of God (I 1-12).

13. Lord *Prajāpati* is great. Man can be great, powerful and prosperous if he observes the right conduct and performs yajna in life. For the shower of prosperity on the righteous man, God has already blessed him with Vedic knowledge, mantras which reveal the secrets of success. With these secrets of success properly followed in action, man wins success over all his physical and mental and spiritual antagonists. For this gift, all people bow to the Lord. The Lord most powerful is worthy of worship. Similarly, the man most successful in action and knowledge is worthy of honour and reverence.

These *āhutis* are offered to the Lord for the activation of all those faculties which He has already gifted to mankind.

Abhyātana Homa Ajyāhutis:

This part of the *Yajña* is performed for the sake of all-round progress and advancement in life.

Eighteen *Āhutis* have to be offered with ghee. The eighteen mantras are given below:—

ओम् अग्निर्भूतानाम धिपतिः स मावत्व स्मिन् ब्रह्मण्य स्मिन् क्षत्रेऽस्या माशिष्य स्यां
पुरोधा यामस्मिन् कर्मण्यस्यां देवहृत्याथः स्वाहा ॥ इदमग्नये भूतानाम धिपतये इदन्न
मम ॥ १ ॥

***Om Agnirbhūtānām-adhipatiḥ sa māvatvasmin
brahmanyasmin kṣatre'syāmāśiṣyasyām purodhāyām-***

*asmin karmanyasyām devahūtyām svāhā. Idamagnaye
Bhūtānām-adhipataye - Idamna Mama.*

Meaning:—Agni (heat, fire, passion) is the first/prime among physical elements, sustaining, vitalizing and protecting all others. That same agni may sustain, protect and bless me too. In matters of vision, virtue and justice including gatherings of *Brāhmaṇās* and *kṣatriyās*, in matters of social prayer, appeal and benediction, in matters of this vedi and this bride and our conjugal life, in this act of yajna and in all such other acts of social creativity, whenever I call upon the good and the great of our society, may Lord *Agni* help and advance us! This is for Agni. Lord of all the elements and forms of life. This is not mine any more.

ओम् इन्द्रो ज्येष्ठानाम धिपतिः स मावत्व स्मिन् ब्रह्मण्यस्मिन् क्षत्रेऽस्या माशिष्यस्यां
पुरोध्या यामस्मिन् कर्मण्यस्यां देवहृत्याऽऽ स्वाहा ॥ इदमिन्द्राय ज्येष्ठानाम धिपतये
इदन्न मम ॥ २ ॥

*Om Indro jyeṣṭhānām-adhipatiḥ sa māvatvasmin
brahmanyasmin kṣatre'syāmāśiṣyasyām purodhāyām-
asmin karmanyasyām devahūtyām svāhā. Idam-indrāya
jyeṣṭhānām-adhipataye - Idamna Mama.*

Meaning:—Indra/electrical energy of the universe is the prime among the highest of natural forces. That same energy may inspire, sustain and bless me (The rest as above). It is for Indra not for me, any more.

ओं यमः पृथिव्याऽअधिपतिः स मावत्व स्मिन् ब्रह्मण्य स्मिन् क्षत्रेऽस्या माशिष्यस्यां
पुरोध्या यामस्मिन् कर्मण्यस्यां देवहृत्याऽऽ स्वाहा ॥ इदं यमाय पृथिव्याऽअधिपतये
इदन्न मम ॥ ३ ॥

*Om Yamah pṛthivyā'dhipatiḥ sa māvatvasmin
brahmanyasmin kṣatre'syāmāśiṣyasyām purodhāyā-
masmin karmanyasyām devahūtyām svāhā. Idam Yamāya
pṛthivyā adhipataye - Idamna Mama.*

Meaning:—The Lord of natural law is the Lord of the earth, the predominating power...

It is for yama, Lord of the earth, not for me, any more.

Pāṇi-Grahaṇa -taking the hand of the Bride:

Now follows the *Pāṇi-Grahaṇa* (taking the hand) ceremony. The bridegroom rises and stands before the bride—the bride is sitting facing east, and the bride groom faces her, his face being westward. He should help her rise, taking her right hand (palm upward) into his left (palm upward). As she arises, he takes her right hand with his left hand into his right. As he stands with the bride's right hand held in his right hand, he pronounces the following mantras:—

ओम् गृभ्णामि ते सौभगत्वाय हस्तं मया पत्या ज़रदष्टिर्यथासः ।

भगो अर्यमा सविता पुरन्धर्महं त्वादुर्गाहंपत्याय देवाः ॥

Om Gr̥bhṇāmi te saubhagatvāya hastam mayā patyā jaradaṣṭir-yathāsaḥ. Bhago aryamā savitā purandhir-mahyam tvādur-gārhapatyāya devāḥ.

Rg. 10, 85. 36. Paras. 1. 6. 3.

Meaning:—Dear Bride, I take your hand unto mine for the progress and prosperity of home-life. Live with me, your husband, happy upto a full ripe age. Bhaga Lord of all prosperity, Aryama, Dispenser of justice, Savita, Lord Creator and Sustainer of all forms of life, and all the virtuous and the wise gathered here have blessed me with your auspicious hand for the performance of household duties and the fulfilment of all social obligations.

Just as the bridegroom addresses these words to the bride, the bride too is supposed to say the same words to the bridegroom. Thus both of them join a new phase of integrated life.

ओम् भगस्ते हस्तमग्र-भीत्स-विता हस्तमग्र-भीत् ।

पत्नी त्वमसि धर्मणाहं गृहपतिस्तव ॥

Om Bhagaste hastamagrabhīt savitā hastamagrabhīt. Patnī tvamasi dharmaṇāham gr̥hapatistava.

Meaning: — I have accepted your hand, so prosperity has taken your hand, so progress and creativity has taken you by the hand. In dharma, by Dharma you are my wife and I am your husband. (The point is that the husband is, as if, Bhaga, progress and prosperity, he is, as if, savita, a man inspired with procreation and advancement. The Bride should feel secure, because prosperity and procreation are just at hand. The husband and the wife have to work together as a matter of pleasure and duty for the well-being of the family, joined as they are in wedlock.) (The bride is supposed to say the same words to the husband.)

ओम् ममेय-मस्तु पोष्या मह्यं त्वादाद् बृहस्पतिः ।

मया पत्या प्रजावति सं जीव श्रदः शतम् ॥

Om Mameyamastu pošyā mahyam tvādād brhaspatiḥ.

Mayā patyā prajāvati saṁ jīva śaradaḥ śatam.

Ath. 14, 1, 51-52.

Meaning:—Dear bride, Lord Brhaspati has gifted you unto me. You are my wife, to be protected and supported by me. Blest with the procreative power of nature, live with me, your husband, to a hundred years in peace and security.

(The bride also should pledge herself with the bridegroom in the same words.)

ओम् त्वष्टा वासो व्य ऽदधाच्छुभे कं बृहस्पतेः प्रशिषा कवीनाम् ।

तेनेमां नारीं सविता भगश्च सूर्यामिव परि धत्तां प्रजया ॥

Om Tvaṣṭā vāso vya dadhācchubhe kaṁ brhaspateḥ

praśiṣā kavīnām. Tenemām nārīm savitā bhagaśca

sūryāmiva pari dhattām prajāyā.

Meaning:— *Tvaṣṭā*, the maker, the teacher, with the blessings of the learned and the wise, has refined her with education and training. May the Lord Creator, the giver of honour and glory, invest her with beauty, joy and offspring just as the Sun invests his rays with radiance and glory.

This mantra can be explained at two levels—the aesthetic level of beauty and the mental level of education and culture. Tvashta is the maker, the Lord God who makes all beautiful forms, the teacher who refines the disciple's personality, and

the bridegroom who has done his best to provide her with the most beautiful vestments. It is better to explain it in all the comprehensive aspects.

ओम् इन्द्राग्नी द्यावापृथिवी मातरिश्वा मित्रावरुणा भगो अश्विनोभा ।

बृहस्पतिर्मरुतो ब्रह्म सोम इमां नारीं प्रजया वर्धयन्तु ॥ ५४ ॥

Om Indrāgnī dyāvāpṛthivī mātariśvā mitrāvaruṇā bhago aśvinobhā. Bṛhaspatirmaruto brahma soma imāñ nārīm prajāyā vardhayantu. Ath. 14. 1.53-54.

Meaning: May Indra and agni (energy and fire), the heaven and earth, the higher wind, prana and udana, the glory of the earth, the physician and the teacher, the ruler, the leaders, the Lord supreme, the moon and the waters of life bless this bride with off spring and increase her family and personality.

ओम् अहं वि ष्यामि मयि रूपमस्या वेददित्यश्यन्मनसः कुलायम् ।

न स्तेयमद्वि मनसोदमुच्ये स्वयं श्रथ्नानो वरुणस्य पाशान् ॥ ५७ ॥

Om Ahañ vi śyāmi mayi rūpamasyā vedadit-paśyan-manasaḥ kulāyam. Na steyamadmi manasoda-mucye svayañ śrathnāno varuṇasya pāsān. Ath. 14. I. 57.

Meaning:—Dear Bride, I love your beauteous form and love you from the core of my heart. I can see the increase and progress of my family. I shall never conceal anything from you nor have anything without taking you into confidence. Loosening the bonds of all kinds of difficulties in the path of our life, I remove all the obstacles to our mutual happiness.

The bride too reciprocates the emotions and sentiments expressed in these six mantras.

The First Round: Bride leading

Having spoken these six *Pāṇi-Grahaṇa* mantras, the bridegroom, holding the right hand of the bride in his, should help her rise, and both should go round the fire, the **bride leading**. The man sitting south of the vedi with a jug of water should accompany them during the circumambulation (*parikramā*). When the bride and the bridegroom have completed the round, the man with the jug should go back

and resume his seat. After this first round (*Pradakṣiṇā*), the bride and the bridegroom should keep standing in their places and pronounce the following mantra, confirming their wedlock and pledging themselves mutually:—

ओम् अमोऽहमस्मि सा त्वं सा त्वमस्य-मोऽहम्। सामाह-मस्मि ऋक्त्वं द्यौरहं
पृथिवी त्वं तावेव विवहावहै सह रेतो दधावहै। प्रजां प्रजनयावहै पुत्रान् विन्दावहै
बहून्। ते सन्तु जरदष्टयः संप्रियौ रोचिष्णू सुमनस्य-मानौ। पश्येम शरदः शतं जीवेम
शरदः शतं शृणुयाम शरदः शतम् ॥ ७ ॥

*Om Amo'hamasmi sā tvam sā tvamasyamo'ham;
Sāmāham-asmi ṛktvam dyauraham pṛthivī tvam tāveva
vivahāvahai saha reto dadhāvahai; Prajām
prajanayāvahai putrān vindā-vahai bahūn; Te santu
jaradaṣṭayah sampriyau rociṣṇu sumanasyamānau;
paśyema śaradaḥ śatam jīvema śaradaḥ śatam śṛṇuyāma
śaradaḥ śatam.* – P.G.S 1/6/3.

Meaning:— Dear Bride, fully aware of myself and in full knowledge of my act voluntarily I accept you. Similarly, you too, fully aware of yourself and in full knowledge of your act, voluntarily accept me. Just as I accept you in love without reservation, similarly you too accept me in love without reservation. You are like the Earth, full of procreative energy and I am like the heaven of clouds and rain for the earth. I am like the Samaveda and you are like the Rgveda, both complementing each other. Thus we happily bind ourselves in wedlock. Let us join our procreative energy, let us beget children, and may they all attain full age. Let us both in love, mutual admiration and conjugal happiness see a full hundred years, live a full hundred years, and hear a full hundred years.

Śilārohaṇa (The adamantine resolve):

The bridegroom should now stand close to the bride south of the vedi facing north. The man with the jug of water has already resumed his seat. The mother or brother of the bride holding the roasted paddy/maize in the right hand should hold it in the left and help the bride place her right foot on the slab of stone, and while the bride does so. the bridegroom should pronounce the following:—

ओम् आरोहेम-मश्मान-मश्मेव त्वः स्थिरा भव ।

अभितिष्ठ पृतन्यता-ऽवबा-धस्व पृतनायतः ॥

Om Ārohemamaśmānam-aśmeva tvam sthirā bhava;

Abhitiṣṭha pṛtanyato'vabādhasva pṛtanāyataḥ. – P.G.S 1/7/1.

Meaning:—Dear Bride, ascend this slab, be firm as a rock in grhastha, duties of the household. Resist those who appose, and defeat those who challenge and fight.

Lājāhoma Āhutis:-

Lājāhoma Āhutis of 'Lājā' (roasted paddy or corn) are an important ritual. For this purpose the bride and the bridegroom should stand close to the vedi facing east, the bride on the right. The bride should put her *hastanjali* on the *hastanjali* of the bridegroom (both hands kept together with palms upward so that roasted paddy could be held in the palms). The *hastanjalis* are now joined together, the bride's above and the bridegroom's below. Now the mother or the brother, whosoever is handling the 'Lājās', should sprinkle a little ghee over the joined *anjalis*, then put two handfuls of the paddy in the *anjalis* and sprinkle some ghee on the roasted paddy contained in the *anjalis*. The bride and the bridegroom together have to offer three *ahutis* with this portion of 'Lājā' For this purpose, the bride has to lower her *anjali*-fingers along with the bridegroom's and offer the *ahutis*, one each with each one of the following mantras :—

ओम् अर्यमणं देवं कन्या अग्निम-यक्षत । स नो अर्यमा देवः प्रेतो मुञ्चतु मा पतेः

स्वाहा ॥ इदमर्यमणे अग्नये इदन्न मम ॥ १ ॥

Om Aryamaṇam devam kanyā agnimayakṣata; Sa no aryamā devaḥ preto muñcatu mā pateḥ svāhā.

Idamaryamaṇe agnaye - Idamna Mama. – P.G.S 1/6/2.

Meaning:—The bride offers homage and oblation to Agni, Lord Aryama, who controls the world, and she prays that the Lord may guide her in separating and departing from this (her parent's) family, but never from the family of her husband. Verily this is true. This is for *Aryamā Agni*. It is not for me.

ओम् इयं नार्युपब्रूते लाजानाव-पन्तिका । आयुष्मानस्तु मे पतिरेधन्तां ज्ञातयो मम
स्वाहा ॥ इदमग्नये इदन्न मम ॥ २ ॥

*Om Iyam nāryupabrūte lājānāvapantikā; Āyuṣmanastu
me patiredhantām jñātayo mama svāhā. Idamagnaye -
Idamna Mama. – P.G.S 1/6/2.*

Meaning:—The bride offering oblations in the fire prays: "May my husband attain a long life and may the members of my family and the relations all enjoy a happy life of plenty and prosperity! Verily, this is true. This is for Lord Agni, it is not for me.

ओम् इमाँल्ला-जानाव-पाम्यग्नौ समृद्धिकरणं तव । मम तुभ्यं च संवननं तदग्निर-
नुमन्य तामियं स्वाहा ॥ इदमग्नये इदन्न मम ॥ ३ ॥

*Om Imānllājānāvapāmyagnau samṛddhikaraṇam tava;
Mama tubhyam ca samvananam tadagnir-anumanya-
tāmiyam svāhā. Idamagnaye - Idamna Mama. – P.G.S 1/6/2.*

Meaning:—The Bride says: I offer this *āhuti* of roasted paddy to the fire for the sake of your progress and prosperity. May there be great love and affection between you and me. May Lord Agni bless us in our conjugal life. This true, this is for Agni and not for me.

Here the first round is complete.

The Second Round: Bride leading

Now the bridegroom has to hold the right hand of the bride with his right hand. For this purpose he has to pronounce the following mantra:—

ओं सरस्वति प्रेदमव सुभगे वाजि-नीवति । यान्त्वा विश्वस्य भूतस्य प्रजाया-
मस्याग्रतः । यस्यां भूतं समभवद् यस्यां विश्वमिदं जगत् । तामद्य गाथां गास्यामि
या स्त्रीणा-मुत्तमं यशः ॥

***Om Sarasvati predamava subhage vājinīvati; yāntvā
viśvasya bhūtasya prajāyāmasyāgrataḥ; Yasyām bhūtam
samabhavad-yasyām viśvamidaṁ jagat; Tāmadya gāthām
gāsyāmi yā strīṇāmuttamam yaśaḥ. – P.G.S 1/7/2.***

Meaning:—Mother Nature, *Sarasvati*, flowing with the living streams of life, source of all good fortune, producer of all means of life's sustenance, promote this union of ours and the home-fire we are lighting. You are the mother of all the forms of creation existing in the world since the beginning. Whatever arose into the world since the beginning, arose from you and whatever now is, is in you. I sing in praise of you, and the highest tribute that can be paid to women is that she is gifted with nature's power of procreation.

Holding the right hand of the bride, the bridegroom has to pronounce the following two mantras while the two go round the fire:—

ओ तुभ्यमग्ने पर्यवहन्त्सूर्या वहतुना सह ।

पुनः पतिभ्यो जायां दा अग्ने प्रजया सह ॥ ३८ ॥

Om Tubhyamagre paryavahantsūryām vahatunā saha.

Punaḥ patibhyo jāyām dā agne prajāyā saha.

Rg. 10. 85. 38. Par. 1, 7, 3.

Meaning:—Lord Agni, Power presiding over the home-fire, for your sake primarily, have I accepted this bride—bright as a ray of the Sun. May she share with me, bear, the sacred responsibilities of the household. May Lord Agni, in due course, give her, unto me, her husband, mature and cool as Soma, and bless me with children.

ओं कन्यला पितृभ्यः पतिलोकं यतोयमप दीक्षामयष्ट ।

कन्या उत त्वया वयं धारा उदन्या इवातिगाहेमहि द्विषः ॥ २ ॥

***Om Kanyalā piṭṛbhyaḥ patilokam yatīyamapa dīkṣām-
ayaṣṭa; Kanyā uta tvayā vayam dhārā udanyā
ivātigāhemahi dviṣaḥ. – Mantra. Br. 1/2/5.***

Meaning:—This girl, leaving the father's home and going to join her husband's home, has accepted and dedicated herself to him and to his honour and tradition. O bride, with you, we two (the husband the wife), joining together like two streams of water into one current, shall overcome whatever negative forces of life confront us

Going round the fire, the man with the jug of water following, they should complete the second round, and stand west of the Vedi facing east, the bride on the right of the bride-groom and offer the *lājāhuti*.

The third round: Bride leading

ओं कन्यला पितृभ्यः पतिलोकं यतीय-मप दीक्षा-मयष्ट ।

कन्या उत त्वया वयं धारा उदन्या इवाति-गाहे-महि द्विषः ॥ २ ॥

Om Kanyalā pitṛbhyaḥ patilokam yatīyamapa dīkṣām-ayaṣṭa; Kanyā uta tvayā vayam dhārā udanyā ivātigāhemahi dviṣaḥ. – Mantra. Br. 1/2/5.

The fourth round: Groom leading

ओं कन्यला पितृभ्यः पतिलोकं यती-यमप दीक्षा-मयष्ट ।

कन्या उत त्वया वयं धारा उदन्या इवाति-गाहे-महि द्विषः ॥ २ ॥

Om Kanyalā pitṛbhyaḥ patilokam yatīyamapa dīkṣām-ayaṣṭa; Kanyā uta tvayā vayam dhārā udanyā ivātigāhemahi dviṣaḥ. – Mantra. Br. 1/2/5.

At the end of it, the bride and the bridegroom should stand west of the vedi, facing east. The remaining roasted paddy now has to be offered to the fire in one ahuti.

Last Lājāhoma Āhuti:

The mother or the brother of the bride should now leave the entire remaining roasted paddy into the joint hastanjali of the bride and bridegroom, the bride should pronounce the following mantra and offer the paddy to the fire:—

ओं भगाय स्वाहा ॥ इदं भगाय इदन्न मम ॥

Om Bhagāya svāhā. Idam bhagāya - Idamna Mama.

– P.G.S 1/7/5.

Meaning:—This is offered for the sake of good fortune and the growth and advancement of the family. Verily and sincerely, it is true. It is for bhaga, prosperity, it is not mine any more.

One Ghee Āhuti:

The bride and bridegroom should now sit west of the vedi, facing east, the bride on the right of the bridegroom. The bridegroom should offer an ahuti with ghee with the following mantra:—

ओं प्रजापतये स्वाहा ॥ इदं प्रजापतये इदन्न मम ॥

Om Prajāpataye svāhā. Idam prajāpataye - Idamna Mama. – P.G.S 1/7/6.

Meaning:—This is for Prajapati. the Lord of creation. Verily it is for Him. It is for Prajapati, it is not mine any more.

The Conjugal Tie:

Then both come to the vedi. At this time the upper garment of the bride is tied with a knot to the upper garment of the bridegroom. This is called the conjugal tie of the couple. Its done by groom's sister.

प्र त्वा मुञ्चामि वरुणस्य पाशाद्येन त्वाबध्नात्सविता सुशेवः । ऋतस्य योनौ
सुकृतस्य लोकेऽरिष्टां त्वा सह पत्या दधामि ॥ २४ ॥

Pra tvā muñcāmi varuṇasya pāṣād yena tvāba-dhnāt savitā suśevaḥ. Ṛtasya yonau sukṛtasya loke'riṣṭām tvā saha patyā dadhāmi.

I free you from the bonds of Varuna, discipline of virginity observed in the spirit of justice, freedom and responsibility in the parental home, into which Savita, lord giver of life and natural growth unto maturity, had bound you in full dedication without inhibition, and I settle and establish you with your husband into a new life of natural conjugal order in the world of noble action free from sin, violence and violation of the law.

Sapta padi (Seven Steps) ceremony:-

Saptapadi is the complete part of the marriage ceremony. For this part of the ritual, the bride and the bridegroom move onto the north side of the vedi, the bride on the groom's right. While in the act of standing, the bridegroom should hold the right hand of the bride into his right hand and help her rise. When they stand facing northward, the bridegroom should put his right hand on the right shoulder of the bride. Standing close thus, the bridegroom initiates the process by suggesting to the bride—

मा सव्येन दक्षिणमतिक्राम ॥

Mā Savyena dakṣiṇamatikrāma. – G.G.S. 2/2/13

Meaning:—Let not the left foot overstep the right, or, let not the left step exceed the right. This means that the move of the left foot will be in unison with the right. This rhythm of movement is symbolic of the right and balanced action within the bounds of law, justice, tradition, culture and Dharma.

The First Step forward:—Having suggested this by way of caution or fore-warning, the bridegroom takes the first step with his right foot taking the bride with him. The left foot joins the right, without exceeding the right.

The first step:

For the first step the following mantra is pronounced by the bridegroom:—

ओम् इषे एकपदी भव सा मामनुव्रता भव विष्णुस्त्वा नयतु प्रजाम् विन्दावहै ते
सन्तु जरदष्टयः ॥ १ ॥

*Om Iṣe ekapadī bhava sā māmanuvratā bhava viṣṇustvā
nayatu prajāṃ vindāvahai te santu jaradaṣṭayah.*

- Par. 1. 8, 1.

Meaning:—Take the first step for the sake of 'anna'—means of health, nourishment and energy. Be with me in my vows and duties of the household Dharma. May Lord Vishnu who looks after all lead you on. May we beget children. and may our offspring enjoy a long and full life.

2nd step:

The second step with the following mantra:—

ओम् ऊर्जे द्विपदी भव सा मामनुव्रता भव विष्णुस्त्वा नयतु प्रजाम् विन्दावहै ते
सन्तु जरदष्टयः ॥२ ॥

*Om Ūrje dvipadī bhava sā māmanuvratā bhava viṣṇustvā
nayatu prajāṃ vindāvahai te santu jaradaṣṭayah.*

- Par. 1. 8, 2.

Meaning:—Take the second step for the sake of strength and power.

3rd step:

The third step with the following mantra:—

ओं रायस्पोषाय त्रिपदी भव सा मामनुव्रता भव विष्णुस्त्वा नयतु प्रजाम् विन्दावहै ते
सन्तु जरदष्टयः ॥ ३ ॥

*Om Rāyaspoṣāya tripadī bhava sā māmanuvratā bhava
viṣṇustvā nayatu prajāṃ vindāvahai te santu
jaradaṣṭayah.*

Meaning:—Take the third step for wealth and prosperity.

4th step:

The fourth step with the following mantra:—

ओं मयोभवाय चतुष्पदी भव सा मामनुव्रता भव विष्णुस्त्वा नयतु प्रजाम् विन्दावहै
ते सन्तु जरदष्टयः ॥ ४ ॥

*Om Mayobhavāya catuspadī bhava sā māmanuvratā
bhava viṣṇustvā nayatu prajāṃ vindāvahai te santu
jaradaṣṭayah.*

Meaning:—Take the fourth step for all happiness.

5th step.

The fifth step with the following mantra:—

ओं प्रजाभ्यः पञ्चपदी भव सा मामनुव्रता भव विष्णुस्त्वा प्रजाम् विन्दावहै ते सन्तु
जरदष्टयः ॥ ५ ॥

*Om Prajābhyah pañcapadī bhava sā māmanuvratā bhava
viṣṇustvā nayatu prajāṃ vindāvahai te santu
jaradaṣṭayah.*

Meaning:—Take the fifth step for progeny.

6th step.

The sixth step with the following mantra:—

ओम् ऋतुभ्यः षट्पदी भव सा मामनुव्रता भव विष्णुस्त्वा प्रजाम् विन्दावहै ते सन्तु
जरदष्टयः ॥ ६ ॥

*Om Ṛtubhyah ṣaṭpadī bhava sā māmanuvratā bhava
viṣṇustvā nayatu prajāṃ vindāvahai te santu
jaradaṣṭayah.*

Meaning:—Take this sixth step for seasons and our cycle of life in accordance with the flow of life for all seasons.

7th step.

The seventh step with the following mantra:—

ओं सखे सप्तपदी भव सा मामनुव्रता भव विष्णुस्त्वा प्रजाम् विन्दावहै ते सन्तु
जरदष्टयः ॥ ७ ॥

*Om Sakhe saptapadī bhava sā māmanuvratā bhava
viṣṇustvā nayatu prajāṃ vindāvahai te santu
jaradaṣṭayah.*

Meaning:—Take the seventh step for the sake of love and friendship in equality and equanimity.

Having completed the saptapadi, the bride and the bridegroom resume their seats, the knot remaining intact, the bride on the left.

Jalabhiṣecana: (Sprinkling water on the couple's forehead)

A senior person (from either family) with the jug of water should come up to the couple and sprinkle some water from the pitcher on the couple's forehead with the following four mantras:—

ओम् आपाँहि ष्टा मस्त्रयाँभुवस्ता नस्त्र ऊर्जे दधातन । महे रणाय चक्षसे ॥ १ ॥

Om Āpo hi ṣṭhā mayobhuvastā na ūrje dadhātana.

Mahe raṇāya cakṣase. Rg. 10,9,1

Meaning:—Waters are the source of happiness. May they support us with means of nourishment. May they bless us with form and beauty of a graceful personality.

ओम् यो वः शिवतमो रसस्तस्य भाजयतेह नः । उशतीरिव मातरः ॥ २ ॥

Om Yo vaḥ śivatamo rasastasya bhājayateha naḥ.

Uśāfiriva mātaraḥ. Rg. 10,9,2

Meaning:—May the most blissful soma sweet of waters be our share in life. May the waters bless us just as the mothers, overflowing with love for their children, bless them with nectar like milk. Rg. 10/9/1&2

ओम् तस्मा अरं गमाम वो यस्य क्षयाय जिन्वथ । आपो जनयथा च नः ॥ ३ ॥

Om Tasmā araṁ gamāma vo yasya kṣayāya jinvatha.

Āpo janayathā ca naḥ. Rg. 10,9,3

Meaning:—Waters help the growth and production of food by feeding the herbs and plants. May we get all the cereals and nourishments, and may the waters nourish us and our children!

ओम् आपः शिवाः शिवतमाः शान्ताः शान्ततमास्तास्ते कृण्वन्तु भेषजम् ॥ ४ ॥

*Om Āpaḥ śivāḥ śivatamāḥ śāntāḥ śāntatamāstāste
kṛṇvantu bheṣajam.* – P.G.S 1/8/5.

Meaning:—Wedded couple, “Waters” are most auspicious, most beneficent, most peaceful, and induce us to attain the highest peace in living. May they give you all health, happiness and peace.

Viewing the Sun with commitment as Dhruva and Arundhati:

The bride and bridegroom should then view the sun. and chant the following mantra:—

ओम् तच्चक्षुदेवहितं परस्ताच्छुक्रमुच्चरत् । पश्येम शरदः शतं जीवम शरदः
शतं शृणुयाम शरदः शतं प्र बवाम शरदः शतमदीनाः स्याम शरदः शतं
भूयश्च शरदः शतात् ॥ २४ ॥

*Aum Taccakṣurdevahitaṁ purastācchukram-uccarat.
Paśyema śaradaḥ śataṁ jīvema śaradaḥ śataṁ śṛṇuyāma
śaradaḥ śataṁ pra bravāma śaradaḥ śatamadīnāḥ syāma
śaradaḥ śataṁ bhūyaśca śaradaḥ śatāt.* Yaj. 36, 24. Par. I.
8, 7

Meaning:—The Lord is the Light. By this Light shines the Sun. He is the vision and the eye of the world. He existed pure before the beginning of this world and would exist after it is dissolved. May we see the light for a hundred years, live for a

hundred years, hear for a hundred years, speak for a hundred years, be independent and self-reliant for a hundred years, and even for more than a hundred years.

Commitment as Pole Star (Dhruva) and Arundhati:

Viewing the Pole Star (Dhruva) and viewing the Arundhati by the bride and the bridegroom is symbolic of constancy, stability and fidelity of the couple in love, marriage and the duties of the household

Pointing or referring to the Pole Star, the bridegroom says:—

ध्रुवं पश्य ॥

Dhruvam paśya!

Let us see and remember the Pole Star.
The bride views/thinks of the Pole Star and replies:—

पश्यामि ॥

Paśyāmi.

I see the Pole Star.
The meaning is that just as the Pole Star is constant, fixed and stable, so may and shall be the bride and the bridegroom, constant toward each other. Then the bride says:—

ओं ध्रुवमसि ध्रुवाहं पतिकुल भूयासम् (अमुष्य असौ) ॥

Om Dhruvamasi dhruvāham patikule bhūyāsam (Amuṣya Asau). - G.G.S. 2/3/9.

Meaning:—May you be constant. May I (name)....wife of (name)be constant in the family as you. Then the bridegroom, pointing or referring to the Arundhati star, says to the bride:—

अरुन्धतीं पश्य ॥

Arundhatīm paśya!

See the Arundhati star.
The bride replies:—

पश्यामि ॥

Paśyāmi.

Yes, I see/commit myself to you as Arundhati.

Then the bridegroom puts his hand on the bride's brow and says:—

ओम् अरुन्धत्यसि रुद्धाहमस्मि (अमुष्य असौ) ॥

Om Arundhatyasi ruddhāhamasmi (Amuṣya Asau).

– G.G.S. 2/3/10,

Meaning:—You are Arundhati, constant as she is. I too am bound to you (in vow to you for a life time.)

Touching the Bride's heart:

After viewing the Sun, Dhruva and Arundhati, the bride and the bridegroom come back in and take their seats. The bride-groom now touches the heart of the bride with his right hand with the following mantra:—

ओं मम व्रते ते हृदयं दधामि मम चित्तमनु चित्तं ते अस्तु ।

मम वाचमेकमना जुषस्व प्रजापतिष्ट्वा नियुनक्तु मह्यम् ॥

Om Mama vrate te hṛdayam dadhāmi mama cittamanu cittam te astu; Mama vācamekamanā juṣasva prajā-patiṣṭvā niyunaktu mahyam. – P.G.S. 1/8/8.

Meaning:—I take your heart unto mine in thought, word and action. May my mind be in perfect accord with yours. May our words also be in accord. May Lord Prajapati join you and me in perfect union.

Similarly the bride should touch the heart of the bridegroom with her right hand and pronounce the same mantra.

Ring Exchange, Mangala Sootra and Sindoor Dana:

The groom touches the bride's forehead with the following mantra:—

ओम् सुमङ्गलीरियं वधूरिमां समेत पश्यत ।

सौभाग्यमस्यै दत्वायाथास्तं वि परेतन ॥ ३३ ॥

Om Sumaṅgalīriyaṁ vadhūrimām sameta paśyata.

Saubhāgyamasyai dattvāyā'thāstaṁ vi paretana.

Rg. 10. 85. 33. Par. I, 8. 9.

Meaning:—This bride is auspicious, a harbinger of all good, see her one and all, admire, and bless her. Bless her with your best wishes that she be happy and prosperous in life. Bless her before you disperse.

The Blessing:

Then all should bless the couple with the following words:

“ओं सौभाग्यमस्तु । ओं शुभं भवतु ॥”

Om Saubhāgyamastu. Om Śubham bhavatu.

Meaning:—May goodfortune always bless you. May all be auspicious!

After this, the bride and the bridegroom should offer:

one *Sviṣṭakṛt Āhuti*, one *Prajāpati Āhuti* with ghee and the four *Vyāhṛti Āhuti*s.
And then three *Pūrṇāhuti*.

Sviṣṭakṛt Āhuti:-

ओं यदस्य कर्मणोऽत्यरीरिचं यद्वा न्यूनमिहाकरम् । अग्निष्टत्स्विष्ट-कृद्विद्यात्सर्व
स्विष्टं सुहुतं करोतु मे । अग्रये स्विष्टकृते सुहुतहुते सर्व-प्रायश्चित्ताहुतीनां कामानां
समर्धयित्रे सर्वान्नः कामान्तसमर्धय स्वाहा ॥ इदमग्रये स्विष्टकृते इदन्न मम ॥ ६ ॥

*Aum Yadasya karmaṇo'tyarīricam yadvā nyūnamihā-
karam; Agniṣṭatsviṣṭakṛdvidyāt sarvam sviṣṭam suhutam
karotu me, Agnaye sviṣṭakṛte suhutamhute
sarvaprāyaścittā-huṭinām kāmānām samardhayitre
sarvānnaḥ kāmānt-samardhaya svāhā. Idamagnaye*

sviṣṭakṛte - Idamna mama. - A.G.S 1/10/22. P.G.S. 2/11. *Shatapath*
14, 9, 4,24

Prajāpati Āhuti:

ओं प्रजापतये स्वाहा ॥ इदं प्रजापतये इदन्न मम ॥ ५ ॥

Om Prajāpataye svāhā. - Idam Prajāpataye Idamna
mama

Pūrṇa Āhuti:

ओं सर्व वै पूर्णस्वाहा ।

Aum Sarvamvai pūrṇam svāhā.