

अन्त्येष्टि संस्कार

Antyeṣṭi Saṁskāra: (*The last rites*):

The Critical Part: The *Antyeṣṭi Saṁskāra* of the body is the last sacrament. After this, nothing remains to do. This sankara is also known as ‘*Naramedha*’. ‘*Pitṛmedha*’, ‘*Narayaga* or *Purushayaga*. It is also called the ‘cremation/ceremony’. The story of the human life begins with ‘*Garbhādhāna*’ and ends with cremation. Hence the Yajurveda says that the body, having passed through the morning excitement, declines and the evening of human existence ends in ash—‘*Bhasmantām shariram*’.

Antyeṣṭi Saṁskāra: The Ritual part:

Materials required:—I. Materials for the washing and anointing the body: soap, sandal paste or such other fragrant paste. If the dead is a male, men should prepare the body for the last rite. If the dead is a female, the women should prepare it. Washing and anointing should be done carefully and with reverence.

In the west, this all is done by the funeral home.

Materials to cover the body:—Fresh clothes, four metres of white cloth for the shroud, sindoor (if the dead is a woman whose husband is alive), one upper cover, i.e., a shawl which should be of cotton preferably.

Materials for cremation:—Four quintals of dry wood, at least two kg. of ghee, ten kg. of *sāmagri*, sandal *samidhās* at least one kg., 100 grms of camphor, one lamp of ghee, one box of matches to light the fire, and a disposable stretcher for the body.

Preparation for the cremation:—Remove the upper shawl and dispose it of at the cremation ground. Put the dead body on the pyre, feet in the south-east or south west direction and head in the north-west or northeast direction.

Starting the fire:—The eldest son, successor, the husband (in the case of a woman), a close friend or relative, a disciple (in the case of a *Sanyāsi*) should light the ghee-lamp, then light the camphor with the lamp, then light the pyre from the

head to the feet going round it in circumambulation, keeping the pyre on the right. The pyre should be lighted at various places so that the fire spreads quickly and effectively, then offer five *āhutis* with ghee with the following mantras:—

ओं अमग्नये स्वाहा ॥ १ ॥

Om Agnaye svāhā.

ओं सोमाय स्वाहा ॥ २ ॥

Om Somāya svāhā.

ओं लोकाय स्वाहा ॥ ३ ॥

Om Lokāya svāhā.

ओं अनुमतये स्वाहा ॥ ४ ॥

Om Anumataye svāhā.

ओं स्वर्गाय लोकाय स्वाहा ॥ ५ ॥

Om Svargāya lokāya svāhā.

Ash. 4, 3, 25-6.

Meaning:—In these mantras, *āhutis* are offered to Agni (fire). *Soma* (water), *Loka* (this world), *anumati* (the earth), and *Svarga Loka* (the other world). *Svāhā* is for sincerity, commitment and thanks-giving. Agni and Soma are closely connected principles of life and the entire creation. We may call them two complementary aspects of world/creative energy—the positive and the negative as in electrical energy, hot and cold, fire and water, ambition and peace of mind, the physical as well as the mental world is an integrated balance of these two. We live in this world in the same state of balanced activity. Hence *lokāya svāhā.* and *anumataye svāhā* in relation to this world and this earth. We live in harmony with the world and the earth. Hence also the happiness of this world and, depending upon this world, happiness of the next—for life, after all, is a continuity—in the cycle of existence.

Āhutis with ghee and Sāmagri:

Now four persons have to offer *āhutis* of ghee with the following seventeen Vedic mantras. Say 'Om' in the beginning and 'Svāhā' at the end of the mantra. With *Svāhā*, offer the *āhuti* into the pyre.

ओं सूर्यं चक्षुर्गच्छतु वातमात्मा द्यां च गच्छ पृथिवीं च धर्मणा ।

अपो वा गच्छ यदि तत्र ते हितमोषधीषु प्रति तिष्ठा शरीरैः स्वाहा ॥ ३ ॥

Om Sūryam cakṣur-gacchatu vātamātmā dyām ca gaccha pṛthivīm ca dharmanā. Apo vā gaccha yadi tatra te hitam-oṣadhīṣu prati tiṣṭhā śarīraiḥ svāhā. Rg. 10, 16, 3

Meaning:—O departed soul, may your eye (sense of sight) go back to the sun, i.e.. light from where it came, may the ātmā/body go to vayu, or the middle region or the earth or the waters, if that be your lot, according to your karma and the law of nature, or may you stay with all parts of your body among the green vegetation.

ओं अजो भागस्तपसा तं तपस्व तं ते शोचिस्तपतु तं ते अर्चिः ।

यास्ते शिवास्तन्वा जातवेदस्ताभिर्वहेन सुकृतामु लोकम् स्वाहा ॥ ४ ॥

Om Ajo bhāgastapasā taṁ tapasva taṁ te śocistapatu taṁ te arcīḥ. Yāste śivāstanvo jātavedastābhir-vahainam sukṛtāmu lokam svāhā. -Rg. 10/16/4.

Meaning:—O man, the soul part of you is unborn and eternal, temper it in the crucibles of austerity and discipline. May the knowledge of God purify it. May the light of God brighten it. Lord of fire, invest this soul with the most blessed body materials under your command and, with that body, take him to the world of the blessed men of good deeds!

The prayer is for a good future for the soul, and, at the same time, it is an exhortation to the departed soul to shine with good acts and thereby win the blessings of God.

ओं अव सृज पुनरग्रे पितृभ्यो यस्त आहुतश्चरति स्वधाभिः ।

आयुर्वसान् उप वेतु शेषः सं गच्छतां तन्वा जातवेदः स्वाहा ॥ ५ ॥

Om Ava sṛja punaragne pitṛbhyo yasta āhutaścarati svadhābhiḥ. Āyurvasāna upa vetu śeṣaḥ saṁ gacchatāṁ tanvā jātavedaḥ svāhā svāhā.-Rg. 10/16/5.

Meaning:—Lord Jataveda, this man who has been consigned to the flames with āhuti, moves around in search of the next life. Save and protect him and let him be reborn for his parents-to-be. May he, the survivor, with your grace, with a new body, endowed with long life, rejoin our humanity.

ओं अग्नेर्वम परि गोभिर्व्ययस्व सं प्रोणुष्व पीवसा मेदसा च ।

नेत्वा धृष्णुर्हरसा जहृषाणो दधृग्विधक्ष्यन्पर्यङ्घयाते स्वाहा ॥ ७ ॥

Om Agnervarma pari gobhirvyayasva sam prornuṣva pīvasā medasā ca. Net tvā dhr̥ṣṇurharasā jarhr̥-ṣāṇo dadhr̥gvidha-kṣyan paryañkhayāte svāhā . -Rg. 10/16/7.

Meaning:—Envelope of fire, reduce the body to ashes with your flames fed with ghee and *sāmagri*. The same power, Lord Agni, may vest the soul with a body, with flesh and bone and marrow. The fire, bright and burning with heat, feeding happily on ghee and other fuel, which consumes all body, does not encircle you, the atman.

ओं यं त्वमग्ने समदहस्तमु निर्वीपया पुनः ।

क्रियाम्बत्र रोहतु पाकदूर्वा व्यल्कशा स्वाहा ॥ १३ ॥

Om Yam tvamagne samadahastamu nirvāpayā punaḥ.

Kiyāmbvatra rohatu pākadūrvā vyalkaśā svāhā. Rg. 10, 16, 13.

Meaning:—Fire, you have reduced the body to ashes, let it cool. May some water be sprinkled on the pyre to extinguish the fire. And may lush grass cover the spot. Rg. 10, 16, 13.

ओं परेयिवांसं प्रवतो महीरनु बहुभ्यः पन्थामनुपस्पशानम् ।

वैवस्वतं संगमनं जनानां यमं राजानं हविषा दुवस्य स्वाहा ॥ १ ॥

Om Pareyivānsaṁ pravato mahīranu bahubhyaḥ panthām-anupaspaśānam. Vaivasvataṁ saṅgamaṇaṁ janānāṁ yamaṁ rājānaṁ haviṣā duvasya svāhā. Rg. 10, 14, 1

Meaning:—O man of virtue, worship the Lord ruler of the world, Yama, who blesses the doers of good with regions of bliss, who shows the right path to all the human beings. Lord of the Sun leads human beings to their destination according to their karma. Serve and worship Him with faith and havi.

ओं यमो नो गातुं प्रथमो विवेद नैषा गव्यूतिरपभर्तवा उ ।

यत्रा नः पूर्वे पितरः परेयुरेना जज्ञानाः पथ्यानु अनु स्वाः स्वाहा ॥ २ ॥

Om Yamo no gātuṁ prathamo viveda naiṣā gavyūtir-apabhartavā u. Yatrā naḥ pūrve pitaraḥ pareyur-enā jajñānāḥ pathyā anu svāḥ svāhā. Rg. 10,14, 2

Meaning:—Lord Yama, prime ruler of the universe, knows the paths we tread, or ought to tread, nor can this path be ever evaded or violated. That is the path which,

in earlier times, our forefathers followed. We too, who are born and know, should follow the same path as our own.

ओं मातली क्वैर्यमो अङ्गिरोभिर्बृहस्पतिर्ऋक्वभिर्वावृधानः ।

याँश्च देवा वावृधुर्ये च देवान्स्वाहान्ये स्वधयान्ये मदन्ति स्वाहा ॥ ३ ॥

*Om Mātālī kavyairyamo aṅgirobhir-br̥haspatir-ṛkvabhir-vāvṛdhānaḥ.
Yāñśca devā vāvṛdhurye ca devāntsvāhānye svadhayānye madanti svāhā.*

Rg. 10, 14, 3

Meaning:—The man who knows the secret of speech is pleased with poetry, the man dedicated to law is pleased with the observance of discipline, the man of knowledge is pleased with meaningful utterances such as hymns of the Veda. Those whom the men of virtue please and advance, and those who please and advance the men of virtue, they feel pleased, some of them, with words of appreciation, while others are pleased with gifts.

ओं इमं यम प्रस्तरमा हि सीदाऽङ्गिरोभिः पितृभिः संविदानः ।

आ त्वा मन्त्राः कविशस्ता वहन्त्वेना राजन्हविषा मादयस्व स्वाहा ॥ ४ ॥

*Om Imaṁ yama prastaramā hi sīdā'ṅgirobhiḥ pitṛbhiḥ samvidānaḥ. Ā tvā
mantrāḥ kaviśastā vahantvenā rājan haviṣā mādayasva svāhā.* Rg.10, 14,

4

Meaning:—O man of discipline and self-control, shining unto all once again, come and occupy this noble seat or the *yajña* of existence and enjoy in unison with the company of the men of virtue and parents and other seniors. May the hymns of knowledge chanted by the scholars and saints reach you, and may you please the gods of *yajña* with havi offering.

Life is a great gift, a field of action and enjoyment. It is worth living in the company of the wise and the leanned.

ओं अङ्गिरोभिरा गहि यज्ञियेभिर्यम वैरूपैरिह मादयस्व ।

विवस्वन्तं हुवे यः पिता तेऽस्मिन्यज्ञे बर्हिष्या निषद्य स्वाहा ॥ ५ ॥

*Om Aṅgirobhirā gahi yajñiyebhiryama vairūpairiha mādayasva.
Vivasvantam huve yaḥ pitā te'smin yajñe barhiṣyā niṣadya svāhā.* Rg. 10,

14, 5

Meaning:—O man, enjoying your place in the cycle of universal law, come back with all the various kinds of powers and potentialities of a creative and

constructive life, and occupy your place. I invoke your father, the Lord, to inspire your heart in this noble work, come and spread joy all round.

ओं प्रेहि प्रेहि प॒थिभिः पू॒र्व्येभि॒र्यत्रा॑ नः पू॒र्वे पि॒तरः परे॒युः ।

उ॒भा राजा॑ना स्व॒धया॒ मद॑न्ता य॒मं प॑श्यासि वरु॒णं च दे॒वम् स्वाहा ॥ ७ ॥

*Om Prehi prehi pathibhiḥ pūrvyebhīratrā naḥ pūrve pitarāḥ pareyuh.
Ubhā rājānā svadhayā madantā yamaṁ paśyāsi varuṇaṁ ca devam svāhā*

Rg. 10, 14, 7

Meaning:—Soul of man, follow, follow the eternal path which our forefathers have followed since time immemorial. Both you and your parents, shining and enjoying life with plenty, spread the joy around. Realise the vision and feel the ecstasy of the vision of Lord Yama and Varuna, Lord Ruler of the universe and giver of bliss.

ओं सं गच्छ॑स्व पि॒तृभिः सं य॒मेने॑ष्टापू॒र्तेन॑ पर॒मे व्यो॑मन् ।

ह्रि॒त्वाया॑वद्यं पु॒नर॑स्तमेहि सं गच्छ॑स्व त॒न्वा सु॒वर्चीः स्वाहा ॥ ८ ॥

*Om Saṁ gacchasva pitṛbhiḥ saṁ yameneṣṭāpūrtena parame vyoman.
Hitvāyāvadyaṁ punarastamehi saṁ gacchasva tanvā suvarcāḥ svāhā.*

Rg. 10, 14, 8

Meaning:—Soul of man, go and move with your future parents and forefathers, go and be with the Lord Ruler of the universe, go and be with the Lord Supreme—doing all that is desirable for yourself and others. Having given up or exhausted the undesirable, get back to the body. Go and live, doing noble work with your new lustrous body.

ओं अपे॑त॒ वी॒त॒ वि च॑ सर्प॒तातो॑ऽस्मा ए॒तं पि॒तरो॑ लो॒कम॑क्रन् ।

अहो॑भिर्द्वि॒र्क्तु॑भिर्व्य॒क्तं य॒मो द॑दात्यव॒सान॑मस्मै स्वाहा ॥ ९ ॥

Om Apeta vīta vi ca sarpatāto'smā etaṁ pitaro lokamakran.

Ahobhir-adbhir-aktubhir-vyaktaṁ yamo dadātyavasānamasmai svāhā .

Rg. 10, 14, 9

Meaning:—Soul of man, depart from here. Go to your destination. Move around there. The forefathers of the created world made it for the creatures of the Lord. For them does the Lord Ruler of the universe, yama, make the day and the night, the waters and the various means and abodes for the living beings to work, enjoy and rest under His care.

ओं यमाय सोमं सुनुत यमाय जुहुता हविः ।

यमं ह यज्ञो गच्छत्यग्निदूतो अरंकृतः स्वाहा ॥ १३ ॥

Om Yamāya somam sunuta yamāya juhutā haviḥ.

Yamam ha yajño gacchatyagnidūto aramkṛtaḥ svāhā.

Rg. 10, 14, 13

Meaning:—Take the best of materials from nature for Yama, the Lord Ruler of creation, and offer them to Yama, the Lord of law, through yajna. For the *yajña*, well performed, sends up everything to Yama through the Lord's celestial agent, Agni the Fire.

The point to consider here is, what is the Soma, the havi, the materials being offered to Yama through fire? Apart from ghee, fragrant *sāmagri*, and the fire wood—sandal included—we are offering the last remains of the departed man. For this reason, antyesti is called ‘*Naramedhā yajña*’ as Swami Dayananda has emphatically asserted.

The mantra is a prayer to Yama to accept this offering through the fire.

ओं यमाय घृतवद्धुर्विर्जुहोत प्र च तिष्ठत ।

स नो देवेष्वा यमदीर्घमायुः प्र जीवसे स्वाहा ॥ १४ ॥

Om Yamāya ghṛtavaddhvir-juhota pra ca tiṣṭhata.

Sa no deveṣvā yamadīrghamāyuh pra jīvase svāhā.

Rg. 10, 14, 14

Meaning:—Offer *āhutis* of materials like ghee for the atmosphere and the Lord Ruler of nature, Yama, and there is the life of service to the Lord. May the Lord of all the powers grant us long life in order to live fully and intelligently!

ओं यमाय मधुमत्तमं राज्ञे हव्यं जुहोतन ।

इदं नम ऋषिभ्यः पूर्वजेभ्यः पूर्वेभ्यः पथिकृद्भ्यः स्वाहा ॥ १५ ॥

Om Yamāya madhumattamam rājñe havyaṁ juhotana.

Idam nama ṛṣibhyaḥ pūrvajebhyaḥ pūrvebhyaḥ pathikṛdbhyaḥ svāhā .

Rg. 10. 14. 15,

Meaning:—Offer the best and the sweetest materials in yajna to the Lord Yama, the almighty Ruler of nature and of life and death. Salutations to the earliest seers, our forefathers who showed the path of right and light for us with their thought and example. Rg. 10. 14. 1-5, 7-9. 13-15.

ओं कृष्णः श्वेतोऽरुषो यामो अस्य ब्रध्न ऋज उत शोणो यशस्वान् ।

हिरण्यरूपं जनिता जजान स्वाहा ॥ ९ ॥

Om Kṛṣṇaḥ śveto'ruṣo yāmo asya bradhna ṛjra uta śoṇo yaśasvān.
Hiranyarūpaṁ janitā jajāna svāhā. Rg. 10, 20, 9.

Meaning:—The Lord God, creator of all, has created this vehicle (the body or the world) in which the human beings live and move. It is black, white and bright intellectually—it is static and stable because of *Tamas*, active and dynamic because of *Rajas*, the red, and pure and intelligent because of *Sattva*, white with purity and intellect. It is immense, moving on the path of Dharma, though slowly yet steadily, worthy of honour and beautiful, grand and glorious, glory to the Lord creator.

Having offered these seventeen *āhuti*s with ghee and *sāmagri* or some sweet preparation, all the four should offer 63 *āhuti*s with ghee and *sāmagri* and some other preparation with the following 63 mantras:—

ओं प्राणेभ्यः सार्धिपतिकेभ्यः स्वाहा ॥ १ ॥

Om Prāṇebhyaḥ sādhipatikebhyaḥ svāhā. - Yaju. 39/2/1.

This for the breath of energy and the soul.

ओं पृथिव्यै स्वाहा ॥ २ ॥

Om Pṛthivyai svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for the earth.

ओं अग्नये स्वाहा ॥ ३ ॥

Om Agnaye svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for the fire, the main *devatā* for the earth.

ओं अन्तरिक्षाय स्वाहा ॥ ४ ॥

Om Antarikṣāya svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for the atmospheric region.

ओं वायवे स्वाहा ॥ ५ ॥

Om Vāyave svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for the air.

ओं दिवे स्वाहा ॥ ६ ॥

Om Dive svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for the outer solar space.

ओं सूर्याय स्वाहा ॥ ७ ॥

Om Sūryāya svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for the sun.

ओं दिग्भ्यः स्वाहा ॥ ८ ॥

Om Dighbyaḥ svāhā. – Yaju. 39/2.

This *āhuti* is for the different directions.

ओं चन्द्राय स्वाहा ॥ ९ ॥

Om Candrāya svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for the moon.

ओं नक्षत्रेभ्यः स्वाहा ॥ १० ॥

Om Nakṣatrebhyaḥ svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for the stars.

ओं अद्भ्यः स्वाहा ॥ ११ ॥

Om Adbhyaḥ svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for the waters.

ओं वरुणाय स्वाहा ॥ १२ ॥

Om Varuṇāya svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for the oceans.

ओं नाभ्यै स्वाहा ॥ १३ ॥

Om Nābhyai svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for the navel.

ओं पूताय स्वाहा ॥ १४ ॥

Om Pūtāya svāhā.

This is *āhuti* for the power that purifies.

ओं वाचे स्वाहा ॥ १५ ॥

Om Vāce svāhā. – Yaju. 39/3.

This *āhuti* is for vocal organs.

ओं प्राणाय स्वाहा ॥ १६ ॥

Om Prāṇāya svāhā.

ओं प्राणाय स्वाहा ॥ १७ ॥

Om Prāṇāya svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for life forces.

ओं चक्षुषे स्वाहा ॥ १८ ॥

Om Cakṣuṣe svāhā.

ओं चक्षुषे स्वाहा ॥ १८ ॥

Om Cakṣuṣe svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for both eyes.

ओं श्रोत्राय स्वाहा ॥ २० ॥

Om Śrotrāya svāhā.

ओं श्रोत्राय स्वाहा ॥ २१ ॥

Om Śrotrāya svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for both ears.

May these go to their sources and come again after being purified!

ओं लोमभ्यः स्वाहा ॥ २२ ॥

Om Lomabhyaḥ svāhā.

ओं लोमभ्यः स्वाहा ॥ २३ ॥

Om Lomabhyaḥ svāhā. – Yaju. 39/10.

This *āhuti* is for hair and nails.

ओं त्वचे स्वाहा ॥ २४ ॥

Om Tvace svāhā.

ओं त्वचे स्वाहा ॥ २५ ॥

Om Tvace svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for the skin.

ओं लोहिताय स्वाहा ॥ २६ ॥

Om Lohitāya svāhā.

ओं लोहिताय स्वाहा ॥ २७ ॥

Om Lohitāya svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for the blood.

ओं मेदोभ्यः स्वाहा ॥ २८ ॥

Om Medobhyaḥ svāhā.

ओं मेदोभ्यः स्वाहा ॥ २९ ॥

Om Medobhyaḥ svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for the fat.

ओं मा॒ंश॑से॒भ्यः॒ स्वाहा॑ ॥ ३० ॥

Om Mānsebhyaḥ svāhā.

ओं मा॒ंश॑से॒भ्यः॒ स्वाहा॑ ॥ ३१ ॥

Om Mānsebhyaḥ svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for the flesh.

ओं स्ना॒व॑भ्यः॒ स्वाहा॑ ॥ ३२ ॥

Om Snāvabhyaḥ svāhā.

ओं स्ना॒व॑भ्यः॒ स्वाहा॑ ॥ ३३ ॥

Om Snāvabhyaḥ svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for the veins and the arteries.

ओं अ॒स्थ॑भ्यः॒ स्वाहा॑ ॥ ३४ ॥

Om Asthabhyaḥ svāhā.

ओं अ॒स्थ॑भ्यः॒ स्वाहा॑ ॥ ३५ ॥

Om Asthabhyaḥ svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for the bones.

ओं म॒ज्ज॑भ्यः॒ स्वाहा॑ ॥ ३६ ॥

Om Majjabhyaḥ svāhā.

ओं म॒ज्ज॑भ्यः॒ स्वाहा॑ ॥ ३७ ॥

Om Majjabhyaḥ svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for bone marrow.

ओं रेत॑से॒ स्वाहा॑ ॥ ३८ ॥

Om Retase svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for the organs of reproduction.

ओं पा॒य॒वे॒ स्वाहा॑ ॥ ३९ ॥

Om Pāyave svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for the organs of excretion.

ओं आ॒या॒साय॑ स्वाहा॑ ॥ ४० ॥

Om Āyāsāya svāhā. – Yaju. 39/11.

This *āhuti* is for right effort in other births.

ओं प्रा॒या॒साय॑ स्वाहा॑ ॥ ४१ ॥

Om Prāyāsāya svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for special effort in other births.

ओं संयासाय स्वाहा ॥ ४२ ॥

Om Samyāsāya svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for joint effort in other births.

ओं वियासाय स्वाहा ॥ ४३ ॥

Om Viyāsāya svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for proper effort to acquire various desired objects in other births.

ओं उद्यासाय स्वाहा ॥ ४४ ॥

Om Udyāsāya svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for proper effort to improve in other births.

ओं शुचे स्वाहा ॥ ४५ ॥

Om Śuce svāhā.

This *āhuti* is to attain purity in other births.

ओं शोचते स्वाहा ॥ ४६ ॥

Om Śocate svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for those who are mourning.

ओं शोचमानाय स्वाहा ॥ ४७ ॥

Om Śocamānāya svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for those who are in grief.

ओं शोकाय स्वाहा ॥ ४८ ॥

Om Śokāya svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for those in sadness.

ओं तपसे स्वाहा ॥ ४९ ॥

Om Tapase svāhā. – Yaju. 39/12.

This *āhuti* is for an industrious life.

ओं तप्यते स्वाहा ॥ ५० ॥

Om Tapyate svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for the ability to face dualities in life.

ओं तप्यमानाय स्वाहा ॥ ५१ ॥

Om Tapyamānāya svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for the ability for special industrious life.

ओं तप्ताय स्वाहा ॥ ५२ ॥

Om Taptāya svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for the hard working body.

ओं घर्माय स्वाहा ॥ ५३ ॥

Om Gharmāya svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for the day.

ओं निष्कृत्यै स्वाहा ॥ ५४ ॥

Om Niṣkṛtyai svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for facing difficulties caused by others.

ओं प्रार्यश्चित्त्यै स्वाहा ॥ ५५ ॥

Om Prāyaścittyai svāhā.

This *āhuti* is to shun evil deeds.

ओं भेषजाय स्वाहा ॥ ५६ ॥

Om Bheṣajāya svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for peace.

ओं यमाय स्वाहा ॥ ५७ ॥

Om Yamāya svāhā. – Yaju. 39/13.

This *āhuti* is for the Just and Merciful God.

ओं अन्तकाय स्वाहा ॥ ५८ ॥

Om Antakāya svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for the Dissolver of the created objects.

ओं मृत्यवे स्वाहा ॥ ५९ ॥

Om Mr̥tyave svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for the Reliever/Releaser of the soul from the body.

ओं ब्रह्मणे स्वाहा ॥ ६० ॥

Om Brahmaṇe svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for the Force that causes growth.

ओं ब्रह्महत्यायै स्वाहा ॥ ६१ ॥

Om Brahmahatyāyai svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for relief from disobedience to the Vedic

commands.

ओं विश्वेभ्यो देवेभ्यः स्वाहा ॥ ६२ ॥

Om Viśvebhyo devebhyaḥ svāhā.

This *āhuti* is for all the noble physical and spiritual forces.

ओं द्यावापृथिवीभ्यां स्वाहा ॥ ६३ ॥

Om Dyāvāpṛthivībhyām svāhā.

Yaj. 39. 1-3; 10; 10, 14.

(This is for the heaven and the earth.)

Continue the *āhutis* with this mantra until the body is totally reduced ' to ashes. With these sixty three mantras *āhutis* have to be offered by all the four persons separately. All these mantras are mantras of the last farewell—as if the departing soul is expressing its gratitude to all the powers, forces and the various shades of life and death, looking past and into the future. Atharv.18,2:7, 14-17, 19, 27, 32, 33, 56

Ten Āhutis by four persons:

ओं सूर्यं चक्षुषा गच्छ वातमात्मना दिवं च गच्छ पृथिवीं च धर्माभिः ।

अपो वा गच्छ यदि तत्र ते हि तिमोषधीषु प्रति तिष्ठा शरौरः स्वाहास्त्र ॥ ७ ॥

Om Sūryam cakṣuṣā gaccha vātamātmanā divam ca gaccha pṛthivīm ca dharmabhiḥ. Apo vā gaccha yadi tatra te hitam-oṣadhīṣu prati tiṣṭhā śarairiḥ svāhā.

Ath. 18,2,7

Meaning:—Departing soul go to the sun with your eye, power of vision; go to the atmosphere in the middle region with your pranas, vital air and energy; if according to your *karmās*, you have to go to the regions of the light or the region of the earth, go there. If according to the law of the Lord, you have to go to the region of vegetation, then go to the waters, and, through the waters, go to vegetation and then come back to the human form.

ओं सोम एकेभ्यः पवते घृतमेक उपासते ।

येभ्यो मधु प्रधावति तांश्चिदेवापि गच्छतात् स्वाहास्त्र ॥ १४ ॥

Om Soma ekebhyaḥ pavate gṛtameka upāsate.

Yebhyo madhu pradhāvati tāṃścidevāpi gacchatāt svāhā.

Ath. 18,2,14

Meaning:—Departing soul, certain people love the Soma, the purifying, some love things like ghee, others love sweets like honey. All these materials are offered here in *yajña*, they are all atomized by fire and rise up. May they help you to go to the region of your choice (i.e., according to your performance and the fruit thereof). May your next life be replete with sweetness and joy.

ओं ये चित्पूर्वा ऋतसाता ऋतजाता ऋतावृधः ।

ऋषीस्तपस्वतो यम तपोजाँ अपि गच्छतात् स्वाहास्त्र ॥ १५ ॥

Om Ye citpūrva ṛtasātā ṛtajātā ṛtāvṛdhaḥ.

Ṛṣīnstapasvato yama tapojāñ api gacchatāt svāhā. Ath. 18,2,15

Meaning:—Departing soul, many there have been who proclaimed the truth, and who enlightened their intelligence with a vision of the truth. May you also in the future take to the path taken by such men of vision and truth.

ओं तपसा ये अनाधृष्यास्तपसा ये स्व र्ययुः ।

तपो ये चक्रिरे महस्तांश्चिदेवापि गच्छतात् स्वाहास्त्र ॥ १६ ॥

Om Tapasā ye anādhr̥ṣyāstapasā ye svaryayuh.

Tapo ye cakrire mahastāṁścidevāpi gacchatāt svāhā.

Ath. 18,2,16

Meaning:—Departed soul, may you take the path of those who lived by their virtue and discipline, never to be subdued by fear or sin, who enjoyed earthly happiness and went to the regions of happiness after death by virtue of their tapas, and who set standards of a good life by virtue of their obedience to the Lord. May you be blessed as they!

ओं ये युध्यन्ते प्रधनेषु शूरासो ये तनूत्यजः ।

ये वा सहस्रदक्षिणास्तांश्चिदेवापि गच्छतात् स्वाहास्त्र ॥ १७ ॥

Om Ye yudhyante pradhaneṣu śūrāso ye tanūtyajah.

Ye vā sahasradakṣiṇāstāṁścidevāpi gacchatāt svāhā.

Ath. 18,2,17

Meaning:—Departed soul. May you be blessed as they who fought in the battles of life to the last drop of their blood and won glory, as those who gave away their all in a hundred forms in *yajña* and in the service of God and His children. May you go their way.

ओं स्योनास्मै भव पृथिव्यनृक्षरा निवेशनी ।

यच्छास्मै शर्म सप्रथाः स्वाहास्त्र ॥ १९ ॥

Om Syonāsmāi bhava pṛthivyanṛkṣarā niveśanī.

Yacchāsmāi śarma saprathāḥ svāhā. Ath. 18,2,19

Meaning:—Mother Earth, be to this departed soul a place of rest without thorns, be good and kind to give him peace in abundance, bless him with happiness (if he happens to take rebirth).

ओं अपेमं जीवा अरुधन्गृहेभ्यस्तं निर्वहत परि ग्रामादितः ।

मृत्युर्यमस्यासीद् दूतः प्रचेता असून्पितृभ्यो गमयां चकार स्वाहास्त्र ॥ २७ ॥

Om Apemaṁ jīvā arudhan-gṛhebhyaṣtāṁ nirvahata pari grāmāditāḥ.

Mṛtyuryamasyāsīd dūtaḥ pracetā asūn-pitṛbhyo gamayāṁ cakāra svāhā.

Ath. 18,2,27

Meaning:—The pranas have taken out the soul from its material abode, it is not to come back to the body. O *prāṇās*, carry it away from the body, its place of habitation so far. Death was a wise agent of Lord yama and has carried the pranas to the moon or the path of the forefathers.

ओं यमः परोऽ वरो विवस्वास्ततः परं नाति पश्यामि किं चन ।

यमे अध्वरो अधि मे निविष्टो भुवो विवस्वानन्वा-ततान स्वाहास्त्र ॥ ३२ ॥

Om Yamaḥ paro'varo vivasvānstataḥ paraṁ nāti paśyāmi kiṁ cana. Yame

adhvaro adhi me niviṣṭo bhuvo vivasvānānvā-tatāna svāhā. Ath. 18,2,32

Meaning:—The Lord Yama, Ordainer of the universe, bright as the sun, is closest and the farthest, I see nothing greater or beyond. All my good deeds are dedicated to Him. He is the power that has created and also pervades this universe.

ओं अपागूहन्नमृतां मर्त्येभ्यः कृत्वा सवर्णामदधुविवस्वते ।

उताश्विनावभर्द्यत्तदासीदजहादु द्वा मिथुना सर्ण्यूः स्वाहास्त्र ॥ ३३ ॥

Om Apāgūhannamṛtāṁ martyebhyaḥ kṛtvā savarṇā-madadhur-vivasvate.

Utāśvināvabharad-yattadāsīd-ajahādu dvā mithunā saraṇyūḥ svāhā. Ath.

18,2,33

Meaning:—The Lord released the eternal energy and, having made it various, gifted it to the sun for the emergence of living forms. Then whatever creation there

was, it received the twofold vitality of *prāṇa* and *apāna*, and the dynamic nature then produced the twofold male and female principles for further procreation.

Life then is a creative process and death is a logical implication of it, a simultaneous fact of existence. Why then worry?

ओं इमौ युनज्मि ते वह्नी असुनीताय वोढवे ।

ताभ्यां यमस्य सादनं समितीश्चाव गच्छतात् स्वाहास्त्र ॥ ५६ ॥

Om Imau yunajmi te vahnī asunītāya voḍhave.

Tābyāṃ yamasya sādanaṃ samitīścāva gacchatāt svāhā.

Ath. 18,2,56

Meaning:—To carry you to your next destination, departed soul, I join the two vital airs, *prāṇa* and *apāna*, and ordain that with these you go to the region of justice and may you enjoy noble company by virtue of your performance. Ath. 18; 2; 7, 14-17, 19, 27, 32, 33, 56.

26 Āhutiḥ:

Having offered the ten ahutis as above, the four persons should offer 26 ahutis with the following mantras:—

ओं अग्नये रयिमते स्वाहा ॥ १ ॥

Om Agnaye rayimate svāhā.

Meaning:—This is for agni which is rich in wealth. (This is the last farewell of the departed soul to Agni which blessed him with so much of wealth in his life.

ओं पुरुषस्य सयावर्यपेदघानि मृज्महे ।

यथा नो अत्र नापरः पुरा जरस आयति स्वाहा ॥ २ ॥

Om Puruṣasya sayāvaryaḥ pedaghāni mṛjmahe;

Yathā no atra nāparaḥ purā jarasa āyati svāhā.

— Tait. Aranyaka.6/ Anu.1.

Meaning:—Appetencies of the departed soul (which go with the subtle body), we cleanse ourselves by removing our sins, so that, here in life, till the ripest old age, no sin should soil us.

ओं य एतस्य पथो गोप्तारस्तेभ्यः स्वाहा ॥ ३ ॥

Om Ya etasya patho goptārastebhyaḥ svāhā.

Meaning:—This is for the protectors of the path of this departed soul. (These protectors are vayu, i.e., air, the rays of the moon or sun, etc., depending upon the karma and samskaras of the soul.)

ओं य एतस्य पथो रक्षितारस्तेभ्यः स्वाहा ॥ ४ ॥

Om Ya etasya patho rakṣitārastebhyaḥ svāhā.

Meaning:—This is for those who are the guardians of the path of this departed soul. (Note that there is protection of various sorts, preservation, conservation, protection and so on.)

ओं य एतस्य पथोऽभिरक्षितारस्तेभ्यः स्वाहा ॥ ५ ॥

Om Ya etasya patho'bhiraṣitārastebhyaḥ svāhā.

Meaning:—This is for all those who are the all-round protectors of the paths of this departed soul—

Note:—No one knows by direct experience the paths of the departed soul. They are all hidden forces of nature working under the rule of the Almighty God. These ahutis are for the Lord and for all His laws and natural forces.

ओं ख्यात्रे स्वाहा ॥ ६ ॥

Om Khyātre svāhā.

Meaning:—This is for the promoter of the virtue and fame of the departed soul.

ओं अपाख्यात्रे स्वाहा ॥ ७ ॥

Om Apākhyātre svāhā.

Meaning:—This is for the protection of the departed soul against the evil speaker.

ओं अभिलालपते स्वाहा ॥ ८ ॥

Om Abhilālapate svāhā.

We should know those acts that describe the results of good deeds.

ओं अपलालपते स्वाहा ॥ ९ ॥

Om Apalālapate svāhā.

Meaning:—This is for the penitence of those who back-bite and speak ill out of jealousy.

ओं अग्नये कर्मकृते स्वाहा ॥ १० ॥

Om Agnaye Karmakṛte svāhā.

Meaning:—This is for Agni which is the means and promoter of human acts of good.

ओं यमत्र नाधीमस्तस्मै स्वाहा ॥ ११ ॥

Om Yamatra nādhīmastasmai svāhā. – Tait. Aranyaka.6/2.

Meaning:—This is for those who are out of mind.

ओं अग्नये वैश्वानराय सुवर्गाय लोकाय स्वाहा ॥ १२ ॥

Om Agnaye vaiśvānarāya suvargāya lokāya svāhā.

– Tait. Aranyaka.6/3.

Meaning:—This is for Agni, the sustainer of all life, which inspires people to do acts of good and thus attain all happiness.

ओं आयातु देवः सुमनाभिरूतिभिर्यमो ह वेह प्रयताभिरक्ता ।

आसीदतां सुप्रयते ह बहिष्पूजाय जात्यै मम शत्रुहत्यै स्वाहा ॥ १३ ॥

***Om Āyātu devaḥ sumanābhirūtībhir yamo ha veva prayatābhiraktā;
Āsīdatām suprayate ha barhiṣpūjāya jātyai mama śatruhatyai svāhā.***

Meaning:—May Lord Yama, Ordainer of the universe, be pleased with our sincere prayers and praises and acts of obedience to the Vedic injunctions for our life here. May we perform yajnas for the attainment of an auspicious state of existence, means of sustenance and protection against internal enemies harbouring the mind! May all men and women join our yajnas!

ओं योऽस्य कौष्ठ्य जगतः पार्थिवस्यैक इद्वशी ।

यमं भङ्ग्यश्रवो गाय यो राजाऽनपरोध्यः स्वाहा ॥ १४ ॥

Om Yo'sya kauṣṭhya jagataḥ pāṛthivasyaika idvaśī;

Yamam bhaṅgyaśravo gāya yo rājā'naparodhyaḥ svāhā.

Meaning:—O men, sing the sweetest of praises in honour of the only Lord ordainer of this world of beauty, variety and prosperity, the sole ruler of the earth, whom no one can equal or oppose.

ओं यमं गाय भङ्ग्यश्रवो यो राजाऽनपरोध्यः ।

येनाऽऽपो नद्यो धन्वानि येन द्यौः पृथिवी दृढा स्वाहा ॥ १५ ॥

Om Yamam gāya bhaṅgyaśravo yo rajā'naparodhyah;

Yenā'po nadyo dhanvāni yena dyauh pṛthivī dṛḍhā svāhā.

Meaning:—Men of the earth, sing in praise of Lord Yama, the sole ruler and ordainer of the universe. Surely, He alone is worthy of praise and worship. He holds the waters, rivers, deserts, the heaven and the earth. He alone holds the universe firmly in balance.

ओं हिरण्यकक्ष्यान्त्सुधुरान् हिरण्याक्षानयःशफान् ।

अश्वाननः शतो दानं यमो राजाभितिष्ठति स्वाहा ॥ १६ ॥

Om Hiranyakakṣyāntsudhurān hiraṇyākṣānayaḥ śaphān;

Aśvānanash śato dānam yamo rājābhitiṣṭhati svāhā.

Meaning:—Yama, Lord Ordainer of the Universe and dispenser of justice holds and wields the worlds with golden rounds of girdles (orbits), moving on golden axes and golden axles, fast and firm like horses with hoofs of steel. He is the giver of a hundred gifts of life and energy—only if we can deserve and pray for them.

ओं यमो दाधार पृथिवीं यमो विश्वमिदं जगत् ।

यमाय सर्वमित्तस्थे यत् प्राणद्वायुरक्षितं स्वाहा ॥ १७ ॥

Om Yamo dādihāra pṛthivīm yamo viśvamidam jagat;

Yamāya sarvamittasthe yat prāṇadvāyurakṣitam svāhā.

Meaning:—Lord yama holds the earth and this entire universe in motion. All that exists here, follows the law of Yama. Everything living, which is sustained by air and *prāṇic* energy, is sustained by Him only.

ओं यथा पञ्च यथा षड् यथा पञ्चदशर्षयः ।

यम यो विद्यात् स ब्रूयाद्यथैक ऋषिविजानते स्वाहा ॥ १८ ॥

Om Yathā panca yathā ṣaḍ yathā panca daśarṣayah;

Yamam yo vidyāt sa brūyād-yathaika ṛṣirvijānate svāhā.

Meaning:—Only he who knows Lord Yama and His Law, can say what the five elements, six seasons, fifteen dates of the fortnight, or the five pranas and ten indriyas, and the seven stars (rshis) are. He alone can say of things in reality as the Lord knows they are.

ओं त्रिकद्रुकेभिः पतति षडुर्वीरेकमिद् बृहत् ।

गायत्री त्रिष्टुप् छन्दांसि सर्वा ता यम आहिता स्वाहा ॥ १९ ॥

Om Trikadrukebhiḥ patati ṣaḍurvīrekamid brhat;

Gāyatrī triṣṭup-chandānsi sarvā tā yama āhitā svāhā.

Meaning:—Three processes—knowledge, action and prayer—save the human being from three kinds of affliction, physical, mental and spiritual. By virtue of this threefold piety, man attains to six great things in the universe— the middle region, the earth, water, vegetation, strength, and truth of speech—in accordance with his virtue (quality), acts and nature. Everything of life, and all the mantras and metres, *Gāyatrī*, *triṣṭup*, etc., which stand for all the hymns of knowledge, acts and prayer, exist in Him. He alone is great.

ओं अहरहर्नयमानो गामश्वं पुरुषं जगत् ।

वैवस्वतो न तृप्यति पञ्चभिर्मानवैर्यमः स्वाहा ॥ २० ॥

Om Ahar-aharnayamāno gāmaśvam puruṣam jagat;

Vaivasvato na tṛpyati pañcabhir mānavairyamaḥ svāhā.

Meaning:—Taking the entire world of man, ‘horse’ (society) and ‘cow’ (earth), is endless change through the integration and disintegration of the five elements which make up the human and cosmic body, the Lord of Light and Law through time never tires—the process of change continues.

ओं वैवस्वते विविच्यन्ते यमे राजनि ते जनाः ।

ये चेह सत्येनेच्छन्ते य उ चानृतवादिनः स्वाहा ॥ २१ ॥

Om Vaivasvate vivicyante yame rājani te janāḥ;

Ye ceha satyeneccchante ya u cānṛtavādinaḥ svāhā.

Meaning:—The Lord of Light and Law is presiding over the universe, therefore those who act by truth in this world, and those who act by untruth, all of these

people are dispensed and discriminated separately for what they are and what they do. Thus is the dispensation of justice effected by Lord Yama.

ओं ते राजन्निह विविच्यन्तेऽथा यन्ति त्वामुप ।

देवांश्च ये नमस्यन्ति ब्राह्मणांश्चापचित्यति स्वाहा ॥ २२ ॥

Om Te rājanniha vivicyante'thā yanti tvāmupa;

Devānśca ye namasyanti brāhmaṇānścāpacityati svāhā.

Meaning:—Lord Ruler of the world, they—men of virtue and vice, truth and untruth, are discriminated and dispensed. Those who bow to the saints and the wise, and those who serve the scholars and men of God, attain to Thee, O Lord. The others who do otherwise are lost in the dark.

ओं यस्मिन् वृक्षे सुपलाशे देवैः संपिबते यमः ।

अत्रा नो विश्पतिः पिता पुराणा अनुवेनति स्वाहा ॥ २३ ॥

Om Yasmin vṛkṣe supalāśe devaiḥ sampibate yamaḥ;

Atrā no viśpatih pitā purāṇā anuvenati svāhā.

Tait. Aran. 6, 5.

Meaning:—In this world, apparently beautiful as a palasha tree, only the man of virtue and discipline fully in his senses can enjoy the good provided by the father. Here in this creation, the Lord our father since eternity provides for us as for His children. (He recalls us too when it is time for home.)

ओं उक्ते तन्नोमि पृथिवीं त्वत्परीमं लोकं निदधन्मो अहं रिषम् ।

एतांश्च स्थूणां पितरो धारयन्तु तेऽत्रा यमः सादनात् ते मिनोतु स्वाहा ॥ २४ ॥

Om Utte tabhnomi pṛthivīm tvatparīmam lokam nida-dhanmo ahaṁ

riṣam; Etāṁ sthūṇāṁ pitaro dhārayantu te'trā yamaḥ sādānāt te minotu svāhā. Tait. Aranyaka.6/7.

Meaning:—The Lord thus says to His children: for you do I hold up this earth. For you, and above this earth, do I hold the sky. No one comes to grief in this system created for you. May the seniors among you keep it fast and maintain it. May they join you with the pillars of virtue and happiness by the grace of Yama, Lord of law and righteousness.

The point is that while the Lord God creates and holds the universe—the earth, the heavens, suns and stars, etc.—the duty of organizing and holding the human society is man's. The wise and the virtuous should guide the human family. The

system of the universe is the total context in which we live. We have to make our existence meaningful by working in our place within the system.

ओं यथाऽहान्यनुपूर्वं भवन्ति यथर्त्तव ऋतुभिर्यन्ति क्लृप्ताः ।

यथा नः पूर्वमपरो जहात्येवा धातरायूँषि कल्पयैषां स्वाहा ॥ २५ ॥

***Om Yathā'hānyanupūrvam bhavanti yatharttava ṛtubhiryanti klrptāh;
Yathā naḥ pūrvamaparo jahātyevā dhātarāyūnṣi kalpayaiṣām svāhā.***

Meaning:—Just as days follow in succession, just as seasons follow seasons close, just as among us the former has to leave and the latter follows leaving the former (who has gone), so may the Lord of life bless us with life in succession in this whirling wheel of the universe.

ओं न हि ते अग्ने तनुवै क्रूरं चकार मर्त्यः ।

कपिर्बभस्ति तेजनं पुनर्जरायुर्गौरिव ।

अप नः शोशुचदघमग्ने शुशुग्ध्या रयिम् ।

अप नः शोशुचदघं मृत्यवे स्वाहा ॥ २६ ॥

Om Nahi te agne tanu vai krūram cakāra martyah;

Kapirbabhasti tejanam punarjarāyurgauriva;

Apa naḥ śośucadaghamagne śuśugdhyā rayim;

Apa naḥ śośucadagham mṛtyave svāhā.

- Tait Aranyaka. 6/ Anu.10.

Meaning:—Lord Agni, let no mortal child of yours do any violence for the sake of this body (its survival). Restless as a monkey shows agitation (for its protection against fear and suspicion), just as a cow does for the skin cover of its new-born, Lord Agni, cleanse us of our sins—burn them. Purify our real worth (as gold is purified in the fire). Cleanse us of our sins as a worthy offering to Death. This is for Death—This is for death.

The dead body is thus offered to the fire as a fit offering of the last of the dead for purification to join the cycle of existence.

Prayers for Sadgati (Ultimate peace) of the Dead:

When the dead body has been reduced to ashes, the friends, relatives and members of the family of the dead should assemble at some place close by and pray for the

peace and salvation of the departed soul. After the prayers, they should disperse and go home.

Yajña in the house of bereavement:

Clean, wash and purify the house in which death took place. Then perform Havan in the home with ghee and fragrant samagri. The havan will dispel the air of the sickly atmosphere, cleanse the house and rejuvenate the heart and mind of the inmates.

Disposal of the ashes:

On the third day of the cremation, the members and other relatives should go to the cremation ground, collect the bones and ashes, the bones should be collected in a clean cloth and consigned to a safe place in or close to the cremation ground. The ashes should be consigned to a stream or river or scattered over a field. Or, the bones and ashes, all should be consigned to a stream or river or scattered over a field. After this, which is the last act of the rites, there is nothing to do now or ever after, since the Veda says that the story of human life closes when the body is reduced to ashes. If, however, a person desires in his life time, or his relatives so desire after his death, money may be dedicated in charity for social and philanthropic causes.