

Maharshi Dayanand's
Vaidic Sacraments

Sanskara Vidhi

With Scholars Commentaries Collected
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Aum Foreword

सर्वात्मा सच्चिदानन्दो विश्वादिर्विश्वकृद्भिः ।
भूयात्तनां सहायो नस्सर्वेशो न्यायकृच्छुचिः ॥
Sārvatma saccidanando visvadir-visvākrdvibhuh ।
bhūyattamam sāhayo nas sārveso nyayākrcchūcīh ॥

I invoke the Lord Almighty by whose kindness and mercy all good works are accomplished. May He ever show His grace upon me and inspire me to continue the spread the message of the Vedas, His eternal gifts of universal knowledge to mankind. I dedicate myself in service and humility to His mission.

I acknowledge in gratitude the help and guidance given to me by all the scholars, saints and sages who bless me with love, vision and encouragement directly or indirectly.

Printing and publication requires money that is a hard reality of life today. On this front the members of my family have given me a sense of rare security. I thank them all for their generosity. I specially thank of my younger brother Shri Chandra Bhan Raghubar Singh who has helped me with money and all other forms of cooperation without any reservation. I pray for his life, prosperity and happiness with the following hymn of the Veda :—

ओम् इन्द्र श्रेष्ठानि द्रविणानि धेहि चित्तिं दक्षस्य
सुभगत्सत्ते पोषं रयीणामरिष्टिं तनूनां स्वाद्मानं
वाचः सुदिनत्वमहनाम् ॥ ऋ० २, २१, ६.
Om Indrā sresthāni dravināni dhehi cittam daksasyā
subhagātvam-asme poṣam rayiṇam-aristim tanūnam
śvadmānam vacah sudinatvām-ahnām ।

Righ. 2, 21, 6.

May God bless you and all members of your family with good health, long life, happiness, love of virtue and dedication to Dharma. May the Lord bless you with ever-increasing wealth, prosperity, honour and success! May the Almighty Lord bless you with sweetness of word, and behaviour, and may you ever rise from good to better and better life. May God bless us all!

— Dev Narayan Arya

Preface

Swami Dayanand, founder of the Arya Samaj, has done great good to all mankind with his two great works, the Satyarth Prakash (The Light of Truth), and Sanskara Vidhi (The Sacraments). In the Satyarth Prakasah he lays down, clearly and definitely, the true principles of life and faith, and in the Sanskara Vidhi he sets out the sixteen sacraments through which everyone man or woman should pass in order to be a fully good and educated person. The former work, we might say, lays down the theory of life and the latter prescribes the practice of it. For a good and purposeful life, we need both theory and practice.

Life to-day is full of colour and glamour, it has taken a seductive form and character. Man is likely to be deceived and thrown off his moorings unless he is seasoned and educated in both theory and practice of truth and virtue. Everyone must pass through the crucibles of cultural discipline through the sacraments. Nature alone is not enough, culture, nurture and commitment to faith in good and truth in practice required. Hence I have had the Swami's Sanskara Vidhi translated into English. Through English, all English-knowing people of the world will know how to supplement the gifts of nature with the training and refinement of nature. God has not only given us birth, He has also revealed through the Veda the eternal knowledge of life in the world and show us the path of goodness and virtue. The Sanskara's will lead us in practice to good and God. This translation is meant to spread the some gospel of practical truth and virtue to be followed in life.

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Introduction

The word Sanskara is derived from the root Kr. (to go) with the prefix 'Sam' which is used in a positive sense of any aspect of the true, the good, and the beautiful. The vertu 'Sanskar' means to do well something so as to refine it in the direction of truth (i.e., if should be true to its essence), goodness (i.e., if should be good in its character), and beauty (i.e., it should be beautiful in its form and manners including performance). Sanskara, than, means a ceremony, a process of cleansing, refinement, development and perfection to the best of one's capability.

Man is a child of nature as any other creature is. But man is not just natural, he is rational too. He is endowed with language and intelligence, so that he is gifted with perception, thought and awareness. This rationality gives to man an awareness of the need for culture, manners, collectiveness, social action and organization, and a feeling of gratefulness and obedience to the Divine and His Will. Further, this rational awareness is not simply a gift of nature evolved through history in the environment. It is implanted in the spirit itself as part of its essential nature. As such, man's position is intermediate between Prakrti (nature) which is just existence, and God who is Existent, Intelligent, and Bliss. Man is existent and intelligent, but, for bliss he vascillates between nature (pleasure) and God (Ananda). If he recedes to nature, his intelligence also recedes into dullness. If he proceeds into the direction of God, his intelligence is refined and he experiences a bliss of the divine order. Hence man cannot afford to live on the plane of nature. He cannot full satisfied with reason and rationality too, except when his reason is joined to faith in God.

In short, man is not perfect, but he has tremendous potential for perfection. Therefore all the effort of education and training throughout history has been in the direction of his perfectibility toward the vision and attainment of God. This process of perfectibility, whether through ritual, or education, or training, is what Sanskara is in the broadest sense of the term. The Sanskara performed in the life of a human being are actual points or stages in the process as well as symbolic of the total process that continues across one's life-span.

Man is a child of nature, he is also a child of God. Hence he cannot live, i.e., exist like the animals. He lives and ought to live a life of thought and culture. For this reason he is called a 'dvijya' in common with all other creatures of nature. But in addition, he acquires another, a higher and rational-pious birth through education and training. Hence the teacher is called a mother, and the educational institution is called the second womb. An animal is born once. Man is born twice, once when the body takes birth as an infant, and secondly when the graduate comes out of the school. Hence there is a saying in English: Man puts off the old *the natural man), and puts on the new (rational and cultural) man. It is only through Sanskaras that a man becomes a 'dvijya'.

Manu says in the Manusmṛti: The Sanskaras of the dvijas should be performed according to the vaidic rites. These Sanskaras Sanctify a person in this world and the next. They enable us to get meritorious rights and positions in our society and higher forms of birth in the next life. With prebirth Sanskaras (Garbhadhana, Punsavana and Samantonnayana) and post birth Sanskaras (Jatakarma, Cudakarma and upanayana), a person is cleansed of the seminal and foetal defects of body and mind. Therefore Manu prescribes daily study of the Vedas, observance of Yama-niyama, that is, positive and negative injunctions of personal and social ethics and behaviour, daily Havana, fast, prayer and procreation, and all kinds of Vaidic Yajnas. With this sanctification programme, the total pressonality—body, mind, and soul—is purified and strengthened on its way to God. (II, 26-28).

Svami Dayanand has followed the path of the ancient sages and has written his famous work the **Sanskara Vidhi** in their live. He says, "Whatever is purified and refined through the Sacramental process in this world is pure and excellent, and whatever is not thus purified and refined is regarded as impure in this world. Therefore earnest endeavour

should be made by the learned people to perform the sacraments with instructions and herbs and such other materials. Sanskaras are the secret of health happiness, and progress."

Sanskaras, actually, are part of life's planning. And Vaidic planning is based on the Vaidic concept of human existence. According to the Veda, the soul is eternal. It is not subject to death. The body alone dies, not the soul. The soul attains another birth according to its merits on demerits which are, we may say, a balance sheet of our life's account in a particular birth or life-span. The balance-sheet we carry even after the body falls off and we move on way to further existence. This sheet is also known as our "Natural Sanskaras", which means that when a person is born, he/she is born along with the Sanskaras. In fact, the kind of existence and the body with which we are born is also a result of that balance-sheet. The man with this balance-sheet is now the natural man. The account includes our instincts, emotions, passions, appetencies, attitudes, desires and capabilities. With Sanskaras performed in this life, and through our action, this balance sheet is always under revision as well as extension, and this revision and extension affects this as well as the next life of ours. Therefore, with Sanskaras, actions and education, we plan the remoulding and progress in life here and later.

The parents play an important part in this plan. Therefore Svami Dayanand says that before insemination and after, the father and mother should not take intoxicants, filthy or dry foods which they cause deterioration of the intellect and disturb the peace of mind. They should, instead, take nourishing foods like milk and milk products, fruits and honey because with these even the semen of an agile nature changes and develops into one of clear, penetrating and intellectual nature.

The body and mind of the parents and the atmosphere in which the child is born and lives affect the development of the child. Under the care of good and meritorious parents in a good home, the attitudes and appetencies of a child inherited from previous birth get improved. The negatives fall off through disuse and lack of nourishment, and the positives grow. Hence the planning begins much before birth. The first three are performed before birth. One is performed after death. And the rest are performed during one's life-time. In all, the Sanskaras are sixteen.

Sanskaras are a physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual process of development and culture of the body, mind and soul. They involve the process of cleansing, refinement, development, and Sanctification. They are meant for the improvement and progress of man's total personality and character.

And the Sanskardras are for all men and women without exception. So says the Veda. So says Manu. So says Svami Dayananda.

Hymns of Praise and Prayer

1. ओम् विश्वानि देव सवितर्दुरितानि परासुव ।

यद्भद्रं तन्न आ सुव ॥

यजु० 3, 30.

Om visvāni deva Savitārdurītāni parā suva ।

yadbhadrām tanna ā suva ॥

Yaj. 3, 30

O Lord creator, pure and glorious, giver of all joy and happiness, grant us your grace, help us remove all the evil and pain from us, and give us all that is good.

2. हिरण्यगर्भः समवर्तताग्रे भूतस्य जातः पतिरेक आसीत् ।

स दाधार पृथिवीं द्यामुत्तेमां कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम ॥

यजु० 13,4.

Hiranyagarbhah samavartatāgra bhūtasya jātaḥ patireka āsīt ।

Sa dādharma prthivīm dyām-utemām kasmai devāya havisa

Yaj. 13, 4.

vidhema ॥

The Lord is Light. He has created the sun and the moon, and He holds all the stars and planets and satellites together. He is the Lord and Master of all that is, and He was there as Spirit before all creation, by Himself. He is the sustainer of all. Let us pray to Him, to Him in discipline, virtue and yoga.

3. य आत्मदा बलदा यस्य विश्व उपासते प्रशिमं यस्य देवाः ।

यस्यच्छायाऽमृतं यस्य मृत्युः कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम ॥ यजु० 25, 13.

Ya ātmadā baladā yasya visva upāsate prāsīsam yasya devāḥ ।

Yasyacchayā' mṛtām yasya mṛtyuḥ kasmai devāya havisa

Yaj. 25, 13.

vidhemah ॥

The Lord is the giver of self-knowledge, of strength of body and mind in society; the learned and the wise men of virtue praise Him. Obedience to His will is freedom and happiness, disobedience means death and damnation. Let us praise Him, pray to Him with our heart and soul in love, faith and service.

4. यः प्राणतो निमिषतो महित्वैक इद्राजा जगतो बभूव ।

य ईशोऽस्य द्विपदश्चतुष्पदः कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम ॥ यजु० 23,3.

Yaḥ prānato nimīḥato mahitvaika idrāja jagato babhūva ।

Ya īśasya dvipadaścatuspadah kasmai devāya Lavisa vidhma ॥

Yaj. 23, 3.

Sanskrit Vidhi

2

The Lord is the One and Only sovereign of the universe, the ruler of the living, breathing and the material world, and father of the human and animal kingdom. Let's all pray to Him with love, faith and service.

5. येन द्यौरग्रा पृथिवी च दृढा येन स्वः स्तभितं येन नाकः।
योऽन्तर्िक्षे रजसो विमानः कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम॥ यजु० 32.6.
Yena dyauragrā pṛthivīca dṛḍha yena svah stabhitam yena nākaḥ।
Yo' antarikṣa rajaso vimānah kasmai devāya havīṣā vidhema॥
Yaj. 32, 6.

The Lord keeps the blazing heaven (sky), and holds the stable earth. He dispenses the happiness and freedom from all pain and suffering. He creates and sustains the space and the heavens. All the stars and spheres keep their motions in harmony because of Him. Let us pray with all love, faith and service to Him who alone is the source of bliss and worthy of attainment.

6. प्रजापते न त्वदेतान्यन्यो विश्वा जातानि परि ता बभूव।
यत्कामास्ते जुहुमस्तन्नोऽस्तु वयं स्याम पतयो रयीणाम्॥
ऋ० 10, 121, 10.
Prajāpate na tvadetānyanyo vīśvā jātāni paritā babhūva।
Yatkāmāste juhumaṣ-tanno' astū vayam syāma patayo rayīṇām॥
Rg. 10, 121, 10.

O Lord of creation, no one other than you is there who can keep the entire forms of life in order. Lord supreme, may we look unto you for all those things which we love and desire. May we enjoy plenty of wealth, honour and social advancement.

7. स नो बभ्रुर्जनिता स विधाता धामानि वेद भुवनानि विश्वा॥
यत्र देवा अमृतमानशानास्तृतीये धामन्धैर्यन्त॥ यजु० 32, 10.
Sa no bandhur-janitā sa vidhātā dhāmāni veda bhuvanāni vīśvā।
Yatṛā devā amṛtamānaśānās-trīṭīya dhāmannadhairayanta॥
Yaj. 32, 10.

The Lord is the brother, He is the father, He keeps all things in proper order, form and discipline. He knows all the worlds, their names, locations and origins. May we, free from all want, pain and suffering, attain to total freedom and peace in God, and may we all pray to Him, our Lord, teacher, King and dispenser of all justice!

8. अग्ने नय सुपथा राये अस्मान् विश्वानि देव वयुनानि विद्वान्।
युयोध्यस्मज्जुहुराणमेनो भूयिष्ठान्ते नम उक्तिं विधेम॥ यजु० 40, 16.
Agne naya supathā rāye asmān vīśvāni deva vayunāni vidvān।
Yugodhyasmaj-juhurāṇam-eno bhūyīṣṭhām te nama uktim
vidhema॥

Lord of Light and knowledge. Agni, giver of light, knowledge and happiness, take us to knowledge, prosperity and glory by the right path of virtue, justice and service and sacrifice—the path followed by the right-thinking people of the past. Help us get away from the crooked paths of evil. May we even and amon sing your praise in humility and may we always enjoy heavenly bliss.

Hymns of Benediction (Prayers for well-being) (Svastivacanes)

1. अग्निमीडे पुरोहितं यज्ञस्य देवमृत्विजम् ।
होतारं रत्नधातमम् ॥

ऋ० १, १, १.

**Agnim-īde purohitam yajñasya devamṛtvijam ।
Hotāram ratnadhātāmam ॥**

Rg. 1, 1, 1.

Lord of Light, who illuminates and guides all, who loves all, does good to all, who creates, sustains and destroys the universe, mover of all, and giver of happiness according to the laws of nature, giver of body, sense and mind to man and makes all things for the happiness and prosperity of all creatures, the mover of all grand creative cycle of the universe—
Him I pray, All praise be to Him.

We should praise and pray to the Lord, Om, in the following way, for Om is the essential name/word which stands for Isvara/Lord God.

1. I praise and pray to Om who moves the entire universe and takes it forward. He is the Lord of knowledge.
 2. He is all before and after creations. He is the first and foremost who loves and does good to us all before any one else can do so.
 3. The Universe is a yajna, it is a cycle of processes and activities. He is the doer and dispenser of his great universal sacrifice.
 4. He is the Lord of Nature. He ordains all the activities of nature according to time and season for the good of all of us as is just and proper.
 5. He is the efficient cause of the universe and the dispenser of the fruits of our actions.
 6. He is the holder of all the 'jewels', that is, precious gifts of life or the stars, planets and satellites.
- It is proper that for the good and happiness of all we pray to God who is all good by nature, act and virtue. It is not good, not proper to pray to anything else, animate or inanimate.

2. स नः पितेव सूनवेऽग्ने सूपायनो भव ।
सद्यस्वा नः स्वस्तये ॥

ऋ० १, १, ९.

**Sa nah pitēva sūnave' agne sūpāyano bhava ।
Sacasvā nah svastāye ॥**

Lord of knowledge, knowledge Itself, the veda tells us and we know too that just as a father provides for his children, so do you create for us. Help us provide for ourselves just as for your children. May we all know and be together for our good!

Broadly speaking, the man who prays, should meditate on God one as our father. We are your children. Just as the father is always there for the children, and does everything for the children, giving them what they want, so may God give us all the good that we want, readily and directly, for a father asks for name between him and his child, just as the father holds the child in his lap for his life and protection, so father, do you too hold me in your lap, so that I may find peace, happiness and security.

3. स्वस्ति नो मिमीतामश्विना भगः स्वस्ति देव्यदितिरनर्वणः ।
स्वस्ति पूषा असुरो दधातु नः स्वस्ति द्यावापृथिवी सुचेतुना ॥

ऋ० ५, ५१, ११.

**Svasti no mimitāmasvīnā bhagaḥ svasti devyaditiranarvaṇah ।
Svasti pūṣā asuro dadhātū nah svasti dyāvaprthivī sucetunā ॥**

Rg. 5, 51, 11.

Teachers and preachers, days and nights, the sun and the moon, the breath and the lower wind, may all these be good to us. The Lord of glory and the air, may be good to us. Men of sun-like lustre and rulers of exceptional merit may help us. The life-giving breath nourishing food grains and the rain-bearing clouds, may bless us with good. May the sun and the earth, father and mother, bless us with knowledge and awareness for our good!

4. स्वस्तये वायुमुप ब्रवामहे सोमं स्वस्ति भुवनस्य यस्पतिः ।
बृहस्पतिं सर्वगणं स्वस्तये स्वस्तय आदित्यासो भवन्तु नः ॥

ऋ० ५, ५१, १२.

**Svastāye vayumupa bravāmahai somam svasti bhuvanasya
yas patih ।
Vṛhaspatim sarvagaṇam svastaye svastāya ādityāso
bhavantu nah ॥**

Rg. 5, 51, 12.

For the advancement of our good, let us approach the ruler of the world, strong as the wind, lover of knowledge, teacher and his disciples, venerable king, and pray for blessings. May the sustainer of the world be good to us. We pray to Vṛhaspati, the lord of all virtues, to the learned and