

day-night cycle may pass you on unto the fortnight, the fortnight unto the month, the month unto the seasons, the season unto the year, the year to age, and age to ripe age!

In simple words, may you, dear child.....live for a long and ripe life from days to years upto the full length of life.

How to use the name in place of 'asau'? Suppose the name of the child is Rama. The form will be :

Ramanamakah yo'astyasu.

If the child is a girl, and her name is Gita, then, Gita namika ya' astyasau.

Having thus for completed the ceremony and given the name to the child, announce the name to the gathering and give three Purnahutis—

ओम् सर्वं वै पूर्णं स्वाहा

Om sarvam vai pūrṇam Svāhā.

After the puranahuti, Samadevyagaan (p.....) may be sung.

Blessing and Benediction

First, the hymns of praise to the Lord from Visvani deva.....to Agne supapha raye should be chanted. Then before the gathering disperses, the following benediction for the child should be chanted :—

हे बालक त्वम् आयुष्मान् वर्षस्वी तेजस्वी श्रीमान् भूयः

He Balaka, tvam āyusmān varcasvi tejasvi śrīmān bhūyah.

Dear child, may you enjoy a long life, blessed with knowledge, virtue, honour, industry, courage, service, and glory!

The significance of feeling the child's breath

In the western countries, kissing is a token as an expression of love. But kissing means physical contact which might cause infection. Feeling the breath of the child, therefore is a healthy practice, and smelling has been the practice in India.

When the father feels the breath of the child, the child looks at the father in a bond of love and feels happy. Pressing the lips of the tip or the nose is a great stimulus for children. They respond with smiles. This bond of love is slowly firming into the heart of the child creates a bond of love and piety between the child and the parents.

6

निष्क्रमण संस्कार (Outing Ceremony)

Niskramana means taking the child out for a taste of the fresh air in the open.

The time for the ceremony, according to the **Pasaskara Grhya Sutras** is the third tithi of the third bright fortnight after the Naming ceremony. According to **Asvatayana Grhya Sutras** it is the tithi of the birth in the fourth month. On this day the ceremony ought to be performed. Svami Dayananda takes a common sense rational view of the date on practical grounds. He says that the ceremony may be performed whenever you feel that the child's health and family convenience allow, but surely in the fourth month the ceremony should be performed.

The ceremony at a glance :—On the day of the ceremony the mother should give a fragrant bath to the child after sun-rise, dress him-her in beautiful clothes and bring hem/her to the yajan-sala, the place where the yajna is to be performed. Standing on the right of her husband and then going in front, she should hand the child, head northward and feet south ward and chest up, over to her husband. The husband and the wife should sit west-side of the Vediti, facing east, the husband on the right of the wife.

Then the husband should pray with three mantras beginning with :

ओम् यत्ते सुसीमे.....etc.

Om yatte susime.....etc.

Then should be chanted the hymns of prayer (Isvara-stuti-prarthana-upasana), Svasti vacana or Hymns of Benediction, Santi Prakasana or Hymns for peace, and the general procedure common to ceremonies be completed.

Then the father should touch the baby's head with three mantras beginning with.

ओम् अङ्गादङ्गात्सम्भवसि.....etc.

Om angādangā sambhavasi.....etc.

then the father should chant the mantra

ओम् प्रयत्धि.....etc.

Om prayandhi.....etc

into the right ear of the child, and the mantra

ओम् इन्द्र श्रेष्ठानि द्रविणानि.....etc.

Om Indra Sresthani dravinani.....etc.

into the left ear of the baby. Then he should hand back the baby to the mother, its head northward and feet to the south. The husband then should touch the head of his wife. Then take the child into open for a sight of the sun with the mantra

ओम् तच्चक्षुर्दवहितं.....etc.

Om taccakṣur-devahitam.....etc.

Keep the baby in the open for some time and then bring it back to the place of the ceremony.

Then all those present should bless the child and the hosts should offer hospitality to the guests and see them off with proper courtesy.

In the evening when the moon has arisen, then the baby should be taken out for a sight of the moon. The mother should bring out the child in good dress, hand it to the father with its head northward and feet toward south. She should do this from the father's sight. Then she should go back, take water in her hands, stand facing the moon, and leave the water on the ground with the mantra.

ओम् यदरचन्द्रमसि.....etc.d

Om yadaścandramasi.....etc.

Then again she should come right of her husband and take the child back and stand on the left side with the child's head northward and feet southward. The father should take water in his hands and, with the mantra as above given, leave the water on the ground. This mantra is a hymn of prayer to God. After the child's sight of the moon, they should come back.

The significance of the ceremony is twofold :—

(1) Taking the child out in the open fresh air, and

(2) Showing the child two of God's great creations, the sun and the moon, which symbolise two opposite yet cooperative and balanced constituent elements of qualities of life: agni and soma fire and water or hot and cold, The sun stands for fire, heat, evaporation and dryness, the moon stands for water, coolness, and wetness. The sight of the sun and the moon is to impress on the child's mind the balance of the two interacting forces and the child's integration with the living process.

Oniting Ceremony

Once the child has seen the moon, the water in the hands is left on the ground. This means that if there are any adverse effects of the moon on the child, the same are given up. Water is symbolic of the mind : Just as water can take any shape, similarly the mind can take and absorb good feeling and attitudes. Just as the sun raises the water above in the shape of vapours and absorb them, so may the child's mind absorb good thoughts upward, and leave the negative and bad ones down.

Why should the mother stand facing the moon ?

The father and the mother leave the water on the earth. They wish and pray that the child may be of cool and sweet temper and add to the peaceful prosperity and honour of the family. Just as the beauty and glory of the moon dominates and covers the dark spots, so may the child dominate its weaknesses, if any, with the honour and virtue which he/she may acquire in life. Water also symbolizes plenty of milk, water and other nourishments. Also, just as water is absorbed in the earth, so the child, after having completed his life of action and honour may be absorbed in the Supreme soul. Water is a symbol of peace, fertility and life.

Why does the mother face toward the moon with water in the hands ?

The sight of the moon pleases the mind and thereby gives health and longevity. The moon and mind are said to be made of the same material. Hence the lustre of the moon stimulates the light and lustre of the mind. The other material of the moon is earthy. That affects the water. It is said in the mantra that the dark spotted part of the moon is earthy. That is why it attracts the waters on the earth. Since a major part of the human body also consists of water, the moon affects our body too. Hence the moon pleases our mind and affects our body for the better, and it gives us health and longevity. One who knows this secret of nature and life expects beneficial effects from the moon.

These days there are only a few sanskaras observed in our society— Namakarana, Mundana, upanayana and massage. The rest have almost been dropped as unnecessary. But if we realized that the Niskramana Sanskara means taking the child out into natural surroundings, joining the child's breath and energy to the energy radiation of the sun and the cooling and exciting radiation of the moon, we would not neglect it. Nature is a mother. The child is placed in the lap of nature while retaining the warmth of the mother's lap. Every sanskara is an important milestone in a hundred-year plan of vaidic life.

निष्क्रमण संस्कार

(मंत्र, अर्थ, विधि विभाग)

Onting Ceremony

(With Mantra, Meaning and Procedure)

The child is brought to the yajna :—

On the day of the ceremony, soon after sunrise the mother should give the child a bath, dress him in beautiful clothes and bring him/her to the place of yajna. She should come from the right side of her husband, stand in front, and, keeping the child's head toward north, feet south, and chest, up, pass it to him. Then going behind the husband, she should sit on his left facing east.

Prayer to God with three mantras :—

The husband, sitting with face eastward on the wife's right, prays with the following three mantras :—

1. ओम् यत्ते सुसीमे हृदयं हितमन्तः प्रजापता।

वेदाहं मन्ये तद् ब्रह्म माहं पौत्रमघं निगाम् ॥ मं० ब्र० १, ५, १०.

Om yatte susime hrdayam hitamantaḥ prajāpataḥ

Vedāham manye tad brahma māham pantram agham nigāḥ ॥

Man. Br. 1, 5, 10.

Meaning :—Lady of the fair locks, I know your heart rests in the Lord, and it is overflowing with love and nobility. Never do you entertain thoughts of meanness, worry or sorrow. May the off-spring of such a mother, by the grace of God, enjoy long life! This is my prayer.

2. ओम् यत्पृथिव्यामृतं त्रिदि चन्द्रमसि श्रितम्।

वेदामृतस्याहं नामसाहं पौत्रमघं रिषम् ॥ मं० ब्र० १, १, ११.

Om yatpṛthivyāmṛtam triḍi candramasi śrītam

Vedāmṛtasyāham nāmamāham pantra magham risam ॥

Man. Br. 1, 1, 11.

Meaning :—Noble lady, your heart is steadfast like the core of the earth. And having watched the beauty of objects such as the moon, it has acquired a beauty, fullness and happiness of its own. May the offspring of such a magnanimous lady be happy and progressive! May the Lord grant the child a long long life!

3. ओम् इन्द्राग्नी शर्म यच्छतं प्रजायै मे प्रजापती।

यथायं न प्रमीयते पुत्रो जनित्र्या अधि ॥ मं० ब्र० १, ५, १२.

Om Indrāgni śarma yacchatam prajayai me prajāpātī

yathāyam na pramiyate putro janitryā adhi ॥ Man. Br. 1, 5, 12.

Meaning :—Noble lady, with faith in God, you have obtained spiritual strength. You have also obtained good health with vital heat and energy by virtue of yajna fire. May the natural heat and the fire of yajna be good and auspicious to to your off-spring. May God graunt the child long life and good health. This is my prayer.

Appointment of Priests and General Procedure

After the prayer with the three mantras as above, appointment of priest (see p. 11) be made, followed by acamana (p.32), anga-sparsa (p.32) and hymns of prayer Isvaropasana (p.1), Svasti-vacana (p.4) and Saniti-prakarana (p.20).

Then follow th general procedure in respect of the yajna from starting of the fire to the completion (p.34).

Caresing the Baby on the Head

After the general procedure is over, the father should affectionately look at the child and caress it touching the head with the following mantras—

ओम् अङ्गादङ्गत् सम्भवसि हृदयादधिजायसे।

आत्मा वै पुत्रनामासि स जीव शरदः शतम् ॥ पार० १, १८, २.

Om angādangāt sambhavasi hrdayadadhijāyasa ॥

aṭmā vai putra-nāmāsi sa jiva śaradaḥ śatam ॥ Par. 1, 18, 2.

Meaning :—Darling baby, you are sprung from every limb of mine, you are born of my very heart. As my child, you are my very self itself, you are me. Live for a full hundred years!

ओम् प्रजापतेष्ट्वा हिङ्कारेणावजिघामि।

सहस्रायुषाऽसौ जीव शरदः शतम् ॥ पार० १, १८, ३.

Om prajāpateṣṭvā hinkāreṇāvajighrāmi ॥

Saha śrāyusā' asau jiva śaradaḥ śatam ॥ Par. 1, 18, 3.

Meaning :—With the liquid emotion of love welling from the heart, by the grace of God, I smell you on the head, my darling! Enjoying good health and energy, live for a hundred years.

ओम् गवां त्वा हिङ्कारेणावजिघ्रामि ।

सहस्रायुषाऽसौ जीव शरदः शतम् ॥

पारो 1, 18, 4.

Om gavāṃ tvā ḥṅkāreṇāvajighrāmi ।

Sahasrāyūṣa' asan jīva śaradaḥ śatam ॥ Par. 1, 18, 4.

(In this mantra and in the last one say the name of the baby in place of "Asau".)

Meaning :—I smell you with a loud expression of joy, expression like that of a cow when it smells its calf. Blessed with good health and energy, live for a hundred years.

The Broad Meaning of this and the last mantras is an expression of natural, human and divine love for the child. The cow's in the natural expression—it produces a peculiar sound of Hin-Hin While it caresses the calf. You can hear a mother and a father producing sounds which are peculiar to them and their society. The father's expression also symbolizes the love of God, Lord Prajapati, Father of his children. In short, the child is the favourite of the divine father, the human parents and Mother Nature. What better welcome can there be to the new arrival in the human family.

Transpiration into the child's ears

(Prayer for long life and prosperity in life)

The father now should slowly and affectionately speak the following mantra into the right ear of the child to inspire him/her to have high goals in life.

अस्मे प्रयन्धि मघवन्तूजीषिन्न्द रायो विश्ववारस्य भूरेः ।

अस्मे शतै शरदो जीवसे धा अस्मे वीराञ्छशत इन्द्र शिप्रिन् ॥

ऋ० 2, 21, 6.

Asme prayandhi maghavan nrjisinindra rayo visvavarasya

bhureḥ । asme satam sarado jivase dha asme virañśhasvata

Indra siprin ॥

Rg. 3, 36, 10.

Meaning :—Lord of the Universe, goal of all virtuous people, bless us with the wealth of life and virtue. Give us a full span of life, a full hundred years. Lord of knowledge and giver of happiness, bless us with brave people.

Now say the following into the left ear of the child :—

इन्द्र श्रेष्ठानि द्रविणानि धेहि चितिं दक्षस्य सुभगत्यमस्मे ।

पोष र्योणामरिष्टिं तनूनां स्वादमानं वाचः सुदिनत्वमहनाम् ॥

ऋ० 2, 21, 6.

Indra śreṣṭhāni braviṇāni dhehi ciuttim dakṣasya subhagat-
vamasme ।

poṣam rayinām-arīṣṭim tanūnām svādmānam vācaḥ sudi-

natvamahnām ॥ Rg. 2, 21, 6.

Meaning : Lord Almighty, giver of all the best in life, give us the wealth worthy of love and praise. Give us the strength to act and achieve. Bless us with good fortune and ever increasing prosperity. Give us health of body for us and our children. Give us the sweetness of speech and a full-life-span of happy days.

The father should now pass on the child to its mother, head in the north direction and feet in the south. In silence, he should touch her head as a mark of affection, conjugal joy and celebration.

Showing the Sun to the child in the day

Now, during the day, show the sun to the child while chanting the following mantra :—

ओम् तच्चक्षुर्देवहितं पुरस्ताच्छुक्रमुच्चरत् । पश्येम शरदः शतं जीवेम

शरदः शतं शृणुयाम शरदः शतं प्रब्रवाम शरदः शतमदीनाः स्याम शरदः

शतं भूयश्च शरदः शतात् ॥ यजु० 36, 24.

Om taccaṣur-devahitam purastācchukramuccarat ।

iaśyema śaradaḥ śatam jivema śaradaḥ śatam śṛṇuyāma

śaradaḥ śatam prabravāma śaradaḥ śatam-adināḥ syama sara-

daḥ śatam bhūyaśca śaradaḥ śatāt ॥ Yaj. 36, 24.

Lord of Light, Bright Sun, God Almighty, you are the benefactor of the noble people, and bless us with vision—being the Eye of the Universe. You are the knower, existing for all eternity. May we see you for a hundred years, live for a hundred years; may we hear noble words for a hundred years! May we speak for a hundred years and spread year message of the Veda! May we be free and independent for a hundred years, and may we repeat the cycle of years even more than hundred.

Now keep the child for some time in the open no, giving it a taste of the fresh air, and then come back to the place of yajna. Here all those who are present should offer their blessings to the child as follows :—

आशीर्वाद (Blessings)

For a male child :

हे बालक! त्वं जीव शरदः शतं वर्धमानः ॥

He Halaka! tvam jiva śaradaḥ śatam vardhamānaḥ ॥

For a female child :

हे बालिका! त्वं जीव शरदः शतं वर्धमाना ॥

He Balika! tvam jiva śaradaḥ śatam vardhamānā ॥

Meaning :—Dear child, may you live for a vardhamana ever growing, better, stronger, more prosperous, more virtuous, more and ever more, going higher and higher in life!

Showing the Moon

In the evening when the moon has arisen, the child should be taken out and the moon should be shown to him/her. The mother should dress the child in beautiful clothes. Coming from the right of the father and facing him, she should pass the child to him with head to the north and feet to the south. She should then go from his right to his left. She should then hold water in her palms, stand facing the moon and chant the following :—

ओम् यददश्चन्द्रमसि कृष्णं पृथिव्या हृदयं श्रितम् ।

तदहं विद्धौ स्तपश्यन् माहं पौत्रमर्घ्यं रुदम् ॥ *मं० ब्रा० १, ५, १३.*

Om yadaścaṅdramasī kṛṣṇam pṛthivya hṛdayam śrītam ।
tadaham vidvān-s-tapśyan māham pantrāmagham rudam ॥

Man. Br. 1, 5, 13.

With this mantra the water should be released to the ground. Then she should come from behind her husband by his right in front, take the child, head north ward and feet southward, go back the same way and stand on his left. The father of the child should take water in his palms and, with the same mantras “Om yadada’s chandraman.....” leave the water to the ground. Having shown the moon to the child, they should come back into home.

7

अन्नप्राशन संस्कार (Anna Prasana Sanskara) (Feeding the child on cereals)

Annprasana is the ceremony to give the child the first cereal feed. Before this the child is kept on the mother’s milk and, if necessary, on cow’s milk.

Time : The time for this ceremony, according to Paraskar Grhyasutra is the sixth month of the child’s birth. Svami Dayananda’s view is realistic and practical. According to him, this ceremony should be performed as early as the child is able to digest cereals. According to Asvatayana Grhyasutras, if you want a brilliant and bustling child, give him/her a feed of sweet cooked rice mixed with ghee, or with ghee, curd and honey, at the time of this ceremony. The ceremony should be performed on the day the child was born.

On the day of the ceremony clean the rice properly, cook it well mix it with ghee, let it cool and put adequate quantity and put it in the plates for the participants in the yajna—the yajamana, the hota and the rtviks (all the priests) with the mantras “Om pranaya tva justam proksami....” etc. After this follow the general procedure with hymns of prayer (eight mantras of Isvara stuti prarthana upasana), hymns of benediction (Svastivacana), hymns of peace (santi-prakarana), starting the fire (agnyadhana), offering of three samidhas (Samidadhana), five ahutis with ghee, sprinkling of water around the yajna-kunda, ajyabhagahuties with “Agnaye svaha,” etc., and then offer two ahutis with the rice with “devim vacam—ajanayanta” etc. Then add ghee to the rice and offer four ahutis with “Om pranenannamasiya svaha” etc. After this offer the svistakrt ahuti. Then offer four vyahrti ahutis and then eight ajyahuntis with “Om tvanno....” etc. then add curd, honey and ghee to the remaining rice, also milk if you like and feed the child with “Om annapate annasya...” When the child has had the feed, clean the child’s mouth. Sung the

Mahavamedevya-gana and bless the child with the prayer that he/she may be prosperous with foods, giver of food to others, master of hospitality and philanthropy, and always going up higher and higher. then the hosts may offer proper hospitality to the guests and see then off.

The importance of Ceremony :—The human being passes through three stages in respect of food :

1. Milk : for about six months of life, the baby lives on milk. It is not able to digest cereals. Therefore, if it is forced to live on cereals, it develops digestive disorders.

2. Milk and cereals : After the six month of its life, the child lives on milk and cereals. It can digest cereals.

3. Cereals and other foods : After some time the human being lives on cereals. We may have milk also besides other foods, but if we do not get milk, we can live on other foods like cereals, vegetables, fruits, etc.

To begin with, the baby lives on the mother's milk. The mother's body, to produce enough milk needs calcium. After six months, the baby needs more milk than the mother can easily and safely produce. And the mother might suffer from deficiency of calcium. The Risis therefore provided for the ceremony in the interest of the health of both the mother and the child. This Sanskara marks the beginning of the second phase of life. The mantras chanted on the occasion tell us the kind of food the baby ought to be given. There are prayers for the child (receiver), and the food-giver (father, farmer, etc.). The food should give health and energy both. Non-vegetarian food (meat, fish, eggs) is not scientifically as well morally good and desirable. The sanskara gives a biological fact the force of Dharma so that, as Dharma, a biological process is taken up and observed. This is in the interest of the child's and the mother's health. Normally, all parents transfer the child from milk to cereal and other food, but Vaidic culture alone has given this change the seriousness and sanctity of Dharma. Why should curd, honey and ghee be mixed as food? There are authorities to show that these three in combination become a very nourishing food. It gives the energy of heat and air, and helps cleanse the system through regular movement of bowels. It nourishes the organs of sense also—eyes, ears, etc. In fact, there is nothing more nourishing for the body and the mind. These foods are not easily available in pure form these days. So the sanskara impresses upon us the value and importance of pure and nourishing food.

Q. What is the relation between food and speech?

Answer.: In the mantras "Deviam Vacam" This relation is shown. We should use that speech (Sanskrit) which is used by the learned. That can give us health, energy, happiness and food for life. The food promotes that speech also, Starvation leads to loss of speech. The upanisad says, "Annam vai praninam pranah", i.e., food is the very life of living beings. However, we should clearly know that the food is far the body, not the body for food.

Q. What is the significance of the mantra "Vajo no' adya"? This mantra prescribes four virtues in respect of food.

1. Before eating, give to others. One should not eat selfishly. we should share.
2. Food Should be according to the season. Nature itself produces articles of food according to the seasons.
3. Unless we have good food, we cannot have a strong nation. Good food gives us strong citizens—scholars, fighters, producers, etc.
4. We can conquer our goals only with the help of food. Food is also a means of international friendship.

Anna Prasana (Feeding the child)

The ceremony with the mantras

For the ceremony, first complete the general part. **The Sanskara Vidhi** says that the complete general part comprises appointment of priests (Rtvigverana) p.31, sipping of water (acamana) p.32, touching body limbs (anga-sparsa) p.33, prayers (Stuti, Prarthana upasana) p.1, hymns of benediction, (svastivacana) p.4, and the hymns of peace (Santiprakarana) p.20, the starting of fire, etc., is given later, So the general part means up to Santi prakarana.

How to Prepare Bhata, i.e., sweet rice

If you want an intelligent, healthy and lustrous child, he should cook pure rice—washing, sifting, cleaning it mix it with ghee or with ghee, curd, and honey and thus prepare it for the Sanskara with the following mantras :—

ओम् प्राणाय त्वा जुष्टं प्राक्षामि ।

ओम् अपानाय त्वा जुष्टं प्रोक्षामि ।

ओम् चक्षुषे त्वा जुष्टं प्रोक्षामि ।

ओम् श्रोत्राय त्वा जुष्टं प्रोक्षामि ।

ओम् अग्नये स्विकृते त्वा जुष्टं प्रोक्षामि ।