

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

(Description of Fire-sacrifice etc.)

The sages said:—

1. O lord, please tell us in order in detail all these rites viz. the fire sacrifice, the sacrifice to gods, Brahmayajña, the worship of the preceptor and the gratification of brahmins.

Sūta said :—

2-3. The offering made into the fire is called fire-sacrifice (Agniyajña). In the case of persons in the Brahmacharya Āśrama (i.e. Religious Students) it is called samidādhāna (collection of sacrificial twigs). O brahmins, until the rite of Aupāsana (fire sacrifice of the householder) all the persons in the first Āśrama perform their Vratas and special sacrifices in the fire from sacrificial twigs.

4. O brahmins, in the case of ascetics and forest-dwellers who have consigned the sacred fire to the Ātman, taking a restricted quantity of wholesome food is itself the sacrificial offering.

5. Householders who have started their Aupāsana rite shall maintain the rite in the sacrificial fire kept in a vessel or pit always.

6. The sacrificial fire shall be maintained either in the Ātman or in the Araṇī (the sacrificial churning twig from which fire is kindled) lest the fire should be extinguished by royal or divine intercession.

7. O brahmins, the offering in the fire in the evening for the fire-god is the bestower of prosperity. The offering in the morning for the sun-god is conducive to longevity.

8-9. This is called Agniyajña in as much as it enters the sun during the day. The different sacrifices Sthālīpāka etc. for the propitiation of Indra and other gods by offerings in the fire are called Devayajña. The rites of Caula (ceremony of tonsure) etc. are performed in the ordinary fire.

10. The regular study of the Vedas is called Brahmayajña. A brahmin shall perform this constantly for the propitiation of gods.

11. This is to be practised by all and hence no special