

of hunger Just then I entered their hut and rolled myself on the floor The remnants of the flour there came in contact with a half of my body and turned it golden as you all see It was so because of the purity of the motive and of the intensity of the spirit of self sacrifice in their act of cooking and serving the guest Since then I am on the look out for another *Yajna* of that type that would turn the remaining half of my body golden What the King Yudhishtira is doing here is no great *Yajna* as it has not brought any change whatsoever on my body ' The assembly meekly submitted to the view of the strange mongoose

— Mahabharata

A day passed bereft of the performance of *Yajna* is a day gone to waste Such is the injunction enjoined in the scriptures An ideal family man is he who engages himself daily in the five great *Yajnas* All the five of them form his *niitya* karma—obligatory work

First and foremost among them is *Deva Yajna*—the worship of God The day invariably begins with it This has to be gone through devoutly and to the best of one's knowledge It may be augmented with rituals according to traditions and individual tastes

The second in order is *Rishi Yajna*—the adoration of the Enlightened The great ones who have had God-realization have not allowed their rare experiences to go into oblivion Out of compassion for the ignorant humanity they have passed them on to posterity in the form of scriptures and sacred books A devoted study, assimilation and practice of the principles contained in them constitute this *Yajna* Expounding the holy scriptures with a devotional attitude to the ardent enquirers and devotees is also an aspect of this *Yajna*.