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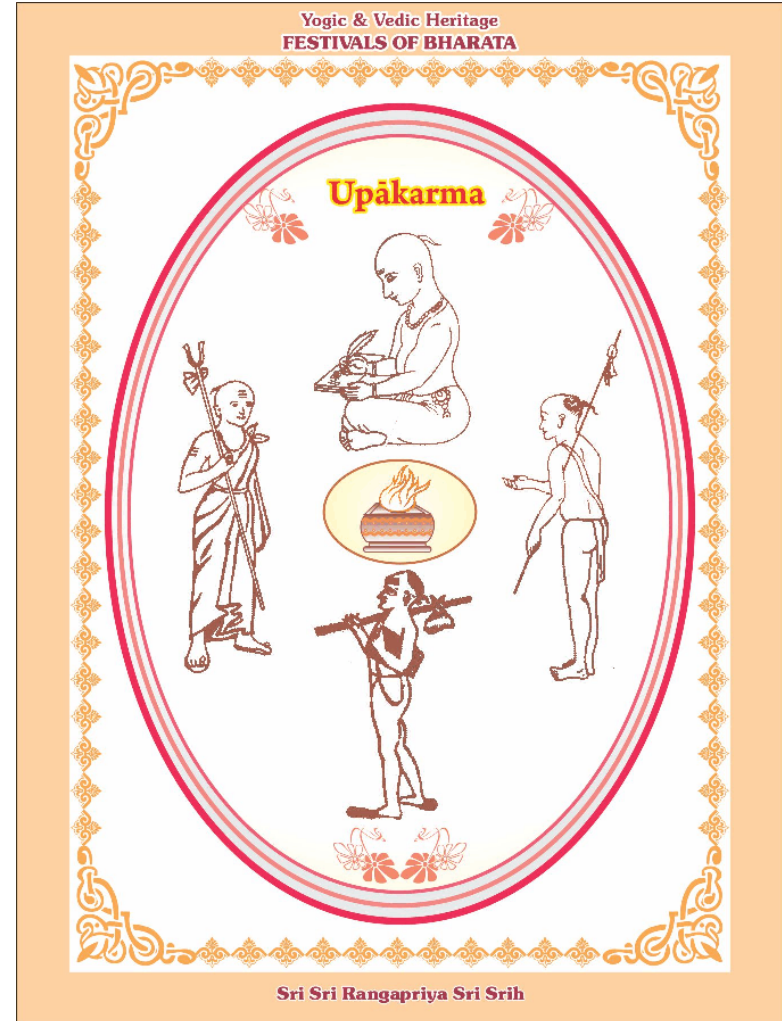
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*We Dedicate this Sacred Treasure at the holy lotus feet of*

**Sriranga Mahaguru and SriMata**

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## Transliteration followed in this book

अ	आ	इ	ई	उ	ऊ	ऋ	ॠ	ऌ	ॡ	ए	ऐ	ओ	औ	अं	अः
a	ā	i	ī	u	ū	ṛ	ṝ	ḷ	ḹ	e	ai	o	au	am	ah
क	ख	ख	ग	ङ											
ka	kha	ga	gha	ṅa											
च	छ	ज	झ	ञ											
ca	cha	ja	jha	ña											
ट	ठ	ड	ढ	ण											
ṭa	ṭha	ḍa	ḍha	ṇa											
त	थ	द	ध	न											
ta	tha	da	dha	na											
प	फ	ब	भ	म											
pa	pha	ba	bha	ma											
य	र	ल	व	श	ष	स	ह								
ya	ra	la	va	śa	sha	sa	ha								

Example:

क	का	कि	की	कु	कू	कृ	क्लृ	के	कै	को	कौ	कं	कः
ka	kā	ki	kī	ku	kū	kṛ	klṛ	ke	kai	ko	kau	kam	kah



## Upākarma

*Upākarma* is one of the most important *parvas* which is observed in the month of *Śrāvaṇa*. This is a very important *parva* which is observed all over India. The people of North India say—"Four very important *parvas* are observed in our country. They are *sravanī-Upākarma*, *daśaharā* (*Navarātra*, *Vijayadaśamī*), *dīvālī* (*dīpāvalī*) and *Holī*. Though these four are important for all, they are especially important to brahmins, *Kshatriyas*, *Vaishyas* and *śūdras* respectively". *Karmas* are of three types. They are *kāmya*, *nitya* and *naimittika*. *Kāmya karmas* are the ones which are performed only if there is a desire for something; otherwise they need not be performed. *Nitya karmas* are obligatory deeds which have to be performed every day. And the *Naimittika Karmas* are the ones which should be performed compulsorily on some particular days

which are significant because of the *Tithi*, star and the planetary position of the day etc. *Upākarma* belongs to the third category. It is a *parva karma* which should be performed every year on a particular day. It is a commendable auspicious *karma* related to the study of the *vedas*. Some *Maharshis* consider this as one of the eighteen *Mahāsamskāras*.

### **Names of Upākarma and the reason for using the term**

This *parva* is called by many names in *Śāstras* such as *Upākarma*, *adhyāyopākarma*, *upākaraṇa*, *vedasvīkāra*, *vedārambhaṇa* etc., In North India it is known by the name 'Śrāvaṇī', in Tamilnadu, it is called 'Āvaṇi avittam' In Karnataka it is called by the scriptural name 'Upākarma' by people who are knowledgeable in traditions. Common people call it 'janivārada habba.'

As it is a sacrament of initiation for the study of *vedas* and their comprehension, the names *Upākarma*, *adhyāyopākarma*, *upākaraṇa*, *vedasvīkāra*, and *vedārambhaṇa* suit the *parva*. (उपाक्रियते अनेन इति उपाकरणं. उप + आ + कृ + मनिन्) The name *Śrāvaṇī* also suits it as it is an important festival in the month of *Śrāvaṇa*. As this is a festival which is observed by *Yajurvedis* on the day when the star *Śravishṭhā* occurs in the month of *Śrāvaṇa*, tamils call it 'Āvaṇi-Avittam' As the wearing of a new sacred thread (*janivāra*) is noticed by all, the

custom of calling it. '*janivārada habba*' by common people is in vogue.

**Adhikāris (Rightful claimants) for Upākarma and rules of time for the observance**

This is a *parva* which should be observed by men who belong to all *Vedaśākhās* (branches of the *vedas*). All those who have undergone *upanayana samskāra* are qualified to observe this. Even those who are not qualified for *upanayana*, should worship God in a special way and meditate upon him on this day, which is dear to the *Veda Purusha* (The God of the *Vedas*).

Some people think that *Upākarma* is important only to *Brahmacāris* and not of much importance to others. But *Dharmaśāstras* state that *Upākarma* observance is intended for all the three i.e. *Brahmacāris*, *gṛhasthas* and *Vānaprasthas*.

अधीयीत गृहस्थोऽपि नियमाद्ब्रह्मचारिवत् (व्यासस्मृति)

उपाकर्म तथोत्सर्गं वनस्थानामपीष्यते,  
धारणाध्ययनं कृत्वा गृहिणां ब्रह्मचारिणाम् (देवलस्मृति)

*Upākarma* should not be performed in the year of the passing away of one's father or mother. This *vrata* should not be observed in *jātāśauca* (impurity caused by the birth of a child in the family) or *mṛtāśauca* (impurity because of a death in the family). It is not auspicious to observe *Upākarma* in *malamāsa* (intercalary month) But some people say

that *Upākarma* can be observed after performing *Śāntikarma* (expiatory or propitiatory rites). But the first *Upākarma* (*pratamopākarma*) should never be done in *Malamāsa*.

*Brhaspati*, *Śukra*, *Maṅgala* and *Budha* (Jupiter, Venus, Mars and Mercury) are the *adhidevatās* (presiding deities) for *R̥gveda*, *Yajurveda*, *Sāmaveda* and *Atharvaveda* respectively. It is auspicious for the followers of respective *śākhās* to observe this *vrata* on those days when the power of the respective *grahas* is strong.

ऋग्यजुस्सामअथर्वशा जीवशुक्रकुजेन्दुजाः ।

शाखाधीशे शक्तियुक्ते तच्छाखाध्ययनं शुभम् ॥

गुरुर्भृगुसुतो धात्रीपुत्रः शशधरात्मजः ।

स्युरेते ऋग्यजुस्सामाथर्वणाधिपाः स्मृताः ॥

Sages state that the months of *Śrāvaṇa*, *Bhādrapada* or *Āshāḍha*, and the *tithis* *Pūrṇima* and *Pañcamī*, and the stars *Śravaṇa* and *Hasta* are best suited for the observance of *Upākarma*. But different *Sūtrakāras* (Authors of religious manuals) have stated either different months, *tithis* and *Nakshatrās*, or the same month, *tithi* and *Nakshatrās* among these. It is best for people who belong to different *śākhās* to observe the *vrata* according to the words of their *Sūtrakāras*.

Manu has stated that *Upākarma* should be observed in the month of *Śrāvaṇa* or *Bhādrapada*.

श्रावण्यां प्रोष्ठपद्यां वाप्युपाकृत्य यथाविधि। युक्तश्छन्दांस्यधीयीत ।

Of the two months (*Śrāvaṇa*, *Bhādrapada*), *Śrāvaṇa* is generally considered suitable for *R̥gvedis* and *Yajurvedis*, and *Bhādrapada* is considered suitable for *Sāmavedis* for *Upākarma*.

*Āpastamba* is of the opinion that *Upākarma* should be observed on the day of *Śrāvaṇa Pūrṇima*.

श्रावण्यां पौर्णमास्यां अध्यायं उपाकृत्य

He opines that it is desirable to observe *Upākarma* on the *Pūrṇima* of *Bhādrapada*, if any blemish or inconvenience is encountered in *Śrāvaṇa*. But it is important that it is observed in *Pūrṇimā tithi*.

*Āshvalāyana* states that *Upākarma* should be observed either on the day of *Śrāvaṇa nakshatra* in the month of *Śrāvaṇa*, or in *Hastā Nakshatra* occurring with *Pañcamī tithi*.

अथाथोऽध्यायानामुपाकरणं ओषधीनां प्रादुर्भावे  
श्रवणेन श्रावण्यां पञ्चम्यां हस्तेन वा।

According to *Yājñavalkya*, *Upākarma* should be observed on *Śrāvaṇa Pūrṇima* with *Śrāvaṇa Nakshatra* or on *Pañcamī* with *Hastā Nakshatra*.

अध्यायानामुपाकर्म श्रावण्याम् श्रवणेन वा।  
हस्तेनौषधिभावे वा पञ्चम्यां श्रावणस्य तु ॥

*Bodhāyana* says that *Upākarma* should be

observed either on *Śrāvaṇa Pūrṇima* or on *āshādha Pūrṇima*.

श्रावण्यां पूर्णमास्यां आषाढ्यां वोपाकृत्य माघ्यां वा उत्सृजेत् ॥

According to sage *Gautama*, *Upākarma* should be observed either in the month of *Śrāvaṇa* or *Bhādrapada*.

श्रावणीं वार्षिकीं प्रोष्ठपदीं वोपाकृत्य

*Vasishṭha smṛti* also gives the same opinion. This *smṛti* states that *Pūrṇimā* is a must for *Upākarma*.

अथातः स्वाध्यायोपाकर्म श्रावण्यां पूर्णमास्यां प्रोष्ठपद्यां वा॥

We have to note an important matter here. The time when medicinal plants start sprouting is the most auspicious time for observing *Upākarma*.

“ओषधीनां प्रादुर्भावे”

“तद्वार्षिकमित्याचक्षते”

Sages say “ओषधिप्रादुर्भावे”. If the medicinal plants fail to sprout in *Śrāvaṇa*, *Upākarma* should be performed in *Bhādrapada* when the medicinal plants sprout.

Those who state that *Śrāvaṇa nakshatra* is most important for *Upākarma* should note an important point. "If *Śrāvaṇa nakshatra* does not pervade for the whole day and if it is conjoined with *uttarāshādhā*, *Upākarma* should not be observed on that day. And, if star *Śrāvaṇa* is conjoined with

*Dhanishṭhā*, *Upākarma* should be observed on that day"— says the *Vyāsaśmṛti*.

श्रवणेन तु यत्कर्म उत्तराषाढसंयुतम् ।

संवत्सरकृतोऽध्यायः तत्क्षणादेव नश्यति ॥

धनिष्ठासंयुतं कुर्यात् श्रावणे कर्म यद्भवेत् ।

तत्कर्म सफलं विद्यादुपाकरणसंज्ञितम् ॥

According to *Āpastamba*, *Upākarma* should be observed on *Pūrṇima* of *Bhādrapada* or *Āshāḍha*, if any *āsouca* occurs in *Śrāvaṇa*, or if it is a *Malamāsa*, or if any blemishes, eclipse, *Saṅkramaṇa* or the setting of the planets *Guru* and *Śukra* happen to occur in *Śrāvaṇa*. If there are any demerits or stains in all these three months, *Upākarma* should be observed in the month of *Śrāvaṇa*, according to *Vasishṭhasmṛti* and *Vyāsaśmṛti*.

मासत्रयेऽपि दोषश्चेत् श्रावण्यामेव कारयेत्

When all the three months have some *doshas* (blemishes), *Upākarma* should be observed in *Śrāvaṇa* itself, after performing *śānthi karmas* with the *mantras* prescribed for *grahayajna*.

Now we have to evaluate one or two matters alluded to earlier.

The first is whether *Upākarma* is *nityakarma* or *naimittika karma*. "*Nityakarma* is one which has to be performed everyday" is one definition. In that sense, *Upākarma* is not a *nityakarma*. (Because) It is performed only on a specified day in a year. But

*nityakarma* would mean duties which should be done regularly as per rules every day. "It is a *karma* that should be necessarily observed on time according to precepts. If not, it causes a demerit (called) '*pratyavāya*'"-This is another definition of *Nityakarma*. From this point of view, *Upākarma* becomes a *Nityakarma* only. The analysis provided by *Mārkaṇdeya Purāṇa* in this regard may be noted here.

नित्यं नैमित्तिकं चैव नित्यनैमित्तिकं तथा ।

गृहस्थस्य त्रिधा कर्म तन्निशामय पुत्रक ॥

पञ्चयज्ञाश्रितं नित्यं यदेतत्कथितं तव।

नैमित्तिकं तथा चान्यत् पुत्रजन्मक्रियादिकम् ॥

नित्यं नैमित्तिकं ज्ञेयं पर्वश्राद्धादि पण्डितैः ।

(A *grhastha* (householder) must necessarily perform three duties namely *nitya*, *naimittika* and *nityanaimittika karmas*. *Nityakarmas* are those which are performed based on the *pañcamahāyajnas*. When a male child is born in the family, *Jātakarma* (A ceremony at the birth of a child) is to be done. For this reason it comes under *naimittika karma*. *Karmas* such as performing a *śrāddha* to please the *pitṛs* which are performed on specific *parvas* come under *nityanaimittika karmas*. It comes under *Naimittika* as it is performed due to the death of a relative. It also comes under *nityakarma* as it is enjoined on every *parva* such as

*amāvāsyā*, *saṅkramaṇa* and *grahaṇa*. From this point of view, *Upākarma* is also a *Nityakarma* as it has to be observed by all the *dvijas* (twice born), on the day of the occurrence of *Śrāvaṇa* (*Bhādrapada Āshāḍha*), *Pūrṇima*, *Śrāvaṇanakshatra*, *Hastanakshatra* etc., as per precepts.

The second matter: On what days *Upākarma* is prohibited? The *Śāstras* say that it should not be performed on those days which have blemishes such as *Āsauca*, *Malamāsa*, eclipse, non-appearance of *guru* or *śukra* etc. And, it should be observed on a day which is free from these blemishes.

मलमासे निपतिते सूतके मृतवेऽपि वा ।

ग्रहणे सङ्क्रमे वाऽपि मौढ्ये च गुरुशुक्रयोः ॥

प्रौष्ठपद्यामथाषाढ्यामुपाकरणमिष्यते

(वसिष्ठस्मृति, वैद्यनाथीय वर्णाश्रमाचारकाण्ड)

प्रायश्चित्तं तु सर्वस्य मलमासे विवर्जयेत् ।

उपाकर्मोत्सर्जनं च पवित्रदमनार्पणम्॥

"In spite of all these, *Upākarma* is a *nityakarma* like *sandhyāvandana*. Therefore it should be observed even if it comes in a *malamāsa*. Only the *prathama Upākarma* should not be done in *malamāsa*. Instead, it should be done in *śuddhamāsa*." — With this explanation some perform the yearly *Upākarma* even if it occurs in a *malamāsa*. Which of these two opinions is right? When there is a provision, it is best to perform it in

a month other than a *malamāsa*. If another auspicious day is not available, only then it should be done in *malamāsa*.

सावकाशं तु यत्कर्म न कुर्यान्मासि दूषिते ।

कुर्यान्निस्वकाशं तु नित्यं नैमित्तिकं तथा॥

Third question: Can *Upākarma* be performed in the year of the death of any of the parents when the *ābdikas* are yet to be completed?

*Śāstras* say—"The body of the *Karta* (the one who has performed the obsequies of the parents) is said to be impure till the year end rites are completed. So, excepting the *māsikas* (monthly rites) no other *karmas* such as *pitṛkarmas* or *devatākarmas* should be performed."

प्रमीतौ पितरौ यस्य देहस्तस्याशुचिर्भवेत् ।

न दैवं नापि पित्र्यं वा यावत्पूर्णे न वत्सरः ॥

(धर्मसिन्धु page 964)

As *Upākarma* is both a *daiva* (divine) and an *Ārshakarma* (pertaining to the sages), it should not be performed according to the above statement, in the year of death of father or mother. Also, *Hemādrismṛtimīmāmsā* clearly states that *Upākarma* is included in the list of *karmas* prohibited from being observed till the *Ābdika* ceremony is over. This statement is quoted by the texts of religious codes and commentary viz.,-*vaideyanāthīya Varṇāśramācāra kāṇḍa* (p. 219),

*Nirṇayasindhu* (III 4791) and *Dharmasindhu* P. 961)

स्नानं चैव महादानं स्वाध्यायं चाग्नितर्पणम् ।

प्रथमेऽब्दे न कुर्वीत महागुरुनिपातने ॥

(Performing of *Snātakakarma*, *Mahādāna*, *Svādhyāya* and especially *Agnipūja* and even *Tarpaṇa* should not be done (by a person) when (either of his) parents has passed away, till the *Ābdika* (ceremony) is completed.)

According to this, the aforesaid persons who are in the *pitṛdikshā* do not perform *Upākarma* till the *Ābdika* is over. But there is a custom practiced by some, who perform the regular *Upākarma* even before the *Ābdika* is over. They defend their practice in the following way.

a) The word *svādhyāya* referred to in the above *śloka* does not mean *Upākarma*. It means *upanayana* (thread ceremony) (“स्वाध्यायः” उपनयनं तदर्थत्वात् उपनयनस्य). Therefore only *upanayana* is prohibited and not *Upākarma*.

b) If *sapindīkaraṇa* is scheduled to be performed at the end of the year, *Upākarma* is prohibited as per the above *śloka*. But if *sapindīkaraṇa* is done earlier then the performer's body does not remain *aśuci*. Therefore *Upākarma* can be performed before the *Ābdika*.

But there is no statement or indication in the

above *śloka* that *Upākarma* is prohibited only for persons who perform *sapindīkaraṇa* at the end of the year.

"*Upākarma* can be observed or dropped as per one's family custom"—This is one of the solutions to be above problem.

"Those who have the strength of mind and feel that they are not impure as they have performed *sapindīkaraṇa* earlier can observe *Upākarma*. But those who feel in their hearts that they are mentally and spiritually in *pitṛdikshā* during the entire year, and so have no right to perform the auspicious ritual of *Upākarma* which is both *daiva* (related to gods) and *Ārsha* (related to sages)"—This is also considered as the suitable solution to the problem.

Also, points like why *Upākarma* should be performed, what is the benefit from it and what one stands to lose if it is not performed should also be discussed.

"The first *Upākarma* which comes after the *upanayana* is called *prathamopakarma*. *Brahmacāris* acquire the right to do *brahmayajna* only after performing *prathamopakarma*. "After that, by the observance of *Upākarma* by them every year, their *vedādhyayana* gets refreshed. The newness which causes prosperity is obtained by



that. The study of the *vedas* which has become stale, gets renewed" - say the *śāstras*.

प्रत्यब्दं यदुपाकर्म सोत्सर्गं विधिवद् द्विजैः ।

क्रियते छन्दसां तेन पुनराध्यायनं परम् ॥ (कात्यायन)

अयातयामैश्छन्दोभिः यत्कर्म क्रियते द्विजैः ।

क्रीडमानैरपि सदा तत्तेषां वृद्धिकारणम् ॥

(वैद्यनाथीय, वर्णाश्रमाचारकाण्ड page 53)

The abovesaid benefit will not accrue to one who does not observe *Upkārma*.

### ***Upākarma - Utsarjana***

It is necessary to take note of another important observance regarding the study of *Vedas*. It is called 'Adhyāyotsarjana' or shortly *utsarjana*.

What is this *Utsarjana*? *Utsarjana* or *Udvāsana* means leaving off or sending off. Leaving off what? It is the (leaving off of) vedic studies. On the day of *Upākarma*, after the worship of sages and deities, *Vedas* have to be begun (again) as per precepts, and having studied thus for a period of time constantly, the studies should be suspended temporarily, and the duration of studies also has to be limited. But that time, (at the disposal of the student) should not be idled away. It should be well utilized for the special study of *śāstras* which are the limbs of the *Vedas*. And again on the day of *upākarma*, the study of the *Vedas* should again be begun as per precepts. Thus, for the purpose of the

special study of the *śāstras*, the constant study of the *Vedas* is suspended in an auspicious way. This itself is *Utsarjana*.

In ancient times the study of both the *vedas* and the *Śāstras* used to take place (simultaneously) and the presiding goddesses of the divine knowledge and wisdom of both streams would be pleased. But (such a system is almost lost and) much *apacāra* injustice is committed regarding this in our schools of *vedas* and *samskr̥ta*. One of the main *apacāra* refers to the time allotted for the curriculum of the *vedas* and scriptures. The six *śāstras* viz *śikshā*, *vyākaraṇa*, *chandasa*, *Nirukta*, *jyotisha* and *kalpa* are called *vedāṅgas*. Besides these, *tarka*, *mīmāṃsā*, *sāṅkhya*, *yoga* and other *Śāstras*, *Itihāsa* and *purāṇas* were taught by the sages for the purpose of explaining and preserving the *vedas*. But unfortunately in our present day *samskr̥ta* *pāṭhaśālas*, curriculum and timetables have been designed in such a way that these two (i.e. the *vedas* and *vedāṅgas*) cannot coexist (in the same body of studies). Thus, a scholar who has specialized in *tarka*, *vyākaraṇa* etc and has obtained a degree in them need not have even a smattering of the knowledge of the *vedas*. And, Vedic scholars may not find the need to have the knowledge of grammar and other *Śāstras*! It has become a tradition where scholars who study logic etc ridicule vedic scholars

calling them '*vedādhyāna jaḍa*' (indolent and lazy vedic practitioner) and vedic scholars jeering them as '*āśrotṛiya*' (one who has no knowledge of the *vedas* and scriptures) and '*avaidika*' (one who is not well versed in the *Vedas*). "The body (i.e. the *vedas*), the limbs and the bodyguards are free to remain strangers to each other. Even if they are familiar, they can look at each other with contempt - This seems to be the end result of the unscientific curriculum that is in vogue now.

Hundreds of texts have been written that are enough to bury the *vedas* and *vedāṅgas* gifted to us by our great *Ṛshis*. And those who carry the load of the knowledge of these books are considered great scholars. The current curriculum is not helpful to prepare a scholar who has sufficient knowledge of the *vedas*, *vedāṅgas*, logic and other scriptures.

But, in the curriculum of the *Maharshis*, there existed a scheme in which every student could obtain a sufficient knowledge of the *Vedās*, *vedāṅgas* and *śāstras*. These was a system in which every student could have access to the happy union of the body, the limbs and the bodyguards. In that scheme, the student could study the *vedas*, continuously, starting with *Upākarma* and ending with *utsarjana*. And again starting from *Utsarjana*, they could take up the study of the *śāstras* with special emphasis, till the next *Upākarma*. By this

all students could gain the knowledge of both the *Vedas* and *śāstras* and the society would greatly benefit from this.

Earlier, we have noted that as per precepts, *Upākarma* should be taken up in *Śrāvaṇa* or *Bhādrapada*. Now, we shall discuss what is the right time for the (temporary) suspension of the study of the *Vedas*, and the scheme for taking up the study of the *Vedas* and *Śāstras* thereafter.

The *Manudharma śāstra* states that *utsarjana* should be done on the morning of *śukla prathama* of the months of *pushya* or *māgha*, outside the town (near a great river, sea or a lake)

पुष्ये तु छन्दसां कुर्यात् बहिरुत्सर्जनं द्विजः ।

माघशुक्लस्य वा प्राप्ते पूर्वाहणे प्रथमेऽहनि ॥

Sage *Āpastamba* states that this sacred rite should be performed on the *Pūrṇima* of the month of *pushya*, or on the day of star *Rohiṇi* in the same month.

पौष्यां पौर्णमास्यां रोहिण्यां वा विरमेत्

*Yājñavalkya* instructs that it should be performed on the day of star *Rohiṇi* in *Pushyamāsa* or on the day of *Ashtaka* (i.e. the *Ashtami* of *Kṛshṇapaksha*)

पौषमासस्य रोहिण्यामष्टकायामथापि वा।

जलान्ते छन्दसां कुर्यादुत्सर्गं विधिवद्वहिः ॥

After evaluating these, the *Nirṇayasindhu*

states the conclusion as follows:—"Those who observe *Upākarma* in *Śrāvaṇa* should do *utsarjana* on the *śukla prathama* of *Pushya*, and those who observe *Upākarma* in *Bhādrapada* should do *utsarjana* in the morning of *śuklaprathama* in the month of *Māgha*. Those who follow *Āpastamba sūtra*, should do the *utsarjana* on *Pushya Pūrṇima* or on the day of *Rohiṇi Nakshatra* in *pushya*. Those who follow *Bodhāyana sūtra* should do *utsarjana* either in *pushya* or *māgha*. *R̥gvedis* should do it on the *Pūrṇima* of *māgha*. ("अध्यायोत्सर्जनं माघ्यां पौर्णमास्यां विधीयते") *Sāmavedis* should do it when the sun is with *simha* in the month of *pushya*. Those who follow *kātyāyana sūtra* should do *Utsarjana* in the month of *Bhādrapada*."

But some *smṛtis* say - "On the whole, it should be understood that the months of *Pushya* and *Māgha*, the *tithis Pūrṇima*, *śuklaprathamā* and *Kṛshṇāshṭami* and the star *Rohiṇi* are best suited for the ritual of *Vedotsarjana*, in the view of the sages."

पुष्ये तूत्सर्जनं कुर्यादुपाकर्म दिने तथा

(खादिरगृह)

उत्सर्जनं पौषमासे उपाकर्म दिने तथा

(स्मृतिसमुच्चय)

But doing *utsarjana* on the day of *Upākarma* itself is not the main option. It is a secondary alternative advised for those who cannot do *utsarjana* on the prescribed day due to some

unforeseen problems or illness. Then, what about the arrangement pertaining to the study of *Vedas* and *śāstras* from the time of *Utsarjana* on the prescribed day till the next *Upākarma*? The great sages have the following to say:

After the *utsarjana*, *vedādhyana* should be done only in the *śuklapakshas*. The *vedāṅgas* should be studied in the *Kṛshṇapakshas*. But the *Vedāṅgas* may be studied on the days of *anadhyayana* also.

अत ऊर्ध्वं तु छन्दांसि शुक्लेषु नियतः पठेत् ।

वेदाङ्गानि तु सर्वाणि कृष्णपक्षेषु सम्पठेत् ॥

(मनु)

वेदोपकरणे चैव स्वाध्याये चैव नैत्यके ।

नानुरोधोऽस्त्यनध्याये होममन्त्रेषु चैव हि ॥

अत ऊर्ध्वं शुक्लपक्षेष्वधीयीत, कामं तु वेदाङ्गानि"

(वसिष्ठस्मृति)

Well, what is the use of doing *adhyāyotsarjana* (temporary suspension) at the proper time? The answer is, whatever the benefit that is obtained by *Upākarma* will be obtained by *utsarjana* also. That is, the study of the *Vedas* does not get stale but gets renewed. Or, in other words, without getting stale and insipid, it becomes strengthened. So, *sankalpas* with only the following purport should be uttered—"अधीतानां अध्येष्यमाणानां वेदानां यातयामतानिरासेन आप्यायनद्वारा सवीर्यत्वाय अध्यायोत्सर्जनाख्यम्..... अध्यायोपाकर्माख्यं कर्म करिष्ये"

If one cannot to do *utsarjana* at the proper

time, he should undertake the appropriate *prāyaścitta* and then perform *Upākarma*.

The atonements are as follows:

1) Performing *Homa* with *Ājya* in fire with the *mantras* “कामोकार्षीन्मन्युरकार्षीत् स्वाहा”, or performing the *japa* of (the *mantra*) “कामोकार्षीन्मन्युरकार्षीत्”

2) Doing *Prāṇāyāma* 16 times

3) Doing the *japa* of *Virajāmantra* appearing in *mahānārāyaṇa*, or doing *Ājyahoma* with that.

4) Performing the *Homa* called पाहि त्रयोदश” etc.,

These *prāyascittas* are powerful enough to routout the blemishes caused by not observing *utsarjana* at the right time, and can also provide atonement for the other *doshas* that have been caused during the whole year. They contain very powerful *mantras* and *tantras* which can redeem all the sins.

The purport of these (*mantras*) is as follows:-

"I did not observe *utsarjana* at the proper time. It was because of my own *kāma* and *krodha*. Let me be freed from these *doshas*. Let my *rajoguṇa* and all my sins get redeemed. Let both my internal and external sense organs and my body be completely purified. I will become an inherently pure *jyothissvarūpa* (form of divine light). I will reach the state of *parama satya* (supreme truth) through *sapta vyāhrtis*. I (we) will meditate upon the

sin-redeeming and the supreme effulgence of the creator Lord who incites (stimulates) our minds in *Dharma* and *jnāna*. It is the *Parabrahma Paramātma* who becomes comprehensible by *praṇava*. It is the abode of the divine nectar called ‘*Āpojyoti*’. It is the trueform of *Sat*, *Cit* and *Ānanda*. O divine fire in the form of God! save me from sins: help me to get over all the adversities. Destroy both my internal and external enemies. Bless me with all the wealth I aspire for."

There is no need to observe *prāyascitta* if *utsarga* is done on the day of *Upākarma* itself, because the day of *Upākarma* also happens to be an important time for *utsarjana*. If one can not do it in *pushya māsa*, it can be done on the day of *Upākarma* itself. “उत्सर्जनं चेन्न करोति पुष्ये सहैव कुर्यादुभयं तदा तु” (स्मृतिसमुच्चय)

1) Some say that *utsarjana* done even on the day of the *Upākarma* will not be *kālātīta*. But it is not correct.

*Śāstras* have not stated that this is the best option. Those who cannot do it at the proper time due to illness etc., and thus take it up at the time of *gouṇakalpa*, must atone for it. Is not the fourth *ārghya* offered during *sandhyāvandanam* as atonement if the *ārghya pradāna* happens to be offered beyond the stipulated time? In the same

way, we opine. that atonement should also be done here. It is best to take up (the study of) both the *Vedas* and *śāstras* in the time most suited naturally. And the *śāstras* determine (and state) such (best) times.

2) Some who cannot do *utsarjana* in *pushya* atone for it but observe *Upākarma* without performing *utsarjana* afterwards. This is also not quite correct. The rule that the regular three *ārghyapradānas* should not be given up just because the special *arghya* is offered anyway as atonement, should be remembered here as an example. Not doing *utsarjana* at all should not become a tradition.

1) Another important thing. Atonement is done when an omission is caused unknowingly or because of illness. But it is not prudent to commit the mistake of not performing the rite at the proper time, in spite of being fully fit to perform it, taking shelter under atonement.

Now, we shall discuss briefly the modalities of conducting *Upākarma* and *utsarjanas* and also discuss some important matters related to them.

We come across many similarities and differences in the rituals pertaining to these, as per different *vedaśākhas* and *sūtras*.

Some rituals viz., invocation of sages, *pūja*,

*tarpaṇa*, and *homa* with reference to them, wearing of the new sacred thread, and the study of the beginning parts of the *Vedas* are common to all the *śakhas* and *sūtras*. And, to a great extent, there are similarities in the performance of *utsarjana* and *Upākarma* also.

The modality of those who follow the *āshvalāyana prayoga* of *R̥gveda*, is as follows: First, *Nāndīśrāddha* is performed in the ritual of *utsarjana*. *Pradakshiṇa granthis* (knots in the clockwise order) are made in *darbhas* and wearing the sacred threads in the *Nivīti* (position), the seven sages viz. *Gautama*, *Atri*, *Bharadvāja*, *Vishvāmitra*, *Kashyapa*, *Jamadagni* and *Vasishṭha* are invoked and they are worshipped with the sixteen fold *upācaras*, and *ārghya* is offered to them. And then in the *Upavīti* position nine personages namely *Sāvitri*, *Brāhmī*, *Śraddhā*, *Medhā*, *Prajñā*, *Dhāraṇā*, *Sadasaspati*, *Anumati* and *Chandorshi* are (invoked and) offered ghee oblations with *svāhākāras*; and *homa* is (to be) performed to twenty *devatās*. (Beginning with *Agni* the twenty *devatas* are *agni-apṛnasūryas*, *agni-śakunta*, *agni-mitrāvaruṇa*, *agni-āpas*, *agni-maruttas*, *agni-varma*, *agni-indrāsomas*, *Indra*, *agnimaruts*, *pavamānasoma*, *soma-agni*, and *saṃjñāna*). Then *Gāyatrī* is chanted three times in the method of *upadeśa* followed by the recitation of the beginning

parts of *R̥gveda*, or the four *Vedas* and the *vedāṅgas*. Later the *Paridhāniyamantra* viz ‘*Namo Brahmaṇe*’ is chanted thrice and the *Anusandhāna* is done with the *mantra*.

“संज्ञानं उशनावदत् ओं उत्सृष्टा वै वेदाः” (The *utsarjana* of the *Vedas* is done)

Next, *Ācāryās* such as *Agni* and *Gautama* should be saluted and *tarpaṇa* should be offered to *Sāvitri* etc. with the *mantra* ‘सावित्रीं तर्पयामि’ (the *Tarpaṇa* is offered to *Sāvitri*, *Brāhmi*, *Śraddhā*, *Medhā*, *Prājñā*, *Dhāraṇā*, *Sadasaspati*, *Anumati*, *Chandāmsi*, *R̥shayah*, *Agni-Sūrya*, *Agni-Śakunta*, *Agni-Mitravaruṇa*, *Agni-Āpa*, *Agni-maruttas*, *Agni-varma*, *Agni-Indrāsomas*, *Indra*, *Agni-maruta*, *Pavamānasoma*, *Soma-Agni* and *Samjñāna*) The following *devatās* should be offered *tarpaṇa* by chanting ‘*tr̥pyantu*’-They are *agni*, *Vishṇu*, *Prajāpati*, *Brahmavedas*, god, *R̥shis*, *Sarvachandas*, *Omkāra*, *Vashaṭkāra*, *Vyāhrtis*, *Sāvitri*, *Yajnas*, *Dhyāvāprthvis*, *Antariksha*, *Ahorātras*, *Sāṅkhyas*, *Siddhas*, oceans, rivers, mountains, holy places, medicinal plants, trees, *Gandharvas*, *Nāgas*, birds, cows, *Sūryas*, *vipras*, *yakshas*, *rākshasas* and *Bhūtas*.

Then wearing the sacred thread in the *nivīthi* position and chanting ‘*tr̥pyantu*’, the following *r̥shīs* viz., — *Śatarcinah*, *Mādhyamāh*, *Gṛtsamada*,

*Viśvāmitra*, *Vāmadeva*, *Atri*, *Vasishṭha*, *Pragāthāh*, *Pāvamānyah*, *Kshudrasūktāh*, *Mahasūktāh*, *Sanakah*, *Sanātana*, *Sanandana*, *Sanatkumāra*, *Sanatsujāta*, *Kapila*, *Olha*, *Āsuri* and *Pancaśikha* should be offered *tarpaṇa*.

Next, switching over to *Prācīnāvīti*, the following personages viz.-*Sumantu*, *Jaimini*, *Vaiśampāyana*, *Paila*, *Sūtrabhāshya*, *Bhārata-Mahābhārata Dharmācāryas* (2) *Jānantī*, *Nāhavī*, *Gārgya* — *Gautama*, *Śākalya*, *Bābhravya*, *Māṇḍavya*, *Māṇḍūkeyas* (3) *Gārgī*, *Vācaknavī* (4) *Badabā* *Prācītheyī*, *sulabha* *maithreyī*, *Kahola*, *Kaushītaka*, *Mahākaushītaka*, *Paṅgya*, *Mahāpaiṅgya*, *Suyajna*, *Sāṅkhyāyana*, *Aitareya*, *Mahaitareya*, *Śākala*, *Bāshkala*, *Sujātavaktra*, *Oudavāhi*, *Mahaudavāhi*, *Saujāmi*, *Śaunaka*, *Āshvalāyana*, and other *Ācāryas* should be offered *tarpaṇa* by chanting ‘*tr̥pyantu*’. Afterwards, those who are *adhikāris* (the ones who are supposed to perform) should offer *tarpaṇa* to their *pitṛs*. And then Lord *Yama* should be offered *tarpaṇa* (invoking him) by the names viz., *Yamam*, *Dharmarājam*, *Mṛtyum*, *antakam*, *Vaivasvatam*, *Kālam*, *Sarvabhūthakshayam*, *Oudumbaram*, *Dhadhnam*, *Nīlam*, *Parameshṭhinam*, *Vrkodaram*, *Citram*, *Citruguptam*, and then the *japa* of the names of *yama* should be performed ten times with the *śloka*-

“यमो निहन्ता पितृधर्मराजो वैवस्वतो दण्डधरश्च कालः ।  
भूताधिपो दत्तकृतानुसारी कृतान्त एतद्दशभिर्जपन्ति ॥”

And the *Śānti sūktas* viz “आ नो भद्राः” etc should be chanted for peace, and the *parjanya sūkta* for abundant rains. Then chanting the *mantra* “विश्वेत्ता ते” the *udvāsana* (giving a send off) to *ṛshīs* should be performed in water, and after *acamana*, addressing the *vedas*. Brahmins should be fed.

Same is the case with *Upākarma* also after *Mādhyāhnika*. *Tarpaṇa* to seven *ṛshis* viz. *Gautama* etc. follows *Nāndīśrāddha*. Then, *homa* to *Sāvitri* and others is performed. Flour made from unbroken rice and wheat should be mixed in cow’s curds, and *homa* should be performed for twenty *devatās* beginning with *agni*. Then the *Ācārya* and the disciples should consume the *prasāda* of flour mixed with curds, and perform *Ācamana*. *Yajnopavīta homa* and *yajnopavītna dāna* should be performed and new *Yajnopavīta* should be put on. *Brahmacārīs* should wear new *kaṭisūtra* (waist band), *kaupīna* (loin cloth), *Kṛshṇājīna* (skin of black antelope), *yajnopavītha*, cloth, *mounjī* and *danḍa* (staff).

As part of *Upākarma*, *sankalpa* to perform *brahmayajna* in the form of study should be made. *Gāyatrī* together with *oṅkāra* and *vyāhṛti* should be chanted three times in the *upadeśakrama*. Then, the *Japa* of the beginnings of the *Vedas* and the

*vedaṅgas* should be done. The *paridhanīyamantra* viz “नमो ब्रह्मणे” should be uttered three times. And reciting the lines “संज्ञानमुशनावदत्, ओं, उपाकृता वै वेदाः” it should be stated that the *Upākarma* of *Vedas* is completed. Salutation should be offered to *Agni* and *Ṛhis* and *Ācāryas* such as *Gauthama* and others *prāyaścitta* homa should be performed and finally addressing the *Vedas*. Brahmins should be fed.

The *Śukla Yajurvedis* include *Arundhatīdevi*, *Yājñavalkya* and the *Ṛshīs* of their *Gotra* and *Vishṇu* in the invocation-worship of the *Saptarshis*. In the *tarpaṇa* ritual, they include *Vishvedevas*, gods, *chandās*, *vedas*, *ṛshīs* *Purāṇacāryas*, *Gandharvas*, other *Ācāryas* and *sāvana samvatsaras* (years), *pitṛs*, *acāryas* and *samvatsaras*.

People possessing the authority to do *tarpaṇa*, offer it to their *pitṛs* and *pitṛs* of their *ācāryas*. After that, they recite and salute the chain of *ṛshis* whose names are mentioned in the *Vamśa*, *Prativamśa*, *adhyāya*, *śanta*, *prapāthaka* and the *antyakāṇḍas* (final cantos), and perform *ṛshi Śrāddha*.

The main deities among the ones whom these (i.e. the *Śuklayajurvedīs*) meditate upon, offer worship and *Homa* in the *Upākarma* are *prajāpati*, *Indra*, *Agni*, *Soma*, *Prṥhvī*, *Brahmā*, *Chandas*, *Dina*, (day) *Sūrya* (sun), *Brahma*, god, *ṛshis*, *Śrāddhā*,

*medhā*, and *Sadasaspatīs*. They are offered *homa* with *Ājya*. *Homa* is performed to *Sadasaspati* with paddy, to *Savitṛdevatas* with gingelly seeds, and to *sviṣṭakṛt agni* with the remaining paddy. *Yajna* is performed with respect to the secondary and main deities viz., *Vāyu*, *Sūrya*, *Agni-Varuṇa*, *Savitṛ*, *Vishṇu*, *Viśvedevas*, *Marutas*, *Arkas*, *Varuṇa*, *Āditya*, *Aditi*, and *Prajāpati*, twenty seven *Ahutis* such as *prṭhivi* are offered with *ghee* to the four *Vedas*. The *Prasādas* in the form of rice and curds are consumed in such a way that they do not come into contact with teeth.

Then *ācārya* offers as many gingelly seeds as *Āhutīs* in the *homa* as the number of groups of *śishyas* he needs. Then he offers nine *Āhutis* beginning with *Bhooh*. Now he should take up *Adhyayana* of the parts of the *Vedas* preceded by *Gāyatrī* with *Oṅkāra* and *Vyāhrtis* and he should make the *śishyas* also to do *Adhyayana*, beginning with *Ishetvā* in his own *śākha* and ending with 1) *Isāvāsyā* 2) *Adhyāyas* of all *Mantrabrāhmaṇas* 3) *ṛshimukhas* of *Ṛgveda* 4) *Parvas* of *Samavedis* and 5) *Sūktas* of *Atharva veda*.

Those who belong to *Āpastambasūtra* of *kṛṣṇayajurveda* should invoke, worship, offer *tarpaṇa* and perform *homa* to the following *Ṛshis* viz. *Prajāpati*, *Soma*, *Agni*, *Viśvedevas*, *Sāmhiti devatas*, *Yājñikī devatas*, *Vāruṇī devatās*,

*Brahmasvayambhū*, and *sadasaspati*. These are called *Kāṇḍarshis*. *Tarpaṇa* to these *ṛshīs* should be offered with *Akshata* and water mixed with white gingelly. The practice of adding sandal paste and flowers is also there. Some people do it using only *akshatā* and water. *Tarpaṇa* is offered in *Nivīti*. Some perform *homa* to the beginning parts of all the *vedas*.

The *mantras* to be taken up for *Adhyayana* are the four *anuvākas* i.e. *Ishetvā* etc. of *Kṛṣṇayajurveda samhitā*. Some people perform *virajāhoma* also, after doing *Brahmayajna*, and then chanting the beginning parts of the *Brāhmaṇas* and *Upanishats* along with the beginning *Anuvāka* of that *Samhitā*, the *Śāntimantras*, the *Ādimantras* of the other *Vedas* and the beginning parts of the *vedāṅgas*. At the beginning, *virajāhoma* is also performed with *Tilamantras* viz. “तिलां जुहोमि” “तिलाः कृष्णा तिलाः श्वेताः

In case *Utsarjana* is to be done on the day of *Upākarma* itself, there is a practice of performing the *homa* “*Pāhi Trayodaśa*” by some, who wish to atone for the *Kālātītadosha*. And some, wishing to atone for not doing *Adhyāyotsarjana* at the proper time, perform the *japa* of either the *mantras* ‘कामोकार्षीत् मन्युरकार्षीत्’ or *virajā mantra* or both. There is also a custom of doing sixteen *prāṇāyāmas* as atonement. Then *utsarjana* is done followed by



*Upākarma*. Some people do *Upākarma* along with *utsarjana* or perform *Upākarma* without *utsarjana* also.

Those who belong to *Bodhāyanasūtra* offer *tarpaṇa* in *nivṛti* to the nine *kāṇḍarshis* viz., *Yajnikīrdevatāh*, *Samhitīrdevatāh*, *Varuṇīrdevatāh*, *Sarvadevatāh*, *Prajāpati*, *Soma*, *Agni*, *Viśvedevāh*, and *Svayambhu*. And *tarpaṇa* is offered in *upavṛti* to *sadasaspati*, *savitṛ*, four *Vedas*, *Atharvāṅgīrasa*, *Itihāsa Purāṇa*, *Sarvadevajana*, *Sarvabhūtas*, *Sādhyas*, *Brahma*, *Prajāpati*, *Parameshthī*, *Hiraṇyagarbha*, *Caturmukha Svayambhu*, *Agnivāyu*, *Brahmapārshadas*, *Brahmapārshadis*, *Varuṇa*, *Soma*, *Sūrya*, *Candra*, *Nakshatra*, *Sadyojāta*, *Purusha* with three *Vyāhṛtis* individually and collectively, seven *Vyāhṛtis*, *Bhava*, *śarva*, *Īśāna*, *Paśupati*, *Rudra*, *Ugra*, *Bhīma* and *Mahādeva*'s consorts, *Rudras*, *Rudrapārshadas*, *Rudrapārshadis*, *Sanaka*, *Sanandana*, *Sanatkumāra* *Sanatsujāta*, *Skanda*, *Indra*, *Jayanta*, *Shashthi*, *Shanmukha*, *Viśākha*, *Subrahmaṇya*, *Mahāsenā* *Skandapārshadas*, *Vighnavināyaka*, *Vīra*, *Śūra*, *Varada*, *Hastimukha*, *Lambodara*, *Ekadanta*, *Śūrpakarṇa*, *Ibhavaktra*, *Vighnapārshadas*, *Vighnapārśadīs*, *Navagrahas*, *Yama*, *Dharmarāja*, *Dharma*, *Mṛtyu*, *Antaka*, *Vaivasvata*, *kāla*, *Sarvabhūtaksha*, *Oudumbara*, *dadhna*, *Nīla*, *Parameshthī*, *Vṛkodara*, *Citra*,

*Citrāgupta*, *Vaivasvata's* *Pārshadas*, *Vaivasvatpārshadis*, *Bharadvāja*, *Gautama*, *Angīrasa*, *Bārhaspatya*, *Viśvāmitra*, *Jamadagni*, *Vidyā*, *Atri*, *Dhanvantari*, *Dhanvantari pārshadas*, *Keśava*, *Nārāyaṇa*, *Mādhava*, *Govinda*, *Vishṇu*, *Madhusūdana*, *Trivikrama* *Vāmana*, *Śrīdhara*, *Hṛshīkeśa*, *Padmanābha*, *Dāmodara*, *Sankarshaṇa*, *Vāsudeva*, *Pradyumna*, *Aniruddha*, *Purushottama*, *Nārasimha*, *Adhokshaja*, *Acyutha*, *Janārdana*, *Upendra*, *Hari*, *Śrīkṛṣṇa*, *Śrīdevi*, *Hridevi*, *Buddhidevi*, *Pushṭi*, *Tusṭi*, *Jyeshṭha*, *MahāŚrīlakshmī*, *Vishṇupārshadas* and *Vishṇupārshadis*.

Then *tarpaṇa* should be offered in *nivṛti* to the *Rshis*, *Maharshis*, *Paramarshīs*, *Brahmarshis*, *Devarshis*, *Rājarshi*, *Vaishyarshi*, *Sutarshi*, *Sūtarshi*, *Śrutarshi*, *janarshi*, *taparshi*, *Satyarshi*, *Kāṇḍarshi*, *Rshigaṇa*, *Rshipathnīs* *Rshiputrās*, *Rshipauthrās*, *Kaṇva*, *Bodhāyana*, *Āpastambasūtrakāras*, *Satyāshāḍhas*, *Hiraṇyakeśis*, *Vājasaneyas*, *Yājñavalkya*, *Śaunaka*, *Āsvalāyana*, *Drāhyāyaṇa*, *Kātyāyana*, *Vyāsa*, *Vasishṭha*, *Praṇava*, *Vyāhṛtis*, *Prajāpati*, *Kāṇḍarshī*, *Soma*, *Agni*, *Viśvedevāh*, *Svayambhu*, *Sadasaspati*, *Sāvitṛī*, *Gāyatrī*, *Chandas*, the four *Vedas*, *Itihāsapurāṇas*, *Sarvadevajanas*, *Sarvabhūtas*, *Sāgmhitīdevatās*, *Yājnikīdevatās*, *Vāruṇīdevatās* and *Sarvadevatās*.

Then *tarpaṇa* should be offered to *Pitṛs* along with *Svadhākāra* in *Prācīnāvīti*. All the *pitṛs* should be offered *tarpaṇa*. The *pitṛs* should be offered *tarpaṇa* with the mantra ‘ॐ वहन्तीः’ also.

Afterwards *ācamana* should be done in *upavīti*, and the beginning of the study of the *Vedas* should be done along with *San̥kalpa*.

The *sāmavedīs*, offer *tarpaṇa* to the following *devatās* in *upavīti* chanting "*Trpyatu*", "*trpyantu*". They are - *Agni*, *Brahma*, *Somah*, *Śivah*, *Prajāpatih*, *Savitā*, *Indrah*, *Bṛhaspatih*, *Tvashtā*, *Vishṇuh*, *Yamah*, *Ādityah*, *candramāh*, *Nakshatrāṇī*, *Vasus* with *Sahadevatās* *Rudrāh*, *Ādityāh*, *Bhṛgavah*, *Angīrasah*, *Sādhyāh*, *Marutah*, *Viśvedevāh*, *Sarvedevāh*, *Vāk*, *Prāna*, *Āpa*, *Oshadhayah*, *Indrāgnī*, *Dhāta*, *Aryamā*, *Sārdhamāsāh*, *R̥thavah*, *Ditih*, *Aditih*, *Indrāṇī*, *Umā*, *Śrīh*, all the *Devapatnīs*, *Rudrah*, *Skandavishakhau*, *Vishvakarmā*, *Darśa*, *Paurṇamāsa*, *cāturvedya*, *Cāturhoutra*, *Vaihārika*, *Pākayajna*, *Sthāvarajaṅgama*, *parvatāśishah*, *Bhavyah*, *Nadyah*, *Samudrah*, *Apāmpatih*, *Yajamānā*, *ye devāh* *Ekādaśakāh*, *Trayaśca-trimśacca* *Thrayaśca* *Trīṇi* *Ca* *Sahasrāh*, *Dvipavitryādevah*, *Ekapavitṛādevah*, *Manushyaprabhṛtayah*, *sankarshaṇavāsudevau*, *Dhanvantarih*, *Sādhukārah*, *Udaravaiśravaṇah*, *Pūrnabhadramānibhadrāh*, *Yāthudhānah*,

*Yakshāh*, *Rakshāgmsi*, *Itaragaṇah*, *Traiguṇyam*, *Nāmākhyātopasarganipātāh*, *Devarshayah*, *Mahāvyaḥṛtayah*, *Sāvitṛīṛcah*, *Yajūmshi*, *Sāmāni*, *Kāṇḍāni*, *Eshām* *Daivatāni*, *Prāyashcittāni*, *Śukrayopanishadah*, *śokī*, *Śukah*, *Śākalyah*, *Pāncālah* *Ṛcābhih*.

The *Ṛshis* who should be offered *tarpaṇa* in the *Nivīti* position with the utterance of '*trpyatu*' are—*Vyāsah*, *pārāśaryah*, *tāṇḍī*, *kukī*, *kuśrah*, *Kauśikī*, *Baḍabā*, *Prācitheyī*, *Maitrāyaṇī*, *Dakshāyaṇī*, *Sarvācārāyāh*, *Kulācārāyāh*, *Gurukulavāsinah*, *Kanyāh*, *Brahmacārī*, *Ātmārthī* *Yājñavalkya*, *Rāṇāyani*, *Sātyamugrī*, *Durvāsāh*, *Bhāguri*, *Gaurunḍi*, *Gālgulavi*, *Bhagavānaupamanyavah* *Dārālah*, *Gārgisāvarṇī*, *Varshagaṇya*, *Kuthumi*, *Śālihotra* *Jaimini* - these eleven *Sāmagācāryas* called *Śālihotra* *Jaimini* (with the desire that these who are satisfied with *tarpaṇa* may bless) and the ten discoursers viz. *Śaṭi*, *Bhāllavi*, *Kālabhavi*, *Tāṇḍya*, *Vṛk*, *Vrshāṇaka*, *Ṭhuraki*, *Agatsya*, *Batkaśirāh*, and *kuhūh* -(May they be satisfied, and cause auspiciousness)

After this, *Deva tarpaṇa* should be offered to these Gods in *Upavīti* with the chanting of *Trpyatu* viz., *Agnih*, *Brahmā*, *Devāh*, *Vedāh*, *Omkārah*, *Sāvitṛī*, *Yajñāh*, *Dhyāvāprthivī*, *Ahorātras*, *Sāṅkhyāh*, *Samudrāh*, *Kshetra*, *Oshadhi*,

*Vanaspatīs, Gandharvas, Apsarasas, Nāgas, Yakshas, Rākshasas and other Gaṇas and Bhūtas*

Afterwards, the following *R̥shis* should be offered *tarpaṇa* in *Nivīti* with the utterance of *svadhā*. They are—

*Sumantu, Jaimini, Vishvāmitra, Vasishṭha, Parāśara, Jānanti, Bāhava, Gautama, Śakalya, Bābhravya, Māndavya, Baḍabā, Prācitheyī, Maitrayaṇī, Dākshāyaṇī, other Ācāryas.*

Then with the chanting of '*tr̥ptirastu*' the following *devatās* should be offered *tarpaṇa* in *Upavīti*—

नमो ब्रह्मणे तृप्तिरस्तु, नमो ब्राह्मणेभ्यः, नमः आचार्येभ्यः, नमः ऋषिभः  
नमो देवेभ्यः, नमो वेदेभ्यः, नमो वायवे च, नमो मृत्यवे च, नमो विष्णवे च,  
नमो वैश्रवणाय च ।

Then, as per *vamśavidyā paramparā*, with the chanting of *tr̥ptirastu* in the *nivīti* position, the *R̥shis* '*śarvadattāt gārgyāt*' etc. and *Rādhō Gautamah* etc. should be offered *tarpaṇa*. Now, switching over to *Upavīti* and as per *Vamśavidyāparamparā*, deities such as '*Agnirindrāt*' and, again in *nivīti*, the chain of *R̥shis* viz., *Aryamabhūti* etc should be offered *tarpaṇa*.

In the end, in *Prācīnāvīti*, *Pitr̥tarpaṇa* should be done to the following *pitṛs*, with the chanting of '*tr̥ptirastu*' viz., *Pitr̥ṇām, Pitāmahānām, Prapitāmahāṇām, Mātṛṇām, Mātāmahānām,*

*Pramātāmahānām, Ācāryāṇām, Prācāryāṇām Samhitakāra, Padakāra, Sūtrakāra Brāhmaṇa Kārāṇām, Brāhmaṇānāmapatyānām, Brāhmanīnām Ekapatnīnām, Anapatyānām Sarvesham ca Brahmacāriṇām.* Then '*Ācamana*' in *Upavīti*, should be done.

We can find these deliberations in more detail in the *Prayogagranthas* of the respective *Vedaśākhās* and *Sūtraśākhās*. Then why some of them which are important have been mentioned here in brief? It is because they are essential for retrospection which is necessary for some important clarifications regarding the *Upākarma Prayoga* taught by *sanātana Ārya Bhārata Maharshis* which can be obtained by comparison (of the *Prayogas*)

1) Why should *Upākarma* be observed? The *Maharshis* provide the answer stating as follows: By performing *Upākarma*, the *Vedas* which have been studied become refreshed again and become robust. Otherwise *vedas* get stale. So, if the *Vaidika Karmas* are performed giving no room for staleness and with refreshness accomplished, they lead to prosperity.

क्रियते छंदसां तेन पुनराध्यायनं परम् ।

अयातयामैश्छन्दोभिः यत् कर्म क्रियते द्विजैः ॥

क्रीडमानैरपि सदा तत्तेषां वृद्धिकारणम्॥

(कात्यायन)

But some who revere the *Vedas* deeply, raise

the following objection to the above answer as follows: "The *Vedas* are eternal literature ‘‘अनादिनिधना ह्येषा वागुत्सृष्टा स्वयम्भुवा’’ . *Vedas* do not undergo any *Vikāra*. They are the very breath of the Lord who is the embodiment of truth. They neither become stale nor get refreshed. When such is the case, there is no question of purifying them. So to state that *Upākarma* should be done to purify the *vedas* is far from truth. It amounts to an offence to the *Vedas*." Those who raise this objection, it seems, have not properly understood the opinion (intention) purport of our great *Ṛshis*. *Vedas* are a mass of divine knowledge, or a form of divine knowledge. In the main sense, there is no question of them becoming stale. But the mind of the person who studies the *Vedas* gets impure and if his disposition gets loathsome because of pollution, there will be no vigour in his *Adhyayana*, or strength or inspiration. In this sense it may be stated that *Vedas* get stale with reference to him. How can *Vedas* shine in a mind which has become dull? In this sense only, the study of the *Vedas* get stale. A few examples can be given here. *Ātma* is always pure. But if one's nature gets vicious, people call him wicked. If his nature becomes pure, he is called pure souled. In this sense the study of the *vedas* becomes worn out or faded. In this way, if the nature (of the person) is pure or impure, the *Ātma* is called pure or impure. So also

by reason of the inertia or vigour of the mind of the student of the *Vedas*, they also get stale or refreshed, say the *śāstras*. When one says that the *Vedas* get stale, the real sense is that the mind of the person who is studying that has become impure or inert.

(2) How does the rite of *Upākarma* make the study of *vedas* refreshed? How is the dullness of the mind removed? The answer to these questions can be seen in the discussion on the ritual of *Upākarma*. During *Upākarma* we worship, offer *tarpaṇa* etc to the deities of *Vedas* and *Ṛshis*. By their grace and blessings, the inertia of the mind and the body gets out, and brings about freshness. The holy bath in a great river, the touch and sight of gingelly, *akshatā* and water, the wearing of a new sacred thread and new clothes etc. during *Upākarma* cause freshness.

There is a tradition to call this *vrata* as ‘janivāradahabba’, as all people wear a new *Yajnopavīta* on the day of *Upākarma*. On that day, *Brahmacāris* wear a new *mauñji*, hold a new staff of the flame tree, wear a new *Kṛshṇājina* and a new *kaupīna* along with a new *Yajnopavīta*. All these are things which bring about inspiration of freshness.

There is a *śāstraic* precept and tradition which state that *Brahmacāris* should have their hair cut on the morning of *Upākarma*. ‘‘ब्रह्मचारिणां उपाकर्मणि

वपनमावश्यकम् (Vaidyanāthīya, Varṇāśramācāra kāṇḍa) The *Vaikhānasa Sūtra* says “श्रावण्यां पौर्णमास्यां शिष्यं वापयित्वा”

Question (3) Sometimes *Upākarma* falls on some days, *tithis* and *Nakshatras* which are prohibited for a haircut. For example *Pūrṇima* is a day which is not auspicious for anyone other than *yatis* for *vapana* (tonsure). Tuesday is also an inauspicious day for a haircut. But if *Upākarma* happens to fall on any of these days because it is mandated by the scriptures. By the power of *Upākarma parva*, the demerits related to haircut on prohibited days will get removed.

वैधे कर्मणि तु प्राप्ते कालदोषं न चिन्तयेत् ।  
सद्यः क्षौरं प्रकुर्वीत मातापित्रोः मृतौ तथा ॥

(4) While offering *tarpaṇa* to *Devatas* and *Rshis*, some people use both *akshatā* of rice and *tila*. This has the support of the scriptures also.

प्रजापति मुखान् देवान् एकैकं त्रिस्तिलोदकम् ।  
उद्धृत्य तर्पणं कुर्युः श्रावण्यां तैत्तिरीयकाः ॥

Some people are afraid that if *tila* is mixed (in this *tarpaṇa*), it becomes a *pitṛkarma*. This is not correct. "Only black *tila* is dear to *pitṛs*. White *tila* is dear to *devatās* and *tila* of mixed colours should be used for *tarpaṇa* to human beings."—says *devala smṛti*.

शुक्लैस्तु तर्पयेद्देवान् मनुष्यान् शबलैस्तिलैः॥

The purport of this is that *tarpaṇa* should be offered to *devarshis* with water mixed with *akshatā*. Or, with water, mixed with white gingelly and *akshata* to *Devatās*.

The (śāstraic) statements that while gingelly is best for *tarpaṇa* to Gods and black gingelly is so for *pitṛs* and *akshatās* for *devarshis* should not be construed to mean that they actually consume the *tila* and *akshatā* respectively. It is unfair to slight the *śāstrās* by taking the meaning in a literal sense. We see with our own eyes that the *tila* and *akshatā* are eaten by fish and other aquatic animals when *tarpaṇa* is given in water. *ŚrīRaṅgamahāguru* has expounded that when one says that *tila* and *akshatā* are dear to *devatās* and *Rshis*, it means that the sight and touch of *tila* and *akshatā* help the flowering of the inner spiritual centers inside our body and help to obtain their grace, and lead to spiritual realization. It is ridiculous to think that *pitṛs* and *devatas* who enjoy divine nectar, fill their bellies with *tila* and *akshatā*.

When *tila*, *akshatā* and other things are not available, *tarpaṇa* can be offered to them with mere water. When even water becomes unavailable, one may offer *tarpaṇa* with the flow of his pure mind, and *devatās* and *pitṛs* will feel pleased with that itself.

(5) Why should *tarpaṇa* be offered to *devatās* and *Ṛshis* on the day of *Upākarma*? It is just a service offered to them as a token of gratitude. It is indeed the *devatās* and *ṛshis* who have gifted us the *vedas* and *vaidik* rituals and have blessed us. We should offer grateful *tarpaṇa* to them every day. And it should be offered especially on the day of *Upākarma*, By their grace the inertia of the mind is removed and inspiration to perform *the Upākarma* of the *vedas* is obtained. Freshness is also obtained. Those who do not worship the *devatās* or *Ṛshis* will incur their curse. They will be enveloped by the stigma of ingratitude. "Śāstras say — "There is redemption for people who may commit *Brahmahatyā* and other sins. But, for an ungrateful person there is no redemption"

कृतघ्ने नास्ति निष्कृतिः

(6) Some people begin the study of only the *vedamantras* on the day of *Upākarma*. Some others begin the study of *vedāṅgas* also with the *vedas*. Some argue "*Vedāṅgās, purāṇas, Itihāsas* etc. are indeed great *śāstras* whose study has to be taken up. But the study of them should not begin on the day of *Upākarma*. It should be done on an other day stipulated for that exclusively." No doubt this argument is well reasoned. But those who do not begin the study of *Vedāṅgas, Itihāsas, Purāṇas*. etc., on other days, may begin on the day of *Upākarma*

itself (along with the *Vedas*), instead of totally giving them up. This will not be a blemish. Because they are also the detailed *Upabṛhmhaṇas* of the *Vedaṅgas* and the meaning of the *vedas*.

7) Some people have a custom of offering *Yajnopavīta* as *dāna* before the beginning of *Vedadhyayana* on the day of *Upākarmas*. This is quite in accordance with the *śāstras*. *Yajnopavīta* is one of many excellent *dravyās* which are giftworthy and, offering of that as *dāna* on that day is indeed special. Because of the merit obtained by gifting it, a special right is earned to wear a new one on that day.

(8) The custom of receiving *saktu* (powdered popped rice) and popped rice mixed with curds etc, as *prasāda* of *Ṛshis* and gods on that day is indeed good. These are auspicious *dravyas*, as the grace of the worshipped *devatās* and *ṛshis* who are dear to the *Vedapurusha* will have flown on them. The *śāstras* have prescribed them in the form of *naivedya* to *Ṛshis* and gods, as they (the *dravyas*) give *Tusṭi* and *Pusṭi* (satisfaction and nourishment) to the *Vedādhyayanamaṅgala* (The auspicious study of the *vedas*.)

(9) Some perform the *homa* 'pāhi trayodaśa' as an atonement for the *kālātītadosha* (demerits caused by delays) and then perform *utsarga*. The

day of *Upākarma* is important for *Utsarjana*. The treatise '*khādiragrhya*' says "तैषां तूत्सर्जनं कुर्यात् उपाकर्मदिने तथा" The *smṛti samuccaya* says उत्सर्जनं चेत् न करोति पुष्ये । सहैव कुर्यात् उभयं तथा तु । Some argue that the performance of the *homa* viz., '*pāhi no*' is not correct, since *Upākarma* also is an important day for *utsarjana*. They condemn those who perform '*pāhi homa*'. This is not right. Because the day of *Upākarma* is not the prime time for *utsarjana* but only a secondary time for it. There is a custom among some, who are *Medhārahitās* and who are unable to observe *utsarjana* in the proper time (i.e. in *Pushya māsa*) due to some difficulties. They do the *utsarjana* on the day of *Upākarma* itself. It can be only a secondary time and not the prime time. There is a rule that those who were unable to offer *arghya* to the sun at the prime time in *Sandhyāvandanam*, have to offer *prāyaścittā arghya* also during the secondary time. Likewise, those who are unable to do *utsarjana* at the right time and do it in the secondary time on the day of *Upākarma*, are right in observing atonement through *Prāyaścitta homa* etc. We feel that it is not wrong to do so. In this regard some people make a remark with instantly pleasing words. They say — "These days no one does *Vedādhyayana*. So they don't have to do *utsarjana* at all. Detailed deliberations for *Upākarma* are also not needed at

all". It is not right on their part to speak lightly and without any seriousness, who say "Wearing of the sacred thread just for the sake of it." (i.e. for the sake of formality of *śāstra*)

Even if one were to wear it just for the sake of *śāstra*, discipline, seriousness, devotion and modalities are a must. Otherwise it amounts to a drama of wearing the sacred with indifference and ostentation. It can be O.K. if at least a new sacred thread is put on, in the case of those who are unable to take up any ritual because of extreme difficulties. If time permits it is better such persons observe the other precepts of *Upākarma* and *utsarjana* at least briefly. With that they can at least have the auspicious remembrance of the *Rshis* and *devatās*. And some day the sense of duty to do *Vedādhyayana* to the possible extent in future, may awaken in *samskāris* (persons with good impressions). So, the *utsarjana* and *Upākarma vidhis* should never be given up as unnecessary.

1. We can find that *śāstras* prescribe that *Brahmacāris* should compulsorily have a haircut on account of *Upākarma*.

श्रावण्यां पौर्णमास्यां शिष्यं वापयित्वा

(वैखानसस्मृति)

क्षुरकर्म न कर्तव्यं चौलात्परमृतुत्रयम् ।

तथोपनयनादूर्ध्वं उपाकर्म विना क्वचित् ॥

This sacred act of *vāpana* (haircut) is called

*Āyushkarma* in our country (an act which increases one's life span). The *Jyotiśśāstra* lays down the rule that it has to be done only on certain days, *tithis* and *nakshatras*.

कुर्वीत बुध सोमयोः

मन्देऽभ्यङ्गं भृगौ क्षौरं ग्रहणेपि न दुष्यति

Hair cut is prohibited on Tuesdays and Saturdays. In the same way *Pūrṇima* is prohibited for those who are in the *āshramas* of householders and *Brahmacāris*, who wish long life. As we have noted earlier, *Upākarma* for *yajurvedi* falls on *Pūrṇima Tithi* only. Sometimes it may fall on a Tuesday or a Saturday also. Then is it correct that the *śāstras* make a rule that *Brahmacāris* should have a hair cut on the day of *Upākarma*, if that day comes under the list of prohibited days, some may ask. It should be noted that *śāstras* declare that *Brahmacāris* should have haircut on that day, without worrying about the *Kāladosha*, as the haircut has been ordained by the *śāstras*

वैधे कर्मणि सम्प्राप्ते कालदोषं न चिन्तयेत्

(वसिष्ठस्मृति)

How can the harmful effect of the inauspicious *Tithi* and *vāra* vanish just because it is permitted by the scriptures? some may ask. The answer is, the powerful auspicious effect of *Upākarma* will wipe out the above harmful effect and will cause a special auspicious effect on them.

Lay persons may object—"Why should one consider the *tithi*, *vāra* and *nakshatra* to have a hair cut? After all, the hair gets removed no matter what day it is done". We remember an incident here.

It was the time when the British had complete domination over India. The British occupied all the top posts in authority. A *Brahmacāri* was holding a good post in one such office. He did not have a facial shave for several days. He had postponed the *haircut* to *Upākarma*, which was nearing by a day or two. His head and face were covered with hair. The English officer had a lot of affection for him. The *Brahmacāri* also had a lot of respect and love for the officer, and enjoyed some freedom with him. One day, observing his bearded face, the officer asked him.

"Why haven't you had a facial shave? You have dirt all over your face?"

"I had a bath just now and I have washed my face well sir. It is clean only. There is not even a little dirt."

"Your face is covered with hair. Don't you think it is dirt?"

"How can clean hair be dirt Sir?"

"Then what it is but dirt?"

"Then why is that you have hair on your head."



Why haven't you had your head shaven completely, as it is also dirt?

"That is not dirt. I have washed my head well and applied scent on it".

"I have also washed my face well. The hair on it has no dirt. It is all clean, Sir".

The officer had to answer, but just smiled and kept quiet.

"Why should one have a haircut? If hair is washed regularly it will always be clean. Doesn't it give protection to the skull and facial skin?", one may ask. Yes it is true. But if the hair on the face is allowed to grow too much, it causes inconvenience. One has to take the trouble of cleaning it well every day. Further, the parts of the body which all people wish to look attractive, get covered by hair. Thus, from the point of view of both convenience and appearance, it is better to get it shaved, we wish to say. This is something agreeable to the lay man. But we see strange statements in our *śāstras* like if one has the hair cut according to precepts, it increases the life span. And if hair cut is had on forbidden days in forbidden places and in forbidden ways, there could be danger to the person and also to his parents, brothers and other close relatives, say the *śāstras* and traditions. We feel that this is just a result of superstition. We hear from traditional

families that if hair cut is had on Fridays there will danger to the mother, if hair cut is had on Thursdays the elder brother will be in danger. But we find that the mothers and elder brothers of many who deliberately get their hair cut on forbidden days, are safe and happy. So it can be proved that there is no relation between hair cut, *Tithi*, *vāra* and *nakshatra* etc." This is the charge of the rationalists. But we wish to say that the critics of this belief have not correctly grasped the opinion of the scriptural statements. The *śāstras* do not intend to state that danger to the life of the person having a hair cut on forbidden days and to his kin is certain. Their opinion is that it may create a condition of nature with proclivity to danger and may tend to lead to the path of some danger. It is possible that they can get out of danger inspite of such a would-be-danger possibility, either because of their past merits or even by the power of good deeds done thereafter. Just as every living being is stalked by forces which may cause harm, there are forces that give protection also. A conflict always exists between these forces in nature. The force that is more strong (at the particular context), triumphs. If rituals are performed during prohibited times and places, destructive forces get nourished. So, one should not indulge in deeds which nourish destructive forces, with the (casual) feeling that

protective forces are there anyhow. For example, health may get affected if a person moves around in minimum clothing during biting cold. But it may not affect some who are robust. By this, one should not conclude that there is no relation between health and cold environs. Again, many people may get affected, if they happen to be in the environs of contagious epidemics like cholera. Some people may survive in spite of such environs. So, it is not wise to move around in an environment of contagious diseases. Some hazards may not affect immediately but may cause trouble later, acting like slow poison. It has to be established only scientifically, whether they cause danger immediately or in course of time. Their existence (or otherwise) should not be decided by results seen by the mere eyes at that moment.

"Does the hair cut had by a person on the forbidden days of *Tithi*, *vāra* and *nakshatra* bring about undesirable changes, subtle or gross, in the nerves, *nāḍis* and brain etc. of the body or the *saptadhātus*? Has it brought about any undesirable results in the *Ādhibautika*, *Ādhyātmika* and *Ādhidaivika* spheres? Is any undesirable reaction detected immediately or later, in that person's disposition? Does the person possess the ability to stop such undesirable results or ward off such undesirable effects?" — These matters should be evaluated scientifically, and then only a conclusion

can be drawn. Without such a study one should not come to a hasty conclusion based on what is seen by the mere eyes, and infer that there is no relation between the time and *karma*, such as—"He had his hair cut on Friday. But his mother is still alive." etc.

The *Nāḍīvijñāna* (The science of the *nāḍis*) tells us that there is a relation between the act of hair cutting and the *Tithi*, *vāra*, *nakshatra*. So, it is safer to avoid a hair cut on such forbidden days. If hair cut becomes unavoidable on such forbidden days, the undesirable effects should be allayed by due *Śāntikarma* etc., and, a hair cut should be had again, at an auspicious time.

Also, one should make a study and find out whether any good results are obtained by having a hair cut on a good *vāra*, *Tithi* and whether health improves and longevity of life gets increased. **ŚrīRaṅgamahāguru** used to give an example to substantiate the point that having a haircut on best days is helpful for the enhancement of health and lifespan of a person. "Grown up trees and plants will gain in health and life span, if they are cut properly at the right time and at the right part (of their body) and thereafter they grow richly. This we see in nature, and the same applies to human beings also."

To this a disciple of the **Mahāguru** said — In

Russia people get their hair cut even on forbidden days. Yet they live longer than our countrymen. On the other hand, in India even people who get their hair cut on auspicious days do not live long. So there is no connection between *kālaśuddhi* (auspicious time-day) and hair cut". We remember what **ŚrīRaṅgamahāguru** had told in this regard. He said. "The reason for the longevity of the people of Russia is their body, country, nature, their food habits and the physical exercises etc, and not just because they have their hair cut on prohibited days. The dos and don'ts regarding Ayushkarma are not the same for all the countries and people of all natures. One should not conclude by just one or two incidents that are superficially visible to the eyes."

Even If *Upākarma* falls on a Saturday or a Tuesday or on a *Pūrṇima Tithi*, *Brahmacāris* should have *Ayushkarma* on that day itself. As the forces that nourish their dispositions are powerful on that day, the evil forces cannot cause any harm to them. By wearing the new *kaupīna*, *ajina*, new *yajnopavīta* and *danḍa*, the enthusiasm of freshness which is necessary for *vedārambha* sets in them.

2. "These days people do not study the *vedas* at all. When such is the case, is it not useless to observe *Upākarma* and *utsarjana* for a day or two in a year? Just as they have given up the study of the

*vedas*, is it not an honest step to give up *Upākarma* itself? — "This is another question.

The answer to this question is as follows: "anyhow they have to perform upākarma. It is better to understand it's secret and significance, and perform it meaningfully. Then it provides an inspiration to *Vedādhyayana*, the origin of *upākarma*, to the extent possible.

On seeing a sick person one should not say"—Any how this man is ill. Why should he be reminded of a good state of health?" Why should he be given emendations related to good health? So, he should not be neglected. *Upākarma* is an auspicious *parva* which reminds the necessity of studying the *Vedas*. Persons who have the right to do *Adhyayana* should observe it to the best of their capacity.

3. "These days people do not have enough time to perform *Upākarma* elaborately in the prescribed way. So can it be shortened.?"

Our answer to this is as follows:-

"One has to find enough time to perform such an important rite in the prescribed manner. If enough time does not become available due to unavoidable reasons, *Upākarma* must be performed at least briefly in the available time. At least the most important parts of it have to be observed. People do not give up eating food for the reason that

they do not have enough time. They take their food within the time available and protect their bodies. In the same way, *Upākarma* must be observed in keeping with their ability at least briefly, for the sake of guarding *Ātmasamskāra*. While doing so, one should have the discrimination as to what is principal and what is secondary. The most important part of *Upākarma* is the beginning of the study of the *vedas*. As a part of it, *Ṛshis* are offered worship, *tarpaṇa* and *homa*. The Wearing of a new sacred thread etc. enhances that. Those who have time constraints, should put on new *yajnopavīta*, remember the *Ṛshis* and chant with devotion the beginning *anuvākas* of their *vedaśākhās* and auspiciously conclude the rite of *Upākarma*. At least this much must be observed.

4. On *Śrāvaṇa Kṛshṇa Prathamā*, *Gāyatrī Japa* is done specially. It is called *Gāyatrī* festival. Is *Gāyatrī* festival a part of *Upākarma* or is it a different ritual?

Answer:- It is not a part of *Upākarma*. Still it is a very important ritual which is related to the study of the *vedas* like *Upākarma*.

Those who cannot observe *Upākarma* in a certain year because of *pitṛdīkṣa* etc., must perform (japa) of *Gāyatrī mantra* or *homa*. In this way, even though "*Gāyatrī*" is not a part of

*Upākarma*, still it is a very important rite related to the study of the *vedas*. It is an atonement-rite for a lapse called *mithyādhyayana*. *Mithyādhyayana* means a false study and a wasteful study. It is a study giving undesirable result instead of the intended good result. *Mithyādhyayana* is studying what is not be studied, and doing the mandatory *Adhyayana* in the manner which is not *śāstriya*. This is an offence against *vedamāta* (mother of *vedas*). To overcome this blemish, *Gāyatrī* should be specially remembered on that day. *Gāyatrī Japa* and *homa* etc should be done. *Gāyatrī mantra Japa* should be done numbering either one thousand and eight times, or one hundred and eight times etc, as prescribed. It should be done with enthusiasm, devotion and concentration. It is an offence to speed up reciting *mantras* just to reach the required number.

This *Gāyatrī pūja* is an important *parva*. It is a *parva* related to the rainy season, or the first *parva* of the new year . One should stay at the same place where *Upākarma* was observed, and the following day the real study of the *Vedas* should to be done to one's capacity. One should not travel to another place on the following day of *Gāyatrī parva*.

