

## Need to use a proper script for Samskritam

Even though Bhagavan understands all languages, the power of our Bharatiya languages cannot be matched in expressing our cultural values especially when rising to the plane of conversing with Bhagavan. Of them, the Samskrita bhasha is special in that it is pan-Bharatiya. Hence **our scriptures, anushtana paddhati-s and a lot of bhakti sahitya texts are in Samskrita only.**

We know that in Samskritam, especially for **anushtanam**, **sound/pronunciation** is important. Therefore one should **write and read sankalpa shloka-s** etc for anushtanam in an appropriate script which is capable of distinguishing all the sounds of Samskritam.

Now the Latin (English) script was evolved for other languages, and we all know the difficulty of correlating spelling and pronunciation even in English. Further, **more letters are required to write Samskritam** than English as there are more sounds in it. However, since Latin script is widely known, scholars felt it useful to create a **Latin-based transliteration system for Samskritam.**

In such a system, Latin letters which may be casually applied to different sounds need to be **differentiated**. For instance in Rama the first or second “a” may denote a long sound. This is differentiated as Rāma or Ramā. Similarly, other marks called diacritics are used to differentiate sounds as in āā īī ūū ṛṛ ḷḷ ṁṁ ḥḥ ṇṇ ṭṭ ḍḍ ṣṣ. Aspirated (mahāprāna) sounds are denoted with an additional h as in k/kh, g/gh, c/ch, j/jh, ṭ/ṭh, ḍ/ḍh, t/th, d/dh, p/ph, b/bh.

However, a system is useful only if followed correctly. **If diacritics or added h-s are ignored and we do not read with the intended pronunciation, then the transliteration is no longer useful for its intended purpose.** It is very easy to ignore diacritics as they are not in daily use. It would then have altogether been better to use a script which actually has different symbols for the sounds.

Therefore **it is strongly recommended to learn a Bharatiya script** like Devanagari, Grantha, Telugu, Kannada etc **which has clearly different letters to denote the various sounds.** Our documents are published in many such scripts.

However, with a view to help people who are not able to immediately learn such scripts, we are now publishing documents in Latin transliteration as well as per the system called International Alphabet of Sanskrit Transliteration (IAST). For the above reasons, people should use these as a temporary measure till they learn a Bharatiya script.

The Samskrita varnamala in IAST is given below with Devanagari equivalents:

a अ, ā आ, i इ, ī ई, u उ, ū ऊ, ṛ ॠ, ṝ ॡ, ḷ ॢ, ḹ ॣ

e ए, ai ऐ, o ओ, au औ, am अं, aḥ अः

ka क, kha ख, ga ग, gha घ, ṇa ङ

ca च, cha छ, ja ज, jha झ, ña ञ

ṭa ट, ṭha ठ, ḍa ड, ḍha ढ, ṇa ण

ta त, tha थ, da द, dha ध, na न

pa प, pha फ, ba ब, bha भ, ma म

ya य, ra र, la ल, va व, śa श, ṣa ष, sa स, ha ह

hara hara śaṅkara

om

jaya jaya śaṅkara



śrī-vedavyāsāya namaḥ

śrīmad-ādyā-śaṅkara-bhagavatpāda-  
paramparāgata-mūlāmnāya-sarvajña-pīṭham  
śrī-kāñcī-kāmakoti-pīṭham  
jagadguru-śrī-śaṅkarācārya-svāmi-śrīmaṭha-  
samsthānam

## bhīṣma-tarpaṇam

5126 viśvāsuḥ makaraḥ 13 māgha-śukla-aṣṭamī

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Shri Bhishma Pitamaha whose very nature was dharma undertook a vow of Brahmacharya and lived as a Brahmachari throughout his life. Hence, he did not have any descendants. He had the boon of icchamrtyu (choosing when he could leave his body). So he waited until Uttarayanam and shed his mortal on Shukla Ashtami in Magha masa. Therefore, all of us should offer Tarpanam and Arghyadanam for the sake of Bhishma on Magha masa Shukla Ashtami. Laugakshi Smṛti says that those who offer this Bhishma Tarpanam gets as much punya as feeding a thousand brahmanas.

aṣṭamī-divase caiva bhīṣma-tarpaṇamācaret|  
dadyāt pradadyād bhīṣmāya tarpaṇam prativatsaram||

tena tarpaṇa-mātreṇa sahasra-dvija-bhojane|  
yat phalaṁ kathitaṁ sadbhistadavāpnotyasamśayaḥ||

śuklāṣṭamyām tu māghasya dadyād bhīṣmāya yo jalam|  
samvatsara-kṛtaṁ pāpaṁ tat-kṣaṇādeva naśyati||

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brāhmaṇādyāśca ye varṇāḥ dadyurbhīṣmāya no jalam|  
saṁvatsara-kṛtaṁ teṣāṁ puṇyaṁ naśyati sattama||

Padma Puranam also warns that those who do not offer this Tarpana to Bhishma on Bhishmashtami, lose the punya accumulated during the entire year. Hence we should all offer Tarpanam and Arghyadanam for the sake of Pitamaha Bhishma and strive to become those who perform their duties well.

After completion of the anushtanas of nityakarmas such as morning Snanam, Sandhyavandanam everyone should do Tarpanam and Arghyadanam for Bhishma.

ācamanam| śuklāmbaṛadharaṁ + śāntaye| prāṇāyāmaḥ|  
mamopātta-samasta-durita-kṣaya-dvārā śrī-parameśvaraprītyartham  
śubhe śobhane muhūrte adya brahmaṇaḥ dvitīya-parārdhe śvetavarāha-  
kalpe vaivasvata-manvantare aṣṭāviṁśatitame kali-yuge prathame pāde  
jambū-dvīpe bhārata-varṣe bharatakhāṇḍe meroḥ dakṣiṇe pārsve asmin  
vartamāne vyāvahārikāṇaṁ prabhavādīnāṁ ṣaṣṭyāḥ saṁvatsarāṇaṁ  
madhye

viśvāvasu-nāma-saṁvatsare uttarāyaṇe hemanta-ṛtau makara-māgha-  
māse śukla-pakṣe aṣṭamyām śubhatithau induvāsarayuktāyām aśvinī-  
nakṣatra (12:31)yuktāyām sādhyā-yoga (09:08; śubha-yoga)yuktāyām  
bhadra-karaṇa (10:17; bava-karaṇa)yuktāyām evaṁ-guṇa-viśeṣaṇa-  
viśiṣṭāyām asyām aṣṭamyām

śubha-tithau śrī-parameśvara-prītyartham bhīṣmāṣṭamī-puṇya-kāle  
bhīṣma-tarpanaṁ bhīṣma-arghya-pradānaṁ ca kariṣye|

jīvat-pitā'pi kurvīta tarpanaṁ yama-bhīṣmayoḥ

(Those whose father is living must also offer Tarpanam for Yama and Bhishma)

According to this vachana, those whose father is alive should also offer Tarpanam to Bhishma. Those who do not have a father should wear the Yajnopavitam on the left and offer tarpanam via the Pitr Tirtha with water mixed with tila (sesame). Those whose father is alive should offer Tarpanam

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with just as in Pitr Tarpanam in Brahmajajna (with Yajnopavitam upto the left wrist and with only water) with Pitr Tirtha.

udaka-dāna-mantraḥ— (prācīnāvītī)

vaiyāghrapāda-gotrāya sāṅkṛtya-pravarāya ca|  
gaṅgā-putrāya bhīṣmāya pradāsyē'haṁ tilodakam|  
aputrāya dadāmyetat salilaṁ bhīṣma-varmaṇe||

bhīṣmaṁ tarpayāmi| bhīṣmaṁ tarpayāmi| bhīṣmaṁ tarpayāmi|

With the following Shlokas, everyone should offer Arghyadanam with water three times similar to how Arghyadanam is done in Sandhyavandanam.

(upavītī)

satya-vratāya śucaye gāṅgeyāya mahātmane|  
arghyaṁ dadāmi bhīṣmāya soma-vaṁśodbhavāya ca||

bhīṣmāya namaḥ idamarghyam| bhīṣmāya namaḥ idamarghyam| bhīṣmāya  
namaḥ idamarghyam|

vasūnāmavātārāya śāntanorātmajāya ca|  
arghyaṁ dadāmi bhīṣmāya ā-janma-brahmacāriṇe||

bhīṣmāya namaḥ idamarghyam| bhīṣmāya namaḥ idamarghyam| bhīṣmāya  
namaḥ idamarghyam|

## prārthanā

bhīṣmaḥ śāntanavo vīraḥ satya-vādī jitendriyaḥ|  
ābhiradbhiravāpnotu putra-pautrocitāḥ kriyāḥ||

With this shloka, offer Prarthana to Bhishma.

kāyena vācā manasendriyairvā  
buddhyā'tmanā vā prakṛte: svabhāvāt|  
karomi yadyat sakalaṁ parasmai  
nārāyaṇāyeti samarpayāmi||

anena mayā kṛtena bhīṣmāṣṭamī-puṇya-kāle bhīṣma-tarpaṇena bhīṣma-  
arghya-pradānena ca paramātmā supṛitāḥ suprasanno varado bhavatu||