

ABHIVADAYE

Preamble

Now a days even a three year old kids are tutored to tell dad, mom, address and school name and the parent feel proud. In earlier days specially amongst brahmans there wa saying that kamam puguvadurku munnal kalviyai puguttu (காமம் புகுவதற்கு முன்னால் கல்வியை புகுத்து). So they use to do sacred thread ceremony. Parents and guru whisper in the ears of the boy Gayatri mantra. After getting gayatri mantra the boy is supposed to do abhivadaye to elders for eeking the blessingss of elders. Abhivadaye is nothing but an introduction of self with lineage. But the present trend, leave aside abhivadaye, they even shorten the name from subramanaiam to mann or raman to ram . How many of us know the lineage? Even if they know lineage ,they ae ashamed of telling with a fear his friends will think of him as outdated and karnatakam (கர்நாடகம்) I have seen the vadhiyar conveniently say amukha gotra sarva rishi during pitru karma.

1.ABHIVADAYE NAMASKARAM:

It gives the introduction of the boy. After reciting the Abhivadaye Mantra, he prostrates before the elders and seeks their blessings.

2. AASEERVADAM - BLESSINGS:

After the function the elders bless the boy. "May this boy be like Vedavyasa in knowledge, Panini in grammar, Adi Shankara in vedanta, Janaka in Philosophy, Prahalatha in devotion, Harichandra in adhering to the truth, Bhishma in Brahmacharya and lead a long life like Markendeya

"Abhivaadaye" - meaning & procedure –

When we say "Abhivaadaye", it is a sort of self introduction. One should touch both ears while doing this and touch the left foot by the

right hand and the right foot by the left hand of an elder, parents or guru after mentioning the following.

(1)Pravaram (2) Gotram (3) The name of the Sutra Kaara or the authour whose rules one follows (4) The branch of the Veda one is learning (5) One's name (6) Addressing the other person.

I am giving a typical "Abhivaadaye".

"Abhivaadaye, Vaishwamaitra, Aghamarshana, Kaushika, Thrayaarisheya, Kaushika Gotrah, Apasthambha Sutrah, Yajussaakhaadhyaayee, Ramakrishna Sarmaa Naamaaham Asmi Bhoh!"

Meaning - I am saluting, having three paravara rishis Vishamitra, Aghamarshana and Kaushika, of Kaushika Gotra, following the rules or mannual of Apasthambha, learning the branch of Veda called Yajus. I am Ramakrishna Sarma by name. Your Honour.

The person addressed should do the Pratyabhivaadanam saying Aayushmaan Bhava Soumya Or Dirghaayushman Bhava keeping his hand in the blessing position. It is mentioned in the Smriti that one should not do Abhivaadanam to a person who does not know how to do the Pratyabhivaadanam.

Pravara - Imagine a big tree with several branches. Each branch may have two or more sub branches. These sub branches together are called pravaraas. The numberof pravara rishis vary from two to five. The person belonging to the same sub branch is called sa-gotra. Persons of two separate gotras mentioned in the pravara group are called samana-pravaras. According to ancient rules, one should not marry a girl belonging to the same gotra or same pravara. samaanagotraam samaanapravaraam na udvahet.

In the above example, a boy of Kousika Gotram should not marry a girl of Kousika Gotram or Viswamitra Gotram or Aghamarshana Gotram. Nowadays the pravara rule is not adhered to. However, other divisions like sects and subsects (Vadama, Brahacharanam etc.) came about due to difference in customs and manners.

The entire Veda is divided into saakhas or branches. These are riksaakha, yajussaakha, (further divided into krishna and sukla

which is not indicated in the Abhivadaye), saamasaakha and atharvasaakha. A student would be learning one of these saakhaas.

For each Veda Saakha there are manuals or rules for performing the rituals. These are called Shroutha Sutras. There are several such Sutras each authored by a particular rishi. When one says Apastambha Sutra, it means that he is following the manual authored by Apastambha.

There are 14 Shroutha Sutras meant for the performance of rituals mentioned in the Vedas. These are -

Rik - Saankalaayana and Aaswalaayana Krishna Yajus
Apastambha, Hiranyakesi, Bodhaayana, Bhaaradwaaja, Maanava,
Vaikhaanasa. Sukla Yajus- Kaathyaayana Saama - Masaka or
Aarsheya, Laatyayana, Draahyaayana Atharva - Vaithaana,
Kaushitaki

There are various other classes of Sutras which have nothing to do with Abhivadaye, such as Grihya Sutras, Dharma Sutras, Sulba Strs, Vyakarana Sutras, Brahma Sutras and so on.

But what is a Sutra?

A Sutra is a concise statement which could be easily memorised.

Its definition is:

**alpaaksharam asandigdham saaravat vishvathomukham /
asthobham anavadyam cha suthram suthravido viduh //**

"People learned in sutra literature say that a sutra should be concise and unambiguous, give the essence of the arguments on a topic but at the same time deal with all aspects of the question, be free from repetition and faultless."

The desire for brevity has made the sutras, particularly in Vedanta, unintelligible leading to divergent interpretations.

I shall end this dry subject in a humorous note.

Dealing with nityakarma or day to day practice to be observed by a Brahmana, there is a Sutra "shvaanam sprishtvaa snaanam aachareth", meaning "take bath after touching the dog".

There was a Brahmin who was very meticulous in obeying the Sutras. Every morning he would be searching for a dog to touch before taking his bath. Obviously, the correct meaning is that if you happen to touch a dog, you should take a bath.

concepts of customary law. They are known as the "angas" or limbs of the four Vedas, but are considered smriti.

There are three known groups of text called sutras: Shrautasutras, Grihyasutras and Dharmasutras, together known as the Kalpa Sutra, and are considered attached to the Vedas. (Outside the Kalpa Sutras are other independent texts, not attached to the Vedas, also called Dharmasutra and Grihyasutras) The Shrautasutras contain short passages of instruction for the performance of the elaborate rituals described in the Vedas. For example, they explain how to lay the sacrificial fire, or how to perform Chaturmasya. The authors of the Shrautasutras belonged to different schools of philosophy. Some of the important Shrautasutra works are: The Ashvalayana and Sankhayana, associated with the Rig-Veda (see Veda). The Jaimini, Manasaka, Latyayana, and Drahyayana, associated with the Sama Veda.

The Baudhayana, Manava, Bharadvaja, Apastamba and Hiranyakesin, associated with the black Yajur Veda. The Katyayana, associated with the white Yajur Veda.

The Kaushitaki and Vaitana, associated with the Atharva Veda. The Grihyasutras deal with household ceremonies or other rites performed with the domestic fire (see Agni) in daily life. As a rule, these ceremonies are not performed by priests but by the householder himself (see Ashram). The Grihyasutras instruct on both the household ceremonies and on sanskaras. They explain the ritual, the

Sutramantras used and the social aspects of the sanskaras. Most Grihyasutras begin with an explanation of the marriage ceremony (see Vivaha<). Some leave out funeral rites (see Antyeshti) as a sanskaras since the ceremony is considered inauspicious. Some of the important Grihyasutras are the Apastamba Grihyasutra, the Baudhayana Grihyasutra, the Ashvalayana Grihyasutra, the Sankhayana Grihyasutra, and the Gobhila Grihyasutra. The contents

of all these texts are similar, with minor differences in the performance of the ceremonies, since the authors belonged to different schools of philosophy.

The Dharmasutra deal with the rules of conduct and law. They are the oldest sources of Hindu law, with a chiefly religious point of view. They are closely related to the Vedas, from which they quote. Some important Dharmasutras are: The Gautama Dharmasutra, which has rules for interpreting texts, details about the ashrams, especially rules of conduct for the householder and information on the sanskaras, particularly the Upanayanam. It is one of the oldest Dharmasutras, and is studied by the followers of the Sama Veda (see Veda).

The Baudhayana Dharmasutra describes the differences in the religious practices followed in northern and southern India, and provides detailed information about the four castes (see Varna), and the five daily sacrifices (Panchamahayagya). It is studied by the followers of the black Yajur Veda (see Veda).

The Apastamba Dharmasutra enumerates the five unpardonable sins , and discusses certain technical terms and doctrines of Mimamsa. It is considered to be part of the black Yajur Veda (see Veda).

Certain other sources divide the Sutras into six categories, known as the Vedangas or limbs of the Vedas. They are the Shiksha, which describes phonetics; the Chandanas, Sutrawhich details metre and poetic rhythm; the Vyakarana, which deals with grammar; the Nirukta, which discusses etymology; the Kalpa, which explains religious practices; and the Jyotishi, which explains astronomy.

The first four works contribute to the correct recitation and understanding of the sacred texts. The last two deal with religious rites and duties and the appropriate seasons for their performance. A Brahmin must mention the sutra his family is associated with, while formally introducing himself with the 'Abhivadaye' Gotra

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