CHAPTER - V

SACRIFICE AS DEALT WITH IN THE DHARMAŞĪTRAS

The bulky Śrauta sacrifices were not easy to perform by the mass people. Besides, in these sacrifices the house holder is more or less a passive spectator or agent in the hands of the priests who perform everything. Again, these scarifices were performed only for a particular desired object. Therefore, the Aryans became attracted towards the performance of the five great daily sacrifices i.e., the Pañcamaḥāyajñas. Here, time, energy and wealth are needed no more. The house-holder can become the Chief agent and he can pay his gratitude to the creator, to the sages, to the Manes and to the whole universe together with the all
kinds of beings. As these are easy to perform and morally and spiritually more progressive than that of the Śrauta sacrifice, these attained popularity among the Aryans. Though some Brāhmaṇa books mention about these sacrifices, but in the books of Dharmasūtras as well as in the Dharmaśāstras a detail description of these are met with. These five great sacrifices are classified under the nitya or ‘obligatory sacrifice’. Every house holder should perform these five great sacrifices daily.

The five great daily sacrifice consist of the sacrifice to the Veda, sacrifice to Fathers, sacrifice to gods, sacrifice to beings and the sacrifice to men. These are termed as Brahmayajña, Pitṛyajña, Devayajña, Bhūtayajña and Manusyayajña respectively. In this regard the Śatapatha
Brāhmaṇa says\(^1\) — “there are only five mahāyajñas, they are like great sacrificial sessions, viz. the sacrifice to beings, the sacrifice to men, the sacrifice to Fathers, the sacrifice to gods, and the sacrifice to Brahman.”

In the Manusmṛti these are mentioned as \(^2\) “the self study consists of the Brahmayajña, daily offering of water consists of the Pitryajña, oblation to the fire consists of the Devayajña, scattering grains or food to beings consists of the Bhūtayajña, and the Manusyayajña, consists of the performing hospitality to the guest.” In the Yājñavalkyasmṛti (1.2.10) these sacrifices are called as the mahāmakhaḥ.

\(^1\) pañcāiva mahāyajñāḥ tānyeva mahāsattrāṇi bhūtayajño manusya yajñāḥ

\(^2\) adhyāpanam brahmāyajñāḥ pitryajñastu tarpaṇam /

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\(^1\) Satapatha Brāhmaṇa, 11.5.6.1

\(^2\) Manusmṛti, 3.70
BRAHMA-YAJÑA:

Generally, the meaning of the term ‘Brahma’ is the ‘Vedas’, the Supreme Being, the Theology and the religious penance or austerities or the sacred text. So, the activities of the Brahmayajña deals with these elements. This consists of the daily recitation of the Vedic text, which is called the Svādhyāya3 thus says in the Baudhāyanagṛhyasūtras. In different Dharmasūtras different procedure has been laid down for the performance of this sacrifice. However, sitting on the proper place the house holder may perform this sacrifice through Prāṇāyama, Śāvitr mantras, Vyāhṛtis and the recitation of certain Mantras of Vedas. In this connection he

3. aharaha svādhyāyaṁ kuryādprāṇavāstathaṁ brahmayajñā samāpnoti /

Baudhāyanagṛhyasūtra, 2.6.16
should pronounce the most sacred syllable 'OM'. It is the representative of all Vedas, which is all speech and the highest syllable. The Taïtiriya Aranyaka says that the householder shall conclude the Brahmayajña by reciting thrice a verse where adoration has been made to Brahma and other gods.  

This idea is also supported by the Āśvalāyanagrhyasūtra (3.3.4).

The water libations are offered to various deities in this sacrifices. This Svādhyāya should be performed daily, thus stated in the Gautamadharmasūtra.

4. namo brahmaṇe namostagnaye namaḥ prthivyaṁ nama oṣadhibhyah / namo vāce namo vāchaspataye namo viṣṇave bṛhate karomi // Taïtiriya Aranyaka, 2.10

5. nityasvādhyāyaḥ / Gautamadharmasūtra, 1.5.4
In Vedas, divine knowledge occupies a prominent position. The daily recitation of the Vedic text with proper ways increase the devotion to the Supreme being. Through the Prāṇāyama (i.e., restraint of breath) and the recitation of the Mahāvyāhṛti an inner sacrifice is possible in the heart of the house-holder. The earth (world of matter), mid world (world of life energies which sustain all life) and the heaven (world of mind) are represented by the three words ‘bhuḥ’, ‘bhuvah’ and ‘svah’ gradually.

The sacred syllable ‘OM’ indicates the divine protection (ava). The sun is the source of all energies. It is the creator of glory. So, he is paid homage with the help of Gāyatrī verse, which is the mother of all three Vedas. As this sacrifice is mostly connected with the recitation, so the
activities of vāk i.e., speech is most important. The soul expresses its thinking through speech. The conscious, intellect and mind help in this process. So, the house-holder recites the verses of the 'Śivasāmkalpa Sūkta' and the 'Puruṣa Sūkta' here. Thus he attains the purification of mind and speech. The fire in the form of knowledge destroys the sin and untruth from his mind. The recitation of the 'Puruṣa Sūkta' arises a sense of self-immolation or consecration for the benefit of society. Thus a co-

union is possible among the mind. Soul, intellect, speech and the divine spirit. By increasing the power of knowledge, it helps the house-holder to develop himself and society morally as well as spiritually.

6. Paraskaragrhyasūtra, p.481
It influenced the character of the human being with that of the manner
of Agni i.e., the shining and energetic quality; like the earth i.e., the
quality of nourishment; like the herbs i.e., the quality of giving sheltering
and feeding and like the Viṣṇu i.e., the quality of movement. With the
help of Svādhyāya, the Brahmayajña attains the glory of Jñāna-yajña.

The daily recitation of the Vedic mantras in a low voice is called the
‘Japa-yajña’. By this yajña the worshiper worshiped the god mentally
as well as spiritually. In the8 Tattiriya Upaniṣad (1-9) the ‘Svādhyāya’ is
regarded as the supplementary part of all other ritual activities.

7. svādhyāyah syājjapah /
Amarakosa, 2.7.46
8. rtaucha svādhyāya pravachane cha /
Tattiriya Upaniṣad, 1.9
DEVA-YAJÑA:

The ‘Deva-yajña’ is the worship of the gods done by morning and evening oblations to the fire. Both in the morning and evening the householder or his representative offers the oblations of coooked food fit for sacrifice into the fire by uttering the words: “To Agni Svāhā, To Soma Svāhā, To Prajāpati Svāhā!” etc. The Baudhāyanadharmaṣṭra States that, the Devayajña consists of offerings made into fire (of food or at least a fuel stick) with ‘Svāhā’ uttered after the name of the deities. According to different Grhya or Dharmasūtras the name of the deities are

9. Šāṅkhāyanagṛhyaṣṭra, 1.10.7
10. aharahah devebhyah svāhākuryādākāśṭhāttathātaṁ devayajñaiṁ samāpnoti / Baudhāyanadharmaṣṭra, 2.6.11.2
differently used in this connection. However, the name of the following
gods are generally mentioned in most of the Grhyasūtras i.e.,\textsuperscript{11} Agni,
Soma, Prajāpati, Dhanvantāri, Viśvedevas, Agni Sviṣṭakṛt, Anumati and
Brahman etc. In the morning,\textsuperscript{12} oblations should be given in the fire to
Sūrya and Prajāpati and in the evening this should be to the Agni and
Prajāpati. In this regard he has put a piece of wood on the fire and
sprinkled water poured round it. He again fills the vessel with water and
puts it at its proper place.

In this sacrifice the elements which make the body of the living
being are worshiped with adoration. The five elements of nature, which
are termed

\textsuperscript{11} Sāṅkhāyanagrhyahasūtra, 2.14.1,4
\textsuperscript{12} Āpastambagrhyasūtra, 3.7.1,21
as Pañcamahābhūtas – the earth, the water, the energy, the air and sky are worshiped differently through it. Agni is the main deity which resides in everything and keep them active. So, the oblations are given to Agni. It symbolizes that the whole creation moves only with the co-operation of different gods. The sprinkling of water around the fire signifies a pious and respectful life-style. The atmosphere of the house becomes free from being polluted due to the daily offerings of medicinal herbs. So, the sacrifice is also termed as a kind of medicinal experiment. Due to the trees, vegetation and other elements of Nature, Life vibrates in man.

Keeping this natural incidence in mind, a man should daily perform the

13. bhaiṣajya yajñāḥ vā ete /

Gopatha Brāhmaṇa, 1.19
‘Deva-yajña’. The daily performance of it arises a sense of gratitude towards the different divine forces of nature and together with this a sense of consecration and faith is also developed through it. It activates the divine forces and make the society a prosperous one.

BHŪTA-YAJṆA:

The offerings to all created things is called the ‘Bhūta-yajña’. The distribution of Balis (i.e., the offerings of food) in various places outside the fire is called the ‘Baliharaṇa’. In particular places to particular deities and beings, the house holder should offer Balis uttering the word ‘namah’. The house holder should offer Balis outside or inside the Agnīgāra, having well cleaned the ground. After that he should sprinkle water on
the ground. Then he offers the first Bali belongs to the Prthivī, the second to Vāyu, the third to the Viṣvedevas and the fourth to Prajāpati – thus said in the *Gobhilagṛhyasūtra*\textsuperscript{14}. After that he should offer Balis in different places to different deities and beings like Waters, herbs (oṣadhīs), Vanaspati, sky, kāma, manyu etc. Then a Bali should be offered to the host of Rākṣṭhasa on the heap of sweepings. The *Pāraskaragṛhyasūtra*, (2. 9.3-8) says that the first three Balis should be offered to the deities i.e., Parjanya, and Prthivī. After that it belongs to the different deities like Dhātr, Vīdhātr, Vāyu, Brahma, Antarikṣa, Sūrya, Viṣvedevas, and Viṣvebūtas, Uṣa and Bhūtapatī. The Balis are offered to the presiding

\textsuperscript{14} sa yat prathamaṁ nidadhāti sa pārthivo balirbhavatyatha yaddvitīyaṁ sa vāyavyo yat tṛtīyaṁ sa vaisāvadevo yaccaturthāṁ sa prājāpatyaḥ /

*Gobhilagṛhyasūtra*, 1.4.8
deities of different quarters of horizon. Though there are several differences in the description of *Bali-Haraṇa* i.e., *Bhūta-yajña* among the different Gṛhyasūtras yet, the *Manusmṛti* expresses that the house holder should offer Bali in this regard even to the¹⁵ dogs, the sinner, the eater of meats of dogs, the patient, the crows and worms etc.

Everybody shall be kind to all types of creatures. Because the whole creation and beings are associated with each other. To move the universe smoothly it is essential to maintain the co-operation among the different creatures, deities and beings. One shall not neglect the other because Earth is the mother of all. For the welfare of the society, it is necessary

¹⁵. *śunāṁca patitānāca śvapacāṁ pāparoṣaṁ / vāyaśāṇāṁ kṛṇāṁca śanakairnirvapedbhūvi //

*Manusmṛti*, 3.92
to get a feelings of oneness, having good will and beneficent attitudes,
towards each other. The offerings to deities and beings help the human
beings to enjoy with the attitudes of consecration. Thus, the sense of
equality, arises in the hearts of men. The qualities of morality, kindness,
unity, humanity, love and fellow fellings all are reflected through this
sacrifice. Service to man and the creature is service to gods–this type of
philosophy is reflected in this sacrifice.

**PITR-YAJÑA:**

The word ‘Pitr’ is derived from the root ‘Pā’ with the suffix ‘trch’.

The meaning of this word is ‘one who protects the son’ etc. The ancestors
or fore-fathers are also taken collectively with this word. It is a kind of.
worship to the Manes or fore-fathers. This type of worship has been done by the 'tarpaṇa' or by periodical funeral rites i.e., śrāddha. According to the Āpastambadharmaśāstra, (2.2.4.5) and some other authorities, the performance of the Pitṛyajña follows that of the Bhūtayajña. This Pitṛyajña has been performed by offering of libations of water, but one may take with it the rice, milk and fruits also. The Manu sāmṛti\textsuperscript{16} and Gautamadharmaśāstra\textsuperscript{17} also support this. During the performance of Bhūtayajña the house holder pours out the remnant of the vaiśvadeva food towards the south as an offering to the Manes, with the words

\begin{quote}
16. kuryādharaḥ śrāddhamannādye nodakena vā /
   payomūlapalairvāpi pitṛvyah prītimāvahan //
   Manusmṛti, 3.82

17. pitṛvyāscadakadānāṁ yathotsāhamanyat /
   Gautamadharmaśāstra, I.5.5
\end{quote}
Svadā to the Pitr. This is mentioned in the Pāraskara gṛhyaśūtra (2.9.9)
and the Gobhilagṛhyaśūtra (1.4.12). Here it is stated that the Pitṛyajña’s
Baliharṇa should take place in the South direction.

In the Pitṛyajña, the offerings are made in honour of the departed
spirits of dead ancestors. The offerings of water to the ancestors is called
the ‘tarpana’. This word is derived from the root ‘trp’ with the suffix
‘lyuṭ’ – means ‘to please’. Again the word ‘Sraddha’ is derived from the
root ‘Śrad’ with the suffix ‘an’ means ‘to faith’.

So, from the viewpoint of object ‘tarpana’ it is understood that by
this ancestors are pleased and from the viewpoint of manner it is ‘Sraddha’
because it is performed with faith and devotion. That’s why the periodical
‘Srāddha’ ceremonies are the expanding form of ‘tarpana’.

The root of the chain of human beings is their ancestors. For them the offsprings are able to perform the four ends of human life. It is a paying homage to them. Taking the libations of water, the Manes become pleased. The Manusmṛti says that whatever has been offered with faith to the Manes, the Manes get it in the next world in infinite and imperishable form. The pronunciation of the name of divine deities before and after the Pitryajña, protects the ritual from the evil spirit and turned the libation to the form of nectar. The daily performance of the tarpana to the ancestors help the human beings to remember about their qualities,

18. yad yaddadāti vidhivadsamyak śraddhāsamanvitaḥ /
        tat tat pīṭṝāṁ bhavati paratrānanantamakṣhyam //
    Manusmṛti, 3.275
activities and advises. Thus a mental relation become possible with them.

**MANUŚYA-YAṆA :**

The term *Manuśya* or *Nyayāṇa* is used for the rites of hospitality to the guests. So, the reception of the guests or the Brāhmaṇas is called the *Manuśyayajña*, it is supported by\textsuperscript{19} the *Baudhāyanagrhyasūtra*. The *Paraskaragrhyasūtra* states that\textsuperscript{20} the house holder having set apart some portion of the food should be given to a *Brāhmaṇa* with welcome properly, then to beggers and guests. After that young and old members of the family and afterwards the house holder and his wife should take meal.

The *Gautamadharmasūtra* (1.5.36) says that the *atithi* is one, who

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{19} *Baudhāyanagrhyasūtra*, 2.9.1.3
\item \textsuperscript{20} *Paraskaragrhyasūtra*, 2.9.14
\end{itemize}
lives in another village, stays in only one night and comes at the time of afternoon or evening. The Manusmṛti (3.102) also supports this idea.

The house holder should washed the feet of the guest. If there is not any special food in the house of that house holder, then he should fed him the general food. In this regard the house holder should made a friendly inquiry after that person’s health or welfare. Thus the Manuṣya-
yajña came to mean offering hospitality to guests. Brahmins, beggers etc.

In the Vedic culture the guest is regarded as the god. In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad it is found that the preceptor advised the disciple to treat his mother, his father and the guests as veritable gods. So, the hospitality to

21. matṛdevo bhava, pitṛdevo bhava, atithidevobhava /

_Taittirīya Upaniṣad, 1.11.2_
guest is regarded as the service to gods. It is as like as the offerings to
the gods. By giving sheltering and food to the hungry and thirsty people
as the form of guest, a sense of dedication is arised in the hearts of the
human being. The honouring of guest, reflects the sense of social service,
attitude of welfare of others, humanity and morality. It teaches that the
journey of life is not for oneself, but for the beneficent of others The
selfishless activity and thinking and doing welfare for the others leads
his life as well as the society towards the divine welfare. Thus it arises
the great sense that all should be happy and all should be well in health.

The Manusmrti (3.68-71) and other Dharmasāstras like Matsyapurāṇa
(52.15-16) etc. state that every house holder causes injury of different
types of animal in various purpose. The five daily sacrifices were used as remedy to remove the sins arising from that. He who perform these, according to proper rule, is never tainted by the sin of injuries arising from that. It is because daily performance of these sacrifices teach him that the whole world, human and non-human is one creation and so their must be a spirit of unity and one-ness. The daily activities of the human being should not only for himself but for others also. The five great sacrifices give this opportunity.

Man is a social animal. So it is needed for him to follow the principles and rules of society in a manner favourable to it. The unrestricted manner of life in modern time causes in the society the misery, battles and wars,
terrorism etc. Although physical science has gathered tremendous volume of information and scientific appliances, but due to the lack of practising the moral codes all these are not properly used for the welfare of the society. The five great sacrifices teaches that particular morality which can solve these problems. It helps to engage in both righteous conduct and action, where divinity is entrusted herewith.