
samskaaram
Practice & Preserve for Posterity

WHAT?

श्रद्धा – आदर :, गुरुश्रुत्याद् उपदेशेषु विश्वास :, स्पृहा, शुद्धि :, प्रत्यय : ।
श्राद्धं श्रद्धया पित्रादिभ्य : दत्तं, कृत्यं क्रियमाणं कर्म ॥

shraddhA -Adara:, gurushrutyAd upadesheShu vishvAsa:, spRuhA, shuddhi:, pratyaya: |
shrAddhaM shraddhayA pitrAdibhya: dattaM, kRutyaM kriyamANaM karma||

The word shrAddham is derived from the word "श्रद्धा shraddA", "आदर : Adara:" which means "faithful following".
Conviction in the vEdAs and teachings of the Guru, interest in the shAstrAs, observing purity and honouring the pitRus with love and faith is called "shrAddham श्राद्धं".

It calls for a deep understanding that we can connect with our manes with love (bhakti) and faith (shraddhA) called bhakti shraddhA, even after they are dead, and that they take a special body called pitRu and live in a special world called pitRu lOkA. When shrAddhams are performed, the offerings of til, water and pinDa reach them and satisfy them; so, they bless us with long life, good health, children/progeny, wealth and prosperity. We can never return the care that our parents have given us. The sacrifice they have made to give birth, take care of us when we were infants, and support us during our young age is endless. It is our duty to take care of them not only when they live but also after their life.

mrutA: shrAddham
The shrAddham that is performed on the death tithi of the parents is called "mRutA: shrAddham". This has to be performed only as an anna roopa shrAddham, preferably not as hiraNyam or pratinidhi (other substitute ways). "anna roopa shrAddham" consists of all the main parts; hOmam, brAhmaNa bhOjanam and pinDapradAnam. Hence it is complete in all respects and very satisfying for both the pitRus and the kartA.

Til and darbhA
Til and darbha are very important in a shrAddham.
Black Til and darbha are said to have emanated from varAha moorti, in order to keep evil forces away. Hence they are to be used frequently.

One who performs the shrAddham is called the kartA or dAtA.
The brAhmaNas who are invited and invoked for the ceremony are called bhOktA.
The son is called putra.
the son of a son is called pautra.
The son of a daughter is called dowhitra.

Types of shrAddham based on occurrence of events.

1. Abdeeka shrAddham: The shrAddham performed on the completion of the first year of death.
2. pratyAbdeeka shrAddham: The shrAddha performed every year on the tithi of the parents. It is also called vArshika shrAddham or mRutAha shrAddham
2. EkOddishTam: The shrAddha performed on the 11th day of death of a person.
3. SapinDeekaraNam: The shrAddha performed on the 12th day of death of a person.
4. amAvAsya or darsha shrAddham: The shrAddha performed on the amAvasya tithi of every month.
5. sankramaNa shrAddham: The shrAddha performed on the beginning of the 12 months.
6. yugAdi shrAddham: The shrAddha performed on the tithi of beginning of each of the 4 yugas.
7. manvAdi shrAddham: The shrAddha performed on the tithi of beginning of each of the 14 manvantaras.
8. tisrOshtakA shrAddham: poorvEdyu, aShTakA & anvashTaka shrAddhas of the 3 months of pausha, magha and phalguni.
9. mahALaya paksha shrAddham: The 15 pitRu paksha shrAddhas of the bhAdrapada month.
10. vyatipAta shrAddham: The shrAddham performed on the vyatipAta yogas of every month
11. vaidRuti shrAddham: The shrAddham performed on the vaidRuti yoga of every month.
12. nAndee shrAddham or vRuddhi shrAddham: A shrAddham to get the blessings of nAndee mukha pitRus performed before auspicious ceremonies like garbhadAna, pumsavana, seemantam, vivAham, jAtakarma, nAmakarana, annaprAsanam, chaulam, upanayanam, samAvartanam, prAjApatya vratam and

gRuhapravEsham.

Types of shrAddham based on place of performance:
The shrAddha performed at sacred river sides is called teertha shrAddham.
The shrAddha performed at gayA is called gayA shrAddham.

गंगा, शतद्रु, यमुना, विपाशा, सरस्वतीं, नैमिषगोमतीं, वा।
तत्रावगाह्यार्चनमादरेण कृत्वा पितॄणां दुरितानि हन्ति॥
gangaa, shatadru, yamunaa, vipaashaa, saraswateeM, naimiShagomateeM, vaa|
tatraavagaahyaarchanamaadareNa kRutvaa pitRUNaaM duritaani hanti||

Types of shrAddham based on the method of performance:
1. anna roopa shrAddham अन्न रूप श्राद्धम्
anna means cooked rice/food.T his is considered as the best and wholesome way of doing shrAddham.
Here, 3 or 4 brAhmaNas are invited and invoked to the shrAddha to be the pitRus, vishvEdAs and vishNu dEvAs, shrAddha homA is performed, brAhmaNas are given food, pinDa dAnam is given to the pitRus and blessings are taken from the brAhmaNas after giving dakShiNa them.
2 sankalpa shrAddham सन्कल्प श्राद्धम्
A shrAddha in which hOma is not done but brahamaNas are invited, invoked, offered cooked food and dakshiNa is called sankalpa shrAddham.
2. Ama roopa shrAddham आम रूप श्राद्धम्
Ama means uncooked rice/food. A shrAddha in which brAhmaNas are offered grains/cereals/raw vegetables so that the brAhmaNas and their family can eat for 3 days is called Ama shrAddham.
3. hiraNya roopa shrAddham or hEma shrAddham
hiraNya/hEma means gold, A shrAddha in which brAhmaNas are offered gold is called hiraNya shrAddham. This is done when anna,Ama shraddhas are not viable.

WHY?

The shrAddha ceremony should never be omitted.
1. sumantu glorifies shrAddham as follows: ((smRuti muktAphalam, shRAddha prashamsA, Page 591)
श्राद्धात् परतरं नान्यत् श्रेयस्करमुदाहृतम् । तस्मात् सर्वप्रयत्नेन श्राद्धं कुर्या द्विचक्षण :

इति ।
shrAddhAt parataraM nAnyat shreyaskaramudAhRutam | tasmAt sarvaprayatnena shrAddhaM kuryA dvichakShaNa: iti |
There is no other karmA that bestows so much prosperity as shrAddha karmA. Hence one who knows this should try with all his might to somehow perform shrAddha karmA for his parents.
2. dEvala smRuti says:
अरोग :, प्रकृतिस्थश्च, चिरायु :, पुत्रपौत्रवान्. अर्थवानर्थकामश्च श्राद्धकामो भवेदिह। परत्र च पराम् तुष्टिं लोकाम्श्च विविधान् शुभान् ।श्राद्धकृत् समवाप्नोति यशश्च विपुलं नर : इति।
aroga:, prakRutisthashcha, chirAyu:, putrapautravAn. arthavAnarthakAmashcha shrAddhakAmo bhavedihaI
paratra cha parAm tuShTiM lokAmshcha vividhAn shubhAn | shrAddhakRut samavApnoti yashashcha vipulaM nara: itiI
One who performs shrAddham will be without disease, he will be close to nature, have long life, have sons and grandsons, get riches if he desires so, will have abundant happiness, gain good name and fame, rule the many esteemed worlds.
3. pitRu geetam or pitRu gAnam; VishNu purANam 3.14.21 to 31
Given below is the excerpt from the discussion between sanatkumAra and Sage Ourva about the glories of performing shrAddham. SanatkumAra expounds to Ourva the song of the pitRus, which they sing yearning for their son's offering of til, annam and water.

२१ पितृ गीतान्तथैवात्र श्लोकांस्तान्छृणु पार्थिव ।
श्रुत्वा तथैव भवता भाव्यं तत्रादुतात्मना ॥
२२ अपि धन्य : कुले जायादस्माकं मतिमान्नर : ।
अकुर्वन्वित्तशाठ्यं य : पिण्डान्नो निर्वपिष्यति ॥
२३ रत्नं वस्त्रं महायानं सर्वभागादिकं वसु ।
विभवे सति विप्रेभ्यो योऽस्मानुद्दिश्य दास्यति ॥
२४ अन्नेन वा यथा शक्त्या कालेऽस्मिन्भक्तिनम्रधी : ।
भोजयिष्यति विप्राग्न्यान्स्तन्मात्रविभवो नर : ॥
२५ असमर्थोऽन्नदानस्य धान्यमामं स्वशक्ति : ।
प्रदास्यति द्विजाग्नयेभ्य : स्वल्पाल्पां वापि दक्षिणाम् ॥
२६ तत्राप्य सामर्थ्ययुत : कराग्राग्रस्थितांस्थिलान् ।
प्रणम्य द्विज मुख्याय कस्मैचिद्भूप दास्यति ॥

२७ तिलैसप्ताष्टभिर्वापि समवेतम् जलाञ्जलिम् ।
भक्तिनम्रस्समुद्धिश्य भुव्यस्माकं प्रदास्यति ॥
२८ यत : कुर्ताश्चत्सम्प्राप्य गोभ्यो वापि गवाह्निकम् ।
अभावे प्रीणयन्नस्माञ्च्छ्रद्धायुक्त : प्रदास्यति ॥
२९ सर्वा भावे वनं गत्वा कक्षमूलप्रदर्शक : ।
सूर्यादिलोक पालानामिदमुच्चैर्वदिष्यति ॥
३० न मेऽस्ति वित्तं न धनं च नान्यच्च्राद्धोपयोग्यं स्वपितॄन्नतोऽस्मि ।
तृप्यन्तु भक्त्या पितरो मयैतौ कृतौ भुजौ वर्त्मनि मारुतस्य ॥
३१ इत्येतत्पितृभिर्गीतं भावाभाव प्रयोजनम् ।
य : करोति कृतं तेन श्राद्धं भवति पार्थिव ॥

21 Dear ParthivA, Now you listen to the shloka sung by the pitRus and then perform the shrAddha karmA accordingly.
22 The pitRu gaNas ask if " In my kula, will there be born any intellectual and virtuous purusha man who will reduce his desire for money and give me pinDadAnam?"
23 The pitrRus ask " if he is rich, will he give the brAhmaNas in a shrAddham, with gems, clothes, vehicle, and a variety of dishes for a hearty meal ?"
24 The pitRus ask " If a kartA can afford to give only clothes and food, then will he perform with devotion and concentration, the shrAddham and offer food for the best brAhmaNas ?"
25 The pitrus ask " If he does not have the capacity to provide food to the brAhamaNas then can he at least give them raw grains and a little money (dakshiNa) to them."
26 The pitRus ask " If he cannot afford that also can he at least prostrate a few eligible brAhmaNas and give them one handful of til ?"
27 The pitRus ask, " Or will he at least give an offering of water and til {tarpaNam}
28 The pitRus ask, "Or if there is obstruction in doing tarpaNam also, will he atleast give one day's food for the cows ?"
29 The pitRus say " Lastly, if he cannot afford any of the above items, then let him spread his arms high praying to the sun Sod {soorya} and the dikpAlakAs with a loud voice saying "I don't have the money, or materials or any other way for doing shrAddham, so I am praying to the pitRus to accept my bhakti devotion towards them as their food. I have stretched out both my arms unto the sky"

WHEN?

shrAddha tithi :- finding the day of the shrAddha
The mRutAha shrAddham (of parents) has to be performed in the same tithi, and paksha corresponding to the date of death of the parents. If there are 2 tithis in the same month, then the second tithi is to be considered for doing shrAddh.

Time of the shrAddham:
dEvala smRuti says: देवल स्मृति :
पूर्वाह्णे दैविकं कर्म अपराह्णे तु पैतृकम् ।
ऐकोद्दिष्टं तु मध्याह्णे प्रातर्वृद्धिनिमित्तकम् इति ॥
dEva karmAs should be performed in the early morning and the forenoon time. shrAddham is performed in the afternoon/ aparAhnNa kALam (1:12 p.m. to 3:36 p.m.)
The EkOddiShTa shrAddham is performed on the 11 th day in mAdhyAhnika kAlam (10:42 a.m. to 1:12 p.m
nAndee shrAddham is performed in the prAta: kAlam between 6:00 a.m. and 8: 30a.m.

HOW?

1. shrAdhdha paksham

The kartA should observe special discipline for a paksha (15 days) or 1 week or at least 3 days before the shrAddham. He should not shave and he should eat only one time meals. He should not have an oil bath during a week before the shrAddha tithi.
KartA should not eat parAnnam (food in other people's house or at hotels) for 15 days before the shrAddha. He can however eat at the following houses:- guru, uncle, sister, and brother.

2. Inviting bhOktA/swAmigal/brAhmanArtam in a shrAddA
a. Brothers should not be bhoktAs in a shrAddha. Only one can sit for shrAddha.
b. One who does not have wife but who has a son can sit for a shrAddha
c. One whose wife is bahiShTai (is in her menstrual cycle) should not sit for a shrAddha

d. A sick person, one who has not read the vedAs, and one who pleads to be a bhOktA should not be invited for a shrAddha.
e. A brAhmaNa whose wife is more than 3 months pregnant should also not be invited for a shrAddha.
f. One who has not completed the Abdeeka shrAddha (first annual ceremony of his parents) and the one who has shaved in the morning should also not be invited for a shrAddha.
g. The younger bhOktAs should be invoked as pitRus and the elder bhOktAs should be invoked as viShvEdEvA.
h. After partaking the meal in a shrAddha, the bhOkta should not eat anything else during the day.

3. kartA's duties in the morning of the shrAddha day
a. The kartA should not use a tooth brush to brush his teeth on the day before the shrAddham and on the day of the shrAddham
b. He should have a head bath and wear the dhOti uttaryam (vastra) that is rinsed and put to dry on the shrAddha day morning.
c. He should perform sandhyAvandana, mAdhyAhnnika, dEva poojA before the shrAddha. During the shrAddha sounds of bell or iron metals should be avoided as they would drive away the pitRus.
d. kartA should start the shrAddha with new yagyOpaveeta
e. He should perform the shrAddha with concentration and sincerity. He should not get angry or throw words on the shrAddha day.
f. He should treat the bhOktAs as Gods.
g. He should arrange for the oil bath and dhOtis for the bhOktAs and the kartA should give such dhOtis to the bhOktAs as he himself would wear. If he cannot afford clothes atleast let him give a set of yagyOpaveeta.

4. Rules for the kartA and bhOktA
1. bRuhaspati smRuti says:
तां निशां ब्रह्मचारी स्यात् श्राद्धकृत् श्राद्धिकैस्सह ।
अन्यथा वर्तमानौ तौ स्याताम् निरयगामिनौ इति ॥
The person performing the shrAddha and the person who has partaken meals of the shrAddha both should observe brahmacharyam (celibacy) in the night of the shrAddham day.
2. matsya Rushi says:

पुनर्भोजन मध्वानं यानमाय् असमैथुने ।
श्राद्धकृत् श्राद्धभुक्चैव सर्वमेतद्विवर्जयेत् ।
स्वाध्यायं कलहं चैव दिवास्वापं च स्वेच्छया इति ।
On the day of the shrAddha, both the kartA and the bhOktA should not eat again the whole day after they have eaten the shrAddha meal. They should not travel anywhere, go in vehicles, do exercise, or have conjugal relationships. He should also not eat betel leaves , have oil bath, brush teeth or shave.
3 bhavishya purANam; yama smRuti (on evening sandhyAvandanam)
दशकृत्व : पिबेच्चापो गायत्र्या श्राद्धभुग्द्विज : । तत : सन्ध्यामुपासीत जपेच्च जुहुयादपि इति।
dashakRutva: pibechchApo gAyatryA shrAddhabhugdvija: | tata: sandhyAmupAseeta japechcha juhuyAdapi iti|
The bhOktA should in the evening first drink a glass of water after uttering gAyatree mantra 10 times. After that he can do his sandhyA, daily hOma etc. The gAyatree in this sandhyA japa should be recited 10 times only.
4. Preparing food for the bhOktAs (annam)
a.The food (annam) for a shrAddha should not be prepared by a servant. It has to be prepared by bandhus (relatives of the kartA)
b. The food should not be prepared by menstruating women.
c. Food should not be prepared wearing a wet cloth or dress.
d. Food should not be prepared by pregnant women or sick people.
e. Food should not be prepared laughing, crying or keeping the hair open.
f. The vessels used should be cleaned well with cow dung or they should be new.
g. Iron vessels should not be used to cook the shrAddha food.
h. Rice (annam) should be cooked in the last after all other items are cooked.
i. All the food prepared should be offered to God as naivedyam.
j. Food items allowed for a shrAddha:
1. Cereals and Pulses: Rice, Wheat, Udad Dal, black til, Moong, moong dAl
2. Vegetables: Bitter gourd, curry leaves, lime, banana vegetable, indian broad beans (avarakkai) snake gourd, turkey berry (sundakkai), yellow berried nightshade (kandan kattiri), colocasia root (sEppankizhangu), elephant foot yam (sEnakizhangu), sweet potato, banana stem (vAzhai tanDu), coconut, chinese potato (koorkA;sirukkizhangu), ginger, gooseberry, jackfruit, pirandai (adamant creeper), tulasi for neivedyam
3. Fruits: Grapes, banana fruit, jackfruit, mango, pomegranate,
4. Spices: Salt, chilly, jeera, ilAichi (cardomom), pepper, dried ginger

(sunth/sukku), clove, jAiphal (jAdikkai), mustard, tamarind, betel leaves..
5. Oils and ghee: Cow ghee, til oil,
6. Milk products and jaggery: Cow milk, cow curd, jaggery, honey
h. Food items not allowed for a shrAddham:
Kidney beans, asafotedia, drumsticks, tuvar dAl, bottle gourd, banana flower, radish, onion, garlic, buffalo milk, buffalo curd, buffalo ghee

5. Washing the feet of the bhOktAs (pAdaprakshALanam)
a. It is believed that the pitRus and dEvAs are coming home from their respective lokAs to the house for the shrAddh, hence they are invoked with the following hospitality.
b. Before washing the bhOktAs feet and serving food, the floor should be wiped with water in the shape of a square for viShvEdEvas and in the shape of a circle for the pitRus.
c. Then in that place, Asanam is made by putting darbha, white rice and til. Then the brAhmaNas (bhOktAs) come and stand in their respective positions.
d. He should use cow dung and water to wash their feet, and he should wash only upto the ankle not above the ankle and under the feet. He should not wash their feet with the pavitram in his hands. At that time he should remove it from his fingers and fix it on top of his right ear
6. AvAhanam and feeding the bhOktAs (brAhmaNa bhOjanam)
The seat for the brAhmaNas should be purified by wiping it with cowdung and water, in the shape of a square for vishvEdEvAs and circle for pitRus. PitRus are invoked by putting some black til on the brahmaNa starting from head and down upto his leg. VisvEdEvas are invoked by putting some rice on the right leg of the brAhmaNa and clockwise around him.
arghya grahaNam: Arghya pAtras should be filled with arghya and kept closed. arghya should be offered to the south of the agni for vishvEdEvAs and shri mahAviShNu. arghya should be offered to the pitRus in another arghya pAtra. Food has to be served to them in 2 big banana leaves. All the items prepared must be placed in the leaf. After some mantras, the brAhmaNas should start eating. They should not touch each other. They should not talk to each other. They should eat quietly. They should eat slowly and have a full stomach. They should show with their finger which item they want. The agni should not be extinguished until the brAhmaNas have completed their meal.
abhishravaNam: While the bhOktAs are having the meal, abhishravaNa

mantrAs have to be recited. abhishravana means “causing someone to hear closely”. Veda mantras that satisfy the pitRus and keep evil forces away are recited in abhishravana. The abhisravaNa mantras are generally from the taittireeya samhitA and brAhmaNa. They include one or many of these mantras: vEdOdaya, purushasuktam, uttara nArAyanam, mahAnArAyanam, Rutagum satyam, rakshOgnam, rakshOhaNO valagahana:, sOmAya pitrumatE, ushantastvA havAmaha ushanta:, bhakshEhi mAvisha, dhruvAsi dharuNA stRutA, agna udadhe yA ta ishu, shirO vAEtad yagyasya, asAvAdityo asmin lOka: , santatirvA ete grahA:, Eka vimsha Esha bhavat, indrO vritragum vritvA, vaishvadEvEna vai prajApati:, agnayE dEvEbhya:, ushantastvA havAmaha, treenAcheekEtam and ruchAm prAchee.
** This abhishravaNam should not be done for EkOddiShTam, sapinDeekaranam, mAsikam, anumAsikam, nAndee and gayA shrAddhas.

A rakshA mantrA is also recited by spreading some sesame seeds.
yagyaeshvaro yagyasamstneta bhoktavyatma hariishwarost.
tatsanidhananadpyanto sadyo rakhanshyashenanyasurash sarve.
‘The enjoyer of the fruit of the entire fire sacrifice, the Lord of the Yagya Bhagavan , Sri Hari is present here. Hence, on account of his presence let all the demons and asura flee from here. …..Varaaha Purana: 14:32
After the brAhmaNas have finished their meal, their left over leaf plates should be picked up and buried inside the ground. The brAhmaNas say swasti vAchanas. Let the kartA give the bhOktAs enough dakShiNa as he can afford. The kartA and the family members take their blessings by prostrating them.

7. pinDa pradanam:
After that pinda pradAnam is given to the pitRus. After the pinDa pradAnam, the eating place should be cleaned and wiped with cowdung and water.
8. pitRu sEsham:
The kartA and the family members can now eat the food which is called pitRu sEsham
9. On the day following the shrAddh tithi, “parEhNi tarpaNam” should be performed. This parEhni tarpaNam should not be performed for sapiNdeekaram, mAseekam, nAndi or Abdeekam. It is only for the annual shrAddh (vArsheeka shrAddham). It should be performed in the brahma muhurtam before sandhyA kAlam before having bath. If missed, then after

sunrise, first snAnam and sandhyAvandanam should be performed, then only tarpaNam has to be performed.

EXCEPTIONS

dEvala smRuti says
पात्राभावे परं कृत्वा पितृयज्ञविधिं नर : । निर्देश्याप्यन्नमृद्धृत्य यत्र पात्रं गति : ।
पात्राभावे क्षिपेदग्नौ गवे दद्यादथाप्सु वा । न तु प्राप्तस्य पोऽस्ति पैतृकस्य विशेषत : इति ।
pAtrAbhAve paraM kRutvA pitRuyaj~javidhiM nara: |
nirdeshyApyannamRuddhRutya yatra pAtraM gati: | pAtrAbhAve kShipedagnau gave dadyaadathApsu vA | na tu prAptasya po&sti paitRukasya visheShata: iti|
If the kartA of a shrAddham is unable to find an eligible brAhmaNa to be a bhOktA for a shrAddham, then he should do the pitRu yagya hOma, and take the anna (food) prepared in a vessel and go the place where brAhmaNass are found and donate it there. If they are also not available then, the annam should be put inside the hOma agni or it can be offered to cows, or immersed in a river. These alternatives are given so that a shrAddham should not at all be omitted because of non-availability of brAhmaNas.


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