

THE IMPORTANCE OF PITAR PAKSH

by
T'ZORBA - The Mystic From India
Ramesh Bhatnagar

From 12th September, 1992 to 26th September, 1992 during the month of Ashwin, Hindus all over the world will be performing "Shradh" to their dear departed ancestors e.g. parents and fore-parents.

SHRADH: means - an act of devotion, the offering of water, food & clothes to the Brahman (learned men) in the honour of ancestors.

The Dark fortnight of the Ashwin month of the Hindu Calender is called PITAR PAKSH. In these fifteen days Hindus offer their devotion to their ancestors who are dead, and because of their labour, pain and sufferings and also well being they are in this world called **MRITYULOK.**

SIGNIFICANCE:-

According to Hindu scriptures, Humans have three types of (Rran) Debts to pay for namely - (1) Devran - Debt toward Deities/God; (2) Rishiran - Debt toward the Saints and (3) Pitar-ran - Debt toward ancestors/parents/fore-parents. From all these three Debts Pitar-ran is said to the highest and very important to repay, because parents/foreparents and ancestors are physical Devtas and Devis - Living God. It is due to them and their sufferings, pain, understanding of situations and circumstances we are here on Earth-existence. And to repay their debt is the most important of all - Not repaying this debt is living in selfishness. One can

repay this debt by performing SHRADH. When a person is cremated rituals performed then are also in the category of performing SHRADH. Performing PINDI-DAN is also SHRADH. Hence, PITAR PAKSH is a unification of dates fixed by our scriptures, for one dies on a specific day of any fortnight of the year, Shradh is performed on the exact date (called TITHI) of the PITAR PAKSH.

For Example: If your beloved died on the 26th August, 1990, this date the TITHI was "SHASATHI" the 6th day of the fortnight SHRADH should be performed on the "SHASHTHI" of the PITAR PAKSH.

In recent time, PITAR PAKSH has being given undue influences from the so-called Pundits, with many DO'S and DO NOT'S. Religious ceremonies have been prohibited by them, whereas such rituals should not be stopped in anyway. For example, if a person is fasting toward a God/Goddess, one should NOT stop his/her devotion, Jal offerings should be continued alongwith, meditation, Havan and other such rituals pertaining to PRAYERS.

During PITAR PAKSH, one must perform SHRADH for his ancestors, by offering water, Black tilli, Black tilli flowers, Dhan, rice, milk etc. (No other flowers should be used). The technique is fixed in our scriptures. It is said that by offering food to COWS, DOGS and CROWS one can perform

SHRADH. Later, the able person should also invite learned Brahmin, Purohit, etc. and feed them accordingly. This ritual should be performed at mid-day (noon time). By performing SHRADH one satisfies his/her ancestors for one year, and gets blessings from them in the shape of health, wealth and prosperity.

RESPONSIBLE PERSON TO PERFORM SHRADH:

The sole responsibility is to the SON. If one has no sons, then the son of the daughter is the next of kin responsible. Even if one has no son to his daughter then any other person can perform this ritual. If a father has many sons, the sole responsibility lies on the eldest son. If the sons have separated they should perform only one SHRADH together and not individually. This is the reason why a SON is considered very important to have amongst Hindus, if there is no SON(S) one is endangered to have his name stopped after him - The end of his dynasty.

A grandson or great grandson can be replaced to perform this ritual. In the absence of all such relatives a wife can perform this ritual, and vice-versa too. But if the son is living then a husband/wife should not do this ritual. Our Hindu scriptures have been very selective in performing such rituals and practices. In summary it can be said that there should be NO Hindu home without a son where after death

there will be no way possible to get SHRADH, Jal offerings, Pindidaan etc. For every human (man or woman) should try to improve their hereafter - PARLOK while they are living. It is also suggested that it is wise to adopt a son for such rituals - who belongs to the same nation and caste.

Human life with such super-normal practices has made a Hindu Social Life of great importance. SHRADH has a special category in Hinduism. The Puraans are fill with numerous stories (Katha) on this subject - extra -ordinaire! The theory and practice of "DHARMA" has praised SHRADH to it's Zenith!

Even in this space-age, it is surprising to notice that the Hindus has an unbroken/unbreakable bond to their ancestors, such practices can not be witnessed in any other religion. It will be impossible to notice no Hindu household on Earth where SHRADH is not a way of life, it is the back bone of US-HINDUS. Even in weddings/religious ceremonies names of ancestors is called upon with due respect and honour.

METHOD OF PERFORMING SHRADH:-

As it has been said above, about the three debts, during the day one should offer Jal to Devtas, Devi, Rishis and then to ancestors. SHRADH is usually performed while standing knee deep in a river or sea. Tarpan (offering of Jal (water))

is performed by cupping both hands together, facing South. While performing Tarpan, one should call upon all known and unknown ancestors, namely:- father, grandfather, great grandfather, mother, grandmother, great grand mother, (grandparents from both sides). Apart from the above, one can also perform Tarpan to father brothers, mother brothers, parents-in-law and all such known and unknown ancestors.

Although all Amawasya (one day preceding new moon) has been considered excellent to perform SHRADH, on the other, however, the Amawasya of PITAR-PAKSH is highly recommended for PITAR-SHRADH meaning father side ancestors. On the "Naumi" the 9th day of PITAR PAKSH - mother SHRADH is instructed alongwith mother side ancestors.

SACRED PLACES TO PERFORM SHRADH:

"GAYA" city in BIHAR, INDIA is allocated for such rituals - here on the banks of PHALGU RIVER is a tirth (holy place) called VISHNUPAD. It is said in our scriptures that if one perform SHRADH to his/her ancestors in this holy place during PITAR PAKSH one can get all his ancestors release from the spirit world etc. After performing SHRADH at G A Y A one also releases himself forever from performing SHRADH. GAYA is only for father side ancestors. However, on the other side, mother side

SHRADH is highly recommended in SIDHPUR in KATHIAWAR in Gujrat.

One can repay all his/her debt toward ones mother by performing SHRADH here - forever.

Motherly debt can be repaid forever by performing mother side SHRADH here.

DUTIES DURING PITAR PAKSH:

Every Hindu household should remember their ancestors with due respect during Pitar Paksh. and should commend their performance on Earth (MRITYULOK). With great patience and honesty one should perform SHRADH. During Pitar Paksh one should not put oil in his/her hair (this condition can be over-looked due to medical reasons), one should avoid using cosmetics; etc. During PITAR PAKSH the following are not recommended to undertake - to buy new shoes, to lay a foundation for a building, no wedding ceremonies are performed, one should not lay a new roof on a building etc. One should observe absolute celibacy during these fifteen days. Only after Tarpan one should eat. Feeding the unfortunates is highly recommended.

BENEFITS OF PITAR PAKSH:

Hindu scriptures says that by performing rituals during Pitar Paksh, one gets blessings from ancestors in the shape of -

longevity, sons, fame, begets heaven hereafter, strength, wealth, cattles and land luxurious living with a lot of prosperity and happiness.

It is also said that ancestors come down form PITARLOK to PRITHVILOK (Earth) hoping that their relatives now here will satisfy them by performing SHRADH to them if no ritual is performed they shraap them and return with regret. So it is said:-

It is the Dharma of every Hindu household to perform SHRADH to their ancestors during PITAR PAKSH. They should do PINDIDAAN AND TARPAN. Whatever one can afford should be offered to their ancestors.

It is also said that wherever SHRADH is not performed during PITAR PAKSH for ancestors in that place or Dynasty no high-spirited son is born. Sickness and misery takes over; not only so, that Dynasty is doomed.

RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES DURING PITAR PAKSH:-

15th September '92
- Sri Ganesh Chaturthi
(Tuesday)

22nd September '92
- Indira Ekadashi
(Tuesday)

24th September '92
- Pradosh Vrat
Shivji Puja
(Thursday)

*"Never was there a time in the past in which we cease to exist
Nor presently will we cease to exist
Nor in the future would we cease to exist"*

BHAGWAT GITA

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We Join with the Hindus all over the world on the occasion of Pitar Paksh by Performing SHRADH to their loved ones who have passed away.

May the Lord accept their offering.

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