

SECTION III. (*Continued.*)

CHAPTER VI. (*Continued.*) Sub-Section (III).

THE SACRAMENTS MENTIONED IN THE YAJUR-VEĀ.

The significance of the *samskāras* or sacraments.—Their dual aspect, conventional, unreal or formal, and real or metaphysical.—The supreme importance of *upa-nayana*.—The symbolical meaning of certain ceremonial articles connected with *brahma-charya*.—The sixteen *samskāras*.

Thus we see that action bases itself on and is connected with cognition, and hence the ordinance that sacrifices should be performed after completing *brahma-charya*. It is true that morning and evening *havana*, offering into the fire, is ordained during *brahma-charya* also, but it has a special significance, there. The *Smṛti*-verse says: Having got together the fuel of *samiṭ* or *palāsha* (different kinds of wood) let him raise the fire, 'morning and evening.' Here *samiṭ* and *palāsha* signify only study and the revision of the lessons. *Samiṭ* indicates knowledge generally; *palāsha* means the same with reference to practical application and action; *agni* is desire; the three correspond to the primal Trinity. Mutual discussion, the voluntary exposition of their special subjects

to each other, by students, is *havana*. The 'mornings and evenings,' are the proper time for study.

When *brahma-charya* has been completed successfully the desire for selfish results disappears. Hence the placing of the household life after it. Only in this wise, joy and sorrow being both seen to be naught, can the work of Brahman, duty, be performed steadfastly.

The begging for food enjoined upon *brahmachāris* has also for object the removal of all false sense of pride and humiliation, and the realisation of all as Self.¹

Because both knowledge and action are means to *mokṣha*, therefore is *samskāra*, consecration, initiation, needed for all persons. Without such sacrament the realisation of Brahman cannot be accomplished. The rules as to caste, etc., are all connected with *samskāra*. There are two primary divisions of caste, *ḍvi-ja*, twice-born, and *a-ḍvi-ja*, non twice-born. The latter is the *shūdra*, the servant of all beings. The

¹ And also, we may perhaps add, the circulation of a constant current of affection between the householders as a body and the students, their own children, as a body; an ideal and idyllic condition of the truest and highest socialism where anybody's child would be treated in any and every house as a child of *that* house, when he comes hungry, asking for food.

former is he who has been born from or by means of two kinds of sacrament¹. This class is sub-divided into brāhmaṇa, kṣhaṭṭriya and vaishya by correspondence to A, U, and M. The two kinds of consecration are the saṭya, true or real, and the asaṭya, false or apparent and conventional. The true consecration is connected with the knowledge of Brahman; the conventional one with the work, activity, or external forms and appearances and manifestations of Brahman. Above both is the third, viz., the asamskṛta, the unconsecrated or beyond consecration.

The true consecration is the conjunction, the harmonious mergence and union, of cognition and action, which is possible only when all three, viz., karma, jñāna, and bhakṭi² have been gained, and are evenly combined. But the gain of one only of these is also a sacrament, and that is a conventional one.

¹ The current interpretation of dvi-ja is 'born a second time' by means of the sacrament of upanayana, the 'leading up' to the Teacher, (ultimately to Brahman, by means of the baptism of fire, the fire of heart-searching and world-searching, the fire of pain and sorrow out of which arises the introspective consciousness, the true second birth).

² These words may perhaps be translated briefly and conveniently, by gnosis, pistis and energism (see Baldwin's *Dictionary of Philosophy*).

The nature of the birth and origin of all beings in one and the same, viz., a conjunction of Puruṣha and Prakṛti, Self and Not-Self, because of mutual desire. These beings are sub-divided into four kinds, minerals, vegetables, animals, and humans, corresponding to cognition, desire, action and the summation. These four are connected with sṭhūla or dense matter and are perceivable by the physical senses. *Before* and *after* these four, too, extends an endless series, in correspondence with the rule of four; and *within* these four, again, are endless atoms, and a tetrad within each atom. All is thus transcendental and infinite, and, in this view, we see at once that all is relative and similar in respect of all action, i.e., of becoming or birth, stay, death, rebirth, etc.

All men are thus the same in birth; but their work is different and differentiates them in accordance with the predominance of cognition, or desire, or action, the fourth or summation, being the service of all, shūdra-hood.

He who simply serves all beings is the shūdra; he has no clear knowledge, either of the relation of action and desire or of the summation. (This is the first stage). Of these shūdras, he who begins to slightly know the Self, the Not-Self and the Negation, his consciousness begins to turn inwards from outwards; for and by means of this he restrains the

activity of the senses and strives after self-control, *sva-vashī-karaṇa*, and thus attains *vaishya*-hood. This inward-turning of the consciousness is the true consecration. The unreal consecration, on the other hand, is the outer imitation thereof by taking up *brahmacharya* and its duties, *viz.*, the study of the inner or subjective and other sciences, whereby fitness for the true consecration is gained. In the condition of the *shūdra*, to serve for personal gain is the *imitation* of the true service which is devoid of all expectation of return, and so constitutes *a-saṭ-shūdra-tva*, false *shūdra*-hood; whereas service based on the consciousness that all is produced from the one, even though it be external service with the immediate attention directed outward and the senses active, makes *saṭ-shūdra-tva*, true or good *shūdra*-hood.¹ So the mere imitation,

¹ It must be clear to the reader and should be borne in mind that the words *saṭ* and *asaṭ*, real and unreal, true and false, have a technical sense in this work, and that the second has no disparaging or condemnatory implication. They correspond with metaphysical and physical, ideal and real, transcendental and empirical, abstract and concrete, principle and practice, theory and embodiment, rule and illustration, homogenous and heterogenous, generalisation and differentiation, universal and particular, law and instance.

the outer form, of the *saṭ* or true *vaishya*, is the *asaṭ* or conventional *vaishya* who carries on trade and business generally. The accomplishment of the work of *Brahman* by means of that trade, for the sake of oneself, of others and of duty, is the mark of the *saṭ vaishya*. In the case of the *kṣhaṭṭriya*, *kṣhaṭṭra* is the destruction of vice and the promotion of virtue, it is the upholding of *dharma* and the guarding of it for the good of oneself and of all others, because all are One. This is the work of the *saṭ kṣhaṭṭriya*. Its outer or formal imitation in the conventional relations, *vyavahāra*, behaviour, of king and subject, the protection of the subject, the establishment of laws, *maryādā*, bounds, limits, conventions, is the work of the *asaṭ* or conventional *kṣhaṭṭriya*. Finally, the knowledge of *Brahman* in its triunity is the quality of the *saḍ brāhmaṇa*; while the formal imitation thereof, the work of the *asaḍ brāhmaṇa*, is the sixfold activity of sacrificing and helping others to sacrifice, study and teaching, and giving and receiving of gifts, all done with the ultimate object of attaining to the *saṭ*. The person who has the right to perform the seventh karma is neither the *brāhmaṇa*, nor the *kṣhaṭṭriya*, nor the *vaishya*, nor the *shūdra*; that karma is the performance of the other six without selfish desire for personal results. The sub-division of

cognition, action and desire by two (*i. e.*, cognition and action?) gives the six ; while the totality of them is the seventh.

This inward turning of the consciousness, then, is the second or *saṭya*, true and real, *samskāra*, which brings about the second birth, or birth by means of the *samskāras*.

The *upa-nayana* (literally, leading up or guiding, and conventionally investiture with the sacred thread) is the chief of all sacraments. It can be accomplished only with the help of a *saḍguru*, a true preceptor. When the understanding arises in the *jīva* that the whole of *Samsāra* is an inseparable compound of pleasure and pain, that pleasure can never be secured in the world unalloyed with and unmarred by pain, then is the proper time for this consecration. 'The maker of all this is *Īshvara*; I am the *Ātmā*; all is composed of Brahman; and Brahman is *ānanda* itself qualified by *saṭ* and *chit*. How and why then is there all this doubt and illusion in this world, and this perplexing rotation of birth, life and death; how pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, love and hate? What and where is the law and order in all this? How and from what does all this arise?' When such reflections arise in the *jīva* then he seeks out his *saḍguru* and obtains knowledge from him and becomes an *upanīṭa*, 'the guided, the brought up, the initiated.' The obtaining of exact

knowledge of the Three in their unity and diversity alone constitutes the true *upa-nayana*.

The formal and external representation of this is the conventional ceremony, known as *upaviṭa*, also called the *vraṭa-bandha*, 'the binding on or taking up of the vow,' for from that time begins the observance of the vow of *brahma-chārya*, which means study of the subjective sciences. All rejoice on the occasion, for the possibility of 'earning' or gaining Brahman comes near to them all at the time. They are glad that this boy, their relative, becomes a *brahma-chārī*, a 'walker' in Brahman, does everything as directed by his *āchārya*,¹ guide and preceptor, and with him studies this supreme science.

The outer mark of the ceremony is the putting on of the thread. But the real triple thread is the trinity of cognition, desire and action. A *yajña* or sacrifice is performed on the occasion, for the successful accomplishment of the study and the removal of all hindrances thereto, and the *devas* of this world and *ṛṣhis*, *maharṣhis*,

¹ आचिनोति च शास्त्रार्थानन्यानाचारयत्यपि ।

स्वयमाचरते चैव तस्मादाचार्य उच्यते ॥

"Because he 'gathers together' the essential teachings of all true sciences, because he 'induces others to act' according to them, because he himself 'lives them'—therefore is he given the honored name of *āchārya*."

brāhmaṇas, yogīs and other high beings are invoked and invited to it as witnesses of the ceremony; and all the assembled people pray to them: 'Do ye help in the fulfilment of this vow of brahma-charya, let this jīva's innermost desire turn to the study of the truth of Brahman.' And the father and the mother of the boy, having placed the sign and symbol of the thread upon him and taught him his new duties, send him away with the āchārya: 'Go willingly and gladly, O beloved! and obey him in all things; study the science of Brahman, learn the truth, become Brahman and then return and happily engage in the work of this Samsāra.'

In accordance with the rule of cognition, desire and action (?) it is proper for the boy to maintain his connection with his family for an *ahna*¹, a week, after the ceremony, and then he follows the āchārya to learn the *Veḍa* with its *Āṅgas* and *Upāṅgas*, and all the laws of the World-process.

This inward-turned consciousness belongs to the three varṇas, 'colors,' castes, only; hence they only have the right to the upa-vīṭa. He who has

¹ *Ahna* seems to be used for a week, in this work, instead of a day, which seems to be the modern interpretation of the word; or perhaps there is a difference between the old *ahnah* and the modern *ahah* and *ahan*.

not the intelligence that can perform introspection and grasp subjective things, he is outside the pale of *ḍvi-ja-tva*, twice-born-ness. Paramparā, heredity, has also a place in this reference. *Vaishyas*, *kṣhaṭṭriyas* and *brāhmaṇas* have the subjective consciousness by heredity. Those whose constant work is the inward-turning of the consciousness—the work of those born among such will also be similar; and, as all the world knows, the birth of every one is guided by his previous karma. As his karma has been, so is the man's family, business, wealth, race, country, pleasure, pain, etc., and also his caste. It is true that many have only the wish to be born in a higher caste and perform just enough karma to secure this. But they have not the power to do the duties of the caste. Yet, having been born there, they get the teachings that belong to and are current in that caste and so secure the wanting faculties in later births.

This division into castes and stages, these sacraments and sacrifices, belong, under different names and forms, to all times and all places. Analogies to them exist even amongst minerals and vegetables in subtle ways. They are only prominent amongst the humans, and this is so because these are the highest of the 'gross' kingdom, (*i. e.*, the physical plane).

Those, then, who have been consecrated and initiated duly, according to law, acquire the

right to the subjective sciences. If the subjective or introspective bent appears in the *shūdra* he becomes a *divija*. On the other hand, he who never gains this inward-consciousness and never turns to the inner sciences, he falls from the estate of the twice-born, though born as one. In this ever-crumbling *Samsāra*, composed of pleasure and pain, to be dejected over death and elated over birth, to exult over gains and wail under losses, is the meanest way of living; and not to know the simple truth about the All is to be truly fallen. Otherwise, indeed, from the standpoint of the Absolute, there is no misery and no glory.

For such reasons are directions given for the consecration of the three castes according to the subtle laws that govern their length of life, mental, physical, and superphysical powers, constitutional functions and activity, etc. If the initiation does not take place before a particular age is reached, the *jīva* 'falls' because he has no further opportunity of being able to secure the subjective or introspective consciousness in this life.¹

Therefore have times, places, and ages been fixed for the consecration of the three castes respectively by the Elders of our race.

¹ The matter of the brain-cells 'sets,' so to say, as bones and muscles set and cannot be manipulated unless trained in the early years of life.

Consecration by sixteen sacraments, each sub-divided into *saṭ* and *asaṭ*, real and formal, is in this wise laid down for the three castes. The three factors of the Logion, and their summation, multiplied by themselves,¹ yield the sixteen. The times prescribed for their performance are based upon the ordinary length of human life. It is true that some die in infancy, others in childhood or in youth, and there is no period fixed unchangeably for the span of human life; still, in a general way, the length thereof is determined for and by each epoch; thus, each particular *yuga* or *manvantara* has its own normal and healthy span of life for its living creatures. Those who fall away from the laws of *āchāra*, right conduct, fall under other laws and are dealt with specially. The consecrations are based on what is common to the majority. As already indicated, the sub-divisions of real and formal or conventional sacraments correspond to cognition and action, respectively, desire being the hidden nexus. By permutations and combinations of these we get indeed an endless number of sacraments and they are all described as *karma*, *kriyā*, action and ritual, and are therefore dealt with in the *Yajur-veda*, but sixteen are the more important.

¹ That is to say, each being sub-divided into four reflexions of the original four, like the *Veḍas*.

The passing through these sacraments is regarded as dharma, duty. Ordinarily they belong to the three castes, as said, but if a śhūdra should attain to the inward consciousness by means of service of others, then he too acquires a full right to be taken through all these sacraments by a sad-guru, a 'true' teacher. As has been said: 'On completing service all enter into the three castes. Serve all beings by thought, word and deed. So only, gradually, is the status of the vaiśya gained, then that of the kṣhāṭṭriya, and lastly that of the brāhmaṇa. Finally, becoming Brahman, the jīva can create new worlds. Briefly, the object and result of all these sacraments is the achievement of the consciousness that the all is I and the I is all.'

The *Vedas* mention the sixteen samskāras, but the *Smṛtis* only ten; this is because ten are primary and the remaining six secondary.