

Mahabharata Series

Social Norms, Systems, Traditions & Beliefs

Compiled by: G H Visweswara

PREFACE

I have extracted these contents from my other comprehensive & unique work on Mahabharata called **Mahabharata-Spectroscope**. (See <http://www.ghvisweswara.com/mahabharata-2/mahabharata-spectroscope-a-unique-resource/>). Whereas the material in that was included in the order in which it appears in the original epic, in this compilation I have grouped them by meaningful Topics & Sub-topics thus making it much more useful to the student/scholar of this subject.

This is a compilation of the contents appearing in the great epic Mahabharata on the topics of **Social Norms, Systems, Traditions and Beliefs**. The broader topics covered are: Marriages, Wife, Husband, Children, *Grihastha*, Women, Deva karya & Pitru karya, Offerinf flower, smoke (*dhoopa*) & lamp, Other norms & beliefs, and Miscellaneous. The compilation is not exhaustive in the sense that every para appearing in the great epic is not included here for the sake of limiting the size of this document. But still most of the key or representative passages have been compiled here. The contents are from Mahabharata excluding the Bhagavad Gita.

I hope the readers will find the document of some use in their study on these topics.

Please see <http://www.ghvisweswara.com/mahabharata-2> for my other topic based compilations based on Mahabharata.

G H Visweswara

gh.visweswara@gmail.com

www.ghvisweswara.com

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Social Norms, Systems, Traditions & Beliefs

About marriages

General

- Bhishma said: (Shl 123) A wise person should marry a suitable girl born in great family and having auspicious characteristics. (Shl 124) He should beget sons from such girl of noble birth and uplift the lineage. They should be sent to *gurukul* for acquiring knowledge/expertise of different *shastras*. One should beget daughters and give them in marriage to boys of noble birth. For sons also he should find wives from noble families. Servants should also be brought from good families. (**Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 104**)

Eight types of marriages

- (Shl 8, 9) **According to dharma-shastra there are eight types of marriages.**

Finding a suitable bridegroom in own caste and performing marriage of daughter decked with clothes & ornaments is called **Brahma vivaha**.

Performing a *yajna* related to *devatas* and at the end of the *yajna* giving the girl in *daan* to the *ritvija* is called **daiva vivaha**.

Accepting a cow or ox from the groom and giving away the bride (*kanyadaan*) is called **arsha vivaha**.

Giving away the bride with the resolve that the two should be together and follow dharma is called **prajapatya vivaha**.

Deciding a price for the bride, taking it as a sale price and giving away the bride is called **asura vivaha**.

Adult girl & boy marrying of their own will is called **Gandharva vivaha**.

Carrying away the bride after killing her relatives in a fight while the parents & siblings are crying is called **rakshasa vivaha**.

Stealing the bride when everyone in the house is asleep or not alert and then marrying is called **paishacha vivaha**.

Swayambhu Manu has described the above types and has said which ones are dharmas for whom.

(Shl 10) The first four are suitable for brahmanas. The first six are acceptable for *kshatriyas*.

There is support of *shastras* that *kshatriyas* can have *rakshasa* marriage also. *Vysya-shudra* can have *asura vivaha* also. For them, of the last five types, first three are acceptable. But *kshatriyas* should never adopt *Paishacha* or *asura vivaha*. (**Adi; Sambhava; 72**)

- Inviting a suitable bridegroom and performing the marriage (as per *vidhis*) of daughter decked with clothes and an ornament is called **Brahma vivaha**.

Accepting two cows from the groom and giving away the bride (*panigrahana*) is called **arsha vivaha**.

Deciding a price for the bride, taking it as a sale price and giving away the bride is called **asura vivaha**.

Carrying away the bride by force and marrying is called **rakshasa vivaha**.

Girl & boy marrying by mutual consent is called **Swayamvara** or **Gandharva vivaha**.

Carrying away an unconscious bride and marrying is called **paishacha vivaha**.

Giving away of the bride by her parents to the boy they like is called **prajapatya vivaha**.

Giving the bride as gift to someone who assisted in the conduct of *yajna-yaagas* is called **daiva vivaha**.

Of these eight types brave men/warriors appreciate *rakshasa vivaha*. Kings appreciate and follow *swayamvara* or *Gandharva vivaha*. Those who know *dharma* say that wife won by defeating all kings present at *swayamvara* will become the most loved one. **(Adi; Sambhava; 102)**

Norms of marriage

- Drupada to Drona: (Shl 10) Marriage can happen only between those who have equal wealth and equal education/learning; friendship will also develop similarly. Other than this, there can certainly be no friendship between the rich & the poor. **Marriage relationship also cannot exist between rich & poor. (Adi; Sambhava; 131)**
- Narada about Mathali & his daughter: He tells Aryaka, grandfather of Sumukha (in Nagaloka) that Mathali has decided that he will give his daughter in marriage only to Sumukha. If you also desire to take this relationship further, agree to accept the *kanya* without delay **(Consent of both parties needed)**.
'Sumukha has the defect that he has no father (*pitru-heenatva dosha*). But we will ignore this defect. In your case we find many more good reasons (noble qualities & lineage) to marry than this one defect'. **(Udyoga; Bhagavadyana; 104)**
- Narada to Parvata: **The following are accepted to constitute the complete process for marrying a girl: Resolve in the mind, oral promise, willful decision, mutual conversation, after this formal *kanyadaan* with water, *pani-grahana* (groom taking the bride's palm in his palm), reciting of Vedic *mantras* etc. But a marriage is not deemed complete with just these. For the marriage process to be complete *saptapadi* is also essential. It is said that marriage is complete only with *saptapadi*.**

In the present context, none of the steps of the process have started. A girl does not become one's wife just by a groom liking the girl but not getting to know the intent of the bride and her parents. **(Drona; Abhimanyuvadha; 55)**

(In this story, though *Maharshi* Narada expresses a desire to marry Srinjaya's daughter and Srinjaya says '*dadami*' (I am giving her to you), they do not get married due to the fight that erupts between Narada and his friend Parvata)
- Bhisma: (Shl 16) Children born from *asura-vivaha* will be jealous, sinners, given to snatching others wealth, fraudulent and will have practices opposed to dharma. Scholars who know dharma quote these verses in this matter. (Shl 18, 19) That person who wants to gain money by selling his own son, **who gives his daughter by collecting *kanya-shulka* to make a living**, such fool will suffer in Kumbhipaka etc seven hells and will be consuming his own sweat, urine and faeces there. (Shl 20) Some say that in *Arsha-vivaha* by accepting a cow and a young bull, the girl can be given in marriage. But some others say this should not be done. **Whether the price is small or big, it becomes a sale only.** (Shl 21) Even if some are following such practice it is not *sanatana dharma*. We see such practices in the world in others also. But they do not become *sanatana dharmas*. (Shl 22) **Those who forcibly capture a girl and enjoy her will be great sinners and will suffer in a hell full of darkness.** (Shl 23) **No man should be sold. Then what to speak of selling own children? Any act of dharma done with money that comes from *adharma* will not yield desired fruits. (Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 45)**
- (Shl 69) When a man & a woman desire each other, then their mutual meeting is like *amrita* (nectar). If a woman in love does not find a man in love with her such union is like poison. **(Shanti parva; Mokshadharma; 320)**

Traditions and systems/rules of lawful marriage of a girl

- Yudhishtira questioned: (Shl 1) Grandfather Bhishma! Tell me about *kanya-daan* (giving a girl in marriage) which is the basis for all dharmas, people of the family, residences, *devatas*, *pitrus* and guests. (Shl 2) It is my opinion that this dharma of *kanya-daan* is most fit topic to be thought about compared to all other dharmas. To what type of person should the girl be given? Tell me about this.

Bhishma said: (Shl 3) Yudhishtira! ***Satpurushas* should thoroughly examine the character & nature, education, family, conduct and the work being done by the prospective groom and**

if all these qualities are found suitable in him then she should be given to such person. (Shl 4) It is the dharma of *satpurusha* brahmanas to select a good groom in this manner and give the girl in marriage. This is called '**Braahma-vivaha**'. A worthy groom should be welcomed, daughter should be made to sit with him and he should say '*sahobhau charatam dharmam*' – you both should practice dharma together. Then as per one's capability marriage should be performed. Doing it in this manner is the *sanatan dharma* for brahmanas & *kshatriyas* (This is called **Praajapatya vivaha**).

(Shl 6) **If the girl rejects the boy found by father and desires to marry a boy whom she likes and the boy also likes and wishes to marry her** (that is, mutual acceptance by boy & girl) **then the father should give his daughter to that boy only.** Scholars of Veda call this **Gaandharva vivaha**.

(Shl 7) Attracting the parents of the girl with lot of money and without caring for the willingness or otherwise of the girl and thus buying the girl for money is called **Asura vivaha**. (Shl 8) Killing the parents and brothers at home, cutting off their heads, and when all relatives are crying, dragging away the girl who is crying uncontrollably and marrying her is called **Rakshasa vivaha**.

(Shl 9) Of these five types, first three (Braahma, Praajapatya & Gaandharva) are approved by dharma. The last two are sinful ways. For no reason should *rakshasa* & *asura vivahas* be performed. (Shl 10) Braahma, Kshaatra & Gaandharva *vivahas* are compatible with dharma. These marriages can be done separately or together. **(Braahma can be clubbed with Praajapatya & Gaandharva. Case of Dushyanta & Shakuntala is Gaandharva. There is no mixing there. The marriages of current day are all mostly Gaandharva-Braahma type. Marriages are solemnised only after boy & girl agree. Formal ceremonies are a part of Braahma marriage. Selecting the partner of their choice is Gaandharva. According to commentators, Damayanti's marriage is considered mix of Braahma-Kshaatra, Rukmini's Rakshasa-Gaandharva and Subhadra's is Kshaatra-Rakshasa).**

Varnas, Age, relationship issues

- (Shl 11) A brahmana can marry a girl from *brahmana*, *kshatriya* or *vysya varna*. A *kshatriya* can do so from *kshatriya* & *vysya varna*. A *vysya* can marry only from *vysya varna*. **If the girl is from another varna, their children will belong to the varna of father.** (Shl 12) Among the girls a brahmana marries, girl of brahmana *varna* must be the eldest. Similarly for *kshatriya*, the *kshatriya* girl should be the eldest. It is the opinion of some *shruti karas* that a *shudra* girl can be married for pleasure/sexual union. Some others say that a *shudra* girl should not be married by other *varnas*. (Manu smriti says that among the four *varnas*, the earlier *varna* man can marry girls from subsequent *varnas*. Order is *brahmana*, *kshatriya*, *vysya*, *shudra*. In this sense, *vysya* can marry a *shudra* girl). (Shl 13) *Satpurushas* do not approve of a brahmana man begetting children from *shudra* girl. There is a rule that such a man should perform atonements.

(Shl 14) A thirty year old man should marry a ten year old *eka-vastra-dharini* girl (One who does not wear a blouse, meaning, who has not reached puberty). A twenty one year old should marry a seven year old girl. (Shl 15) A girl who does not have father & brother should not be married because she will be bound by *putrika-dharma* (Not having father & brother means she will be the only daughter. Father may have considered her in the position of her son at the time of his death. In such circumstance the only daughter will have duties of *putrika-dharma*. Therefore she should not be married). (Shl 16) If the parents do not perform the marriage of the girl before her reaching puberty, then she should wait for three years after reaching puberty. If marriage does not happen even then, she should find her partner herself in the fourth year. (Shl 17) By doing this, her sexual relationship with her husband or the children born will not be of inferior order. Instead, if she behaves promiscuously, she will become worthy of blame in the eyes of Prajapati Brahma.

(Shl 18) Such a girl should be married who is not *sapinda* with boy's mother and not *sagotra* with boy's father. Manu has stated this dharma (Mother's sister, mother's brother and brother's daughter are *sapindas*. Smriti has stated that after five generations from mother and seven generations from father, this *dosha* is annulled).

Kanya shulka, willingness of girl & favouring better groom

- Yudhishtira said: (Shl 19, 20) There is a girl for marriage. She will be beautiful and have auspicious characteristics. A boy would already have given *kanya-shulka* (girl-fee; opposite of dowry). Another man comes and decides marriage with her promising to pay *kanya-shulka*.

Another one wants to forcibly take away the girl. A fourth one entices parents with as much *kanya-shulka* as they desire. A fifth one is ready to marry her formally then and there. In such circumstances, whose wife does she become according to dharma? Throw light and guide us in this matter.

Bhishma said: (Shl 21) Dharmaja! **It will be seen that in all matters relating to the welfare of human being there will be good systems everywhere. Once all wise people have assembled and decided that this girl is for this boy, avoiding it by telling lies is a sin.** (Shl 22) If any among wife, husband, *ritvijs*, *acharyas*, disciples or teachers tell a lie against an arrangement or agreement already made, it will deserve punishment. Others (who were witnesses or participants in the discussions) are not to be punished. (Shl 23) **Manu does not approve marriage where a girl is married off to an unwilling boy. Therefore, for whatever reason, not allowing a marriage that has been decided with the consent of the boy, girl and the *acharya* to happen is *adharma* and brings infamy. It only hurts dharma.**

(Shl 24) There is no blemish in the act of boy taking the girl to his house after the marriage has been solemnised by the parents of the girl and her relatives by proper formalities. Similarly, they is no blemish when the girl is taken to his house after the *kanya-shulka* is paid. Since the formalities and rules of marriage are like this, where is the blemish? **(Later verses contradict it and give much more freedom in changing promises made!!)** (Shl 25) After obtaining the consent of girl's parents and relatives *homas* should be performed with appropriate *mantras*. Then those *mantras* will also yield their results. **If the girl is not given away with the consent of parents then there is no scope for *homas* & *mantras*.** Even if done, they will not accomplish the desired things. (Shl 26) **In such marriages that are approved by parents, husband and wife make mutual promises through *mantras* for the stability of their married life.** Therefore, scholars opine that such formally conducted marriages, supported by relatives, is the best. (Shl 27) **A wife obtained through the rules of *dharma-shastra* is considered by the husband to have been obtained by *daiva-yoga*** (god's ordainment, grace). He makes false the statement of those who say that this marriage is unworthy.

Yudhishtira questioned: (Shl 28) A groom would have come first, would have paid as much *kanya-shulka* as desired by the parents of girl and would have settled that he would come and take the girl later. Then, another groom who is better in many respects including *dharma*, *kaam* & *artha* comes and desires to marry the same girl. In such situations, can parents lie to the earlier boy and marry the girl to the one who came later and **who is better suited in all respects?** Or just for the reason that one should not lie, should they marry her to the first boy? (Shl 29) In both these decisions there is a blemish. If he refuses to marry her after having obtained consent of relatives and having accepted *kanya-shulka*, he gets the blemish of breaking a promise. Out of this fear if he rejects the more suitable boy who came later, it would amount to ignoring the welfare of the girl. So, when both decisions have a blemish, by taking which decision will the father of the girl earn success and fame? I feel that this dharma of *kanya-daan* (giving away the girl) is worth much thinking about.

Grandfather! Guide me who am interested in understanding the principles & truth (*tattva*). Explain to me all about *kanya-daan*. I feel like listening to everything you say and do not at all feel contented.

Bhishma said: (Shl 31) Yudhishtira! He (first boy) thought that payment of *kanya-shulka* completes the marriage and hence did not take her back with him. **But this *shulka* alone certainly does not complete marriage. *Satpurushas* sometimes for special reasons do not perform *kanya-daan* in spite of having accepted *kanya-shulka*.** (Shl 32) If the boy has some defects (such as older age, not so good looking etc) the parents of girl in such situations may tell the boy to deck up the girl with gems and jewellery and then get married. If the boy gives these things according to his abilities it does not become *kanya-shulka*. Accepting jewellery etc in this manner for the sake of the girl and then giving the decked up girl in marriage is not same as selling the girl. (Shl 33) Therefore such practice comes under *sanatana dharma*. (Shl 34) **All such statements of those who before formal *kanya-daan* say, '*bhavate kanyam dasyami*' (I donate my daughter to you), those who do not say anything or those who say, '*avashyam dasyami*' (I will surely give her to you) are equivalent to no statement at all.** (Shl 35) **That is why till the formal (following all procedures) *panigrahana* (ceremonially putting girl's hand in boy's hand & they hold each others hands, meaning handing over) happens both sides will be repeatedly requesting each other to formalise the marriage. We have heard that Marudganas (troop of Marut gods) have given boon to girls that if a better groom is found then from the point of**

view of the welfare of girl rejecting an earlier one even if a promise had been made is permitted and this will not result in any blemish. There is also a *Smriti-vachana* that if a much better boy is found, marriage should be performed with him even if *kanya-shulka* has been taken from another and a promise made about giving the girl (*dattamapi haretkanyam shreshstshchedvara aagate*). (Shl 36) It is also the opinion of *rishis* that the girl should not be given to an undesirable or unworthy boy because, for both sex related matters and begetting children a groom who is liked is the main cause. (Shl 37) There are many blemishes in giving away the girl in marriage after accepting *shulka*. You will yourself realise this after thinking carefully about it. Marriage is not finalised just by paying the *shulka*. There was no such tradition in the past also. I will explain with an example. Listen.

I snatched two daughters of the king of Kashi for Vichitravirya after defeating kings of Magadha, Kashi & Kosala in a fight. Apart from those two, another daughter (Ambe) had already given her hand to another king (Ambe had made a mental resolve to marry Shalva raja). For the other two, the king of Kashi had accepted *kanya-shulka* and had given his word to two princes. At that time my father (Bahlika) told me to let go Ambe and take the other two for marrying them with Vichitravirya. I was not sure about what my father told me. Therefore I also consulted other scholars. But my father had special interest in following principles of dharma. Therefore he was pressurising me to let go the girl who had already married someone else mentally. Wanting to understand traditions and practices of the family I asked him: 'Father! I wish to understand the traditional practices of our family. After knowing this I will do just as you say'.

Yudhishtira! After I said this, my father who was a great *dharmatma* said: (Shl 43) If, in your opinion, marriage is finalised merely by taking *kanya-shulka* – and not by formal *panigrahana* – the statements of *Smritis* will be wasted. *Smriti vachana* has stated that by merely accepting *kanya-shulka* marriage is not settled irrevocably and that if a better groom is found marriage should be conducted with him in the interest of the girl. (Shl 44) Those who know dharma (*dharmavids*) do not accept as statement of authority that mere acceptance of *kanya-shulka* is equivalent to marriage and that *panigrahana* is an unessential act. (Shl 45) Even in normal parlance in the world we say, '*kanya-daan* is over' or '*panigrahana* ceremony was completed' etc and not that '*kanya-shulka* was given' to announce the solemnisation of marriage. Therefore payment of *kanya-shulka* is unessential in marriage matters. ***Panigrahana* can take place without payment of any *kanya-shulka*. Those who consider *shulka* as the most important part and that marriage is solemnised just by giving it are surely not knowledgeable about dharma.** (Shl 46) **Girl should not be given in marriage to those who give *kanya-shulka* and treat it as the value or price for the girl. Similarly, one should not marry a girl who is being sold only for the sake of money because, wife is not an object of trade.** (Shl 47) For those greedy sinners who buy and sell *dasis* (servants, slaves) giving of *kanya-shulka* itself may seem as the decision of marriage.

Once in the past many people went to *Satyavanta* and questioned him in this matter: 'Oh great wise man! In case the boy from whom *kanyaa-shulka* had been accepted dies before formal marriage is performed, can the girl be given in marriage to another boy? We have a doubt about dharma in this matter. Please clarify. Be our guide. *Satyavanta* said: (Shl 51) **The girl should be given in marriage only to that boy whom she likes. There is no doubt at all in this matter. Even if the person who paid the *shulka* is alive and if a better boy is found the girl should be given in marriage to that boy in the interest of the girl and not to the one who had given *kanya-shulka*.** This being the case what is there to tell or ask about one who is dead? Girl should be given in marriage only after finding a good boy. (Shl 52) In case the girl also likes, parents also consent and the boy is also worthy, the girl can be married to the brother of the dead person. Or the girl can resolve that she will marry only the boy who had given *shulka* in her next birth, remain unmarried and perform *tapas*. (Shl 53, 54) According to the opinion of some, in case the person who had paid *kanya-shulka* dies, the girl can mate with the younger brother of the boy. In the opinion of some others this is only optional and not the rule to be followed.

After suitably aggregating the opinions scholars have concluded as follows: **Before the formal event of *pani-grahana*, even if certain other auspicious ceremonies like *haridra-snana* etc have happened, even if the father of the girl has made the resolve that he will do the *kanya-daan*, even if some prior procedures like *homa* etc have been completed, if instead of an unworthy boy a better boy is found, the girl can be given to that boy instead of to the unworthy boy. In such situations the father of the girl will only accrue the sin of telling a lie.** (A girl is not treated as married until the ceremony of *panigrahana* is completed). (Shl 55) **All**

the *mantras* of *pani-grahana* find their success/fulfilment only in the seventh step of *sapta-padi*. After the seven steps of *sapta-padi* are completed with the boy holding the hands of the girl is the *pani-grahana* accomplished. Only after the father of the bride makes the resolve and gives away his daughter by way of pouring water does she become his *dharma-patni* (lawful wife). **She becomes his *dharma-patni* only after the *daan* is done. *Sapta-padi* and *kanya-daan* are important acts in marriage.** That is how scholars have defined the formalities of marriage (Before these two acts nothing else that has taken place solemnises the marriage). (Shl 56) A *dvija* should marry such girl who is favourable to him, who is suited to his lineage and is given away formally with fire at witness (*agni-sakshi*) by father or brother of bride. He should accept her as his wife by *sapta-padi mantras* by circumambulating the *agni* according to the formal procedures. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 44)**

Specific case: Clarification

- Yudhishtira questioned: (Shl 1) Grandfather! A prospective groom would have paid *kanya-shulka* with the intent of marrying the girl. But the formal marriage would not yet have happened. He goes away somewhere. Others do not come forward to marry her because someone has already paid the *kanya-shulka*. What should the father of the girl do in such situations? Tell me about this.

Bhishma said: (Shl 2) Yudhishtira! If a rich man who has no children has paid the *shulka* and has gone away to another country, then the father should wait for the return of that man and not give her to anyone else. **As long as the *kanya-shulka* is not returned, it is as if she has been sold to him.** The father does not have rights to marry her to another person. (Shl 3) If such person does not return at all, then the girl can beget children from others for the growth of that person's lineage according to the procedures stated in *smritis*. No one else should marry her with the formalities consisting of *mantras*. No other *garhastya karmas* should be performed with her. (Shl 4) (This verse talks about the case where no one comes forward to pay *kanya-shulka* or to marry a girl) Savitri (of Satyavan fame) found her partner herself with the permission of her father. Some persons knowledgeable about dharma appreciate/approve such freedom of a girl finding her own partner in such situations. But some others do not approve this. (Shl 5) Some say, 'apart from the episode of Savitri, no one has done this'. 'Whoever might have done this, *satpurushas* have never done this', say others. **The practices of *sadhu-satpurushas* are always the important and main characteristics of dharma.**

In this matter, Sukratu, the grandson of Janaka, the great king of Videha kingdom, has said as follows: (Shl 7) 'Where can you find the basis of *shastras* for the acts of *asatpurushas*? In this instance father asking the daughter to find her own suitable partner is against the tradition (say of Manu *smriti* which says women enjoy no freedom). In such case, whether this can be done or is it dharma or *adharma* does not arise. Therefore who will accuse that *satpurushas* did such act which is against dharma? (*Satpurushas* do not act against dharma. Therefore it is not right to say that this is the virtuous practice of *satpurushas*). (Shl 8) Women are never eligible for freedom. This is ancient dharma. A woman choosing her partner is against this dharma. This is called *asura-dharma*. We have not heard of such dharma being followed in many of the marriages of the past. (Shl 9) The relationship between man-woman or husband & wife is very subtle. It can be understood only by *shastras*. Sexual union is an ordinary dharma. (The system of marriage has not been formulated with just this as the basis). **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 45)**

Freedom in marriage to women

- Neelaraja's kingdom: **From then onwards, men of Mahishmati town could not marry women according to their liking. Marriage was possible only if the young women wanted to. Women were living freely as they wished and married only those whom they liked. (Sabha; Digvijaya; 31)**
- ...That *rishi-kanya* was engaged in very rigorous *tapas* and many many years elapsed. When her father Kunigarga was alive, he had tried a lot to get her married to a boy of noble lineage. But that flawless girl did not consent at that time. The main reason for her not marrying was that she felt that she did not find a groom suitable (*anuroopa*: matching her) for her. **(Shalya; Gada; 52)**

Polygamy & Polyandry

- (Shl 27) Drupada: **One man marrying many women is accepted. But one woman marrying many men is something I have neither seen nor heard so far.**

(Shl 7-9) I feel having many husbands is a sin and is against tradition, world and Vedas. I have never heard of a woman having more than one husband. This dharma of multiple husbands has not been followed by any of our ancestors. We, who have the discriminative ability for dharma & *adharma*, should never practice *adharma*. Therefore my mind does not consent to this. I have strong doubt that having multiple husbands is dharma.

Yudhishtira: Even if we examine tradition, practices and customs, there are many examples of multiple husbands in Puranas. *Dharmic* Jatila of Gautama *vamsha* had married seven *rishis* (*Saptarshi*). Similarly, Varkshi, daughter of Kandu *muni* had married ten *rishi kumaras* all having the same name Prachetasa. (Adi; Swayamvara; 195)

- Chitrangada to Uloopi: (Shl 14) Oh fortunate one! **There is no blemish if men have many wives. It is not also an offence. But women should not have many husbands.** Therefore do not have such cruel attitude. (Shl 15) The relation between husband & wife is decided by Brahma himself. That bond is firm and permanent. You also have similar relationship with Arjuna. Therefore you should also understand the principle of this friendship. Let the friendship between you and Arjuna become true. (Ashwamedhika parva; Anugita; 80)

Tradition of first night

- Vaishampayana: Draupadi who had married Yudhishtira on the first day was again a virgin when she married Bhima the second day. **At the time of marrying each of the five, she had regained her virginity;** I came to know this from a *devarshi*. (Adi; Vaivahika; 198)

Intermarriage

- Devayani to king Yayati: There have already been several marriages between brahmana & *kshatriyas*. (Adi; Sambhava; 81)

About wife

Meaning of 'jaaya'

- (Shl 37, 40-52) Shakunthala to Dushyanta: Wife is called '*jaaya*'. Do you even know the etymology of this word?

Husband enters the wife's womb through his semen and is again born to her in the form of son. For this reason wife is called '*jaaya*'. The child which is born after various *samskaras* like *garbhadaan* etc becomes the *uddharaka* (deliverer) of previous generations who are in the form of *pretas*.

Importance/significance/duties of wife

- **I am your *dharma patni*, *bharya*. Have you understood the significance of *bharya*? If you had, you would not have humiliated me in this packed assembly.**

Bharya has to be efficient; should have a son; should consider husband as her life; should be co-operative/favourable to the deeds done by husband. These are important characteristics of *bharya*.

She is the *ardhangi* (half) of man. She is the best friend. She alone helps in achieving *dharma-arth-kaama*. Those who wish to cross the ocean of *samsara* have to take the help of *bharya*.

Only one who has wife is eligible to perform *yajna-yagaas*. Only those who are with wife are called *Grihastha*. Only one with wife enjoys comforts & happiness. Only they have all the good things (*shree-sampanna*) in life.

Wife plays the role of father, mother, friend and servant. In private, she tells those words which are in the best interest of husband like a good friend. She, just as a father advises his son, advises in *dharma karyas*. When husband falls sick, she cares just like a mother.

When passing through forests or going on pilgrimage *bharya* cares for the husband. Moreover, when passing through towns or villages, people provide shelter if you are with wife. People trust such a person. For all these reasons wife is the refuge for husband. Even when in family, wife stays with husband.

When husband dies, then also she follows him there. In times of troubles/difficulties, when all others have forsaken, only wife gives company and shares the difficulties. If she were to die first, she will be waiting for him there.

Therefore this relationship is permanent & forever. For these reasons men desire marriage with a girl of good qualities.

Men may be suffering from mental or physical diseases. They may be suffering from poverty. In all such times wife cares for him with patience & tolerance and brings him happiness. Those that have *pativrata* wife need not be anxious under any difficult circumstance. **Therefore, whatever may be the reason, however angry they may be, men should always behave with courtesy towards wife.**

Passion, love and dharma are all dependent on wife. Woman is responsible for the birth of world.

Woman is the field (*kshetra*) of birth for man. If anything is sacred it is the place of birth. Therefore women are also sacred places for their husbands. *Rishis* may be great *tapasvis*. They may be capable of making the impossible happen. But even they cannot produce children without women. Any amount of *tapas* does not give them that power. Moreover, all *rishis* are also born to women. **(Adi; Sambhava; 74)**

- Brahmana about his valuable wife: (Shl 31-33) You are my **saha-dharma-charini** (who walks the path of dharma with me); you ignore your own pleasures considering my pleasures as your pleasures. You care for me like my mother. *Devatas* have made you my best friend. You alone will be with me at all times. My parents have accepted you as the rightful partner for my obligations of *grihasthashrama*. Just to save my life, I certainly cannot renounce you who are born in noble lineage, have all the good qualities & have borne a son. **(Adi; Bakavadha; 157)**
- Brahmani to her husband: (Shl 7, 22, 23) **Aren't wife, son & daughter for own benefit? ...I will myself go to him (Bakasura). This is also in accordance with dharma and is the main duty of women. The greatest duty of wife is to sacrifice for the welfare of husband even if by giving up her life. This is sanatana dharma.**

Haven't you already gained from me the main benefit of marriage? **Begetting children is the main benefit of marriage.** We already have a son to light up our *kula* and a daughter to bring us a son-in-law. Therefore my primary duty is over. I have fulfilled my obligation. You are capable of bringing up these children even if I die. I cannot do the same if you were to die.

For these reasons it is wiser for you to let me go & it is in accordance with dharma too. Experts in dharma say that it is auspicious for a woman who has children to die before her husband dies. I am ready to sacrifice my daughter, son, relatives and even life for your sake.

The main job of a wife is to engage herself in fulfilling the tasks dear & beneficial to husband. Even *yajna*, *tapas*, *niyama*, *daan* etc are second to the service of husband. **(Adi; Bakavadha; 158)**

- **Bhishma** (answering Draupadi): **Wife is always under husband's control.** **(Sabha; Dyuta; 67)**
- Nala: about a *pativrata stree* (loyal/faithful wife): Does not get upset with the husband for any of his wrong deeds, if it was done under extreme stressful conditions. **(Vana; Nalopakhyana; 70)**

Virtuous conduct of a loyal/faithful wife (*pativrata stri*)

- Yudhishtira said: (Shl 1) Grandfather! I wish to know about *sadachara* (virtuous conduct) of *satstris* (*sadhvi*, virtuous woman, faithful wife). Kindly tell me.

Bhishma said: Yudhishtira! This incident happened in *devaloka*. Kekaya king's daughter Sumana asked all-knowing, virtuous Shandili in this matter. (Shl 3) *Kalyani*! By the power of which virtuous conduct did you wash all sins and come to *devaloka*? ... (Shl 6) You do not appear to have come here by doing small charities or limited *tapas* or limited *vrats* etc. Please tell me with all facts how you came here.

Then Shandili, smilingly, sweetly and humbly said: (Shl 8) Sumana! I did not wear saffron clothes. Nor did I wear *valkala* (garment made of bark, typically worn also for leading spiritual life). I did

not shave my head. Nor did I have twisted locks of hair. I did not get *devatva* by any of these disciplines followed by *sanyasinis* (nuns, ascetics).

(Shl 9) I was always careful and never spoke to my husband unpalatably or harshly. (Shl 10) I always obeyed my in-laws. I was always careful about the worship of *devatas*, *pitrus* and brahmanas. (Shl 11) I never listened to calumny (or tales carried) or acted based on it. I never went to the doors of the wicked. I would not talk to others for too long. (Shl 12) I would never joke in an indecent way with anyone whether in private or public. I was not doing any act that would be unpalatable to others. I would never engage in such acts.

(Shl 13) When my husband returned home after some work outside, I would immediately get up, offer him a seat and show hospitality to him with concentration. (Shl 14) I would not eat the foods or delicacies that my husband found unfit/unworthy to eat or unpalatable. (Shl 15) When there was any work of the family I would get up early in the morning and complete all of them. (Shl 16) Whenever my husband went out of the country on some work, I would live a regulated life and would perform many auspicious deeds praying for his happy travel. (Shl 17) When he was travelling, I was not applying *anjana* (black pigment for eyelashes) to my eyes. I would not wear *tilak* (mark on forehead) of *gorochana* (bright yellow orpiment). I was not taking oil bath. I was not wearing flowers or sandal paste. I was not doing any kind of make-up. I did not like making-up when my husband was not around. (Shl 18) I would never disturb/wakeup my husband when he was sleeping happily. I would not disturb him when he was engaged in some work. These things made me happy. (Shl 19) In matters of care and nourishment of the family too I never troubled my husband. I always maintained secrecy in required matters of family. I always swept, wet mopped and kept the house spick & span. (Shl 20) That woman who follows this dharma with focus will be considered equal to Arundhati and will be loved & respected by all. After death she will be honoured in *Swarga* also. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 122)**

- Yudhishtira to *rishi* Markandeya: .. (Shl 7) Women who are dedicated to serving/caring the husband have to be *jitendriyas*. They have to control their minds so that it is not overtaken by anger. They have to consider husband as virtual god (*para-daiva*). Listening to the greatness of such women will indeed clear sins. I think it is very difficult to care for & serve the husband while ignoring own comforts/happiness, controlling mind and treating husband as god. (Shl 8) The serving of aged parents by children and serving of husband by wife are indeed very hard tasks. Between these two, that of women is more difficult. .. (Shl 11, 12) When the time of delivery nears for pregnant women, they will fear if they will come out alive from it. The agony they experience at that time is indescribable. They bring up the children with much grief and pain with great affection. (Shl 13) Virtuous women, even if they have a cruel husband & are humiliated & rejected by him, continue to care for & serve him. It is my opinion that it is next to impossible to serve and behave politely with such cruel husbands. ... I wish to understand the secrets of many of these dharmas from you.

Markandeya: (Shl 17) Some say that the mother should be placed first & respected. Some others say that it should be done so for father. But as you said, mother struggles for ten months, suffers intense pain and then without thinking of any of it, brings up the child with lot of affection. (Shl 19) Having got a child with great suffering in this manner, parents are always thinking of their future prosperity & growth. They are always worried if they will bring fame to the lineage or become a stain on the reputation. (Shl 21) parents always wish that their children should be famous, rich, followers of dharma and beget children themselves. (Shl 22) That child who fulfils the desires/wishes of parents is dharmatma or knows the secret of dharma. That child whose parents are always contented will gain lasting fame and happiness both here & hereafter (*iha & para*). (Shl 23) Yajnas, *shraaddhas* or fasting etc do not give much fruits to women. They will win *swarga* merely by caring for the husband. **(Vana; Markandeya Samaasya; 204)**

Parvati describes *stri-dharma*

- Mahadeva, after having said all this, became desirous of hearing about dharma from Parvati and said to his beloved wife: (Shl 2, 3) Oh one who knows past & present! One who knows dharma! One who lives in *tapovana*! One who has beautiful eyebrows! One who has beautiful dense hairs! Of daughter of king of mountains Himavanta! Oh the one skilled in tasks! One who has restraint on *indriyas* and mind! One who is free of I & mine! One who practices dharma! The Faithful one! One who has beauty & charm! Parvati! I will also ask some questions. Then tell me what I desire to know. (Shl 4-7) Brahma's wife Savithri, Indra's wife Shachidevi, Markandeya's wife Dhumorna,

Kubera's wife Riddhi, Varuna's wife Gauri, Surya's wife Suvarchala, Chandra's wife Rohini, *Agni's* wife Swaha, Kashyapa's wife Aditi – all these are *sadhvis* (virtuous, chaste). Are *pativrata-shiromanis*. They consider their husbands as their gods. **You have worshipped all of them. You have also queried them about dharma.** For this reason I am asking you. **I wish to know about *stri-dharma* in its totality from you.**

(Shl 8) You are my *sahadharmini*. Your *Sheela*, *vrat* & *swabhavas* synchronise with mine. Your might and power equal mine. Moreover you have also done severe *tapas* like me. (Shl 9) ***Stri-dharma* described by you will have special significance. They will become an authority in this world.** (Shl 10) **Women themselves are the best refuge/mentors for women.** This has come down from generations on earth. This alone is the firm direction for this world. (Shl 11) **Half of my body has been made from half of your body. You perform deeds that are for the welfare of *devatas*.** It is you who enlarge the population of living beings. (Shl 12) Shubhangi! You know *sanatan stri-dharma* completely. Therefore tell this fully.

Uma said: (Shl 13-15) *Sarva-bhuteshwara! Sarva-shreshtha! Mahadeva!* It is due to your power/influence that my speech has talent and knowledge. Therefore I can tell about *stri-dharma*. But with a desire to touch you, to help you in your bath and *achaman* these rivers constituted with all the holy pilgrim centres have come near you. I will consult these divine rivers and tell about *stri-dharma*. **However capable a person may be, if he has no ego people consider him a worthy person.** (Shl 16) *Bhutanatha! A woman always follows a woman.* If I consult these great rivers, the ruling deities of all these rivers will feel honoured. (Shl 17) This is river Saraswati, the first among rivers. Vipasha, Vitastha, Chandrabhaga, Iravati, Shatadru, Devika, Sindhu, Kaushiki, Gautami – all these sacred rivers are here. (Shl 19) *Devanadi* Gangadevi which has come down from the skies, which is served by all holy centres, which is greatest of all rivers is also here.

Having said these words, Umadevi with a pleasing smile asked the great rivers about *stri-dharma*. (Shl 22) Oh holy rivers! Bhagawan Shankara has asked a question about *stri-dharma*. I wish to answer him after getting all your suggestions. (Shl 23) Oh rivers which go to the seas! **I feel that no single person, whether on earth or in *Swarga*, can know all the *vijnana* comprehensively. Therefore I respect all your suggestions.**

Then all rivers respectfully nominated Ganga to answer on their behalf.

(Shl 25, 26) Gangadevi, who had knowledge of several topics, who knew *stri-dharma*, who had a pure smile, who was very auspicious, who drives away the fear of sins, who had scholarship in all dharmas, who was endowed with great intelligence said with a smile to Parvati devi: (Shl 27) *Dharma-parayane!* Parvatidevi! I am blessed. You, who are honoured by the whole world, are respecting me. (Shl 28) **He, who even though is capable in everyway (or knows everything), asks others and does so without any crookedness in mind and respects them, will surely get fame as *pandita*.** (Shl 29, 30) **The person who asks others who are experts in making suppositions, who are rich in *jnana* & *vijnana* and are orators about his doubts, will not get into dangers. A very intelligent person speaks differently in an assembly. An egoistic person speaks weakly and without any essence.** (Shl 31) Oh the one with divine knowledge! Great among all in *devaloka*! Who is always enthusiastic! Umadevi! You alone are worthy of telling all of us about *stri-dharma*.

Having thus been praised by Gangadevi, Umadevi started to tell about *stri-dharma* comprehensively:

(I have omitted points that are repeated within and across verses)

(Shl 33) *Gangadevi!* I will tell about this as it shines upon/manifests in my mind. May it become famous in the world as I present it! (Shl 34) **The close relatives of the bride will preach *stri-dharma* to her at the time of marriage. The girl becomes her husband's *saha-dharma-charini* (who practices dharma with him) with *agni* as witness.** (Shl 35, 36) That girl whose nature is very good (*su-swabhava*), who speaks good words (*su-vachana*), who has good character (*su-vrta*), who is such that merely looking at her makes the husband happy (*sukha-darshana*), whose mind never wanders towards other men (*ananya-chitta*) and has a beautiful face (*sumukha*), will live according to *stri-dharma*. That faithful wife who at all times considers her husband as god himself is the woman who practices *pati-dharma* with devotion. She alone will get *punyas*. (Shl 37, 38) That *sadhvi* (chaste, virtuous, faithful woman) who considering her husband as god obeys & serves him, does not lose concentration even once (in serving her

husband), follows good rules, **who looks at her husband's face repeatedly just as looking at son's face** and **who eats limited food** is the one who practices *stri-dharma*. (Shl 39) The wife who is devoted to dharma in accordance with the saying that 'husband and wife should live in the same place and perform dharma *karyas* with a single mind' is a *pativrata stri*. (Shl 41, 42) One who has submitted herself to the husband with love, has very good mind, has virtuous character, dresses up so as to make the husband happy and who is always smiling in the presence of husband is the one who practices *stri-dharma*. The wife who maintains a pleasant face even if the husband speaks harshly to her or looks at her as if she is blemished is a *pativrata*. (Shl 43, 44) The woman who does not look upon anyone other than husband as a man whether it is Sun or Moon or a tree is devoted to *stri-dharma*. The wife who cares for her husband like caring for her son even if he is poor or sick or exhausted after travelling will earn *punya*. (Shl 45, 46) That woman, who has pure heart, is skilled in caring for her husband, has son, is loved by her husband and who thinks of her husband as her life earns *punya*. That woman who is engaged in caring and nursing her husband with a happy mind, who has unshakeable trust in her husband and is humble/polite is associated with dharma. (Shl 47) That woman who does not have as much desire/longing for sexual pleasures or enjoyments or wealth or happiness as she has for her husband is associated with dharma. (Shl 48-50) The woman who is keen on getting up early in the morning, starts her household duties soon after getting up, cleans the house thoroughly, performs *agnihotra* with her husband, offers flowers to *devatas*, worships *devatas* along with her husband and eats her food only after serving guests & servants and makes sure that the members of the family are happy and well nourished is united with dharma. (Shl 51, 52) That woman who has virtuous qualities and is interested in serving the in-laws, **is also devoted to her parents** is surely a *tapodhana* (rich in austerities). That woman who takes care of brahmanas, the weak, orphans, poor, blind and indigent by giving them food becomes eligible to get the fruits of *pativrata dharma*. (Shl 53) One who everyday practices very difficult *vrata* which a weak woman cannot and is always interested in the welfare of her husband will get the fruits of *pativrata dharma*. (Shl 55) Husband is the god for a woman; he is the relative; he is the ultimate refuge. There is no refuge that can match husband. Even god cannot be a match to him.

Parvati turned to Ishwara and said: (Shl 56) *Devadeva!* To a *sadhvi*, the grace of husband and *Swarga* may be equal or may not be. But I would not want *Swarga* also if you my beloved husband is not happy. (Shl 57, 58) Even if the husband is very poor or suffering from sickness or be in danger or in the midst of enemies or agonised by curse of a brahmana, wife should obey him. At that time even if what he says in *adharma* or wrong deed or even risk to life she must consider it as *apadharma* (dharma in times of distress) and do the task without any doubts. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 146)**

Matters of sex

- Story of Uthathya *rishi's* wife Mamatha who was pregnant & Brihaspati, the younger brother of Uthathya: Brihaspati was not an ordinary person. He is a *mahamahima*. Still he could not control his momentary & intense sexual desire for Mamatha. He ignored Mamatha's pleas & advice. He also ignored the *Smritivakya* (sayings of *Smriti*) that there should be no sex with a woman who does not have such desire. Caught in his deep passion & lust, he ignored all limits of dharma and the world and started enjoying Mamatha. Just at the time of ejaculation, the developed foetus which was already in the womb spoke..... **(Adi; Sambhava; 104)**
- In the ancient times women were mating only when they were *ritusnate* (period of fertility). They would not mate at other times merely for sexual pleasures. This was not only among humans; even animals & birds were following this same principle. Plants would blossom & yield fruits at the appropriate seasons. **(Adi; Amshavatarana; 64)**

Obedient/loyal wife

- **Pandu to Kunthi:** "Practices from the past are not blind followings. They were ways of living indicated by *rishis* who knew the nuances of dharma. This is also known as *shishtachara*. **In the olden times women had more freedom. Family was not considered bondage and women did not have to obey the orders of husband. They had the freedom to go wherever they wanted and live as they wished. In spite of living so, they were considered as *pativratas*.** Their manner of living was not considered sinful. That was the regulation of dharma in those days. **Even now aren't all animals other than humans following the same rule?** Have they developed any jealousy because of such living? *Maharshis* knowledgeable about dharma had

approved such behaviour & living. Among Uttarakurus this tradition is followed even now. Giving freedom to women is considered *sanatana dharma*. **The requirement (*shishtachara*) that a woman should have attachment only to her husband is more recent. (Adi; Sambhava; 122)**

- Pandu to Kunthi: (Shl 14, 17-19) I will tell you the story of the person responsible for this change. There was a *mahatapasvi* called Uddalaka. He had a son called Shwethakethu who was also a great *tapasvi*. Today's practice came about because of his anger. One day when Shwethakethu was nursing/serving his father, a brahmana came into the house and grabbing Uddalaka's wife's hand said, "let us go away from here. Come" and saying so he pulled her away with him. Though Uddalaka showed no anger at all by this act of the brahmana, Shwethakethu could not control his anger. Sensing that his son was angry, Uddalaka consoling him said, "(Shl 14) Why are you angry? This is the accepted practice. **Women are not subject to any control in this world. They are absolutely free. Have you not seen how animals behave? Humans of all *varnas* behave the same way. Do not become angry on that account.**

Shwethakethu was not satisfied with his father's words. He decided to change the practice and declared, (Shl 17-19) **"If women do not remain under control of their husbands they will be subjected to *bhruna-hatya paap* (sin of killing a foetus in the womb). This rule will apply not just to women. If a husband ignores or ill treats the wife who treats him as her everything, he will also be tainted with the same sin.** Further, a woman who does not obey a husband who is desirous of a son will also be subject to the same sin.

The existing dharma for husband & wife has come from Shwethakethu's days. **(Adi; Sambhava; 122)**

About husband (*pati*)

- Hidimba: (Shl 19) **Women have more love for husband than for their own brother. (Adi; Sambhava; 152)**
- Pradweshi, wife of *rishi* Deerghatamas: (Shl 20) By fostering & supporting (*poshana*) the wife, husband is called '*bhartha*'. Because he nurtures (*palan*) her, he is called *pati*. But you are neither *bhartha* nor *pati*. You are neither fostering me nor protecting me. On the other hand, I am taking care of you who are born blind & your children.....Finally she said, "I cannot care for you as I did in the past. You can live as you wish." **(Adi; Sambhava; 104)**
- Bhishma said: One should practice celibacy on *Amavasya* (new moon day), *Poornima* (full moon day), *chaturdashi* (fourteenth lunar day of the two fortnights) of the two *pakshas*, and *ashtami* (eighth lunar day). **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 104)**
- King Ashwapathi: Similarly, one who does not mate with his wife who is in her 'fertility' period is worthy of blame. **(Vana; Pativrata-mahatmya; 293)**
- Bhishma said: (Shl 116) Other's wives are never suited for mating. One should never go near the wife of a king or her friends. (Shl 117) One should also not go near the wives of doctors, young persons, aged persons, brahmanas, those who have surrendered and of relatives. By doing this man will enjoy long life. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 104)**

One woman-one husband for life rule

- Deerghatamas understood the intent of his wife completely. He felt she has no desire to continue as his wife. He decided to eliminate the system whereby wife could live with another while the husband was still alive. He proclaimed a new dharma. His *dharmavani* was firm & clear: "I am proclaiming a new rule from today. During the lifetime of a woman she should be attached to only one husband. Even after the death of husband, she should not take other partners in her lifetime. In case, out of sexual desire, a woman gets attracted to (*anuraktha*) another man when the husband is alive or even after his death, she will become a sinner. Even if a woman has plenty of wealth, if she does not have a husband who is responsible for her getting a child who gives eligibility for happiness in both this world & other world, let that wealth be wasted. Let infamy & allegations follow a woman who goes after another man (*parapurusha*)." **(Adi; Sambhava; 104)**

Dharma of marriage

Validity of *Saha-dharma*

- Yudhishtira questioned: (Shl 1) Grandfather Bhishma! At the time of marriage of women, many things (like *saha ubhau charatam dharma*) are stated about *saha-dharma* (common dharma, duty etc). With what objective is this stated? (Shl 2) Is the *saha-dharma* stated by *rishis* in the past about the relationship between man & woman an *arsha dharma* (relating to or belonging to or derived from *rishis*) or *prajapatya dharma* (for purposes of procreation) or *asura dharma* (The word *asura* also means *indriyas*. Does it refer only to the pleasure of *indriyas*)? (Shl 3) I have a serious doubt about this statement on '*saha-dharma*'. I feel the word has contrary meaning. That is, where will whatever *sahadharma* is here be after death? (Shl 4) Grandfather! After death human being may get *swarga*. Between husband and wife, one of them will die first. Then how can *sahadharma* be meaningful for the one who survives here. Tell me about this.

(Shl 5) **Since human beings consist of different kinds of *dharma-phalas*, live in different places controlled by variety of karmas and go to *swarga* or *naraka* according to their auspicious or inauspicious fruits of karmas, how can *saha-dharma* be managed between a man & a woman?** (Shl 6) ***Dharma-sutra-kaars* (makers or authors of dharma-sutras) have decided that women are not truthful (*astayavadi*). If this opinion were to be accepted, how is *saha-dharma* possible with them?** (Shl 7) Even Vedas have mentioned that women are untruthful. Therefore, the *sahadharma* that is stated at the time of marriage also includes this untruthfulness. But *asatya* (untruth) can never be dharma. **Therefore the term *saha-dharma* in marriage can only be figurative and not factual. Whatever acts husband and wife do together have been called *sahadharma* only for namesake and there really is no element of dharma in it.**

(Shl 8) Though I have been thinking about this matter for long, the issue only becomes more complex and I do not find an answer. Therefore please tell me what the *shrutis* say about this and clear my doubt. (Shl 9) From when did this thing called *sahadharma* come into vogue? How did it become a practice? In what form did it come. Tell me completely about all these.

Bhishma said: Yudhishtira! In this matter an old *itihaas* that happened between Ashtavakra and Goddess of North direction (*Uttara-dik-devata*) is quoted by scholars.

(The illustrative example does not at all appear to address the issue raised by Yudhishtira!! It only talks about unbridled sexuality in women and hence looks quite out of place!! (Story not included here).

.... Ashtavakra said (To the old woman who disguised as very old woman though in reality was goddess of Northern direction): *Bhadre!* I will not unite with other's wives under any circumstance because those who know dharma *shastra* have condemned adultery. I swear on truth. I have already decided to marry a *rishi-kumari*. Understand this very well. I do not know about pleasures of the senses. Don't we want to beget children only for the accomplishment of *dharma & artha*? I will marry only to beget children for dharma. I will attain higher *lokas* only by virtue of such children. There is no doubt in this matter. You should understand dharma and stop this kind of libertine behaviour. (**Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 19**)

About children

12 ways to get children

- Pandu to Kunthi: There are twelve ways in which a man can have children. **Of these six types of children are called *jnati* who enjoy the right to property and the rest are only *jnati* without such rights.**
 - Born to wife married formally (*swayamjatha*)
 - Getting a child in one's wife by the grace of a great person (*praneetha*)
 - Giving plenty of money to a *tapasvi* and getting a child through him in your wife (*parikreetha*)
 - Son born to the second wife (*pounarbhava*)
 - Child born due to mating before marriage will also be considered their child (*kaaneena*)
 - Even if wife is profligate/promiscuous child born due to mating with someone not lowly (*kunda*)
 - Given in *daan* by parents (*datta*)

- (8) Purchased by giving suitable value (*kreetha*)
- (9) Adopted due to some reason even though *kula-gothra* are not known (*kritrima*)
- (10) One who has come to you saying "I am your son"
- (11) Born after marrying a woman who had already mated with another & was pregnant (*sahoda*)
- (12) Born to low caste woman (*jnatirethasa or jnatarethasa*)

If first method fails, then second can be tried & so on. By any one method children should be born for *vamshoddhara* (continuation of lineage) and clearing *pitru-rina*.

In hopeless situations women can have child from husband's brother also. **(Adi; Sambhava; 120)**

- Sri Krishna when speaking to Karna says, 'Anyone may be responsible for the birth of *kaaneena* or *sahoda*. But whoever marries such a mother by following formal procedures becomes the father of the *kaaneena* or *sahoda* child as per the *dharma shastras*. **(Udyoga; Bhagavadyana, 140)**

Niyoga system for getting children

- Bhishma: Parashurama killed all the *kshatriya* warriors but he did not kill any of the *kshatriya* women. We have heard that such women, who were deprived of husband & sons, followed the *apaddharma* (dharma during emergency or extraordinary circumstances) and had children from brahmanas who were experts in Vedas & Vedangas. In such situations there will be no sexual desire to the man or woman. The rules & regulations to be followed will also be tough. *Shruthis* declare that such children are considered as children of the man she had married formally. This is how *Kshatriya kula* again grew after Parashurama annihilated them. **(Adi; Sambhava; 104)**
- Parashurama killed all the power-mad and egoistic kings. Parshurama rid the earth of *kshatriyas*. When the situation was such that *kshatriya vamsha* itself would vanish, *kshatriya* women went to *brahmanas* to beget children. In this manner, they became pregnant and gave birth to many princes & princesses and caused the rebuilding of *kshatriya vamsha*. **(Adi; Amshavatarana; 64)**
- Baliraja met Deerghatamas near Ganga river...He requested him, "Maharshi! Please bestow your grace so that I may have children who will be very *dharmic* and will have noble qualities." Maharshi who was an expert in both *godharma* & *purusha dharma* agreed to the King's request. Happily the king told his wife Sudeshna to serve the *rishi*. But she did not like to go to the born blind & old *rishi*. She sent her maid-servant fully decked up. Eleven children were born to her who all became experts in Vedas & Vedanga and became equivalent to *rishis*. **(Adi; Sambhava; 104)**

Rules for Niyoga

- Vyasa to Satyavathi: I will obey your orders and keeping in mind only dharma I will fulfil your desire. I know that this is a *sanatana dharma* which was followed only during emergency situations...My brother's wives will get children equivalent to *Mitra* & *Varuna*. But they (wives) will have to follow *vrata* & *niyama* strictly for one year. Then they will be purified. Women who have not followed such strict *vrata* cannot come near me. But Satyavathi tells him that there is no time to lose & delay is not acceptable due to circumstances. She requests Vyasa to grace them with children immediately. **(Adi; Sambhava; 105)**
- (From commentary given in footnotes) Manusmriti says the following about *niyoga*: The person who mates with the widow as per the wishes & approval of the elders of the family, should smear *ghee* all over his body and should mate without speaking anything. Only one child should be had by this method and not a second one. He should mate with the widow with detachment and strictly for the purpose of helping her get a child. After this, their relationship should be like that of father-in-law & daughter-in-law. The man should never consider her again as suitable for sex. **(Adi; Sambhava; 105)**
See current trends: <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2014/11/29/have-sperm-will-travel-the-natural-inseminators-helping-women-avoid-the-sperm-bank.html>
- Kunthi to Pandu: 9Shl 77) Knowledgeable people (*jnani*) do not approve fourth pregnancy by *niyoga* even in emergency conditions. **One who mates with four persons will be considered a**

svairini (profligate?). One who mates with five will be a prostitute. Knowing the intricacies of dharma why are you asking me to go against dharma for the love of children. **(Adi; Sambhava; 106, 123)**

Description of different kinds of sons

- Yudhishtira questioned: (Shl 1) What kinds of children are born to which woman? To whom do these children belong? Tell me about this separately for each *varna*. (Shl 2) We have heard several different things said by scholars about sons. We are confused not knowing the principles governing this. Kindly clarify these doubts.

Bhishma said: (Shl 3) The son born to formally married couple is called **anantaraja**. He should be considered as one's own form (*atma-swaroopa*). Son born to one's wife (*kshetra*) by another man (through *niyoga*) is **niruktaja**. Son born to a woman who is not one's wife but was mated with to satisfy sexual desire is a **prasrataja**. (Shl 4) Son got from the wife of a fallen man who had come and obtained refuge is the fourth kind. Adopted son is the fifth kind. Purchased for a price is the sixth. Son born after marrying a woman who was already a pregnant is the seventh called **adhyudha**. (Shl 5) Eighth is **kaaneena** (An unmarried woman – *kanya*, when virgin - would have got a child. If such a girl is married, then that child will be *kaaneena* to the person who married her). Apart from these eight kinds, there are six kinds in *anuloma krama* (natural order) and six in the *viloma krama* (inverted or reverse order). **Totally there are twenty kinds of children.**

Yudhishtira questioned: (Shl 6) Grandfather Bhishma! Who are the six kinds of **apadhvamsaj** children and six kinds of **apasada** children? Kindly tell me all these correctly.

Bhishma said: (Shl 7, 8) Yudhishtira! Sons born to a brahmana from *kshatriya*, *vysya* and *shudra* girls, sons born to a *kshatriya* from *vysya* & *shudra* girls, sons born to a *vysya* from *shudra* girl – these six are called **apadhvamsaja**. Next I will tell you who the six **apasada** children are. (Shl 9) **Chaandala** (born to a brahmana woman from a *shudra* man), **vraatya** (born from *kshatriya* girl to *shudra* man; this has been called *nishada* in previous *adhyaya*), **vaidya** (born from *vysya* girl to *shudra* man; called *ayogava* earlier) – these three are called **apasada**. (Shl 10, 11) **Maagadha** (*vysya* man, *brahmana* woman; called *vaidehaka* in previous *adhyaya*), **vaamaka** (*vysya* man, *kshatriya* woman; called *vandi*, *maagadha* earlier), **soota** (*kshatriya* man, *brahmana* woman) -- these three, total six kinds are **apasada**. It is impossible to deny that these are children.

Yudhishtira asked: (Shl 12) Grandfather! Some say that whoever is born in *swakshetra* (own field, meaning, one's wife) is a son. Some others say that one born in *swakshetra* with *sva-virya* (own semen) only is son. Are the children born to one's wife with husband's semen and other's semen equal? Who has authority over such children? Whose children do they become? Does the husband of the woman who gave birth to them have rights over them? Or does the person who caused the pregnancy have rights over them?

Bhishma said: (Shl 13) Yudhishtira! Those born due to own semen (*retaja*) can also be children. If someone has made one's wife pregnant and has gone away, then also the child born to her will be own child. This applies even to *adhyudha* born due to difference of timing (A girl would have become pregnant before marriage by someone else. The man who married that girl becomes the father of that child which will be born after marriage. Therefore both *retajas* & *kshretajas* are children).

Yudhishtira: (Shl 14) We know that one born to one's wife with own semen is a son. But how can someone born without one's semen be considered a son? How to consider *adhyudhas* born due to timing sequence as sons?

Bhishma said: (Shl 15) Yudhishtira! A man gets a son by his semen and due to some reason abandons him. **Even though his semen was responsible for the birth of the child, by having abandoned the child, he will not retain rights over it permanently.** The rights will transfer to the person who married the mother of the child or the master of that *kshetra*. **Therefore mere semen does not become the reason to call someone own child.** (Shl 16) Some persons who desire children may marry an already pregnant woman. In such situations the child born after marriage will be the child of that person and not the one who caused the pregnancy. (Shl 17) The things said above apply to *retaja*, *kshetrajaja* & *adhyudha* born to own wife. We have also seen children born in *anya-kshetra* (woman who is not wife) also being that man's children. Because, even though the child is born in another woman, it will be like the father only. This cannot be hidden. This case has been accepted by all. Therefore child born to another woman with one's

semen is also one's child (In some situations this conflicts with previous verses). (Shl 18) In some places we also see unnatural children (*kritaka putra*). By adoption or by merely considering someone as son or by purchasing one can become son. In such situations the semen or *kshetra* does not become the reason for having a son.

Yudhishtira: (Shl 19) Grandfather! If semen, field or resemblance does not become reasons for the status of calling son and if by mere acceptance of someone as son what kind of unnatural son will he be?

Bhishma: (Shl 20) Dharmaja! In case of child whom parents abandon on the streets and the child whose parents are just not known, they become *kritima putra* of whoever is caring for that child as if their own son. (Shl 21) **At that time, in whomever an orphan child sees ownership, he alone becomes the father. Whatever varna the person who cares for him belongs to, the child will also belong to the same varna.**

Yudhishtira: (Shl 22) Grandfather! After such an orphan child is accepted, how should the various *sanskaras* (various purification ceremonies) be done? With girl of which caste should the marriage be performed? Tell me about this.

Bhishma: (Shl 23) Yudhishtira! The person who becomes the support for the orphan child abandoned by real parents should do all *sanskaras* just as he would do to his own sons. That boy will belong to the same *varna* as the person who has adopted him for providing care & nourishment. (Shl 24) Yudhishtira who never falls from dharma! Whatever is the *sanskaras* applicable to the *sagotra* relatives will be applicable to that boy also. He should be married with girl of the same *varna*. (Shl 25) In case the *gotra* and *varna* of the real mother of that boy are known, then all *sanskaras* should be done according to that. **Kaaneena & adhyudha have to be treated as children of lowest order.** (Shl 26, 27) Yudhishtira! For both *kaaneena* & *adhyudha* children all *sanskaras* should be done just as for own sons. This has been decided in *shastras*. Brahmana etc *varnas* should do all *sanskaras* as applicable to their own *varnas*. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 49)**

About Children

- Bhishma to Yudhishtira: (Shl 34) Men should get married and should beget children. Getting children is a great gain. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 68)**
- None of the sacred karmas like *tapas*, *yajna* and such *punya karyas* are equal to good progeny. **(Adi; Asthika; 45)**
- **A son in any life form will do?**

Devatas to *rishi* Mandapala: (Shl 14) Son will make it possible to avoid the *naraka* called '*puth*'. Therefore it is your duty to beget a son so that your *vamsha* is not discontinued.

Mandapala thought for a while as to how he could get sons in the shortest time. Remembering that birds have short gestation and can get many children at a time, he took the form of a *shargna* bird and mated with a *sarangika* called Jarika. As per his resolve very soon he got four children who were all *brahmajnanis*. **(Adi; Mayadarshana; 229)**

- Shakuntala to Dushyanta: (Shl 98) When talking about son *pitru devatas* have said that son is responsible for the continuation/growth of lineage & therefore begetting a son is superior dharma. Therefore a son should not be rejected or abandoned for any reason.

(Shl 99) Manu has considered all the following five types as son only: (i) born to *dharma patni*, (ii) born to some other woman but accepted in donation or who became available unasked, (iii) obtained by purchasing (iv) foster son, and (v) one who has been purified by *upanayana* etc *samskaras*.

(Shl 100) Sons become important vehicles for parent's practice of dharma and fame. They increase love in the mind. They help the father cross the *naraka* called '*puth*'. It is therefore utterly wrong to forsake such a son.

(Shl 102) It is better to have one well than a hundred potholes. It is better to perform a *yajna* than digging a hundred wells. It is better to have one good son than performing a hundred *yajnas*. The effect of being dedicated to path of truth is that of having hundred sons. Therefore truth should never be forsaken. **(Adi; Sambhava; 81)**

- Vyasa: (Shl 4) **I agree that son is most important but which one to love more when there are many sons? (Vana; Aranya; 9)**
- Aswatthama to Duryodhana: Man desires sons hoping he will protect them from the great fears of this world and the other worlds. **(Drona; Narayanastra-moksha; 195)**
- In the story of Mathali trying to find a suitable groom for his daughter: Woe be to the birth of a girl child in families of people who are of great character (*sheela-swabhava*), are well known for excellent behaviour & virtuous practices (*shishtachara-sampanna*) and are soft-natured (*mridu-swabhava*). (Implying that if daughters are born in such families, parents have to undergo lot of grief). **(Udyoga; Bhagavadyana; 97)**
- (Shl 25) Madhavi to her father Yayati: For the same reason that men get a share of the *punya* of their children, they also get the *phala* due to birth of grand-children. Just like you all those who have daughters will gain abundant *punyaphala* (As much *punya* is gained by birth of grandsons as is gained by birth of sons). **(Udyoga; Bhagavadyana; 121)**

Father-son relationship

- Shakuntala to Dushyanta: **Maharaja! What is the pleasure of children? How to be happy with children? How does a father derive happiness from his children? Perhaps you do not know any of these.**

(Shl 53) **When father returns home from work, and the child which was playing in mud comes to know of his return, comes home running with his tiny feet and calling his father with his babble and rolls on his lap, the joy that father feels is indescribable.** It can only be experienced. Such a son is before you. He wants to sit on your lap. Why are you ignoring such a son who is your own image?

(Shl 54) Even ants carefully protect their eggs & show affection to their young ones. They never break the eggs. Then why you, who know dharma, are not cuddling your son?

(Shl 55) There are many things that give man the pleasure of touch. Prominent among them are woman, clothes and water. **But nothing can equal the pleasure you get by embracing your child covered in dust.** Embrace of own child is so joyful.

(Shl 57) Among two legged animals, human is superior. Among four legged, the cow. Guru among those worthy of worship. Among worth touching, son is the greatest.

Who is a son? What is his real form? These matters are mentioned in Vedas also. Brahmanas recite these same *mantras* when performing the birth related *samskaras* for children. You, who know everything, must also know them.

(Shl 63) That *mahamantra* is this *Maharaja*, "Oh son! **You are born from my heart & organs. That is, you are my own *atma* (*atma vai putra namasi*).** You are called by the word '*putra*'. May you live hundred years!"

(Shl 64) The father again tells the son: "My living and continuation of lineage is dependent on you. Therefore, Oh Son! Live for a hundred years. *Maharaja*! You have to say the same thing to your son. This boy is also born of your organs & your soul. From one *mahapurusha* another *mahapurusha* is born. Just as you can see your image in clear water, see this boy who is your own image, your second.

(Shl 66) Just as *ahavaniyagni* is born from *garhapatyagni* he is born of you. In spite of this there is no difference between the two *agnis*. **Similarly there is no difference between you & your son. You have split your *atma* in two. (Adi; Sambhava; 81)**

Rights/duties/concerns/importance of parents

- (Shl 31) Satyavathi: Sons are born with elements from both father & mother. Therefore there is no doubt that mother has as much right over children as the father. **(Adi; Sambhava; 105)**
- Yudhishtira to Arjuna: Fathers, by performing *tapas*, *brahmacharya*, *satya-nishta* and *kshama*, like to have children who are full of all good qualities (*kalyana-guna-sampanna*). In the same way, mothers, by fasting, *yajnas*, *vratas* and several auspicious deeds desire to have sons with good qualities (*guna-sheela*), and bear the pregnancy for 10 months. All parents will have only worries

like, 'Will the children be born safely and easily? Will we have children? Will the children after birth live well without various evil planetary influences (*graha-badhe*)? After they grow up will they be full of noble qualities and bring us happiness in this and other worlds?' (**Shanti; Rajadharmanushasana; 7**)

- Bhishma to Yudhishtira: (Shl 14, 15) **In terms of respect one *upadhyaya* (preceptor, spiritual adviser) is equal to ten *acharyas* (teacher). One father is equivalent to ten *upadhyayas*. One mother is equivalent to ten fathers. Respect for mother exceeds the respect for the whole earth. Therefore there is no guru equal to mother.** (Shl 16) Mother has higher respect than all others. That is why people especially respect her. (**Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 105**)
- (Shl 4) By doing *tapas*, *daan*, repentance etc it may be possible to overcome all curses. **But mother's curse cannot be neutralised by performing any kind of *vratas* however tough these *vratas* may be.** (**Adi; Asthika; 37**)
- King Ashwapathi: According to dharma *shastra*, a father who does not find a suitable groom for his daughter & perform her marriage when she has reached the adulthood is worthy of blame. (**Vana; Pativratamahatmya; 293**)

Rights & duties of children

- Sharmishta: (Shl 22) **It is said that wife, servant & son have no money or have no rights on earnings, because their earnings belong to their masters.** (**Adi; Sambhava; 82**)
- Yayati: (Shl 24) *Dharmajnas* (those who know dharma) say that a son who is not obedient to his father is not a son at all. (**Adi; Sambhava; 85**)
- (Shl 47) Just as the dowry given to son-in-law cannot be shared with others, it is not possible to share the *karma-phalas* earned here with others in *para-loka*. (**Shanti parva; Mokshadharma; 321**)
- King Ashwapathi: A son who does not protect & care for his widowed mother is worthy of blame. (**Vana; Pativratamahatmya; 293**)

Inheritance/Partitioning of property

Custom of making a daughter as '*putrika*'

- Daksha brahma did not have any sons. So he had made his daughters as his '*putrika*'. (Commentary: For those who have no sons, to avoid the problem of not having any one to perform *samskaras* like *shraaddha* etc after death this method was adopted. The son born to that daughter who is made '*putrika*' will get the eligibility to perform all such *samskaras*. This procedure is stated in *smriti*) (**Adi; Sambhava; 66**)

- Yudhishtira questioned: (Shl 10) Grandfather! If a daughter born to a man gets the eligibility to be treated as son, then how much share of property will each get in the property of that girl's father?

Bhishma said: (Shl 11) Dharmaja! A son is *atma-swaroopa*. **Daughter is also equal to a son.** Therefore she is also *atma-samana*. When a daughter who is like own *atma* is there, how can any one else get his property? (Shl 12) **The *stree-dhana* which exclusively belongs to mother will go to daughters.** Regarding wealth where there is no son, *dauhitra* (daughter's son) will have the rights. Therefore it is he who will take maternal grandfather's wealth & property. (Shl 13) A *dauhitra* gets the right to perform the post-death ceremonies of his father and mother's father. Therefore, **from the viewpoint of dharma there is no difference between son and *dauhitra*.**

(Shl 14) In another instance a man accepts his first daughter as his son. Later he gets a son also. In such situations both will get equal share. **In case he does not get a son but adopts another boy, then the daughter will have higher priority than the adopted son and she should get higher share of property.** (Shl 15) If the daughter who was given in marriage after taking *kanya-shulka* gets sons, they will have share only in their father's property. I do not see any logic in saying that they should have rights to the property of maternal grandfather. (**Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 45**)

- Bhishma said: (Shl 10) All those brothers engaged in banned activities will not have right to parental property. The elder brother can refuse to give them the share and can enjoy it himself. (Shl 11) If the elder brother does not harm the parental property in any way and goes to other countries/places and earns money by his hard work & efforts, then it becomes self-earned wealth. He need not share such money with his younger brothers if he does not wish to do so. (Shl 12) If all sons join together and grow the parental property, then the father should divide it equally among all without any discrimination. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 105)**
- (Shl 18-21) Some who lose their *viveka* (discrimination) due to greed of money ask for property division. The moment brothers divide, third parties enter and by telling several lies cause mutual distrust & enmity among brothers to increase. Moreover they try to snatch the property by acting like friends. Therefore if brothers divide, all of them will lose. For this reason wise do not agree to division of property. **Because, after division they will not be bound by the *shastras* which are like a guru—that the youngest should be treated like a son and the eldest is equal to father.**

Brother replied: Oh elder brother! I cannot live with you. If it was true that there should never be a division of property there would have been no mention of property division in *smritis*. I feel there will be better love between us if we separate. Therefore give me my share as per *shastras*. Let us both live peacefully. **(Adi; Asthika; 29)**

Partition of inheritance in the four *varnas*

- Yudhishtira questioned: (Shl 4) *Shaastras* have permitted that brahmana can have four wives. These four will be brahmana woman, *kshatriya* woman, *vysya* woman and if he desires sexual pleasures, a *shudra* woman. (Shl 5) If that brahmana gets children from all four, how much will each be eligible as their part of inheritance? (Shl 6) Which son should take how much from his father's properties? How much is said to be the share of each? I wish to know about all these.

Bhishma said: (Shl 7) Yudhishtira! Brahmana, *kshatriya* and *vysya* are called as *dvijatis*. Therefore marriage of a brahmana with any of these *varnas* is in accordance with dharma. (Shl 8) By injustice or greed or desire, a *shudra* girl can also become his wife. But we do not find any method or procedure stated for this in *shastras*. (Shl 9) A brahmana who mates with a *shudra* woman will fall to depths. He has to perform certain atonements to overcome that sin. If that brahmana begets children from the *shudra* woman then the atonements double.

Division of property of a brahmana

- Yudhishtira! Now I will tell you the **partition of inheritance of a brahmana for children born from wives of all three *varnas*.**

(Shl 11, 12) The son born to the brahmana wife should take one part of the complete assets consisting of good things, oxen, vehicles and other good items. Then the remaining assets should be divided into ten parts. Of these ten parts, he should again take four parts (The first one part of the whole he takes is called *jyeshthamsha*). (Shl 13) The son born to *kshatriya* woman will also be a brahmana only. There is no doubt about this. He becomes eligible to take three parts due to the special position of mother. (Shl 14) The son born to *vysya* woman should take two parts. (Shl 15) The son born to *shudra* woman is said to be the son who should not get any money (*adeya-bhaga*). Still, he should be given some part (the remaining one part). (Shl 16) This is the method of sharing the property after dividing into ten parts. All children born to the wife of same *varna* (as father) should get equal share (If there are more than one sons from the brahmana wife, they should all share the four parts due to them equally and similarly for other *varnas*). (Shl 17) Because the son born to *shudra* wife will not have the required expertise he is called *abrahmana*. The children born to wives of other *varnas* are considered as brahmanas only. (Shl 18) Only four *varnas* have been stated. There is no fifth. The son born to the *shudra* wife is eligible to get one tenth of assets. (Shl 19) But he should take it only if father gives it to him willingly. If he does not, then he has no right over it. But father should give a share to him also. (Shl 20) The *shudra* son should also be given a part of the property with the motto that kindness is dharma. **Where there is kindness, there virtuous qualities will take birth.** (Shl 21) However, whether the brahmana has children from other wives or not the *shudra* son should not get more than one tenth.

(Shl 22) If a brahmana has more money and grains than needed for running the family for three years, he should perform *yajna* with the excess money. **He should not accumulate money**

unnecessarily. (Shl 23) At the most only 3000 coins (of money) should be given to women (however much is available, more than this should not be given). Wife can use that money as meaningfully as she feels. (Shl 24) The share women get in the property of husband is called *upabhoga-phala*. Therefore women should not steal more than what they get legally from husband's wealth. (Shl 25) **The wealth or property that a brahmana girl gets from her father's side will rightfully go to her daughter because, daughter is also just like son.** (Shl 26) **Daughter is equal to son. This is stated in *shastras*.** The *dayabhaga dharma* (the dharma of partition of inheritance) has also been stated extensively on the same principles. **In this manner wealth should be earned by always remembering dharma. Money should not be accumulated unnecessarily.**

Yudhishtira questioned: (Shl 27) Grandfather! If the son born to the *shudra* wife of a brahmana is ineligible for any share, then due to which special right does he get one tenth share? (Shl 28) There is no doubt that the son born to the *brahmana* wife will also be a brahmana. Similarly, sons born to *kshatriya* and *vysya* wives will also be brahmanas. (Shl 29) **If this is so, why do they get unequal shares?**

Bhishma said: (Shl 30) All women who are married are designated by the common word '*daara*' (Respected/loved by men who desire *dharma*, *artha* & *kaam*; one who divides the husband in the form of sons). But because they are called by the same designation, a special situation has arisen. (Shl 31) Even if a brahmana marries a brahmana girl after having already married *kshatriya*, *vysya* & *shudra* women, it is the brahmana girl who becomes greater than them. She becomes worthy of worship by all. She will also have a higher place. (Shl 32, 33) Yudhishtira! In a brahmana's house all works like helping husband take bath, preparing the accessories for his brushing teeth, giving *kajal* that is applied to the eyes, providing the items for dressing up, making ready and arranging all the things needed everyday for *havya-kavya* and assisting in other religious activities have to be done by the brahmana wife. **When she is available, wives of other *varnas* do not get this right.** (Shl 34) All things like food, drinks, garland, clothes, jewellery etc have to be given to the husband only by the brahmana wife because, she is greater than others. (Shl 35) Even in the *dharma-shastra* stated by Manu, *sanatan dharma* has been propounded in this way only. (Shl 36) If a brahmana behaves differently from this under influence of sexual attraction, he becomes a *brahmana-chandala*.

(Shl 37) Even if the brahmana gets a son from the *kshatriya* wife and though he is also designated a brahmana, there will be some difference between the one born from brahmana woman & others. (Shl 38) Just because a *kshatriya* woman is married to a brahmana, the brahmana and *kshatriya* women do not become the same. Similarly, the children born to brahmana woman will have a higher place and will be greater than those born to others. That is why they get a higher share.

(Shl 39) Just as a *kshatriya* woman is not equal to a brahmana woman, so is the case with *vysya* woman. (Shl 40, 41) Wealth, kingdom and treasury belong to the *kshatriya*. He acts in accordance with dharma and obtains large kingdom and huge wealth. He holds the *danda*. **Other than him no one else can protect the country.** (Shl 42) Highly fortunate brahmanas are *devatas* even to *devatas*. They should be respected duly and should be dealt with cordiality and respect. (Shl 43) **A *kshatriya* noticing that the *sanatan dharma* propounded by *rishis* is declining or lapsing protects it in accordance with his dharma.** (Shl 44) *Kshatriya* protects the wealth and women of all *varnas* from robbers who try to snatch it. (Shl 45) The son born from *kshatriya* woman to a brahmana will be greater than one born from *vysya* woman. There is no doubt about this. **That is why *kshatriya* son gets a higher share in the property.**

Division of property of other varnas

- Yudhishtira questioned: (Shl 46) Grandfather! Now you have told us about the division of property of brahmana. Tell me the rules regarding division applicable to other *varnas*.

Bhishma said: (Shl 47) It is prescribed that ***kshatriya*** can have wives of two *varnas* (*kshatriya* & *vysya* women). The third, that is, *shudra* woman can also be his wife. But *shastras* do not support this. (Shl 48) The same sequence stated for brahmana's property division applies to *kshatriya* also. *Kshatriya*'s property should be divided into eight parts. (Shl 49) The son born to him from *kshatriya* wife gets four parts. He also takes all his weapons. (Shl 50) The son born to the *vysya* wife gets three parts. The son born to *shudra* wife can take the remaining one part. He should take it only if father gives and not otherwise.

(Shl 51) For a **vysya** only a **vysya** wife is permitted. A **shudra** woman can also be his wife. But **shastras** do not support it. (Shl 52) The rule of sharing for **vysya** is as follows: (Shl 53) **Vysya's** property should be divided into five parts. Son born to **vysya** wife should take four parts. The fifth part is for the son born to **shudra** wife. (Shl 55) He should take that one part, only if given by father. **Son born to a shudra woman from brahmana, kshatriya and vysya is always adeya-bhaga** (does not have right to property of father).

(Shl 56) A **shudra** can marry only a girl of same **varna**. Girls of other **varnas** cannot be his wives. Even if he gets a hundred children from his wife, they all get equal share of property.

(Shl 57) **For all children born to the wife of same varna as husband, generally equal share is stated.** (Shl 58) But for sons born among higher **varnas**, the share of the eldest son will be more by one part. Swayambhu Manu himself has formulated these rules in the past. (Shl 59) There is another speciality to be noted about children born to the same **varna** wife. Even if a son is born to the first married wife after any of the later married women get sons, the son born to first married wife becomes eligible for the **jyeshthamsha**. This rule has come about due to the special place for earlier marriage. (Shl 60) Even among sons born to the same **varna** wives, the eldest son born to the senior most wife gets the **jyeshthamsha**. (Shl 61) In this manner, among all **varnas**, sons born to the wife of same **varna** are greater. Kashyapa, son of Marichi, himself has said this. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 47)**

How to behave with/treat brothers?

- Yudhishtira questioned: (Shl 1) How should the elder/eldest brother behave with younger brothers? How should the younger brother behave with elder brother? Tell me about this.

Bhishma said: (Shl 2) You are the eldest. Therefore you have to always behave as the eldest of all. Just as gurus have lot of affection for their students/disciples, in the same way you have to treat your younger brothers with love and respect. (Shl 3) **Whether guru or elder brother, if he is not wise & learned, others cannot obey him. If the guru or the elder brother is farsighted, the younger ones will also become farsighted.** (Shl 4) The elder brother will have to be like a blind man in some situations, like an inert man in some situations and sometimes like a scholar. If younger brothers are committing an offence he will have to act as if blind even when he sees it. Even though he realises that they have offended he should be inert as if he knows nothing. If they commit offences repeatedly they should be advised in good words at appropriate times. (Shl 5) **If the elder brother punishes them as soon as they commit an offence, they will develop divisive tendencies. They will spread the matter everywhere. Enemies who are waiting for such occasion and who are jealous of the wealth of the brothers will intervene and try to break up the unity.**

(Shl 6) The elder brother brings upliftment of the family by his good policies and discretion. If he has bad policies he will cause the destruction of the family. When he behaves without ethics and morals he destroys everything. (Shl 7) **That person who in spite of being an elder brother does not have good behaviour and relationship with brothers will not even be an elder brother. He will not even have rights to the share of the elder (jyeshthamsha). The king should punish such person.** (Shl 8) A cheat will undoubtedly get sinful **lokas**. He will be useless like the Ratten flower (*vidula*: Fasciculatus) to the father who gave birth to him. (Shl 9) The sinner born in a family will become responsible for all calamities in the family. He not only destroys the name & fame of the family, he also causes all round failures.

(Shl 10) **All those brothers engaged in banned activities will not have right to parental property. The elder brother can refuse to give them the share and can enjoy it himself.** (Shl 11) **If the elder brother does not harm the parental property in any way and goes to other countries/places and earns money by his hard work & efforts, then it becomes self-earned wealth. He need not share such money with his younger brothers if he does not wish to do so.** (Shl 12) **If all sons join together and grow the parental property, then the father should divide it equally among all without any discrimination.**

(Shl 13) Whether the younger brother is good or bad natured, the elder brother should not humiliate him. The elder brother should behave in a way that his sisters or brothers should gain **shreyas** (prosperity/auspiciousness). Those **mahatmas** who know dharma say that dharma is the means for **shreyas**. (Shl 14, 15) **In terms of respect one upadhyaya (preceptor, spiritual adviser) is equal to ten acharyas (teacher). One father is equivalent to ten upadhyayas. One**

mother is equivalent to ten fathers. Respect for mother exceeds the respect for the whole earth. Therefore there is no guru equal to mother. (Shl 16) Mother has higher respect than all others. That is why people especially respect her. After the death of father, the elder brother becomes equal to father. All younger brothers should consider him as father. (Shl 17) The elder brother should provide means of livelihood for all younger brothers and protect them. Younger brothers should also keep their heads bowed before him and should act in accordance to his wishes. They should behave towards him just as they were towards the father when he was alive and should lead their lives under his refuge.

(Shl 18) **Parents create only this body. But the birth consisting of knowledge that comes from *acharya* is the birth which has no ageing or death.** (Shl 19) Eldest sister is equal to mother. Wife of elder brother and mother who fed milk in childhood and brought up are equal. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 105)**

About people with family (*Grihasta*)

- Vyasa to Maitreya: (Shl 17) That family in which husband with wife and wife with husband live harmoniously and happily will always be auspicious/blissful. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 122)**
- (Shl 26-28) **Those who know dharma say that wife, son, relatives, dear friends, money—all these are meant to help us free ourselves from emergency situations according to the applicable dharma.** Money should be saved for tiding over emergencies. Wife should be protected with that money. Or wife should be protected more than money. But when one is in danger, even by giving up wife or money one should protect himself. **It has been decided by scholars that wife, children, wealth, house—all these are gained by humans towards fulfilling the known & unknown results (*drishta-adrishta phala praapti*). (Adi; Bakavadha; 158)**
- Dhritarashtra's questions to Yudhistira: (Shl 8) I hope children/youth, women and aged are not grieving due to any reason in your kingdom? I hope they are not begging anyone for a living? **In your house are daughter-in-law, wife, younger sister and daughter receiving due respect and hospitality?** (Manu Smriti: 2: 57: Lineage itself will be destroyed in that house where younger sister, daughter, daughter-in-law and wife are grieving. There will be prosperity in that house where they do not grieve). **(Ashramavasika parva; Ashramavasa; 26)**
- Highly pleased king said to Yudhishtira: Child! Now accept the fruits & roots I have to offer. **Man should show hospitality with whatever things he himself uses.** Yudhishtira agreed and ate the items that were offered. **(Ashramavasika parva; Ashramavasa; 26)**

Duty of a *grihasta* towards others

- Yudhishtira: If I am incapable of being a good host to those who have followed & come with me, what is the use of being in *grihashthashrama*?
(Shl 53) We see everywhere that all animals find the food they need and share it with their dear ones. But there are people in the world who do not find their food or cook it for themselves. *Grihasta* should feed such people like *yatis*, *brahmacharis* etc.
(Shl 54) Following hospitalities never stop in the house of a *satpurusha* for guests: offering a seat, a place to rest, clean drinks to quench thirst and a few sweet words. (Shl 55) A bed to sleep for one who has come exhausted, a seat to one who is tired of standing, water to the thirsty, food for the hungry—these are minimum things a person in *grihashthashrama* should offer. (Shl 56) **What a guest needs are: happy outlook of the host, good mind & words. A *grihasta* should get up, welcome & receive the guest happily, offer him a seat, and treat him well & justly.** This is *sanatana dharma*.
(Shl 57) If a *Grihasta* does not treat the following in a way they deserve to be treated, they will destroy him: *agnihotragni*, ox, *jnatīs* (cousins), relatives, guests, children, wife and servants.
(Shl 58) A *Grihasta* should never cook only for himself. He should not kill an animal unless there are worthy reasons. He should not eat food which has not been offered to *devatas* & *pitrus*.

(Shl 59) He should perform *vaishwedeve* in the morning & evening and distribute food to dogs, *chandalas* and birds. (Shl 60) Everyday *Grihastha* should eat *vighasa* & *Amritha*. The food that is left after serving to the guest is called *vighasa*. The food that is left after offering *havis* to *devatas* & *pitrus* is called *amritha*.

(Shl 61) The **five *dakshinas* of *atithi satkara*** (ways of treating the guest well) are: Looking at the guest with trust & affection when he arrives at home, sincerity in his care, sweet & polite words spoken to him, satisfying him with things he likes and walking a short distance with him when he leaves.

(Shl 62-63) The *annadaan* (giving good food as donation) to a stranger who has come tired to the house brings great *punya*. According to *panditas*, nourishing *yatis* & *brahmacharis*, extending hospitality to guests out of the money earned & saved is considered a great dharma for a *Grihastha*. **(Vana; Aranya; 2)**

- **As per the tradition, *rajarshi* Vrishaprava walked some distance with Pandavas to see them off. (Vana; Yakshayuddha; 158)**

About Women

General

- Dushyanta: (Shl 73) Generally women are liars: *asatya vachana naryah*. Therefore who will have faith in their words? **(Adi; Sambhava; 81)**
- Gandhari: (Shl 2) Women get more happiness in having a son-in-law. **(Adi; Sambhava; 116)**

Fear of a widow

(Shl 10-13) In the story of Bakasura, the wife in the family laments: How can I survive with honour and care for my children as a widow and an orphan (upon death of husband)? If our daughter is asked in marriage by the wicked & the foolish how can I protect her?

(Shl 16-17) **Many men will desire a widow just as birds snatch & fight for a piece of flesh thrown on the street. (Adi; Bakavadha; 158)**

- Dhritarashtra excitedly & reverently wishes to give a grand welcome to Sri Krishna & tells Vidura of the various gifts he would give to Krishna & other arrangements (extracts): ...Let all my children & citizens dress up nicely and welcome Sri Krishna...**Let beautiful women who go to receive him go without covering their faces with veils.... (Udyoga; Bhagavadyana; 86)**
- ..The *sindhur* in the parting of hairs of many women was about to be snatched. (They would become widows). **(Shalya Parva; 23)**
- Sanjaya introducing to the *rishis* the widowed wives of Kauravas (Duryodhana's brothers): (Shl 16) All these women who are **having a white upper cloth, not having red powder along their hair parting**, are wives of Duryodhana and his brothers. **(Ashramavasika parva; Ashramavasa; 25)**
- *Maharshi* Narada describing Sri Rama's kingdom to king Srinjaya: "(Shl 56) In his rule no one would fight with another. **When there was no fight among women, what to speak of men?** All were dedicated to dharma." **(Shanti; Rajadharmanushasana; 29)**
- Parvati to Shiva: (Shl 27) *Patideva!* Even an ordinary man will indulge in self-praise and show off his pride when in the assembly of women. There is no doubt about this. **(Shanti parva; Mokshadharma; 284)**
- **Beautiful women test Shuka muni**
The minister took him (Shuka *muni*, son of Vyasa) to such a garden. He offered him a seat to sit and went away. As soon as the minister left 500 beautiful women rushed to Shuka. All of them were wearing attractive dresses. They had very attractive hips. All were young. They had very pleasing appearance. They were wearing delicate red sarees. They were wearing shining gold ornaments. They were all skilled in amorous conversation. They were experts in singing &

dancing. They would talk to others with a pleasing smile. They matched *apsaras* in their beauty. They were skilled in showing their hospitality so as to excite sexually. They could understand the intents in other's mind. They knew all the arts. Such 500 prostitutes gathered around Shuka. They all showed their respects in traditional ways by offering *arghya* & *padya*. They satisfied him by serving a meal which was difficult to find in those times. After he had eaten, they took him around that garden and showed him all the attractions. They were taking care of him by their sweet chattering and many exciting games etc. **But Shuka who was *arani-sambhava*, of pure soul, having no doubts, being dedicated to his duty, having *indriyas* under his control, having conquered anger was neither feeling joyous nor getting angry seeing all this.** After the women completed playing the games and having fun, they prepared a luxurious bed of exquisite carpets studded with gems. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharm; 325)

Independence of woman

- ...Next night Ashtavakra and the old woman (Deity of Northern Direction disguised as old woman to test Ashtavakra) slept on separate beds. But at around midnight, that old woman went and sat on his cot. The *muni* woke up and immediately said: (Shl 12) *Mangalangi!* My mind will certainly not get interested in other's wives. Please get up and go. Avoid this sinful deed.

The old woman said: **I am an independent woman. I am not anyone's wife. Therefore by accepting me, you will not be subject to any such *dosha* of adultery.**

Ashtavakra replied: (Shl 14) **Women do not have independence. They are always dependent. This is the opinion of Prajapati. Therefore a woman can never be independent.** The old woman responded in a different way. (Shl 15) Intense sexual desire is bothering me. Notice how much devotion I have towards you. If you reject me, who is desiring sexual pleasures, you will accrue sins.

Ashtavakra was not moved by those words. Justifying his stand he said: (Shl 16) **Sins pull towards them a person with unrestrained moral behaviour.** I always keep my mind under control by courage. Therefore go to your bed and sleep. The old woman did not give up. She begged him in pitiable voice: (Shl 17) Great *vipra!* I bow to you. Be refuge to me who is prostrating and entreating you. (Shl 18) If you think that union with other woman will cause *doshas* then I will surrender/offer myself as donation to you. (Shl 19) I am telling the truth. You will not accrue any sin by doing this. Understand that I am independent. Even then if you think it will result in sins then let that sin accrue only to me. My mind is fixed on you. Also, I am independent. Therefore kindly accept me.

Ashtavakra said: (Shl 20) How are you independent? Prove this with reasons **because no woman in the three *lokas* is eligible to be considered independent. Manu dharma *shastra* has said this categorically. (Shl 21) Father protects women in their childhood & maidenhood. Husband protects them in youth. Children protect her in old age. Therefore there is no independence for women** (*Pita rakshati kaumare, bharta rakshati yauvane, putrashcha sthavire kale, nasti streenam swatnatrata*).

Respecting the statement the old woman said: Great brahmana! I am still a virgin. As you say, a husband has to protect in youth. Accept me, who am a virgin, as your wife. Be my protector. Do not destroy the firm faith I have in you. As soon as she said this, she transformed to a very beautiful damsel. So Ashtavakra said: (Shl 23) You have the same state of youth that I have. Just as you have dreams of getting married, I also have dreams. I am thinking about what Vadyana *muni* told me. He has told me only to see the woman in Northern direction and not to marry her. (Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 20)

- *Tapasvis* to Ambe: (Shl 7) **It is just that you seek your father's refuge. It is not right for a woman to be with any one else. Either husband or father should give refuge to a woman.**

Normally husband is the support for a wife. If for any reason there is a strong misunderstanding or she faces some serious difficulty with husband, she must seek refuge in father's house. **Your desiring *sanyasa* is a sad thing.** (Udyoga; Ambopakhya; 176)

Respect, care & independence of women

- Bhishma said: (Shl 1, 2) Yudhishtira! Those scholars who know the ancient history have said the following words of Daksha Prajapati in the matter of girls: **'The gifts, clothes & jewellery etc given by the boy's family to the girl should not be retained by parents of girl and should be**

given away to the daughter. By doing this the gifts will not be considered sale value. It will be respecting the girl. Giving clothes and jewellery to girls at the time of marriage is an act of great kindness. All the gifts received at the time of marriage should be given to the girl. (Shl 3) All relatives like father, brothers, uncle, brothers-in-law who desire many kinds of auspiciousness of the girl should all decorate the girl with clothes and jewellery and honour her. (Shl 4) If the woman does not find the married life palatable, she will not make the man joyous. If this does not happen, there will be no children. Therefore men should please women by making them happy by giving clothes and jewellery and by indulging them.

(Shl 5) Where women are worshipped, there *devatas* will reside happily (*striyo yatra cha poojyante ramante tatra devataah*). Where there is no love and respect for women, all actions done there will be wasted (*apoojitashcha yatraitaah sarvaastatraaphalaah kriyah*).

(Shl 6, 7) If the daughters-in-law in a house are suffering/grieving due to the troubles created/torture given by other members (mother-in-law, father-in-law, sisters-in-law or husband) the entire lineage of that family will be destroyed. Houses cursed by daughters-in-law will be destroyed like houses destroyed by *krityas* (sorceresses). If they are always grieving, the house loses its lustre; they will not look bright. Nor will they prosper.

(Shl 8, 9, 10) Monarch Manu desired to go to *swarga* and handing over women to men said: Oh Men! Women are weak. They do not commit many sins. They are content with small amounts of clothes and jewellery. They have a good mind. They win truth (are truthful). They are jealous. They expect honour & respect. They have a very angry temperament. Some times they are also very uncordial. They are not very knowledgeable. Still these women deserve to be respected. Oh men! Indulge and respect women. It is the woman who is the mainstay of dharma. Sexual pleasures, service and *namaskaaras* (adoration, offering of respect) are under the control of women. Therefore you should be soft hearted and gentle towards them. (Shl 11) Notice well that delivering babies, care & upbringing of the children, taking care of hospitality of guests for the sake of husband's love and such worldly affairs are the responsibilities of women. If you respect them, all your works will be successful.

In respect of the duties of women, *Sita devi*, the daughter of king of Videha has said the following verses: (Shl 13) Women do not have to do *yajna* etc *devata-karyas*, *shraadh* related work for *pitrus*, *vrats* like fasting etc. Serving their husband is their main duty. They will win *swarga* just by doing this. (Shl 14) In childhood father protects them. In youth husband protects them. In old age children protect her. Therefore woman does not deserve to be free (or independent)'. (*pita rakshati kuamare bharta rakshati yauvane, putrashcha sthavire bhava na stree svatantramarhati*).

Having said this, Manu went away to *swarga*.

(Shl 15) Yudhishtira! Women are like *Mahalakshmi* (Goddess of wealth and prosperity) to the house. Those who desire progress, wealth, prosperity and happiness in life should respect and be cordial to them. If you keep them under control and indulge and care for them, they become Goddess *Mahalakshmi* who grants all kinds of wealth. (*Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 46*)

- Yudhishtira speaking to Narada: (Shl 16) Subhadra being the wife of my younger brother is like my daughter-in-law..... (*Shanti; Rajadharmanushasana; 1*)

About *deva karya* & *Pitru karya*

- Yudhishtira questioned: (Shl 1) Grandfather Bhishma! What special rules have *rishis* and *devatas* prescribed for *deva karyas* & *pitru karyas*? I wish to know these things from you.

Bhishma: (Shl 2, 3) Yudhishtira! Man should get up in *brahma muhurta*, become purified with bath and should make an effort to do karmas which please the *devatas* in the forenoon. At noon time he should treat guests with hospitality. In the afternoon he should perform karmas that please *pitrus*. Karmas done at wrong times will reach the *rakshasas*.

Unworthy food (which will belong to *rakshasas*)

- (Shl 4) Food that has been leapt over, that have been tasted/licked, that is cooked while quarrelling and that seen by menstruating women will go to *rakshasas* according to scholars. (Shl 5) The food that is left after the announcement that 'a person who has fallen/strayed in his *vrat*

(*vrat-bhrasht*) has eaten' and food touched by dog will belong to *rakshasas*. (Shl 6) Food in which hair or worms have got mixed, food blemished by yawn and sneezing, food seen by dog and food given while crying and with disdain belong to *rakshasas*. (Shl 7) Food left after someone eats it without OMkaar, food left after someone holding a weapon has eaten and food left after a wicked person has eaten will belong to *rakshasas*. It will not be fit for offering in *deva-pitru karyas*. (Shl 8) Food left after others or oneself has eaten will go to *rakshasas* if used in *deva, pitru karyas*. (Shl 9) Food served in *shraaddhas* by all three *varnas* without reciting *mantras* and following due procedures will belong to *rakshasas*. (Shl 10) Food served without performing *homa* in *agni* with *ajya* (clarified butter) will go to *rakshasas*.

Fit & unfit persons for deva karya and pitru karya

- (Shl 12) Fallen, dumb and insane brahmanas should not be invited for *deva and pitru karyas*. (Shl 13) One affected with whiteness (white patches) of skin, impotent, person affected by leprosy, affected with consumption, epilepsy and blind – all these should not be invited for *karyas* related to *devatas* or *pitrus*. (Shl 14) **Chikitsaka** (Doctors who treat for money), **devalaka** (priest who worships an idol in temple and who takes a salary for the same), **those who follow religious rules only for appearance's sake** and those who sell *somalatha* are not fit for being invited in *deva, pitru karyas*. (Shl 15) **Singers, dancers, those who make a living by playing by way of jumping, leaping etc, instrumentalists, story teller, warriors are not fit for being invited for deva, pitru karyas.** (Shl 16) **Those who teach Vedas to shudras, those who help them perform yajnas, those who have them alone as disciples and those who are disciples of shudras are not eligible to be invited in deva, pitru karyas.** (Shl 17) Both the brahmana who accepts money to teach Veda and one who pays money to learn Vedas are sellers of Vedas. Therefore they are unfit to be invited in *shraaddha karmas*. (Shl 18) Brahmana who was earlier a great brahmana, had virtuous practices, was well respected in society but later marries a low caste woman, then even if he is an expert in all kinds of *vidyas*, he becomes unfit to be invited for *deva, pitru karyas*. (Shl 19) Brahmanas who do not have *oupasanagni* or *shrautagni*, who are *sthenas* (thieves, who do not perform karmas prescribed for their *ashramas*), those who have fallen (*patita*: man becomes *patita* by karmas, by defects in the body, by being born in contemptible family, and by committing serious sins) committing serious sins are unfit to be invited for *deva, pitru karyas*. (Shl 20) Brahmanas whose past is not known (strangers), those who were earlier in the army and *putrika-purva-putras* (A girl is given in marriage with the condition that 'the boy born to her will become my son', and then the boy so born will fall from father's *gotra* and is called this) are unfit to be invited for *deva, pitru karyas*. (Shl 21) **Those who lend money for interest (rinakarta), those who pay huge interests (vardhushika: borrows half part grains and returns full part) and those who trade in animals are unfit to be invited for deva, pitru karyas.** (Shl 22) Such brahmanas who give prominence to women and live like their subordinates, who make a living by making arms & ammunition and who do not do *japa (gayatri mantra)* are unfit to be invited in *deva, pitru karyas*.

Eligibilities of persons for shraaddha

- (Shl 24) Those brahmanas who practice all the rules and *vrats*, are full of virtuous qualities, are engaged in work and know the meaning of Gayathri *mantra* and not merely its repetition are fit to be invited for *shraaddha* even if they are agriculturists. (Implication: Some brahmanas had taken up agriculture for a living). (Shl 25) **A brahmana of noble birth, even if he practices kshatriya dharma in war, is eligible for shraaddha. But if the brahmana is engaged in trade he should not be invited for shraaddha.** (Shl 26) That brahmana who is an *agnihotri*, who lives in his own village/town, is not a thief and knows how to show hospitality to guests is fit to be invited for *shraaddha karmas*. (Shl 27) That brahmana who repeats Gayathri *mantra* three times a day (morning, afternoon & evening), lives by begging for alms, and is hard working is fit to be invited in *shraaddha karmas*. (Shl 28) That brahmana who was prosperous and now has had a downfall, the opposite kind and one who does not cause violence/cruelty to animals is fit to be invited for *shraaddha* even if he has some minor defects. (Shl 29) That brahmana who is not a hypocrite, does not engage in useless arguments and begs for food in houses worthy of begging is fit to be invited for *shraaddhas*. (Shl 30) Even if a brahmana does not practice *vrats*, is a gambler, a thief or in the business of selling & buying animals, if he performs *somayaga* and drinks *somarasa* he becomes eligible to be invited for *shraaddha*. (Shl 31) Even if a brahmana who had earlier made money in harsh ways later becomes a very good host & shows excellent hospitality to guests, he becomes eligible to be invited for *shraaddhas*. (Shl 32) Money earned by teaching Vedas, earned

by women and earned by displaying weakness or pitiable conditions should not be given as *daan* in *shraaddha karmas* to brahmanas who are in *pitru roopa*.

What brahmana must say in *shraaddhas*

- (Shl 33) That brahmana who does not say the mandatory '*astu svadha*' etc at appropriate times when *shraaddha* is in progress and while ending, will be subject to sins equal to telling lies about cow. (Shl 34) **Whichever day one finds worthy brahmana, good quality curds & clarified butter, *amavasya*, meat of animal which lives in forest and roots & fruits is the well suited time for *shraaddha*.** (Shl 35) After having their *shraaddha* meal in the house of a brahmana, if they say '*astu svadha*', *pitrus* will be pleased. In the house of a *kshatriya* once *shraaddha* ends, the brahmanas who had meals should say, '*pitrah preeyatam*'. (Shl 36) After *shraaddha* ends in the house of a *vysya*, brahmanas should say, '*shraaddham akshayyamastu*'. (May the *daan* you gave towards *shraaddha* become *akshaya*—multiply endlessly). Once it ends in the house of a *shudra*, they should say, '*svasti*' (may it bring auspicious things).

(Shl 37) In the same way when *devata* related *karyas* happen in the house of a brahmana *punyaha vachana* including *OMkaar* should be said (*Yajamana* says: *punyaham bhavanto bruvantu*; Brahmana should say: *Om punyaham Om punyaham*). In *kshatriya*'s house this same thing **without OM** should be said. (Shl 38) When performed in the house of a *vysya*, at the end brahmanas should say, '*preeyantam devata*'.

Now I will tell the methods of *karma anushtan* for the three *varnas*:

(Shl 39) *Jatakarma* etc *sanskaras* have been prescribed for *brahmana*, *kshatriya* and *vysyas*. For all these *varnas* these *sanskaras* should take place through *mantras* stated in *Vedas*.

Most suited persons for giving *daan*

- (Shl 49) Yudhishtira! Just as farmers await good rains, such poor brahmanas whose wives wait & eat the food left after their husbands have eaten should be served food. (Shl 50) Those who are steady in virtuous practices, those whose means of living is lost and therefore are weak – if such persons come seeking help from donors, the *daan* given to them will yield great results. (Shl 52) Food & water served to those who troubled by fear have escaped from thieves or enemies and come asking for food & water, will yield great fruits. (Shl 53) The food served to such brahmanas and his children who have no impurity in their minds, who are so poor that when a handful of food is seen in his palm his hungry children cry out, 'give it to me' will yield great fruits. (Shl 54) The *daan* given at such times when brahmana has lost his wealth and wife due to some serious calamity in the country and roaming everywhere comes to you for money will yield great fruits. (Shl 55) Money given to brahmanas who strictly follow the disciplines and walk on the path prescribed by *Vedas* and take up some *vrat* and seek money to complete such *vrat* will yield great results. (Shl 56) Money given as *daan* to even those who are stuck in life threatening danger, are weak, are moneyless and are followers of *pashanda siddhanta* (heretics) will yield great fruits. (Shl 57) When powerful robbers rob everything from innocent persons, then if food is given to such persons they will wish well for the giver. Food given at such times to such victims yields great fruits. (Shl 58) If those who are *tapasvis*, who are always engaged in *tapas*, or those who beg on behalf of *tapasvis*, come and desire something, then giving them what they seek will yield great fruits. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 23)**

Results of performing *shraaddha* on different *tithis*

- Yudhishtira questioned: (Shl 1) Grandfather! Just as you told me about the dharmas of the four *varnas* tell me comprehensively about *shraaddha vidhi* (rules and ways of performing *shraaddha*, a ceremony in honour of the dead relative).

Bhishma said: Yudhishtira! Listen attentively to the ***shraaddha karma vidhi* which is called *pitru yajna* which is the cause of gaining money, fame and children.** *Pitru devatas* (ancestors who are like gods) are worship worthy for *devas*, *asuras*, *manushyas*, *Gandharvas*, *uragas*, *rakshasas*, *pishachas* and *kinnaras*. **First the *pitru devatas* are worshipped and then *devatas* are worshipped.** Therefore man should always worship *pitru devatas* through all *yajnas*. ***Pitrus* will feel contented even if worshipped on all days.** Now I will tell you *tithis* (lunar day) and their good and bad results.

(Shl 9) If the *shraddha* is performed on *padya (pratipat)* (**first day** after full Moon) he will get a beautiful and favourable wife who will beget many children. (Shl 10) If performed on *dvitiya*

(second day of lunar fortnight) daughters will be born. If done on *Tritiya* (3rd day) there will be increase in number of horses in the house. If done on *Chaturthi* (4th day) there will be prosperity in respect of smaller animals (like sheep, goat etc). (Shl 11) If done on *Panchami* (5th day) he will have many sons. If done on *Shashti* (6th day) then he will gain radiance. (Shl 12) If done on *Saptami* (7th day) he will gain in agriculture. If done on *Ashtami* (8th day) he will see gains in trade and business. (Shl 13) If done on *Navami* (9th day) he will see prosperity in respect of single hoof (unsplit) animals like horses. If done on *Dashami* (10th day) he will see increase in cattle strength. (Shl 14) If done on *Ekadashi* (11th day) he will have prosperity in respect of metals other than gold & silver. Children with *brahma tejas* will be born in his house. (Shl 15) If done on *dvadashi* (12th day) he will see wonderful gold, silver and money everyday. (Shl 16, 17) If done on *trayodashi* (13th day) he will be considered great among his family members. **But if performed on Chaturdashi** (14th day) **youthful children in his house will die. He will also have to participate in war.** (Therefore it should not be done on that day). By performing *shraaddha* on *Amavasya* (New Moon day) he will fulfil all his desires. (Shl 18) In *Krishna paksha* (Fortnight of Moon waning) *Dashami* to *Amavasya* except *chaturdashi* are very well suited for *shraaddha karma*. *Pratipat* to *Navami* are not so well suited. (Shl 19) **Just as Krishna paksha is better than Shukla paksha** (fortnight of moon waxing) **for shraaddha karma, in the same way afternoon is better than forenoon.** (Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 87)

How pitrus feel satisfied in shraaddhas

- Yudhishtira questioned: (Shl 1) Grandfather! What things given to *pitrus* become *akshaya* (un-decaying)? By donating which *havya vastu* do *pitrus* remain satisfied for long? And by giving what will they be satisfied for an endless time?

Bhishma said: (Shl 3) Yudhishtira! Sesame, red rice, *yava* (barley), urad dal, roots and fruits – *shraaddhas* done with these will keep *pitrus* **satisfied for one month.** (Shl 4) Manu has said that the *shraaddha* in which sesame is used in major proportion will be *akshaya* (un-decaying). **It has been said that in all edible items used in shraaddha, sesame (til) should be used prominently.** (Shl 5) *Shraaddha* performed with items from cow (milk, curds, ghee) will keep them satisfied for one year. The same results as obtained with cow related items will be obtained also by doing it with *payasa* with ghee.

In this matter scholars quote *pitru gita*. Sanatakumara had told me this in the past while conversing with me. (Shl 7) Will some one be born in our lineage who will give us *payasa* with ghee in *Dakshinayana*, *Bhadrapada bahula*, *makha nakshatra*, *trayodashi*? (Shl 8) Will someone be born in our lineage who will offer us red meat of goat on the day of *Makha nakshatra* in *gajacchaya punya kaal* (*pitru paksha*, *trayodashi*, Moon in *Makha* and Sun in *Hasta*) and when being fanned by the elephant's ears? (Shl 9) **Man should have a desire to beget many sons because, at least one of them may go to Gaya** (A sacred place in Bihar, India). **He may perform Shraaddha for his father there. The famous akshaya vata vriksha** (banyan tree) **which makes the fruits of shraaddha undecaying is in Gaya.** (Shl 10) On the *tithi* (lunar day) on which *pitrus* have died any of the following should be offered to them along with honey to make them satisfied for ever – water, roots, fruits, meat or cooked rice.

(Five additional *shlokas* found in many editions)

(Shl 5) If *Shraaddha* is performed with fish they will be satisfied for two months. If done with meat of sheep they will remain satisfied for three months. If done with meat of rabbit, they will be satisfied for four months. (Shl 6) If done with meat of goat they will be pleased for five months. If done with the meat of wild boar they will be happy for six months. If done with red fish they will be happy for seven months. (Shl 7) If done with meat of *Chitra mriga* (spotted antelope) they will be happy for eight months. If done with meat of *Krishna mriga* (black antelope) they will be content for nine months. If done with the meat of *Gavaya* (semi-domesticated bovine; *bos frontalis*; specie of ox) they will be satisfied for ten months. (Shl 8) If done with buffalo meat they will be happy for eleven months. If done with cow related items like milk, curds, ghee they will be happy for one year. Similarly they will be happy for one year even when done with *payasa* mixed with *ghee*. (Shl 9) **If done with the meat of rhinoceros they will be satisfied for twelve years.** (Shl 10) If on the day *pitrus* die, if *Shraaddha* is performed with meat of rhinoceros they will be content for ever. It is said that *kaalshakam* (*kari patta* or *curry leaves*; *basil*), flower of *Kanchana vriksha* (*jasmine*?) and goat meat cause satisfaction to them forever.

(Note by editors: In Kaliyuga meat has been banned in *shraaddhas*. This tradition does not exist now. Even in the *yugas* when it was in vogue, it was optional). **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 88)**

Examining brahmanas for inviting to *shraaddhas*

- Yudhishtira questioned: (Shl 1) Grandfather! What type of brahmanas should be invited for *shraaddha*? Kindly tell me about this.

Bhishma said: (Shl 2) **A *kshatriya* who knows the secret of *daandharma* should not check (or examine) brahmanas in *karmas* related to *daiva* (such as *yajnas* etc). But when inviting them for *pitru karyas* it is considered just to examine them.** (Shl 3) Even though *devatas* have *daivic tejas* they worship/honour brahmanas. Therefore *daan* can be given to all brahmanas addressing the *devatas*. (Shl 4) But when inviting for *shraaddha* the family, character, age, looks, learning and his lineage etc should be checked.

Pankti dushaka brahmanas

- (Shl 5) Among brahmanas some are *pankti-dushakas* (unworthy of sitting for meals with other brahmanas) and some are *pankti-pavanas* (worthy of being seated along with other brahmanas and who will make the whole line sacred).

(Shl 6 – 11) The following are *pankti-dushakas*: One who gambles, has committed foeticide, has TB, who rears cattle, is not learned (or is uneducated), *grama-preshya* (servant or messenger of a village), who lives on interest income, singer, who sells all kinds of things, who has burnt others houses, who eats in the house of *kunda* (someone born to another man when husband is alive), who sells *somalata*, who makes a living by palmistry, servant of the king, who sells oils, who gives false witness, who quarrels with father, who has accommodated wife's alternate husband in his house, who is defamed or calumniated, a thief, who lives by sculpting, who mates with women on festival days, who carries tales, who has committed treachery towards friends, is adulterous, is teacher to those who do not practice *vrats*, who lives by making and selling weapons, who walks around with dogs, who has been bitten by dog, elder brother who is not married even though younger is, one having skin diseases, who has mated with wife of guru, who acts in different roles, who lives by worshipping in temples and who lives by telling results of different *nakshatras* (stars) (like astrologer). *Brahma-vadis* say that food eaten by such brahmanas will go to *rakshasas*.

(Shl 12) The *pitrus* of one who eats meals at *shraaddha* and studies Veda the same day and who mates with a *shudra* woman will live in his faeces for one month. (Shl 13, 14) If a brahmana who sells *somalata* is invited and fed in the *shraaddha* it will be like giving faeces to *pitrus*. If a doctor is invited and fed, it is like giving pus and blood to *pitrus*. By feeding a temple worshipper (attendant on an idol) the *shraaddha* is destroyed. Neither *pitrus* will be satisfied nor will the performer get any fruits. If someone who lives on interest income is invited and fed, the fruits become uncertain. If it is done with someone who is into trading/business, there will be fruits neither of this world nor of the other worlds. The *shraaddha* becomes a waste. (Shl 15) If a *paunarbhava* (son of a widow remarried) is invited and fed the *shraaddha* will be wasted just as *homa* done in ashes. Those who give *havya-kavya* to characterless brahmanas will lose the fruits of their *karmas* in *paraloka*. (Shl 16) The *pitrus* of those fools who knowingly invite such *pankti-dushakas* and feed them will surely eat the faeces of such *pankti-dushakas*. (Shl 17) Such low brahmanas should be understood as *pankti-bahiras* (unfit to be included with other brahmanas for this purpose). Even brahmanas who teach Vedas to *shudras* should be treated the same way.

(Shl 19) Meals eaten with a covered head (with a cap or *pagadi*), facing south direction and wearing footwear should be understood as *asura* (related to *asuras*). (Shl 20) Brahma has ordained that the fruits of donations made with envy or with lack of faith will go to *asura* Bali. (Shl 21) **Dogs or these *pankti bahira* brahmanas should not even see the *shraaddha*. That is why the *shraaddha bhojana* (meals served during *shraaddha*) should be served in a place which is covered on all four sides and sesame should be spread on all sides.** (Shl 22) **The *havis* of *shraaddha* performed without sesame and with anger will be snatched by *rakshasas* & *pishachas*.** (Shl 23) The person who is unworthy to sit with brahmanas will make the fruits of food eaten by as many persons as he sees ineffective to the performer of *shraaddha*.

Pankti pavanas

- Now I will tell you about *pankti-pavanas* (those who will purify or make the group sacred by their presence). You should ensure that brahmanas are such persons and they should be invited for *shraaddhas*.

(Shl 25) All brahmanas who have completed their studies and *veda vrats*, are *snataks*, and are dedicated to virtuous conduct should be considered as *pankti-pavanas*. Now I will tell you about *paankteya* brahmanas. You should consider them as *pankti-pavanas*. (Shl 26, 27) Those who repeat (*japa*) the *trinaachiketa mantra*, who worship the *panchagnis*, who read *trisuparna mantras*, who know the six *vedangas*, those born in the tradition or family of scholars in Veda or preachers of Brahma *vidya*, those who sing Samaveda, who sing *Jyeshtha sama*, who are obedient to parents and those who are *shrotiyas* for ten generations are all *pankti-pavanas*. (Shl 28) Brahmana who mates with his wife only during her fertile times, has studied Vedas and is *snataka* is also *pankti-pavana*. (Shl 29) One who has studied Atharvana Veda, a *brahmachari*, one who willfully and with an effort practices *vrats*, who is always truthful, who is dedicated to dharma, who is dedicated to executing his specified karmas – all these are also *pankti-pavanas*. (Shl 30, 31) Such brahmanas who have struggled to take bath in sacred *tirthas*, who have participated in *yajnas* by reciting *mantras* and have had their *avabharta snan*, who are without anger, who have no unsteadiness or fickleness, who are forgiving, are *jitendriyas*, and are engaged in the welfare of all beings should be invited for *shraaddhas*. (Shl 32) All these are *pankti-pavanas*. The *daan* given to them will yield undecaying fruits. Apart from these, the following persons are also *pankti-pavanas*. (Shl 33 - 36) Those who know *moksha dharma*, yogis having good self-restraint and who perform *vrats*, those who tell *itihaas* (Chronicles, traditional accounts of past events) before great brahmanas, those who know commentaries on Vedas, those engaged in the study of *vyakarana*, those who have studied *puranas*, those who have studied *dharma shastras* and practice it as described, those who have been ascertained to have been truthful in several instances, who are great in study and teaching of four Vedas, who have studied for specified time in *gurukul* – all these are *pankti-pavanas*. They will purify as far as they see the people seated for meals. (Shl 37) *Brahma-vids* say that a brahmana born in the *vamsha* (lineage) of a *brahma-jnani* alone can purify upto a distance of three and half *krosas* (10.5 miles). (Shl 38) Even if not a *ritvija*, if he gets permission from other *ritvijs* and sits at the beginning of the line, he can also clear all blemishes. (Shl 39) If a brahmana knows Vedas and is free of all *pankti doshas* and is not fallen (*patita*), he will also be a *pankti-pavana*.

Therefore every effort should be made to examine before inviting brahmanas for *shraaddha*. One should invite those who are dedicated to their ordained karmas (*swakarma*), have noble birth and are highly learned.

Some others who should not be invited

- (Shl 41) If friends play a prominent role in the *shraaddha* performed by someone then such *shraaddhas* and *havis* will not satisfy *pitrus* or *devatas*. The performer will also not go to *Swarga*. (Shl 42) One who feeds the brahmana in *shraaddha* and makes friendship with him (or feeds with the intent of improving friendship with him) will not go to *para loka* by *devayaan marga*. One who develops friendships by way of *shraaddha* will fall from *Swarga* just like the fruit of *Ashwattha* tree. (Shl 43) Therefore friend should not be invited for *shraaddha karma*. One can pay money to increase friends. But in *havya kavya* only a neutral who is not considered either a friend or enemy should be invited.

(Shl 44) A seed sown in saline soil will not germinate. One who sowed cannot even recover the seed. In the same way, *shraaddha* (meals) eaten by the ineligible or unworthy will not yield any fruits to the performer either here or in *paraloka*. (Shl 45) Just as fire on grass gets destroyed quickly, a brahmana who is not engaged in self-study (of Vedas & scriptures) will lose his *tejas*. Therefore one who does not spend time studying should not be invited for *shraaddhas*. Whoever he be, he would not like to perform *homa* in ash, isn't it? (**Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 90**)

Right and wrong *dakshinas*

- (Shl 46) Such *dakshina* where two persons invite each other mutually in *shraaddha* and exchange *dakshina* is called *pishacha dakshina*. ('A' invites 'B' for the *shraaddha* he performs. 'B' invites 'A' for the *shraaddha* he performs. This is mutual invitation. 'B' gives the same amount of *dakshina* that 'A' had given. This is exchange of *dakshina*). By doing this the *havis* of *shraaddha* will neither reach *devatas* nor *pitrus*. Just as a cow which has lost its calf keeps roaming around in the

cow shed, the *dakshina* which is bereft of *punya* will keep exchanging itself. The significance of *dakshina* will no longer be valid in that exchanged money. (Shl 47, 48) The *ghrita-homa* done when the fire is getting extinguished will neither reach the *devatas* nor the *pitrus*. In the same way *dakshina* given to dancer, singer and liar is wasted. **Dakshina given to an unworthy/undeserving person does not do any good to the giver. It does no good to the receiver too. It destroys both.** Not only this; such dangerous *dakshina* will cause the *pitrus* of the giver to fall from *devayana*.

(Shl 49) **Such persons who are always following the path of dharma described by *rishis*, have clear knowledge, and know dharma completely are considered as brahmanas by *devatas*.** (Shl 50) It should be understood that some among *rishis* are dedicated to *swadhyaya*. Some are *jnana nishtas*. Some are *tapo nishtas*. Some others are *karma nishtas*. (Shl 51) *Shraaddhas* etc should be offered (handed over to) to *jnana nisht munis* (*Jnana nisht munis* should be invited for *shraaddhas*). **Those few who do not blame/accuse brahmanas are great human beings.** (Implication: There were many who blamed/accused brahmanas!!). (Shl 52, 53) Those who blame or censure brahmanas when gossiping together should not be invited for *shraaddha bhojana*. *Maharshi* Vykanasa has said the following in this matter: 'The blamed/abused/censured brahmanas will destroy next three generations of the abusers. Brahmanas who are experts in Vedas should be examined from a distance'. (Shl 54) Whether the person who is knowledgeable about Veda is liked or disliked, he should be invited for *shraaddha bhojana* without a second thought. **Even if one feeds a million undeserving brahmanas by spending a lot of money it is all a waste.** Just one brahmana who has knowledge of *mantras* is good enough to get the money spent on a million. It is much better to invite just one brahmana who is an expert in Vedas, feed him, give him *dakshina* and satisfy him than feeding a million undeserving ones. (**Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 90**)

Atri maharshi about shraaddha

- (extracts)

(Shl 27) Some *devatas* born from Brahma are well known by the name *pitrus*. These illustrious *pitrus* are called also as *Ushnapa*. Brahma has created a share for them too in *shraaddha*. (Shl 28) If *Ushnapas* are worshipped through *shraaddha*, the *pitrus* of the doer of *shraaddha* will be liberated from sins. Brahma has already indicated the seven *agnishvatta* etc *pitrus* *vamshas*. (Shl 29) *Vishvedevatas* are *agnimukha devatas* (having *agni* for the mouth). I have already told you that they also have a share in *shraaddha*. There are many more who have share in the *havis* of *shraaddha*. (Their names are given). All these are *Vishvedevatas*. All these who are highly fortunate know the movement of time.

Now I will tell you **things that are banned in shraaddha**. (Shl 38 – 40) Certain types of grains and *kshudra* grains should not be used. In saute asafoetida should not be used. Among vegetables, onion, garlic, drum stick, *kovidara*, *grinjanakadaya*, kind of pumpkin (*kushmanda*), black salt, domesticated pig's meat, *aprokshita* (not consecrated) things, black jeera, lemon salt, *shitapaki*, grains which have sprouted and *shringataka* etc creepers. (Shl 41) All varieties of salt and *jambu phala* (rose apple fruit) should be avoided. Items spoiled by sneeze and tears should not be used. (Shl 42) At the time of *pitr tarpana* or *havya kavya* sighting of dog is condemned. *Havis* seen by dogs is not liked by *pitrus* or *devatas*. (Shl 43, 44) At the time of *pinda daan chandala* or *shwapacha* (Low or outcaste tribe or a dog-keeper) should not be present. Also the following should be avoided in *shraaddha*: anyone wearing *kaashaya vastra* (red-brown clothes like monks), someone having leprosy, someone who has committed *brahma hatya*, brahmana born in *sankara yoni* (mixed caste) and a relative who is *dharma bhrashta*. (**Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 91**)

Other matters

- Bhishma said: In this way, once Nimi started the *Shraaddha karma*, all other *maharshis* also started to perform it according to the *shastra vidhis*. ... Gradually, all the four *varnas* started satisfying the *pitrus* and *devatas* by *pinda pradaan*.

Before doing *pinda pradaan* *havirbhaga* should be given to *agni* & *soma*. (Shl 15) At the time of performing *shraaddha*, menstruating women, deaf women and women belonging to other lineages should not be present. (Shl 16) While crossing water the names of *pitamahs* should be recited. *Pinda pradaan* should be done at the banks of rivers and *tarpana* should be given. (Shl 17) First *jala tarpana* should be given to parents and then to other relatives & friends. (Shl 19) On

the *Amavasya* day of *Krishna paksha*, *shraaddha*, *tarpana* etc should be done for *pitrus*. If it is done with devotion it will result in nourishment, longevity and wealth. (Shl 20, 21) *Brahmaa*, *Pulasthya*, *Vasishta*, *Pulaha*, *Angirasa*, *Kratu* and *Kaashyapa* – these seven have been said to be *maha-yogeshwaras* and *pitrus*. (Shl 22) As soon as the contact with *pinda* is established, by virtue of the *shraaddha karma* involving *pinda pradaan* the *pitrus* who are in the form of *pretas* will be freed from that state of *pretatva*. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 92)**

- Bhishma said: (Shl 120) One who desires auspiciousness for oneself should not perform *shraaddha* etc *pitru karyas* in the night. .. (Shl 126, 127) *Deva karya* & *pitru karyas* should be performed after taking head bath. These *karyas* should not be done in one's birth *nakshatra*, *Pooravabhadra*, *Uttarabhadra* and in *agni nakshatra* that is *Krittika nakshatras*. (Shl 128) On days of dreadful *nakshatras* *deva* & *pitru karyas* should not be performed (These are *Ashlesha*, *Ardra*, *Jyeshtha* and *Moola*). These should not be done on the day of *pratyaktara* also (as counted from birth star). Whatever *nakshatras* have been said to be not suitable in *Jyotish shastra* should be avoided. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 104)**
- Bhishma said: (Shl 104) The inside of the thumb is called *brahma-tirtha*. Back of the little finger is called *deva-tirtha*. (Shl 105) The area between the thumb and forefinger is called *pitru-tirtha*. As per *shastras*, *tarpana* etc *pitru karyas* should be done between forefinger and thumb by using water. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 104)**

Flowers, fragrant vapour/smoke, lamps & offering them

- *Daityendra* Bali asked *Shukra*: (Shl 15) What fruits do we get by donating flowers, *dhupa* & *dipa*? Kindly tell me about this.

Shukra replied: *Daityendra!* **First *tapas* was born. Then *dharma* was born.** In the meantime, creepers and plants/medicinal herbs (*oshadhi*) were born. Many varieties of *somalatas* were also born. *Amrita*, *visha* (poison) and many kinds of grass were also born. (Shl 18) *Amrita* brings happiness and contentment by merely seeing it. But poison causes deep anguish to the mind by its smell. (Shl 19) Understand that *amrita* causes auspiciousness, whereas poison causes inauspiciousness. **All kinds of medicinal herbs are *amrita* in their essence. Poison is a *tejas* born from *agni*.**

About flowers

- (Shl 20) Flowers which blossom in good plants cause joy when we see them and bring lustre to the wearer. Therefore *punyatmas* call it *sumanasa* (causing good mind). (Shl 21) *Devatas* feel happy about the person who worships them with flowers and with those who donate/gift flowers. Once happy they bring him prosperity.

(Shl 23) **There are many varieties in *oshadhis* such as fierce, mild, brilliant, very powerful and with many forms & shapes.** (Shl 24) I will tell you which trees/plants are related to *yajna* and which ones are not. Similarly I will also tell you which flowers please *devatas* and which *asuras*. (Shl 26) Some flowering trees grow in forests also & some in inhabited places. **Some flowering plants grow in tilled soil where seeds are sown (floriculture!!).** Some others grow by themselves in mountains. Some are born from the thorns of plants & creepers. Some have no thorns. But all types of flowers have *roopa* (form, shape), *rasa* (taste) and *gandha* (smell). (Shl 27) Even in respect of smell there are two types: likeable and disliked. *Devatas* are pleased with flowers which have likeable smell. (Shl 28) **If there are white flowers in plants which do not have thorns, they are always liked by *devatas*.**

(Shl 29) A knowledgeable person should offer flowers which grow in water like Lotus etc to *Gandharvas*, *nagas* & *yakshas*. (Shl 30) It has been stated in *Atharva mantras* that plants which are bitter, have thorns and red flowers are used in black magic to hurt enemies. (Shl 31) Such flowers which are surrounded by thorns, which are difficult to even touch, have very pungent smell and have blood red colour are fit for offering to *bhuta*, *preta* & *pishachas* (dark forces like ghosts etc). (Shl 32) Flowers which cause joy to the mind, look especially delightful and are beautiful are loved by humans.

(Shl 33) **Flowers used in welfare related events, marriages and in lonely places like graveyard and flowers grown in the boundary of the temples should not be brought and used.** (Shl 34) **Beautiful and fragrant flowers which have grown at the bottom of mountains**

should be brought and dipped in or sprinkled with water and then offered to gods as per **dharma-shastra** in proper manner. (Shl 35) *Devatas* feel contented with the smell of flowers alone. *Yakshas* & *rakshasas* feel satisfied by merely seeing them. Serpents feel contented by consuming it. Men feel contentment by all the three methods.

(Shl 36) A devotee feels very happy by decorating the gods with beautiful and fragrant flowers. *Devatas* who are *sankalpa-siddhas* (who can accomplish things by mere mental resolve) feel pleased with this offering of flowers and fulfil the desires of the devotees. (Shl 37) **When the devatas are pleased with the worship of devotees, they in turn do what pleases the devotees. If they feel honoured, they honour the devotees. They burn the mean & lowly man who humiliates or rejects them.**

Offering smokes & vapours

- *Daityendra!* Now I will tell you about good and bad smokes and the *vidhi* of offering them and the fruits obtained.

(Shl 39) Among *dhoop*s there are three varieties: *niryasa*, *saari* and *kritrima*. Even in these smells there are those which are likeable and those which are not. I will tell you about all these. Listen. (Shl 40) Curdled milk is called *niryasa*. *Devatas* like *niryasas* (solidified resin) of all trees except *Sallaki* tree (sakai frankincense plant [Boswellia Serrata]). Among all *niryasas* that of *guggula* (resin of Guggul tree [Commiphora wightii]) is considered best. (Shl 41) (The smoke (*dhoopa*) which comes when certain tree wood are put in fire is called *saari*). Among such *dhoops* the smoke from the tree *aguru* (Agallochum or agar wood [aromatic resin embedded wood]) is considered the best. *Saari dhoop* is particularly liked by *yaksha*, *rakshasa* & *sarpas*. *Daityas* like the *dhoop* of *sallaki* tree and other tree of the same family. (Shl 42) *Dhoop* produced from powder of certain fragrant trees (*vatica robusta* etc) is called *kritrima* (artificial). Such artificial *dhoops* (like from incense sticks) are liked by human beings. (Shl 43) In this manner, *dhoops* cause immediate joy to *devatas*, *danavas* and *bhuta-ganas*. Apart from this there are *dhoops* used in situations of enjoyments and pleasures. All these are for the enjoyments of human beings. (Shl 44) Whatever attributes have been stated as causing greatness in flowers are applicable to *dhoop* also.

About donating lamps/lights (*gyoti*)

- (Shl 46) A lamp (*gyoti*, such as typical oil lamp) has been described as upward going *tejas* (*tejah prakasham urdhvagam*) and that which causes fame and lustre. Therefore donating lamps increases the *tejas* of the donor.

(Shl 47) There is a dark *Naraka* called *Andhatama* (*Andhtamisra*). Even *dakshinayana* (period of Sun's progress south of equator) is full of darkness. *Uttarayana* (period of Sun's progress north of equator) is full of brightness. Therefore it is much more auspicious than *dakshinayana*. Donating lamps has been praised for removal of darkness.

(Shl 48) **A lamp's flame burns upwards. It is the remedy for darkness. By lighting a lamp the disease of darkness is immediately cured.** Therefore those who donate lamps with upwards flow will also certainly gain upward growth. (Shl 49) **By virtue of lamps devatas appear with more tejas, brightness and lustre. Darkness encourages rakshasas. Therefore lamps are given to please devatas.** (Shl 50) By donating lamps man will appear with *tejas* and will have better eyes. He will have greater radiance. **Once the lamp is given, it should not be shaken from that position. It should not be carried to another place. It should not also be extinguished.**

(Shl 51) One who steals lamps will become blind. He will become a *tamasi* and lustreless. He will go to *Naraka* after death. One who donates lamps will shine brightly in *Swarga* like a garland of lamps. (Shl 52) **Giving ghee** (clarified butter) **lamps is a great practice. Next best practice is of giving lamps with oshadhi juices** (vegetable oils). **One who desires health & strength of the body should never give lamps which burn with oil extracted from body parts.**

(Shl 53) One who desires auspiciousness should donate lamps regularly near waterfalls in mountains (*giri prapate*), in forests, in temples and at intersections of four roads. Donations done in these places bring wealth. (Shl 54) One who donates lamps will brighten his lineage, will be purified, will have lustre and after death will go to the *lokas* of bright lights.

Offering of food to different categories

- (Shl 56) Understand that those who do not offer food to *devatas*, brahmanas, guests and children before they themselves eat are *rakshasas* who are inauspicious and not afraid of dharma. (Shl 57) Therefore a *grihasta* should abandon laziness and worship *devatas*, bow to them and give the first offering of food to them with a pure heart. (Shl 58) *Devatas* receive the *bali* (offering of food) given by the *grihasta*. They feel satisfied with it and bless him. *Devatas*, *yaksha*, *rakshasas*, *sarpas* and *atithis* who come from outside all live on the offerings of the *grihasta*. Pleased with the offerings they make the *grihasta* happy by bestowing longevity, money and success.

(Shl 60) The offerings made to *devatas* should be done with flowers. And these offerings should contain milk & curds, should be fragrant and attractive to look at. (Shl 61) To *yakshas* & *rakshasas* offerings should contain blood & flesh. They should include alcohol and stimulating juices. They should be decorated (topped with) *laaja* (fried parched grain). (Shl 62) Serpents like offering with lotus and such flowers (*padmotpala*). Sesame mixed with jaggery should be offered to *bhutas* (ghosts).

(Shl 63) That *grihasta* who first offers to *devatas* and then eats will be enriched with fine luxuries, might and strength. Therefore *devatas* should first be worshipped and food offered to them. (Shl 64) The *griha-devatas* (deity of a house) of a *grihasta* always brighten his house. Therefore a man who desires auspiciousness should offer first part of food to *griha-devatas* and thus honour them. (**Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 98**)

Other Social norms/Beliefs

Greatness of Ganga, the sacred river

- (In this *adhyaya* there are one hundred verses in which the greatness of river Ganga has been praised. Even today the river Ganga remains the most sacred river for Hindus. A few *shlokas* which reflect some practices even today are translated here)

(Shl 28) Even if any of the organs of the human beings touch river Ganga, it is enough. Even if the body is disposed in Ganga after death it is enough. Even they will never fall from *swarga*. (Shl 29) Those persons who do all their work with waters of Ganga will, after death, find residence in *swarga* permanently. (Shl 30) Even if a person has committed several sins in the past in young age, if he serves Ganga in his old age he will attain very good states after death. (Shl 32) As long as the bones of the person remain in the river Ganga, meaning several thousand years, that person will remain in *swarga*. (Shl 33) Just as Sun destroys utter darkness and shines in the morning, in the same way those who bathe in Ganga will lose all their sins and shine. (Shl 37) If *tarpan* is given in the river Ganga for any living being which dies in any of the three *lokas*, then whatever be the state in which it was, it will experience great contentment. (Shl 42) Just as a heap of cotton will burn to ashes in a moment if put in fire, in the same way the sins of one who bathes in the waters of river Ganga will be burnt to ashes. (Shl 45) Those for whom there is no support in life, those who have practiced only *adharma* in their lives, even for them mother Ganga is a refuge. She is protective like armour. (Shl 46) If even those who have committed many sins and will fall in *naraka* seek refuge in mother Ganga towards the end of their lives, that great mother will rescue them from *naraka* after death. (Shl 52) Just as the cow in the form of earth bears & protects all those who are in her refuge, in the same way river Ganga also bears & nourishes all those who have taken refuge in her. (Shl 63) The lineage from mother's side and father's side of those who listen to the greatness of mother Ganga, then wish to go to the river, go there even if there are difficulties, see it, touch its waters, drink its waters and bathe in it, will be uplifted in special ways by the kind mother Ganga. (Shl 70) If a person who has been acceptable to the virtuous and has had control over his mind, remembers Ganga with humility at the time of death, then the person will attain great *sadgati*. (Shl 72) Bhagawan Mahadeva bore on his head the highly sacred Ganga which was falling from the skies. That *akash-ganga* is served by *devatas* in *swarga*.

(Shl 98) It may, by chance, be possible to make a great effort and count the number of stones in mountain Meru. It may be possible to count the number of drops in a sea. But it is impossible to count or measure the greatness of waters of Ganga. (**Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 26**)

About brahmanas

- **Shukra bans brahmanas from drinking wine**

Shukra banning liquor for brahmanas: (Shl 67) Shukra after killing Kacha, though unknowingly repents very much for having consumed *sura* & decides to ban it. **"In future, any foolish brahmana who drinks *sura* will fall from the path of dharma (*dharma-bhrashta*)**. Being a brahmana & drinking wine will bring upon him *brahma-hatya dosha*. He will be blameworthy both here & hereafter. This rule will also get added from today to the list of rules applicable to brahmanas. This rule will apply to the whole world. Let *satpurushas*, *brahmanas*, *acharyas*, *shishyas* and *devatas* listen to this proclamation of mine and follow it accordingly." (Adi; Sambhava; 81)

- Yayati: (Shl 23) One can play around with an angry poisonous snake; you should understand that it is more dangerous to anger a brahmana than playing with a poisonous snake or a huge flame. (Shl 25) **Brahmana is never cruel. He is full of *satwaguna*. One who is lacking in *satwaguna* cannot be a brahmana. But a *brahmana's* anger is very cruel.** (Adi; Sambhava; 81)
- *Devatas* have mercy on their devotees; more so on brahmanas who have right practices. (Vana; Aranya; 2)

Sharing of seats

- (Shl 9, 10) Daughters & daughters-in-law only should sit on the right thigh. Left thigh is for lover or wife. (Adi; Sambhava; 97)
- (Shl 16) Sudhanwa to Virochana: According to dharma *shastras*, the following can share the same seat: irrespective of the *varna* father & son, two *brahmanas*, two *kshatriyas*, two aged *vysyas* and two aged *shudras*. Other than this none can share the same seat. (Udyoga; Prajaagara; 35)

Ethical values

- Yayati: (Shl 4) When I remember everything I have done since my birth, I can't remember a single instance when I bought something without paying the right price for it. **Paying unequal (unfair) price or not paying the price are both same**.....Therefore, I who am capable of discerning what is right & what is not, will not do this deal with you. (Adi; Sambhava; 93)
- Kacha to Devayani: A *shishya* (disciple) should respect daughter of guru, wife of guru & guru's sisters. (Adi; Sambhava; 81)
- Sri Krishna replying to Jarasandha as to why they will not accept his hospitality: We have come here for a specific task. Moreover we do not accept hospitality of enemies. This is our ancient *vrata*. (Sabha; Sabhakriya; 21)

Juvenile law

- (Shl 14, 17) Ani Mandavya: Proclaims new Juvenile justice law: "Yamadharma! **For twelve years since birth whatever act done is not considered *adharma***. Such children will not have any clear directions (*no knowledge of right & wrong acts*)..... I will proclaim a new law from today. You will have to honour it. **From now on crimes committed by children under fourteen will not be considered as *adharma*. After completing the age of fourteen it will not only be considered a sin, it will also be punishable.**" (Adi; Sambhava; 108)

Types of *rinās*

- (Shl 18-20) Man is born with four types of *rinās* (debts). *Pitru rina*, *Deva rina*, *Rishi rina* and *manava rina*. According to those who know dharma, if he does not discharge these *rinās* in proper time he will not get good *lokas*.
Deva-rina is discharged by performing *yajna*-yaagas and *homa*-havans. By doing *adhyayana*, *adhyapana* *rishi-rina* is discharged. By performing *shraadhās* *pitru-rina* is cleared. *Manava-rina* is discharged by living with kindness towards all beings. (Adi; Sambhava; 120)

- (Shl 11-13) Humans come to this world with three types of *rinās*. By following *brahmacharya* and studying Vedas, *rishi rina* has to be cleared. By performing *yajna* & *yaagas* *deva rina* has to be cleared. *Pitru rina* has to be cleared by begetting a son. **(Adi; Mayadarshana; 229)**

Death related rituals

- After observing ritual *karmas* for 12 days Bhishma & Kunthi along with relatives & friends performed the *shraaddha* & did *pinda-pradana*. On that day feast was arranged for the citizens and thousands of brahmanas; plentiful *daan* was given to brahmanas in the form of *bhudaan*, *grama daan* and *ratna daan*. After giving 16 types of *daan* (*shodasha daan*) and completing the post-death rituals (*uttarakriya*) Pandavas purified entered the town. **(Adi; Sambhava; 127)**

- **Who is eligible/ineligible to be invited for food for *shraaddha***

Markandeya: (Shl 17-18) Only a brahmana who has studied Vedas quite well should be invited. Followig should **not** be invited for food in *shraaddhas*: One who has been cursed or is fallen (*patita*), too fair or too dark colored, having crooked nails, having leprosy, a cheat, born to a widow from other than husband (*golaka*), born due to adultery (*kunda*), and one who lives like a *kshatriya* with weapons even though born as brahmana. *Shraaddha* should not be performed with a feeling of disgust/aversion or laziness. *Shraaddha* performed with disgust will burn the lineage of the performer just as fire burns out firewood. **(Vana; Markandeya Samaasya; 200)**

- **Yudhishtira performs last rites**

Narada said: (Shl 1) Yudhishtira! **As you have imagined Vichitravirya's son Dhritarashtra was not burnt in *laukikaagni***. I will tell you what I heard in this matter. Listen. ...

Vaishampayana said: Paarikshita! After hearing this, Yudhishtira went with his brothers to the banks of river Ganga. **The citizens who considered devotion to king (*raja-bhakti*) as main duty went along with them wearing a single cloth**. After taking bath in Ganga, they offered *tarpan* to Dhritarashtra with Yuyutsu leading them. They also offered *tarpan* to Gandhari & Kunthi. **Awaiting clearing up period of *ashaucha*** (impurity due to death of close relatives) **they stayed outside the town**. Then Yudhishtira sent people who knew the procedures to Gangadvara and told them to perform the needed rites there also for them. Then Yudhishtira gave all the items worth giving as *daan* to them.

He performed the required rituals on 10th & 11th day and on 12th day performed *shraaddhas* as per procedures and gave away huge donations to brahmanas. He gave away the *daans* addressing each of the three separately. He gave away gold, silver, cows, expensive mattresses etc to brahmanas. Each one was getting whatever he desired and as much as he desired. Mattresses, food items, vehicles, gems, diamonds, money, bed-covers, luxury items, fully decked up *dasis* – all these were given away on behalf of his mothers. **After completing all the rituals they entered the town**.

The persons who had gone to Gangadvara as ordered by the king collected their *asthis* (remains, normally pieces of bones) **and came to the banks of Ganga. There they did all the needed rites and dispersed them in river Ganga**. They informed all this to Yudhishtira. **(Ashramavasika parva; Naradagamana; 39)**

Selling humans

- (Story of Bakasura vadha) The husband in the family laments: "I do not even have the financial strength to buy a person and send him to the *rakshasa*." **(Adi; Bakavadha; 160)**

Rules of visiting River Ganga

- Arjuna to Gandharva: (Shl 16-17) "Oh you wicked! Whether in the day time or in night or in the evening, whose obstruction prevents from going to seas, Himalaya and river Ganga? Or who can obstruct? Whether on full stomach or in fasting, in day time or in night, any one can go to river Ganga. There are no rules that only such and such persons should go to the sacred river Ganga at certain times. **(Adi; Chaitraratha; 170)**

About servants (*dasis*)

- (Shl 34) Dushasana: ***Dasis*—servant maids--need not necessarily be clad in clothes. (Sabha; Dyuta; 67)**
- Karna: ***Dasi* choosing an owner by own will is not objectionable. (Sabha; Dyuta; 71)**

Philanthropy/*daan*/Social service

- Markandeya: (Shl 6-8) Sixteen types of *daan* that are useless (i) to one who though in rigorous *brahmacharya* or *sanyasa* has fallen (ii) donating illegally earned money (iii) to a fallen brahmana (iv) to a thief (v) elders like parents (vi) to a liar (vii) sinner (viii) to an ungrateful person (ix) to *grama-purohit* (x) to one who sells (knowledge of) Vedas (xi) to a *shudra purohit* (xii) to one who is brahmana only by birth & does no spiritual studies (xiii) one who has married a post-puberty girl or a *shudra* woman (xiv) to women (xv) to a snake charmer and (xvi) to servants . By giving *daan* to such persons only more sins will be accrued and not *punya*. (Notes by commentators: Elders like parents have to be served; women & servants should be protected & cared for. This is one's main duty. Hence what is given to them will not be considered as *daan*).

(Shl 9) One who gives *daan* due to *tamo guna* & filled with fear or anger will suffer the evil results in the next birth in the womb itself.

(Shl 27) *Daan* should be given to: (i) one who studies & follows scriptures, (ii) very poor, (iii) a *grihastha* (iv) one who does *agnihotra* every day (v) one who is with wife & sons (vi) **one who has not done any favours to you.** (Shl 28) *Daan* should not be given to the rich; it is of no use.

(Shl 34) If you cannot yourself help someone in trouble, then you should help at least by directing them to someone who can help. (Shl 35) *Anna-daan* is greater than all other *daans*. Do not forget to feed those who come hungry to your doors. **(Vana; Markandeya Samaasya; 200)**

- Markandeya: (Shl 40) Those who construct lakes & wells to help the travellers to overcome their thirst, places to stay for the tired travellers, give food to those who come hungry, those who console persons who are in grief with sweet words, will not hear any harsh words from Yama, the god of death. **(Vana; Markandeya Samaasya; 200)**
- (Shl 31) Manu has said that if a brahmana remains firm within limits set by dharma and donates something given to him as donation to another similar brahmana then both the giver and the receiver will gain immense *punya*. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 68)**

- **Items donated during pilgrimage**

Balarama leaving for his pilgrimage: ..When going on pilgrimage, Balarama transported with him items that would be needed for the sick, the aged, children and to the tired and weak. He also carried many items for giving to charity. Balarama was donating in each centre whatever people of that centre desired. He had also organised for serving food in each centre to the hungry.

Suitable transportation mechanisms were in place for travellers. Cool drinks were ready for the thirsty. Tasty & delicious food was ready for the hungry. Balarama's servants were giving good clothes and ornaments also as gifts... **(Shalya; Gada; 35)**

..Balarama donated many goats, sheep, cows, **donkeys**, camels as well as gold and silver.....He also donated big vessels made of metal (iron?) and copper. **(Shalya; Gada; 37)**

- Yudhishtira questioned: (Shl 18) People donate variety of things to brahmanas. What speciality exists in the giver and the receiver?
Bhishma replied: (Shl 19) Brahmins take *daan* from very virtuous gentleman as well as from wicked person with no good qualities. If accepted from a person endowed with good qualities and virtues only a little blemish is acquired. But if accepted from the opposite kind he will drown in sins. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 93)**
- (Shl 22) Cooked rice should be put on the ground for the sake of dogs, *chandalas* and birds. This karma is called *vaishvedeva*. This should be done in the evening and morning. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 97)**

Auspicious fruits of certain good deeds

- (India has a long standing tradition of constructing lakes, reservoirs and such useful water-bodies and planting and growing groves. This *adhyaya* gives a background to such practices).

Yudhishtira questioned: (Shl 1) I wish to know what fruits are enjoyed by those who grow groves/gardens and who construct water bodies like lakes etc?

Bhishma said: (Shl 2) **It is said that this earth which looks beautiful, strong, appears in varied forms, is rich in gold etc *sapta-dhatus* (gold, silver, copper, tin, mercury, lead and iron) and is refuge to all kinds of animals is the greatest place.**

Benefits of constructing water-bodies

(Shl 4) I will tell you the benefits to people by constructing *tadaga* (man-made water bodies or reservoirs). One who constructs lake will be worshipped in all three *lokas*. (Shl 5) **Constructing a reservoir is helpful to all like the house of a friend. It brings about universal friendship.** It increases friends. It is the best way to increase fame & name. (Shl 4) Scholars say that by constructing a lake in a village in the country all three *purusharthas* of dharma, *artha* & *kaam* will be accomplished. A place having a lake will be a great place of refuge for all animals. (Shl 7) It should be realised that reservoirs are great refuge for all four kinds of living beings such as *jarayuja* etc. All lakes yield good wealth. (Shl 8) *Deva*, *manushya*, *Gandharva*, *pitrus*, *uraga* & *rakshasas*, as well as non-moving things like trees find refuge in lakes.

(Shl 9) I will tell you what fruits have been stated by *rishis* for constructing water-bodies. I will tell you the qualities of water-bodies. (Shl 10) The builder of that lake in which water is filled round the year will get the fruits of performing *agnihotra*. (Shl 11) The builder of that lake in which water is filled in autumn (*sharat kaal*) will, after death, get the same great fruits of having donated a thousand cows. (Shl 12) The builder of that lake in which water is filled in *hemant* season (winter, Nov to jan) will get the fruits of performing a *yajna* in which many gold coins are donated. (Shl 13) The builder of that lake in which water is filled in *shishira* (dewey season, Jan to March) will get the fruits of *agnishtoma yaaga*. (Shl 14) The builder of that lake in which water is filled in *vasant* season (spring) and thus helps animals satisfy their thirst will get the fruits of performing *atiratra yaaga*. (Shl 15) The builder of that lake in which water is filled in summer will get the fruits of performing *ashwamedha yaaga*. (Shl 16) The builder of that lake in which water is used for drinking by cows and *sadhu-sants* in all seasons will uplift his entire lineage. All people of his lineage will get *sadgati*. (Shl 17) The builder of that lake in which water drunk by thirsty cows, animals, birds and human beings will get the fruits of performing *ashwamedha yaaga*. (Shl 18) The builder of that lake in which water is used by people to take bath, to drink water and to rest near it, will get the *punyas* of all those people and will enjoy great happiness after death. (Shl 19) **Water is a very difficult to get commodity.** Getting water in *paraloka* is even more difficult. Those who donate water here will be always content in *paraloka*.

(Shl 20) Pandavas! Donate sesame, water, and light (lamps). Always be alert and do only acts of dharma and thus be happy with relatives. By doing these virtuous deeds, you will get very difficult to get fruits after death in *paraloka*. (Shl 21) Donating water is greater than many other *daans*. It is unique compared to many other *daans*. **Water charity must be done.**

Auspicious results of growing trees

(Shl 23) There are six types in *sthavara* (non-moving) beings. *Vriksha* (trees), *gulma* (bush), *lata* (creepers), *valli* (creepers on the ground), *tvaksara* (bamboo etc), and *trina* (grass). (Shl 24) These are variations of trees. By growing these man earns fame in this world and great auspicious fruits in *paraloka*. (Shl 25) **The name of one who grows trees here will be remembered permanently.** Even *pitrus* honour him. Even after he goes to *devaloka* his name will not be forgotten here. (Shl 26) One who plants and grows trees will uplift his past generations, future generations and his *pitru kula*. Therefore trees must be planted and grown necessarily. (Shl 27) **Trees become the sons of those who plant and grow them. There is no doubt in this.** For this reason those who go to *paraloka* will get *swarga* and such other permanent *lokas* obtained by those who have sons. (Shl 28) By virtue of their flowers the trees grown on earth will offer hospitality to group of *devatas*, by fruits to *pitrus*, and by their shade to guests who rest there. (Shl 29) *Kinnaras*, *sarpas*, *rakshasas*, *deva*, *Gandharvas*, *manavas* & *rishis* take refuge in trees. (Shl 30) Trees with their flowers & fruits make human beings very content. **These trees, just as our sons, uplift those who donate trees.** (Shl 31) Therefore, those who desire

auspiciousness should plant and grow trees around water - bodies they have constructed and protect them till they grow and become strong. **In the eyes of dharma they are also considered as children.**

(Shl 32) Those who construct water-bodies, grow trees, the *dvija* who performs *yajnas* and one who speaks truth – they will all be honoured in *swarga loka*. (Shl 33) Therefore water-bodies should be built, groves should be grown, several kinds of *yajnas* should be performed and only truth should be spoken. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 58)**

Greatness of different *daans*

- (Extracts)

Til daan

Bhishma: (Shl 6) Kaunteya! I will tell you what the fruits of donating *til* (sesame) are. Listen. (Shl 7) *Til* created by Brahma is a great food for *pitrus*. Therefore by donating *til*, *pitru-gana* will be very pleased. (Shl 8) By donating *til* in *Magha masa*, the donor does not have to see *narak* filled with many people. (Shl 9) One who worships *pitrus* through *til* will get the same fruits as performing all *satras* (sacrifices). **One who is desireless (*nishkaam*) should never perform *til shraadh*.** (Shl 11) ***Til* is nourishing. It gives good looks.** In the same way it destroys the sins of those who donate it. Therefore donating *til* has special significance. (Shl 13) All brahmanas who are engaged in acts of dharma and who mate with their wives only during their fertile periods will be engaged in performing *homas* with *til* which is equivalent to *ghee* (clarified butter).

...Once *devatas* prayed to Brahma and said: **..If the owner of the land does not give permission, then the *yajna* performed in that place will not yield desired fruits.** You are the lord of everything moving and not moving in this world. Therefore permit us to perform the *yajna* on earth.

Donating land

(Shl 30) **One who constructs shelters for cows such that it withstands cold, wind and rain will uplift his lineage for seven generations.** (Shl 32) Barren land, land which has got burnt due to fire, land near graveyard or land on which sinners were residing should not be donated to brahmanas. (Shl 33) Both *shraadh karma* and *daan karma* of one who performs *pitru shraadh* in other's land or who gives *daans* of other's lands for pleasing *pitrus* will be destroyed (will not bear any fruits). (Shl 34) Therefore a knowledgeable person should buy land even if it is a small area and then donate. The *pinda* given to *pitrus* in own land will be forever. (Shl 35) **Forests, mountains, rivers and lakes are not anyone's property. They are not controlled or owned by any individual. Therefore no one has control on receiving or owning them.**

Donating cows

(Shl 39) Cows do a great benefit to the world by their milk, curds, clarified butter, cow-dung, hide, bones, horns and tail. (Shl 40, 41) Cows are always working for the benefit of the world. Cold or heat or rain does not trouble them. They do not have any kind of grief. That is why they go to the *Brahmaloka* along with brahmanas. (Shl 42, 43) This is the reason that scholars equate cow with brahmana. **In the *yajna* performed by Ranti deva cows were taken as *yajna pashu* (sacrificial animal). The water that flowed out from their bodies when they were being washed formed the river *Charmanvati*. Later they freed them from the state of sacrificial animals and retained them for giving as *daan* as part of the *yajna*.** (Shl 44) One who donates cows to great brahmanas will overcome great dangers. (Shl 46) *Devaraja Indra* has called the cow's milk as *amrita* itself. Therefore donating cow is like donating *amrita* itself. (Shl 49) Because cows protect and nourish all by their milk they are also considered as life of all living beings. Therefore donating cow is like donating life itself. (Shl 51) **Cow should never be given to one who wants to kill them. It should not also be given to a butcher who kills it secretly. It should not also be given to an agriculturist. Nor should it be given to an atheist. It should not be given to one who makes a living only by possessing it.** (Shl 52) *Maharshis* say that one who donates cows to such sinners will fall into never ending *naraka*. (Shl 53) Emaciated cow, cow without a calf, barren cow, sick cow, cow with a physical disability or an aged cow should not be donated to a brahmana.

Anna daan

(Shl 58) The way in which *shreyas* is gained by one who donates food (*anna*) is not gained by even those who donate gold or clothes or any other item. (Shl 61) Man should worship gods in a proper manner everyday and offer *anna* to them. Whatever *anna* a man consumes, the *devatas* he worships accept the same. (Shl 62) One who donates *anna* in the *Shukla paksha* of *Karthk masa* will overcome great difficulties. And after death he will enjoy inexhaustible happiness. (Shl 63) One who serves to guests before he himself eats will go to the *lokas* of *brahma vids*. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 66)**

More on some *daans*

- Yudhishtira: (Shl 1) Tell me the best methods of *daan* once again. Tell me particularly about *bhudaan* (donating land). (Shl 2) Only a *kshatriya* can donate land to a brahmana who performs or helps perform *yajnas*. Brahmana can formally accept such *daan* given by a *kshatriya*. None others can give *bhudaan*.

Bhishma said: (Shl 4) **Gavah** (cows and oxen), **bhumi** (land) and **Saraswati** (Goddess of knowledge) – **all these have the same name gau. All these should be given as daan. The fruits of donating these three are same. These three will cause fulfilment of all desires.** (Shl 5) The brahmana who teaches *brahmi-saraswati* (*veda vani*) which favours dharma to his disciple will gain the same fruits of *godaan* and *bhudaan*. (Shl 6) In the same manner, *godaan* (donating cow or oxen) is also praised. There is no *daan* greater than *godaan*. It gives results quickly. Moreover, the results are achieved with less money. (Shl 7) Go (cows) are like mothers to all animals. They cause happiness to all. Man who desires prosperity should go such that cows are to his right (like *pradakshina*). (Shl 8) They should not be kicked. One should not walk between them. Go are like *devatas* which shelter auspiciousness. Therefore they deserve to be worshipped at all times. (Shl 9) Go (cows & oxen) can be deployed for work. Encouraging them for work is the *dharma* arranged by *devatas* from the beginning. There are a few more things to be said about them other than using them for service. (Shl 10) When they are grazing and when they are sitting down peacefully to masticate they should not be perturbed. Thirsty cows indicate to the master that they need water by their looks. If the cow-herd ignores them at that time, they will burn him along with his family with their cruel looks. (Shl 11) Cow-dung purifies the *pitru grihas* (place where *pitru shraadha* is performed). It also purifies *deva mandiras*. What can be more sacred thing than this? (When cow-dung can purify such places what to speak of cows?). (Shl 12) The *vrata* of feeding one handful of grass everyday for one year to other's cow will result in fulfilling all his desires (*ghasa-mushti-vrata*). (Shl 13) One who completes this *vrata* will get sons, money and wealth. This *vrata* will eliminate inauspiciousness and bad dreams.

Yudhishtira questioned: (Shl 14) Grandfather! Go with what characteristics should be donated? What kind should not be donated? To what type of brahmana should they be donated? To whom should it not be donated?

Bhishma said: (Shl 15) *Godaan* should just not be done to a man with wicked practices, a sinner, someone greedy, a liar and one who does not perform *deva yajna* & *shraadha karmas*. (Shl 16) One who donates ten cows to a *shrotriya* who has many sons, performs *agnihotra* everyday and is dedicated to Vedas will gain higher *lokas* after death. (Shl 17) If the one who received *godaan* does certain acts of dharma after being inspired upon taking that *daan*, then one part of the fruits gained by him will be to the credit of the donor. This is quite fair. (Shl 18) **The following three become *pitrus*** (parental ancestors): **one who gave birth, one who saves from life threatening situations and one who arranges a job to help make a living.** (Shl 19) **Serving the elderly will clear all sins. Arrogance destroys great fame. Three sons remove the blemish of having no sons. Ten cows which yield milk keep away joblessness.** (Shl 22) The same amount of sins are earned by snatching away the properties (or assets) of a brahmana as the amount of *punya* that is earned by donating cow to a deserving brahmana. Therefore never snatch the assets of a brahmana. And their wives should be avoided from a distance. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 69)**

More about *Godaan*

- (Extracts)

Yama to Naachiketa: (Shl 30) Oh great among brahmana! Just donating cows alone is not commended. *Daan* should be given after properly ascertaining worthiness of the *brahmana*, suitability of time to donate, the quality (or pedigree) of the *go* and the formal procedures to donate. It is very difficult to see differences between cows. Similarly it is very difficult to identify

worthy brahmanas who have *tejas* like *agni* & *surya*. (Shl 31) That brahmana who is studied Vedas, is a good *tapasvi* and is engaged in performing *yajnas* is most worthy for receiving *godaan*. Firstly, cows released from captivity and secondly cows which have come from a very poor person's house for being cared well are considered especially suitable for donating. (Shl 32) The person who gives the *daan* should be fasting for three days and be living only on water. He should sleep on the floor. The cows to be donated should have been fed ample grass and should be feeling satisfied. They should be happy with their calves. They should be capable of giving birth to calves in future also. They should be accompanied by bronze vessels needed for milking them. Such cows should be donated to brahmanas who are made to feel satisfied with food and *dakshina*. After donating for three days he should take only *gorasa* (curdled milk, butter milk) as food. (Shl 33) If cow with good nature (does not kick or gore etc), having auspicious characteristics, having a calf and which is not in the habit of running away is donated along with the bronze vessel needed to milk it, then the donor will enjoy pleasures of *Swarga loka* for as many years as the cow has hairs on its body. (Shl 34) In the same way, if well domesticated, capable of carrying loads, strong, youthful, which can manage the lives of agriculturists, is virile and big ox is donated to brahmana, then he will enjoy the same fruits as described for cows above. (Shl 35, 36) Go should be donated to a brahmana who is very forgiving, is capable of protecting and *nourishing* them, is grateful and has no job. He is considered a worthy receiver. It can be donated to those who are aged, who have to eat prescribed dietary food due to sickness, who are scared because of famine and who intend to perform a great *yajna*. Go can be donated at that appropriate time for use in farming, for performing *homa* of *agnihotra*, when children are born, when a disciple comes asking for it to pay *guru dakshina* and when a boy needs cow's milk for meeting his nutrition requirements (at such times one need not consider sacred time, place or formal procedures). Cows bought after assessing them for good yield of milk and their good nature, cows given to reward one's knowledge, obtained by bartering animals, cows captured in a war and those obtained as gifts from father-in-law at the time of marriage can be donated.

After hearing Vyvasvata, I again questioned him: Yamaraja! If one cannot find cows and therefore cannot donate how will humans go to the *lokas* meant for those who donate them? Then he explained about this matter. According to him there are many who have done *godaan* without having actual go. The substitute methods he described are as follows:

(Shl 39, 40, 41) **Essentially the substitutes are cows made out of clarified butter, *til* (sesame) and water.**

Yama to Naachiketa: (Shl 46) *Munikumara! Godhan* (wealth of *go*) is very pure. Never ignore dharmas. Whenever good time and worthy persons are found, *daans* should be given. Therefore keep donating cows. Let you not have any doubt in this matter. (Shl 49) Cows earned in just/legal ways should be donated to brahmanas. Cows which are donated to worthy person after due examination of the cow should be arranged to be sent to his house. Starting from any auspicious *Ashtami* for ten days the person who donates should live only on *gorasa* (milk, curds, *ghee*). (Shl 54) Go are equal to rays of Sun in respect of gains (*praapti*), nourishment (*pushti*) and protection (*loka-samrakshana*) to the world. Words for both are same. The word '*go*' signifies both cows and rays. It is from *go* that both children and enjoyments are gained. Therefore one who does *godaan* will shine like the Sun who spreads his rays everywhere. (Shl 56) You should get *go* in just and legal ways and donate them. After donating to a worthy person you should arrange to send it to his house. *Devatas*, *manushyas* and we all expect *daan* & *dharma* from you who are humble and a *punya-sheela*. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 71)**

- (Extracts)

Maharshi Vasishta to King Saudasa: (Shl 11) One who owns ten cows should donate one. One who owns a hundred should donate ten cows. One who owns a thousand should donate a hundred cows. All three will get equal fruits. (Shl 12) One who does not perform *agnihotra* in spite of owning a hundred cows, one who does not perform *somayaaga* in spite of owning a thousand cows and one who is miser in spite of being wealthy is not fit for receiving *arghya* (not worthy of being honoured).

(Shl 17) One should not feel upset upon seeing cow-dung and cow urine. Cow-dung and urine are very sacred. But meat of cow should never be consumed. Consuming *panchagavya* (five products of cow viz milk, curd, *ghee*, cow urine and cow-dung) is *nourishing*. (Shl 19) Everyday cow-dung should be applied to the body before taking bath. One should sit on dried & flattened cow-dung

pieces (cow-dung cakes). One should not spit phlegm on cow-dung. One should not urinate or defecate on cow-dung. Cows should never be hit.

(Shl 24) I will see cow everyday. May the cows also see me with grace! All cows belong to us. We belong to the cows. We will be where there are cows. (Shl 25) One who prays in this manner to *gomata* (mother cow) both in day and night, both in happy times and unhappy times and in times of great difficulties and in great fear will be freed of variety of difficulties and fears. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 78)**

Procedure for *godaan*

- (This chapter has a detailed description of the procedure to be followed for donating *go*. Only extracts are given here).

(Shl 7) “Cow is my mother. Bull is my father. May both these grace me with happiness of *Swarga* and this world!” Thus saying, he should spend that night among them silently. Then next morning while donating the bovine he should recite the same *mantra*. (Shl 8) In this manner the donor should spend one night among the cows, should treat them as equals, should be with them with friendliness and thus being, if he can attain/feel unity with them (*ektama bhava*), then at that same moment he will be freed of all sins.

(Shl 13, 14) “Oh *gos* (bovine)! **Your form is same as my form. There is no difference between you and me. It is for this reason that I who am donating you am donating myself.**” He should say this standing before the cows facing east.

(Shl 15) When an actual *go* cannot be donated, as its substitute its equivalent price, clothes and gold can be given. He will be considered as a *godaani* (donor of *go*). (Shl 16, 17) One who donates full value of *go* instead of the actual *go* will enjoy 36000 years in *divya-loka*. One who donates clothes to the best of his abilities will enjoy its *punya phalas* for 8000 years. One who donates gold to the best of his abilities will enjoy *punya phalas* for 20000 years. **As soon as the receiver of the *daan* walks eight steps, this *punya phala* will accrue to him.**

(Shl 22) This *godaan vidhi* (procedure) should not be preached to one who is not your disciple, who does not practice *vrats*, who has no faith and who has crooked mind. This *godaan dharma* is a great secret. Therefore this should not be told indiscriminately wherever you please. (Shl 23) **There are many people in this *loka* who have no faith in this kind of dharma. Among human beings there are many mean people with *rakshasi pravritti* (demonic attitude). Many with little earned *punya* will be atheists. By preaching this auspicious *godaan dharma* to such persons only ominous things will happen, not desired things.** (Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 76)

Blemishes of donating stolen cows & other matters

- Indra questioned Brahma: (Shl 1) If someone knowingly sells a stolen cow to another due to greed for money what states will he get?

Brahma said: (Shl 2) I will tell you the results of stealing cow for eating or selling or donating. (Shl 3) **One who causes violence to cows with the intent of eating its meat or eats its meat or that selfish person who permits the butcher to kill the cow will all acquire immense sins.** (Shl 4) All these sins will result in falling into *Naraka* for as many years as the cow has hairs on its body. (Shl 5) The person who steals and sells cows will get the same amount of sins as the person who destroys the *yajnas* of brahmanas. (Shl 6) One who steals cows and donates it to brahmanas will fall into *Naraka* for as many years as his *punya* would have lasted by donating cow obtained by his own earnings. (Shl 7) There is a procedure (or rule) that gold *dakshina* should be added in *godaan*. (This doubles the fruits of *godaan*). (Shl 9) Indra! Donating gold is very auspicious. *Dakshina* of gold is the best form. Among things that purify, gold is the best. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 74)**

Greatness or significance of several virtuosities

- Yudhishtira questioned: (Shl 2) What are the fruits obtained by practicing *vrats*? What fruits are obtained by following regulations/rules and studying Vedas? (Shl 3) What fruits are obtained by giving *daans*, by memorising Vedas and helping others to study them? (Shl 4) What fruits does one who does not accept anything from others obtain? What are the fruits of teaching Vedas? (Shl 5) What fruits are obtained by valorous persons who stick to their *swadharma*? What are the

fruits of *shauchachara* (purification rites) and *brahmacharya-palana*? (Shl 6) What fruits are obtained by serving and caring for parents? What by serving *gurujana* (elders & teachers)? What fruits are obtained by showing kindness to animals?

Bhishma said: (Shl 8) The persons who start *vrats* with a pure heart as prescribed in *shastras* and complete it will obtain *sanatana shubha lokas* (eternal auspicious *lokas*). (Shl 9) **In this world the results of following regulations/rules (*niyamas*) are seen directly** (practically) (*niyamaanam phalam pratyakshamiha drishyate*: **Could be theme line for some organisations!!**). You have also obtained the fruits of following *niyamas* and *yajnas*. (Shl 10) It is possible to see the fruits of studying Vedas both in this *loka* and *paraloka*. One who studies Vedas is filled with bliss in this *loka* and in Brahmaloka after death. Now listen to the fruits of *dama*.

(Shl 11) *Daantas* (those who have their *indriyas* & *manas* under control) will be happy and contented everywhere (*daantah sarvatra sukhino daantah sarvatra nirvrtaah*). (Shl 12) *Jitendriyas* go wherever they wish to. They obtain whatever they desire. (**Isn't this contrary to what they are?!**) They destroy all enemies like *kaam* & *krodh*. There is no doubt in this. (Shl 13) *Jitendriyas* have the capability to obtain whatever they want everywhere. They enjoy bliss in this *loka* and *Swarga loka* by virtue of their *tapas*, valour, *daans* and variety of *yajnas*. **In the same way they will be capable of forgiving.** (Shl 14, 15) **Dama is greater than daan.** A donor may sometimes, due to circumstances, get angry when donating. But since *jitendriyas* have completely restrained their anger etc they will never do so. That is why it is said that *dama* is greater than *daan*. One who donates without getting angry for any reason will get *sanatana lokas*. (Shl 16, 17) **Even if slight anger develops at the time of donating it will destroy the fruits of daan.** That is why *dama* is greater. **All the *rishis* in all the *lokas* have thousands of invisible places in *Swarga*. *Devatas* & *rishis* wish to go to such places and by being *jitendriyas* manage to go to those places.** That is why *dama* is greater. (Shl 18) **A teacher obtains inexhaustible fruits due to his teaching with great efforts.** One who performs *homa* in *agni* as per prescribed procedures will be worshipped in *Brahma loka* also. (Shl 19) Those who study Vedas and preach it to disciples who are dedicated to being just & lawful and who appreciate the methodology or sequence used by guru will be worshipped in *Swarga*. (Shl 20) Even a *Kshatriya* who is engaged in study of Vedas, performing *yajnas* and *daans* and protects *satpurushas* will be worshipped in *Swarga*. (Shl 21) By donating, a *vysya* who is dedicated to practicing his *swakarma* will obtain great states. A *shudra* who is dedicated to *swakarma* will attain *Swarga* by doing service of others.

(Shl 28) The *punyas* gained by memorising all the Vedas and bathing in all the *tirthas* may or may not equal the *punyas* obtained by being always truthful. (Shl 31) *devatas*, *pitrus* and *brahmanas* are pleased by truthfulness. Firmness in speaking truth is said to be the greatest dharma. Therefore truth should not be transgressed. (Shl 32) *Munis* are dedicated to truth. Their valour is truth. Their vow is truth. That is why *satya nishta* is the greatest dharma. (Shl 33) Those who are truthful will find happiness in *Swarga*. But *dama* is the root cause for the fruits obtained by truthfulness. I am telling you this with utmost sincerity. (Shl 34) One who controls his mind and is humble/polite will be worshipped in *Swarga*.

Now I will tell you the fruits of *brahmacharya*. (Shl 35) There is nothing that a person who remains a *brahmachari* all his life cannot get. (Shl 36) Many in this world who were *satya nishtas*, *jitendriyas* and *urdhva-retaskas* are now living in *Brahma loka*. (Shl 37) If someone practices *brahmacharya vrat* with especial rigor, he will burn all the sins in him. This rule applies especially to brahmana. Because a brahmana who is practicing strict and rigorous *brahmacharya* is considered to be *agni* himself. Now I will tell you the fruits of serving & caring parents. (Shl 40, 41) *Maharaja*! One who continuously serves parents, gurus, *acharyas* and elder brother and does not find fault in their qualities will find an honourable place in *swarga*. A person who is dedicated to serving the guru and is a *jitendriya* will never have to see *naraka*. (**Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 74**)

Greeting/Expressing joy

- When Duryodhana was proceeding towards the tent of Bhishma to meet him, several soldiers see him and bow to him with folded palms along his path. **Duryodhana raised his right arm to acknowledge them all.**

As he was riding his horse to meet Bhishma, many people were rushing forward to see him. His soldiers, who wore dresses with gold-threaded border, holding batons and whips, requested them gently to stay back and make way for him. (**Bhishma; Bhishma vadha; 97**)

(**Practices we have even to this day**)

- When Sri Krishna comes to meet Yudhishtira in the morning, he greets Krishna thus: "Madhusudana! Did you spend the night comfortably? Are all your *jnanendriyas* (5 cognitive senses) cheerful?
Sri Krishna replies: "I spent the night comfortably. My mind is quite cheerful. (Drona; Pratisya; 83)
- Sri Krishna woke up one and half hours before the night ended. Then adopting *dhyana-marga* he visualised all the dharmas and meditated upon *sanatana-brahma*....Then **Sri Krishna came out of his *dhyana-yoga*, got up and had bath**, with folded palms recited the sacred Gayathri *mantra* secretly, went to *agnyagara* (special place for fire) and worshipped *agni* with *ajyahuti*. After coming out of that place, he donated 1000 cows to 1000 brahmanas who had studied all four Vedas and received their *swasti-vachana*. Then he touched many auspicious things like *poorna-kumbha* and saw his reflection in a clean mirror.
Then Sri Krishna, Satyaki, and Pandavas got down from their chariots and **conveyed their respects to all the assembled by raising their right hands.** (Shanti; Rajadharmanushasana; 53)
- Duryodhana's soldiers speaking thus among themselves, praised Duryodhana for having won the war without ever fighting. **With a joyous mood and overflowing happiness, they threw their *angavastrs*** (Upper cloth draped over the shoulders) **in the air.....** (Bhishma; Bhishma vadha; 43)
(This way of displaying happiness about victory appears to have come down to today also; in most sports the winner removes the shirt and waves or throws it!!)
- All the Panchala warriors saw him emerge out of the lake. They all felt happy. They **clapped each other's palms** and expressed their happiness. (Shalya; Gada; 32)

Meeting/Receiving formally

- (Shl 72) Whoever he is, he should not go in disguise to a king. Similarly one should not go in disguise to a brahmana or to a *pativrata* woman (devoted & virtuous wife). If done so, the king or the brahmana or the *pativrata* woman will destroy the person in disguise. (Shl 73) Wealth is the might of kings. *Adhyatma jnana* is the strength of brahmanas. Beauty, youth & being fortunate is the strength of women. (Shl 74) Thus these three become strong by virtue of their respective qualities stated. The person who wishes to have his desires fulfilled by them should go to them in straight and honest ways. Adopting any crooked approach like disguising will result in his destruction. (Shanti parva; Mokshadharma; 320)
- Having sighted Bhishma from a distance, Sri Krishna, Yudhishtira, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula, Sahadeva, Sharadvata etc **got down from the chariot, brought the fickle mind under control, merged the *indriyas* in mind and came near the *mahamunis* who were all sitting there.** Then they all prostrated to the *rishis* there and stood near Bhishma. (Shanti; Rajadharmanushasana; 50)
(Perhaps this is how we are supposed to go to persons of spiritual accomplishments and also to temples)
- When king Sudyumna heard that *rishi* Likhita was coming to his palace, he along with his ministers went **walking barefoot** to receive him with cordiality and respect (The tradition of walking barefoot in all religious centres or to meet spiritual personalities exists to this day in India). (Shanti; Rajadharmanushasana; 23)
- Yudhishtira's entering the capital, Hastinapura: He climbed into a new chariot pulled by sixteen oxen... The citizens had burned fragrance sticks/powder (*dhoopa*) all along the route. Several kinds of powders (*choorna*) had been spread all around, bunches of flowers of several varieties were kept as decoration and garlands were hung at intervals..... (Shanti; Rajadharmanushasana; 37)

Food related

- Bhishma said: (Shl 89, 90) Should not sit together and eat out of the same plate. Should not eat the food touched by menstruating woman. Should not eat things from which the essence has been extracted. When a beggar is watching, should not eat without giving him. (Shl 91) An intelligent man should not eat near an impure person or sitting opposite *satpurushas*. Those items which have been banned in *dharmashastras* should not be eaten even by hiding. (Shl 92) One who wishes auspiciousness should not eat fruit of holy fig tree (*pippala*), fruit of banyan tree (*vata*), pulse of hemp (*shanashaka*) or cluster fig tree (*udumbara*). (Shl 93) **Meat of goat, cow and peacock as well as dried and rotten meat should be rejected.** (Shl 94) A wise man should not lick salt held separately in hand. **He should not eat flour mixed with curd in the night. Should give up eating meat as routine food.** (Shl 95) Every day should eat only in the morning and evening with concentration. Should not eat anything between meals. If hair is found in the food it should not be consumed. Left over food from *shraaddha* performed by others should not be eaten. (Shl 96) Food should be eaten silently. Should not be eaten without wearing an upper cloth. Should not eat when not sitting properly. Food items on the floor/ground should not be eaten. Should not eat while standing. Should not eat while making sound (like loud slurping). (Shl 97) An intelligent man should eat with concentration after serving food and water to guests. (Shl 98) All those sitting in a line should be served the same kind of food. One who does not invite his cordial friends who have come home and eats alone eats poison itself. (Shl 99) Other than leftovers of water, *payasa*, flour, curd, ghee and honey, leftovers of anything else should not be served to others. After serving a person in a ladle the leftover in the ladle should not be served to another. (Shl 100) When eating you should have no suspicion about the food being consumed. **One who wishes auspiciousness should not drink curd at the end of the meals.** (Shl 101) After eating meals and washing hands and mouth, *achaman* should be done and with right hand the big toe of right leg should be wetted. (*Uttara madhyanhika*). (Shl 102) A man skilled in practices should keep his hand on the head after meals. Then he should touch *agni*. By doing so the members of family will attain greatness. (**Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 104**)
- Bhishma said: (Shl 121) No flours should be eaten in the night. During meals one should not consume food or drink used & left by others. (Shl 122) **One should not take excessive food in the night; nor should force others to do so.** Tooth should not be extracted in the night. **After finishing meals, buttermilk or water should be taken.** (**Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 104**)

- **Rakshasas & their food**

Rakshasas to *rishis*: (Shl 22) Those who are born by the sin of adultery become *rakshasas*. In the same way those among *vysya*, *shudra* and *ksatriyas* who hate brahmanas take birth as *rakshasa*. (Shl 23) Those who humiliate *acharyas*, *ritwijas*, *gurus*, aged people and animals are born as *rakshasas* here.

..Then the pleased *rishis* said, "(Shl 26-28) The following types of food are fit for eating by *rakshasas*: food on which there is spit, on which there is some insect or worm, which is left-over, in which there is hair, that which has been given with contempt, on which a tear due to crying has fallen and that which has been touched by dog. Therefore a *vidwan* should reject such food in all circumstances. Eating food with such defects is equivalent to eating *rakshasanna* (*rakshasa's* food). (**Shalya; Gada; 43**)

Forbidden foods

- Swayambhu Manu to group of *rishis*: (Shl 21) Brahmanas should not eat meat of ox, *mritika* (mud?), small ants, a certain fruit (*shleshmataka*) and poisoned food. (Shl 22) Brahmanas should not eat fish without scales (?). They should not eat any four legged animals other than tortoise. They should not eat frogs and such animals which live in water.(Shl 30) One should not eat food given by a person excommunicated from society or village. Also applies to food given by one who is dependent on a dancer-woman (*nartaki*), who lives by acting on stage (professional actor, *ranga-jeevi*) and a *stree-jeevi*. (Shl 31) One should not eat food brought in left hand; food served before you sat down to eat; food stored overnight; food kept near wine; food remaining in the ladle after serving to someone; and food remaining after all others have eaten. (Shl 32) The following should not be eaten if stored for a long time: food prepared by 'deforming' flour, cane-juice, vegetables and milk.... (Shl 33) If the following were not prepared for offering to god but for eating

for one's own pleasure, then a *grihastha* brahmana should not eat them: *payasa* (a sweet liquid food made out of milk), cooked rice mixed with sesame seeds, meat, and *apooa* (sweet dish). (Shanti; Rajadharmanushasana; 36)

Miscellaneous

- Bhima: Gambler's houses usually have many prostitutes. (Sabha; Dyuta; 68)
- Nala: it is said that if someone who lost his everything in *dyuta* (game of gambling) comes back & invites for playing the game again, the winner should accept the offer. This is good *rajadharma*. (Vana; Nalopakhya; 78)
- Yudhishtira: (Shl 9) Even a young boy who is learned in Veda-Vedanga & follows dharma is respected as a *rajarshi*. (Vana; Arjunabhigamana; 31)
- Ashtavakra to Janaka *maharaja*: (Shl 1) One should give way to a blind person & show him the way. If a deaf person is going, then also he should be given right of way. Way should be given to women & those bearing heavy loads. If a king comes in your path, he should be given way. But if a brahmana comes in the way, even king should yield the way to him. (Vana; Tirthayatra; 133)
- **What types of living is a wasted life**
(Shl 4-5) *Maharshi* Markandeya: (i) not having children (ii) always depending on others for food (iii) cooking & eating food only for oneself without giving to others (iv) eating before children & aged persons have eaten. (Vana; Markandeya Samaasya; 200)
- (Shl 13-14) Duryodhana to Krishna upon his waking up & greeting them both: "Noble people who follow the traditions established by forefathers always consider the prayers/requests of the one who has come first." (First come first served is a tradition from even before Mahabharatha days)
Krishna while agreeing with this tradition, counters it with another tradition that the younger one should get priority. Duryodhana agrees. (Udyoga; Senodyoga; 7)
- Sri Krishna upon entering the assembly of Dhritarashtra showed his respect to others according to the accepted order/sequence (The sequence is according to age, *kula-gotra*, their fame etc. This sequence does not consider wealth of the person). (Udyoga; Bhagavadyana; 89)
- **Physical disability disqualifies from being a king**
Dhritarashtra to Duryodhana: Narrates the story of king Prathipa who wanted to crown his son Devapi, who had a skin disease but was an excellent person; he was stopped from doing so by the citizens and ministers, who quoted *shastras* & conventions.
(Shl 25) **A king with physical disabilities/defects will not be supported/felicitated by devatas. Such a person, however good a character & capability he may have was not allowed to become the king.** (Udyoga; Bhagavadyana; 149)
- Dhritarashtra to Sanjaya: Aswatthama, the son of Drona, was all the time being served by brahmana, *kshatriya* and *vysya shishyas*. **In his house he used to enjoy with his friends vitanda-vada** (meaningless discussions/frivolous arguments), **chatting, musical instruments being played in drut** (slow pace) etc. .. In Drona's house I now do not hear songs sung by people from different countries and the sounds of instrumental music. (Drona; Jayadrathavadha; 85)
- Ghatotkacha to Duryodhana: One who desires to obtain *swadharma*, *artha* or *kaama* should not go empty handed when meeting king or brahmana or woman for this purpose. (Drona; Ghatotkachavadha; 174)
- Sri Krishna to Gandhari: (Shl 5) A brahmana woman conceives in order to give birth to one who likes to do *tapas*. A cow conceives to give birth to an ox which can carry load. A horse conceives to give birth to a horse which can run fast. A *shudra* woman conceives to give birth to one who has *seva-dharma*. A *vysya* woman conceives to give birth to one who can protect cows (cattle). In

the same way princesses like you conceive to give birth to warriors who are willing to sacrifice their lives in war. **(Stree; Shraaddha; 26)**

- (Shl 35) It is said that walking just seven steps with virtuous person causes friendship with them. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 51)**
- Bhishma said: (Shl 25) When walking along a narrow path, one should first make way for brahmana, cows, king, aged person, one carrying a load, weak, and pregnant woman when they come from the other side. (Shl 26) When walking on the path one should go such that sacred trees like Ashwattha etc fall on the right. All intersections of four streets should fall to the right when travelling **(This is like driving on left side of road)**. (Shl 27) One should not be at intersections of four streets during noon time, night hours, mid-night and just before and after sunset. (Shl 28, 29, 30) One should not wear footwear or clothes worn by others. One should always be dedicated to Brahma. One should not step with one foot on the other foot. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 104)**
- Bhishma said: (Shl 42) *Agni-karya* should be done everyday. Everyday alms should be given to beggars. One should brush the teeth everyday while being silent. (Shl 43) Soon after getting up in the morning, one should prostrate to parents. Then he should prostrate to teachers and other elders. By doing this man will have long life. (Shl 44) Teeth should be brushed only with the pieces of wood (*danta dhavana kaashtha*) specified in *shastras*. Teeth should be brushed everyday only with pieces of wood. On auspicious/festival days teeth should be brushed without using the pieces of wood. (Shl 45) Urinating and defecation should be done by sitting facing north. Worship of *devatas* should not be done without brushing teeth. (Shl 46) One should not go to anyone before performing the worship of *devatas*. But one can go to the guru, aged, *dharmic* and *vidwan* for guidance. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 104)**
- Bhishma said: (Shl 47) A very intelligent person should not see his face in a dirty mirror. He should not even go near a stranger woman and a pregnant woman. (Shl 48) **One should not sleep with head towards north or west. A scholar should sleep with head towards east or south.** (Shl 49) Should not sleep on torn or weakened bed. Should not sleep on a bed which is in darkness. Many should not sleep on the same bed. Should never sleep in bent or crooked postures. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 104)**
- Bhishma said: (Shl 71) One who is impure should not teach Vedas; nor should he be taught. If walking/travelling in foul smelling air, Vedas should not be recited mentally. Those who know about this from the past, quote these *gitas* of Yama. (Shl 73, 74) I will cut the longevity of one who when impure recites Vedas or teaches or is taught. I will snatch the longevity of his children also. That brahmana who under *moha* studies Vedas during the forbidden periods will lose his studies. Will also lose longevity. Therefore one who follows dharma should not study on the *anadhyayana* days. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 104)**
- Bhishma said: (Shl 103) One should not travel when the hands are wet. Hands should be dried thoroughly with cloth before going out/resuming travel. **(Anushasana parva; Daandharma; 104)**

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