

Swami Śradhānand

6 Feb. 1856 to 23 De. 1926



By Acharya Suryanarayan Nanda
for Arya Samaj Greater Houston

- One of the greatest sons of India, who were eminent in building our nation
- in the
- 19th century.

A noble soul
and fearless
patriot.

A valiant
warrior of the
war of
independence.

Education
of girls

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Revival of Gurukul
system

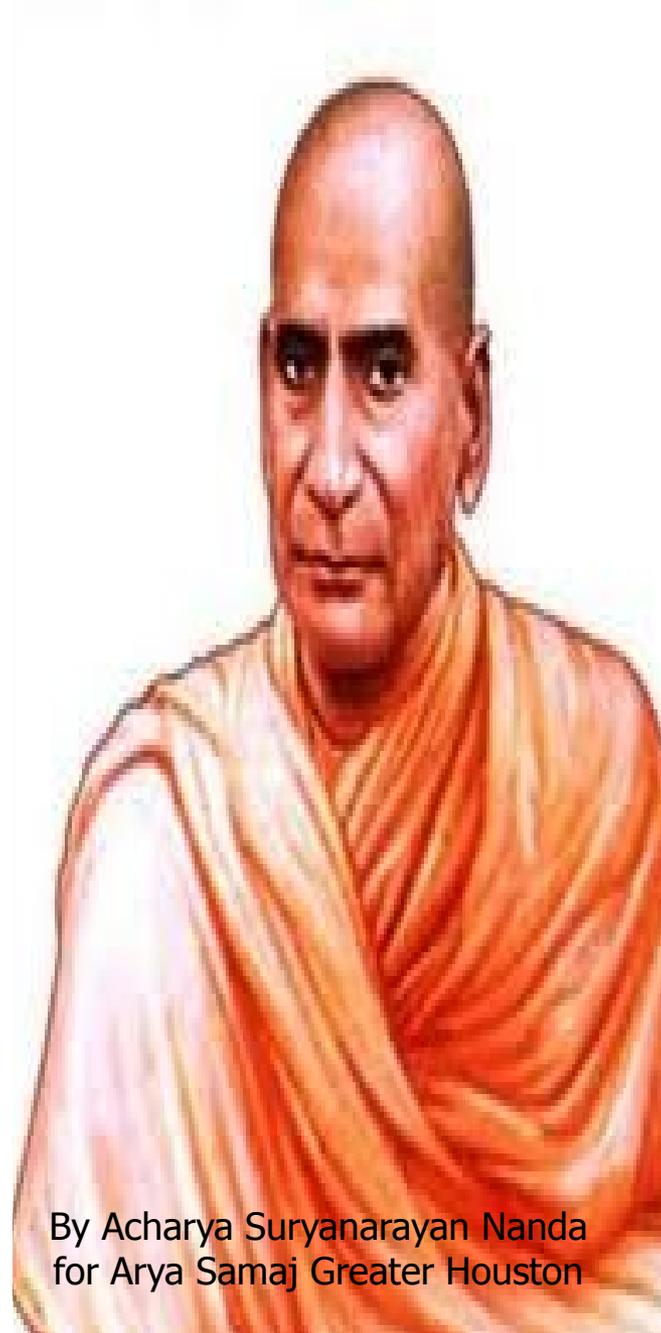
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Upliftment of
downtroddens, and
untouchables

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Śudhi Āndolan
(Movement of re-
conversion of converted
Hindus)

2019-12-22



Swāmī
Śradhānand

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Ṣaṃskāra

The act of refinement

Acharya Surya Nanda

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- Saṃskāra is a process of purification and transformation.
- It is an activity that alter the nature of an object and give it a new shape.
- It is to improve upon something while removing its undesirable attributes.

Samskāro hi
guṇāntarā-dhāna-
mucyate.

Carak Samhita

2019-12-22



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Cotton



Paddy



Gold ore

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janmanā jāyate śūdraḥ
samskārad dvija uccyate
Veda-pāthād bhaved vipraḥ
brahma jānātīti brāhmanaḥ

By birth every one is a śūdra, by the purificatory process one becomes a dvija, by study of the Vedas one becomes a vipra, and one who knows Brahman is a brāhmana.

Manu Smriti



The process of saṃskāra has three components, namely

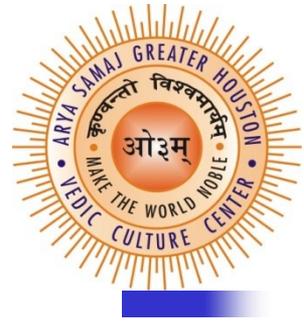
1. **Doṣāpanayana** (purification),
2. **Hīnānga-pūr̥ti** (making up deficiency),
3. **Guṇādhāna** (Value enrichment).

When a child is born, he brings with himself two kinds of impressions.

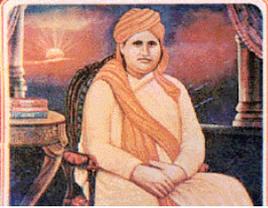
- The first category comprises of those impressions that he has been carrying with him through several lives.
- The second type consists of those which he attains from his parents' impressions as part of his inherited legacy. These can either be good or bad.



- The Saṁskāras are intended not only to develop further human qualities but also to eliminate all remnants of animal nature in man.
- It is a system of practices by which the bad tendencies in man are got rid of and good tendencies are inculcated.



Samskāras (Sacraments) are also done to celebrate various stages and journey of a human life such as pregnancy, first outing, first learning, etc..



- These ceremonies are **indicative** of an individual's growth and development, and also the **acknowledgement** by the family and the society.
- The acknowledgement of this unique individualization process at every step of growth **helps enrich** the person's life.
- ❖ Since each saṃskāra makes the individual the focus of the occasion, he/she is **psychologically boosted**.



- ❖ The samskāras bring together family members, close relatives and friends.
- ❖ The consequence of this is a healthy society with a strong cultural identity which easily refines, boosts and perpetuates its traditions, customs, morals and values.



The detailed explanation about saṃskāras is found in various Dharma śāstras.

- ✓ There are diverse number of Saṃskāras, varying by texts between 12 and 18 in deferent texts.
- ✓ Of these 16 are referred to as "Śoḍaṣa Saṃskāra).

Prenatal ceremonies

Garbhādhāna saṁskāra **(The ritual of conception)**

Beckon a new soul that possesses supreme qualities and characteristics. Just like a growing tree or a farm requires fertile land, seeds, manure, water, air and special protection, in the same manner, summoning a healthy soul having fine impressions on it requires preparation on the part of parents even prior to conception.

Prenatal ceremonies
Garbhādhāna saṃskāra
(The ritual of conception)

By Vedic tradition, a couple can willfully (obeying the directions given in the scriptures) acquire a strong, beautiful, intellectual offspring possessed with good impressions.

For this, it is necessary to follow certain pre-requisites like continence, healthy and pure diet, regular study of scriptures and of self, excellent company, a strict routine, contemplation etc.

The physical as well as the mental condition of parents before conception and during fertilization has a profound effect on the impending soul.

Prenatal ceremonies

Puṃsavana (Fetus protection)

- It is a ritual conducted when the pregnancy begins to show, typically in or after the **third month** of pregnancy and usually before the fetus starts moving in the womb.
- The ceremony celebrates the rite of passage of the developing fetus, marking the stage where the baby begins to kick as a milestone in a baby's development.

Prenatal ceremonies

Puṃsavana (Fetus protection)

- The mother has to take precautions for the protection, growth and development of the womb.
- Yājñavalkya Smṛiti verse 3.79 asserts that the desires of the pregnant woman should be satisfied for healthy development of the baby, to prevent miscarriage and her health.
- In the last months of the pregnancy, the woman is expected to not overexert herself, her husband is expected to be by her and not to travel to distant lands.

Prenatal ceremonies
Puṃsavana (Fetus protection)

Right from the first day, a pregnant woman should remain happy, adorn herself with pure jewels, have a peaceful mind, wish well for everyone and be devoted to the service of God and saints.

[Source: Charak Sanhita]

Prenatal ceremonies

Puṃsavana (Fetus protection)

She should abstain from touching soiled, distorted or inferior organs. She should stay away from stinking places and unpleasant sites. She should avoid listening to things that cause uneasiness or restlessness. She should not partake of dry, stale or rotten food. She should shun visiting an unoccupied house or cremation grounds, staying under a tree, getting cross or sulking, being untoward, yelling etc. She should avoid all those things that could harm her womb and its occupant.

[Source: Charak Sanhita]

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Prenatal ceremonies

Puṃsavana (Fetus protection)

She should not use any intoxicant, should not climb for a ride, should not eat meat, abandon the things which the senses are not desirous of and comply with the learned women of the neighborhood or family.

[Source: Charak Sanhita]

Prenatal ceremonies

Puṃsavana (Fetus protection)

All that is written above implies that when the child is in the womb, everything that the mother does, contributes towards the child's constitution.

Keeping in mind the physical development of the offspring, it is therefore, the mother's duty to regulate her eating-drinking habits, her lifestyle and behavior in such a manner that it leaves no adverse effect on the child.

[Source: Sushrut, Shaareer Sthaan - 3/16].

Prenatal ceremonies

Simantonnayana

(The ritual for the mental development of fetus)

This ceremony is performed in the fourth or sixth or eighth month of pregnancy, when the brain-cells of the fetus start forming. *Shaareer Sthaan of Sushrut* mentions: In the fifth month, the mind is quite awake, in the sixth the intellect and in the seventh there is manifestation of organs.

The **fourth** suits because during this month, the formation of brain cells begins. The **sixth** suits as during the sixth month, the first origin of intelligence can be traced and **eighth** is suitable because by that time, the body, mind, brain and heart of the fetus are all ready.

This is the time when the woman is called 'twin-hearted' as two hearts work simultaneously.

Prenatal ceremonies

Sīmantonayana

(The ritual for the mental development of fetus)

The implication of *Sīmantonayana Saṃskāra* directs the parents' attention to the child's mental development.

Here the husband should himself oil the wife's hair and comb it and take her to the temple or Place of Yajna .