



श्री लक्ष्मी नारायण मन्दिर



## SHRI LUXMI NARAYAN TEMPLE

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### INTRODUCTION

The arrival of a new born child in the home is an occasion for great happiness for the whole family. This joy is manifest for different people in different ways. It is a time of sincere thanks giving to Paramatma who has blessed the home. The Hindu expresses his gratitude to God and a welcome to the child with Shasthi Pooja. This is the most fitting way to welcome the new born in the home. All other ways in which adults indulge in the grossest of sensual pleasures should be avoided.

The number six (6) is of great spiritual and cultural significance. Firstly the newly formed body of the infant is viewed in six parts – HEAD, HANDS, MID-BODY (TRUNK), LEGS. The divine energy responsible for the development, called by a special name, Shasthi Devi is invoked for good health, good character and freedom from disease. Secondly, the Pooja is held as far as possible on the sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) day after birth, preferably in the evening at when the lamp is lit.

All the food for the Pooja must be strictly Satvic, prepared under rigid hygienic and clean conditions to be offered as Prasad. The home must be free of alcohol and all non-vegetarian food.

### EXPLANATION OF AśAUCa SŪTAKA (AŚAUCA SŪTAKA)

AŚAUCA, which arises on birth and on death, is defined as “emergent attribute attaching to a person, which is got rid of by a LAPSE OF TIME or A BATH and the like.” (Kane, 1973:268, Vol IV). AŚAUCA more commonly referred to as SŪTAKA is not merely the absence of the privilege or power to do religious acts, since even those who have incurred impurity are enjoined to do certain religious acts such as offering of water (tarpan). What becomes clear from the above is there is no stoppage of any religious acts when AŚAUCA or SŪTAKA begins. There might be different religious acts to perform, but one cannot say that all pooja stops as a result of the SŪTAKA (both birth and death). According to the Yajnavalkya Smriti, the mother is untouchable for ten days on the birth of a child, but the father and sapindas when they TAKE A BATH after the prasava are not untouchable. (Kane, 1973:268, Vol IV). The Dharamsindu says that if a woman has delivered at her father’s or brother’s house, then her parents and her brothers staying with at her paternal home had to observe AŚAUCA (SŪTAKA) for one day. It goes on to say that if a woman has delivered a child at her husband’s house, then her father or brother had to observe no AŚAUCA or SŪTAKA.

Simple logic and common sense dictate that’s that one should not stop all Dharmic activities on the birth of child. As alluded to in the introduction, the birth of child is a happy occasion and therefore warrants the performance of pooja as thanksgiving for the off-spring.

Also there has been some talk of not lighting the lamp for ten days on the birth of a child. This goes against simple logic. We continue to switch on the lights in our homes. Then how can we not ‘switch on’ the lamp that is the sum total of all light in the world. Pooja, deity worship, japa and hawan must continue normally in our homes, even after the birth of a child, because this contributes positively to the physical, emotional and spiritual growth of the newly born child.

According to Manusmrithi ,

सर्वेषां शावमाशौचं मातापित्रोस्तु सूतकं । सूतकं मातुरेव स्यादुपस्पृश्य पिता शुचिः ॥

sarveṣāṃ śāvamāśaucam̃ mātāpitrōstu sūtakaṃ ।

सह्यताकाप्र मब्रतुरेवा सयब्रदुपासपभ्रन्नया पतिब्र म्ब्रचहि जज

मृतक का अशौच सबको होता है और सूतक का तो माता पिता को ही लगता है और उन दोनो में से विशेष माता को होता है ।

पिता स्नानादि करके पवित्र हो जाता है । The SŪTAKA or AŚAUCA arising out of death affects all immediate family members, but the SŪTAKA or AŚAUCA arising out of birth affects both parents. However, the father is 'released' of SŪTAKA or AŚAUCA after a bath on the birth of a child.

Shri Luxmi Narayan Temple - Mumbai