

SACRIFICE

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All mankind have sinned, having transgressed the law of God. Therefore, they devise various ways and means how to escape the wrath of God, and live. In our own country the Brahmins perform sacrifices, and the non-Brahmins offer animals in sacrifice.

An examination of the Vedas reveals that sacrifice is spoken of as the only means of salvation. "*Prathamani Dharmani*" "Sacrifices are the foremost of our first duties."

"*Yagnovai Bhuvanasya Nabhih*"—"Sacrifice is the mainstay of the world."

"*Yagne Sarvam Pratishthitam*"—"It is sacrifice that bestows all things."

"*Yagnovai Sutarmanowh*"—"Sacrifice is the bark (boat) that enables one to live well."

"*Yagnena Va Deva Divangatah*"—"Only by means of sacrifice, the gods attained heaven."

"*Rutasyanah Pathanaya Ati Viswani Durita*"—"Afford deliverance through the path of sacrifice."

These doctrines proclaimed by the Vedas, declare that sacrifice should be the foremost of all penances that must be performed for the atonement of sins.

Let us also see what the *Bhagavad Gita* says:

Slo. "*Sahayagnah Prajasrushtwa Purovacha Prajapatih Anena Prasavishyadhvam Eshavostvishta Kamadukh*"—"In the beginning alone, along with the creation of man, God instituted the sacrifice, and told them, 'May this grant the desires of your heart'."

"*Yagnakshapitakalmashah*" "Those whose sins have been effaced by means of sacrifice."

"*Nayam lokostyayagnasyah kutonayah kurusattama*"—"Oh noble Kuru, there is no place in this world for him who does not perform even a single one of these sacrifices; how then shall he obtain heaven?"

In this way, the importance of sacrifice is taught.

Yet in the Mundakopanished, we see, "*Plava hyere adrudhayagnarupah*"—The timbers of the bark of sacrifice are unsound."

In Skanda Puranam Yagna Vaibhava Khandam, 7th chapter, we read:

Slo. "Plava eyete sura yagna adrudhashcha na samshayah"—“Ye gods, sacrifices are like the timbers of a bark; there is no doubt that they are unsound.”

Tandya Maha Brahmanam says, *Sru: "Yagnota avati tasya chhaya kriyate"*—“It is a sacrifice that saves. What is being performed, is the shadow of sacrifice.”

In Rig Veda, we read, *Sru: "Atmada baladah yasya chhaya-mrutam yasya mrutyuh"*—“He whose shadow and death become nectar shall, by his shadow and death, confer the spirit and strength.”

The above sayings clearly reveal that the sacrifices performed do not themselves confer salvation, but they are the type and the shadow of a great salvation-giving sacrifice.

Aitareya Brahmanam says, *Sru: "Yaja-manah pashuh yaja manameva suvargam lokam gamayati"*—“He who offers the sacrificial animal; therefore, he who performs sacrifices goes to heaven.”

In the Satpatha Brahmanam we read, "*Prajapatir yagnah*"—“God himself is the sacrifice.”

In Tandya Maha Brahmanam of Sama Veda we read, *Sru: "Prajapatir devebhyam atmanam yagnam krutva prayachhat"*—“God would offer Himself as a sacrifice and obtain atonement for sins.”

Satapadha Brahmanam says,

"Tasya prajapatirardhameva martyamasidardhamamrutam"—“God became half mortal and half immortal.”

That means, He united in Himself the human and the divine.

In the Purusha Sukta we read, the God Brahma is sacrificed. What is evident from all these teachings is that the true and great redeeming sacrifice would be the one performed by the Sovereign Lord of this world, who putting on both mortality and immortality and becoming incarnate as God-man, would Himself be the sacrificial animal and offer Himself as a sacrifice to redeem mankind from their sins.

This is what the Rig Veda says about the sacrificial animal :

1. It must be a goat without blemish.
2. The "balusu" bush must be placed round its head.
3. It must be bound to a sacrificial post.
4. Nails must be driven into its four legs till they bleed.
5. The cloth covering the goat should be divided among the four priests.
6. None of its bones must be broken.
7. The goat should be given a drink of Soma juice.
8. After it has been slain, it must be restored to life again.
9. Its flesh should be eaten.

Now, these details lead us to conclude that the sacrificial death of the incarnate God-head, must have answered this description in full.

Thus, it is said that God Himself must become man, and then become a sacrifice to save sinners. But we do not read any such thing written about the incarnations of our country, nor in the Sastras. There is no God-incarnate-man, who died a sacrificial death, to save sinners. But there is a country called Palestine in the west of Asia, on the Mediterranean coast, in the centre of the great land mass of the world. In this country was born of a holy virgin's womb, the incarnate God, in Whom were fulfilled all the details of the description given about the God-man. He was absolutely without blemish. He lived a perfectly holy life, He was both mortal and immortal, that is to say, He was both human and divine. From the beginning He foretold His sacrificial death to save mankind, and then of His living again as death's conqueror. He voluntarily surrendered into the hands of wicked men, who loved sin, hated His teachings and wanted to kill Him. If we examine the way in which he was killed, we find that like the sacrifice of God Brahma as described in Purusha Sukta everything said about the sacrificial animal in the Rig Veda, was clearly fulfilled in this incarnation in the following manner.

1. It must be a goat without blemish—He was the sinless God-man.
2. The "balusu" bush must be placed round its head—A crown of thorns was placed on His head.
3. It must be bound to a sacrificial post—He was crucified on the cross.

4. Nails must be driven into its four legs till they bleed—
He was nailed hands and feet to the cross.
5. The cloth covering the goat should be divided among four
priests—Those who nailed Him to the Cross divided His
garments among themselves.
6. None of its bones should be broken—Not one of His
bones was broken.
7. The goat should be given a drink of Soma juice—He was
given vinegar to drink.
8. After it has been slain, it must be restored to life again—
He rose again, as death's conqueror.
9. Its flesh should be eaten—Before His death He told His
disciples that they should eat His flesh and drink his
blood which were sacrificed for the redemption of the
world, and that they should, while often remembering His
death, symbolically partake of bread and wine; and for this
purpose He instituted a Sacrament. This sacrament con-
tinues to be observed to this day.

Since in the incarnation that took place in Palestine was fulfilled the atoning sacrifice for the saving of sinners, it is evident that this was the true Incarnation of God Whom sinners should take hold of for their salvation. This incarnation is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Purusha Sukta says, "*Nanyah Pantha Ayanayavidyate*"—
"Except through God Brahma who offered Himself as sacrifice,
heaven cannot be attained even by a thousand works. So Saya-
nulu has declared in the Bhashyam.

Therefore, except in Jesus Christ, there is no salvation in
any other.



Planting



Missions



Education



Training



Study



Orphanages



Prayer