

# Tarpana for Devas, Rishis and Pitris

## Super-short Procedure

By P.V.R. Narasimha Rao ([www.VedicAstrologer.org](http://www.VedicAstrologer.org))

Date of 1st version: 2008 August 11 Date of current version: 2012 May 27

### Introduction

External rituals are meant to create the internal visualization needed to affect desirable internal changes in the long run. For example, one offers a full coconut into fire as poornaahuti (complete offering) at the end of a homam (fire ritual). This is symbolic of surrendering one's head or ego (sense of I-ness) to god and burning it in the fire of wisdom and becoming free from ego. As one keeps engaging in this act again and again, the visualization becomes stronger and stronger and ego is slowly reduced.

One important ritual of Hinduism is tarpana. Tarpana means "satisfying" or "satiating". One acknowledges the debt one has to devas (gods), rishis (sages) and pitris (ancestral manes) and tries to satisfy them using this ritual. Just as gods are invoked in fire in a homam, pitris are invoked in water in this ritual, then held in the palm and released in a specific way conducive to freeing them.

One owes a lot to one's parents and ancestors. In modern scientific terms, one owes all of one's genetic characteristics to one's parents and ancestors. Each ancestor is actually present in the person as a genetic characteristic. In karmik terms, one inherits some karmas of one's parents and ancestors and each ancestor is actually present in the person as a kaarmik predisposition. The latter approach obviously extends to multiple lives and some karmik predisposition is inherited from the ancestors from a past life too, though they may not be related to one in this life.

By thinking of the deceased ancestors with gratitude and trying to give them an emancipation, one is actually trying to free oneself from various kaarmic predispositions that one has as a result of the rina (karmik debt) with several people. One can view this as an external event of satisfying and emancipating an external entity (a pitri). Alternately, one can view this as an internal event of satisfying and releasing an internal kaarmik predisposition. Ultimately, it is the latter. However, one needs to externalize first and perform external rituals, while thinking of what it means internally. This builds up one's visualization and slowly brings about internal changes and eventually the desired internal change itself. One with living parents also can perform pitri tarpanas for departed ancestors of this life and previous lives.

Two external spiritual sadhanas are particularly powerful, useful and recommended for every person desirous of fast spiritual progress:

- (1) Homam (fire ritual): Gods are invoked in fire and satisfied with offerings with mantras. Please see the homam website at <http://www.VedicAstrologer.org/homam> for more. In the long run, a regular practice of this ritual increases the subtle fire burning inside one's subtle body, burns various impediments to spiritual progress and gives clarity, focus and stability to the mind.
- (2) Tarpana (water ritual): Gods, sages and manes are invoked in water and satisfied with emancipation given to them. In the long run, a regular practice of this ritual increases the release of various kaarmik predispositions and weaknesses that are blocking one's spiritual and material progress.

This document describes the procedure of pitri tarpana with the relevant mantras using a simple approach. This document is the **regular procedure**. There are also documents giving a **short procedure** and a **super-short procedure** for the benefit of those with time constraints or problem with Sanskrita language. Download them from <http://www.VedicAstrologer.org/tarpana>.

### When to Perform Tarpana

Tarpana can be performed on any day. In fact, it can be performed everyday also. If that is not possible, one can consider performing it every week or every fortnight or at least every month. One can perform this anywhere, but *ideally* not in the living area of one's house where people may sleep. It is fine to do it the front yard or back yard or balcony or terrace of one's house. Amavasya (new Moon) day or eclipse day or a Vyatipata yoga day and sankranthi (solar ingress) day or pitri paksha are very good times for performing tarpana. At those times, tarpana can be performed inside one's house also.

There are some restrictions. Tarpana with water containing sesame seeds (which is needed for pitris) should *not* be performed:

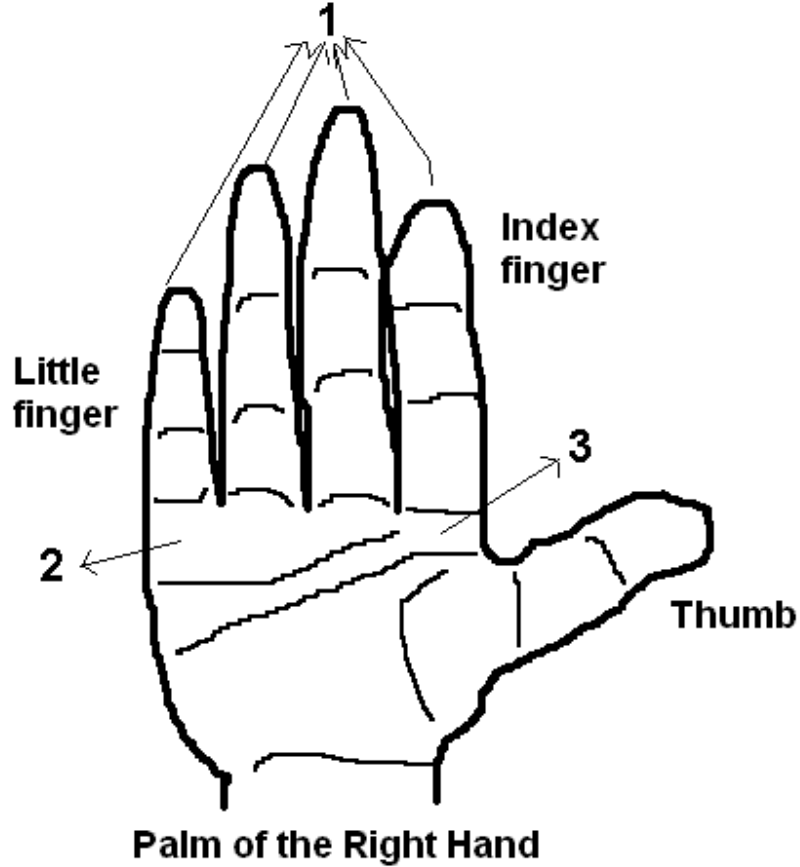
- (1) on a Sunday that has saptami tithi (7<sup>th</sup> day of the lunar fortnight),
- (2) on a Friday that has a nanda tithi (1<sup>st</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> tithis of the lunar fortnights),
- (3) on a Sunday with Moon in Bharani, Krittika or Magha nakshatra, and,
- (4) on one's birthday.

On these days, tarpanas not requiring water with sesame seed can be performed, but not the ones requiring water with sesame seeds.

## Materials Needed

One needs the following materials:

- (1) Water pot made ideally of gold, silver, copper, bronze, brass or panchalohas (five metals). It should ideally not be made of iron, steel or clay. However, it is better to make compromises when you have no suitable pot, than skipping the ritual altogether.
- (2) Some *akshatas* made by mixing uncooked plain white (or brown) rice grains with turmeric powder and a drop of ghee (clarified butter) or an oil. In the absence of turmeric powder, just plain rice grains can be used as akshatas. In the absence of rice grains, use a grain that is locally popular and available.
- (3) Black sesame seeds. Try your best to get them. If you cannot get them, use white or brown sesame seeds as a substitute. If you cannot get any of them, use akshatas (see (2) above) instead of sesame seeds.
- (4) Darbhas or kushas, a sacred grass. Each darbha has a sharp edge and a base. You need to hold three of them in your right palm, while holding and leaving water. If you do not have darbha, use a locally available grass. If that cannot be done, just ignore darbhas in all directions and proceed without them.
- (5) A ring made of darbha, known as pavitram, is to be worn on the right hand ring finger during the ritual. If that is not available, it is acceptable to wear any ring made of any gemstone or gold or silver. So wear some ring on the right hand ring finger. If that is not possible, proceed without it.



## Sankalpam (vow)

While sitting cross-legged, the empty left-hand palm is placed on the right knee with the palm facing up. Some akshatas are taken in the right hand, it is closed and the closed fist of the right hand is placed on the left palm with the palm of the closed right fist facing down (towards the left hand palm). The following is recited to take a sankalpa (vow) to perform this ritual. It means “on this auspicious day and auspicious time, I shall perform tarpana to Devas, Rishis and Pitris to the best of my ability”. After reciting it, the akshatas are dropped on the ground in front of one.

ఓం అద్య శుభ దినే శుభ ముహూర్తే దేవర్షిషితృప్రీత్యర్థం దేవర్షిషితృతర్పణామ్ యథాశక్తి కరిష్యే ।

## Deva Tarpana

The first to be performed is Deva Tarpana, satiation of various gods who run this universe. They are also microcosmically present in each person as various good qualities inside that person. Place the water pot in front of you. Sit facing the **east** direction. The right knee should be in contact with the ground, while the left knee should be out of contact with the ground (*i.e.* place the left leg over right leg so that left knee is a little above the ground). Put some akshatas in the water pot, hold the water pot on the right hand palm, cover it with the left hand palm and say the following to request the presence of gods, rishis *etc* in that water pot. It means “may Brahma *etc* gods and Kashyapa *etc* sages, may all the great ones who live in the stomach of the cosmic egg of creation come here”.

బ్రహ్మాదయః సురాః సర్వే ఋషయః కశ్యపాదయః | ఆగచ్ఛంతు మహాభాగా బ్రహ్మాండోదరవర్తినః ||

Now say the following mantras once each. Pour some water with the left hand into the open right palm. You can pour directly from the pot or use a spoon to pour. Once water is poured into the right palm, say one mantra and release the water. The water should be released such that it falls out of the right hand palm from the tips of the four fingers, *i.e.* from the area marked as “1” in the picture. If you have 3 darbhas, place them on the right hand palm with the tips of the darbhas aligned with the tips of fingers. You may insert them in a ring or something to force them to stay on the palm and not move off. If you do not have darbhas, do not worry.

If you are performing this in a river, you can stand in the river, make a bowl (an anjali) with both the palms joined together, take water in that bowl, raise the hands as high as you can, say the mantra and then drop the water via the tips of the fingers of both hands.

ఓం బ్రహ్మ తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం విష్ణుః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం రుద్రః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం ప్రజాపతిః తృప్యంతామ్ |  
ఓం దేవాః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం దేవ్యః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం వసవః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం రుద్రాః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం ఆదిత్యాః తృప్యంతామ్ |  
ఓం ఛందాసీ తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం వేదాః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం ఋషయః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం గంధర్వాః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం ఆప్సరసః  
తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం దేవానుగాః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం నాగాః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం సాగరాః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం పర్వతాః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం  
సరితః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం మనుష్యాః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం యక్షాః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం రక్షాసీ తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం పితృణాః తృప్యంతామ్ |  
ఓం సువర్ణాః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం భూతాని తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం పశవః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం వనస్పతయః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం ఓషధయః  
తృప్యంతామ్ |

## Rishi Tarpana

You need to continue to sit facing east with the right knee in contact with earth. You need to use the water containing akshatas and do the same way as in Deva tarpana. Use the following mantras.

ఓం కశ్యపః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం అత్రిః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం వసిష్ఠః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం విశ్వామిత్రః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం గౌతమః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం  
భరద్వాజః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం జమదగ్నిః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం అంగిరాః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం కుత్సః తృప్యంతామ్ | ఓం భృగుః తృప్యంతామ్ |

## Some changes before the next sections

Sit facing the **south** direction. If you are wearing the sacred thread, wear it in reverse. In other words, wear it now **above** the shoulder on the **right** and **below** the shoulder (*i.e.* at the hip level) on the **left**. Change its position **without removing it** from the body. The left knee should be in contact with the ground, while the right knee should be above the ground and not touching it. So sit with the left leg on the ground and the right leg on top of left leg. Pour some **black sesame seeds** in the water pot.

**The style of releasing water from now onwards:** Take some water, hold it in the right palm, say each mantra and release it sideways from the area below the base of the **index finger**, *i.e.* from the area marked as “3” in the picture. Three offerings are made with each mantra now. If you have 3 darbhas in your hand, place them on the index finger, with the tips of darbhas aligned with the tip of the index finger. Water should be touching the base of darbhas as it leaves the palm. If you do not have darbhas, do not worry.

## Pitri Tarpana

These are offerings to various deceased ancestors of various lives. First place the water pot in front of you, bow to it and say the following. This means “may my ancestors come here and accept my water oblations”.

ఓం ఆగచ్ఛంతు మే పితరః ఇమం గృహ్లాంతు జలాంజలిమ్ |

Use the following mantras and release water 3 times or one time with each mantra on encountering numbers, in the style previously mentioned. Please note that 3 offerings are made to 3 generations of maternal and paternal ancestors, while only one offering is made to other people.

These are generic mantras to cover all people who have a strong kaarmik connection to you, either **in this life or the ones before**. These mantras are applicable to all, **irrespective of whether any of one's parents and other relations are alive or not**. Some specific customizable mantras giving the names of a specific deceased relatives you want to cover will be given at the end.

To beings who played the role of father in various lives to you:

మమ సర్వజన్మేషు పితరః తృప్యంతామ్ ఇదం తిలోదకం స్వధాయిభ్యః తేభ్యః స్వధా నమః ॥౧॥ తేభ్యః స్వధా నమః ॥౨॥ తేభ్యః స్వధా నమః ॥౩॥

To beings who played the role of father's father in various lives to you:

మమ సర్వజన్మేషు పితామహాః తృప్యంతామ్ ఇదం తిలోదకం స్వధాయిభ్యః తేభ్యః స్వధా నమః ॥౧॥ తేభ్యః స్వధా నమః ॥౨॥ తేభ్యః స్వధా నమః ॥౩॥

To beings who played the role of father's father's father in various lives to you:

మమ సర్వజన్మేషు ప్రపితామహాః తృప్యంతామ్ ఇదం తిలోదకం స్వధాయిభ్యః తేభ్యః స్వధా నమః ॥౧॥ తేభ్యః స్వధా నమః ॥౨॥ తేభ్యః స్వధా నమః ॥౩॥

To beings who played the role of mother in various lives to you:

మమ సర్వజన్మేషు మాతరః తృప్యంతామ్ ఇదం తిలోదకం స్వధాయిభ్యః తాభ్యః స్వధా నమః ॥౧॥ తాభ్యః స్వధా నమః ॥౨॥ తాభ్యః స్వధా నమః ॥౩॥

To beings who played the role of father's mother in various lives to you:

మమ సర్వజన్మేషు పితామహ్యాః తృప్యంతామ్ ఇదం తిలోదకం స్వధాయిభ్యః తాభ్యః స్వధా నమః ॥౧॥ తాభ్యః స్వధా నమః ॥౨॥ తాభ్యః స్వధా నమః ॥౩॥

To beings who played the role of father's father's mother in various lives to you:

మమ సర్వజన్మేషు ప్రపితామహ్యాః తృప్యంతామ్ ఇదం తిలోదకం స్వధాయిభ్యః తాభ్యః స్వధా నమః ॥౧॥ తాభ్యః స్వధా నమః ॥౨॥ తాభ్యః స్వధా నమః ॥౩॥

To beings who played the role of wife in various lives to you:

మమ సర్వజన్మేషు పత్నీభ్యః తృప్యంతామ్ ఇదం తిలోదకం స్వధాయిభ్యః తాభ్యః స్వధా నమః ॥౧॥

To beings who played the role of husband in various lives to you:

మమ సర్వజన్మేషు పతయః తృప్యంతామ్ ఇదం తిలోదకం స్వధాయిభ్యః తేభ్యః స్వధా నమః ॥౧॥

To beings who played the role of son in various lives to you:

మమ సర్వజన్మేషు పుత్రాః తృప్యంతామ్ ఇదం తిలోదకం స్వధాయిభ్యః తేభ్యః స్వధా నమః ॥౧॥

To beings who played the role of daughter in various lives to you:

మమ సర్వజన్మేషు కన్యాః తృప్యంతామ్ ఇదం తిలోదకం స్వధాయిభ్యః తాభ్యః స్వధా నమః ॥౧॥

To beings who played the role of a dear one in various lives to you:

మమ సర్వజన్మేషు ఆప్తజనాః తృప్యంతామ్ ఇదం తిలోదకం స్వధాయిభ్యః తేభ్యః స్వధా నమః ॥౧॥

To beings who played the role of one born in the same lineage in various lives to you:

మమ సర్వజన్మేషు స్వకులజాతాః తృప్యంతామ్ ఇదం తిలోదకం స్వధాయిభ్యః తేభ్యః స్వధా నమః ॥౧॥

## Customization for Specific Deceased Persons

The exhaustive list above covers various people who were close to us in various lives and left a kaarmik imprint on our soul and resulted in some kaarmik predispositions in this life.

Now, if you want to offer tarpana to a specific deceased person, use the following customization. Based on whether the deceased is a man or woman, pick the correct mantra from below. Substitute the gotra, relation and name in the mantra to get a customized mantra.

If the deceased person is a **man** from List A:

Gotra గోత్రః మమ Relation Name తృప్యతామ్ ఇదం తిలోదకం తస్మై స్వధా నమః॥౧॥ తస్మై స్వధా నమః॥౨॥ తస్మై స్వధా నమః॥౩॥

If the deceased person is a **woman** from List A:

Gotra గోత్రా మమ Relation Name తృప్యతామ్ ఇదం తిలోదకం తస్యై స్వధా నమః॥౧॥ తస్యై స్వధా నమః॥౨॥ తస్యై స్వధా నమః॥౩॥

If the deceased person is a **man** from List B:

Gotra గోత్రః మమ Relation Name తృప్యతామ్ ఇదం తిలోదకం తస్మై స్వధా నమః॥౧॥

If the deceased person is a **woman** from List B:

Gotra గోత్రా మమ Relation Name తృప్యతామ్ ఇదం తిలోదకం తస్యై స్వధా నమః॥౧॥

In all the cases, the word “Gotra” in the mantras is to be replaced by the gotra name of the deceased person (e.g. Vasishtha, Gautama, Angirasa, Bharadwaja, Kaushika, Atri *etc*). Gotra of a person traces to the Rishi (sage) from whom the family line originated. If the gotra is not known, one can use Achyuta (అచ్యుత) for those who prefer Vishnu and Shiva (శివ) for those who prefer Shiva, as the default gotra. The word “Name” in the mantras is to be replaced by the actual name of the deceased person. The word “Relation” in the mantras is to be replaced by the Sanskrit word describing the relationship of the deceased person to you. Get it from the following tables. Please note that tarpana can be offered to several specific people. In that case, repeat the above mantra by inserting the gotra, name and relationship corresponding to each.

Get the Sanskrit words for relationship from the table below.

**List A (paternal/maternal ancestors):**

Father: పితా Mother: మాతా. Father’s father: పితామహః. Father’s mother: పితామహీ

Father’s father’s father: ప్రపితామహః Father’s father’s mother: ప్రపితామహీ

Mother’s father: మాతామహః Mother mother: మాతామహీ

Mother’s father’s father: ప్రమాతామహః. Mother’s father’s mother: ప్రమాతామహీ

Mother’s father’s father’s father: వృద్ధప్రమాతామహః Mother’s father’s father’s mother: వృద్ధప్రమాతామహీ

**List B (others):**

Wife: పత్నీ Husband: పతిః Son: పుత్రః Daughter: కన్యా

Daughter-in-law: పుత్రపత్నీ Son’s son: పౌత్రః Son’s daughter: పౌత్రీ

Son-in-law: జామాతా Daughter’s son: దౌహిత్రః Daughter’s daughter: దౌహిత్రీ

Brother: భ్రాతా Sister: భగినీ

Step-mother: సాపత్నమాతా . Step-father: సాపత్నపితా

Step-brother: సాపత్నభ్రాతా Step-sister: సాపత్నభగినీ

Father’s brother: పితృవ్యః Mother’s brother: మాతృలః

Father’s sister: పితృభగినీ Mother’s sister: మాతృభగినీ

Father-in-law: శ్వశురః Mother-in-law: శ్వశురపత్నీ

Male teacher: గురుః Male teacher’s wife: గురుపత్నీ

Female teacher: గుర్వీ Female teacher’s husband: గుర్వీపతిః

Disciple: శిష్యః Friend: సఖా

A dear one: ఆప్తజనః One born in the same lineage: స్వకులజాతః

**Conclusion**

Now throw away the remaining water in the pot, clean it and take fresh water in it. Put back the **sacred thread** in the **normal** way (see previous sections for the description). Sit facing the **east**. Say the following and think that you have surrendered the doership of the just finished action to the Lord. Now you should try to completely abandon the thought that “you” did it.

అనేన యథాశక్తికృతీన దేవర్షిపితృ తర్హణాఖ్యేన కర్మణా భగవాన్ పితృస్వరూపీ జనార్ధన వాసుదేవః ప్రీయతాం న మమ | ఓం తత్ సత్ |  
ఓం సర్వం శ్రీ కృష్ణార్హణమస్తు | ఓం లోకాః సమస్తాః సుఖినో భవంతు | ఓం సర్వే జనాః సుఖినో భవంతు | ఓం శాంతిః శాంతిః శాంతిః |