

# Apastamba Prasna 2, Patala 3, Khanda 6

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APASTAMBA PRASNA II, PATALA 3, KHANDA 6.

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1. If he has any doubts regarding the caste and conduct of a person who has come to him in order to fulfil his duty (of learning the Veda), he shall kindle a fire (with the ceremonies prescribed for kindling the sacrificial fire) and ask him about his caste and conduct.

2. If he declares himself to be (of) good (family and conduct, the teacher elect) shall say, 'Agni who sees, Vayu who hears, Aditya who brings to light, vouch for his goodness; may it be well with this person! He is free from sin.' Then he shall begin to teach him.

3. A guest comes to the house resembling a burning fire.

[6. 1. The person desirous to study addresses his teacher elect with the following Mantra: Bhagavan maitrena kakshusha pasya sivena manasanugrihana prasida mam adhyapaya, 'venerable Sir, look on me with a friendly eye, receive me with a favourable mind, be kind and teach me.' The teacher elect then asks: Kingotro 'si saumya, kimakarah, 'friend, of what family art thou? what is thy rule of conduct?'

3. The object of this Sutra is to show the absolute necessity of feeding a guest. For, if offended, he might burn the house with the flames of his anger.]

4. He is called a Srotriya who, observing the law (of studentship), has learned one recension of the Veda (which may be current in his family).

5. He is called a guest (who, being a Srotriya), approaches solely for the fulfilment of his religious duties, and with no other object, a householder who lives intent on the fulfilment of his duties.

6. The reward for honouring (such a guest) is immunity from misfortunes, and heavenly bliss.

7. He shall go to meet such (a guest), honour him according to his age (by the formulas of salutation prescribed), and cause a seat to be given to him.

8. Some declare that, if possible, the seat should have many feet.

9. The (householder himself) shall wash the feet of that (guest); according to some, two Sudras shall do it.

10. One of them shall be employed in pouring water (over the guest, the other in washing his feet).

11. Some declare that the water for the (guest) shall be brought in an earthen vessel.

[4. The object of this Sutra is to complete the definition of the term 'guest' to be given in the following Sutra. In my translation I have followed Haradatta's gloss. The literal sense of Apastamba's words is, 'He who, observing the law, has studied one recension of each (of the four) Vedas, becomes a Srotriya.' Haradatta says this definition would be contrary to the current acceptance of the term. That argument proves, however, nothing for Apastamba's times.

5. Manu III, 102, 103; Yagn. I, 111.
6. Yagn. I, 109; Manu III, 101.
8. Haradatta states that this is also Apastamba's opinion.
11. According to Haradatta, Apastamba is of opinion that it should be brought in a pot made of metal.]
12. But (a guest) who has not yet returned home from his teacher shall not be a cause for fetching water.
13. In case a (student comes, the host) shall repeat the Veda (together with him) for a longer time (than with other guests).
14. He shall converse kindly (with his guest), and gladden him with milk or other (drinks), with eatables, or at least with water.
15. He shall offer to his guest a room, a bed, a mattress, a pillow with a cover, and ointment, and what else (may be necessary).
16. (If the dinner has been finished before the arrival of the guest), he shall call his cook and give him rice or yava for (preparing a fresh meal for) the guest.
17. (If dinner is ready at the arrival of the guest), he himself shall portion out the food and look at it, saying (to himself), 'Is this (portion) greater, or this?'
18. He shall say, 'Take out a larger (portion for the guest).'
19. A guest who is at enmity (with his host) shall not eat his food, nor (shall he eat the food of a host) who hates him or accuses him of a crime, or of one who is suspected of a crime.
20. For it is declared in the Veda that he (who eats the food of such a person) eats his guilt.
- [12. I.e. it is unnecessary to offer water for washing the feet to a student.
15. 'Ointment, (i.e.) oil or clarified butter for anointing the feet.'--Haradatta. Manu III, 107.
19. Manu III, 108.
19. Manu IV, 213; Yagn. I, 162.]