

A Critical Review on Brahma Muhurta and its Importance

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Abstract

Dinacharya deals with routines/regimens which are to be followed daily in order to ensure optimal engagement of *Artha & Karma* with *Ayush* and thus resulting in *Swasthasya Swasthya Rakshanam*. Ayurveda teaches that a *Swastha* for the sake of *Ayushaha rakshartham* may get up at *Brahma muhurtham*. It is that time which can be calibrated precisely for utilizing *jñanarjana*. At that time if we do whatever process we are initiated for and it will bear maximum fruit as a seed will get the necessary support to sprout.

Keywords: *Brahma muhurtham, Swastha, Arogyam, Dinacharya*

Introduction

Ayurveda is defined as that science which explains measurement and character of *Hitayus* (desirable life), *Ahitayus* (undesirable life), *Sukhayus* (happy life) and *Dukhayus* (unhappy life). The contents of the text can be mainly divided in to two parts that is *Swasthathuraparayanam*^[1]

1. *Swastha parayanam*
2. *Athura parayanam*

Param means extreme or topmost and *Ayanam* is the *Margam* so it is the science which provides best ways for the maintenance of health by prevention of ailments and in curing them.

Whenever we are going through a chapter or a special context there are mainly four things to be taken in to consideration this is explained as the *Chathurvidhyam* or *Chathurvidhatwam* of a particular subject in *Rasa-vaisheshikam* by Acharya Nagarjuna. For example in the context of *Arogyam* they are

1. What is *Arogyam*?
2. What are its characteristics?
3. How to preserve them?
4. What are the benefits of getting it or outcomes?

What is Arogyam?

For *Swasthyam* the *Karanam* or *Hetu* is the *Kalarthakarmanam samyakyogam* so when the *Ayus* is in optimal engagement (*Samyakyogam*) with *Kalam*, *artham* & *karmam* then the *Ayus* experiences *Swasthyam* or *Arogyam*. And the person who experiences *Swasthyam* / *Arogyam* is known as the *Swastha*. So the characteristics of *Arogyam* will be the *Lakshana* of *Swastha* [2].

SwathaLakshana - These are the features of *Swastha* as explained by Acharya Susruta. Acharya Kashyapa had also given wonderful definition for *Swastha* [3]. Definition by Kashyapa samhitha is more experiential and more outcomes focused whereas definition of Sushruta is more technical and also there is a strong experiential part in it. On combining both these definitions together we will get the most beautiful definition of *Swasthyam* ever made in the literature in any branch of *Shasthra*. Optimal engagement of *Ayus* with *Kalam*, *Artham* & *Karmam* are the *Hetu* of *Arogyam* and the non-optimal engagement of *Ayus* with *Kalam*, *Artham* & *Karmam* are the *Hetu* of *Rogam*. This non optimal engagement can be of three types they are *Heena yogam*, *Mithya yogam* & *Atiyoga*[4]. So, *Swasthasya swasthyarakshanam* should focus on avoiding this non optimal engagements and ensuring the optimal engagement with *Kalam*, *Artham* & *Karmam*. As far as *Kala* is concerned a separate chapter is explained

that is *Rhruthucharya* the third chapter of *Ashtangahrudayam*. This chapter focuses on how to ensure optimal engagements of *Kala* with *Ayus*. And the second chapter *Dinacharya* deals with the techniques in a broad context of societal picture as well as a short version called personal picture/ individualized picture for getting engaged with *Artham & Karmam* optimally. That is why Arunadatta explained *Dinacharya*^[5]. The term *Prathidine* is very important it means everyday so *Dinacharya* deals with routines/regimens which are to be followed daily in order to ensure optimal engagement of *Artham & Karmam* with *Ayush* and thus resulting in *Swasthasya swasthya rakshanam*^[6] Basically whatever is explained in the chapter called *Dinacharya* is meant for *Swasthasya swasthya rakshanam* and the best evident for that is the first shloka itself^[7]. There are multiple things which are residing in the statement

1. It is meant for *Swastha*
2. And the benefit is *Ayushaha rakshartham*

Thus, it means that a *Swastha* may get up at *Brahma muhurtham* for *Ayushaha rakshartha*^[8] An *Athura* for *Dhatuamyartham* may continue to sleep. He is not advised to get up in *Brahma muhurtham*. Not only getting up in *Brahma muhurtham* all the regimens explained in the *Dinacharya Adhyayam* is for *Ayushaha rakshartham*.

What is Brahma muhurtham?

Brahmam means something related with *Brahma* which here means *Jñānam* So that *Muhurtham* which can be utilized *Jñānārjana* for can be calibrated precisely as the *Brahma muhurtham*^[9]. Whatever field in to which a particular person is introduced in to for gaining mastery over to have his *Artham* that *Muhurtham* can be precisely called as *Brahma muhurtham*. At that time if we do whatever process we are initiated for it will bear maximum fruit as a seed will get the necessary support to sprout.

Importance of *Brahma muhurtham*

The samhitas of Ayurveda were written thousands of years ago at that time human life is so closely adherent to the circadian patterns and natural lighting patterns. No significant artificial lighting was there at that time so the life was so closely associated with the natural system that is the *Surya & Chandra*. And the breadwinning traits were very limited and most of them were living in agricultural setups so the daytime will be mostly in the work fields^[10]. So whatever has to be done in extra is to do in the early morning hours where we can expect a calm peaceful distracting by default atmosphere. So that time was kept reserved for gaining knowledge acquiring skills and to have greater and deeper contemplation regarding oneself. On that time the life was not that complex as we see it today these days due to wide range of economic principles that prevail across the borders all around the world human beings are divided in to two categories in terms of wealth that is those who are having wealth and those who are not having it .even the countries are divided based on wealth in to developed, undeveloped and developing countries. But on those days this was not the division there was a category those who doesn't seek wealth those who were seeking enlightenment they were running with the principle of contentment .so there were people who were working for a higher consciousness by meditation, contemplation^[11-12]. So for those who don't seek wealth in that context the *Brahma muhurtham* is becoming very significant.

What time is *Brahma muhurtham*?

The exact time of defining *Brahma muhurtham* are different from school to school, from culture to culture, from place to place but generally accepted concept ^[13].

This is explained by taking the *Rathrikala & Divakala* as equal. The *Muhurtham* just prior to the time of sunrise is known as the *Roudra muhurtham*, *Roudra* means something related with rudra. So the *muhurtham* proceeding to the *Roudra muhurtham* is known as *Brahma muhurtham* ^[14]. So two *Nadika*=*Ghatika* form one *Muhurtham*. One *Muhurtham* is 48 minutes so one *Ghatika* is 24 minutes. When we go through the definition *Brahma muhurtham* starts approximately 4 *Ghatika* before sunrise that means if the sunrise is at 6:30 AM on a particular given day the time which is 4 *Ghatika* that is 96 minutes prior to 6:30 AM which will be 4:54 PM will be the starting of *Brahma muhurtham* and ends on 5:42 AM. So *Brahma muhurtham* is that time period which starts at two *muhurtham* before sunrise and lasts for one *Muhurtham*.

Jeernajeerna niroopanam & Brahma muhurtham

In *Ashtangasangraha* it is told that one may get up at *Brahma muhurtham* only if the food he had at yesterday evening is *Jeernam* (on those days there were only two meal times one meal in the morning after the *Kaphakalam* and one meal in the evening before the sunset) if the food is not digested then he is not advised to get up at *Brahma muhurtham* he may take sleep further (*Svapyāth Ajeerni*)^[15].

Shareerachintha after getting up in Brahma muhurtham

The term *Shareerachintha* means making a thorough assessment regarding your *Shareera*^[16]. Now adays this *Chindha* is very less everybody is much more interested about *Vyadhi* but nobody is keen about the *Shareera* that is why Charakacharya explained in *Shoshanidanam Adhyaya*^[17] that in *Ashtangasangraha* *Shareerachintha* is explained more specifically as the *Jeernajeerna nirūpayan*. According to Hemadri *Shareerachintha* is that one should contemplate on what are his duties, what he supposed to do, Is there any spillover works left behind from whatever he had to do on the previous day^[18]. How much time he should keep for everything and how to fulfill the works that he had planned etc.

What are the things to do after getting up in Brahma muhurtham?

Acharya Bhavamishra says that after getting up in *Brahma muhurtham* the person should offer prayers to lord *Madhusūdana*, so that all the *Pāpa* he had indulged in will be forgiven by the god ^[19-20] Then he says that one should see and touch *Dadhi, Ājyam, Sarshapa, Bilwa & Gorochana* immediately after awakening from sleep, then it will be a good beginning in the day. Viewing once own facial reflection in *Ghritham* will help in attaining *Deergha jeevitham* ^[21]. In standard day with proper *Agnishakthi* and proper *Doshasthithi* we are supposed to have our natures call once we get up. Problems like *Anthrakoojanam, Adhmanam &*

Udaragouravam will be relieved if we attend the natures call in early hours of the day. *Krithashouchavidhistata* is the term explained in Ashtangahridaya this represents the highest degree of hygiene socially, personally in a domestic setup in a community.

That is *Vyakthigatakshemam & Lokakalyanakarakam*. After indulging in all these *Dinacharya* including *Danthadhavanam, Ushnajalapanam* etc. he may also engage himself in penance, yajnas ,pooja, bhajan ,yoga, studying or any such activities.

Is it compulsory to get up at Brahma muhurtham?

Life is a compromise between ideal and the practical. *Āchārya* has no issue with it. Here the word used is '*Uthishteth*' which is a "*Ling*" in terms of the '*La kara*' of the Sanskrit and not a "*Lot*". If it's a *Lot* we will have no excuse from it the translation should be "**you should get up at Brahma muhurtha**" but when its '*Ling*' the translation will be "**you may get up at Brahma muhurtha**" so there is a space of compromise or flexibility. So what we have to understand from this particular notion is that, the *Shasthra* is *Bhodhaka* not *Karaka* if it is *Karaka* it will force us to do things but when it is *Bhodhaka* it teaches us the advantages and disadvantages of doing and not doing a particular thing and the final choice will be ours. So if you are a *Swastha* for the sake of *Ayushaha rakshartham* you can/may get up at *Brahma muhurtham*. If you are not a *Swastha* you can have logical violations/compromises from whatever is explained.

What are the benefits of getting up in Brahma muhurtham?

There are many researches done by the yogic schools across the country and outside the country which proves that there are many health benefits for the practice of getting up in *Brahma muhurtham*. It is the most pure and fresh time of the day it provides most cleanest oxygen for exercise and connective with most purest part of ourselves. Meditation at this time improves mental performance and thus helps in increasing *Satwa Guna* therefore subduing mental irritation or hyperactivity and lethargy which are contributed by *Rajasa & Tamasa guna*. Getting up in *Brahma muhurtham* will also help in preventing many metabolic diseases

like diabetes, obesity, thyroid dysfunction etc. which are the results of *Rathrijagarana* & *Diwasvapna*.

Conclusion

Charya means *Acharanam* / *Anushtanam* it is highly dependent up on or influenced by *Desha* & *Kala*. When we are living in a different *Desha* in a different *Kala* as that of the author/original writer you need not take the text as such. The *Shabda* part of *Shasthra* becomes immaterial and *Artha* part of the text becomes what really relevant is. So *Shabdarupashasthram* need not be relevant in relation with difference in *Desha* & *Kala*, what really matters is the *Artharupashasthram*. The *Śashvatatwam* of the *Shasthram* is for the *Artharupashasthram* not the *Śabdarupashasthram*. So whatever is explained in the portions of *Dinacharya* in *Susrutha samhitha* need not be as such literally applicable at the time of *Charakacharya* and vice versa. And whatever explained in *Charakasamhitha* and *Susruthasamhitha* need not be relevant by the time of *Vagbhata*. So the important thing is to get the concept i.e. what is meant by the chapter and then apply it to real life situations. So the concept of *Brahma muhurtham* needs to be understood well only then we will be able to explain and advice it to the people coming from different *Desha* & *Kala*.

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