

## Garbhadhana

We can call it the conception ceremony. A suitable day and time are fixed astrologically (from the stars) for Garbhadhana and the ritual follows a set pattern. The Mantras (special words) uttered by the husband in this Samskara (ceremony) are essentially prayers offered to God to help the bride conceive a good son. The Mantras make use of occasional metaphors of joint action. They can be freely translated thus:

"May we produce strong and long-lived sons as fire is produced by friction; may he be well behaved. I am part of God and I shall produce good sons to liberate my ancestors. May we beget shining, wealthy children. May we donate liberally to the needy and attain moksha (freedom). May God make you fit for conception. Let the evil spirit flee from you. Let your child be free from defects like lameness, deafness."

Having children is a compulsory duty enjoined on the Hindu to repay his ancestral debt, except when either or both the partners are functionally unfit. Hindus believe that the kind of child they will have is affected by the mental states of both the father and mother. This samskara is to purify the parents before the child is even conceived so that the child will not be disadvantaged.

**Stage 1: Read the information on Garbhadhana (above) and summarise it in 5 bullet points. Make sure you read it properly before you begin. You have 15 minutes.**

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- It is a conception ceremony.

- This Samskara is to purify the parents so the child will not be disadvantaged.

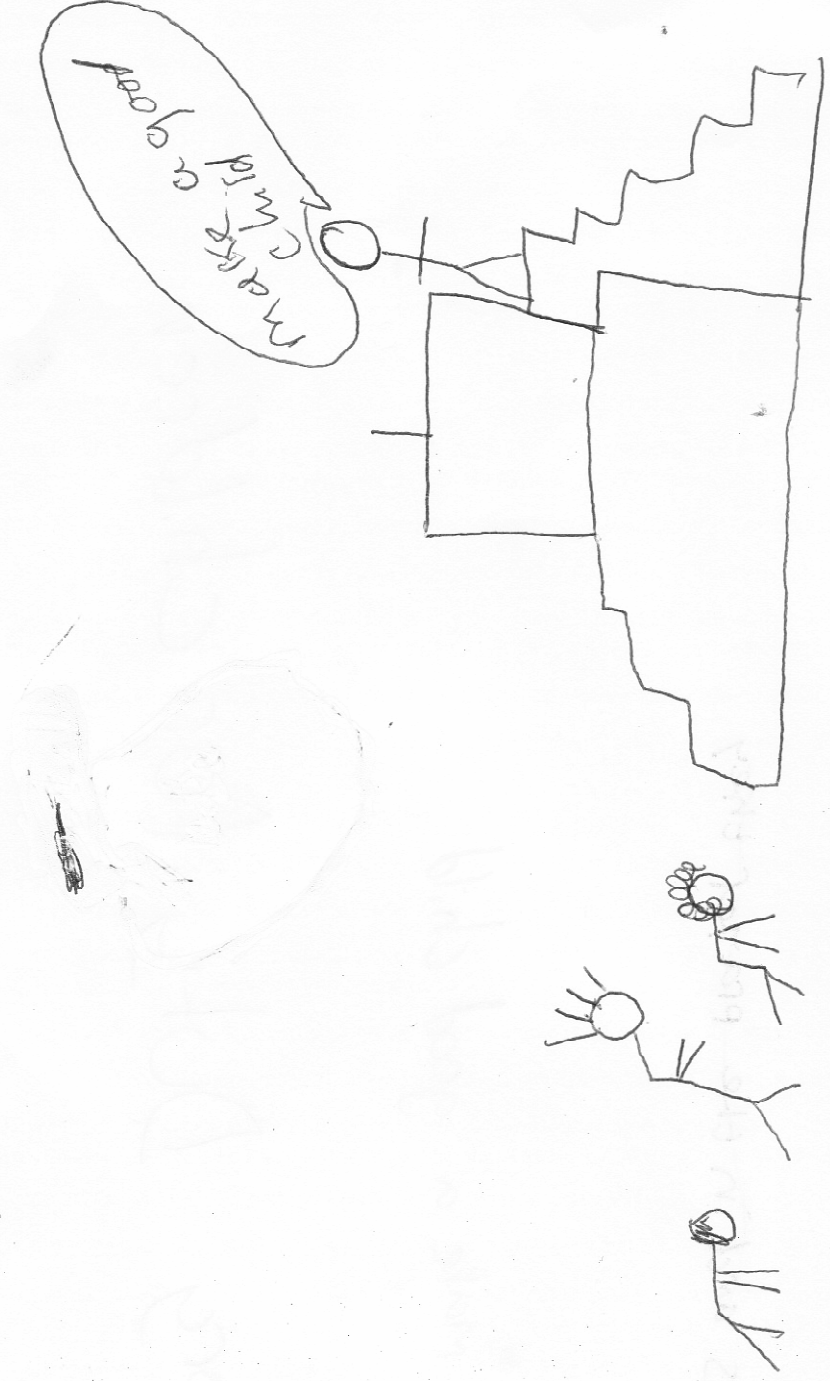
- It never mentions ~~daughters~~ daughters only sons and children for example - "May we produce strong long-lived sons as fire is produced by friction. This is the first line of the ~~Samskara~~ mantra.

- Having children in the Hindu religion is a compulsory duty enjoined on the Hindu to repay his ancestral debt.

- A Samskara is a ceremony. The mantras are special words. Moksha means freedom.

Stage 2: Read the information on Garbadhana and the bullet point summary (over the page) then draw a diagram with labels to show what happens in the ceremony.

# A Conception Ceremony



Stage 3: Look at all the information already present and draw a diagram with labels to show the structure/dimensions of the ceremony. The diagram should be...



Stage 3: Look at all the information already present and draw a diagram with labels to show the *spiritual* dimension of the ceremony. The diagram does not need to show what is happening on the outside, but what is happening on the *inside*.

