

Śakuna had developed as a science even in olden days. A general description about omens, good and bad, according to the Indian concept, is given below.

Mixed medicines, black grains, cotton, grass, dried cow-dung, charcoal, molasses, one whose head is shaven clean or whose body is smeared with oil or who is naked; flesh-eater; iron, dirt, skin, hair of the head, insane person, eunuch, prison, guard; women, who are either carrying or are widows; oil cake, paddy husk, ashes, skull, bone, broken vessel etc. are evil omens. Broken, fierce or murmuring instrumental music also is a bad omen.

It is a good omen to hear the voice of beckoning (come) in front of the traveller, but it is not good if the voice is heard from behind. It is good if the voice of farewell (go) is heard from behind, but is bad to be heard in the front. Disapproving or prohibitive words like "Where are you going, stop, don't go", "what is to be done by going there?" etc. will cause death. It is a bad omen to see carnivorous birds perched on the top of flag-staff etc. For vehicles to bump, weapons to break and head to get wounded by dashing against doors etc. as also for umbrella or clothes to fall down are ill omens. Praising or worshipping Viṣṇu will do away with the inauspicious results of ill omens. But, if evil omens are seen continuously the traveller should return home.

White flowers are good omens. Full pots are the best of omens. Flesh, fish, sound from afar, old man, solitary man, cow, goat, ox, horse, elephant, devas, burning fire, Dūrvā grass, fresh cow-dung, prostitute, gold, silver, gems, Orris root, mustard, medicinal herbs rooted out of soil, Bengal gram, weapon, sword, stool, royal symbols, dead body being carried without lamentation, fruits, ghee, curdled milk, milk, akṣata, mirror, honey, conch, sugarcane, auspicious words, music by devotees, loud thunder and lightning are auspicious omens.

2) *Two kinds of omens.* Omens are divided into two varieties, *dīpta* (glowing) and *śānta* (quiescent, mild). Glowing omens bring about auspicious results and the other inauspicious results. There are six ways or elements, which make omens *dīptam*, i.e. *velā* (time), *dik* (region), *deśa* (place), *Karaṇa* (action), *ruta* (cry) and *jāti* (kind). The power or effect of *dīpta* increases in ascending order.

To see creatures, which move about during day time as moving about during night and vice-versa is *velādīpta*. In the case of stars, *lagnas* (the dominant zodiac) and planets, those which are virulent are considered to be *dīptas*. With regard to stars and *lagnas*, those which the Sun enters into are *dhūmita*, those where-in the Sun is already present are *jvalita* and those from which the sun has left are *Amāriṇī*. These three are *dīptas* and the rest *śāntas*. (This is called *velādīpta*). When *dik* (region) is *dīpta* it is called *digdīpta*. To see forest animals in village and village-animals in forest is *digdīpta*. To see good brahmins at inauspicious places is *deśādīpta*. To see some one doing work not ordained to his caste is *karaṇādīpta*. To hear different horrible voices is *rutādīpta*. To see purely flesh-eating animals is *jātidīpta*. If all the characteristics of *dīpta* do not synchronise but differ from one another it is called *śānta* and if the characteristics of *dīpta* and *śānta* are mixed up it is called *miśra*.

3) *Birds, animals etc.* If the *cāṣa* bird (wild crow) makes sound when the king gets out of the palace, he will meet with dishonour. If the sound is heard on the left side, there will be quarrel, but food will be served. If the

bird is sighted on the right side at the start of the journey, it is a good omen. If the peacock makes different sounds, threats from thieves will result. If a deer is seen in front of the king going out on a journey, death will happen to him. To see the monkey-bear, rat, tiger, lion, cat and donkey coming in the opposite direction also will bring about death. Donkey braying in awkward notes is also inauspicious. To see *kapiñjala* bird on the left side is an excellent omen; on the right side also it is not bad. But, behind the person, it is a bad omen. *Tittiri* bird also on the rear is not good.

It is always a good omen if the deer, boar and spotted deer cross the path from the left to the right side; the opposite of it is bad omen. It is a favourable omen if the ox, horse, jackal, tiger, lion, cat and donkey pass from the right to the left side. It is auspicious to see the females of the jackal etc. on the right side and the males on the left. To hear the serpent, hare, boar and wild lizard named is good, but to see them is not so. Contrary to this is the effect to see the monkey, ox etc. The result of the important and powerful omens witnessed at the start of the journey will be experienced the very same day. The omen of the intoxicated, those craving for food, children, people quarrelling and those who stand away from the limits of the road is effectless. To hear the jackal howl once, twice, thrice or four times is a good omen, but to hear it five or six times is bad, The seventh time is good.

If heard for more than the seventh time it will have no effect. *Dīpta* omen facing the Sun will horripilate men, cause fear in the case of vehicles and is to be greatly feared. If *sāraṅga* (lotus, deer, elephant, peacock, cuckoo, lion, horse etc.) is met as the first thing in an auspicious place its good effect will last for one year, and if these are met at the inauspicious place, the result will be bad. Everybody should see *sāraṅga* at some auspicious place every dawn.

If the crow is found crowing in fear on the left side of camps put up for the army of the King, the head of the army will have to face great threats. If the crow, perches on and pecks on the shadow, vehicle, slippers, umbrella, clothes etc. the owner of those things will die. If they are respected by the crow, honour will accrue to their owner. If the crow flies about the entrance of the house it means that he, who had left the house will return. If the crows bring and scatter red coloured and baked things in the courtyard, the owner of the house will meet with imprisonment. If the crow carries to a house something yellow in colour, gold or silver, the owner of the house will get such things. Whatever thing the crow carries away from the house, such things therein will be destroyed. If the crow vomits raw flesh in the rear of the house, the owner of it will come into possession of wealth; if soil is deposited thus, land will be acquired. If gem is deposited, extensive lands will come to the owner of the house. If the crow flies in the same direction as the one chosen by the traveller, prosperity and success will result to him and if it flies in the opposite direction not only will the traveller not achieve his object but, he will also meet with danger. If the crows come crowing against one starting on a journey, it will be hindered. To see the crow on the left side is a good omen. If it is seen on the right side, the journey will not end in success. It is very good if the crow flies in the same