

## PURANJAN AKHYAN: THE CITY OF NINE GATES

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### Abstract

*It is believed that this world is made up of 25 basic elements. Among these elements Purusha and Prakriti are the two main elements. Purusha refers to the conscious element and prakriti refers to the inert or basic element. Purusha is the positive element while Prakriti is the negative element. When Purusha Tattva combines with Prakriti Tattva, Prakriti leaves its state of ignorance and diffuses into 23 elements. As nature permeates these elements, it entraps the soul in the loop of ignorance. When Maya captivates the soul, the soul forgets its own form, then the soul begins to understand itself as Prakriti or Maya.*

Lord Krishna says in Bhagavad Gita,

*“सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति गुणाः प्रकृतिसंभवा।*

*निबध्नति महाबाहो देहे देहिनम् अव्ययम्।”<sup>1</sup>*

That is, sattva rajas and tamas – three gunas arising from nature bind the imperishable soul within the body. Puranjana Akhyana of Srimad Bhagwat analyses how nature binds Purusha in this material world.

Keywords: Purusha, prakriti, three gunas, imperishable soul.

Preface: In ancient times King Puranjan went to a grove. There, he came across a beauty that was incomparable and was immediately infatuated. He married her and enjoys his time with her in the city of nine gates. He had hundred sons and daughters. The king was completely under the control of the queen. A Gandharva named Chandvega invaded this city. The city of Puranjan was destroyed.

Introduction: There was a great successful king named Puranjan. Puranjan had a friend named Avijnat. No one can understand the nature and behavior of the unknown. Puranjan was longing for all the comforts and pleasures, so he left his friend and roamed around the city of Lakhs, but he could not find the place he wanted.

*“द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्ष परिष्वजाते।*

*तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्तनश्नन्नन्यो अभिचाकशीति।”<sup>2</sup>*

In other words, two birds living side by side live on the same tree, one of them tastes the fruit of the tree and the other just stares at it.

Puranjan means Jivatma and his friend Avijnat is the Paramatma. 84 lakh Yoni that move millions of citizens. When the Jivatma desired to perform a Prakrit sacrifice, he chose a human body with two arms, two legs and nine gates. A body in which a man becomes ignorant and forgets his original form.

Being full of rajas-tamas rather than sattva guna in the organism, its intelligence and perception are reduced.

At last he saw a beautiful town with nine gates south of the Himalayas.

*“नवद्वारे पुरे देही नैव कुर्वन्न् कायरन।”<sup>3</sup>*

The town was very grand and beautiful and full of all kinds of sacrificial materials. It was a beautiful park outside the town. The king was walking in the park and saw a beautiful woman. The girl was coming towards the king. With this lady were ten excellent servants and those servants had hundreds of maidservants. One Panchafeni Naga was the gatekeeper of the town and was protecting the town. Seeing Sundari coming towards him, the king asked her, “Devi! Who are you? Who are these sevak sevikas and the five-fanged serpent?” After listening to the king's questions, the beauty replied, “O Rajan! I know nothing except that we live in this town. These men and women are my true friends and protect this nag town. Rajan! I will give you all the happiness of homestead. Glory, splendor, salvation and childlike happiness are found only in the world.” Being drawn into the illusory charm of Maya, the soul is trapped in the deceptive mirage of Maya.

Thus Puranjanaraja stayed with the beautiful woman in that town. Both of them lived in the city for a hundred years and suffered a lot. Puranjan was always happy with his wife. If the wife eats, he also eats, if the wife cries or laughs, he also cries or laughs, if the wife dances, he also dances. Just like Madari's monkey!

Puranjan's woman means intelligence - it is because of her that the sense of self arises in the body senses and by taking her shelter the living beings suffer the subjects.

The ten servants of his woman are the ten senses and their hundred-hundred servants are many kinds of instincts.

Panchafeni Naga Prajagar who protects the town is Prana, Apana, Vyana, Udan, the same five pranas. Pancha Prana is the vital force that sustains and energizes each component of the body and creates harmony between its integrated components.

The hero mind of both types of senses which is the eleventh great warrior. Through which the soul experiences pleasure, excitement or infatuation.

Form, taste, smell, word, touch, etc. are the five subjects of the Panchal country, in the center of which there is a nine-door Puranjannagar, meaning the body.

Kabirdasji says,

*“कबीर बैरी सबल है, एक जीव रिपु पांच।*

*अपने अपने स्वाद को, बहुत नचावे नाच।”<sup>4</sup>*

Meaning, O human being you are one but the senses are five. It leads you astray by various temptations for its own benefit.

Through the nine gates of this town, King Puranjan used to go to different countries with different friends. In this town, two gates are shown at one place each, two eyes, two nostrils, two ears, mouth, linga and inner senses. This is found to be nine gates. The life in them comes in contact with external objects with the senses

Through the two gates in the eastern direction called Khadyota and Avirmukhi, he used to go with friend Dyuman to the country called Vibhrajit. Khadyota means the left eye with less light, Avirmukhi means the right eye with more light. (Also the right side of the body is stronger). Dyuman means the eye and its friend vibhajit means the object of the sense organs.

Through the gates named Naalini and Nalini, Avadhuta and Saurabh used to go to the country. Naalin and Nalin means left and right nostrils, Saurabh Desha means olfactory organs – the subject of smell.

In the fifth gate called Mukhya, the king used to go to the country called Bahudan and Apana with his friends named Rasana and Vishana. Mukhya means mouth, rasana mitra is the sense of taste and vishana mitra is the sense of speech, speaking, giving speech etc. The country called Apana and Bahudan means the object of the sense of taste - rasa, that is, the eating of various kinds of food.

Through Pitruhu gate in the south and Devhu gate in the north, Puranjan used to go to the Panchal country with a friend Shrutadhar. Pitruhu means right ear and Devhu means left ear, the friend named Shrutdhar is the auditory organ that receives that word, with its help the life follows the path of Pitriyan and Devyana by listening to the path of activity in the form of rituals and the path of retirement in the form of worship respectively.

*“अग्नि ज्योतिरहःशुक्लःषण्मासा उत्तरायणम्।*

*तत्र प्रयाता गच्छन्ति, ब्रह्म ब्रह्मविदो जनाः॥*

*धूमो रात्रिस्तथा कृष्णःषण्मासा दक्षिणायनम्।*

*तत्र चान्द्रमसं ज्योति, र्योगी प्राप्य निवर्तते॥”<sup>5</sup>*

Meaning, I shall now describe to you the different paths of passing away from the world. One of which leads to liberation and the other leads to rebirth. Those who know the Supreme Brahman and who depart from this world, during the six months of Sun's northern course, the bright fortnight of the Moon, and the bright part of the day, attain the supreme destination. The practitioners of Vedic rituals, who pass away during the six months of Sun's southern course, the dark fortnight of the moon, the time of smoke, the night, attain the celestial abodes'. After enjoying celestial pleasures, they again return to the earth. These two bright and dark paths always exist in this world, The way of light leads to liberation and the way of darkness leads to rebirth.

In the west, through the gate called Asuri, the king went to the country of Gramaka with Durmad, and through the other gate of the west, Nirruti, he went to the country of Vaishas with Lubdhaka. The door called Asuri is the linga door and the friend called Durmad is the inner sense. Gramaka -Gramya are the subject of love for the rural man and the door of death is Nirruti.

Although there were sighted citizens in this town, the king used to consult two blind citizens. Two blind advisors are the hands and feet with the help of which Jiva Surve Karma is done.

Once King Puranjan, wearing his bow, golden shield, Akshaybhata, sat in a five-horse chariot with the commander and went to the forest called Panchaprastha. The two wheels of the king's chariot are sin and virtuous deeds, one axle is nature, three gunas are three flags, five pranas are five cords, mind is the bridle,

intellect is the essence, heart is the seat, flesh, fat, bone, marrow, blood, Skin, semen, etc., seven sheaths and two camels are mourning and infatuation. Mounted on this chariot, the Jiva runs towards mirage-like subjects.

“आत्मनो, रथिनं विद्धि शरीरं, रथमेव तु।  
बुद्धिं तु सारथिं विद्धिमनः प्रगहमेव च।”<sup>6</sup>

The king had a thousand sons and grandsons and 110 daughters. All got married. Thus became a huge family. Due to self-indulgence, he had no regard for self-welfare.

“माया मुई न मन मुवा, मरि मरि गया सरीर।  
आसा त्रिष्णा णा मुई यो ककहि गया कबीर।”<sup>7</sup>

Kabirji says, by staying in this world, neither Maya nor mind dies, nor does the body die many times but human hopes and desires never die. There is no end to hopes and desires.

The king became old. The king did not like it at all.

The thousand sons of the king are the resolution and choice tendencies of the senses and the grandsons are the various kinds of karma.

There were 360 Gandharvas and 360 black and white Gandharvins under a Gandharva named Chandvega. All of them got together and started looting the city of Puranjan. The Prajagar snake kept them all at bay for many years but eventually he too got tired. Chandveg through which knowledge of time or time is known. Its assistant Gandharvas are 360 days of the year and Gandharvas are 360 Shukla-Krishna nights of the year. They always circle around the body and shorten the lifespan of human beings. Old age is a Kal Kanya. Yavanaraja is death who makes Kalakanya a sister for destruction, Aadhi-Vyadhi are Yavanaraja's foot soldiers. His brother Prajwar, which causes pain to animals and leads them to death, is two types of fever, hot and cold. Diseases enter the body like old age or eyes etc. from all the portals and they start causing pain to the whole body. Yavanaraj- Bhay, his brother Prajwar and Kalakanya- Jara, together these three invaded Puranjanpuri and destroyed the city. The whole city was set on fire. All the natives left the city.

“यह तन काचा कुम्भ है, लिया फिरे था साथ।  
ढबका लागा फूटिया, कछुं ना आया हाथ।”<sup>8</sup>

meaning, this body is like a pot of raw clay. At the slightest stumble, it will explode and nothing will come to hand.

Just as Jadbharata's life was in his pet deer at the end, he was reborn as a deer, so Puranjan's life was in his wife at the end, he was reborn as the beautiful maiden Vaidehi to Vidarbharaja.

यं यं वापि स्मरन्भावं त्यज्यन्तेकलेवरम्।  
अन्तकाले च मामेव स्वारंमुक्त्वा क्लेवरम्।”<sup>9</sup>

Meaning, Whosoever, at the end, leaves the body, thinking of any being, to that being only he goes, O Kaunteya, because of his constant thought of that being.

When Vaidehi became marriageable, she got married to Pandavanresh Malaydhvaj. Pandavanresh means determined intelligence. He had one daughter and seven sons.

Seven sons are interested in seven types of devotion namely Sraavana, Smaran, Kirtan, Padasevan, Archan, Vandana, Dasya and one daughter is interest in Bhagavadseva. As King Malayadhwaaja grew old and became disillusioned with the world, he went to the Malay mountain with his wife to worship Bhagavat. Malayadhwaaja absorbed the soul in Parabrahman through undivided contemplation. On the death of Malayadhwaaja, Vaidehi began to wail profusely. She was ready to commit Sati behind her husband. At the same time his old friend, the self-realized (Atmgyani) Brahmin, came and said to the weeping Vaidehi, “Why are you mourning? I am your friend Avigyat. You left me and went to Puranjanpuri to indulge yourself. There you became the wife of Makardhwaja in this birth. Didn't you realize even after so many births that this body and the sufferings of the body are mortal? All this is Maya. Ignorantly you have forgotten your original form. Think of your original form. You are neither a woman nor a man. You are what I am. There is no difference between you and me. So do not mourn.” Hearing this, self-remembering was awakened in Vaidehi's heart and her grief was destroyed.

Although the Jiva is self-illuminated, but because it is surrounded by three gunas, it is forced to do sattvik, rajasik and tamasik activities and according to the karmas, it takes birth in the divine yoni, the human yoni, the animal-bird yoni and continues to experience happiness and pain.

The Upanishads have dealt with the subject of the body in their own poetic way. In sum, they see it as a perishable vehicle for the Jiva, subject to the laws of growth, disease, old age and death. It is the Jiva's temporary abode provided to it to work out the account of its unsettled karmic debt carried forward from countless previous lives, and to do new karma to help it on its very long journey of evolution to perfection and final freedom from the cycle of life and death. They express this in several ways.

Shvetashvatar Upanishad says:

नवद्वारे पुरे देही हंसो लेलायते बहिः।

वशी सर्वस्य लोकस्य स्थावरस्य चरस्य च।<sup>10</sup>

Meaning: He resides in the city of nine gates, which is the body. He moves in the world enjoying the play of his countless forms. He is the master of the Universe, of animate and inanimate.

Kathopnishad says:

पुरमेकादशद्वारमजस्यावक्रचेतसः।

अनुष्ठाय न शोचति विमुक्तश्च विमुच्यते।एतद्वै तत्।<sup>11</sup>

Meaning: There is a city with eleven gates of which the ruler is the unborn self, whose light forever shines. They go beyond sorrow who meditate upon that Self and are freed from the cycle of birth and death, for the self is Supreme.

The immature run after sense pleasures and fall into the widespread net of death. But the wise, knowing that the Self is deathless, seek not the changeless in the world of change.

Chhandogya says:

मघवन्मर्त्यं वा इदं शरीरमातं मृत्युना.....ज्योतिरूपसम्पद्य स्वेन रूपेणाभिनिष्पद्यन्ते।।छां.8-12-1,2।<sup>12</sup>

Meaning: "It is true the body is perishable, but within it dwells the imperishable Self. This body is subject to pleasure and pain; no one who identifies with the body can escape from pleasure and pain. But those who know they are not the body pass beyond pleasure and pain to live in abiding joy. Like the wind, like clouds, like thunder and lightning which rise from space without physical shape and reach the transcendental light in their own form, those who rise above body consciousness ascend to the transcendental light in their real form, the Self.

Shvetashvatar says:

नैव स्त्री न पुमानेष न चैवायं नपुंसक।

यद्यच्छरीरमादते तेने तेने स युज्यते।<sup>13</sup>

Meaning: Not female, nor male nor neuter is the self. As is the body, so is the gender. The Self takes on a body with desires, attachments and delusions, and is born again and again in new bodies to work out the karma of former lives. The embodied soul assumes many forms, heavy or light, according to its needs for growth and the deeds of previous lives. This evolution is a divine law.

We live in accordance with our deep, driving desire. It is the desire at the time of death that determines what our next life will be. We will come back to earth to work out the satisfaction of that desire.

Chhandogya says:

यथाक्रतुरस्मिँल्लोके पुरुषो भवति तथेतः प्रेत्य भवति सं क्रतुं कुर्वित।<sup>14</sup>

Meaning: A person is what his deep desire is. It is our deepest desire in life that shapes the life to come. So let us direct our deepest desire to realize the Self.

## CONCLUSIONS

There is one element in the body which is the doer and the determiner that is Jivatma. Self-conscious people experience it. This living being is also the doer and the experiencer of happiness and pain. The Supreme Being occupies the supreme position over this living being. It is the rule of all. All powerful and all powerful. A living soul can do self-welfare by worshiping his name and remembering his name.

As long as the Jiva is not freed from the three types of sufferings, Adhidaivik, Adhibhautik and Adhyatmik, there is no liberation from the samsara "पुनरपि जन्मं पुनरपि मरणम्"<sup>15</sup> but when the Jiva realizes that "ब्रह्म सत्यं जगत् मिथ्या"<sup>16</sup> and the essence of the Jiva lies in leaving this maya. As soon as this is realized, the living being is freed from maya and is united with the divine.

At the end I would like to say that in today's materialistic world where the body and flesh are given priority, one should strive to rise above the body.

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