



11

PURUSHA SUKTAM

When you were an infant, your father was everything for you. He provides anything you need, he protects the family, he gives you emotional support almost he is like an all-rounder for you. Similarly, you mother; she makes it possible to get what you want, almost all the works of your house are done by her, basically she is the home maker, she cooks, cleans, manages, supports, mentors and what not? Don't you think parents are everything for you.

When you grow, capable of handling things yourself, just your parents are not everything. You can see teachers, managers, principals and village Panchayat officials etc. who are just more than capable than your parents. However, there



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can be no one who cares you more than your parents or parent-like caring people, is it not?

Scientists of this land have visualized a grand entity which is capable of doing everything, all capable. It has thousands of limbs to act, eyes to watch, ears to hear etc. This is the whole message of this Purusha Sukta. Purusha Suktam colorfully narrates the properties, characteristics of Purusha (cosmic existence). The body of capable of doing everything is called Purusha in Vedas. There are many Purushas also, Vastu Purusha, Rashtra Purusha, Yajna purusha, Samaja Pursha etc.



OBJECTIVES

After reading this lesson, you will be able to:

- recite all the mantras of Purusha sukta,
- understand the basics of Purusha suktam.

11.1 PURUSHA SUKTAM

Now, let us learn how to recite the Mantras of Purusha Suktam

अथ पुरुषसूक्तम् ॥

ॐ तच्छं योरावृणीमहे । गातुं यज्ञाय । गातुं यज्ञपतये । दैवीं स्वस्तिरस्तु नः ।

स्वस्तिर्मानुषेभ्यः । ऊर्ध्वं जिगातु भेषजम् । शन्नो अस्तु द्विपदे । शं चतुष्पदे ।

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ।

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Note

We worship and pray to the Supreme Lord for the welfare of all beings. May all miseries and shortcomings leave us forever so that we may always sing for the Lord during the holy fire ceremonies. May all medicinal herbs grow in potency so that all diseases may be cured. May the gods rain peace on us. May all the two-legged creatures be happy, and may all the four-legged creatures also be happy. May there be peace in the hearts of all beings in all realms.

ॐ सहस्रशीर्षा पुरुषः । सहस्राक्षः सहस्रपात् ।

स भूमिं विश्वतो वृत्वा । अत्यतिष्ठदशाङ्गुलम् । १ ।

sahasra śīrṣā puruṣaḥ | sahasrākṣas sahasra pāt |

sa bhūmiṁ viśvatō vṛtvā | atyātiṣṭhad daśāṅgulam || 1 ||

The Purusha (the Supreme Being) has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes and a thousand feet. He has enveloped this world from all sides and has (even) transcended it by ten angulas or inches.

पुरुष एवेदः सर्वम् । यद्भूतं यच्च भव्यम् ।

उतामृतत्वस्येशानः । यदन्नैनातिरोहति । २ ।

puruṣa evedaguṁ sarvaṁ | yaḍ bhūtaṁ yac ca bhavyaṁ |

utāmṛtatva syeśānaḥ | yaḍ annenā tīrohāti || 2 ||



Note

All this is verily the Purusha. All that which existed in the past or will come into being in the future (is also the Purusha). Also, he is the Lord of immortality. That which grows profusely by food (is also the Purusha).

ए॒तावा॑नस्य महि॒मा । अतो॑ ज्याया॑श्च पू॒रुषः॑ ।

पादो॑ऽस्यु विश्वा॑ भू॒तानि॑ । त्रि॒पाद॑स्यामृ॒तं दि॒वि । ३ ।

etāvān asya mahimā | ato jyāyāguś ca pūruṣaḥ |

pādō'sya viśvā bhūtāni | tripād āsyām ṛtam divi || 3 ||

So much is His greatness. However, the Purusha is greater than this. All the beings form only a quarter (part of) Him. The three-quarter part of His, which is eternal, is established in the spiritual domain.

त्रि॒पादूर्ध्व॑ उदै॒त्पुरु॑षः । पादो॑ऽस्येहाऽऽभ॑वा॒त्पुनः॑ ।

ततो॑ विश्व॑ङ्ग॒क्रामत्॑ । सा॒श॒ना॒न॒श॒ने अ॒भि । ४ ।

tripād ūrdhva udaīt puruṣaḥ | pādō'syehā'bhāvāt punaḥ |

tato viśvaṅ vyākramat | sāśanānaśane abhi || 4 ||

The Purusha with the three-quarters (of His energy) ascended above (the spiritual energy). His one quarter of material energy becomes this creation again (and again). Then He pervades this universe comprising a variety of sentient beings and insentient objects.

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तस्माद्द्विराडजायत । विराजो अधि पूरुषः ।

स जातो अत्यरिच्यत । पश्चाद्भूमिमथो पुरः । ५ ।

tasmād virāḍ ajāyata | virājo adhi pūruṣaḥ |

sa jāto atyaricyata | paścād bhūmim atho puraḥ || 5 ||

From Him (the Adipurusha or original Supreme Being) was born the Virat (or Virat Purusha, the immense universal form). Making this Virat as the substratum (another) purusha (or being, Brahma) (was born). As soon as he was born, he multiplied himself. Later, he created this earth and then, the bodies (of the living beings).

यत्पुरुषेण हविषा । देवा यज्ञमतन्वत ।

वसन्तो अस्यासीदाज्यम् । ग्रीष्म इध्मः शरद्धविः । ६ ।

yat puruṣeṇa haṁviṣā | devā yajñam atānvata |

vasanto āsyāsīd ājyam | grīṣma idhmaś śarad-haṁviḥ || 6 ||

When the devas (the demigods or beings of light) performed a yajna (or sacrificial ritual), using the Purusha as the havis (sacrificial material) for the yajna (ritual), the Vasanta (spring) became the ajya (ghee), the Grishma (summer) served as idhma (pieces of wood) and the sharad (autumn) filled the place of havis (obligatory material like the purodasha or rice-cake).

सप्तस्यासन्परिधयः । त्रिः सप्त समिधः कृताः ।

देवा यद्यज्ञं तन्वानाः । अबध्नन्पुरुषं पशुम् । ७ ।

saptāsyāsan pariḍhāyāḥ | tris sapta samidhāḥ kṛtāḥ |

devā yad yajñam tānvānāḥ | abādhnan puruṣam paśum || 7 ||

For this (yajna or spiritual ceremony) there were seven paridhis (fuel pieces serving as borders). And, twenty-one items were made the samit or sacrificial fuel sticks. When the devas were performing this yajna or ceremony, they tied the purusha (himself) as the pashu (sacrificial animal).

तं यज्ञं बर्हिषि प्रौक्षन् । पुरुषं जातमग्रतः ।

तेन देवा अयजन्त । साध्या ऋषयश्च ये । ८ ।

tam yajñam barhiṣi praukṣan | puruṣam jātam āgrataḥ |

tena devā ayajanta | sādhyā ṛṣayaś ca ye || 8 ||

The devas, the sadhyas and the rishis performed the sacrifice by using that Purusha as the means of yajna, the Purusha who had been born in the beginning, after sprinkling him with water by the barhis (or sacrificial grass).

तस्माद्यज्ञात्सर्वहुतः । संभृतं पृषदाज्यम् ।

पशूस्ताश्चक्रे वायुव्यान् । आरण्यान्ग्राम्याश्च ये । ९ ।



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Note

tasmā́d yajñā́t sárva hutáḥ | sambhṛ́taṁ pṛ́ṣad ā́jyam |
paṣū́guṁs tā́ggaś cākṛe vā́yavyā́n | ā́raṇyán grā́myāśca ye || 9 ||

From that yajna (or sacrificial ritual) wherein the Cosmic Being was Himself the oblation, was produced the prasajya (or curds mixed with ghee). Birds flying in the air, wild animals of the forest as also the domesticated animals of the villages were also produced.

तस्माद्घृजात्सर्वहुतः । ऋचः सामानि जज्ञिरे ।

छन्दाः सि जज्ञिरे तस्मात् । यजुस्तस्मादजायत । १० ।

tasmā́d yajñā́t sárva hutáḥ | ṛcaḥ sā́māni jajñire |
chandā́guṁsi jajñiré tasmā́t | yajuṣ tasmā́d ajāyata || 10 ||

From that yajna (or sacrifice) wherein the Cosmic Being was Himself the oblation, were born the riks (the mantras of the Rig-veda) and the samans (the mantras of the Sama-veda). From that (yajna) the metres (like Gayatri) were born. From that (yajna again) the yujas (the Yajur-veda) was born.

तस्मादश्वा अजायन्त । ये के चौभयादतः ।

गावो ह जज्ञिरे तस्मात् । तस्माज्जाता अजावयः । ११ ।

tasmā́d aśvá ayājanta | ye ke cōbhayādātaḥ |
gavó ha jajñiré tasmā́t | tasmā́j jā́tā ajā́ vayáḥ || 11 ||



Note

From that were born the horses, as also animals (like donkeys and mules) which have two rows of teeth. From that were born the cattle. From that (again) were born goats and sheep.

यत्पुरुषं व्यदधुः । कृत्विधा व्यकल्पयन् ।

मुखं किमस्य कौ बाहू । कावूरु पादावुच्येते । १२ ।

yat puruṣam vyādadhuh | kṛtvīdhā vyākalpayan |

mukhaṁ kim āsya kau bāhū | kā vūrū pādā vucyete || 12 ||

(Now some questions are raised by the sages:) When the gods decided to (mentally) sacrifice the Viratpurusha (and produce further creation), in how many ways did they do it? What became of his face or mouth? What became of his two arms? What became of His two thighs? What were (the products of) the two feet called?

ब्राह्मणोऽस्य मुखमासीत् । बाहू राजन्यः कृतः ।

ऊरु तदस्य यद्वैश्यः । पद्भ्यां शूद्रो अजायत । १३ ।

brāhmaṇo'sya mukhaṁ āsīt | bāhū rājanyaḥ kṛtaḥ |

ūrū tad āsya yad vaiśyaḥ | paḍbhyāguṁ śūdro ajāyata || 13 ||

From His face (or the mouth) came the brahmanas. From His two arms came the rajanya (the kshatriyas). From His two thighs came the vaishyas. From His two feet came the shudras.

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चन्द्रमा मनसो जातः । चक्षोः सूर्यो अजायत ।

मुखादिन्द्रश्चाग्निश्च । प्राणाद्वायुरजायत । १४ ।

cāndramā manāso jātaḥ | cakṣoḥ-sūryo ajāyata |

mukhād indrāś cāgniś ca | prāṇād vāyur ajāyata || 14 ||

From His mind was born the moon. From His two eyes was born the sun. From His mouth were born Indra and Agni. From His breath was born the air.

नाभ्यां आसीदन्तरिक्षम् । शीर्ष्णो द्यौः समवर्तत ।

पद्भ्यां भूमिर्दिशः श्रोत्रात् । तथा लोकाः अकल्पयन् । १५ ।

nābhyā āsīd antarikṣam | śīrṣṇo dyaus samāvartata |

paḍbhyām bhūmir diśaś śrotrāt | tathā lokāgum ākalpayan || 15 ||

From (His) navel was produced the antariksha (the space between the earth and the heavens). Dyuloka (or heaven) came into existence from His head. The bhumi (the earth) evolved out of His feet, and deek (or spacial directions) from His ears. Similarly (the demigods) produced the worlds (too).

वेदाहमेतं पुरुषं महान्तम् । आदित्यवर्णं तमसस्तु पारे ।

सर्वाणि रूपाणि विचित्य धीरः । नामानि कृत्वाऽभिवदन् यदास्तै । १६ ।

vedāham etaṁ puruṣam mahāntam | āditya varṇam tamasaś tu pāre |

sarvaṇi rūpaṇi vicitya dhīraḥ | nāmāni kṛtvā'bhivadaṇ yadāstē || 16 ||



Note

"I know (through intuitive experience) this great Purusha (the Supreme Being), the wise one, who, having created the various forms and the nomenclatures (for those forms), deals with them by those names, and who is beyond darkness and is brilliant like the sun."

धा॒ता पु॒रस्ता॒द्यमु॒दाज॒हारं । श॒क्रः प्र॒विद्वान्प्र॒दिश॒श्चत॑स्रः ।

तमे॒वं वि॒द्वान्मृ॒तं इ॒ह भ॑वति । नान्यः पन्था॒ अय॑नाय विद्यते । १७ ।

dhātā purastād yam udājahārā | śakraḥ pravīdvān pradiśaś-catāsraḥ |
tam evā vidvān amṛtaḥ iha bhavati | nānyaḥ panthā ayānāya vidyate || 17 ||

In the ancient days, Prajapati (Brahma) praised Him. Indra who knows all the four quarters also spoke about Him. Anyone who knows Him thus, will become immortal even in this life. For attaining liberation there is no other path (than knowledge of this Purusha, the Supreme Lord).

य॒ज्ञेन॑ य॒ज्ञम॑यजन्त दे॒वाः । तानि॑ ध॒र्माणि॑ प्रथ॒मान्या॑सन् ।

ते ह॒ नाकं॑ महि॒मानं॑ सचन्ते । यत्र॑ पूर्वे॒ सा॒ध्याः सन्ति॑ दे॒वाः । १८ ।

yajñena yajñam ayajanta devāḥ | tāni dharmāṇi prathamā-nyāsan |
te ha nākam mahimānaś sacante | yatra pūrvē sādhyās santi devāḥ || 18 ||

The (demi)gods worshiped (the Supreme Creator in the form of) yajna through yajna (sacrificial ceremonies). Those very processes became the primary dharmas (laws guiding humanity). Those great ones attain that heaven where the ancient devas (demigods) and sadhyas live.



Note

11.2 PURUSHA SUKTAM

अद्भ्यः संभूतः पृथिव्यै रसाच्च । विश्वकर्मणः समवर्तताधि ।

तस्य त्वष्टा विदधद्रूपमेति । तत्पुरुषस्य विश्वमाजानुमग्रे । १ ।

adbhyas sambhūtaḥ pṛthivyai rasācca | viśvākarmaṇas samāvartatādhi |
tasya tvaṣṭā vidadhād rūpam-ēti | tat puruṣasya viśvaṃ ājāṇam agre ||

The Viratpurusha manifested Himself from out of (the all-pervading) water as also the essence of the element of earth. This Viratpurusha was born out of the greatness of the Paramapurusha, the Creator. The (Paramapurusha, known as) Tvashta engaged Himself in the act of creating (the fourteen planetary systems), (which form of the expanded) figure (of the Viratpurusha). (Thus) the entire creation (related to the Viratpurusha) came into existence in the very beginning of creation.

वेदाहमेतं पुरुषं महान्तम् । आदित्यवर्णं तमसुः परस्तात् ।

तमेवं विद्वानमृतं इह भवति । नान्यः पन्थां विद्यतेयऽनाय । २ ।

vedāham etaṃ puruṣam mahāntam | āditya varṇam tamasaḥ parastāt |
tam evaṃ vidvān amṛtaṃ iha bhāvati | nānyaḥ panthā vidyate'yānāya ||

"I have known that great Purusha (Supreme Being) who is brilliant like the sun and who is beyond all darkness. One who



Note

knows Him thus becomes immortal (even) here. There is no other path for liberation than this."

प्रजापतिश्चरति गर्भे अन्तः । अजायमानो बहुधा विजायते ।

तस्य धीराः परिजानन्ति योनिम् । मरीचीनां पदमिच्छन्ति वेधसः । ३ ।

prajāpātīś caratī garbhē antaḥ | ajāyāmāno bahudhā vijāyate |

tasya dhīrāḥ pari jānanti yonim | marīcīnām padam icchanti vedhasaḥ ||

Prajapati (the Supreme Creator) moves inside the cosmic womb. (Though) unborn, He takes birth in a variety of ways. The wise ones know His (real nature) as the origin (of the universe). The (secondary) creators desire to attain the positions of Marichi and others.

यो देवेभ्य आतपति । यो देवानां पुरोहितः ।

पूर्वो यो देवेभ्यो जातः । नमो रूचाय ब्राह्मये । ४ ।

yo devēbhya ātapāti | yō devānām purohitaḥ |

purvo yo devebhyo jātaḥ | namo rūcāya brāhmāye ||

Obeisances to Him, the self-luminous Brahman, who shines for the (demi) gods, who is the leader of the rituals of the gods and who was born even before the gods.

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रुचं ब्राह्मम् जनयन्तः । देवा अग्रे तदब्रुवन् ।

यस्त्वैवं ब्राह्मणो विद्यात् । तस्य देवा असन् वशे । ५ ।

rucam brāhmaṁ janayantaḥ | devā agre tad ābruvan |

yas tvaivam brāhmaṇo vidyāt | tasya devā asan vaśe ||

In the beginning of creation, the gods, manifesting the light of Brahman, addressed Brahman thus: "That brahmana who realizes (You) thus, all the gods will come under his control."

हीश्च ते लक्ष्मीश्च पत्न्यौ । अहोरात्रे पार्श्वे ।

नक्षत्राणि रूपम् । अश्विनौ व्यात्तम् । इष्टम् मनिषाण ।

अमुं मनिषाण । सर्वम् मनिषाण । ६ ।

hrīś ca te lakṣmīś ca patnyaū | aho rātre pārśve |

nakṣātrāṇi rūpam | aśvinau vyāttaṁ | iṣṭam maṇiṣāṇa |

amum maṇiṣāṇa | sarvaṁ maṇiṣāṇaḥ || 24 ||

O Purusha! The goddesses Hri (modesty) and Sri (Lakshmi, wealth) are Your consorts. Day and night are Your lateral limbs. The stars are Your form. The Ashvins are your widely opened (mouth). (O Purusha) fulfill our desire for self-knowledge as also our desire for the enjoyments of this world (like longevity,

cows, and horses). Give us all that we need. Om, let there be peace, peace, peace.

ॐ तच्छं योरावृणीमहे । गातुं यज्ञाय । गातुं यज्ञपतये । दैवीस्वस्तिरस्तु नः ।
स्वस्तिर्मानुषेभ्यः । ऊर्ध्वं जिगातु भेषजम् । शन्नो अस्तु द्विपदै । शं चतुष्पदे ।
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ।

We worship and pray to the Supreme Lord for the welfare of all beings. May all miseries and shortcomings leave us forever so that we may always sing for the Lord during the holy fire ceremonies. May all medicinal herbs grow in potency so that all diseases may be cured. May the gods rain peace on us. May all the two-legged creatures be happy, and may all the four-legged creatures also be happy. May there be peace in the hearts of all beings in all realms.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 11.1

1. कति शीर्षा पुरुषः ?
2. कियत् पुरुषस्य विश्वा भूतानि ?
3. विराट् कस्मात् अजायत ?
4. पुरुषस्य मुखं किम् आसीत् ?
5. चन्द्रमा कुतः जातः ?

Note

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Note



WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT

- Recitation of mantras of Purusha Suktam
- Meaning of Purusha Suktam.



TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Describe the features of Virat-purusha according Purush sukta.



ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTINS

1. सहस्रशीर्षा
2. पादो
3. पुरुषात्
4. ब्राह्मणः
5. मनसः