

This is the twenty ninth part of the serial article, continuation from Oct 2023 newsletter.

पुनश्च जन्मान्तरकर्मयोगा-

त्स एव जीवः स्वपिति प्रबुद्धः ।

पुरत्रये क्रीडति यश्च जीव-

स्ततस्तु जातं सकलं विचित्रम् ।

आधारमानन्दमखण्डबोधं

यस्मिँल्लयं याति पुरत्रयं च ॥ १४ ॥

*punaśca janmāntarakarmayogātsa*

*eva jīvaḥ svapiti prabuddhaḥ*

*puratraye krīḍati yaśca jīvastatastu*

*jātaṁ sakalaṁ vicitram*

*ādhāramānandamakhaṇḍabodhaṁ*

*yasmin layaṁ yāti puratrayaṁ ca*

पुनः - again च - and जन्मान्तर-कर्मयोगात् - because of the deeds of past lives सः एव - the very same जीवः - *jīva* स्वपिति - (as though) dreams/sleeps प्रबुद्धः - awake पुरत्रये - in the three cities क्रीडति - sports यः - who च - and जीवः - *jīva* ततः - from whom तु - indeed जातम् - is born सकलम् - the entire विचित्रम् - varied आधारम् - substratum आनन्दम् - joy अखण्डबोधम् - unbroken consciousness यस्मिन् - in whom लयम् - dissolution याति - goes पुरत्रयम् च - and all the three cities

Again, because of his deeds of past lives, the very same *jīva* comes back to the dream or wakefulness. The *jīva*, who (thus) sports in the three cities, is the substratum, the indivisible consciousness and joy, from whom the entire varied diversity has sprung up and in whom alone all the three cities dissolve.(14)

Once again, on account of past actions, the one who is the limitless self awakens. On account of identification with the gross body, he is the waker; on account of

identification with the subtle body, he is the dreamer, and on account of identification with the causal body he is the sleeper. This is his life story. What else is there? If you want to write your autobiography, this is it. You can write whatever details you want, but it is essentially waking, dreaming, and deep sleep. And it is the same the next day, and the next day, and the next. If we don't gain the knowledge, we go from womb to tomb, gain the next body, and begin the process all over again.

What is it that wakes us up? Deep sleep is such a pleasurable experience that nobody would want to wake up. Most people are reluctant to come out of sleep. When the alarm rings, the first impulse is to stop it and pull the comforter over one's head. That is the first reaction. Nobody wants to give up the experience of the deep sleep state, because, in fact, it is the experience of happiness. Yet we are forced to get up. It is our past *karma*, unfulfilled desires, ambitions, duties or preoccupations, which force us to wake up. It is our *karma* that wakes us up, because, when we go to sleep at night, all our desires and ambitions remain intact, in the causal or seed state. They don't get destroyed in the deep sleep state. Therefore, the fellow who went to sleep with whatever desires he had is the one who wakes up, and then those desires, which were in the causal state or seed state, begin to sprout. Just as the seed that is put in the ground takes a little time to germinate and sprout, so also, the desires that are dormant during the deep sleep state germinate and want to sprout; we wake up each morning because of desires that want to be fulfilled. Sometimes, we go from deep sleep to dreaming and then to waking, though sometimes, we go from deep sleep to waking; sleep is not a continuous experience. This is the process that goes on day in and day out.

What do we learn from this? Why does the Upaniṣad describe these three states?

It is to make a point that the one who is the waker alone is the dreamer, that he alone is the sleeper, and that he alone is again the waker. The experiences of the three states are different from one another. The waker has no entry into the

dream, the dreamer has no entry into the sleep state, and the sleeper has no entry into the world of waking. Thus, each state excludes the other two. The waker is not the dreamer and the dreamer is not the sleeper. Yet there is some continuity; when we wake up in the morning, we know that we have been sleeping and have now woken up. We do have that degree of awareness, is it not so? When you wake up in the morning, how do you feel? Do you feel like, 'Hey, a new person is born today'? No. Sometimes we might wish that it were the case, but that is not really so. There is continuity of existence. That is why we recollect that the one who was sitting on the dais and talking yesterday is the one sitting and talking today. In all these changing and discontinuous experiences, there is a continuous thread, and it is that which is important to us.

The *sāstra* draws attention to the fact that there is a changeless thread linking all these changing experiences. It is the same *jīva* or self that sports in the three different 'cities,' the waking, dream, and deep sleep states, the three realms. We know that the one who sports in the city is different from the city. Today, we are in Ben Lomond, but tomorrow we might be in San Francisco. Three days later, we might be in New York, and thus sporting in different cities. But when can we go from one city to another? It is only when we are not that city. For instance, San Francisco is where it is and New York is where it is. Only one who is neither San Francisco nor New York can go from one city to the other. The fact that we travel from one state of consciousness to the other shows that the waking world one is not, the dream world one is not, and the deep sleep world one is not. Even the waker, dreamer, and sleeper one is not. We are the self that connects all the three and yet transcends all the three. We can learn this much from our experiences, and when this much is learned, the nature of the experiences does not matter.

*To be continued...*