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Introduction

Among the great Gods of Vedas is Purusha, which in simple translation means the “male”. But the word actually indicates Lord Vishnu, who is the God among the great trinity in charge of the care of the created beings. He is supposed to live in the ocean of milk and his consort is Lakshmi the goddess of wealth and prosperity. Possibly along with Rudra it is one of the greatest stotras originating from the Vedas. While the devotees of Rudra are afraid of his anger and request Him again and again the devotees of Purusha keep praising him, describing his various facets and request boons from him. Though the original Purusha suktha manthra occurs in Rig Veda , it also occurs in Vajaneyya Samhitha of Shukla Yajur Veda, Taiteeriya Samhitha of Krishna Yajurveda and also with slight differences in Sama Veda as well as Atharva Veda. Many great sages have given details of how this great Suthra should be used in Fire Sacrifices and many sages including the great Sayanacharya have written commentaries on Purusha Suktham.

Purusha in this Suktham is described as a gigantic personality who is spread everywhere. Brhama the creator is supposed to have his huge body as a sacrifice so that he can create the world.

Shanthy Pata

Thachamyo ravrunimahe.gathum yagnaya.
Gathum Yagna pathaye.Daivee swasthi –rasthu na.
Swasthir Manushebhya. Urdhwa Jigathu beshajam.
Sam no asthu dwipadhe.Sam chatush pade
Om Shanthy, shanthy, Shanthy.

Request we from you with all enthusiasm,
For the good deeds that are medicine,
For the sadness of the past and future,
Request we for the growth of fire sacrifices,
Request that only good should occur,
To the one who presides over such sacrifices,
Request we for the mercy of gods to man,
Request we for good to the community of men,
Request we that the herbs and plants,
Should grow taller towards the skies.
Request we for good for all two legged beings,
Request we for good to all four legged beings,
Request we for peace, peace and peace.

First Anuvaaka

Sahsra seerhaa purusha; Sahasraksha saharpath.
Sa bhoomir viswatho vruthwa.Athyathishta ddhasangulam.

1-1

The Purusha has thousand heads,

He has thousand eyes,
He has thousand feet,
He is spread all over the universe,
And is beyond the count with ten fingers.

Purusha eeveda sarvam.Yad bhootam yad bhavyam.
Utha amruthathwasya eesana. Yad annena adhirohathi.

1-2

This Purusha is all the past,
All the future and the present,
He is the lord of deathlessness,
And he rises from hiding,
From this universe of food.

Ethaa vaanasya mahimaa.Atho jyaaya scha purusha.
Padhosya viswa bhoothanee.Tripaadasyamrutham divi.

1-3

This Purusha is much greater,
Than all his greatness in what all we see,
And all that we see in this universe is but his quarter,
And the rest three quarters which is beyond destruction,
Is safely in the worlds beyond.

Tri paddurdhwa udaith prurusha. Padhosye habha vaath puna.
Thatho vishvangvyakramath.Sasanana sane abhi.

1-4

Above this world is three quarters of Purusha,
But the quarter, which is in this world,
Appears again and again,
And from that is born the beings that take food,
And those inanimate ones that don't take food.
And all these appeared for every one of us to see.

Tasmath virad jayatha. Virajo agni purusha.
Sa jatho athya richyatha. Paschad bhoomi madho pura.

1-5

From that Purusha was born,
The scintillating, ever shining universe,
And from that was born the Purusha called Brahma,
And he spread himself everywhere,
And created the earth and then,
The bodies of all beings.

Yat purushena havishaa. Devaa yagna mathanvath.
Vasantho asyaasee dhajyam. Greeshma idhma saraddhavi.

1-6

The spring was the ghee,
The summer was the holy wooden sticks,
And the winter the sacrificial offering,
Used or the sacrifice conducted by Devas through thought,
In which they also sacrificed the ever-shining Purusha.

Sapthaasyasan paridhaya. Thri saptha samidha Krutha.
Devaa yad yagnam thanvaana. Abhadhnan purusham pasum.

1-7

Seven meters were its boundaries,
Twenty one principles were holy wooden sticks,
And Devas carried out the sacrifice,
And Brahma was made as the sacrificial cow.

Tham yagnam barhisi prokshan. Purusham Jaatham agradha.
Thena deva ayajantha. Saadhya rushayasch ye.

1-8

Sprinkled they the Purusha,
Who was born first,
On that sacrificial fire.
And the sacrifice was conducted further,
By the Devas called Sadyas,
And the sages who were there.

Tasmad yagnath sarva hutha. Sam brutham prushad ajyam.
Pasus tha aschakre vayavyaan. Aaranyaan graamyascha ye.

1-9

From this sacrifice called “All embracing”.
Curd and Ghee came out,
Animals meant for fire sacrifice were born,
Birds that travel in air were born,
Beasts of the forest were born,
And also born were those that live in villages

Tasmad yagnath sarva hutha. Rucha saamanee jagniree.
Chanadaa si jagnire tasmath. Yajus tasmad jaayatha.

1-10

From this sacrifice called “All embracing”
The chants of Rig Veda were born,
The chants of Sama Veda were born,
And from that the well-known meters were born,
And from that Yajur Veda was born.

Tasmad aswaa ajaayantha. Ye ke chobhaya tha tha.
Gavooaha janjire tasmath. Tasmad gnatha ajavaya.

1-11

From that the horses came out,

From that came out animals with one row of teeth,
From that came out cows with two rows of teeth,
And from that that came out sheep and goats.

Yad purusha vyadhadhu.Kathidhaa vyakalpayan.
Mukham kimsya koo bahu. Kaavuruu pada a uchyaathe.

1-12

When the Purusha was made
By their thought process by the Devas,
How did they make his limbs?
How was his face made?
Who were made as His hands?
Who were made as his thighs and feet?

Brahmanasya Mukham aseed.Bahu rajanya krutha.
Ooru tadasys yad vaisya.Padbhyo sudro aajayatha.
His face became Brahmins* ,
His hands were made as Kshatriyas* ,
His thighs became Vaisyas* ,
And from his feet were born the Shudras* .

1-13

Chandrama manaso Jatha.Chaksho surya Ajayatha.
Mukhad Indras cha Agnis cha.Pranad Vayua aajayatha.

1-14

From his mind was born the moon,
From his eyes was born the sun,
From his face was born Indra and Agni,
And from his soul was born the air.

Nabhya aseed anthareeksham.seershno dhou samavarthatha.
Padbyam Bhoomi,, disaa srothrath.Tadha lokaa akampayan.

1-15

From his belly button was born the sky,
From his head was born the heavens,
From his feet was born the earth,
From his ears was born the directions,
And thus was made all the worlds,
Just by his holy wish.

Vedahametham purusham mahantham.Adhitya varna thamasathu pare,
Sarvani roopani vichinthya dheera. Namaani kruthwa abhivadan yadasthe.

1-16

* The four fold caste system of Hinduism was supposed to have been born thus

* The ruling class

* The merchant class

* The labour class

I know that heroic Purusha, who is famous,
Who shines like a sun,
And who is beyond darkness,
Who created all forms,
Who named all of them,
And who rules over them.

**Dhaatha purasthad yamudhajahara.sacra pravidhaan pradhisascha thathra.
Thamevam vidwaan anu mrutha iha bavathi. Naanya pandha ayanaaya vidhyathe. 1-17**

The learned one who knows that Purusha
Whom the creator, considered as one before Him,
And whom the Indra understood in all directions,
Would attain salvation even in this birth,
And there is no need for him to search for any other path.

**Yagnena yagnam aya jantha devaa. Thaani dharmani pradhmanyasan.
Theha naakam mahimaana sachanthe.yatra poorvo saadhyaa santhi devaa. 1-18**

Thus the devas worshipped the Purusha,
Through this spiritual yagna,
And that yagna became first among dharmas.
Those who observe this Yagna,
Would for sure attain,
The heavens occupied by Saadya devas.

Second Anuvaaka

**Adhbhyaa sambhootha pruthvyai rasescha.Viswakarmanas samavarthadhi.
Tasyas twashtaa vidhadh drupamethi.tad purushasya viswa maajanam agre. 2-1**

From water and essence of earth was born,
The all pervading universe.
From the great God who is the creator,
Then appeared that Purusha
And the great God, who made this world,
Is spread as that Purusha, in all fourteen worlds.
And also the great form of Purusha,
Came into being before the start of creation.

**Vedaham etham purusham mahantham.Aadithyavarna thamasa parasthath.
Thamevam vidwan amrutha iha bhavathi.nanya pandhaa vidhyathe ayanaaya. 2-2**

I know that great Purusha,
Who shines like the sun,
And is beyond darkness,

And the one who knows him thus,
Attains salvation even in this birth,
And there is no other method of salvation.

Prajapathis charathi garbhe antha. Aajayamano bahudha vijaayathe.
Tasya dheera parijananthi yonim. Mareechinaam padamicchanthi vedhasa. 2-3

The Lord of the universe,
Lives inside the universe,
And without being born,
Appears in many forms,
And only the wise realize his real form,
And those who know the Vedas,
Like to do the job of,
Savants like Mareechi.

Yo devebhya aathapathi. Yo devaanaam purohitha.
Poorvo yo devebhyo jatha. Namu ruchaaya brahmeye. 2-4

Salutations to ever shining brahmam,
Who gave divine power to devas,
Who is a religious teacher of devas,
And who was born before devas.

Rucha brahmam janayantha. Devaa agne tadha bruvaan.
Yasthaiva barahmano vidhyat. Tasya deva asaan vase. 2-5

The devas who teach the taste in Brahman,
Told in ancient times,
That. He who has interest in Brahman,
Would have the devas under his control.

Hreescha the lakshmischa patnyou. Ahorathre paarswe.
Nakshatrani roopam. Aswinou vyatham. 2-6

Hree and Lakshmi are your wives,
Day and night are your right and left,
The constellation of stars your body,
And Aswini devas your open mouth..

Ishtam manishaana. Amum manishana. Sarve manishana. 2-7

Give us the knowledge that we want,
Give us the pleasures of this world,
And give us everything of this and other worlds.

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