

thousands of births going to and from the moon. The jīvātmā coming back from the moon evolves from a plant to man. Plants are the food of man and the soul entering the plant enters the puruṣabīja (semen virile) through food. The souls coming out as rebirths do accept wombs according to a definite principle. In the order of the merit of their good deeds on earth they are born in Brahmin, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya or Śūdra wombs. The souls with great sins are born as worms and insects. This passage of the soul from earth to Candra and vice versa is called Pitṛyāna.

(ii) *Aparavidyopāśana*. There are some people who do not consider performance of religious rites as important but worship Brahman. They do not treat Brahman and jīvātmā as one but view them as separate entities. Such devotees are called Aparavidyopāśakas. Their souls as soon as they leave the body move towards aparabrahman. The path to aparabrahma is through Agni, Jyotis, daytime, Śuklapakṣa (the white fortnight), Uttarāyaṇa (the passage of the sun to the north), samvat-sara (year), Sūrya (sun), Candra (moon) and Vidyut (lightning). The dhanyas (blessed ones) who attain Vidyut go to Varuṇaloka, Indraloka and Prajāpatiloka and then merge with parabrahma (the supreme being). This path is called Devayāna. Since for both Pitṛyāna and Devayāna the jīvātmā has to depend upon Candra it is to be surmised that there is some special connection between jīvātmā and Candra. Those who attain Aparabrahma by the path of devayāna do not come back to earth. They have no rebirths. Those who have merged with aparabrahma attain Brahman by the end of a lifetime of Brahmā. Thus those who attain Brahman and do not believe that jīvātmā and Brahman are one and view them separately attain Parabrahma through the merger with aparabrahma. This is called Kramamukti. Some sages are of opinion that those who attain aparabrahma enjoy prosperity by mind. Those who live attached to worldly pleasures but not do things prohibited by the Vedas attain Pitṛloka by the path of Dakṣiṇāyana. After enjoying all the accrued 'puṇya' there, they come back again to earth to be born again.

(iii) *Pāpōpāśana*. The jīvātmā of one who does not follow the injunctions of śāstras correctly does not attain Candra. It is born again as pests and insects attaining a place called Tṛtīya. There is no evidence in the Purāṇas of their attaining mokṣa. How a soul subjected to rebirths attains mokṣa is described under 'Mokṣa'. (Chāndogya Upaniṣad, Gītā, Bhāgavata, Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad).

**PUNARVASU ĀTREYA** An ancient preceptor of Āyurveda. He was the Guru of Agnideva author of the book 'Agniveśatantra' which is the basis of Caraka-saṁhitā and also of his classmates like Bhela.

Punarvasu was the son of the sage Atri who was one of the spiritual sons of Brahmā. In support of this statement it can be found in many places in Caraka-saṁhitā his name referred to as 'Atrisuta' or Atrinandana'.

Atri maharṣi was also a learned preceptor of Āyurveda. According to Kaśyapa-saṁhitā Devendra taught Āyurveda to Kaśyapa, Vasiṣṭha, Atri and Bhṛgu. The incomplete work 'Āyurvedacikitsātantra' by Atri was completed by Punarvasu according to Aśvaghōṣa.

Punarvasu's mother's name was Candrabhāgā. Getting knowledge in Āyurveda from his father and also from Bharadvāja, Punarvasu became an authority on Āyurveda. His important work is 'Ātreya-saṁhitā'. There are about thirty prescriptions in his name. The prescriptions regarding 'Balātāila' and 'Amṛtāditaila' are found in Caraka-saṁhitā.

**PUNASČANDRA**. A sacred place. This is situated in the Jamadagnivedī in Śūrpārakakṣetra. (Śloka 12, Chapter 88, Vana Parva).

**PUNGU**. A King of Sūryavamśa (solar race). He was the son of Harita and father of Vijaya. (Brahmaṇḍa Purāṇa, Chapter 1).

**PUNḌARĪKA I**. A King born of the race of Śiṣi Rāma. He was the son of Niṣadha and father of Kṣemadhanvā. (9th Skandha, Bhāgavata).

**PUNḌARĪKA II**. One of the Aṣṭadiggajas (elephants guarding the eight zones). (See under Aṣṭadiggajas).

**PUNḌARĪKA III**. A brahmin who lived during the period of Nārada. Nārada once held a scholarly conversation with him on virtue. He saw Mahāviṣṇu in person and attained sāyujya (intimate union with a deity). (Chapter 124, Anuśāśana Parva).

**PUNḌARĪKA IV**. A great yajña. (Śloka 100, Chapter 5, Sabhā Parva).

**PUNḌARĪKA V**. A holy place situated on the border of Kurukṣetra. One who bathes in a sacred pond there would get the benefit of doing a Puṇḍarīkayajña. (Śloka 83, Chapter 83, Vana Parva).

**PUNḌARĪKĀ VI**. A nymph. This maiden was present for the Janmotsava of Arjuna and performed a dance then. (Śloka 13, Chapter 122, Ādi Parva).

**PUNḌARĪKAMUKHA**. An eminent serpent King. His subjects, Puṇḍarīkamukhas, lived with him in the beautiful serpent-city surrounded on all sides by gold castles. Gandharvas and Kinnaras of both sexes lived inside the city. A Gandharva of name Lalita fell in love with a Gandharva lady named Lalitā and they lived there happily enjoying amorous sports. One day Puṇḍarīkamukha held a music concert in which Lalita was asked to sing as the leading musician. His love Lalitā was absent at the assembly and Lalita could not sing or dance in proper form that day. Karkāṭaka, a serpent chief, privately informed his King the reason for the poor display of Lalita that day. The King got angry and cursed Lalita thus : "Wicked one, you will be born as a man-eating rākṣasa. This is the penalty for thinking about your wife while singing for me." Lalita immediately became an ugly, fierce-looking demon. Lalitā deeply mourned over this pitiable plight of her husband and followed him in the forests where he roamed about making loud roaring sounds. While they were thus wandering in the forests, they found a pretty āśrama in which there was an ascetic engaged in penance. Lalitā stood before him with tears rolling down her cheeks. When the sage opened his eyes Lalitā told him that she was the daughter of the Gandharva named Vīradhanvā and that her husband had become a demon by the curse of the serpent King Puṇḍarīkamukha. The sage advised her to observe Ekādāśī Vrata. She observed the Vrata with devotion and her husband Lalita, was freed from the curse. He became the former handsome Gandharva once again. They then went back to Gandharvaloka. (Chapter 49, Bhāga 4, Padma Purāṇa).