

Eighth (Āyush) Bhāva

The eighth bhāva is more often called the Mrityu bhāva (bhāva of death), though its proper nomenclature should be Āyush bhāva or bhāva of life. This is so because any harm to 8th bhāva or its lord can indicate harm to life and even death. Another reason is that a planet occupying this bhāva is said to become weak and the bhāva owned by such a planet is also said to suffer weakness, though there are many exceptions to this general rule. This bhāva is also called the “Randhra” bhāva. “Randhra” means a crevice/chasm/fissure/anterior fontanelle/vulva etc., in Sanskrit language, and does represent all of these in different manner. This bhāva is also the bhāva of unexpected gains, occult, and legacy.

We shall first try to see what other area of the Jātaka’s life can be understood from analysis of the 8th bhāva, applying the “Bhāvāt Bhāvam” principle. The 8th bhāva is 7th bhāva to the 2nd bhāva and shows the travels of family; being the 6th from the 3rd it shows the disease and enemies of younger sibling and being 5th from the 4th bhāva it can also show the grandfather of mother and her acquired or higher knowledge. Again 8th bhāva is the 4th bhāva from the 5th bhāva and thus represents the house and self earned property of the first progeny, while being the 3rd from the 6th bhāva it shows the second sibling of mother and valour of her immediate younger sibling. The 8th bhāva being the 2nd bhāva from the 7th bhāva indicates both the speech and the wealth of spouse and being 12th to the 9th indicates father’s expenditure, sleep and genes that pass on to the Jātaka. The 8th house is also the 11th bhāva counted from the 10th bhāva and therefore indicates the income from wealth of father and thus the legacy. We can also see that the 8th bhāva is the 10th bhāva from the 11th bhāva and therefore indicative of career of Jātaka’s elder brother/younger uncle and friends, whereas being the 9th from the 12th it indicates maternal aunt/uncle’s father-in-law or whether the Jātaka will be able to follow the righteous duties that can lead him to final emancipation.

Let us try to understand what the 8th bhāva represents, besides life and why. This is where the Indian scriptures and philosophy make it easy to understand Vedic astrology. Hindu scriptures talk about 10 Prānas of whom 5 are those that we experience, physically while the other five Prānas are at the subtle level.

The five perceptible Prānas are known as:

- Prāna (air inhaled)
- Apāna (air expelled through rectum)
- Samāna (digestive breath),
- Udāna (air passing through throat)
- Vyāna which is responsible for circulation of all Prānas through body (or carrying oxygen to blood/brain).

The 5 subtle Prānas are:

- “Nāga” is the Prāna which facilitates opening and closing of eyes, mouth etc.
- “Krikara” is the Prāna which increases appetite.
- “Kurma” is the Prāna which helps contraction of body parts.
- “Devadatta” is the Prāna causing wide opening of mouth, as in yawning.
- “Dhananjaya” is the name of Prāna indicating the air which sustains life itself.

Eighth (Āyush) Bhāva

It is said that the body decomposes when the Prāna called Dhananjaya leaves it. Now let us see how Prāna which rules over life is connected with the 8th bhāva of astrology and why the bhāva is called both the Āyush and the Mrityu bhāva. Yama (the lord of death) explains the process of birth and death to sage Nachiketa in Kathopanishad thus:

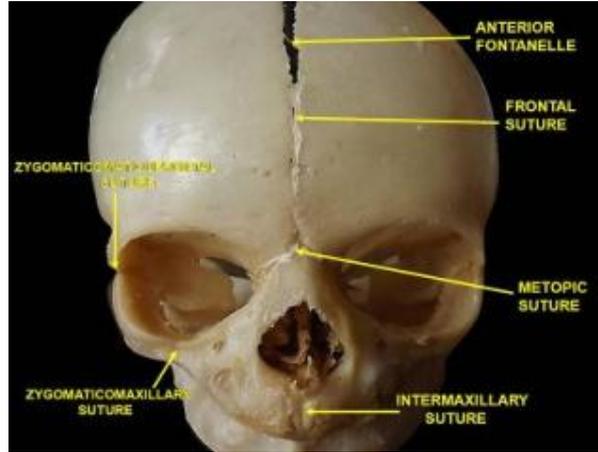
ऋतं पिबन्तु सुकृतस्य लोके गुहां प्रविष्टौ परमे परार्धे

छाया तपौ ब्रह्मविदो वदन्ति पञ्चाग्नयो ये च त्रिणाचिकेताः ॥ १।३।१ ॥

ṛtaṁ pibantu sukṛtasya loke guhāṁ praviṣṭau parame parārdhe
chāyā tapau brahmavido vadanti pañcāgnayo ye ca triṇāciketāḥ ॥1३१॥

Meaning: Having enjoyed the fruits of good deeds (on this earth), the mortals enter the secret place (chasm, fissure) on the opposite side (reborn). The knower of Brahman call this as shadow and heat (going from the stage of being mortal to immortal and back), which is controlled by the five fires (Prānas).

We have already seen that one of the names of the 8th bhāva is “Randhra” and one of the numerous meanings of this name is “anterior fontanelle”. Let us see how exactly does the anterior fontanelle look and where it is situated to understand exactly what the ancients were indicating by naming the bhāva as “Randhra”, besides its commonly known name as “Āyush” bhāva.



As we can see the anterior fontanelle does look like a crevice and is situated at the top of human skull. This is open at birth and closes over a period of time. This again is in consonance with principles of yoga and Hindu scriptures. This is the crevice through which the “Prāna”, meaning life itself, is said to enter the newborn giving it life/existence of its own, as separate from sustenance drawn from his mother. It is said that yogis try to force out their Prāna, at the time of their death, through this crevice so that they can obtain final emancipation. Having thus understood why the 8th bhāva is called both Āyush (life) and Mrityu (death), it is not difficult to understand why some astrologers, including me, call it the bhāva of transformation. The 8th bhāva also represents the legacy, the sexual organs, anus, deep crevice, research and physical ailments which are constitutional or hereditary. Here, by hereditary, we should understand that these are ailments that are other than those brought upon partially through the Jātaka’s own actions. Therefore one can observe that when a

Eighth (Āyush) Bhāva

planet like Mars aspects the 8th bhāva in natal chart, the Jātaka could be accident prone, suffer from acidity despite of being cautious or following a Satwik diet or he might suffer from bleeding piles. Again the planets influencing the 8th bhāva could give an indication of ease, or problems, in enjoying legacy and so on.

We have seen that this is also the bhāva of the unexpected events. Therefore its lord occupying some other bhāva will indicate something unexpected occurring in connection with the indications of that bhāva. Here it is well to remember that 8th bhāva also being bhāva of termination and new beginning (Mrityu and Āyush), and one of the trika bhāvas, the planet occupying it loses strength and the bhāva owned by that planet suffers. Again the bhāva occupied by the lord of the 8th also gets weakened. Here one has to understand that the lords of 6th, 8th and 12th bhāvas occupying any of the other two bhāvas are said to give rise to rājjyoga. Here one has to be clear in interpreting the 6th lord going to the 8th bhāva and 8th lord going to 6th bhāva could also indicate the Jātaka's acute ailments going chronic and chronic subclinical ailments leading to acute health problems to the Jātaka respectively, though in the matter of wealth they might give good yoga. Another matter to be kept in mind is that, at first glance it might appear that applying above principle the lord of the lagna occupying the 8th bhāva should indicate short life to the Jātaka. However the 8th bhāva primarily being the bhāva of Āyush, that is life, the Jātaka will be seen to enjoy good health for most part of his life. Again Saturn being Āyush kāraka gives long life to Jātaka when occupying the 8th bhāva, putting the “Kārako bhāva nāshaH” (kāraka of a bhāva harm occupying that bhāva) theory under severe scrutiny.

As has been our practice let us close this article by looking at the opinion of the learned Vaidyanātha who in his classic Jātaka Pārijāta where he says:

आयुर्दायमनिष्टहेतुमुदयव्योमायुरीशार्कजैरुक्तं तत्सकलं तथापि निधनप्राप्तिं प्रवक्ष्ये पुनः ।

अल्पायुर्व्ययगतेऽथवा रिपुगते पापान्विते रन्ध्रपे लग्नेशेन युते तु तत्र विबले जातोऽल्पजीवी नरः ॥ १४।४८॥

āyurdāyamaniṣṭahetumudayavyomāyurīśārkajairuktaṁ tatsakalaṁ tathāpi
nidhanaprāptiṁ pravakṣye punaḥ।

alpāyurvyayagate'thavā ripugate pāpānvite randhrape lagneśena yute tu tatra vibale
jāto'lpajīvī naraḥ॥14|48॥

Meaning: We have already told about longevity from the lords of the ascendant, 10th bhāva and 8th bhāva as well as Saturn, yet let us look at death from the 8th bhāva. Should the lord of the 8th occupy the 12th or the 6th bhāva and be conjunct malefic/s or should he conjoin a weak lord of the ascendant in the 12th or 6th bhāva, the Jātaka has short life (span).