

YOGA AND VEDIC ASTROLOGY

Sister Sciences of Spiritual Healing



Essentials of Vedic Astrology – Volume I

SAM GEPPPI (SADASIVA)



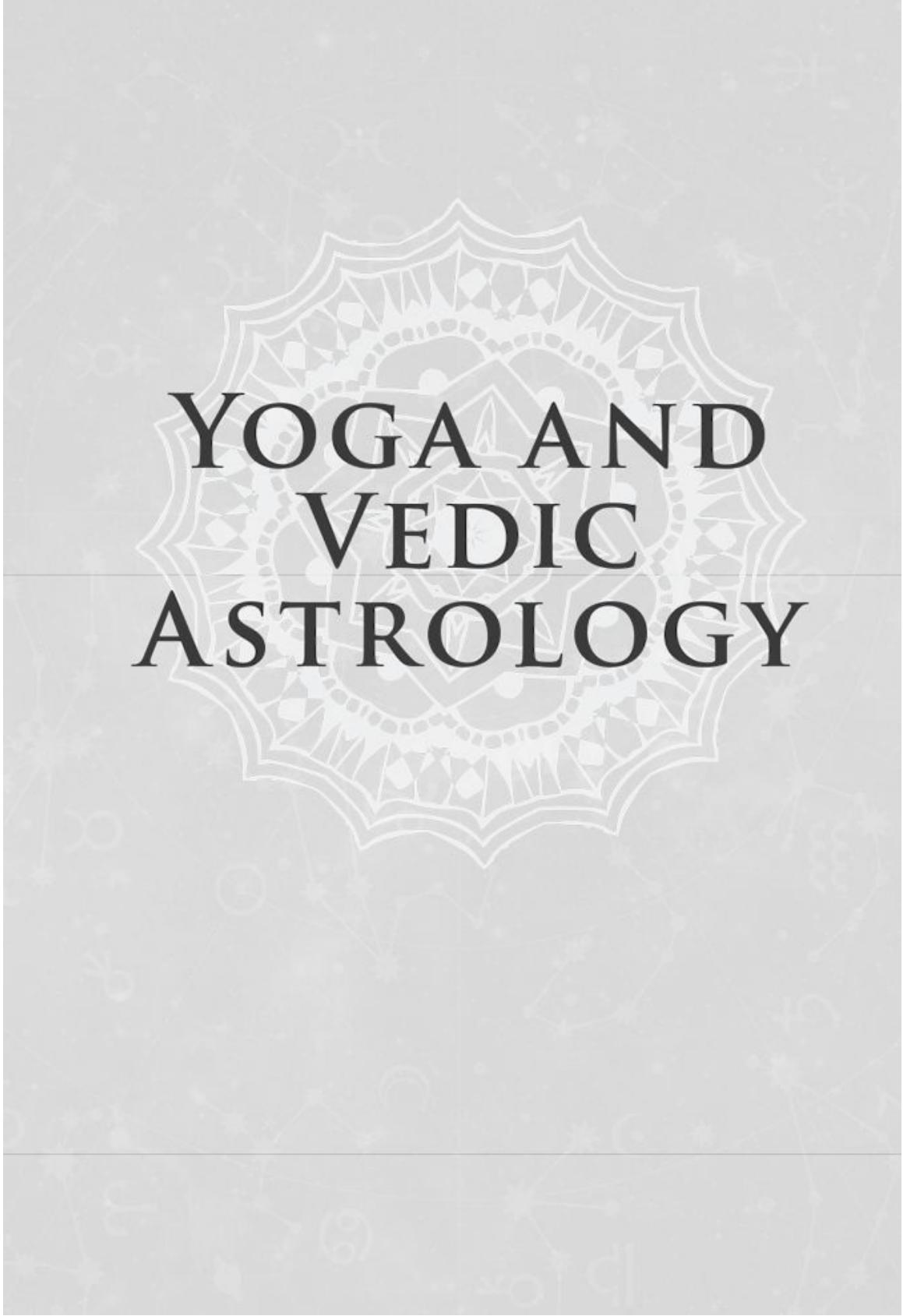
COLLECTION OF VARIOUS
→ HINDUISM SCRIPTURES
→ HINDU COMICS
→ AYURVEDA
→ MAGZINES

FIND ALL AT [HTTPS://DSC.GG/DHARMA](https://dsc.gg/dharma)

Made with

By
Avinash/Shashi

[creator of
hinduism
server!]



YOGA AND VEDIC ASTROLOGY





YOGA AND VEDIC ASTROLOGY

*Sister Sciences of Spiritual Healing
Essentials of Vedic Astrology – Volume I*

S A M G E P P I (S A D A S I V A)
Vedic Academy Press
vedicacademypress.com



Yoga and Vedic Astrology

Copyright © 2015 by Sam Geppi (Sadasiva)

ISBN - 978-0-9968482-0-6 (print)

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law. For permission requests, write to the publisher, addressed “Attention: Permissions Coordinator,” at the email address below.

Published by Vedic Academy Press

San Francisco, Ca

www.vedicacademypress.com

orders@vedicacademypress.com

Ordering Information

Quantity sales. Special discounts are available on quantity purchases by corporations, associations, and others. For details, contact the publisher at the contact information above.

Printed in the United States of America

Cover Design by: Jera Publishing

First edition

Acknowledgements:

I wish to first thank my Satu Guru Mata Amritanandamayi Devi, to whom this book is dedicated. I would also thank the Sivanada organization, Swami Sitaramananda, David Frawley (Vamadeva), Dennis Harness, Dr. Pillai and Astroved, ACVA, CVA and all of the many students and colleagues who have supported my work over the years.

I would also like to thank the following people for their assistance.

- Ruchi Khanna
- Raj Vuppu
- Carol Hook
- Milana May
- Marie Fowler
- Gwen Burdick
- Avani Sukhadia

Special thanks to the following Book Patrons:

Valli Wells, Vedic Astrologer
Business Contact: valli@pillaicenter.com,
www.AstroVed.com/LAC

Roy Rupessh - TuneUrLife Inc.
Wellness, Match-Making, Career, Education guidance and remedies.
www.tuneurlife.com

Michael Phillips
www.ddadb.com

Dedication

I dedicate this book to my Guru Mata Amritanandamay Devi, without whom nothing is possible for me.

<http://amma.org> is a website with more information about this amazing being.



Contents

[Acknowledgements](#)

[Dedication](#)

[Introduction](#)

[Vedic Astrology as an Occult Science](#)

[Purpose of This Book](#)

[Repetition of Concepts](#)

[Chapter 1: Welcome to the Universe](#)

[The Illusions of a Limited Being In Cosmic Time](#)

[Perspective on the Aeons of Time](#)

[The Sacred Number 108](#)

[The Explosion of Life](#)

[The Sun, Moon and Hindu Deities](#)

[Sun and Moon — Shiva and Shakti](#)

[Other Images of Shiva / Shakti as Sun / Moon](#)

[Vedic astrology — The Sun and Moon](#)

[The Ego and the Prism of Maya](#)

[Astrology of the Past and Future](#)

[The Divine Science](#)

[The Million Dollar Question](#)

[Vedic Astrology for a World in Transition](#)

[The Science of Karma](#)

[Chapter 2: Yoga Beyond the Mat](#)

[Dharma and Karma](#)

[Overview of Indian Texts and Their Evolution into the Vedic Sciences](#)

[1. Vedas](#)

[2. Upanishads and Brahmanas](#)

[3. Puranas — Stories, Myths and Mantra Glorifying Secular Deities](#)

[3A. Puranic Texts Proper](#)

[4. Epics — Glorify Incarnations that have “Lived”](#)

[5. Vedic Science Texts — Teach us the Sciences of Living](#)

[Conclusion](#)

[Samkya Philosophy / Vedic Frameworks](#)

[The Five Elements](#)

[The “Three Gunas”](#)

[Masculine / Feminine — Yin / Yang](#)

[The Four Purusarthas — Life Lessons](#)

[And Now, Yoga](#)

[Classical Yogic Text — the Bhagavad Gita](#)

[Classical Yogic Text — the Raja Yoga Sutras](#)

[Part 1 — Yoga Theory](#)

[Yoga Sutras Part 2 — Practice](#)

[Yogic Powers](#)

[Modern Forms — Integral Yoga or the Yoga of Synthesis](#)

[Chapter 3: Yogic / Vedic Principles Formalized](#)

[The Five Elements — Building Blocks of the Vedic Sciences](#)

[The Five Elements at Work](#)

[Karma and the Five Elements](#)

[The Three Gunas](#)

[The Five Koshas \(Sheaths\)](#)

[Elements, Karma Indriyas and Jnana Indriyas](#)

[Chakras](#)

[Karma — Revisited](#)

[A Quick Story to Illustrate Karma](#)

[Present Time, Universal Time and Karma](#)

[Law Breakers Beware](#)

[Karma \(Action\) Equals the Truth](#)

[Three Types of Karma and the Archer](#)

[Karma = Predeterminism + Presence](#)

[Karma, Freewill and Astrology](#)

[Chapter 4: Vedic Astrology — The Science of Light](#)

[Brihat Parashara Hora Sastra](#)

[Astrology Sanskrit in his Book](#)

[From BPHS Chapter 2 — Divine Incarnations](#)

[From BPHS Chapter 4 — Zodiacal Rashis Described](#)

[Life in the Universe-ity: A Metaphor for Astrology](#)

[More Lessons on the Law of Karma](#)

[Vedic Concepts in Astrology](#)

[Astrology and the Chakras](#)

[Astrology and the Five Elements](#)

[Earth:](#)

[Water:](#)

[Fire:](#)

[Air:](#)

[Space:](#)

[Planets and the Three Gunas](#)

[Planets, Gunas, Wakefulness and Sleep](#)

[Planets Rule the Gunas](#)

[Planets and Guna Synthesis](#)

[Gunas of the Astrology Signs](#)

[Caste](#)

[Four Purusarthas](#)

[Chapter 5: The Planets and Their Signs](#)

[Astrology Signs and Planets](#)

[More Planetary Traits Exclusive to Astrology](#)

[Planetary sutras:](#)

[The Planetary Order](#)

[Special Karaka: \(Indicator\)](#)

[The Planetary Cabinet](#)

[Planetary Temperament — Gentle or Cruel](#)

[Surya — the Sun](#)

[Evolutionary Process of the Sun:](#)

[Leo — Simha “Lion” Rashi](#)

[Chandra — the Moon](#)

[“Evolutionary Process of the Moon”](#)

[Cancer — Karka “Crab” Rasi](#)

Kuja — Mars

Evolutionary Process of Mars

Aries — Mesha “Ram” (Masculine Mars)

Scorpio — Vrischika “Scorpion” (feminine Mars)

Budha — Mercury

Evolutionary Process of Mercury

Gemini — Maithuna “Couple” (Masculine Mercury)

Virgo — Kanya “Girl” (Feminine Mercury)

Guru — Jupiter

Evolutionary Process of Jupiter

Sagittarius — Dhanu “Bow” (Masculine Jupiter)

Pisces — Meena “Fish” (Feminine Jupiter)

Shukra — Venus

Evolutionary Process of Venus

Libra — Tula “Balance Scale” (Masculine Venus)

Taurus — Vrishaba “Bull” (Feminine Venus)

Shani (Saturn) and His Signs

Evolutionary Process of Saturn

Aquarius — Kumbha “Pitcher” (Masculine Saturn)

Capricorn — Nakra “Crocodile” (Feminine Saturn)

Chapter 6: The Rashis and the Signs of the Zodiac

Ch.. 4 Zodiacial Rashis Described

Why 12 Zodiac Signs?

The Universal Sky / Rasis

The Vedic View of Rasis and the Sidereal Zodiac

Ch. 3. Grah Characters and Description

Important Attributes of Rasis

Astrology Sign Attribute Chart

The 12 Zodiac Signs and Their Frameworks

The Holistic Zodiac

Three Modalities Through Four Elements

Three Quadrants — Birth, Stability and Change

Masculine and Feminine — Assertion and Reflection

Mesha (Aries) — The Ram

Vrishabha (Taurus) — The Bull

[Mithuna \(Gemini\) — The Couple](#)
[Kataka \(Cancer\) — The Crab](#)
[Simha \(Leo\) — The Lion](#)
[Kanya \(Virgo\) — The Virgin](#)
[Thula \(Libra\) — The Man With A Scale](#)
[Vrischika \(Scorpio\) — The Scorpion](#)
[Dhanus \(Sagittarius\) — The Half Man, Half Horse](#)
[Makara \(Capricorn\) — The Crocodile](#)
[Kumba \(Aquarius\) — Man With An Empty Pot](#)
[Meena \(Pisces\) — The Fish](#)

[Chapter 7: Astrology Houses](#)

[Astrology Houses Framework](#)

[1st House — Personal truth — Body, Experience](#)
[2nd House — Personal Value — Possessions and Money](#)
[3rd House — Personal Happiness — Interests and Skills](#)
[4th House — Personal Peace — Emotions and Feeling](#)
[Overview of Houses 1-4 \(The Personal Houses\)](#)
[5th House — Relational Intelligence — Power of Love](#)
[6th House — Relational Values — Capacity for Sacrifice](#)
[7th House — Relationship Desire — Sharing and Equality](#)
[8th House — Relationship Freedom — Facing Fears](#)
[Overview of Houses 5-8](#)
[9th House — Universal Intelligence — Highest Truth](#)
[10th House: Universal Values — Highest Impact](#)
[The 11th House — Universal Desires — Highest Wishes](#)
[12th House: Universal Freedom — Letting go](#)

[Overview of Houses 9-12](#)

[Astrology House Types](#)

[Angular Houses — 1, 4, 7 and 10](#)
[1st House — Eastern horizon, rising sign.](#)
[4th House — Nadir, directly below.](#)
[7th House — Western horizon.](#)
[10th House — Midheaven/ directly overhead.](#)
[Trinal Houses — 1, 5 and 9](#)

1st House — Growth through having a truthful sense of self identity and the fulfillment that results from it.

5th House — Growth through learning and intelligence.

9th House — Our highest sense of purpose and meaning.

Upachaya (Increasing) Houses — 3, 6, 10, 11.

3rd House — Self-willed nature in pursuit of desires.

6th House — The unpleasant details and hard work in life.

10th House — Attachment to our past actions and current circumstances.

11th House — Highest worldly ambitions.

Upachayas Build on each Other

Dusthanas — Difficult Houses

Chapter 8: Rahu and Ketu — The Lunar Nodes

Interpreting the Story Astronomically and Astrologically

The Power of Confusion

Confusion or Perception

Rahu — The Advancing Army

Ketu — The Occupying Army

The Parent/Child Example

Chapter 9: The Nakshatras (Distant Stars)

Important Nakshatra Details and Patterns

Nakshatras and Rasi Connections

Rajasic Nakshatras: Aries-Cancer

Ashwini — Power of the Horses, the Horsemen

Bharani — Bearing, Enduring/The Bearers

Krittika — Razor/Cutter

Rohini — Ruddy cow, Red, Growing

Mrigashira — Deer/Antelope's Head

Ardra — Moist

Punarvasu — Return of the Light

Pushya — Nourisher, Flower, the Best

Aslesha — Entwiner, Embracer, Intimate Connection

The Tamasic Nakshatras: Leo-Scorpio

Magha — Beneficent, Mighty

Purva Phalguni — Previous Red One

[Uttara Phalguni — Later Red One](#)
[Hasta — Hand](#)
[Chitra — Brilliant/Distinguished](#)
[Svati — Independent, Sword](#)
[Vishaka — Branched, Forked Branches](#)
[Anuradha — Subsequent Success/Following Radha](#)
[Jyestha — The Eldest](#)
[Sattwic Nakshatras: Sagittarius-Pisces](#)
[Mula — Root, Commencement](#)
[Purva Ashada — Earlier Victory](#)
[Uttar Ashada — Later Victory](#)
[Sravana- Famous, Hearing](#)
[Dhanista — Very Rich, Very Swift](#)
[Shatabishak — 100 Medicines or Doctors](#)
[Purva Bhadra Pada — Earlier Blessed Result](#)
[Uttara Bhadra Pada — Later Blessed Result](#)
[Revati — Wealthy, Rich](#)

[Chapter 10: Harmonic Charts](#)

[Chapter 11: Important Planetary Factors — Aspects and Yogas](#)

[Planetary Aspects](#)
[Common | Shared Aspects](#)
[Mars Aspect Chart](#)
[Jupiter Aspect Chart](#)
[Saturn Aspect Chart](#)

[Mahapurusha Raja Yogas](#)

[RULE FOR MAHAPURUSHA RAJA YOGAS](#)
[Mars — Ruchaka Yoga](#)
[Mercury — Bhadra Yoga](#)
[Jupiter — Hamsa Yoga](#)
[Venus — Malavya Yoga](#)
[Saturn — Sasha Yoga](#)

[Other Important Classical Yogas](#)
[Classical Raja Yogas with Rahu and Ketu](#)
[Dhana Yogas \(Wealth-Producing\)](#)

Chapter 12: Timing Factors — Dasa and Transits

Dasas — the Cycles of Unfolding Karma

The Moon in the Vimshottari Dasa Scheme

Ketu — 7 Years

Venus — 20 Years

Sun — 6 Years

Moon — 10 Years

Mars — 7 Years

Rahu — 18 Years

Jupiter — 16 Years

Saturn — 19 Years

Mercury — 17 Years

Planetary Transits and Karma

Planets in Transit Through Rasis

Planets in Transit Through Bhavas

Chapter 13: Chart Analysis

Synthesizing the Graha, Rasi and Bhava

Keyword Templates for Chart Reading

Planet Keywords

Sign Keywords

House Keywords

Rhythm of Opposites

Bhavas and Their Opposite

Rashis and Their Opposite

A Simple Reading Formula

Case Studies Using the Worksheet

Angelina Jolie's Chart Using the Worksheet

A Synthesis of Angelina Jolie's Chart

John McEnroe Chart Using the Worksheet

A synthesis of John McEnroe's chart:

Chapter 14: Making Predictions Using Dasas and Transits

Dasa Cycles and Karma

Planetary Transits and Karma

Angelina Jolie Breast Surgery Chart

[John McEnroe — First Big Win Chart](#)

[Chapter 15: Mantras, Remedies and Devotion to Planets and Deities](#)

[Remedies for the Planets](#)

[Hymn to the Nine Planets:](#)

[Navagraha Stotra \(Nine Planet Verse\)](#)

[Chapter 16: Onward to Volume II 339](#)

[Glossary of Special Terms](#)

[Bibliography](#)

[About Sam Geppi the Author:](#)

[Certification — Free Classes and Updates:](#)

[Astrology Books and Media](#)

Introduction

Vedic astrology is a science — a serious science. Maybe you don't believe that. You will in about 20 minutes as you read Chapter 1. Maybe you do "believe" Vedic astrology is a science, but you have no idea why or how it works. You will also know this once you have read Chapter 1.

Vedic astrology is based on the same principles of yoga, Ayurveda and the other Vedic sciences. These sciences assert that our reason for incarnation is to learn that we are not simply a mind/body phenomenon. We are not limited beings of time and space. We are infinite and without boundaries. Our human struggles are a function of the limited self falsely imposed on to our deeper infinite self. We are struggling to get free and access the full power of who we are. Just as a nightmare wakes us from sleep, our life struggles are wake-up calls that force us to look for deeper meaning.

Of the three main Vedic sciences, Vedic astrology is probably the most misunderstood, especially here in the West, where many regard astrology as superstition or folly. This is understandable as most Americans encounter astrology through a horoscope or other fluffy, trivial media. There is no surprise that when an astrologer starts to speak about astrological "science," most scratch their heads in disbelief.

Putting all feelings about astrology aside, who among us has not at one time or another gazed up at the night sky and been moved by the mysterious, awesome, yet familiar nature of the universe? From our vantage point here on Earth we can see the Orion Nebula, believed to be the birthplace of our Sun, or the Pleiades cluster of stars, newly hatched worlds in the making, and many other sky objects, and we are humbled by them.

But we need not look far into the heavens for inspiration, as some of the most beautiful sky objects are the closest to home. Venus shines like a diamond in the night sky and as a "Morning Star," when it rises before the Sun. Jupiter is also radiant and breathtaking, and of course our lovely Moon. We are blessed and equally humbled by our own solar system, with its rhythms and daily magic.

However, besides providing us with a breathtaking light show, planetary and stellar movements also have an effect on us. The first thing human beings learned was to pay attention to the heavens. Many of mankind's earliest drawings, cave paintings and writings were astrological records of some sort. Astrology was the first science. Lunar cycles in particular are what allowed our forefathers to discover the best time for the planting of crops and to align with the daily rhythms of life on Earth.

Soon, auspicious times for every event as well as the deeper motivating forces behind the universe were to be understood by studying the rhythm of all planetary movements and our relationship to them. Actually, our bodies are approximately 75% water, just like the Earth. We are in fact star-stuff, refined in a sentient form, conscious and miraculous. We are children of the stars.

In our modern world, most of us live in urban areas. Given that we are not directly immersed in nature every day, it is easy to forget that we are residing on a large round globe that makes one revolution per day and moves around a large ball of fire at the center of a larger system of planets. How often do we stop to remember that during the sunrise or sunset it is not the Sun that is moving, it is the Earth that is turning? We must be careful, as we are so conditioned by the unnatural environments we live in that we run the risk of losing sight of what is real.

A "day" is not just an arbitrary measurement of time based on our work and sleeping schedule, it is the time it takes our planet to rotate once on its axis. The same is true with a month; it is the 30 days it takes the Moon to wax from new to full, then back to new again. A year is the time it takes the Earth to complete its annual orbit around the Sun.

These are not just heavenly cycles; they are human ones. Our bodies run on the same 24-hour cycle as the Earth. Every morning the Earth turns to face the Sun's life-giving energy. The Sun energizes all creatures that receive its light and warmth. By evening, as the Earth falls into shadow, our minds and bodies prepare for the evening's rest and rejuvenation, presided over by the Moon. Our blood flow, circadian rhythms and natural body clock are timed accordingly.

Whether we remember it or not, our brains are wired for waking in the light and sleeping when darkness falls. Many other earthly cycles such as high and low tides, women's menstrual cycles and the mating habits and rituals of many other Earth creatures are determined by the Moon's monthly orbit.

Few would dispute these claims as they are confirmed by logic and

observable events, however forgotten they may be in most of our daily lives. Westerners like “logic and observable events,” but when discussing other planets and their effects or the deeper psychological understanding possible through astrology as a science of divination and prediction, most people lose faith.

It is hard for many to accept that astrology evolved into a profound science that not only includes mundane issues like seasons and earthly cycles, but that also encompasses a deep understanding of the energetics behind all of creation. Modern arrogance has a tendency to dismiss the wisdom of ancient civilizations because they lacked our modern technology, with all its implied sophistication. But we should not mistake our advanced technology to mean an advanced understanding of the world, or even to mean an understanding of the technology itself. Just because I can turn on my computer or drive a car does not mean I understand how they work.

If Buddha were to appear today he would be clueless as to how to operate a cell phone or a spreadsheet program. That does not make me more intelligent or better able to understand the world or my self than Buddha. Similarly, just because they had yet to invent microwave ovens, the early Indians were not backward, ignorant hicks, cowering in fear of wrathful deities or whatever is the prevailing stereotype.

They had an understanding of occult knowledge and human awakening that culturally we do not possess today. Astrology is an example of this. Reclaiming this lost spiritual heritage is central to our survival as a species. Astrology is an example of this deeper connection to truth and a large part of reclaiming our spiritual roots.

Vedic Astrology as an Occult Science

As an occult science, astrology reigns supreme. However, given that it is based on distant objects rather than our hand (palmistry), colorful cards (tarot), or numbers (numerology), its effects often seem harder to cognize. Yet each of the aforementioned systems is based on astrology. The lines and mounts of palmistry are planetary, the cards in a tarot deck mirror planets in signs and other astrological archetypes, and numerology is also based on planetary energetics. Many astrologers also read tarot and palms and understand numerology. It makes sense. What else is there but the universe? Astrology is the science of our place in the universe.

Vedic astrology's sister science, Ayurveda, is mainly concerned with the physical world and our physical bodies. Astrology is mostly concerned with understanding the implications of our karma, the timing of life events, and how to unfold higher consciousness as a result.

Through astrology we gain insight into our deep-seated mental patterns, the karmas that created these patterns, and the best way to heal and understand ourselves.

We incarnate when the planets arrange in accordance with our karmic lessons. Essentially, the astrological chart is a portrait of the pattern of our karma. Astrology shows the history of our soul, its progress so far. Why we are here in this lifetime, what we are here to learn, what we have recently learned, and what will be our biggest challenges to learning it can all be seen through the chart. The mind wants answers. Astrology not only provides these answers, it also provides solutions. As a Vedic science, astrology uses the remedial measures of yoga, Ayurveda and the other Vedic sciences to aid us in enhancing our consciousness and understanding of our problems and ultimately ourselves.

Purpose of This Book

Too often Vedic astrology is reduced to fortune telling or mixed with new age ideas that have come from Western astrology / metaphysics. Not to disparage those approaches, but the precision and alignment of Vedic astrology with the universal Vedic frameworks described in this book is what make it unique.

With those things in mind, there are several purposes for this book:

1. To correctly place Vedic astrology in the culture and frameworks of Indian philosophy, Santana Dharma (Eternal truth) and Yoga.
2. Outline and illustrate how those universal principles and frameworks are shown in Vedic astrology.
3. Reveal the legitimate scientific basis of Vedic astrology, as the study of how spirit takes form.
4. Show the main important structures in Vedic astrology that allow us to learn and practice it, all the while maintaining the integrity of Vedic thinking outlined above.
5. Give several case studies that show Vedic astrology working on a high level — revealing how spirit takes form through our actions (Karma).

Repetition of Concepts

In keeping with Vedic exegesis, foundational principles will be restated to maintain continuity of Vedic thought and to convey importance. For example, Karma will be described as it relates to Sanatana dharma, Yoga philosophy, Vedic astrology — as it relates to the elements, gunas and more. Karma is a deep subject.

Similar is the case with the 5 elements, the 3 Gunas, the astrology houses, the astrology signs, the planets and many other concepts. You will see them approached from many angles throughout the text.

These are the same universal / Vedic principles that are too often glossed over without comprehension. Thus, in order to unwind the subtle implication of these principles, they must be attended to at different times, in different ways and from many angles.



गजाननं भूतगणादि सेवितं
कपित्थ जम्बूफलसार भक्षितम्
उमासुतं शोक विनाशकारणं
नमामि विघ्नेश्वर पादपङ्कजम् ॥

Gaja-[A]ananam Bhuuta-Ganna-[A]adi Sevitam
Kapittha Jambuu-Phala-Saara Bhakssitam
Umaa-Sutam Shoka Vinaasha-Kaarannam
Namaami Vighne[a-l]shvara Paada-Pangkajam ||

“I Salute Gajananam (Elephant-faced Ganesha) Who has an Elephant Face, Who is Served by the Bhuta Ganas (Celestial Attendants), Who Eats the Core of Kapittha (Wood Apple) and Jambu (Rose Apple) Fruits, Who is the Son of

Devi Uma and the one who Destroys Sorrows, I Prostrate at the Lotus-Feet of Vigneshwara (the God Who Removes Obstacles)."



CHAPTER 1

Welcome to the Universe

I often start public classes with a simple question: “What are the two reasons for life on Earth?” “What are the two things without which there would be no life on Earth?”

I get all sorts of answers. “Oxygen” and “water” are sometimes mentioned. Others are more scientific and say things like “prana.”

The answer: The Sun and the Moon.

The power of the Sun has energized every being that has ever lived. Think about it for a second. Every physical body, every heartbeat, every thought, every act of photosynthesis in a plant, every microbe, everything that exists, has ever existed or will exist derives its power from the Sun — including you, right now.

The only reason you are alive to read this now is because the Sun didn’t explode last night while you were sleeping or so far today. As soon as the Sun explodes or stops shining, everything is dead immediately. After hearing the answer maybe you will slap your head and say, “Of course, the Sun.” Then, your mind goes on to the next thing without really grasping the impact and miracle of the Sun.

Don’t do it this time.

Let this awareness of the Sun sink in. Feel gratitude for it what it means.

We have no idea how the Sun does what it does, why it is doing it, or how it got there. The Sun is this gigantic star that for some reason is sustaining our life and all life on the Earth. It doesn’t ask for anything in return for this. It doesn’t

demand, it just gives, and as soon as it stops giving we are all dead. That's it. The game is over.

No Sun = no life.

The Sun gives the power, but the power of the Sun would be inert if it were not for the Moon. Her orbit around the Earth is what regulates the tides and water and maintains the seismic activities of the Earth. If it were not for the Moon all the weather patterns would cease, things would stop growing and life as we know it on Earth would cease. In fact, life on Earth did not flourish until the Moon reached the proper harmonic balance with the Sun (more on that later).

It takes the power of the Sun and the creative principle of the Moon for life to flourish on Earth. And just like the Sun, the Moon asks for nothing. The Moon doesn't demand we praise her or worship her or even think of her at all. We need not do anything: the Moon will continue to circle the Earth, regulating the oceans and keeping the weather patterns and fertility cycles humming. We can land crafts or probes to her, explode projectiles on her surface and she will take it all.

Her love is unconditional, just like the Sun and the beautiful Earth they have given us. In fact, we can even pollute, destroy and degrade the Earth itself and the Sun, Moon and Earth will still continue to provide abundance.

We have no paradigm for this kind of generosity in our worldly, human mind and life. Perhaps the best example we see of this kind of selflessness is shown in the lives of the great saints who give tirelessly to humanity.

The Illusions of a Limited Being in Cosmic Time

The concept of maya is a very important one in Indian thinking. Translated loosely, "maya" means "illusion." There is a famous story of "the snake and the rope" from the Vedic texts that illustrates the power of illusion.

On a dark night, we may mistake a rope in our path to be a snake. When such a mistake happens, our full mind, body and nervous system react to a snake, albeit an imagined one. For us, in that moment, the snake is real. We may scream, cry and run away at this site. However, later if a flashlight is produced and the rope is seen, we return to normal.

Once we see the rope (truth) for ourselves, we do not later forget and react to the same imagined snake again. The appearance of light/truth removes the illusion of the snake, immediately and permanently.

There are many illusions with our place in the cosmos, which can be shattered by simple contemplation or observation. For example, this very second, the Earth you are standing on is spinning at 1,000 mph at the equator and moving around the Sun at about 70,000 mph. Yet it is all happening with ease, in relative silence and stillness.

Perspective on the Aeons of Time

This amazing, cosmic equilibrium did not happen overnight. In fact, it took close to 4.5 billion years for life to evolve on Earth. Even though the solar system has been here for 4.5 billion years, archaic — modern humans have only inhabited Earth for the last 100,000 years.

These numbers are staggering and therefore lose relevance; 4.5 billion years or 100,000 years, they both sound like a long time. When we think of years in terms of our lifetime, 100 years is a long time, even 50 years seems like a long time. In term of years, five or six thousand years seems like forever, yet it is a blink of an eye when measured against the age of our solar system.

Consider this:

4.5 billion (4,500,000,000) years is the age of our solar system.

100,000 years is how long there have been “humanoids” on Earth.

If you were to stack 100, 450-page books one on top of the other to represent the age of our solar system, the age of humanoids (100,000 years) would be the last page in that stack.

The earliest records of the ancient Vedic, Egyptian and Sumerian people (dated to perhaps 3000 BC) would be 1/20th of that last page, perhaps the last sentence or two.

Our modern world, of the last hundred years or so, is 1/50th of that, perhaps the last word on the page.

Your lifetime is perhaps the “d” in the last phrase of the last book, “The End.”

We should see this timeline as analogous to how our body, mind and psyche were formed and how they operate. Our body/mind life on Earth is embedded with the intelligence of the entire cosmos. This intelligence reaches back into the mists of time through eons of patient forbearance.

This universe that created us, implanted its genius everywhere and in everything, and it is not done yet. As such, we are remarkably durable and well-built. Our bodies can withstand extreme levels of trauma and abuse due to the

redundant genius built into every cell, forged over 4.5 billion years. The higher levels of mind are supported by layers of more primal brains, backup systems and brilliance, down to the cellular level. Each cell contains the sagacity of the entire organism — independent, yet connected — simultaneously magical and practical.

And from where did this come? God, some might say. Well, if there is any need to call anything god, it would certainly have to include the Sun and Moon and the universe as main agents of her work. As you will see, the Vedic astrology texts are clear that the planets are the “visible form” of Lord Vishnu. Our bodies, minds and spirits are the product of 4.5 billion years of love and dedication from the Sun, Moon and the other planets.

The Sacred Number 108

Since we’re talking about illusions, I wonder if you’ve ever stopped to ponder something truly miraculous about the Sun and Moon. Have you ever considered how it’s possible that these two arbitrary celestial objects, although completely different in size and constitution, look exactly the same size to us from Earth? Have you ever pondered the odds that a giant ball of fire and a relatively small rock look exactly the same size from where we are?

The reason this happens is due to the phenomena of size and distance, and is based on the number 108. Most who have studied yoga know of the mystical number 108. Mala beads (prayer necklaces) have 108 beads on them to symbolize this ratio of size and distance.

$L=Dx108$ (length equals diameter multiplied by 108) is the formula that shows how the Sun and Moon maintain this symmetry.

The approximate mean length between the Sun and Earth roughly equals 108 x the diameter of the Sun. The approximate mean length between the Moon and Earth equals 108 x the diameter of the Moon. (Actually, the exact scale is closer to 109.) Images 1.1 and 1.2 show this graphically.

You can understand this more simply by visualizing that you could put 108 Moons between us and the Moon and 108 Suns between us and the Sun. The chances of something like this being “coincidence” are simply out of the question. This is an incalculable phenomena. In fact, in cosmic time it is also a very recent phenomena. Here’s why.

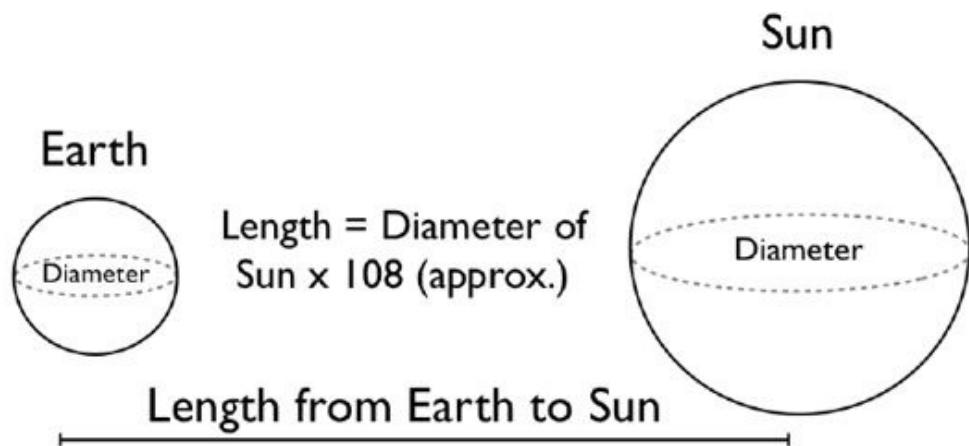


Figure 1.1

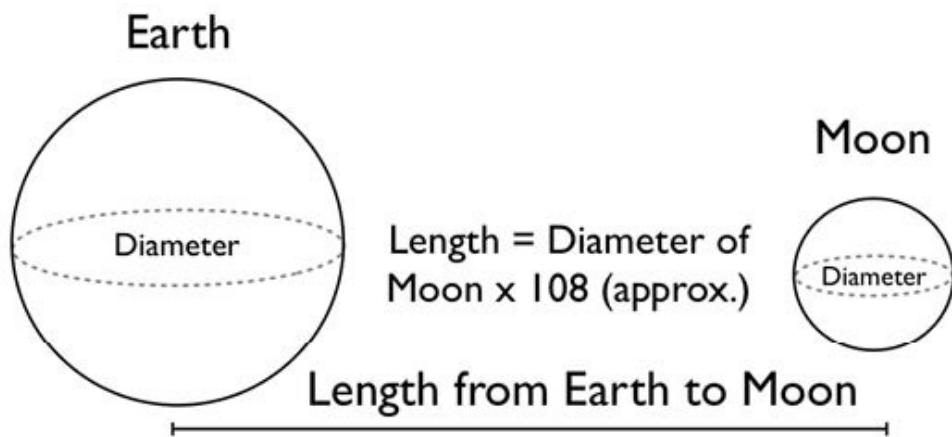


Figure 1.2

The Explosion of Life

As we have just discussed, the Sun, Moon and Earth are 4.5 billion years old, approximately. For most of this time, there was no life at all. For nearly 2.5 billion years there was nothing on Earth, not even a single-celled organism. Then, for about a billion years, single-celled organisms flourished, then became double-celled organisms — essentially a microbe swimming around with a tail.

It was not until quite recently, in the scale of cosmic time, that we started to see life explode on Earth. This explosion of life is called the Cambrian explosion, and it happened 500 million years ago — after 9/10 of time on earth had elapsed.

So what made life suddenly start to appear on Earth?

The Moon.

Once the Moon neared the same “108” vibrational frequency as the Sun, life began to explode. You see, the Moon is actually slipping out of that 108 vibrational pattern by about 1.25 inches per year. She has been in this “108 sweet spot” for about 94,000 years. What a coincidence that this is the same period of time that intelligent life has blossomed on Earth.

There are many explanations for why 108 is important in yoga philosophy, but none are more important than this one. The reason there is life on Earth at all is because both the Sun and Moon have patiently energized her with the exact ratio of fire, water and the other elements for over 4 billion years, culminating in the last 95,000 years, where the perfect ratio has been achieved for reflective consciousness to develop.

Sadly, in 100 years mankind has altered this delicate balance, one that took 4.5 billion years to create.

Through incalculable eons of time, to this very moment, the Sun and Moon have worked their magic. We have no idea how these immense beings got here or why there is life at all. But we must reconnect and recommit to understanding the nature of our life in the cosmos if we are to restore dharma (truth) to this Earth. In fact, at this point we have little choice. We must reawaken or perish.

The Sun, Moon and Hindu Deities

The Sun and Moon (and the other planets as well) are the beings that have created and continue to create life every second of every day of your life. They are as indispensable to us as anything we can imagine. How hard is it to conclude that the very beings that create life on Earth also have some form of intelligence? How unimaginative and shortsighted we are as human beings to only ascribe intelligence to something that has a face, or that can talk to us.

Just as you are not only a creature of form, neither are the planets. If someone were to empty you of your essence, objectifying you as just a hunk of meat walking around, it would be downright insulting. Yet this is what most people do with the planets. The planets are not just big, dumb rocks up in the sky. That is their form, their body. In essence, they are wise and benevolent beings that each activate or create a different force of life on Earth and in you.

Don't feel so bad if you forget. The ancient rishis (seers) knew the forms of the planets would likely not inspire you. After all, they are way up in the sky, so far away, just points of light. Meanwhile you have your daily concerns here on Earth with family and work and so on. So the great seers of the past made the planets more approachable for you — gave them a face, so to speak. Vedic myths and Hindu deities are simply anthropomorphic (made to be like humans) versions the planets.

The rishis knew it would be much easier for people to understand the nature of spirit (Sun) and form (Moon) if they were made into beautiful deities with faces and stories that illustrate their natures. We easily relate to something that looks like us and behaves like us, but in superhuman ways. How else can we convey that which is impossible but by using some references to human life?

The divine masculine principle is related to and activated by the Sun.

The divine feminine principle is related to and activated by the Moon.

Sun and Moon — Shiva and Shakti

Two of the most powerful deities are the male Shiva — the Sun — and the female Shakti (or Parvati, Durga or Kali) — the Moon. Their interactions are direct depictions of the Sun and Moon. Often you see Shiva, the male deity, sitting perfectly still while his wife is tending to their children or in devoted prostration. There is a lovely story that illustrates Shiva and Parvati's courtship, connections and their relationship to the Sun and Moon.

Since she was a little girl, Parvati only wanted one thing, to marry Lord Shiva and have children with him. Her father used to take her to the mountain where Lord Shiva was in deep Samadhi (in communion with the highest self). She wished to grow up and one day meditate like Shiva.

As the years went on and Parvati grew up Shiva remained in deep levels of samadhi and would not even look up to see who was before him, serving his needs, cleaning his peeta (royal seat) and worshipping him. How Parvati longed for just a glance from Mahadeva ("Great Lord," another name of Shiva).

Even though she was the most beautiful woman in the village, she only wanted to marry Shiva, who, by most accounts, had a repulsive appearance: a body smeared with cremation ashes, a necklace of cobras and matted hair. Not to mention that he would simply sit in meditation and cared nothing for the world, a family and children, like other men would.

When Parvati confessed to her desire to marry Shiva, her father and mother were not pleased. They imagined their daughter would be alone and childless, pining away for the god of solitude and dispassion. But Parvati was determined to marry her lord, as nothing gave her as much hope and pleasure than to be looking upon Lord Shiva in deep meditation.

Her parents sought the help of the god of love, Kamadeva, to shoot Lord Shiva with a love arrow, hoping this would activate his desires for their daughter. They thought that if Kamadeva were to shoot Lord Shiva while Parvati was nearby, as soon as Shiva opened his eyes he would see her and immediately be smitten. However, when the god of love shot his arrow, Shiva immediately opened his third eye and burned the arrow and the god of love to ashes. Meanwhile, he remained in samadhi, unperturbed by the most beautiful and voluptuous Parvati.

Her family thought at this point that she would surely give up on her irrational desires to marry Shiva. Even the spell of Kamadeva himself had no effect on Shiva. But she did not give up. Instead, she committed herself to the most rigorous tapas (penance).

“Lord Shiva is not interested in beauty and worldly forms, he is only interested in a pure heart,” she thought. “Only the heat of tapas will burn my desires. I must enter the all-consuming flames of truth.”

She went to live in the mountain forest where Shiva lived, all alone and eating only wet leaves. Eventually she would eat only dry leaves, and then later nothing at all — subsisting on just water and prana (vitality). Her tapas (penance) was so fierce it started to shake the world. In her presence animals that were normally enemies became friends. The lamb and the lion lay down together. The rat and the snake became friends.

Eventually Lord Shiva noticed her tapas. He had to see who this powerful yogi in his forest was. Shiva disguised himself as a holy man (a beggar) and approached Parvati. When Parvati saw the holy man, she bowed in reverence to him. Shiva, disguised as the holy man, asked her why she was doing such a severe penance. Being such a young and beautiful girl, she should have been attending to courtships, dating and selecting a husband. When she explained she was doing penance in order to gain Lord Shiva’s hand in marriage, he laughed.

“Interested in marrying Lord Shiva? What kind of husband would he be? With snakes around his neck, funeral ashes smeared on his body, surrounded by ghouls and goblins, always meditating and not providing for a wife and kids,

what a sight that would be to have such a rascal joined with such a lovely young woman.”

On hearing these insults to Lord Shiva, Parvati narrowed her eyes and gave the holy man a caustic stare. “Respected Sir, the way you speak of Shiva is not worthy. It shows me you cannot really know or understand who Shiva is. He is the refuge for the lowest of the low and the maker of all worlds. He is the easiest to please and not concerned with the appearances of this world. Even though you defile and ridicule him, he has nothing but love and compassion for you and your ignorance. Even if Lord Shiva is never aroused from his meditation to marry me, the love that burns in my heart for him is pure. There is nowhere I would rather be than in his presence. Even if I die waiting to give my hand to him, it would be worth it. Now, do not speak to me anymore in this way and leave me at once.”

On hearing this, Lord Shiva was moved to the very core. Then he revealed his true form to Parvati. Seeing such pure, raw devotion stirred his heart. “Dear lady, do you wish to have a boon? Simply name it and it is yours,” Shiva said.

“I want no boon; I have only one wish, and that is to be your wife. One as powerful as you should certainly be able to see that!” she exclaimed.

He could not refuse Parvati, and immediately confessed his love and asked for her hand in marriage. At this time, she left for home and advised Shiva to approach her father and ask for her hand in a proper way.

This story illustrates many things, including the 4.5 billion year dance through time of the Sun and Moon that was just described. The Sun was steady and powerful for eons of time, unmoved and untempted by anything other than total purity. The Sun was self-fulfilled, whether there was a world of forms and people, just like Shiva. But eventually, Parvati’s vibration became irresistible, as it moved into perfect synch with his — and a world of beings exploded eventually.

Other Images of Shiva / Shakti as Sun / Moon

At other times Shakti is in her fierce form as goddess Kali. Lord Shiva is lying beneath her — still and unmoving — supporting her wild and ecstatic dance. This symbolizes the Sun, sitting still in the sky, providing power and support, as the Moon dances in her orbit, giving rise and fall to a multitude of forms.

A similar depiction is seen when Shakti is in the form of goddess Durga, riding a lion (a symbol of the Sun). Her creative, protective nature is supported by the courageous and mighty Sun.

These images take on a sublime nature when we remember the Sun and Moon waited four billion years for the Moon to move into the sacred, life-giving vibration. The Sun and Moon never lost track or gave up the goal of creating life. They knew it would take a long time to orient the cosmic chemistry set just right.

Lord Vishnu and his wife Lakshmi are also an important deity couple, as is Lord Brahma and his daughter Saraswati. These masculine/feminine deities are directly related to the Sun and Moon and the reason for life.

Most of the time we are completely disconnected from the truth of our life on Earth, and unpayable debt we owe the Sun and Moon. The ancient cultures of the world were not so disconnected. They had lifestyles that affirmed their connection to the Sun, Moon and the entire cosmos. The Vedic people would do “Surya Namaskar” (salutations to the Sun) every morning. They knew the Sun was not just a big fireball in the sky. That ball of fire is just the appearance of the god, Surya — the deity of the Sun.

Vedic culture also tracked the Moon very carefully. In fact, the Moon was so important that an entire zodiac is dedicated to the daily movement of the Moon.

Vedic astrology — The Sun and Moon

Although we will explore this in great detail later, it is important to establish the connections between the sacred astronomy of “108”, the Hindu Deities and Vedic astrology. Here is what the Vedic astrology sage Parashara has to say about the Sun god Surya and the Moon god Chandra:

Surya — The Sun

“Honey-yellow eyed is the Sun, square and radiantly pure, O’ Twice Born, of Pitta nature, intelligent, masculine, with but little hair, O’ Twice Born.”

Chandra — The Moon

“Abounding in Vata and Kapha and filled with knowing is the Moon of round body, O’ Twice Born, auspicious looks, of sweet speech, fluctuating and love sick.”

As a creative force, the Sun gives the consistent, eternal power to life on Earth. In Samkya philosophy (explained later), Vedic astrology and Ayurveda, the Sun is the Purusha (soul), the Param Atman (the supreme self). This supreme self is not the self of the individual. It is the ONE self, referred to in yoga, the ocean of light from which all comes and to which all returns.

The Sun is the non-localized being within you, the one who is beyond form and incarnation — just like Shiva. The true Sun within needs nothing of the world. If there were no world here at all, your inner Sun would still exist in full luminescence. In fact, the Sun does just that each night when you dream, illuminating your mind.

As a creative force, the Moon takes the non-localized power of the Sun and makes (localized) life forms with intelligence, such as people, animals and plants. In Samkya philosophy, Vedic astrology and Ayurveda the Moon is Prakriti (form) and is called the Jiva atman (the individual self).

The Sun and Moon together create the world of duality, which includes the feeling of “you” in the body, of this world and with Karma. As such, the Moon also refers to your psychology and the inner experience you are having. The Moon is the source of emotions, ideas, memories, moods. You experience yourself, and have a feeling of being alive that comes from the Moon.

It is through the agency of consciousness (the Moon) that we must experience and perceive the light of the soul (the Sun). Just as we cannot look directly at the Sun without burning out our eyes, so too is the case with our soul: we must look through the mind (the Moon) — which is actually the heart in Eastern practice.

The Ego and the Prism of Maya

The Sun and Moon are the archetypes of masculine and feminine / yang and yin / spirit and matter. The other planets rule over important parts of our body, mind and soul as well. Astrology, like other Vedic sciences, is a tool to help us reunite with the highest truth, beyond the illusion that we are merely a mind / body / ego.

Here is an example. Visualize light shining through a prism. In your mind’s eye, see a shaft of white light entering on one side, then being broken up into its seven component colors. Vedic astrology views the planet’s relationship to the world in a similar way.

Visualizing light through a prism, the world of maya (illusion) is represented by the fragmentation of the one ray of light into seven colors. It is through the prism of the mind / body / ego that light appears to be its seven component colors. The prism separates the colors from each other and from their source. In reality their rays are one with each other and with the source itself (see Figure 1.3).

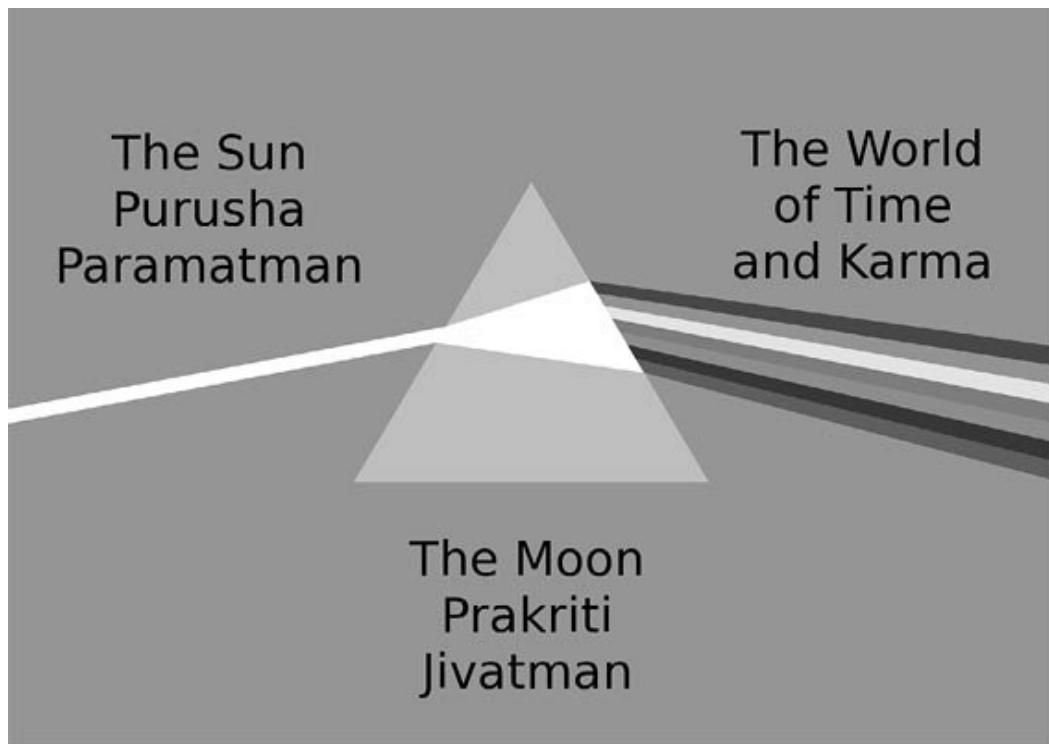


Figure 1.3

Similarly, there is a false sense of separateness that we have from each other and from our collective source. We try to understand the wholeness of reality through these limiting qualities of form and thought. Without a prism there would be no separation of light. Similarly, without the ego and the limitations of the body / mind phenomena there would be no division of the true self into the component qualities of the smaller self.

The ego / prism of maya is caused by our karma, the actions we have taken in the past, and the need to take more actions in order to evolve (Karma will be explained in great detail later in the book). Actions that unfold more easily are shown by planets in good dignity or disposition. More painful lessons are seen by the planets that are not in good dignity and / or influence.

The seven rays of light indicate the planets and their forces. All seven colors fully shined and integrated comprise the original, single ray of light. Yet we struggle with even the individual rays in their full expression.

From an astrological perspective, spiritual growth is learning how to express the full energy of all of the planets (signs and houses too). It is learning to allow the rays of each planet to shine through us fully. Enlightenment is the state that occurs when someone has fully reintegrated all seven rays into their being, fully understanding the forces behind them. But since we are not yet complete, we express their energies through our limitation. Astrologically speaking, all human suffering is a result of the inability to express the full energy of the planets.

For example, Venus in her full expression brings devotion to pure love and beauty itself, not to an outer form of momentary pleasure or happiness. We try to express this devotion and beauty through the love we make with our partners, but we suffer in love because we fall short of this fullness. Lust, attention-seeking, vanity, and over-sensuality are the counterfeit versions of Venus, her eternal wisdom filtered through our limited ego.

Yet Venus gives exactly what we need to love fully all of the time. But we are not able to express her full energy until we purify the fears and desires associated with our smaller self, the ego. Thus, yoga and other disciplines give methods on how to purify.

Suffering in love feels like a loss of self, because at our very core we *ARE* this Venus love, respect and beauty. We feel it, but we cannot express it through our limited bodies and perceptions. We suffer when we experience love through our limitation. In the case of love, we experience Venus in limitation.

With Mars, for example, we suffer when we experience limited “strength” — becoming frustrated when something outside of us has power over us. This usually makes us angry.

With Mercury, limited skills and knowledge causes suffering. With Jupiter, limited understanding, hope and meaning is painful. I discuss each of these things in greater detail in the chapter on planets.

Through astrology we see which of our energies are stronger and weaker, as shown by the planets. The chart below shows the highest lesson and the lowest expression of each of the seven main planets in Vedic astrology as well as the North and South nodes.

Use the table below to reference and compare each planet functioning in full power contrasted with its nature when filtered through our ego.

There is a more detailed explanation of the evolutionary process of each planet in the chapter on the planets. For now, however, the following table can act as a guide to the seven rays of light emanating from the planets into form

<i>Planet</i>	<i>Full Expression</i>	<i>Through Limitation</i>
Sun	Confident – consistent – integrity – vision	Egotistical, tyrannical, demanding praise, unreliable
Moon	Peace, clarity of mind – selfless sharing	Volatile emotions, clinging, dependence
Mars	Focused energy – bold, courageous	Argumentative, violent, reckless
Mercury	Discrimination – flexible – skill – lighthearted	Over-stimulated, unable to adjust, gossipy
Jupiter	Hopeful, good judgment, expansive, philosophical	Greedy, atheistic, impractical, lack of hope and judgment
Venus	Joy, happiness, beauty, love, devotion	Energy wasted on sensual pursuits, vanity, materialistic
Saturn	Determined, able to be alone, realistic	Sorrow, isolated, cold, ruthless, fearful, bitter
Rahu (north node)	Psychic, purity / transcendence of matter	Materialistic, addicted, attached, extreme personality
Ketu (south node)	Inward focus, desire for liberation	Explosive, critical, unforgiving, isolated, cynical,

Astrology of the Past and Future

Every wise and dharmic culture of the past practiced some form of astrology as they were all tuned in to the sacred universe creating beings and experiences. But Vedic astrology is miraculous in that we still have a direct link to the cultural texts and teachings, and see how it worked, and still works, as a revered system of healing in everyday life.

But the sad truth is, like many metaphysical systems, astrology took a beating in the dark ages. Its practitioners were branded as heretics (witches), ostracized and even killed. Not surprisingly, the Church also labeled as a heretic any scientist who produced facts inconsistent with Church doctrine. Indeed, many scientists and astronomers were also astrologers. Isaac Newton, Kepler, Benjamin Franklin and others in the West were students of astrology. Of course, in the East, astrology continued even through the dark ages.

But even Eastern astrology suffered mightily during the dark ages (commonly called the Kali Yuga in the East). Rather than the precise techniques of great rishis like Parashara and Jaimini, medieval Vedic astrologers relied on imprecise methods, endless and bewildering permutations of planets, a wild overemphasis on certain difficult combinations of planets and many other sloppy practices. Astrology itself also became inextricably linked with the Brahmin class (the Church and priests), becoming more and more superstitious, political and suspect.

To many, astrology became a tool for scaring people into getting remedies to remove curses and their practitioners less and less scientific, less and less connected to the deeper heart of dharma and the universal truths we are discussing.

Sadly, some of these stereotypes still exist today, especially in the West where astrology is hardly considered a serious science. In fact, even worse, there are many who still consider astrology in the same extreme terms as in the dark ages — as being satanic or against the Church and religion. Astrologers are still commonly labeled as charlatans, said to be preying on people's fears and duping suckers out of their money.

Recently, as astrology has become more popular, there are many who call themselves professional astrologers after just taking a few workshops and gathering information from the internet. Many are very sloppy and imprecise about what they say, often using general astrological archetypes to riff on their take on spiritual counseling, and in general give many reasons not to take astrology seriously.

I am not saying these things to disparage well-meaning people who call themselves astrologers. I know many are simply trying to help others and raise their spiritual vibration. But I want to give context to how many view astrology, given the beating it has taken for centuries and the shoddy applications of many who "believe in it." Today. In fact, that is also one of the big problems: believing in astrology. There is no need to "believe in" astrology.

Astrology is not a religion, it is a science.

The Divine Science

Make no mistake about it, astrology is a science. Like every science, it is remarkably consistent. Any person who studies astrology will see it work. Down

to a very deep level, astrologers and serious students know exactly what they are looking at when they read an astrology chart.

For instance, if I were to say a person was born when Mars was in the 7th house, aspecting Venus in the first house and joined Mercury in the 7th house. Any person who has studied astrology, even at a basic level, would know many things about the person with that birth chart. The things said would be correct and everyone would agree about those things (minus specific “predictions” that only the most advanced would make).

Diagnosis of tendencies and understanding in astrology, across ALL systems, is remarkably uniform. There would be very little to debate about such placements. If the planets were changed and it was the Moon in the 7th house, the astrology students would modify their indications accordingly — and again, the modifications would be correct and people would agree on them.

This is no different to when you go to the doctor and receive blood tests. Anyone trained to read that blood test chart would know what they are seeing. They have been trained to look for a certain ratio of chemicals in the blood. They know what certain chemical anomalies might mean. For instance, a lack of iodine may mean a weak thyroid, the presence of insulin would alert to the pancreas, etc.

The same is true with reading an astrology chart. Astrologers see the planets and their relationship to each other and their location as a certain “soul DNA,” revealing certain strengths and weaknesses, tendencies and levels of intelligence. But astrology also shows the timing of when things happen and what they mean and feel like to the person.

Reading an astrology chart is like reading sheet music. To those who know how to read sheet music, the notes on the page actually make music in their heads. To those who can’t read the notated language, there is no music. Sheet music is useless to them.

The Million Dollar Question

I can hear you now asking, “So how does astrology work? How does the movement of rocks in the sky influence me on Earth. Is it gravity? Do the planets emit rays?”

No one knows how astrology works. But here is the thing: no one knows *how* anything works.

What do I mean by that?

In the West we refer to things like “The Scientific Community” as a sort of catch-all group of experts that we trust to validate the Sciences. We believe that certain “sciences” have been approved by this scientific community, so we “believe” in those sciences, like, for example, Western medicine.

We believe in it as a “proven science.” We believe that a doctor knows “how” the body works, and that other “real scientists” (not wacky astrologers) can actually prove their assertions based on “scientific fact.” The truth is, scientists and doctors do not know any better than astrologers how their sciences work, we just believe they do based on our cultural bias.

For instance, let us say you go to the doctor’s office and observe a conversation between a child and your doctor. It may go something like this:

Child: “What does the heart do?”

Doctor: “It pumps blood through the body so we can stay alive.”

Child: “How does the heart do that?”

Doctor: “The heart is controlled by a part of the brain that automatically sends an electrical impulse to it.”

Child: “How does the brain do THAT and how does the brain know HOW MANY times the heart should beat and for how long?”

Doctor: “Ah, such a curious little girl, aren’t you?” (looking for a piece of candy to give the child)

Any five-year-old child can bring the curtain down quickly on our mental arrogance, and our thinking we understand how things work.

The truth is that no one understands how these things happen. Just because we have been able to isolate and observe the areas of the brain that control autonomic functions, like the heart beat and breath, does not mean we understand how it happens — any more than astrologers know how astrology works.

Doctors, the medical system, and others who are high on a perch of “scientific proof” are playing with the same deck of cards as metaphysicians. They are just shielded from accountability by the belief system of the masses. People believe doctors are practicing science and astrologers are following a weird belief system. But astrologers and doctors do the same things. Both

conduct experiments, observe the effects of these experiments and predict what will happen next.

People ask things of astrology that they completely overlook in other “sciences” they believe in. If we dismiss astrology because the astrologer cannot answer “how,” then we must dismiss medicine and every other science as well.

How do the planets influence? No one knows.

What is the origin of the electrical impulse that is sent forth from the R-Complex of the brain that keeps our heart beating and body breathing? No one knows.

How does the digestive system know exactly what to do with every chemical compound in food and micromanage every little function each second? No one knows.

Doctors have no idea.

Astrologers have no idea.

The ancient yogis and rishis knew. Everything comes from the divine universe and we can see into that using astrology. We can see the what, the why, the who, the when — but not the how. No one knows “how,” only god — or you could say, that mysterious creative genius behind it all is god.

Vedic Astrology for a World in Transition

We are at a point in human history where we have to plot a new course. As a species, our shortsighted ways now demand of us nothing less than a full renaissance of culture, economics and spirituality. Many see this as a bleak and dangerous time, but it does not have to be.

Central to this paradigm shift is the awakening and empowerment of each individual. We have to choose boldly and with expanse. These unprecedented times also present unprecedeted opportunities for growth and a higher consciousness to again take root on Earth.

All around us we see evidence of the new heart and soul-centric world of the future. There are many Mahatmas (great souls) on this Earth now spreading mystical wisdom to all corners and resurgence in the spiritual traditions and techniques of the past. Yoga, tantra, tai chi, chi gung and many other spiritual systems and approaches are once again becoming commonplace, and not only in medicinal settings.

These amazing spiritual sciences are a perfect example of where science and spirituality meet. Yoga and Ayurveda are a perfect example of this merging of science and spirituality, and now it is time to also return astrology to its rightful place among the spiritual sciences.

It is unfortunate that even in many traditional yoga and Ashram communities how Vedic astrology is seen as outdated, superstitious and inferior to the other Vedic sciences. The truth is, Vedic astrology was considered the supreme science of them all. Vedic astrology was revered as the great science, called the “Eye of the Vedas.” Of course, the eyes allow us to see beyond the illusion.

Every wise and ancient culture knew the importance of our connection to the universe. Our descent into the hyper-literal scientific culture we are now trying to dig our way out from directly mirrors the discredit of astrology through the ages. This antiseptic world view, where our impeccable logic is king, is exactly the mindset that has left us so disconnected from spirit and on the verge of self-destruction.

Sadly, even many who practice modern Western or Vedic astrology do so with this modern hyper-logical bent, where everything is seen as a way to intellectually conquer the universe in some way — to overcome the problems.

Don’t get me wrong, Vedic astrology has many remedial measures to help us avoid trouble. But in many circles astrology is seen as one more tool to help us get what we want from life rather than as a tool for self-knowledge — similar to how yoga is just seen as good exercise. This limited perspective separates us from the source, rather than connecting us to it.

The Science of Karma

Our spirit takes form on Earth with a body and mind that experience pain and pleasure very easily. This is to ensure that we get immediate feedback on our soul’s progress and the things we think we have learned.

The planets are the energies of intelligence in our mind, our eternal teachers and the agents of that karma.

The first chapter of *Brihat Parashara Hora Sastra* states:

“Janrdana, in the Form of the Grahas (Planets), gives the fruits of karma of the living beings. To destroy the strength of the Daityas [demons], to increase the strength of the Devas, aiming to establish dharma. Janrdana (Vishnu) from grahas took many auspicious births successively.”

This is the truth of astrology and why it works. The planets are incarnations of Lord Vishnu (Janardana), the conscious forces of creation that form our being and everything we call “life”.

In yoga / tantra, the planets are the energizing forces in our chakras, the inner zodiac and the archetypes of all the deities (more on that later).

In Ayurveda, the planets form the Pancha Mahabhutas (the five great elements) and the Dhatus (the seven sacred tissues).

We are not separate from the universe and the planets, any more than our body is separate from our mind. Yoga is the science of unifying the body, mind and heart. The term “Hatha yoga” literally means to unite the Sun and Moon. Many yogis and yoga students know this, but see it as poetry. It is not just poetry.

The Sun and Moon rule the ida and pingala nadis (right and left nostrils respectively) — the active and passive breath, the hot and cool, the yang and yin. The same polarities of life originated 4.5 billion years ago from the Sun and Moon, not just poetically, but scientifically.

Our illusion of the snake and the rope is the opposite of the classical yoga story. We have snakes in our path and we think they are just ropes. We need to produce a flashlight and shine it on these snakes. We need Jyotish.

Our soul comes to this limited world with a limited form in search of divine experiences. How vast the gap often seems between form and spirit!

Yoga is the science of connecting the limited form to the unlimited spirit. It gives us practical tools in the moment, in form, to reawaken our divine nature.

That body and awakening self was given to us by the agents of intelligence and love — the planets. We call this our “karma.” Astrology is the study of karma — the study of the living, divine universe that creates all beings and their experiences.



CHAPTER 2

Yoga Beyond the Mat

There are many common Vedic frameworks that connect yoga and Vedic astrology, but first let's define what we mean by "yoga" in this book. We will not be discussing the alignment of postures (asanas) and physiology. We will be exploring yoga as a path of spiritual awakening that involves many methods, approaches and philosophies — including ones that are tantric or that come from Ayurveda or perhaps from Hinduism.

You see, yoga in its purest sense is really just the application of all Vedic principles toward the goal of self-realization. The same energetics and philosophies underpin all of the Vedic sciences, with just a slightly different emphasis.

Robert Svoboda, in his book *Your Ayurvedic Constitution: Prakruti*, explains:

"Because every embodied individual is composed of a body, a mind and a spirit, the ancient Rishis of India who developed the Science of Life organized their wisdom into three bodies of knowledge: Ayurveda, which deals mainly with the physical body; Yoga, which deals mainly with spirit; and Tantra, which is mainly concerned with the mind."

The philosophy of all three is identical; their manifestations differ because of their differing emphases. Ayurveda is most concerned with the physical basis of life, concentrating on its harmony of mind and spirit. Yoga

controls body and mind to enable them to harmonize with spirit, and Tantra seeks to use the mind to balance the demands of body and spirit.”[1]

Excellent explanation, except Vedic astrology is missing. When Vedic astrology is brought into the mix, we connect these other sciences with the science of time, place and purpose. We see the overarching themes of destiny and the interconnectedness between things like our liver, our guru, the sky and our children (Jupiter).

Vedic astrology allows us to make sense of our larger purpose, connecting our limited minds to the cosmic mind, not to mention allowing us to avoid difficulties and maximize opportunities in life. For instance, understanding astrology allows us to find the best times to begin a new meditation practice or medical routine, or to find the right partner. Once we add Vedic astrology to our skill set, even in a basic sense, we connect our limited mind to the divine mind that's always unfolding, whether we know it or not.

For example, each day the phase of the Moon is different, in a different star and relating to the other planets of destiny in a unique way. Also, we are receiving certain karmas / unfolding different parts of our consciousness at that time as well. We are meant to be living in harmony with these universal forces, that's why Vedic astrology exists. We all want success in our undertakings and to understand what challenges may be ahead of us on the road.

Indian festivals and holidays occur on certain astrological days. For instance, Guru Purnima usually occurs when the full Moon happens in the sign of Sagittarius. This is because our mind is most capable of connecting to the guru on that day. Sagittarius is the sign ruled by Jupiter (guru).

Diwali occurs on the new Moon when the Sun is usually in Libra, its sign of debilitation, when the Sun is at its weakest. Diwali is the celebration of “light,” and on this day both the Sun and Moon are very dark. And often the Sun is in the Nakshatra of Swati, ruled by Vayu, the wind god. (Later he became Hanuman in the Ramayana.) If one did not know astrology, the story of Lord Rama on Diwali would just seem like an interesting story. Once we learn astrology, we see the festival connected to the sky itself, our universal home.

Dharma and Karma

Vedic astrology, yoga and all Vedic sciences and teachings are based on a philosophy called “Sanatana dharma,” which translates as “eternal truth.” Every scripture, writing, deity and story is in one way or another teaching this concept.

Sanatana dharma is remarkably simple, yet quite subtle and elusive, because of our self-forgetfulness. At its heart are two core concepts: dharma and karma. Dharma and karma are closely related to each other.

Dharma means truth, and the actions that connect us to truth. The “truth” of dharma is the biggest truth — of who we really are and how life actually works. It is the truth that states (and more importantly, remembers) that we are creatures of spirit, not of form. We do not have a soul; we ARE a soul. This soul is on an evolutionary journey, which incarnates from time to time with different bodies in order to grow and evolve toward full self-knowledge and self-actualization.

Karma means action, and the level of intelligence behind them. We can see how much wisdom a person has from their actions. This wisdom comes back to us. The reason the soul incarnates with a body is to take action (karma) with that body, in order to test what the soul has learned through its many past lifetimes and adventures in different realms. We take new actions, based on our past tendencies, creating new grooves of karma. This cycle is compared to wheel, a wheel of karma, also called wheel of “samsara” (wandering, meandering).

Life in a limited body, with limited time, gives us the chance to test what we think we already know and get immediate feedback from our environment. Having a body and nervous system that experiences pleasure and pain easily allows us to learn from our mistakes and grow much more quickly than in other realms of existence.

It is useful to see dharma and karma as two concepts separately, so we can better understand why things are happening the way they are — the truth (dharma) behind the actions (karma).

However, in practice, karma is the expressed form of dharma. The actions we take are a culmination of how well we embody dharma. This intelligence comes back to us, and continues to frame our circumstances.

This process of how the past has formed the present, framing the circumstances through which our freewill operates, is “karma.”

Like many things in the West, dharma and karma are widely misunderstood, filtered through our narcissism and Western desires. “What is my dharma?” is a question often asked of astrologers when a person is looking for their life purpose. There is a “personal dharma”, (called Swadharma) which loosely translates into “life purpose”. But in reality, our swadharma are the actions that show us the truth of who we are as a being immersed in the cosmic play. They align us with actions based on duty, not desire. This is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3.

Overview of Indian Texts and Their Evolution into the Vedic Sciences

The Vedic concepts of dharma and karma reach back into the mists of time. They descended from ancient technologies encased in mantras of the Vedas, to more secular practices, principles and writings, to developed sciences, like astrology and Ayurveda.

It is difficult to understand “Vedic” thinking without at least a basic understanding of Indian literature, and the different classifications of texts. These different classifications are by no means absolute, or even “neat and clean” within the categories below. What is most important in this context is to see how the obscure and hard to approach “Earth Magic” of the Vedas developed into the very practical life sciences we now study in the form of Yoga or astrology. It is fascinating to see how the common threads of karma and dharma filtered down from the absolute.

1. Vedas

There are four main Vedas. They are thought to be the oldest books known to mankind. The knowledge and practices they contain are said to reach back more than 5,000 years.

In the earlier Vedas (Rig and Yajur) supernatural deities are called forth to heal through the power of their mantras. In the later Vedas (Sama and Atharva) we see more of an application through music and the arts (Sama Veda), as well as culture, healing and medicine (Atharva Veda).

The four Vedas are:

Rig Veda: The oldest book known to man. It is the work of (at least) seven rishis (seers) of the Vedic period. It is the most difficult of the Vedas to approach literally as it was mainly meant to be spoken, using the sacred power of sound (mantra) to call forth spirit into form.

There is enormous symbolism in the text itself, as it is mainly hymns to Gods and sacred powers. But there are also numerous historical references to the ancient kingdoms, geography and culture of what we now call India.

The Rig Veda has the first references to Vedic astrology, called the Vedanga Jyotisha.

Yajur Veda: Outlined many instructions for priests to perform rituals and sacrifices. There are many details about Vedic timekeeping and cosmology, including an update on the Vedanga Jyotisha in the Krishna (dark) portion of the Yajur Veda.

Many of the themes from the Rig Veda are continued in the Yajur Veda, as well as several other important deities are introduced, namely Rudra (Shiva). One of the more famous sections of the Yajur Veda is called the Shri Rudram.

Sama Veda: Takes many of the mantras from the Rig Veda and puts them to song. For the most part, there are few (if any) original teachings in this Veda, just a reorienting of the Rig Veda mantras into pleasant melodies and music. A lot of Indian sacred music has its roots in the SamaVeda.

Atharva Veda: Many do not consider this a “Veda” at all, because the language is simpler and it is more secular. It gives great insight into the Vedic culture at the time and also contains some of the earliest references to healing through herbs and Ayurveda proper.

2. Upanishads and Brahmanas

The great yoga master swami Shivananda calls the Upanishads “the cream of the Vedas.”

The Upanishads take many of the obscure principles from the Vedas and codify them into analogies, stories and philosophies.

Vedanta (the philosophy of sanatana dharma) comes mainly from the Upanishads, Brahmanas and other commentaries on the Vedas. There are also

many well-known mantras in them, such as this one from the Bradharanyaka Upanishad:

Asato Ma Sat Gamaya
Tamaso Ma Jyotir Gamaya
Mrityor Ma Amritaam Gamaya

Translation:

*Lead us from untruth to truth
Darkness to light
Death to immortality*

Many analogies like the “illusion of the snake and the rope” referenced earlier are from the Upanishads. Also Samkya philosophy was first referenced in the Upanishads.

3. Puranas — Stories, Myths and Mantra Glorifying Secular Deities

The obscure, celestial gods from the Vedas became much more approachable with a group of texts called the Puranas. Most of the deities discussed in what is referred to as Hinduism are from this group of texts. There are three main families or groups of deities:

- Shiva and his family. This would be Shiva and his wife Durga (also called Kali or Parvati), and their children Ganesh and Skanda.
- Vishnu and his wife Lakshmi.
- Brahma and his daughter Saraswati.

These gods can be easily worshiped by common people. The mantras and prayers are accessible to everyone, unlike the complicated mantras in the Vedas, which are only to be spoken by priests and require much training to be done properly.

Hinduism proper (as we might call it) is organized around these secular deities. Many homes in India will have a statue to Goddess Lakshmi, the goddess of prosperity. You will also see a statue to Lord Ganesha, the remover of

obstacles, etc. (See the chapter on deities at the end of the book for more information about each one.)

IMPORTANT:

The term “Hinduism” was not derived by Indians. It was applied by outsiders as a way to encapsulate the multitude of Vedic teachings, practices and Gods of India.

3A. *Puranic Texts Proper*

Many mantras, stores and myths originate in the Puranas. Also there are important details about the history of India, sacred places, remedial measures, sacred architecture and a lot more.

There are 18 Mahapuranas (Great Puranas).

A few of the most influential are:

a. Bhagavata Purana (Srimad Bhagavatam) — Discusses the incarnations of Lord Vishnu. It is unique amongst Puranic texts due to its emphasis on devotional practices over factual analysis or recounting of events. Most of the text is dedicated to Lord Krishna. Also, many concepts and practices such as Dharma (truth in practice), Yoga (union with God), Advaita (non-dualism), Samkya (philosophy of creation), Bhakti (devotional practices) are described. It is sometimes called the “fifth Veda” due to its impact.

b. Skanda Purana — The longest of the Puranas, it contains important stories, mainly related to the God Shiva — how and where to worship him — and his wife Parvati (Skanda’s mother). It also includes the churning of the Milk ocean story, (described in detail in the Chapter on the Lunar nodes), exploits of the Divine mother killing the demons, as well as many specific holy sites and methods of worship related to Lord Shiva.

c. Brahmanda Purana — Discusses creation of Cosmos from the unified Cosmic egg to the differentiated 3 gunas. The planets, stars and astronomy, different planes of existence (Lokas) and time cycles (Yugas) are discussed. Also the emergence of the Goddess Lalita is offered and her 1000 names.

4. *Epics — Glorify Incarnations that have “Lived”*

This group of texts has to do with (supposedly) living incarnations of god. Since the entire physical creation is an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, these living beings are also called Vishnu avatars. It is said when the world descends into a state of such chaos, Vishnu incarnates to restore dharma.

In particular, two incarnations of Vishnu are discussed (and worshipped) more extensively: Lord Rama and Lord Krishna. These are a group of texts known as *itihasa* — which translates loosely into “historical event”.

These texts show us how to live connected to truth, meaning, and purpose (dharma), in the midst of our troubles and problems. There are many real world dramas that we can easily identify with in these Epics.

a. Mahabharata / Bhagavad Gita — The Mahabharata translates as “The Great Bharata” (Bharata is the original name of the land we now call India). It describes an ancient kingdom and a power struggle that occurred between relatives who had dominion over this land.

The Bhagavad Gita (Song of God) is a portion of the Mahabharata that took place on the battlefield. It is in the form of a dialogue between Lord Krishna and his devotee Arjuna (the Bhagavad Gita is described in great detail later in this chapter).

b. Ramayana — This is the story of Lord Rama, his wife Sita, and their interactions with the Evil King, Ravana. Lord Rama was also a King and Sita was his Queen. Sita was abducted by Ravana after her and Lord Rama’s exile. This exile was the fulfillment of a curse placed on Vishnu from long ago, being fulfilled as a boon given to Lord Rama’s evil step mother. The monkey god, Hanuman, comes to Lord Rama and Sita’s rescue to restore the kingdom to a triumphant Lord Rama.

5. Vedic Science Texts — Teach us the Sciences of Living

Eventually the philosophy of Sanatana Dharma became codified into specific practices that we now call inclusively “the Vedic sciences.”

The three main Vedic paths of self-growth and self-awareness are:

- Yoga, Ayurveda, Jyotish (Vedic astrology)

Other sciences include Vaastu (sacred architecture), Sanskrit (sound) and Hasta Samudrika (palmistry), Dhanurved (Archery) and others.

Yoga is the spiritual science for individuals to unfold higher states of consciousness through different techniques. Those techniques include doing physical postures, breathing exercises, selfless service and performing rituals — to name a few.

Ayurveda is the spiritual science that allows the individual to connect with his environment in the most beneficial way, through diet and daily routines.

Jyotish (Vedic astrology) is the spiritual science that allows the individual to understand their place in the cosmos, the nature of their karma and their time on Earth.

Below are a few of the important texts.

- a. Yoga — Bhagavad Gita, Yoga Sutras
- b. Ayurveda — Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Atharva Veda
- c. Vedic Astrology — Brihat Parashara, Brihat Jataka, Jaimini Sutras.

In this book I quote Brihat Parashara Hora Sastra

Conclusion

Any attempt to “neatly sum up” the entire history of Indian literature is bound to be a little sloppy at times. For example, there is enormous crossover between the deities/stories in the epics and those in the Vedas and the Puranas. In the Mahabharata (the epic about the life of Lord Krishna), Lord Shiva (Puranas), Lord Indra and Agni (Vedas) are all mentioned.

We see this crossover in the Puranas as well, where the Vishnu Purana and Bhagavata Purana are about living emanations like Lord Krishna, and also discuss Rig Vedic Deities. The canon of Indian literature is vast and not designed to fit neatly into tidy categories.

However it is important for you to understand difference between a deity like Lord Shiva and a living incarnation like Lord Rama. They are discussed differently. Lord Rama, like Lord Krishna, was a king. His life was held up as an

example of how we are meant to live our life. The stories about the gods are not told this way. They are supernatural tales, magical interludes, etc.

Samkya Philosophy / Vedic Frameworks

All Vedic sciences interlock seamlessly with the others due to certain frameworks that underpin them. These will be discussed in greater detail later, but it is important to understand at the outset.

Many of these frameworks exist under the rubrique of “Samkya philosophy”, one of the 6 main schools of Indian thought. It is a dualist philosophy, which asserts life on earth is the interplay between spirit and form. It states that form originates from spirit. This was described in Chapter I as the Sun (pure spirit) and Moon (form and mind) create life on earth (beings where spirit and form are connected).

Samkya philosophy is the prevailing philosophy of Yoga and Hinduism. The word Yoga itself, means to “join” or “yoke” the spirit to the form — the body / mind to the consciousness. Most of the stories in the epics and Puranas are affirming this approach. The concepts of karma and dharma are also deeply entwined within Samkya philosophy.

A detailed exposition of Samkya philosophy is not necessary in this text (and it would be lengthy). The most important things to know about Samkya philosophy is it posits that spirit descends into form, and has attributes and component qualities, elements and features as it descends. These qualities and characteristics are universal to Yoga, Ayurveda and Vedic astrology. I will briefly discuss a few of these concepts now.

The Five Elements

The five elements are the universal building blocks of all life according to the Vedic sciences, whether it's yoga, Ayurveda or Vedic astrology. The five elements are earth, water, fire, air, and ether. These elements are physical, mental and spiritual.

The “Three Gunas”

The Three Gunas (qualities of nature) is another universal principle used in the Vedic sciences. The three qualities of nature are (in Sanskrit) tamas, rajas, sattwa. We can better understand these three gunas as the concepts of body, mind

and spirit. All life evolves through body (tamas), mind (rajas) and spirit (sattwa). Yoga is the practice of cultivating sattwa.

Masculine / Feminine — Yin / Yang

Another important Vedic concept has to do with masculine and feminine/inner and outer, such as the case with the Sun and the Moon. Once we enter form, we enter the world of duality: light and shadow, life and death. These appear to be opposite, yet the same seed principle is contained within both. This principle of “balancing the opposites” is important in all facets of life.

The Four Purusarthas — Life Lessons

The four lessons in life (also called the four Purusarthas) are another important Vedic framework, designed to show how we are meant to live our life. These four lessons are dharma (truth), artha (value), kama (enjoyment), moksha (freedom). All of our inner conflicts and drives in life come from these four lessons.

We want to do what is right (dharma), but that is not so easy. In fact, it is usually in conflict with what we like or enjoy the most (kama). We want to feel free and light (moksha), but we need structure and support along the way (artha).

As we move forward, discussing yoga and the other Vedic sciences, we will keep referring to these larger Vedic frameworks, as they remain touchstones of continuity.

Now let's explore yoga through the two main texts, the Bhagavad Gita and The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali.

And Now, Yoga

Yoga is a practice. Yoga is not a religion. It shares a common culture with Hinduism, but anyone can practice yoga. It is non-denominational.

The best way to understand something is to retrace its steps back to its origin. Yoga is no different. There are thousands and thousands of yogic and Hindu scriptures, including the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Puranas and many epic poems as well.

Two of the main classical yogic texts are the Bhagavad Gita and the Raja Yoga Sutras of Patanjali. Each distills Vedic thought into working systems of knowledge and living. They are very different in tone and approach. The

Bhagavad Gita is a classic epic story rich in symbolism and lessons. It is more about developing a loving relationship with God and the practices of Yoga. The Yoga Sutras are literal short statements with no exposition or explanation. Each in their own way revolutionized mankind and human consciousness.

Classical Yogic Text — the Bhagavad Gita

The Bhagavad Gita is part of the Indian epic, the Mahabarata, which means “The Great Bharat.” Bharat was the name of India before outsiders named her India. Many of yoga’s essential lessons can be learned from it. The title “Bhagavad Gita” means “The Song of God.” Everything from selfless service (karma yoga) to Vedanta (the knowledge of truth) are illustrated in the lively exchange between the warrior Arjuna and Lord Krishna.

I have reflected on the Bhagavad Gita many, many times. I refer to it often when I teach the spiritual principles of astrology. Perhaps the greatest lesson in “the Gita,” and the greatest lesson we need to learn in life, has to do with understanding the difference between our “likes and dislikes” (kama) and our “duties” (dharma).

In the Bhagavad Gita, we encounter the great warrior Prince and general, Arjuna, on the battlefield. He is reluctant to fight and reluctant to kill, as many of those he must kill are relatives and acquaintances. He is morally torn by his duty as a general and what he would prefer: a peaceful, non-violent solution. It is a remarkable situation. It underscores the choice between our likes and dislikes (kama) and doing our duty, what we know to be right (dharma).

In order for Arjuna to fulfill his duty, he must kill his relatives, those he has grown up with from childhood. Many of those he would have to kill are simply pawns, who are also trying to fulfill their duty (which includes killing Arjuna). He must do this because years ago based on trickery and deceit, some of his relatives stole the kingdom and have been oppressing the citizens ever since (stated simply).

Arjuna has trained his whole life for this moment, to win the kingdom back from the evil Empire. His charioteer is none other than Lord Krishna himself, a symbol of the supreme consciousness and truth within. At first, Arjuna does not realize that his friend Krishna is also the lord. Eventually, Arjuna discovers that his charioteer has all of the answers, in spite of his own resistance to them.

Through Arjuna's questions we hear our own fears and objections and our own minds' difficulties in accepting the surrender of the ego — the surrender of our likes and dislikes to the deeper truths we are avoiding or afraid of. We hear our own opinions, our own pathos. Yet Krishna teaches yoga to Arjuna with love and kindness and joy.

This beautiful story is highly symbolic yet simple. Arjuna is symbolic of you and me, the individual soul struggling with his duty, struggling with the truths we are afraid to face. The battlefield is life itself, with all of its dramas and pitfalls. Krishna is god, ever present, wise, patient and our best friend. He is the charioteer. If we can surrender the ego and let him drive, we will always be going closer to god, closer to our higher self.

Remarkably, in the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna/god instructs Arjuna to fight and kill. He must do his duty. It is too late on the eve of a battle for Arjuna to suddenly decide that he cannot fulfill his duty as a warrior. Krishna lays the truth bare to Arjuna, all at once. Krishna explains Arjuna's situation relevant to the full nature of reality, not just confined to the present circumstance.

Ch.2 v.19

"He who takes the self to be the slayer and he who thinks it is slain neither of them knows. It slays not nor is it slain."

Krishna makes it clear that killing the body is not killing the person. And also he who mistakes the slayer to be real is also mistaken. Not only is no one killed, but no one is killing either. The self is not in the body of either the slayer or the slain. The self is beyond all physical form.

Ch.2 v.22

"Just as a man casts off worn out clothes and puts on new ones, so also the embodied self casts off worn out bodies and enters others, which are new."

This stark and unmistakable example drives the point home. The self has a body that it wears like we wear our clothes. Eventually the body is shed and replaced by a newer one. But the self is unaffected. It is embodied, but not the body.

Krishna continues to tell of the soul. It is eternal, beyond qualities and attributes.

Ch.2 v.24

"This self cannot be cut, burnt, wetted, nor dried up. It is eternal, all pervading, immovable and ancient."

Krishna explains that whether it is he who kills the evil others or someone else, they will surely perish one day, as will everybody.

Ch.2 v.27

"For certain death is for the born, and certain birth is for the dead therefore over the inevitable thou shouldst not grieve."

Why fret over the inevitable? His evil uncles and relatives who have stolen the throne and wish to rain darkness on their people have brought this evil karma to themselves. Arjuna must do his duty without attachment or regard for the outcome, and if that means that it is he who kills them, then so be it. He is a warrior and warriors must kill if the cause is just, and this one is.

This incredible scenario is meant to dramatize the nature of action and false identification. Even in war, equanimity of mind is possible and necessary. The Lord said.

Ch.2 v.38

"Having made pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat the same, engage thou in battle for the sake of battle; thus thou shalt not incur sin."

“Sin” means to be falsely identified with body and the world, as the doer of our actions. Also, when we identify with merit or demerit we incur the karma that accompanies the actions. When engaged in external action we should still remember the internal calm and peace. When we are inactive and not working we should be actively focused on the truth, not unconscious or focused on future or past doings.

The false self, the ego, becomes strengthened by its accomplishments, which are like food to the ego. When we give up our accomplishments, we are freed from attachment to them and freed from the karma we incur through them. Then all of our actions become holy. Our work becomes god’s work.

This is what is meant by letting Krishna be the charioteer. Let him guide our actions from within as we are filled with his love, not concerned about praise or

censure.

Krishna then begins to teach Arjuna Jnana yoga, the yoga of knowledge.

Ch.2 v.41

“Here, O joy of the Kurus, there is but a single one-pointed determination; many branched and endless are the thoughts of the irresolute.”

Krishna is speaking about the focus of mind necessary to pierce the veils of illusion. The blissful path to god requires a persistent and resolute nature. Those with a “many branched” and irresolute mind will surely fail in realizing god. They will be:

Ch.2 v.43

“Full of desires, having heaven as their goal (they utter speech which is directed to ends), leading to new births as the result of their works, and prescribe various methods abounding in specific actions for the attainment of pleasure and power.”

Those unable to do yoga will be led into new births as a result of their karma and “specific actions”. Their goal-oriented (even with heaven as their goal) egoistic desire natures will not have been quieted through the focus already recommended.

Krishna warns about becoming attached to the world through the three gunas, the qualities of the world that bind the soul through name and form.

Ch.2 v.45

“The Vedas are such that their scope is confined to the three qualities (the three gunas). Be free from those three qualities Arjuna, indifferent toward the pairs of opposites, eternally fixed in truth, free from thoughts of acquisition and comfort.”

This is the Krishna’s first mention of the three gunas, the three qualities of nature whose energy lead the soul into karma and misery. Acquisition and comfort are what add fuel to our egoistic drives, which leads to one to no longer be fixed in truth.

Krishna continues.

Ch.2 v.47–48

“Your right is to action alone; never to fruits any time. Never should the fruits of action be your motive, never let there be attachment to inaction in you. Fixed in yoga, perform actions, having abandoned attachment, Arjuna, and having become indifferent to success and failure. It is said the evenness of mind is Yoga.”

One must even avoid becoming attached to inaction. The mind is cunning and must be watched closely. Desiring non-desire can cause a strengthening of the ego. Thus Krishna instructs that evenness of mind is yoga.

After Krishna speaks, Arjuna is filled with many doubts and questions. He asks his friend about what to do regarding the battle and Krishna tells him the whole meaning of life, all at once.

Imagine asking a friend for advice and they respond by telling you that they are god and that everything you thought about the world and yourself was totally wrong? This is Arjuna’s dilemma.

Arjuna asks about breaking free from the bonds of attachment and karma.

Ch3. v.36

“Then impelled, by what does a man commit this evil, unwillingly even, o Krishna, as if urged by force?”

Krishna answers:

Ch.3 v.37–38

“This force, this anger, its source is the rajasic guna and greatly injurious. Know this to be the enemy. As fire is obscured by smoke, and a mirror by dust, as the embryo is enveloped in the membrane, so is the intellect obscured by passion.”

It is the passionate nature of man that causes unevenness of mind. This desire and passion lives in the senses, mind and intellect:

Ch.3 v.40

“The senses, the mind and the intelligence are the sitting places of this lust. Through them lust covers the real knowledge of the living entity and bewilders

him.”

Lord Krishna then gives Arjuna instructions for how to become re-established in his natural self. He explains about meditation and a proper meditation posture.

Ch.6 v.12–14

“There having directed his mind to a single object, with his mind to a single object, with his thought and the activity of the senses controlled, seating himself on the seat, he should practice yoga for the purpose of self-purification. ... Holding the body, head and neck erect, motionless and steady, gazing at the tip of his own nose and not looking in any direction. ... With quieted mind, banishing fear, established in brahmacharya (celibacy) controlling the mind, with thoughts fixed on me, he should sit, concentrated, devoted to me.”

Arjuna, however faithful and willing, has difficulty believing that evenness of mind is possible. It is “*as difficult to control as the wind*”.

Ch.3 v.33–34

“This Yoga declared by you as evenness of mind, Krishna, I do not perceive the steady continuance of this because of the mind’s instability ... the mind, indeed, is unstable, Krishna, turbulent, powerful and obstinate. I think it is as difficult to control as the wind.”

Krishna responds:

Ch.6 v.35

“Without doubt, O Arjuna, the mind is unsteady and difficult to restrain; but by practice, Arjuna and by indifference to worldly objects, it is restrained.”

Arjuna has a hard time believing that the mind can be controlled. He seems to want an easy fix. There isn’t one. But by practicing yoga and becoming indifferent to worldly objects it is eventually restrained.

In the next twelve chapters Arjuna doubts and Krishna answers, with love and insight. Most of us do not believe we are god or that it is possible to realize god. Even the great warrior Arjuna, while talking to god, his best friend, who shows him his full presence, misses it.

The Song of God is truly a love song, the deepest truths in life transmitted from friend to friend.

Classical Yogic Text — the Raja Yoga Sutras

The modern system of Raja yoga as we know it grew out of the teachings organized by the Indian sage Patanjali sometime between 200 BC and 300 AD. These teachings are commonly known as the Yoga Sutras. Before Patanjali, yogic practices had existed in one form or another as a part Vedic teaching, but it was the Yoga Sutras that refined these Vedic teachings into a more cohesive working model, into what we now call Hatha yoga.

As was said, the word *yoga* means “union,” from the same root as the English word “yoke” is derived. To yoke together is to join. The Yoga Sutras refined and joined together many different Vedic practices into the clear and formal path that is the basis for how *yoga* is practiced today.

The Yoga Sutras comprise 195 aphorisms, very clearly and succinctly stated and divided into four sections: theory, practice, divine powers and realizations. The Yoga Sutras reveal *yoga* as the science of spirituality. There are references to fixing your mind on god, but the Yoga Sutras are much more method-based, not belief-based.

There is no poetry or excess in Patanjali’s words. He was certainly an enlightened being, but he resisted the temptation to indicate anything beyond clear directions. In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna spoke through words of love and drama as did Jesus in the Bible, and many others. Enlightenment is said to be akin to falling in love with all of creation, words are bound to explode with the joy and love at times, but Patanjali resists that.

He does not want to create more dreams. He was rare in that way. He just gives simple directions.

Part 1 — *Yoga Theory*

2. *Yogas chitta-vritti-nirodah* —

“*Yoga is restraining the activities of the Mind*”

Fascinating that Patanjali says this. All of the postures, and breathing exercises and activities are to “restrain the mind”.

The mind includes all mental activities, emotions, thoughts, dreams, etc. The mind is part of the astral body, not the physical body. The astral body contains the record of all that we have done in this life and all others. The word chitta means “mind stuff,” or mental substance. It includes the ego, the intellect, primal urges, and memories. It is like the ground floor of the mind or the foundation of a house. The chitta may manifest in any one of five forms, each progressively more refined [2].

1. Kshipta (scattering) — The mind justifies its desires without regard to consequence. When reminded of the potential pitfalls of smoking, a non sequitur such as “Well, at least I am not a murderer” is enough to put the ego at rest.
2. Mudha (darkening) — The tendency to see and cause suffering and negate happiness. It is to view a situation through what it lacks rather than through what it is. “My lover is not here, so this lovely day brings me no peace at all”.
3. Vikshipta (gathering) — The conscious effort to gather the rays of the mind, as the mind’s energy is usually scattered and unfocused. Saying a mantra is a great way to do this.
4. Ekagrata (one-pointed) — The one-pointedness of mind, arrived at through meditation and sadhana.
5. Niruddha (inactive) — The state of mind that exists in samadhi, the experience of supreme bliss — once the mental activities have been restrained.

The chitta is the background condition in the mind. Think of it like a lake on which waves rise and fall. These waves are called vrittis (thoughts). They are extremely powerful. They are the origin of all action. As we act on these vrittis we create samskaras, our thought patterns. They compel us on a deep level.

Our samskaras show the routines in which we are stuck. The deeper ones are like grooves on a record, playing over and over again — perhaps for lifetimes. They are the foundational energy to our karma and they form the substance of our own unique version of illusion (maya). Of course, there are also positive samskaras — positive thoughts and actions that lead to positive results. But with them we still need always be mindful of attachment, to the happiness that results.

All actions in the mind must be restrained, after focusing it, anchoring it in the heart. “Restraining the activities of the mind,” means taking it beyond positive and the negative outcomes.

With each vritti we have the option of either cooperating with it and its accompanying desires or we can observe it, discard it and not cooperate. All actions will have a result commensurate to their positive or negative qualities. Discrimination is needed to decide whether a vritti is beneficial to our spiritual development or harmful to it, bringing positive or negative karma.

For example, let’s say I start a new job. The first day after work as I am walking to the bus, I pass a coffee shop. The vritti is formed in the mind, “I’d like to get a coffee and pastry in that coffee shop.” So that is what I do, and I have a good experience.

The next day as I pass the bakery, what pops into my head? Of course, another trip inside for a coffee and a pastry, now two days in a row. The more I cooperate, the more I am forming a habit and the harder it will be to break it.

The mind is easily conditioned in this way. But just as we develop bad habits, we can develop good ones. Through yoga we can learn ways to recognize our negative mental patterns and habits and replace them with uplifting, positive ones.

Again, in yoga Sutra 2 Patanjali says, “Yoga is restraining of the activities of the mind.”

3. Tada drastuh svarupe vasthanam —

“At that time, when the thought waves are stilled, the perceiver rests in his own true nature.”

Once the thought waves are stilled, we are able to experience our own true nature, and rest in it. Our true nature is as the silent perceiver, free and unbound. Yet we become lost in the perceived. We become bound by our perceptions and emotions and strategies of the ego, losing the seer in the seen.

Stilling thought waves through meditation and mantra is the path to our true nature, our original self, the silent, peaceful witness.

4. Vritti-sarupyam itaratra —

“When the mind is not concentrated it identifies with the modifications.”

The modifications are the thoughts to which we become attached. They obscure our true nature. The original mind is like a lake, a clear lake where you

can see all the way to the bottom. No ripples on the surface whatsoever. Vrittis arising in the mind stuff are like throwing a pebble in the lake. Even the tiniest pebble creates enough waves and ripples to obscure the surface of the lake to such a degree that we cannot see the bottom anymore. And this pebble of thought leads to more and more thoughts. We have thousands of thoughts, impressions and emotions continuously obscuring the surface of the mind and our deeper vision of ourselves.

The thoughts themselves are not the problem. The problem is that we “identify” with them, as Patanjali says. The key word is “identify.” We are identified as the doer, and the owner of the thoughts those actions generate — and we lose ourselves in them. We think we are their content. This basic error of the intellect is the basis of all negative emotions and human suffering.

For example, Arjuna on the battlefield was identified to his separate identity and the separate identity of others. He thought he was going to kill those beings. Yet Krishna explains, the imperishable soul is deathless. Patanjali is taking a more scientific and simple approach, but toward the same end.

Patanjali then describes the different types of thought waves that we identify with and how to transcend their effects and our attachment to them.

Then in Sutra 16 he says:

16. *Tat param purusha-khyater gunavaitrsnyam* —

“The highest state of non-attachment stems from awareness of Purusha; it renounces even the three qualities of nature.”

Purusha is the self, unmanifest and without qualities. It refers to Shiva and the Sun energy as I mentioned in Chapter 1. Purusha (the Sun) interacts with prakriti (the Moon) to cause forms. Patanjali uses the term “guna” to identify the qualities of nature. They come from prakriti, from form. It is on the causal level (the metaphysical level) that the gunas take hold of our mind in order to make us feel the results of our karma.

The individual who realizes the self to be the Purusha (the Supreme, non-localized self), rather than the mind/body, will be in the highest state of non-attachment. She will avoid the suffering associated with the limiting qualities of the world through the gunas.

Yoga Sutras Part 2 — Practice

1. Tapah-svadhyayesvara-pranidhanani kriya yohah —
“Austerity, self-study, and surrender to God constitute kriya yoga.”

Austerity does not mean physical abuse or punishing yourself; it means giving up some unnecessary material comforts and applying some control to the senses. Occasional fasting, rising a little earlier so as to meditate rather than sleeping later than necessary, regular study of scriptures like the Bhagavad Gita, these will constantly keep the word of truth on your mind.

It is mainly important to develop a spiritually healthy routine. Too much sleep and comfort, and tamas will dominate. Too much sensory pleasure and passion and rajas will take over.

In the next several sutras Patanjali describes the different obstacles to maintaining a consistent practice. Then he lays out the famous eight steps of Raja yoga, which will overcome all obstacles if properly adhered to.

27. Tasya saptada pranta-bhumih prajna —
“Enlightenment is reached through seven steps.”

There are seven steps before liberation, the eighth step, samadhi.

28. Yoganganusthanad asuddhi-ksaye jnana-diptir aa viveka-khyateh —
“By practicing the various aspects of yoga, impurities are destroyed and spiritual illumination arises, which develops into awareness of reality.”

The beauty of yoga is laid bare. By practicing these steps impurities are destroyed. Yoga is a practice, and when it is done it works. Just like medicine, you need not believe in it in order for it to work.

29. Yama-niyama-asana-pranayama-pratyahara-dharana-dhyana-samadhayo ‘stav angani —
“Yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana, samadhi are the eight limbs.”

Raja yoga is sometimes called Ashtanga yoga (“eight-limbed”). The limbs are: restraints, observances, postures, regulation of breath, withdrawal of the mind from sense objects, concentration, meditation, super-consciousness.

After explaining the benefit of the yamas and niyamas, Patanjali explains the asanas, the yoga postures.

46. Sthira-sukham asanam —
“Asanas should be steady and comfortable.”

**47. *Prayatna-saithilyananta-samapattibhyam* —
“Posture is mastered by releasing tension and meditation on the unlimited.”**

The asanas are a very important part of yoga. They make up a large part of Hatha yoga, which works with prana (vitality) and kundalini (the subtle energy currents of the body). Hatha yoga asanas done in a specific order bring about a natural meditative state by massaging energy centers in the endocrine system of the physical body and their corresponding points, the chakras, in the astral body.

In this way, by doing asanas as a series of “steady and comfortable poses,” the mind is ready for meditation afterwards. By remaining focused on the infinite while in the pose and relaxing into, rather than struggling with, the body’s limitations, mastery is achieved in the asana and yoga is achieved.

The asanas make the body strong and flexible so that a meditative, sitting posture (the same one described by Lord Krishna) can be held for a long period of time.

**49. *Tasmin sati svasa-prasvasayor gati-vicchedah pranayamah*
“The next step is pranayama which is control of the inhalation and the exhalation of breath.”**

Pranayama are specific breathing exercises done to rein in the vital energy in the mind. The body’s energy and vitality (prana) comes from food, water, sunlight, but mainly from breath. Pranayama works directly with the primary source of the body’s power, the breath. Control the breath and you control the mind. Pranayama is very important to breaking through initial difficulties and barriers most encounter when trying meditation.

**4. *Sva-visayasamprayoge citta-svarupankara ivendriyanam pratyahara* —
“Pratyahara is the limitation of the mind by the senses, which comes from withdrawing the senses from their objects.”**

In meditation the mind is turned inward. Pratyahara applies this to the senses. Objects that are distracting or irritating to the senses are eliminated from sensory contact. When this happens, the mind is much less likely to take on agitating thought forms.

Yogic Powers

Patanjali then discusses what happens as deeper layers of energy become awakened. The yogi gets powers, knowledge of his own past lives, future

knowledge, and other abilities.

According to yoga these powers come with responsibilities. They should not be used to dominate or control others; rather, they are confirming experiences. They validate the path and the infinite to which we are all yoked.

The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali laid out in clear unmistakable terms exactly what it takes to realize the highest self. One need not believe in their truth, but simply experiment, just like a scientist would. A scientist would say “experiment,” Patanjali says “experience.” They are the same: to experiment is through the outer, to experience is through the inner.

Modern Forms — Integral Yoga or the Yoga of Synthesis

The Bhagavad Gita and The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali define what have evolved into the four main paths of yoga. Each of the four main paths of yoga help in a different way to bring peace and clarity to the mind. The great twentieth century yoga master Swami Sivananda was especially prominent in systematizing these paths of yoga into four main paths of yoga.

They are:

- Karma yoga — The yoga of service (Gita)
- Bhakti yoga — The yoga of devotion (Gita)
- Raja yoga — The scientific path of yoga (Patanjali / Yoga Sutras)
- Jnana yoga — The yoga of the intellect. (Gita / Yoga Sutras)

Karma yoga is the foundation of yoga. It teaches the need to serve something higher than just our own personal happiness. It is the relentless drive for personal happiness (kama) that undercuts the true meaning of life — the quest for truth (dharma). Serving a higher cause also opens our heart. Karma yoga often takes the form of physical labor. Karma yoga breaks the identification with ego and personal desire.

Bhakti yoga transforms the emotions of an open heart into devotion to something higher. Many beginning yoga practitioners are emotional as years of blockages release. Channeling those emotions toward a divine purpose is Bhakti yoga. Bhakti yoga often takes the form of devotional chanting and singing and

also pondering scripture. Bhakti Yoga elevates the emotions and breaks the identification with our personal feelings.

Raja yoga scientifically transforms the mind and emotions through a comprehensive lifestyle approach. The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali are almost fully dedicated to Raja yoga. The word “Raja” means “king.” Raja Yoga is the royal path. It develops self-discipline. Raja yoga often takes the form of physical postures, breathing exercises and controlled practices. Raja Yoga elevates our personal will and the power of our actions toward something divine. Rather than create a power structure to “win” or dominate others, we create our Self, on the highest level.

Jnana yoga is encountered after one has walked the path of the lower forms of yoga. In Jnana yoga, the incredible power of the mind is brought to bear as the yogi focuses the intellect on a microcosmic point of awareness, where the yogi burns through every false thought and idea. Jnana yoga develops discrimination. Jnana yoga often takes the form of perceiving our thoughts and seeing behind them. Jnana Yoga destroys the identification with our separate mind.

Hatha yoga is a system of yoga that only involves the body, the physical part of Raja yoga. It includes postures, breathing exercises, mudras (gestures), bandhas (energy locks), chakras (energy centers), kriyas (purifications and actions) and other aspects. It was developed in the fifteenth century by Yogi Swatmarama. It is very similar to what is described as Raja Yoga above.



CHAPTER 3

Yogic / Vedic Principles Formalized

“The Self has entered this body, this dense jumble. If a man finds him, recognizes him, he’s the maker of everything — the author of all! The world is his — he’s the world itself.”

- BRHADARANYAKA UPANISHAD

The Five Elements — Building Blocks of the Vedic Sciences

In Samkya philosophy, when spirit (Purusha) takes form it is called Prakriti. Every object exists as Prakriti expressing Purusha. Prakriti is made up of five elements. These five elements are the building blocks of the Vedic sciences. Their energies and properties provide the archetypes that underpin all aspects of Vedic thinking.

Starting with the grossest and moving toward the finest, the five elements are: earth, water, fire, air, ether (space). Also, each element corresponds to an organ of knowledge (Jnana indriya) and organ of action (karma indriya).

Let us look deeper:

Earth — The earth element corresponds to our physical body. As the densest element it is also the heaviest and “weightiest” psychological influence. Our physical body demands the most attention when its needs arise. For example, no matter how enjoyable it may be to talk to your best friend on the phone, you will only suppress the urge to go to the bathroom for so long before you relent.

Earth connects us to the sense of smell. Anything we can smell contains earth, which directly connects to the sex organ. Psychologically speaking, the earth element is our practical nature, where we are literally “down to earth.” Too much earth can lead to clinging to ideas and forms.

Water — The water element corresponds mainly to the senses, or, more specifically, to the flow of the senses from the physical body to the outer world and the connections and impressions made through the senses. It is on this vital level that our energy must connect to the environment in order to satisfy our bodily needs (earth): we see a piece of chocolate and our mouth starts to water.

Water connects us to the sense of taste. This compels us to consume, which connects us to the organs of elimination. Psychologically, the water element has to do with our deep emotional bonds, memories and sensory impressions. Too much water can lead to excessive emotion / emotional dependence.

Fire — The fire element corresponds to digestion of all sorts, food and impressions. It is also our active, individual mind and ego. The firey mind shows our passionate nature and the instinctual and conditioned / reactive mind. It is the element of fire that digests sensory impressions (water), turning them into thoughts that we can use. Otherwise our minds would just be a jumble of data.

Knowledge of fire is related to sight, which compels us to act through the feet, once we can see where we are going. Psychologically, fire represents our desire nature. We literally “burn” to satisfy our desires. It is fire that makes us “want” something and move toward it. Too much fire can lead to excessive anger and individualism.

Air — The air element corresponds to movement of all sorts, the body, breath, thoughts, etc. Air is our higher intellectual and social mind. It is the mind of our philosophies and plans — our politics and rationalizations as well as how we relate to others and society as a whole. It is through the air element that we

interact socially with the world and others and form conclusions about them and ourselves.

Air connects us to the sense of touch, which activates the hands. Anything we can feel is touched by air. Psychologically, air represents our higher mental capabilities, as well as our conscience and ethical principles. Too much air and one becomes ungrounded, aloof, dry or sterile.

Ether — The ether element corresponds to pure consciousness itself, our awareness. It is the layer of being beyond the four gross physical elements. It refers to the witnessing consciousness, which is able to perceive the thought process and remain unidentified with it, as Patanjali discussed. It is our connection to freedom and the closest to our true self and our intuitive nature.

Ether connects us to the sense of sound, which also activates the function of speech. It is through sound that we perceive space and distance. Psychologically, ether represents an initial freedom from the mind/ body complex. It is through the element of ether that we perceive the distance between the thinking / feeling mind substance and the oneness of creation and our connectedness to it. Ether does not represent our physical karma.

The Five Elements at Work

There are a few things one should realize about the five elements. Each finer element contains and animates the grosser ones. In this way and for this reason, the primordial sound of Aum is said to be the first act of creation. Its resonance through the element of ether (sound resonates through ether) begins the dance of creation out of the equilibrium that exists before.

After ether, the air element is formed, then fire, water, and earth. This is why mantras are so powerful: they resonate through all five of our elemental bodies. (Mantras are sacred sounds repeated to focus the mind).

Your existence was also created through the vibrational frequencies of the planets, according to your karma. The birth chart shows this karmic arrangement, and if our ears were more attuned we could hear those vibrations too!

As we advance on the spiritual path we begin to actually hear these vibrations. This is just one of the Yogic powers described by Patanjali.

Life is created from the finer elements to the grosser ones. However, our spiritual path is walked in reverse. First we must master our physical body

(earth), then the senses / emotions (water), then restlessness / actions (fire), then the intellect (air), only then can we rest in pure consciousness (ether). But then we must discard that too.

When we see a chocolate bar, the physical body (earth) is animated by the senses (water). The desire to eat it arises in the reactive / instinctual mind (fire), but the higher mind (air) actually *decides* whether or not to eat it. Our consciousness (ether) makes us aware of this process.

In Hatha yoga, asanas (postures) are designed to balance the five elements in this way:

- Earth: holding the posture stabilizes and relaxes the body.
- Water: a stable, relaxed body stabilizes the emotions and the senses.
- Fire: stable emotions allow mental peace and remove desire and motivation.
- Air: once struggling stops, perceptions clear and the mind can enter the present moment.
- Ether: once perceptions become clear and the mind is present, conscious and blissful awareness fills the being. One rests in one's true nature.

Hatha yoga prepares the mind and body for meditation. In meditation we connect to our deeper self and balance the five elements in this way.

- We connect to universe (ether) through the breath (air).
- Deep breathing slows, deepens and stabilizes the mind's desires and passions (fire).
- With the passions controlled we can observe the senses and emotions (water), which become balanced.
- Then the body becomes stable (earth).

A stable body in meditation is one of awareness. Since we started with breath connecting to ether, higher consciousness will be observing the thoughts and mind / body events.

Karma and the Five Elements

According to Vedic thought, everything is an expression of pure god energy, pure god consciousness. All physical bodies arise out of this balanced god state. But as a result of past karma and the samskaras (mental impressions) that accompany them, the five elements arrange themselves to create the body that reflects the appropriate person, animal, or whatever. This karmic energy points to the lessons that need to be learned in that lifetime.

For example, a person who needs to work through anger problems in this lifetime will inherit a body, mind and upbringing that will challenge them to confront their anger and hopefully transcend it. In the case of anger, the element of fire will likely predominate.

If a person needs to learn to be flexible they will likely have a predominance of the air element. If a person needs to learn to work hard they will likely have earth qualities. An astrology chart shows this portrait of the soul's karmas and samskaras.

These elemental factors are shown astrologically by the planets and astrology signs mainly. For instance, a fiery person will likely have a prominent Mars or Sun. He may also have many planets in the firey Signs of Aries, Leo or Sagittarius. These elemental factors will be explored in the astrology sections of this text.

The Three Gunas

The three gunas are the three qualities of nature. The term *guna* means “that which binds,” as each *guna* is like a separate strand, which when placed together form the rope of maya. They are what bind us to the illusion that we are merely a physical / mental creature. All matter and energy consists of the three gunas in different quantities. They are the component qualities of the physical, mental and spiritual worlds.

The three gunas are:

Tamas: *Body / Form.* It includes inertia, ignorance and attachment. Tamas binds through inertia and our tendency to cling to situation and form. Its power is best expressed through the physical forms, including our body, and puts emphasis on ourselves.

Rajas: *Mind / Activity.* It includes passion and desire. Rajas binds through motivation and our desire to experience pleasure. It is best expressed as the mind

and emotions and puts emphasis on other people.

Sattwa: *Spirit / Harmony.* It includes love, knowledge and peace. Sattwa binds us to happiness and wisdom, which is eventually also a barrier to final liberation. It is best known as the soul and connects us to God.

Yogic practices aim to cultivate sattwa. Attachment to God/wisdom (sattwa) is the attachment that breaks all others. Each of the gunas has a proper and necessary function.

Tamas provides the solidity and stability of the physical world, for us that means our bodies. Solid objects have a preponderance of tamas, especially when at rest.

Rajas maintains the mind and emotions, animating the physical world through need and preference. When the body needs to eat, procreate, move, etc. — rajas gets us moving.

Sattwa looks after the higher mind and soul and its progress. We are always looking to grow, learn and love. This is sattwa.

But each of these attributes also act as obscuring factors, as their expressions show our illusory limitations, forming the rope of maya. When tamas becomes a mental or emotional state, the intellect becomes stagnant and there is clinging and ignorance, which also prevents love and peace.

An excessively rajasic body will bring exhaustion and instability. Neither rajas nor tamas will allow higher learning, which requires a sattwic mind.

If suddenly you become sleepy as you read this, you would stop learning, as the heaviness of tamas would disrupt. If suddenly you became hungry or sexual, also you would stop learning, as rajas would compel you to act and disturb your mental quiet.

Sattwa can also disrupt by bringing disconnect from the world and our duties — as we may just withdraw into the high vibes of our practices. This may sound like a good problem to have, but imagine a family person leaving it all behind because they found God.

This morning, as your alarm clock went off there was a preponderance of tamas. Your body and mind were heavy and perhaps you had just mistaken yourself in a dream as being your real self. Sleep, inertia, and delusion are tamasic.

As you started to become motivated and got up from the bed, rajas was dominant, as rajas is activity. Also, you need to go to work to earn money so you can have things that give you pleasure and that you enjoy. Worldly pursuits are mainly rajasic in nature as they are primarily self-centered.

Currently, as you read this, in search of knowledge and understanding beyond pleasure seeking and accumulation, sattwa dominates (hopefully, at least).

Most of the time, we are rajasic, striving toward sattwa, trying not to be pulled down by tamas. Our experiences take on the quality of the predominant guna. Even though waking from sleep is generally tamasic, saints, for example, awaken in a very sattwic way. Our spiritual practices or lack of them determine whether we are growing toward higher knowledge and harmony (sattwa), descending into darkness and delusion (tamas), or simply maintaining our outward desire-driven existence (rajas).

Either way, our true self is there, unspoiled and causeless, silently and peacefully existing beneath all actions and beyond the qualities of the gunas.

The Five Koshas (Sheaths)

As discussed in the section called “karma and the five elements,” we are all on an evolutionary journey, playing out through the elements and the gunas. The elements refer to different actions and functions, while the gunas refer to states of mind and awareness.

Based on these two factors, five different sheaths are formed, which cover the pure consciousness within. Spirit takes form through the agency of elements and gunas, based on our karma. In fact, the reason we have taken form is because we still have actions to perform (karma). We still need to test what we think is right in this world of action and consequence.

An easy way to illustrate the five koshas is to visualize a 200-watt light bulb shining brightly, spreading light in all directions around the room. Now imagine you have five sheets of very thin tissue paper. Imagine you place one sheet of the tissue paper over the 200-watt light bulb. The light would not be dimmed very much by one sheet, but the clarity and sheen would be lessened by the tissue.

After a second tissue the light would still be bright but the clarity and glow would be faded or gone completely. After three tissues the light would be much less than before. After four, even less light, and after five the light would be just bright enough to help you find your way around in the dark, but not much more

than that. This example illustrates the veiling power of the elements as seen through the five koshas, the five sheaths.

At the center of our being, the divine light of our true self shines in all directions, illuminating our senses, mind and perceptions. But the five koshas cover that light. Like the layers of tissue paper covering the 200-watt light bulb, eventually the light is just bright enough to help us find our way around in the dark.

Many have inferred the connection of the to the senses, gunas, kingdoms and Chakras. The five koshas are:

1. Annamaya Kosha — The Food Sheath — BODY — made of inherited genetic material and food. It is the vehicle for the senses and their outward projection. Birth, growth, change, decay and death are its qualities. Earth — Tamas — Mineral

2. Pranamaya Kosha — The Vital Sheath — ENERGY and their accompanying physical sensations. It animates the physical body, compelling it to action; hunger, thirst, heat, cold, sexual excitement are its qualities. Water — Tamas/Rajas — Plant

3. Manamaya Kosha — The Mental Sheath — MIND and senses, digesting sensory impressions, fulfilling desires, thinking, doubting, comparing, the emotional mind are its qualities. Fire — Rajas — Animal

4. Vijnanmaya Kosha — The Intellectual Sheath — INTELLIGENCE and the rational mind — philosophical, questioning nature, morals, ethics, and discrimination are its qualities. Air — Rajas/Sattwa — Human

5. Anandamaya Kosha — The Blissful Sheath — CONSCIOUSNESS beyond the illusion of ego, pure awareness, but still existing in duality, bliss, joy and calmness are its qualities. Ether — Sattwa — God

Chart 3.1 shows the different properties of the five Koshas

<i>Kosha</i>	<i>Form</i>	<i>Element</i>	<i>Guna</i>	<i>Kingdom</i>
Anna	Body	Earth	Tamas	Mineral
Prana	Senses	Water	Tamas rajas	Plant

Mana	Emotion	Fire	Rajas	Animal
Vijnana	Intellect	Air	Rajas sattwa	Human
Ananda	Consciousness	Ether (space)	Sattwa	God

Chart 3.1

In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna discusses the five koshas:

Ch.3 v.42 “They say that the senses are superior (to the body). The mind is superior to the senses. The intellect is superior to the mind. That which is superior to the intellect is the self.”

It is through each of these sheaths that our life energy and soul's inner radiance must function in order to sustain our life.

Spiritual progress, and the ability to ponder such heady subjects, is a privilege possible only after our bodily needs have been met. It makes sense that the Annamaya Kosha, through the earth element, is the first sheath. Earth is the heaviest and densest element, just like the influence of the physical body on the psyche. The functions and elements become progressively lighter and more refined, culminating in the blissful sheath through the element of ether, indicating pure consciousness.

As we have evolved through time, we have evolved the capacity to understand more and more of our true nature as indicated by the koshas. Our evolution and future enlightenment will be through our mastery of each of these koshas and our transcendence of their influence.

On a karmic level, we have passed through the kingdoms of earth (mineral), water (plant), and fire (animal), and learned their lessons. We are now learning the lessons of air (human). We as humans have discrimination through the intellect (Vijnanamaya Kosha) and a direct link to our transcendent blissful nature (Anandamaya Kosha), the layer of god.

Yet the heavier layers are also present, threatening to darken the soul's inner light and dull its ability to radiate the joy of the soul, like the tissue paper on the light bulb.

Observe:

1. The physical body activates the senses.

2. The body and senses then feed the emotions and the ego / conditioned mind.
3. The body, senses and conditioned mind then provide information to and ultimately feed our intelligence.
4. The intelligence then searches for meaning and forms the ethical structure, belief system and philosophies that it needs to transcend the smaller self and merge with the higher self through pure awareness.

Elements, Karma Indriyas and Jnana Indriyas

The five elements rule the different koshas, then through those bodies we take action and also gain knowledge of their lessons. The word for these “organs” is “Indriyas” — from Lord Indra, the King of the Gods. The Indriyas are where the power is located. The power to activate the elements (Karma Indriya) and the power to learn the lessons of the elements (Jnana Indriya) give us mastery of them.

Earth — We get knowledge of earth through the nose, then expel the inert elements through the anus.

Water — We get knowledge of water through the mouth, then procreate / activate water through the genitals.

Fire — The knowledge of fire comes through the eyes; we act through the feet.

Air — The knowledge of air comes through the skin; we activate air through touch, the hands.

Ether / Space — We get knowledge of ether through the ear; we activate it through the throat.

The chart below formalizes the Indriyas.

<i>Element</i>	<i>Organ of Wisdom</i>	<i>Organ of Action</i>
Earth	Nose	Anus
Water	Mouth	Genitals
Fire	Eyes	Feet

Air	Skin	Hand
Ether	Ear	Throat

Figure 3.2

These principles are profound and should be pondered. Take, for example, the fire principle. Knowledge of fire (Jnana Indriya through the eye) shows the direction we should move (Karma Indriya through the feet). When it is dark we do not move so well. Once the knowledge of fire enters, movement starts and eventually mastery of fire is attained.

Chakras

The five koshas show one way of organizing the evolution of consciousness from the physical to the super-conscious states. The chakras are a similar but different way of assessing the same energies, but in a more metaphysical way. The chakras also are directly related to an astrology chart. We will explore this later.

In yoga, tantra and Hinduism the chakras are part of what is referred to as the astral body. It is the astral body that goes with us from lifetime to lifetime, holding the mental energy (samskaras) that compel us to act (karma).

The chakras are invisible energy centers along the spine that correspond to different organs and glands in the body. In Ayurveda energy moves through the Nadis (called meridians in Chinese medicine). Chakras are places where the Nadis gather along the path of the kundalini, the hidden power that runs through the spine. The Chakras first appeared in Vajrayana Buddhist texts around the 8th century, although the same concepts were referred to in earlier literature that discussed the nadis (energy channels).

Each chakra is related to an element, an organ of action, an organ of wisdom. They show the corresponding points in the body where our consciousness evolves. Like everything in life, this evolutionary process takes place through the five elements and the three gunas.

Technically speaking, the chakras are also said to vitalize the physical body from the deeper dimensions of prana (vitality) and shakti (divine power). This shakti flows up the spine through the subtle energy channels, called nadis. There are three main nadis that correspond to the prana directly.

As prana is the vitality in the breath, the nadis also correspond to the right (pingala nadi) and left (ida nadi) nostrils. The right nostril/nadi is related to the active, masculine, solar power. The left nostril/nadi is related to the receptive, feminine, lunar power.

The Seven Main Chakras



Sahasrara - Beyond



Ajna

AUM - Pure intuition - Balance Higher
and Lower selves



Visuddha

HAM - Growth - Communication
Freedom - Mantra Siddhi



Anahata

YAM - Selfless love - creativity
Union of Male and Female



Manipura

RAM - Courage - Independence
Clarity - Self-will - Protection



Swadisthana

VAM - Expansion - Passion
Reproduction - Growth



Muladhara

LAM - Security - Longevity
Structure - Control

Figure 3.3

In yoga, much of the balancing of the mind begins with balancing the breath. Alternate nostril breathing is one of the ways we balance the breath and the mind. Once this balance between right/masculine and left/feminine is achieved, the prana enters the central channel, the central nadi.

As was said, the chakras are part of the astral body, that which goes with us from lifetime to lifetime. It can also be known as our “mental body.” Our thoughts and feelings are invisible and deep, penetrating into subconscious and unconscious layers.

But the chakras and the astral body are not as far from your conscious experience as you think. For instance, the dream state is an explosion of the astral body. It is also a concrete reality, every bit as real as the waking state. In your dreams, you are also working through karma. It is just karma that does not require your physical body. This is why in dreams you can do things that are not possible with your physical body, flying, killing animals with your bare hands, etc.

The in-between life state is very much like the dream state. Remarkably similar experiences are reported in past life regression, telling of the soul knowing itself as a beam of light, flying, and as an unembodied presence. There is full identity recognition in lifetimes that do not include a physical body.

Karma — Revisited

One of the greatest misunderstandings about karma comes from the judgment we bring. There is no judgment or “punishment” in karma. I have found it is easier to view karma to be more like a natural law, such as gravity, rather than as a spiritual principle.

Here is why. Natural laws function, with no judgment, beyond our likes and dislikes. We understand them on those terms and we are at peace with them on those terms. For example, we don’t judge gravity as being right or wrong. Gravity is not right when it keeps us rooted on the Earth, then wrong when it pulls airplanes out of the sky killing people. Fire is not good when it cooks our food, then bad when it burns us.

It is meaningful to see the law of karma the same way, often we do not. When discussing karma, our mind grapples with themes of unfairness / punishment /

innocent beings suffering harsh realities. But we are not seeing clearly in this assessment.

Use the gravity example. Imagine a small baby is crawling on a fifteenth-story balcony, then falls off and plunges to his death. That is a sad event, and no one would want to see that happen. Many among us would have a very hard time saying, “Well, it was the baby’s karma to plunge to his death.” That would seem cold. The baby did nothing to “deserve” that “karma,” we would say.

But the truth is, “deserving it (or not)” is not for us to say. Actions produce results. Furthermore, we do not know the reason that baby incarnated in order to live such a short life.

A Quick Story to Illustrate Karma

I will never forget hearing the story told of an elderly devotee of an Indian enlightened master.

One day a respected and elderly devotee came and offered himself for karma yoga, (selfless service) to his guru. The master told the elderly man to go clean the toilets. This took place during an event at which there were thousands and thousands of people present, in India, and many toilets to be cleaned. It was hellishly hot, and was a difficult, dirty job. The elderly devotee made no complaints and went off to work.

Several devotees close to the master asked, “Why would you give such a difficult job to such an elderly man, and one so respected? What did he do wrong?” The devotees could not understand. To them, it seemed like punishment. But the master answered, “By cleaning toilets for me tonight, he just avoided three lifetimes of cleaning toilets.”

There are those who are masters, who have knowledge of past, present and future, as Krishna and Patanjali stated. We do not have such knowledge and make many mistakes by trusting our limited senses and judgments. This is especially true when it comes to these immutable laws of the universe, like the law of karma.

Present Time, Universal Time and Karma

In the above example, ‘karma’ is a universal principle that transcends lifetimes. Often, it is easier to understand karma if we bring it into a tighter timeframe and a more visceral example, for example: food.

We can clearly understand the implications of our actions when we analyze the effects of food. If we eat a half-gallon of ice cream and a box of chocolate chip cookies, we will develop a stomach ache and have low energy. If we eat one half cup of rice, some spinach and other healthy food, we will be rewarded with good health and a lot of energy.

If these momentary events become habits, the results will magnify over time — resulting in poor or good health. Our eating habits have evolved over time based on these principles. When we were children, we just wanted to candy. But after getting stomach aches and having low energy, we learned it was better to sacrifice momentary pleasure for long-term gain, and eat better food. If we do not change poor eating habits, we will develop diabetes and other health problems.

In this case the law of karma is clear. We are reaping as we sow. It is impossible for us to actually “know” the truth of “better health through diet” until we suffer the results of those actions.

Law Breakers Beware

There is no judgment in karma, any more than there is judgment in the ice cream or broccoli or gravity that pulled the baby off the balcony. We don’t say, “Gravity punished the baby for the sin of crawling off the balcony.” We know better. Gravity is a law. Failure to obey that law, or have knowledge of that law, is its own punishment. So we better learn that lesson as soon as possible.

If someone sticks their hand in fire, they get burned. Fire is not punishing them. We understand the nature of fire and failure to understand that results in pain. But we can’t live without fire, just like we can’t live without gravity; otherwise we would fly off the Earth. Similarly, we cannot live without the law of karma teaching us the results of our actions.

Karma (Action) Equals the Truth

It is easy overlook the depth of the word “karma”, and its meaning, “action.” Your actions about something are the aggregate result of your wisdom about it, like the “food” example above. Additionally, the only things you truly know — in your bones — are the things you have done, the actions you have taken.

Here is another example:

You have a lot of ideas and philosophies about romantic relationships. But the truth of what you actually know is shown in your actions toward partners. What you do, and what comes back to you as a result is the karma. Relationship pain is to awaken you to learning that lesson better. Astrology shows us what the karma actually is, and why we are having such a hard time learning it.

Actions are always in the present moment even though your mind is not. All of your ideas happen in retrospect, as stories and “ego spin”, whereas the truth of your life is shown by every action in every moment. Everything that comes back to you as a karmic result, began as a present moment.

The present moment is the intersecting point of karma, where your past actions and tendencies frame your present choices, toward a future you choose.

Three Types of Karma and the Archer

This past / present / future model of karma is shown in the classic example of the archer and his arrows.

Sanchitta: Past karma or karmas waiting to ripen. Sanchitta karma is the record of every action we have done and the energy impression it has left behind, from this and every other lifetime. Sanchitta is the unresolved portion of our karma, waiting to be experienced. *These are like the arrows that have already been shot.*

Parabda: This is our present action, what we are doing now. Mainly it refers to this lifetime, but on a micro level it is this very moment. Certain events from the storehouse of our Sanchitta karma ripen in the present and we must act accordingly. *This is like arrow in the archer's bow that he is about to shoot.*

Agami: This is the future that will be a direct result of our present actions. This is the good news. We create our own karma each moment. There is no wrathful god waiting to punish us for our misdeeds. We punish or reward ourselves based on our present actions and it has always been so. *These are the remaining arrows that need to be shot.*

Karma = Predeterminism + Presence

As illustrated in the example of the archer, it is best to see karma as a flow rather than as a “thing”.

Karma:

Karma is the law, which includes predeterminism, presence and the unalterable future based on our present actions.

- *Predeterminism* is the momentum of past actions that shape the present moment, like the arrows we have shot in the past.
- *Presence* is the moment in which we choose a course of action, similar to reaching for a new arrow to shoot.
- *Unalterable Future* is created from the present action, where the arrows we have just shot are going to land.

Unfortunately, too often when people use the word “karma” they mean “bad karma.” It is a term used to denote the painful effects of life we are trying to overcome. This pits us against our past, introduces enormous duality and is not helpful.

Karma is a “law” that operates on two poles:

Predeterminism and presence.

Your karma, right now, is the container of your life, what is limiting you, or what you believe that to be. Then you take action (karma) in the present, based on those inner and outer limitations/perceptions.

For example, In the Bhagavad Gita, we pick up Arjuna’s karma as the warrior on a battlefield, conflicted over having to kill, and his limited mindset about it. Whatever actions he takes based on this circumstance will ripple out into the future and frame that future.

Predeterminism:

Most of our karma is predetermined and much of it is common to all beings. For instance, we have the karma to have a body on Earth, to be a human (shared with other humans, which implies the need to eat, sleep, breathe, etc.). We have the karma of our gender (also shared with many). Also, we have the karma of our race, our culture, our family, our general health, our talents, our temperament, and on and on.

These were predetermined (because we did not “choose” them in the moment). They are deep connections to our soul’s past. They are our innate tendencies, the results of our samskaras.

In the Bhagavad Gita, Arjuna’s connections, family history, culture, skills as an archer, health, luck to have Lord Krishna as his charioteer are all

predetermined and the result of many lifetimes — as well as his tendency to see things and respond in a certain way.

Presence:

Within this predetermined structure, the moments of our life arrive in the form of freewill, where we bring presence into our circumstances. Every action we take in the present moment (both inner and outer) is an expression of freewill. We always have a choice, at least an inner one. From this place of freedom, all is possible. The actions in the present are what determine the structure of our life in the future. Predeterminism does not mean it was determined by a force outside of us. We determined the present, based on our past choices.

But we do not usually see endless possibilities because of our preconditioning. Instead, we tend to make the same choices over and over, for both positive and negative.

For example, Arjuna learning yoga, trying to find a better solution to deal with his dilemma and what he actually chooses is a function of his freewill.

Our present choices (freewill) create our future conditions (karma). However, regardless of what we do, have done or will do, there is a part of us that is absolutely free of it all. The soul (Param Atman) is untouched by the karma of the individual (jivatman).

It is from this place that Lord Krishna told Arjuna to fight and kill. Those actions (karmas), however dramatic they may be, have no inherent residue on the soul, just like clouds moving through the sky have no effect on the sky.

Through repeated births the soul can experience the fruits of its actions and learn from them. Our actions set in motion forces that attract similar energies to us, which then result in the similar circumstances that follow. If we act violently, for example, we will attract violent people to us, who will act upon us in a similarly violent manner, allowing us to reap as we have sown.

The pain of our wrong action teaches us. It is in this way that we learn to do the right things, or the things that uplift us and take us closer to truth. At the end of each life we will take with us the essence of our actions and the underlying will and energy that has caused them, which becomes the basis of our next life.

The Karmic Frame

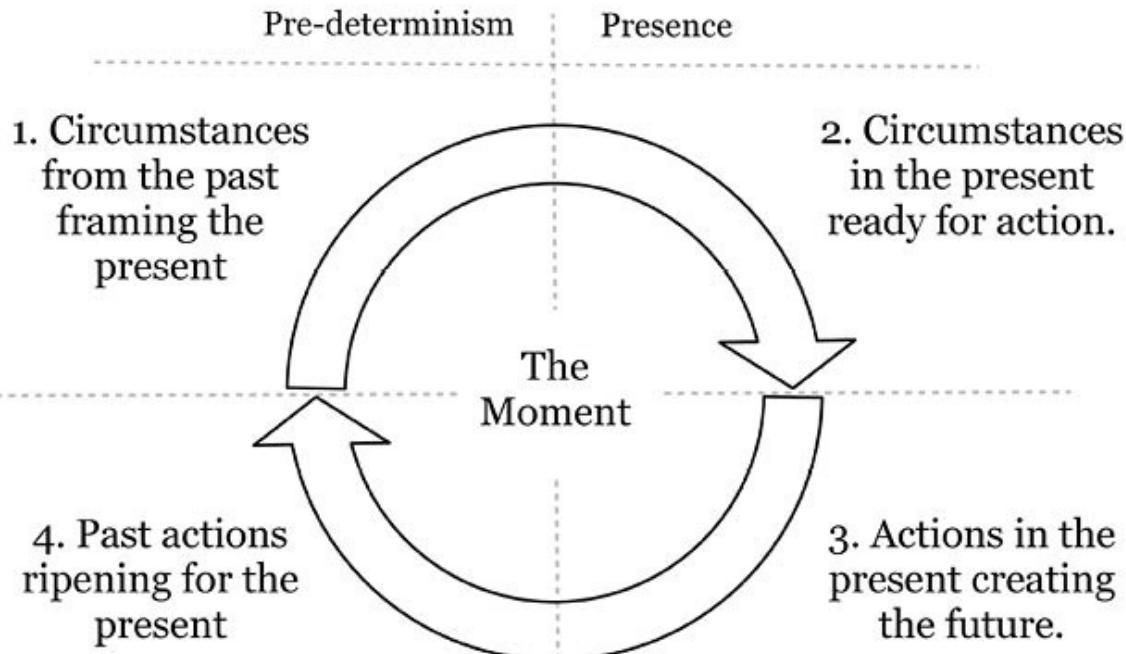


Figure 3.4

Karma, Freewill and Astrology

“Paramatma who is unborn has had many avatars. Janardana, in the Form of the Grahas, gives the fruits of karma of the living beings. To destroy the strength of the Daityas [demons], to increase the strength of the Devas, aiming to establish dharma. Janardana (Vishnu) from grahas took many auspicious births successively.”

~Brihat Parashara Hora Sastra

Wouldn't it be nice to know your karma? Astrology is the Vedic science of looking into a person's karma. According to the Vedic scriptures, it is the planets who are the keepers of our karma. When the planets line up synchronous to our karmic energy, at that time we are brought into the world.

This pattern can be seen by the planets' positions at the time of our birth. There are certain things that are or were destined to happen, such as our upbringing and early life environment, our parents and siblings.

These early events molded us into the person we are today, the person who must face the situations that await us, and deal with them as we are conditioned to. At that time, as our karmas ripen, our freewill comes into play — in each moment.

It is as if the arrows have been shot from our previous lifetimes and our upbringing, and then it is up to us. We shoot the arrows and either hit or miss the mark. Astrology can be a very valuable tool in helping us to see through the forest of maya.

Astrologers in the West encounter much skepticism and misunderstanding. A very common mistake places upbringing and early environment factors ahead of astrological factors. They are the same. Having a mean mother will harm you in such a way that will force you to find happiness within yourself. This will show the 4th house ruler, the Moon or other indications of mother afflicted in the birth chart.

They are the same, one does not override another.

Karmic factors will show in the birth chart and be played out in the life.

An astrology reading is very much like a weather forecast. If told that it will rain tomorrow, most will bring an umbrella. We are here to act with freewill. In fact, an astrologer is actually reading the freewill of the person as much as anything else. The more we move toward knowledge and wisdom, the less power our negative karma has over us.

Spiritual practices cultivate sattwa, elevating all potentials. Yoga practices and meditation are key. All of the great saints also incarnated with karma, yet they were unaffected by it. The aches, the pains, the moods, the dramas of their incarnation were accepted cheerfully as a choice, as a function of presence or freewill.



CHAPTER 4

Vedic Astrology — The Science of Light

So, after much “to do,” we are ready to start discussing Vedic astrology. It is through Vedic astrology that we see how spirit takes form and why.

Brihat Parashara Hora Sastra

In this book we will use the text Brihat Parashara Hora Sastra for astrological authority. This text was originally in the form of a dialogue between the Rishi (Seer) Parashara and his student. Parashara was a Rishi quoted in many Vedic texts, not just his “Hora Sastra”, the Jyotish text.

Brihat Parashara Hora Sastra (hereafter referred to as BPHS) is thought to have been composed between 800-200 BC, but was lost for thousands of years. It was referred to throughout history in medieval Indian astrology texts, but not rediscovered until the end of the 19th century when it was recompiled.

There is some controversy about certain sections of BPHS that may not be original, but I will not be discussing any of the controversial material here.

Astrology Sanskrit in his Book

Here is a quick list of the main Sanskrit terms used in Vedic astrology. They will be used interchangeably throughout the rest of this text.

1. Grahas — Planets
2. Rashis — Astrology Signs
3. Bhavas — Astrology Houses
4. Nakshatras — Star groups
5. Dasas — Astrological cycles

FroM BPHS Chapter 1— The Creation

9-12. *Śrī Vishnu, who is the Lord (of all matters), who has undefiled spirit, who is endowed with the three Gunas, although he transcends the grip of Gunas (Gunatita), who is the Author of this Universe, who is glorious, who is the Cause and who is endowed with valour, has no beginning. He authored the Universe and administers it with a quarter of his power. The other three quarters of Him, filled with nectar, are knowable only to the philosophers (of maturity). The Principal Evolver, who is both perceptible and imperceptible in Vasudeva. The Imperceptible part of the Lord is endowed with dual powers, while the Perceptible with triple powers.*

13-15. *The three powers are Śrī Shakti (Mother Lakshmi) with Sattva-Gun, Bhū Shakti (Mother-Earth) with Rajo-Gun and Nil Shakti with Tamo-Gun. Apart from the three, the fourth kind of Vishnu, influenced by Śrī Shakti and BhooShakti, assumes the form of Shankarshan with Tamo-Gun, of Pradyumna with Rajo-Gun and of Anirudh with Sattva-Gun.*

16-17. *Mahatatwa, Ahamkar and Ahamkar Murti and Brahma, are born from Shankarshan, Pradyumna and Anirudh, respectively. All these three forms are endowed with all the three Gunas, with predominance of the Gun due to their origin.*

18-19. *Ahamkar is of three classes, i.e. with Sattvic, Rajasic and Tamasic dispositions. Divine class, sensory organs and the five primordial compounds (space, air, fire, water and earth) are, respectively, from the said three Ahamkaras*

Here we clearly see Lord Vishnu is the author of the Universe and is endowed with the 3 Gunas and the five elements. Later we will see that the planets are

incarnations of the “Visible” form of Vishnu and the Signs as the “invisible” form.

From BPHS Chapter 2 — Divine Incarnations

3-4. The unborn Lord has many incarnations. He has incarnated, as the 9 (Nava) Grahas to bestow on the living beings the results due to their Karmas. He is Janardan. He assumed the auspicious form of Grahas to destroy the demons (evil forces) and sustain the divine beings.

8-13. The beings with more Jivatman are (mortal) beings. The high degree of Paramatman from the Grahas, viz. Surya etc. did incarnate, as Ram, Krishn etc. After completing the mission, the Paramatmanas (of the respective) Grahas again merge (in the respective) Grahas. The Jivatma portions from the Grahas take births, as human beings and live their lives according to their Karmas and again merge in the Grahas. And at the time of Great Destruction the Grahas as well merge in Lord Vishnu. The one, who knows of all these, will become versed in the knowledge of the past, present and future. Without a knowledge of Jyotish these cannot be known. Hence, everyone should have a knowledge of Jyotish, particularly the Brahmin. The one, who, devoid of knowledge of Jyotish, blames this Vedic Science will go to the hell called ‘Raurava’ and will be reborn blind.

It is clear to see from the above passage that according to Parashara, the great rishi of Vedic astrology, the Planets (Grahas) are the visible form / incarnations of Lord Vishnu (God). We are the “Jivatma portions” from the Grahas that have “taken form as human beings” to “live their lives according to their karmas and again merge in the Grahas”. There are also higher beings, Paramatmans, which incarnated from higher levels. They “did incarnate as Ram, Krishna, etc.” Then after completing their mission (as/with that Graha), merge again in the Graha.

From BPHS Chapter 4 — Zodiacal Rashis Described

1-2. Importance of Hora. The word Hora is derived from Ahoratr after dropping the first and last syllables. Thus Hora (Lagnas) remains in between Ahoratr (i.e. day and night) and after knowing Hora the good and bad effects

of a native be known. Lord Vishnu, the Invisible is Time personified. His limbs are the 12 Rashis, commencing from Mesh.

Here we see the Rishi describing the Zodiac Signs as “Sri Vishnu the invisible” and as “Time Personified” (Kala Purusha), with his limbs as the 12 Signs (Rashis). Thus we can infer that the planets are the visible form of Lord Vishnu and the Signs are the invisible form.

Once we have a birth time, those signs become houses and as Parashara says above, “after knowing Hora (time of birth) the good and bad effects of the native be known”.

Thus, the main building blocks of Vedic astrology are planets, signs and houses. Also, the Vedic astrology system uses the distant stars, and star sections in the sky, called “Nakshatras.”

As it relates to the three gunas:

- Planets are related to sattwa (spirit and knowledge).
- Signs are related to rajas (feeling).
- Houses are related to tamas (form).

The planets are the forces of intelligence and light. This is why Vedic astrology is called Jyotish, the science of light. It is the science of illuminating these planetary forces and energies within our mind and consciousness. This is why planets are represented by gods and deities. They are the creative, intelligent forces of the universe.

The astrology signs are expressions of the planets — how they feel to us (rajas). It's useful to view the planets as landlords of different sections of the celestial territory. When you are in their domicile you feel a certain way, which tends to make you behave in accordance with their principles. These domiciles are the astrology signs

For example, Jupiter creates righteousness and knowledge. He is akin to a counselor or teacher or priest. His signs, Sagittarius and Pisces, are related to things such as churches, courtrooms, ashrams and classrooms. These are places you would go to get the feeling of Jupiter.

The astrology houses show what gets produced through form in the world (tamas) by the planets, and how those things feel — relative to the signs. The

astrology houses are determined by the rising sign at birth.

As the Earth turns, different signs appear to rise on the horizon. Each sign has a fixed relationship to every other sign and is measured from the rising sign, which forms the first house. Then every other house unfolds from there, based on the signs.

For example, if someone is born at the moment when Leo was rising, that Jupiter ruled sign of Sagittarius would fall in the 5th house, because Sagittarius is 5 houses from Leo. Scorpio will be the fourth house, because Scorpio is the fourth sign from Leo. This will be discussed at great length later in the book.

Life in the Universe-ity: A Metaphor for Astrology

Through these planets' signs and houses (and Nakshatras), our life unfolds. You can look at life as being akin to being in school. Just like when you are attending university, each year you begin a new grade, with a clean slate, after having passed the previous grade. Similarly, you incarnate in each lifetime to start a new school grade, and hopefully go to the next level.

Remember, Lord Krishna told Arjuna, "*Just as a man casts off worn out clothes and puts on new ones, so also the embodied self casts off worn out bodies and enters others, which are new.*" The same idea applies here.

In this model, the planets are the teachers. They have the wisdom that you are trying to learn (sattwa).

How you feel (rajas) in their class and in their presence is related to the astrology signs — their territory.

Your results in their class, your behavior in their classroom, whether you pass or fail, are shown by the houses (tamas).

But the planets are not merely teachers, like at our high school or university. They are teachers of universal law. Each planet is billions of years old. They are the creators of the lessons they are teaching and they have been teaching these lessons to every creature who has ever existed.

Each being has a relationship with every planet, as the scriptures tell us: "*Janārdana, in the Form of the Grahas, gives the fruits of karma of the living beings.*" Each planet knows exactly who you are and knows your level of intelligence when it delivers its karma to you. Each planet has the lesson plan of your life already figured out before you even arrive. In fact, it is their will that compels you to take form in order to have the experiences you need in order to

grow and learn. They know exactly what tests will come, when they will come and why. The timing of those tests are predetermined and seen in the astrology chart.

Realizing this should give you enormous peace and solace. The universe knows about you, loves you and cares about you. In fact, you ARE the universe, under the illusion of separateness.

More Lessons on the Law of Karma

Because we don't understand the law of karma, when we hear of pre-determinism in astrology, we may say something like, "But there is still freewill, right? Can I still overcome my karma and the harmful effects of the planets?"

As explained previously, pre-determinism and freewill are part of the same process.

Yes, the events in your life are going to unfold when they're supposed to unfold. The lesson plans have been predetermined in advance by your past actions. So, you can relax and trust that the universe loves and cares about you and nothing *wrong* is happening to you.

However, you are here to take the tests, then pass or fail, just like in school (call that freewill). Just because you know the tests are planned does not mean you have passed them. That is why you are in school, to take the tests then pass or fail.

When you go to university, the teachers already have the lesson plans laid out as well. However, they are teaching the same lesson to all the students. But in the real Universe-ity, the planets are teaching different lessons to every being at different times in perfect accordance with their karma.

The truth is, each planet is not even "separate" from you. Each planet created a different part of you, through the three worlds, through the three gunas. They are the specific energies of your higher self. They are not lording over you from above. They are bubbling up in your consciousness at the appropriate time. Or you might say, showering you from above in perfect measure at the perfect time, to put you exactly where you need to be all the time.

There is no karma that we need to overcome with our freewill. We instead need to relax into the beauty of the cosmic will and intelligence felt by the planets. What most people refer to as freewill is often the ego asserting itself over the process, trying to get its desires fulfilled. When correctly understood,

we see that studying astrology is studying the science and mechanics of how your higher self communicates with your worldly, limited self.

Vedic Concepts in Astrology

Astrology shows when and how our karma is delivered — through body, mind and spirit. Yoga, Ayurveda and Vedic astrology are the three main sciences of karma in Vedic thinking. These three sciences are connected through the same universal Vedic concepts already described. Let's explore them now.

Astrology and the Chakras

Shri Yukteswar in the Holy Science directly correlates the outer zodiac of the sky to the inner zodiac of the chakras.

As was said, the astrology signs are the most related to feeling and emotion — the mental body. The mental body of the individual is activated through the chakras, which, like everything in life, are ruled by the planets.

Each planet rules a chakra, and then the nature of the planet expresses itself through the duality of the world (masculine and feminine) through the astrology signs.

The graph below formalizes the connection.

Astrology and the Chakras

Divine Bliss State		Divine Bliss State	Sahasrara - Beyond
Cancer		Leo	Ajna - Sun/Moon AUM - Pure intuition - Balance Higher and Lower selves
Gemini		Virgo	Visuddha - Mercury HAM - Growth - Communication Freedom - Mantra Siddhi
Taurus		Libra	Anahata - Venus YAM - Selfless love - creativity Union of Male and Female
Aries		Scorpio	Manipura - Mars RAM - Courage - Independence Clarity - Self-will - Protection
Pisces		Sagittarius	Swadisthana - Jupiter VAM - Expansion - Passion Reproduction - Growth
Aquarius		Capricorn	Muladhara - Saturn LAM - Security - Longevity Structure - Control

Figure 4.1

Below is the South Indian Vedic astrology chart, which is also revealed as a portrait of the chakras. Notice the chakra, element, guna, gender and ruler of each sign.

SOUTH INDIAN VEDIC ASTROLOGY CHART WITH IMPORTANT VEDIC PRINCIPLES

Pisces Jupiter Water Female Sattwa Swadisthana	Aries Mars Fire Male Rajas Manipura	Taurus Venus Earth Female Rajas Anahata	Gemini Mercury Air Male Rajas Visuddha
Aquarius Saturn Air Male Tamas Muladhara			Cancer Moon Water Female Sattwa Ajna
Capricorn Saturn Earth Female Tamas Muladhara			Leo Sun Fire Male Sattwa Ajna
Sagittarius Jupiter Fire Male Sattwa Swadisthana	Scorpio Mars Water Female Tamas Manipura	Libra Venus Air Male Rajas Anahata	Virgo Mercury Earth Female Tamas Visuddha

Figure 4.2

Image 4.2 formalizes several Vedic concepts with the astrology signs.

1. Five elements (earth, water, fire, air, space)
2. The three gunas (body, mind, spirit)
3. Chakra
4. Gender
5. Ruling Planet

Astrology and the Five Elements

The five elements are crucial in Vedic thinking and astrology.

Earth:

- The Earth signs are: Capricorn, Taurus and Virgo.
- Mercury *rules* the element of Earth. Saturn and Venus are also earthy planets.

Water:

- The water signs are: Cancer, Scorpio and Pisces.
- Venus *rules* the element of water. The Moon and Jupiter are also watery planets. (Although Mars also rules a water sign, he is a fiery planet.)

Fire:

- The fire signs are: Aries, Leo and Sagittarius.
- Mars *rules* the element of fire. The Sun and Jupiter are also fiery planets.

Air:

- The air signs are: Libra, Aquarius and Gemini
- Saturn *rules* the element of air. Venus and Mercury are also airy planets. The Moon is also airy if it comes within 30° of the Sun.

Space:

- There are no space signs.
- Jupiter *rules* the element of space.

Planets and the Three Gunas

There are several ways to integrate the three Gunas into your astrological understanding. We already described how the Planets are related to Sattwa, the Signs to Rajas and the Houses to Tamas. When we drill a little deeper, we see two important ways the planets are related to the Gunas.

1. Each planet has the potential to operate within a spectrum of wakefulness or sleep, in a general sense (from the birth chart) or in a more specific moment (when affected by dynamic events like eclipses or full moons).
2. Each planet rules / activates a Guna. Like everything in life, the planets are the creators. This includes creating the Gunas. Through analyzing the planets we can see the wise outcome and need of each Guna.

Planets, Gunas, Wakefulness and Sleep

Each planet is operating within a spectrum of wakefulness and sleep. These relative states of awareness are referred to in Brihat Parashara Hora Sastra — Ch.45 V. 5

Awakening, Dreaming and Sleeping States. If a Grah is in its own Rashi, or in exaltation, it is said to be in a state of awakening (alertness). In the Rashi of a friend, or of a neutral it is in dreaming state, while in an enemy's Rashi, or in debilitation it is in a state of sleeping

- Jagraad = Awake / Conscious (Planets Exalted or in their own Sign)
- Swapna = Dreaming / Sleepy (Planets in friend or neutral sign)
- Sushupti = Asleep / Unconscious (Planets in Enemy or Debilitated Sign)

I mention this now, just for context, and will explore planetary dignity, friendship and enmity later.

Realize that these are not static proclamations. Instead they are ever-changing processes, based on a range of factors, both in a natal chart (if assessing the chart of a person) and any given moment / current sky. These issues will be explored in more depth later in the Chapter on Chart reading. But for now we want to understand that as consciousness evolves from darker, self-interested motives to

more gracious, enlightened ones, we can refer to the attributes of the gunas to show the way.

Tamasic manner (through the body — in a heavy, self-interested way)

The planetary energies that are obstructed, or aggravated will function more through the physical body and in a psychologically and spiritually dark manner.

Attributes of Tamasic Nature of Planets:

Violence (Mars), manipulation (Saturn), confusion (The Nodes), lust (Venus), greed (Jupiter), dishonesty (Mercury), domination (Sun), clinging (Moon) are the specific qualities of each planet operating in a Tamasic way.

Rajasic manner (through the mind and emotions — in a passionate way — related to others)

Planetary energies that are of average strength will function more through the mind and emotions. They will function passionately. Bodily desires and darker emotions will be a distraction. This passionate nature disturbs the balance required for sattwa.

Attributes of Rajasic Nature of Planets:

Anger (Mars), fear (Saturn), confusion (The Nodes), passion (Venus), dogmatism (Jupiter), stimulation (Mercury), power (Sun), emotion (Moon) are the specific qualities of each planet operating in a Rajasic way.

Sattwic manner (through the heart/soul — in a loving, balanced way — related to Universal themes)

Planetary energies that are very developed will function in a more loving, balanced way. They will be forces of intelligence. This intelligence will be distracted by passions, yet negative emotions such as anger and fear (tamasic in nature) will usually be under control.

Attributes of Tamasic Nature of Planets:

Discipline (Mars), solitude (Saturn), perception (The Nodes), devotion (Venus), transcendence (Jupiter), discrimination (Mercury), sacrifice (Sun), peace (Moon) are the specific qualities of each planet operating in a Sattwic way.

Planets will fall somewhere within this level of awareness in a natal chart. Planets that are challenged will have a harder time learning life lessons, and will often only learn them after making painful mistakes. Increasing their strength through spiritual practices helps. Planets that are naturally intelligent will also have challenges and need to pass through the stages of evolution, but they will learn more easily from them.

For example, Venus shows where we look for happiness, mainly through our relationships with others. Those relationships can be more self-interested, and revolve mainly around sex and our bodily pleasures (Tamas). They may be more about the give and take with others, expressing in a Rajasic, worldly way. Or the relationships may evolve toward higher themes related to others, where we have no desires we wish to fulfill with them.

If Venus is weak and obstructed we will have a hard time recognizing our mistakes with others. Our relationships will be too sexually charged, based mainly on physical attraction, which brings disrespect to both parties. In this case, Venus lessons will be hard to learn and occur only after painful mistakes, long disrespectful relationships, perhaps involving abuse of one sort or another.

When Venus is more intelligent, we will be able to see our tendencies and those of others. We will recognize the levels of mutual respect flowing in our relationships earlier in the process, and make a change if necessary. This allows us to avoid repeating these painful mistakes over and over again.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

All planets are hard-wired to operate through the Tamasic levels first. We see this clearly in children. We all go through an immature stage of growth with each planet. For example, everyone's early relationships were Tamasic, as I described above. They were based on some form of "physical beauty". But eventually we realize that physical beauty is not everything and we fall in love with the beauty in the other's heart. Then eventually, love experiences transcend human interaction and we see the beauty in all of creation.

Often life lessons are learned after painful mistakes. But the intelligent, Sattvic planets learn very quickly and often early in life and may never have to suffer a painful lesson as part of the growth process. The intelligent planetary forces are usually things we just "know", and usually wind up being the thing we teach to others.

It is easy to be judgmental about the three gunas, thinking certain ones are “better than others”. This is a mistake. Instead we need to see them as steps along the growth process and stages of evolution / integration through experience (Tamas), emotion (Rajas) and consciousness (Sattwa). All spiritual growth (Sattwa) needs to be integrated through experience (Tamas) and felt in our heart (Rajas).

Yoga is the Vedic Science that cultivates Sattwa through intelligent action and experience.

Astrology is the Science that allows us to see which forces are obstructing or assisting us on that path at any given time.

This is one level of the three gunas astrologically. It is based on the principle that each planet will have a level of awareness that we can map directly to the 3 gunas. It is also based on the understanding that all planets in their purest sense are evolving toward sattwa in us.

Planets Rule the Gunas

The planets have an actual guna (aside from the level of intelligence described above) and bring that quality into our life naturally. This is where it gets tricky. Many Vedic astrologers become judgmental when they discuss the planets as ruling the three gunas, assigning qualities of “good and bad” to them. This is a mistake. Everything has an inspired, divine purpose. We simply need to align ourselves with that purpose rather than our judgments, which are based on a limited perspective.

- **Tamasic planets:** Mars, Saturn, the nodes (Rahu and Ketu) — Keep to ourselves
- **Rajasic planets:** Mercury, Venus — Share equally with others
- **Sattwic planets:** Sun, Moon, Jupiter — Give selflessly.

The Tamasic planets are primarily motivated toward self-protection and self-preservation, but they may darken the higher potential in the process, especially when we inflict their nature on others. Instead we are supposed to use their nature to protect ourselves and make ourselves stronger by facing our own shortcomings, not trying to change others by fixing theirs.

Mars is the planet of strength. He protects us through the willingness to fight in order to survive. First this means our body must survive and be strong. But eventually we must conquer our inner demons, the internal ones. Only then are we truly strong and safe. A powerful Mars has the courage to fight the inner battle.

Saturn gives the awareness of time and how it wears down and destroys forms, including our form. Saturn is protective by alerting us to danger, allowing us to remember those who hurt us as well as other dangers. This compels us to avoid certain people and situations or seek to control them. But this behavior is usually fear-based and projected outward. We need to face these fears internally, control ourselves and face our mistakes, only then can we forgive others and commit to the true meaning of life.

The Nodes bring confusion, which has the effect of protecting the ego, until the karmic lessons associated with the Nodal axis are integrated, in our mid-forties. This is why they are perhaps the most difficult energy. As we untangle the confusion of the nodes we release the grip of confusion on our ego.

The Rajasic planets are motivated to experience pleasure and enjoyment, but they are also distracting energies, especially if we try to keep their enjoyable qualities to ourselves. Rajasic Planets are supposed to be shared with others. They are about mutuality and evenness. They make us flexible and accommodating, experiencing life and learning from these experiences along the way.

Mercury gives intelligence through curiosity, openness, enjoyment and play. But we must be careful to not just use his energy for entertainment, stimulation and mirth. Instead, the highest Mercury is one of inquiry and truth seeking, like a child always asking “why”, and not boxed into rigid corners. Eventually Mercury leads to finding our authentic voice, and speaking it too. This requires we listen as well as we speak.

Venus brings sensual enjoyment and happiness by bringing an appreciation of beauty in all its forms. But we must be careful to not just seek pleasure (for ourselves) or happiness and fun (with others). Instead we must also seek a higher

bliss, which is more of the soul. This higher Venus leads us to feel “happiness for no reason”, and leads to the highest levels of devotion.

The Sattvic planets are motivated to doing something good and uplifting, for higher purposes. However they may be disconnected or unrealistic too. Sattvic planets should be used in situations when we can share selflessly, like a father (Sun), mother (Moon) or teacher / counselor (Jupiter). Situations and relationships that require harsh and cruel energy (Tamasic), or a transactional / mutual energy (Rajasic) are best avoided with Sattvic planets.

The Sun is the main planet of power. Just as the Sun in the sky is the source of all power on Earth, the “inner Sun” is the source of our power. This applies to us as an individual, and as we try to experience our transcendent Self, called the ParamAtman in Vedic philosophy. We must have a worthy goal where the Sun is concerned, otherwise we may become a tyrant, and abuse the power we have, rather than share it selflessly, like the Sun in the Sky.

The Moon is the planet of selfless love. It is through this love that we merge with life through the heart, hoping to dissolve the painful feeling of separation experienced through the ego. A mother’s love is a great example of this selflessness. However, when we are not with the child (or in other situations where we can love selflessly) the moon feels the pain of separation. We feel vulnerable. We need to protect ourselves (Tamasic) from danger in order to survive and we feel more comfortable around some people more than others (Rajasic). These attractions and aversions generate a lot of emotions, which obscure the purity of feeling deep inside our heart.

Jupiter is the planet of higher teachings, beliefs and the direction it gives our life. This includes religion and the teachers we follow and emulate. We all have a philosophy, some answer that comes forth when life kicks us to the curb. That is Jupiter. However, too often our religion or philosophy makes us clannish and dismissive of those who simply “do not get it”. This seed of religious intolerance leads to many problems in the world (like terrorism) and can also wreak havoc in our personal lives.

Planets and Guna Synthesis

Once again, we have to be careful about judging the Gunas as good or bad. They are simply activating forces, motivations. It is possible to do something bad with a good motivation or vice versa. For instance, a religious zealot may kill because he thinks it's the right thing to do for you — killing you because his religion told him to. This is a perversion of sattwic energy — mainly related to Jupiter. Lying “for your own good” is another example of sattwic energy gone bad.

Also, the protective quality of tamasic energy can be a great force for good. A fireman rushing into a building, risking his own life to save yours is powerful tamasic energy — mainly related to Mars. He's trying to prevent difficulty and avoid trouble. Any sort of fighting and conflict is going to be related to tamasic energy.

Rajasic energy is simply activity, pleasure and enjoyment. In many ways we spend most of our life in a rajasic mode. Wanting to share that pleasure with someone else is also rajasic. In general, rajas is passion, which includes sex. This desire is usually for personal pleasure, but we can also desire truth and liberation, in which case our rajasic tendency to experience happiness will be focused toward sattwa. In fact, this is the goal of yoga: to turn rajas toward sattwa.

Tamasic Warning:

We must acknowledge that the tamasic planets are the ones that bring anger, fear and confusion into our life, so we must be more careful with them. It's very easy to confuse how we are supposed to handle them, especially if you read Vedic astrology books. Back in the day, the rishis were not interested in subtlety. So for instance, if someone has Venus affected by a tamasic planet (such as Rahu), the scripture might say, “When Venus joins Rahu they are haunted by witches and their wife is a prostitute.”

Of course, these things are not meant to be taken literally, but they refer to some deep truths about this association. Yet, as we have discussed before, anger and fear are simply our limited expressions of discipline and courage (Mars) facing our limitations with maturity (Saturn).

As you move forward in this book, think about how the gunas of the planets are inextricable from their nature.

Here is an example: Mars is always trying to protect something by destroying what he sees as weakening it. His house placement, sign placement and placement by transit in the sky will all show these things. Jupiter will always try

to expand something by seeing the good in it and trying to rise above the worldly difficulties associated with it. Venus will always try to beautify something and make it more pleasant and enjoyable.

Once we understand how to translate the gunas astrologically, we can combine the states of awareness (the first quality of the guna, based on dignity) with the natural disposition of the planet (its personal guna as just described).

Ex: If Mars is functioning at a high level of intelligence, he will try to destroy things (tamasic) that he perceives to be weakening the soul's progress (sattwa). At a medium level of intelligence he will try to destroy things that he perceives to be weakening the mind or interrupting his path toward pleasure (rajas). At the lowest level of intelligence he will destroy things that he perceives to be weakening or threatening physical safety (tamas). The destructive nature of Mars is not bad. When we suffer Mars problems it's because we are fighting the wrong battles.

This example extends to all of the planets and will be covered when we discuss each of them individually.

Gunas of the Astrology Signs

The astrology signs have a guna. In general, the signs are the psychological expression of the planets that rule them. Therefore, it makes sense that most of the signs have the same guna as the planet that rules them. But there are exceptions.

- Aries — rajasic — Passionate to take action
- Taurus — rajasic— Passionate to experience pleasure
- Gemini — rajasic— Passionate to know how things work
- Cancer — sattwic — Inspired by Love
- Leo — sattwic— Inspired by Action
- Virgo — tamasic— Staying safe by noticing all the important details
- Libra — rajasic— Passionate to be with others
- Scorpio — Tamasic— Staying safe by hiding our vulnerabilities
- Sagittarius — sattwic— Inspired by our beliefs
- Capricorn — tamasic— Staying safe by remembering mistakes and dangers
- Aquarius — tamasic— Staying safe by changing structures that are not working

- Pisces — sattwic— Inspired by Metaphysics

Just as with planets, the signs have these embedded motivations. A planet in a sattwic sign will be motivated to do something good and uplifting. The planet in a tamasic sign will be motivated to avoid pain and trouble for themselves or others. A planet in a rajasic sign will be motivated to fulfill desires for themselves or others.

Blending the qualities of planetary guna and sign guna is one of the more important principles in Vedic astrology. Of course, usually the guna of the planet and the guna of the sign is not the same. When you start using the qualities of sign and planetary guna, you will see a dramatic difference in the interpretations and motivations behind why things happen.

Caste

Caste is used for planets and signs. The castes are related to different professions or activities in life. They are remarkably telling.

- Warrior (Kshatriya) — Fire signs — Dharma (truthful action)
- Worker (Sudra) — Earth signs — Artha (comfort and wealth)
- Merchant (Vaishya) — Air signs — Kama (happiness)
- Teacher / Minister (Brahmin) — Water signs — Moksha (liberation)

These motivations have a lot to do with profession literally, and also the nature and psychological temperament of planets in those signs.

These castes were developed in a more enlightened era. These castes are from a time when dharma, not exploitation, was the norm. Being a “warrior,” for instance, was very noble. But in our modern world warfare is looked at as some unseemly pursuit — mainly because it IS in this era. But the reason it is unseemly is because our leaders are corrupt, we live in the dark ages where people wage war for reasons that have nothing to do with upholding righteousness.

However in those days, warriors were the great protectors of truth. Notice how in this dark age, the rhetoric for war is always trumpeting a noble cause — to “liberate” people and to “defend” liberty — even though it falls far short of these virtues in reality.

Even the “teacher/minister” arouses suspicion. “Teacher” doesn’t necessarily, but “minister” does. When we use the Sanskrit word “guru” for teacher — there is discomfort. We are used to ministers being ambiguous. Some are good, some are just out for themselves, the money and greed etc. When pondering these castes, try to look at them without the usual irony and suspicion of a modern, cynical person. :

Warrior: politicians, managers, military, lawyers, CEOs. The warrior mentality is very individual. They may have difficulties in relationships because a successful relationship will water down one’s individuality. The warrior can often be truthful to a fault, even offensive. They are generally in a hurry, impatient, maybe even aggressive. The highest warrior mentality is one that fights for a righteous cause. The lowest warrior mentality is to fight simply to win, regardless of the cause.

Worker: laborers, construction, clerical workers, menial professions. The worker mentality is very hands-on and detail oriented. They like putting their hands on things and seeing tangible results at the end of the day. The worker is generally slower in their approach and may accumulate much wealth, but often they have earned it through patience and hard work. The highest worker mentality is one of patient progress toward a fulfilling goal. The lowest worker mentality is one of stagnation and a non-empowered servitude.

Merchants: Salespeople, small business owners, bankers. The merchant mentality is one of ideas, communication and a mutually respectful interaction. The best merchants are the ones who strike a fair deal for both themselves and their customers. They are also enjoyable to talk with, informed, humorous. The highest merchant mentality is one of creativity, ingenuity and equality for all. The lower merchant mentality is one with a hyper-transactional nature to all interactions — a certain “scorekeeping” mentality may also prevail.

Teachers: Counselors, teachers, ministers, mystics. The teacher mentality is one of guidance and counseling. This approach to life stems from a desire and ability to bring greater expansion into the lives of others — to help free them. The best teachers are the ones who never sacrifice a single individual student to the larger message they are trying to serve. The highest teacher mentality has the selflessness and wisdom to expand upon and translate the subjects they are

teaching toward the greatest good. The lowest teacher mentality uses the teachings themselves as a way to advance a personal agenda / dogmatic purpose or (worse yet) coerce others for personal gain.

Pisces Water Sattwa Teacher	Aries Fire Rajas Warrior	Taurus Earth Rajas Worker	Gemini Air Rajas Merchant
Aquarius Air Tamasic Merchant			Cancer Water Sattwa Teacher
Capricorn Earth Tamasic Worker			Leo Fire Sattwa Warrior
Sagittarius Fire Sattwa Warrior	Scorpio Water Tamasic Teacher	Libra Air Rajas Merchant	Virgo Earth Tamasic Worker

Figure 4.3

The chart above formalizes the special attributes of astrology signs.

Four Purusarthas

The 4 Purushartha refers to the 4 pursuits that must be mastered if we are to live a fulfilled life. Those 4 pursuits are — Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. In astrology, they are most related to the Houses and will be covered at length in Chapter 7 — Astrology Houses.



CHAPTER 5

The Planets and Their Signs

Everything in life is evolving. The specifics of this “evolutionary process” are seen by the planets, the forces of intelligence. Therefore, with each planet their evolutionary process, through the three gunas, will first be mentioned.

Also, the exaltation and debilitation points of each planet will be described. Exaltation and debilitation points show a quality of the planet in extreme benefit or detriment. These placements are discussed (along with planetary dignity) in Brihat Parashara Hora Sastra, immediately after the sage Parashara gives the descriptions of the planets.

IMPORTANT:

We will discuss the exalted points as qualities of the planets, not as related to any specific chart. Meaning, great insight can be known by understanding how the purest form of the Sun’s energy is expressed through Aries and the most confused to be expressed through Libra. But this is just an archetype, not a literal assessment of any specific chart. These points show a purification of purpose for the Sun in general, for everyone.

This is useful because in all situations we can know the highest potential of any planet as being related to the qualities of its exaltation sign.

Astrology Signs and Planets

Because the astrology signs are extension of the planets, they will be described first, in this chapter, as related to the planets and using the Vedic concepts we have already discussed. The signs will also be discussed in relation to each other, and the zodiac itself, in the chapter “The Rasis and the Signs of the Zodiac”.

More Planetary Traits Exclusive to Astrology

In this chapter, so far we have described the planets and signs in reference to several Yogic / Vedic concepts: The 5 elements, the three gunas and the castes. Now we are going to discuss a few qualities of the planets that exist only in astrology.

Planetary sutras:

“Benefics and Malefics. Among these, Sūrya, Śani, Mangal, decreasing Candr, Rahu and Ketu (the ascending and the descending nodes of Candr) are malefics, while the rest are benefics. Budh, however, is a malefic, if he joins a malefic.”

“The Sun is full Atman, the Moon manas, Mars strength, the consciousness spoken is Mercury giving speech, Jupiter is joy & wisdom, Venus the giver of virya, and Saturn is difficult sorrow, as told by the ancient rishis.”

“The Sun and Moon are the sovereigns, the general is Mars, Mercury is the young sovereign, the counselors are Jupiter and Venus, the menial is Saturn, and the army is Rahu and Ketu. In this succession, O Wise, the Sun, etc. should be reflected upon.”

-- Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra:
Nature and Form of the Grahas, 11-15

“Eunuchs are the two Mercury and Saturn, young women are the Moon and Venus, men are to be known the remaining: Sun, Mars and Jupiter.”

-- Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra:
Nature and Form of the Grahas, 19

The Planetary Order

First, as you notice, the planets are listed in a specific order, as the life force descends from the planets in this succession. It correlates to many things,

including the days of the week. The planetary order is:

- Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, (the Nodes)

Special Karaka: (Indicator)

Sun: Soul — related to the number one. It refers to the ‘one without a second’. In the highest sense it is your soul connected to all souls. Yet, we often feel it as our limited personal power, rather than our universal power.

Keywords: father, government, physical constitution, power

Moon: Mind — related to the number two. It shows the reflection of the souls light on the field of consciousness and experience. Life on earth ‘feels a certain way’, and we want to connect that feeling with others through the moon.

Keywords: mother, family, psychology, connections

Mars: Strength — related to the number three. Two individuals create a third pole of existence. There is a tension, a struggle, competition. First externally, then internally, we struggle with others and with ourselves with Mars.

Keywords: brothers, competition, action, will

Mercury: Speech — related to the number four. The black-and-white distinctions of Mars lead to variety, exploration and a desire to enjoy and capacity to understand with Mercury. This also leads to self-expression and communication.

Keywords: friends, flexibility, information, humor, equanimity

Jupiter: Meaning — related to the number five. The playfulness and curiosity of Mercury must be elevated toward a worthy goal and higher cause. We learn that through Jupiter, which gives our life meaning, hope and purpose.

Keywords: teachers, philosophies, optimism, growth

Venus: Happiness — related to the number six. The beliefs of Jupiter may disconnect us from others. Venus reconnects us through the desire to enjoy life and the capacity to appreciate beauty in all its forms.

Keywords: romantic partners, pleasures, devotion, happiness

Saturn: Sorrow — related to the number seven. No matter how much love, beauty and happiness we experience, eventually we need to let go of it all and make peace with time and our mortality with Saturn, the awareness of life beyond our mortal frame.

Keywords: old people, effort, maturity, commitment

The Planetary Cabinet

The planetary cabinet is a very interesting and important attribute of planets. They are assigned different roles in the hierarchy of our inner kingdom. Their relationship to each other within this planetary cabinet is quite telling.

Sun — King & Moon — Queen

The Sun and Moon as King and Queen together relate to the archetypal forces of masculine and feminine energy that exist within us. The power of the Sun combined with the creative principle of the Moon is why there is life on Earth. The Sun is the Param Atman (universal soul — the soul of all), the Moon is the Jivatman (the individual soul — joined the universal). When we remember our self as the Sun we are illuminated from within rather than seeking to be illumined from without.

However, we cannot perceive the Param Atman directly, we cannot look directly at the Sun. We perceive it (our true Self) as it reflects on our consciousness, our mind (the Moon). The Sun has all the power, but the Moon gives life and perception to that power.

Mars — General

Mars is the General of the Army who executes the king's orders and protects the kingdom. He trains the inner army and keeps it tough and ready for battle. When Mars takes his orders from a place of clarity and illumination, we destroy ignorance and restore dharma.

Mercury — Crown Prince

Mercury is the one closest to the King, the voice in his ear. Mercury goes to all parts of the kingdom, the good and bad places and reports back without bias. Mercury is the planet closest to the Sun. Mercury is the voice in our head interpreting our soul's vision and carrying that vision to the other parts of our being. That voice in our head determines the world in which we live.

Jupiter — Teacher of the Gods

Jupiter teaches the forces of light within us. Great teachings that inspire and uplift us toward something transcendent come from Jupiter. His counsel leads us to transcend the pettiness of the world and rise above its impurities. Part of that uprising includes us stepping into the role of a teacher and connecting to something greater within us.

Venus — Teacher of the demons (inner desires).

Venus is the teacher of the demons, the forces of darkness within us. Elevating our worldly desires into otherworldly ones is the magic of Venus. It is her energy that teaches us how to get along with each other here on Earth. She shows us how to navigate the jungle of desires

Saturn — The laborer

Saturn is the worker — and there's a lot of work to be done here. Facing the unpleasantness of life and persevering in spite of it all is the job of Saturn. Determination, humility, simplicity and sometimes just the desire and capacity to make it through one more day are the gifts of Saturn.

Rahu — The advancing army

Rahu shows the territory the soul wishes to conquer in this lifetime. The battlefield is always chaotic, but if the cause you're fighting for is just, there can be peace amidst that chaos and detachment from it. But usually this comes later in life, after the Nodal axis (Rahu and Ketu) calm down.

Ketu — The occupying army

Ketu shows the territory the soul has already conquered in past lifetimes. The word Ketu means “flag.” It is a potential stronghold of power, but often overlooked by us until later in life, after the fascinated gaze of Rahu calms down.

Gender:

Male: Sun, Mars, Jupiter

- The Sun shows the masculine quality related to fatherhood. The consistent, protective masculine nature is shown by the Sun.

- Mars shows the masculine quality related to the expression of our raw animal nature. Energy expressed through fighting, competition, or asserting our sexuality is related to Mars.
- Jupiter shows the masculine quality related to uplifting guidance and virtuous masculine principles. The inspiring, wise and patient teacher, who has everyone's best interests in mind, is related to Jupiter.

Female: Venus, Moon

- The Moon shows the feminine quality related to motherhood. The Moon shows selfless nurturing and the desire to feed another, even as it weakens us.
- Venus shows the feminine quality related to worldly attraction and beauty. The sensual nature of the world comes from Venus — the power of allure to fascinate us and keep our attention.

Neuter: Mercury, Saturn

- Mercury is gender-neutral in the same way that children are, yet he also stimulates and neutralizes both genders. Mercury does not take gender any more seriously than anything else.
- Saturn is gender-neutral in the same way that old people are. In many ways, Saturn does not care about gender issues; he has more serious concerns. He tends to suppress gender urges.

Planetary Temperament — Gentle or Cruel

The planets will have a nature that shows their basic temperament. There are two classifications: Gentle, Cruel or Neutral.

IMPORTANT:

The planet's nature has no bearing on whether or not it gives good things or not — or whether we will enjoy those things. It just refers to their inherent nature — how they give, how you feel in their classroom as you are learning their lessons.

Gentle planets are:

- Waxing Moon (feeling of growth)

- Venus (happiness)
- Jupiter (hope)
- Mercury (helpfulness)

Cruel planets are:

- Waning Moon (neglect, a sense of lack)
- Mars (aggression)
- Saturn (fear)
- Sun (sacrificing)
- Nodes of Rahu and Ketu (confusion).

The neutral planet is Mercury (depends on associations, but his influence is helpful and gentle).

Surya — the Sun

“Honey-yellow eyed is the Sun, square and radiantly pure, O’ Twice Born, of Pitta nature, intelligent, masculine, with but little hair, O’ Twice Born...”

The Soul | Sattvic | King | Cruel | Fiery | Kshatriya

Evolutionary Process of the Sun:

“From Physical Power and Fitness (tamas) to worldly power as a father and through the career (rajas) to the inspired, god / truth seeker (sattwa) is the evolutionary process of the Sun.”

“Seed Principle of the Sun” — Like the Sun in the sky, the inner Sun empowers our mind and body with vitality and clarity. This power gives us the confidence to meet our challenges and do what is right (which is not always what is easiest), owing to his sattvic motivation. When the Sun is strong we have the energy, confidence and intelligence to reach our goals. When the Sun is weak we waver in our duties and our actions become inconsistent — based more on personal confidence, not truth or righteousness.

A life of dignity that expresses our authentic, unique creative self is the goal of the Sun. The clarity and focus to endure life’s setbacks without losing our

vision or veering off course gives us the confidence to pursue higher and higher forms of power. Ultimately, this leads us back to the source, the Atman.

In Vedic thinking the Sun is “the Atman,” the “universal self,” that which is beyond the embodied personality of the world. The sign, house and planets joined to the Sun show areas where we are being PURIFIED of that personality. His job is to illuminate and purify. We can see our mistakes with the Sun — or at least that is our hope.

As a sattvic planet the Sun has a dignified and high-minded purpose. Like the other sattvic planets, the Sun must remain generous if he is to fulfill that purpose. The Sun is the king — the one with all the power and the most responsibility. In this way the Sun is like the father, the one who feels responsible for protecting and providing for his family — his kingdom. If immature, at the end of the day the king may be very proud of his accomplishments, and expect admiration. This is where the good king may become a tyrant.

His luminous nature also makes him the main planet of integrity and accountability. Facing things truthfully is his goal. In the spiritual sense, the Sun gives the capacity to sacrifice our temporary, personal happiness for a greater cause. But this sacrifice requires a strong sense of identity and a large purpose, otherwise we are merely giving away power that we have not yet owned or mastered — which leads to resentments. This is a tricky conundrum of the Sun. First we need a healthy sense of self and ego, and only then can we use it toward the greatest good.

The Sun is a cruel planet in that he separates us from worldly happiness due to placing more emphasis on duty, work and responsibility. Lord Buddha renouncing his kingdom, leaving his wife in order to pursue god is a good example of the cruel nature of the Sun. He eventually finds god, but there was a painful reckoning that had to happen first. And, if you were his wife you might not think he was such a great guy for “pursuing god.”

With the Sun we must take care to NOT lose our true power to some personal power struggle in the world. This creates a counterfeit version of power and attachment to the personality, rather than connection to the universal self. This personality and false attachment is a feeble substitute for all that we truly are. Once we commit to a higher vision, generosity and willingness to sacrifice our worldly power naturally arises. At that time the power of the Sun aligns our ego with the Atman — the universal self joined to all selves. This burns our ego in

the fire pit of truth. The Sun shows and illuminates “the void” as inextinguishable light, not mixed with shadow.

Keywords: Father, capacity for action, consistent vision, confidence, highest self, purification, health and fitness

Sun exalted point in Aries — Aries is a moveable, fire sign of courage and instinctive action. The exaltation point of the Sun in Aries shows the necessity to act upon our highest Soul’s purpose with courage. This type of action transforms the inner Sun from one of self-interest to universality.

Sun debilitated point in Libra — Libra is a moveable air sign, concerned mostly with getting along with others. This sign of humanistic compromise elevates certain planets, but not the Sun. We cannot compromise on our true Self. When we do we are lost, afraid to step up, take responsibility and shine our brightest. Instead we are timid and weak, asking permission to shine and spread our power. This is the archetype of the Sun in Libra. This takes courage and instinctive action, not hesitation, compromise or making nice with everyone

Leo — Simha “Lion” Rashi

The Sun rules Leo, a fire sign, symbolized by the lion. It is through Leo that each chart is illuminated by the mighty Sun, the King of the zodiac.

The ability to sacrifice the lower forms of the ego toward a higher purpose (Sattwic) is being learned when planets are in Leo.

Leo natives want to be treated as a king or queen. They may have a problem with apologies and relationships that demand compromise. Yet, it is a Sattwic sign and a warrior — a champion of truth and integrity. As is always the case with Sattwic signs, the issue is with how we define truth and power.

Chandra — the Moon

“Abounding in Vata and Kapha and filled with knowing is the Moon of round body, O’ Twice Born, auspicious looks, of sweet speech, fluctuating and love sick.”

The Mind | Sattwic | Queen | Gentle and Cruel | Watery | Brahmin

“Evolutionary Process of the Moon”

“From psychological comfort and attachment (tamas) to worldly connection as a mother and caretaker (rajas) to embodying the divine mother (sattwa), with love for all, is the evolutionary process of the Moon.”

“Seed Principle of the Moon” — The capacity to receive, feel and integrate comes from the Moon. A life of heart-centered connection and peace of mind is the goal of the Moon. Dismantling our emotional protective strategies with vulnerability and courage gives rise to the innocent, perceptive mind of the present moment. This purity and innocence refers to the core of selfless love and peace we are becoming.

In Vedic thinking the Moon is “the manas,” the “mind,” that which reflects the soul’s power (Atman — the Sun). The Moon is what feels most like our psychology — our outlook. The nature of the Moon is to connect us to the world, and each other. The round body of the Moon shows its variable and fluctuating nature — one of connection. It is like a ball, rolling here and rolling there, based on its environment. The sign, house and planets joined to the Moon show areas where we are being sensitized in some way.

As a sattvic planet, the Moon has a dignified and high-minded purpose. Like the other sattvic planets, the Moon must remain generous with that purpose. Selfishness brings suffering with the Moon. The Moon is the Queen — the mother of our kingdom, the one who connects most with the different parts of who we are and tries to feed and nourish them all equally. Tangibly, the Moon is concerned directly with feeding people, especially children. But due to her impressionable nature, desire to feel connected and her fluctuating moods, sensitivity can become volatility if she’s not careful. This is where the Queen Mother may become a little crazy and emotionally controlling.

Her changeable nature is like an emotional sponge that absorbs all the influences around her. In fact, the Moon is where we are the most vulnerable — at times 100% vulnerable — and impressionable. It is the part of us that is completely innocent and naïve and just wants to feel peaceful. She is related to our childhood and that time in our life when we had to simply accept what came our way. The Moon shows the capacity to be receptive to all that comes our way. Anything we are protecting ourselves against is where our peace of mind ends.

The Moon is a gentle planet of tenderness and utter selflessness. The mother selflessly suckling the child is the perfect archetype. Yet in other ways, there is a certain terror associated with such states of selflessness. This is why we fear falling in love. We realize the possibility of being dangerously manipulated. Thus, boundary issues are important for the Moon, especially when it comes to romantic / conditional love (the realm of Venus).

The Moon is the area of life where we must settle our mind internally, anchored in the universal heart, rather than on something or someone external in order to feel connected. Assess the Moon for the capacity to meditate. The Moon is the deep, clear lake of intuition and pure feeling, whose origin is divine love. When calm and peaceful we can see all the way to the bottom; we can plunge into the depths of self. Yet just like the calm surface of the lake, it only takes one pebble, one desire (rajas), to obscure our vision. Once the emotional mind is brought under control, a lasting, sustained peace arises that offers a truthful reflection of our deeper nature and peaceful, happy life.

The mysterious, fluctuating, evolving, consciousness process is the Moon.

Keywords: Mother, the public, women, receptivity, capacity for peace, childhood, memories, basic feeling nature, vulnerability

Exalted in Taurus. The fluctuating watery nature of the Moon is exalted when resting on the fixed Earth nature of Taurus, which is perhaps the most stable sign in the zodiac. Taurus, as the female expression of Venus, provides a fertile soil into which the intangible longings of the Moon can take root in the tangible world.

Debilitated in Scorpio. The impressionable, subjective nature of the Moon is disturbed in the sign of Scorpio, ruled by restless Mars. Scorpio is the sign where we are learning to strengthen our insecurities. But this causes intensity and drama, which is unsettling to the Moon (heart), which just wants peace.

Cancer — Karka “Crab” Rasi

Cancer is the sign ruled by the Moon and reflects the same qualities. Just as the Moon waxes and wanes, planets in Cancer experience changing moods and emotions.

Cancer is a Sattwic, watery sign, showing the highest qualities of selfless love. Like a mother who feels a total merging with her child, Cancer people are also natural teachers (Brahmin caste). Yet in adult relationships there may be trouble with this tendency to “mother” everyone. There is great strength, but also great vulnerability here.

Cancer natives are highly sensitive, but also may be self-absorbed, even childish, as the desire to merge with others can create a painful longing at times. They must learn to be more practical about life matters and not wear their hearts on their sleeve.

Kuja — Mars

“Cruel with red eyes is Mars, moving to and fro, of torn form, Pitta nature, angry, with a thin medium-sized body.”

Gives Strength | Tamasic | General of the Army | Cruel | Fiery | Warrior

Evolutionary Process of Mars

“From fighting to strengthen the physical body (tamas) to surmounting external challenges and conflicts (rajas) to the disciplined yogi, courageously facing their deepest self (sattwa) is the evolutionary process of Mars.”

“Seed Principle of Mars” — Capacity for strength. The ability to put our principles into action and fight the good fight is the type strength being referred to — not just physical strength. Actions speak louder than words, they are the truest measure of our strength of character. The discipline and courage to face down the true enemy, our own ignorance, is where Mars is leading us.

The cruel nature of Mars refers to his temperament, a capacity and a feeling that emanates from him. There’s no judgment in the word “cruel,” yet the capacity to act in a cruel nature, especially through anger, is shown by Mars. There are times when we need to act with cruelty, to protect our body, to destroy a threat of some kind. At this time the adrenal glands fire and we get a superhuman rush of power — this comes from Mars. But adrenaline also numbs us to the pain of our own wounds and the wounds we are inflicting on others. This is the Tamasic quality of Mars to make us unconscious to pain.

Mars does not necessarily act through anger, but the capacity for anger and destruction comes from Mars. If his energy is aligned with a worthy cause, Mars will fight for peace.

Mars shows the strength of our principles — which principles we are willing to defend and go to battle over, and how we defend those principles. As the god of war, Mars is willing to suffer for those principles. In fact, Mars is the part of us that enjoys suffering for our principles. There is an excitement, an ego gratification and fulfillment that comes when we fight. This thrill of anger is Mars. Typically, in our rajasic, desire-driven life, Mars is the energy that brings us into arguments with people. And why do we argue? “It’s the principle of the thing.”

We all have a line in the sand that we draw somewhere, and if you cross it Mars will come out and defend that territory. Mars is the simplistic, black-and-white thinking nature of the mind. It is that black-and-white approach that informs everything he does. Just ponder the nature of our actions. We are only doing one thing at a time. They are black and white. Why they are happening is up for interpretation — but the actions themselves are very simple. It is this black-and-white thinking mind that may even compel us to kill another, like animals do. Mars is a very simplistic energy, related to children.

In the Hindu pantheon he is related to Lord Shiva’s son, Lord Subramanya. He was the General of the Army of the gods, who never grew beyond five years of age. He has the mental innocence to fight without ego and cunning.

The truly destructive nature of Mars emerges when we defend causes that are related to the ego. When Mars is aligned with a worthy cause, rather than destroy our personal relationships or our peace of mind, he destroys our ignorance and the demons of our lower nature. Until that time, however, the opinionated, self-willed and combative nature of Mars may be the very thing we’re struggling against. Mars gives “strength.” According to the scriptures, it takes a powerful Mars, aligned with a divine purpose, to give us the strength, discipline and courage to fight the good fight. In many ways life on Earth is a battle, and we had better learn the art of war and who the real enemy is. This is real strength.

Mars refers to the “General” in the planetary cabinet. It is the general who trains the troops, makes them strong, keeps them tough and ready for battle. Yet just because the troops are trained and tough, doesn’t mean there is always a war. Very rarely do we need to use the fighting nature of Mars externally, yet internally we are always being tested and tempted to slide on our principles and

what we know is best for us. Thus, his disciplined nature, keeping us strong, keeping us tough, keeping us facing the truth courageously, is how he is best used.

Day-to-day, the capacity to wake up early, eat the right food, do our spiritual practices is the highest Mars. The ability to endure physical discomfort is one of the most important parts of the higher Mars energy. This is why Mars is the true yogi; the one able to do tapas (sacrificial penance) — in fact, he likes it. Thus, rather than bringing his love of battle and challenges into the world of others (rajasic), his energy is best expressed individually, internally (tamasic).

Keywords: Self-will, opinions, courage, brothers, fighting, discipline, logic, principled action

Exalted in Capricorn. The courageous and willful nature of Mars is exalted in the Cardinal Earth sign of Capricorn. The cautious nature of Capricorn slows Mars down and brings an awareness of consequences to the things we would otherwise destroy in a hot flash of anger. Also, Capricorn is Tamasic, like Mars. This keeps us focused on destroying problems, rather than destroying things, circumstances or people that make us happy.

Debilitated in Cancer. The ever changing emotions and irrationality of Cancer is not conducive for Mars' impulsive style, for the same reason you do not give a gun to a child. We are not meant to act (Mars) on every emotional whim (Cancer). Our actions should be more calculated (Capricorn), with an awareness of consequences. Planets in Cancer become soft and introspective, seeking to merge their energies with what they influence. This is not the nature of Mars.

Aries — Mesha “Ram” (Masculine Mars)

Mars expresses his masculine side through Aries. Planets in Aries will want to move quickly, given its Rajasic nature.

The ram charges with his head down and his eyes lowered, not always looking where it is going, often running into walls in the process. Planets here may be reckless, hot-tempered and impatient, given to tantrums. But they will also have much courage, owing to the warrior caste.

Aries natives usually have a charming innocence about them and will be independent. When their courageous and enthusiastic nature aligns with higher

purposes, (not just bold and brash actions) their higher potential can unfold.

Scorpio — Vrischika “Scorpion” (feminine Mars)

The reflective power of Mars is felt and concentrated internally through Scorpio. This is where we are learning to stabilize our emotions by channeling our fears and obsessions into emotional courage.

Planets here will want to dig deeply into life's great mysteries with the courage and daring of planet Mars. But given the cruel nature of Mars, many emotional upheavals are possible with this sign. Planets here are in a process of strengthening and protecting the most vulnerable areas of the mind and psyche. The theme of rebirth and regeneration is central to this sign (tamasic).

These natives are the tamasic Brahmins. They teach others to develop the emotional courage that transforms vulnerability into strength. They must be careful with emotional intensity masquerading as “growth”, when it is often drama.

Budha — Mercury

“The most excellently formed, of metaphoric speech, and taking pleasure in laughter is Mercury, having pitta, having kapha, O' Twice Born, and of vata nature.”

Speech Giver | Rajasic | Prince | Gentle | Earth and Air | Merchant

Evolutionary Process of Mercury

“From excessive stimulation through bad influences (tamas) to pursuing a life of worldly fun and enjoyment (rajas) to a playful detachment from life's drama that leads to a renaissance of childlike wisdom (sattwa) is the evolutionary process of Mercury.”

“Seed Principle of Mercury” — Capacity for Flexibility and Discrimination. The ability to adapt to new situations and new ways of thinking are the highest qualities of Mercury energy. Flexibility and openness in the mind leads to higher and higher forms of discrimination. This ultimately leads to the capacity to recognize the real from the unreal.

The higher Mercury is the lord of discrimination, and the capacity of the mind to be fair and balanced. The lower Mercury can drain our mental energy through over-stimulation and trivia, leaving us unable to recognize the important details to focus on, manage and develop.

Mercury is discrimination, for either good or bad. Proper discrimination implies neutrality; such is the nature of Mercury. This neutrality can lead to a disconnected, ungrounded intellect or one prone to bad influences. His nature is also to play, be curious and experiment, as it is through these activities that we hone our skills and connect them to others. Then, through proper speech and clear communication we are able to manifest something tangible from them.

Mercury governs the detail-oriented nature of the mind. All things considered, Mercury is the most fortunate planet to have powerful for manifesting a good life on Earth. Powerful Mercury is an effective manager of life's many details; weak Mercury becomes overwhelmed by those details.

Spiritually, Mercury shows whether we will become ensnared in the multitude of life's details and choices or organize them into a paradigm of truth, which eventually leads to our freedom.

As the minister, Mercury is the closest advisor to the king. Mercury is also the planet closest to the Sun and thus, the closest to our deeper soul nature. Mercury constructs and interprets our worldly life experiences into the story of our life. He tells the soul what is happening and why it is happening the way it is.

In ancient cultures, the minister was the most important functionary in the kingdom, because it was he who had the king's ear. This is also true today. (Think of the vice president or an important advisor.) Thus, when Mercury is positively influenced we make decisions that take us closer to truth, when he is negatively influenced we make bad decisions. His flexible and neutral quality is what allows us to stay open minded to things we have not yet considered, and thus evolve beyond our past conditioning and influences, considering new options and possibilities. But this neutrality can be very dangerous if under bad influence, undermining the long-term growth in our kingdom.

Keywords: Speech and communication, skills, intellect, dexterity, equanimity, neutrality, curiosity, playfulness, in-laws

Exalted in Virgo. In the dual Earth sign of Virgo, Mercury is best able to express his neutral yet grounded and consistent nature. The most troubling quality of Mercury is his ungrounded nature and capacity to live simply for stimulation and play. The serious and practical quality of Virgo aligns his flexibility with a worthy goal and the psychology of improvement through responsible action. The tamasic / fearful / protective nature of Virgo elevates Mercury, allowing the detailed mind to focus on what is worthy and important, rather than simply on what is stimulating or fun.

Debilitated in Pisces. In dual Earth Pisces Mercury is in a dreamy, water sign, ungrounded and prone to escapism and fantasy. In this case the details of life become confused. If life is like a business, then Mercury is like the accountant. We want the accountant budgeting and balancing the books based on numbers only, not on dreams and fantasy projections and hopes. Mercury in Pisces is like the accountant is on drugs, or just painting rosy pictures, telling you that there is enough money to pay the bills because he is hopeful.

Gemini — Maithuna “Couple” (Masculine Mercury)

Gemini is the masculine sign ruled by Mercury. It is an air sign related to communication, intelligence, curiosity and fun. Given the gentle nature of Mercury, planets in this sign will like variety in all things and be stimulated to seek new experiences — a rajasic quality.

It is through these experiences that our knowledge grows through actual experience, not just from information gathering. Difficult planets here may show more painful experiences, as we conduct our experiments.

Gemini natives need to make sure to align their curious minds and actions with a worthy goal, not just for stimulation and play. Activity masquerading as meaning and information masquerading as wisdom are the counterfeit versions of Gemini.

Virgo — Kanya “Girl” (Feminine Mercury)

Virgo is where Mercury reflects upon itself in an Earthy way. This is where we try to organize our emotional environment in a precise way.

As a tamasic sign Virgo is aware of trouble and the need to avoid it, and improve things that need perfecting. Planets here may feel that “life takes work”, as they belong to the “worker” class. But the gentle nature of Mercury finds joy

in the work. Planet's in Virgo shows things we enjoy working on, but we need to be careful not to turn those things (and people) into never ending "restoration projects".

Virgo natives may have a worried and overly responsible mentality, and may come to only have faith in their own skills and actions. Instead they need to let go of control and trust in a universe that they cannot control.

Guru — Jupiter

"Large bodied is Jupiter, and also yellow haired and eyed, of kapha nature, intelligent and proficient in all shastras."

Joy of Knowledge | Sattwic | Teacher | Gentle |
Fiery and Watery | Brahmin

Evolutionary Process of Jupiter

From excessive material growth and attachment (tamas) to an overreliance upon man-made, worldly philosophies (rajas) to a mind filled with the highest, universal wisdom (sattwa) is the evolutionary process of Jupiter.

"Seed Principle of Jupiter" — Capacity for expansion and growth. Jupiter is the main planet of growth. Children, money, worldly teachings or spiritual teachings are all related to Jupiter. Yet Jupiter is also related to the abstract nature of the mind, something very big within us that we are not yet expressing. All external, tangible forms of growth are an attempt to merge with the abstract concept of "growth" itself, and that "big" thing in us.

The higher Jupiter is god's grace, luck, wisdom and ethics aligned with right behavior. A powerful Jupiter shows that a person will recognize good teachings when they hear them and will innately gravitate toward such teachings. These uplifting teachings give hope, which helps them rise above life's setbacks. A weak Jupiter is usually lacking hope and good teachings, and therefore may be greedy, materialistic and dogmatic, simply expanding into the material realm.

Jupiter shows our ethics and morals. He shows the capacity to do the right thing, and our wish to choose the good over the bad. Whether we are actually doing good or not, Jupiter gives us the sense that we are on track and growing, in alignment with our principles.

We all have a higher vision of ourselves that we are expanding toward; Jupiter shows that vision and how we would like it to play out in our lives. The big plans we have are also related to Jupiter. This is why on a mundane level, Jupiter rules children. Once we have a child, many things become clear, including a sense of purpose, hope for a better world and passing that legacy on to another.

Yet, a foolhardy optimism is also possible with Jupiter. Over-optimism and trying to “rise above” people, difficulties or unpleasantness we would rather avoid all have a Jupiter flavor to them. Whereas Mercury rules the details of communication and comprehension, sometimes Jupiter cannot be bothered. Jupiter may ever so graciously dismiss things or people that do not meet our lofty “standards”.

Jupiter aligned with our sense of duty will allow for our higher vision to not only lead us externally but also expand internally. Jupiter rules “wealth” — an abstract concept. Jupiter also rules the concept of “god, religion and spirituality” — another abstract concept. Wealth is different than money. We pursue wealth, the concept of wealth. We have money — cash in our hand, money in the bank. Wealth is an expansive idea, just like god. In many ways we face a choice to pursue money or god. Yet, this is a false choice once we get a healthier relationship with both.

Once we define our principles, and begin to pursue them, Jupiter keeps us focused on the goal. Yet, in keeping us focused, we may overlook important details (the qualities of Mercury) that could have helped us better navigate the path. Jupiter is also orthodox and may cause us to march lockstep with a rigid belief system and gain a sense of superiority for it. Religious fanaticism and condemnation of others whose belief systems seem inferior have a powerful Jupiter nature to them. As such, Jupiter is more related to religion than to spirituality. The spiritual nature of Jupiter emerges when the capacity for experimentation and play (Mercury) is also present and a more realistic nature (Saturn) is influencing. Otherwise, a person may love the trappings and ceremony of their inherited religion, yet an authentic spiritual search, where these beliefs are tested, may elude them.

Keywords: Faith, knowledge, expansion, (children, education, spirituality) teachers and teaching, optimism, religion, wealth, orthodox beliefs, mysticism

Exalted in Cancer. The expansive nature of Jupiter becomes an internal, creative and the emotional force in the sign of Cancer. The cardinal water nature of Cancer insists on growth through strengthening the internal process of any planet in her sign. This is the perfect domain for Jupiter to expand internally, through the element of water, our basic feeling nature.

The mystical and abstract quality of Jupiter, when expressed through the emotional intuition of Cancer allows for a deep inner unfolding and expansion toward something not just of this earth, but of our essential nature.

Debilitated in Capricorn. Jupiter's expansive nature gets bogged down in worry and materiality in Capricorn. The rational, useful, practical nature of Capricorn disturbs the mystical nature of Jupiter, leading to a rigidity and orthodoxy of belief and a mindless material expansion. Hope, intuition and abstract thinking are completely opposed to the rational, calculating and practical nature of Capricorn. Jupiter in Capricorn is a well-known placement for material wealth; however, many times the expected lack of hope and optimism is also seen.

Sagittarius — Dhanu “Bow” (Masculine Jupiter)

Sagittarius is the masculine quality of Jupiter, in all its fiery glory. An inspired mind and life course lights the path of the Sagittarians. This desire to connect to the highest good may make them overly optimistic and impractical at times.

Planets here will seek the deeper meaning and / or highest good in things, owing to its Sattvic nature. A sense of righteousness and duty may lead to things such as counseling, teaching or law.

Sagittarian natives may be too attached to their beliefs, rather than testing them. Sacrificing dogma for authentic wisdom is the negative shadow game of Sagittarius.

Pisces — Meena “Fish” (Feminine Jupiter)

Jupiter expresses its feminine side through the sign of Pisces. Parashara says, “It glides in the water”. This is a telling description of Pisces where we seek to connect our heart to the cosmic beyond.

A feeling of having one foot in this world and one foot in the other world is felt. Ruled by gentle Jupiter, planets in Pisces have the desire to liberate others, but this may also lead to escapism and fantasy.

Pisces natives need to be careful of worldly forms of escapism masquerading as freedom and liberation. As Sattvic sign, purity and high practices are important or a lot of time and energy will be wasted.

Shukra — Venus

“Pleasing, lovely formed, the most splendid and beautifully eyed is Venus, who is poetical, abounding in kapha, of vata nature and curly haired.”

Happiness | Rajasic | Lover | Gentle | Earth and Air | Shudra

Evolutionary Process of Venus

“From excessive sensual gratification or hedonism (tamas) to romantic, desire-filled love and joy, to finding happiness for no reason is the evolutionary process of Venus.”

“Seed Principle of Venus” — Capacity for Happiness and Vitality. Venus is the planet of conscious desire in all its forms. Sensual pleasure, the capacity to appreciate beauty and the arts, the desire for the greatest happiness of all, and devotion to our highest self are the domain of Venus. A powerful Venus will not pay too high a price for happiness. That price comes in many forms, self-respect and vitality among them.

The higher Venus is divine love and devotion, desiring a union with the highest self. The lower Venus is hedonism and over-indulgence in sensory pleasures. In between these two poles we have romantic love and appreciation for the beautiful world we live in. Much of our human life is learning to transmute our physical desires from the animal (sensory pleasure) to human (human love) to god (spiritual devotion). Venus is key to this transformation as she rules all three of these important qualities of life. Her Sanskrit name means “sperm” (also “vitality,” “luster” and “refined”), as it is she who shows how much vitality we will ultimately have.

A strong Venus will not pay too high of a price for happiness and thus not leave us (and others) feeling devalued through the exchange. From this point of selflessness a deeper devotion to god emerges.

Venus is the ruler of all human relationships — the most intense and complicated being the romantic relationship. The high desires of our romantic

relationships are the glue that keep us going back time and again to face the most difficult parts of ourselves. How much to compromise, how much to assert our own individuality, and whether or not the expenditure of energy is even worth it are big Venus themes. Valuing the needs of others as equal to our own is the main crux of the Venus principle — not self-sacrifice, but equality

Selfless love is the Moon principle, whereas the give-and-take, negotiated relationship principle is Venus. She is the planet of love through mutual respect. This gives the awareness that everyone's views are valid and important and worthy of respect — anything short of that is an abomination. Yet this can lead to excessive compromises — followed by a disheartened backlash.

In many ways our life on Earth is a Venus experience. Venus grounds us deeply in the world of our body and the pleasure we can experience in the world. Stated simply, Venus is what makes the senses feel good and attractive. Venus is the planet of sexuality, showing our sexual attractiveness and beauty.

It is a very important planet for women — as feminine energy draws power from attraction. This may lead them into a preoccupation with worldly forms of attraction and glamour — feeding lower forms of Venus to simply get attention. This leads to vanity and excess stimulation and eventually is a distraction for the individual and those around them.

However, when better understood, we use the power of Venus to attract god through service, devotion and love. The love and devotion in our heart and the inherent beauty in our mind can attract that sweetest of energies, the unchanging and permanent source of all beauty and happiness.

In truth, we all want the same thing in life: to be happy. Venus is the planet that gives us happiness. Maturity with Venus is learning to find happiness in the things that replenish our energy, not drain it. Ultimately we need to connect to the source of happiness itself, and learn to be happy for no (external) reason.

Keywords: Pleasure, love, sex, happiness, sensual desire, service, devotion, courtesy, manners, vitality, respect, improvement

Exalted in Pisces. The desire-filled nature of Venus becomes exalted through the mystical quality of Pisces. Pisces is also a dual sign given to dialogue, flexibility and transformation. These qualities are necessary to elevate the nature of Venus, who is a very sensual and worldly planet. In many ways Venus is the worldliest planet, and Pisces is the least worldly sign. Yet they both share a

common theme of love and devotion; it is this shared theme that elevates the sensual desire of Venus toward a desire to merge with our higher self.

Debilitated in Virgo. The detailed, practical nature of Virgo inhibits the expansive awareness necessary to elevate Venus beyond the worldly, sensual domain. Venus as the planet of happiness and love in the sign of Virgo will show where conditions become placed on our happiness and love for others, our self and God. If happiness is conditional, it cannot be attained. It becomes a transaction. Virgo is where we learn to be responsible, practical and focus on the details. This elevates Mercury but harms Venus. To be happy for no reason elevates Venus. In Virgo there are a million and one reasons for everything, especially unhappiness.

Libra — Tula “Balance Scale” (Masculine Venus)

The masculine quality of Venus flows through the sign of Libra, where the scales vacillate between the desired object and the price they must pay in order to acquire it.

The merchant nature of Libra influences planets toward business, and wanting to see that everyone's needs are met and their values are respected. As an air sign, intelligence and communication skills make them accommodating and curious.

Libra native must be careful to look beyond the world of people and culture. At times they are too hung up in human affairs, gossip and things of this world.

Taurus — Vrishaba “Bull” (Feminine Venus)

Taurus is where the soul learns to slow down and gather, hold and refine, to preserve and beautify, to be comfortable and to enjoy. Taurus is the feminine expression of Venus, functioning in an earthy way.

Steadiness and patience are seen with the planets that reside in Taurus. A commitment to things that bring comfort and happiness to ourselves and those we love is usually present.

Taurus natives need to be find contentment with the things they have, rather than mindlessly building up higher levels of comfort. Once greediness and attachment are overcome, a deep sense of peace is possible.

Shani (Saturn) and His Signs

“Thin and long bodied is Saturn, and yellowed eyed, vata natured, large toothed, indolent, lame and having coarse hair, O’ Twice Born.”

Hardship | Tamasic | Laborer | Cruel | Airy and Earth | Shudra

Evolutionary Process of Saturn

“From excessive physical worry and material accumulation (tamas) to worldly ambition, achievement, control and power (rajas) to a peaceful solitude without fear and loneliness (sattwa) is the evolutionary process of Saturn.”

“Seed Principle of Saturn” — Capacity for solitude, facing our fears and letting go of things. Saturn exists at the edge of the visible solar system. As such, he marks the limits of time and space we must respect here on Earth. How we deal with those boundaries is the realm of Saturn. The grim realities of life lived through the body are his domain. Yet, they do not have to be grim. His Sanskrit name is “Shani,” which is the same as the word for “peace” — Shanti. We have only as much peace as we are able to let go of things and face ourselves without artifice.

The higher Saturn is a monk in meditation, the lower is a cold, ruthless individual, disconnected from his feeling nature and other people. It is through Saturn that we come to experience ourselves as a separate being and make peace with our limitations or not; the ultimate limitation is death itself.

Saturn rules the nervous system and through it creates painful complexes that reinforce our separation from god, through form and concept. Anxiety, fear, sorrow, insecurity, loss and life’s painful lessons are all ways in which Saturn teaches us to give up attachment to form and not take things so personally.

His neuroses will teach us perseverance and self-control, as we will hide behind a wall of self-sufficiency to avoid being seen in our state of weakness. However, at some point something much bigger than what we can control forces us to our knees, such as the death of a loved one, a chronic illness or an excessive amount of responsibility that was previously our distraction. These crises force our pain into the open where we must face them.

Those who cannot learn from life and the hard lessons of Saturn will be reduced to bitterness and foolishness in old age. The greatness of Saturn is that

he teaches us sensitivity to others and a respect for all; for once we have suffered we become sensitive to all who suffer.

Once his ability for control is properly aligned with dharmic purposes, Saturn gives the perseverance and concentration to put into practice what we have learned, not just acknowledge it mentally. He allows us to be alone to work through our salvation, which is the only possibility. In many ways Saturn is simply the planet of our fears. He shows where we will take things too seriously and personally. The real cure for Saturn problems is humor.

Releasing the painful attachments of Saturn is the main sphere of life and making peace with it. Ultimately, Saturn makes us realistic and mature about the meaning of life. We will win some and lose some, we will have good days and bad days, but our lives are not being lived so that we can win, lose or have good or bad things. We come here to learn, not necessarily to enjoy. Although enjoying life is also a part of it, we will only be able to enjoy as much as we can be detached from the results. The maturity of Saturn gives this detachment and a realistic understanding of our limitations and purpose in life.

Keywords: Ambition, fear, responsibility, the perseverance and capacity for hard work, stress, isolation, old people

Exalted in Libra Saturn's exaltation sign is humanistic and worldly Libra. The tendency of Saturn is to withdrawal into our fear; the Cardinal air sign of Libra keeps us engaged with others and in the world while working through our complexes. Many of the complexes of Saturn revolve around other people. Libra is the sign where we naturally appreciate others and their help, and value higher service. Saturn in Libra will show the tendency to reach out to others rather than fearfully isolate ourselves when his complexes and neuroses arise. This allows us to grow in service and practical sensitivity for all, rather than collapse into a black hole of fear, self-doubt, isolation and sorrow.

Debilitated in Aries. The cautious and self-conscious nature of Saturn is highly stressed by impulsive Aries energy. Rather than slow down and seek counsel when upset (as seen in Libra), we will act impulsively and rashly, often destroying something in the process. There is also the "go it alone" Aries tendency that wants to compete and win. We should not be trying to win a battle with others, when under the thumb of our own fears. Saturn is also the planet of

penance, where we always remember our mistakes. Aries in general is a sign that takes risks and makes a lot of mistakes in order to learn. Through each harsh, impulsive action through Aries, Saturn's fearful, insecure nature brings doubt about our capacity to act, and undermines our commitments.

Aquarius — Kumbha “Pitcher” (Masculine Saturn)

Saturn expresses his male side through airy Aquarius, showing a focus on ideas and a commitment to social change and the structures which support that change. Aquarius is where sense the “gains and losses” of life, and make peace with that, as the Soul become more universalized.

Planets in Aquarius are sensitive to the pain and hardships of life, and spend a lot of time trying to avoid it — first for their sake, then for the sake of their loved ones, then eventually for the sake of all. As a merchant sign, a mentality of fairness dominates.

Aquarius natives need to develop a healthy self-esteem, to accompany their desire to serve. This shows a heart filled with joy, empowered to give its all. When lacking a healthy sense of Self, their natural service-oriented ways may descend into a feeling of servitude, bitterness and false martyrdom.

Capricorn — Nakra “Crocodile” (Feminine Saturn)

Saturn reflects upon itself through his female side in a moveable Earth sign through Capricorn. A determined and practical course through life is seen here. Saturn will also generally make for conservative values and a preference for what is useful, which allows them to navigate life's details and avoid trouble.

Planets in this sign are well aware of limitations and will devote much of their time looking to control them, owing to its Tamasic guna.

As a female sign they are psychologically aware of things ending and the need for safety in an unpredictable world. Thus, a calculating and controlling mentality can be observed.

They are also great planners. But they must learn to not always be so calculating and strategic. Their well thought-out routines can become a prison.

Once the native learns to calm the natural fears of their ruling Saturn, fear, inhibition and self-control are replaced by meditation and implementing the proper daily routines that allow for a greater spiritual awakening to unfold; this native is very able to thrive in isolation and work through their salvation.



CHAPTER 6

The Rashis and the Signs of the Zodiac

Individual Rashis themselves should first be understood as extensions of the planets, as how the planets feel and as the psychological environment they create, as in the Chapter on Planets.

However, it is also important to discuss the Rasis collectively as they form the Zodiac, what the Vedic Rishis call the “Kala Purusha” — the Being in Time.

Ch. 4. Zodiacal Rashis Described

V.2 “Śrī Vishnu, the Invisible is Time personified. His limbs are the 12 Rashis, commencing from Mesh.”

As it says in the above sutra — the Zodiac is the “Invisible form of Lord Vishnu”. As a group, the Rashis form a “Chakra” — a circle of stars. This circle of stars has been grouped into 12 sections and given attributes, collectively known as the “Zodiac” for thousands of years. The Zodiac rashis have many specific and remarkable qualities only related to each other, aside from their connection to the planets. In this chapter we will discuss the Zodiac as a separate mandala of cosmic energy.

Why 12 Zodiac Signs?

Each of the 12 Signs are 30 degree portions of the sky, meant to approximate the distance the earth travels in its orbit around the Sun every 30 days. Why every 30 days? It takes the Moon 30 days to complete its lunation Cycle, from New Moon to full Moon. The Zodiac connects the Sun with the orbits of the earth and Moon.

Why These Particular Stars and Signs?

The ZodiacaL Rashis are the constellations that fall on the ecliptic (the orbital path the planets take around the Sun). This is why certain Constellations and stars are not in the Zodiac.

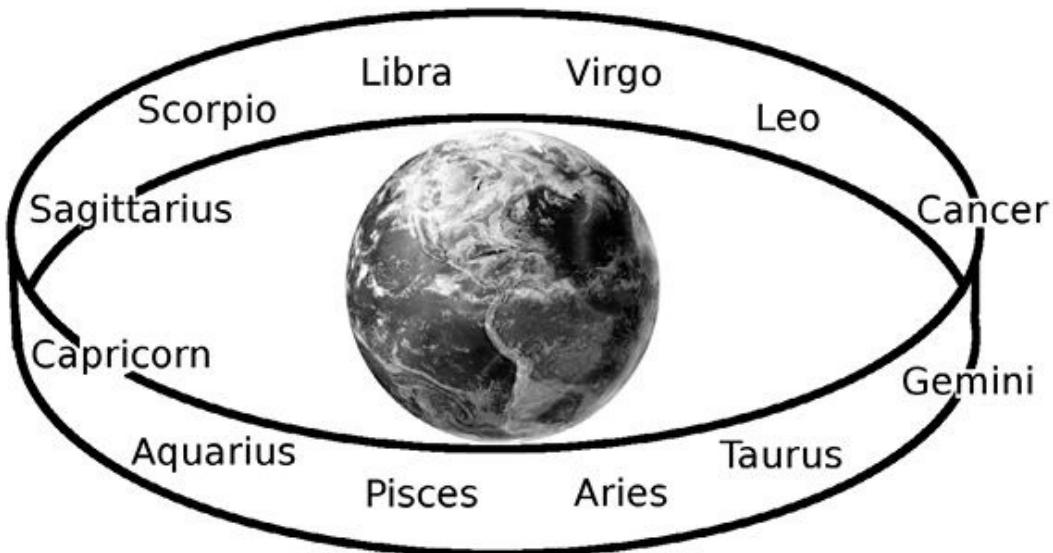


Figure 6.1

Ancient astronomers / mystics from all cultures realized that these 30 degree portions of star groups along the ecliptic were infused with specific spiritual energies. Myths and stories evolved to explain those energies, and then later, figures were imagined and projected onto the stars groups and sections of sky.

The Universal Sky / Rasis

The 12 Signs of the Zodiac that we know and use in Western and Vedic astrology was first formally recorded approximately 1000BC, by the Mesopotamian culture, in a document called the *Mul.Apin*. This document predates any formal system of astrology by 500-1000 years. Yet it contains the same constellations in the same order we now use.

Amazingly, other cultures portrayed these sections of the sky in the same way. For example in the Mesopotamian, Greek and Vedic Zodiac, the portion of the Zodiac where Taurus and Gemini oppose Scorpio and Sagittarius are symbolized by:

- A Cow (Taurus)
- Two Sexual People (Gemini)
- A Scorpion (Scorpio)
- An Archer on Horse / Centaur (Sagittarius).

In the Mayan Zodiac the same sections of sky are shown by:

- A Turtle (Rather than a Cow — Taurus)
- Two Fornicating animals (Rather than Two Sexual People — Gemini)
- A Scorpion (Same)
- The Tree of Life (Rather than an Archer on Horse / Centaur — Sagittarius).

The same energy was communicated by the Mayans and the Greek / Vedic / Mesopotamian people, but using the symbols of their culture. The turtle in Mayan astrology was a prominent symbol of structure and stability, just like the cow in Western / Vedic astrology.

Instead of two passionate people to symbolize Gemini — as in Western / Vedic Astrology — there were two playful fornicating animals in Mayan astrology. The scorpion is common to both systems. The tree of life in Mayan astrology holds the same energy and inspiration as the Sign of Sagittarius in the Western / Vedic.

The common theme is the sky itself, the stellar mandala of energy, called the Kala Purusha.

The Vedic View of Rasis and the Sidereal Zodiac

This should be clear by now, but in case it isn't, let it be known. In Vedic astrology the Planets and the sky itself is God. Lord Vishnu incarnated as the 9 Planets (The visible form of God) then takes an invisible form as the Zodiacal Rasis. These Rasis are made up of star groups along the ecliptic, constellations.

These star groups have specific spiritual energies that are emulated in all cultures, dating back as far as recorded history, as we have discussed.

You can see the clear reference to the Stellar based Zodiac below in this passage from Brihat Parahsara Hora Sastra.

Ch. 3. Grah Characters and Description

4-6. Those are called ‘Grahas’, that move through the Nakshatras (or stellar mansions) in the zodiac. The said zodiac comprises of 27 Nakshatras commencing from Ashvini. The same area is divided in 12 parts equal to 12 ‘Rashis’ commencing from Mesh.

By contrast, the Zodiac used in Western astrology is based on the seasons, with the same properties of the constellations assigned to them. For example, in Western astrology, when it is said that a planet is in “Pisces”, the actual constellation is most likely Aquarius, due to the difference between the Sidereal / stellar Zodiac and the Tropical / Seasonal Zodiac. Due to the precession of the equinoxes, these 2 Zodiacs are no longer in alignment.

Note:

See <http://storyofthezodiac.com> for more information on the 2 Zodiacs.

Important Attributes of Rasis

The rasis are the rajasic quality or the mental and emotional force in the chart. It is through the rasis that the planets express their nature as psychological forces and as sign lords. Because we as human beings are quite emotional, motivated by our psychology, the influence of signs on the planets modify the planetary expressions, and often overwhelm them.

Once we have a correct birth time, these signs become bhavas (I explain this more in the chapter on the astrology houses). It is the Sign’s energy that shows the quality of the bhavas. The planet that rules the house/sign will be the ruler of any planet that is contained in it and determine the energy behind what is produced through the house.

Here are the Sutras from Brihat Parashara Hora Sastra describing the Rasis:

Chapter 4 — Zodiac Rasis Described:

6-7. Mesh (Aries) described. *The Mesh is blood-red in complexion. It has a prominent (big) physique. It is a quadruped Rashi and strong during night. It denotes courage. It resides in the East and is related to kings. It wanders in hills and predominates in Rajo-Gun (the second of the three constituent qualities and the cause of great activity in living beings). It rises with its back (a Prishtodaya Rashi) and is fiery. Its ruler is Mangal.*

8. Vrishabh (Taurus) described. *Vrishabh's complexion is white and it is lorded by Śukr. It is long and is a quadruped Rashi. It has strength in night and resides in the South. It represents villages and businessmen. An earthy Rashi, Vrishabh rises with its back.*

9-9½. Mithun (Gemini) described. *The Rashi Mithun rises with its head and represents a male and a female, holding a mace and lute. It lives in the West and is an airy Rashi. It is a biped Rashi as well and is strong in nights. It lives in villages and is windy in temperament. It has an even body with a green (grass like) hue. Its ruler is Budh.*

10-11. Kark (Cancer) described. *The Rashi Kark is pale-red. It resorts to forests and represents Brahmins. It is strong in nights. It has many feet (i.e. it is a centipede Rashi) and has a bulky body. It is Sattvic in disposition (seen in gods) and it is a watery Rashi. It rises with its back and is ruled by Candr.*

12. Simh (Leo) described. *Simh is ruled by Sūrya and is Sattvic. It is a quadruped Rashi and a royal Rashi. It resorts to forests and rises with its head. It has a large, white body. It resides in the East and is strong during daytime.*

13-14. Kanya (Virgo) described. *This Rashi is a hill-resorter and is strong in daytime. It rises with its head and has a medium build. It is a biped Rashi and resides in the South. It has grains and fire in its hands. It belongs to the business community and is variegated. It relates to hurricanes ('Prabharanjani'). It is a Virgin and is Tamasic (a disposition of demons). Its ruler is Budh.*

15-16½. Tula (Libra) described. *Tula is a Seershodaya Rashi, rising with its head; Tula is strong in daytime. It is black in complexion and is predominant with Rajo-Gun. It relates to the western direction and resorts to land. It is destructive, or mischievous ('Dhatin'). It represents Sudras, or the 4th Varna. It has a medium build physique and is a biped Rashi. Its Lord is Śukr.*

Vrischik (Scorpio) described. *Vrischik has a slender physique and is a centipede Rashi. It denotes Brahmins and resides in holes. Its direction is North and it is strong in daytime. It is reddish-brown and resorts to water and land. It has a hairy physique and is very sharp (or passionate). Mangal is its ruler.*

17-18½. Dhanu (Sagittarius) described. *The Rashi Dhanu rises with its head and is lorded by Guru. It is a Sattvic Rashi and is tawny in hue. It has strength in night and is fiery. A royal Rashi, Dhanu is biped in first half. Its second half is quadruped. It has an even build and adores an arch. It resides in the East, resorts to land and is splendourous.*

19-20. Makar (Capricorn) described. *Makar is lorded by Śani and has predominance of Tamo-Gun (a disposition, seen in demons). It is an earthy Rashi and represents the southern direction. It is strong in nights and rises with back. It has a large body. Its complexion is variegated and it resorts to both forests and lands. Its first half is quadruped and its second half footless, moving in water.*

21-21½. Kumbh (Aquarius) described. *The Rashi Kumbh represents a man holding a pot. Its complexion is deep-brown. It has medium build and is a biped Rashi. It is very strong in daytime. It resorts to deep water and is airy. It rises with its head and is Tamasic. It rules Sudras, the 4th Varna and the West. Its Lord is Śani, Sūrya's offspring.*

22-24. Meen (Pisces) described. *Meen resembles a pair of fish, one tailed with the head of the other. This Rashi is strong at night. It is a watery Rashi and is predominant with Sattva-Gun. It denotes resoluteness and is a water-resorter. It is footless and has a medium build. It rules the North and rises with both head and back. It is ruled by Guru. This is how the*

twelve Rashis, each of 30 degrees extent, are described to evaluate gross and specific effects.

Astrology Sign Attribute Chart

Sign	Lord	Element	Guna	Caste	Modality	Feet	Body Part	Size	Other Attributes
Aries	Mars	Fire	Rajas	Warrior	Moveable	Quadruped	Head	Large	Red, Night, Rocky places
Taurus	Venus	Earth	Rajas	Worker	Fixed	Quadruped	Face	Long	White, Night, South, Villages, businessmen
Gemini	Mercury	Air	Rajas	Merchant	Dual	Biped	Neck, arms	Even	Male, west, villages, businessmen
Cancer	Moon	Water	Sattwa	Teacher	Moveable	Insect	Chest	Bulky	Forests, night
Leo	Sun	Fire	Sattwa	Warrior	Fixed	Quadruped	Stomach	Large	Day, forests, white, east
Virgo	Mercury	Earth	Tamas	Worker	Dual	Biped	Intestines	Medium	Hills, daytime, South, , hurricanes, variegated
Libra	Venus	Air	Rajas	Merchant	Moveable	Biped	Pelvis, Anus	Medium	Daytime, black, west, mischievous
Scorpio	Mars	Water	Tamas	Teacher	Fixed	Insect	Genitals	Slender/ Hairy	holes, north, daytime, reddish brown, sharp
Sagittarius	Jupiter	Fire	Sattwa	Warrior	Dual	Biped/ Quadruped	Buttocks, back thighs	Even	Tawny, night, East, splendidous
Capricorn	Saturn	Earth	Tamas	Worker	Moveable	Quadruped/ Watery	Front thighs, knees	Large	South, Nights, variegated, forest, moving in water
Aquarius	Saturn	Air	Tamas	Merchant	Fixed	Biped	Calves	Medium	Deep brown, daytime, West, rules Shudras
Pisces	Jupiter	Water	Sattwa	Teacher	Dual	Footless	Feet	Medium	Night, North, resoluteness

Figure 6.2

Let's explore each of these qualities.

1. Element — The element shows the inherent physical and psychological motivation operating behind each sign.

Fire signs are related to dharma and finding our true identity. Our dharma is what we feel compelled to do in the highest sense, and the sacrifices we are willing to make for it. Fire signs will follow their intuition and will plot a bold and daring course through life. Fire represents our passionate nature, so they are inspirational and action oriented with natural leadership qualities. But they can also be self-centered, impatient, impulsive, aggressive and competitive.

- **Key:** Fire can either illuminate the path of truth or create smoke and obscure it. It either warms or burns. Planets in Fire signs will seek truth

and inspiration, and become frustrated if unable to do so.

Earth signs are related to artha — our values and our feeling of security. It is the money and resources we need and what we need to do to keep it. Earth signs tend to be materially oriented. They may sacrifice true values, which are more internal, for outer forms of wealth. Earth signs will follow practical and steady course through life. Earth represents the senses, so sensual indulgence and laziness can be seen in the earth element. They are usually hard-working, down to earth, reliable and patient. But they may also be narrow-minded, greedy, conservative, stubborn, cautious, reserved, and possessive.

- **Key:** Earth can either provide the stable ground that supports our path or the mountain of materiality we must overcome. The real issue is where we are finding the most value, the things of the world or the things of the Soul.

Air signs are related to kama and our need for happiness. Kama is the happiness we derive from the things we have, and the connections we must make in order to fulfill ourselves in the world. Air signs will follow their intellect and communication skills as they move through life. Air represents intellectual and physical stimulation, and thus social interaction and communication, high education, a sense of humor and wit are all very prominent with air signs. But they may also be spacey, ungrounded, morally loose, superficial or eccentric.

- **Key:** Air either provides the understanding and discrimination we need to separate fact from fiction or it shows the false mental story obscuring that deeper understanding. Planets in air signs seek mental understanding; if this fails they will look for physical stimulation.

Water signs are related to moksha. Moksha is our desire to be free of the confines of mind and body and the emotional struggle brought on by this desire. Water signs follow their heart and emotions, which plots a subjective course through life that can be very painful as water signs are generally the most aware of their separation from spirit, and also the closest to it. Water represents the connective emotions and deep perceptions. The intangible world of feelings and devotion are important to these natives. A highly empathic nature is seen here, as

well as a desire and ability to heal. Yet given this subjective nature, they may be very needy and moody and, as a result, manipulative and dependent.

- **Key:** Water either provides the emotional attunement and sensitivity that can lead us to devotion and surrender, or, if those emotions are negative, that can cripple us to the point of stasis. Planets in water signs will seek connection and transcendence; if this fails they will become clingy, self-pitiful and self-absorbed.

2. Modality — Rashis are moveable, fixed or dual. The modality shows whether the course in life will be steady, changeable or a combination of the two.

Moveable rashis will change course dramatically and often in life. This inner restlessness can create many disturbances and make success, prosperity and fulfillment hard to come by. Although naturally skilled at initiating projects, they lack the consistency necessary to finish the job. They may like excitement and change, yet be bored with the humdrum. Inspiration and initiative is their greatest gift. It is best that they choose a course where more practical types support their ingenuity. Planets in these signs may be restless and changeable.

Fixed rashis are the most consistent and the best at staying the course. They are slow to initiate and slow to change. However, they are usually the most prosperous in life, or at least they have the best chance at prosperity. The most prosperous thing we can do is be consistent and not give up or change course. The danger here is staying on a path too long, unable or unwilling to change direction. Consistency and organizational skills are their greatest gifts. Stubbornness and stasis are the dangers with the fixed modality. Planets in these signs will act the same way, plodding and moving steadily.

Dual rashis contain the energy of both the moveable and the fixed rashis. They are flexible and capable of changing course or staying the course. They are the most volatile of all signs as well, always attuned to the possibilities and consequences of changing or staying the course. They also have an excellent possibility of success if they are able to properly decide which course to take. The strength of the dual rashis is in their ability to adapt and communicate effectively. In many ways, the dual rashis are not as concerned with worldly

advancement as, ruled by Mercury and Jupiter, they are the most intellectual. Planets in dual rashis will be flexible and able to adapt when necessary.

3. Polarity (Male/Female) — The modality is very important in understanding how the sign will naturally function and in which direction its energy will move.

Male — Male signs (Fire and Air Element) are extroverted and positively charged, and they thus project energy into the world. The will actively seek and engage with others or in situations when faced with difficulty. Their strength is in the power of initiation, yet they can be impulsive if there are compromising factors. Male signs are more likely to be focused on the positive side of life, ready with many possible options and solutions when problems arise. Male signs are likely to be more physical as well. Planets in male signs exhibit a more active, expressive attitude, more positively charged and dynamic, yet may lack introspection.

Female — Female signs (Earth and Water Element) are introverted and negatively charged, and they thus absorb and reflect on the world's energy and will not often react when faced with difficulty. Their strength is in the power of reflection, yet they can be too passive, avoiding action. Female signs are more likely to be focused on the negative side of life, ready to give up before trying to fix a problem, or prone to depression and feeling like a victim. Planets in female signs will exhibit a more reflective, sensitive attitude, more internally charged with an attitude of preservation, yet they may lack the ability to act positively.

4. Guna — The three gunas are the three qualities of nature. All matter and experiences contain the three gunas in varying forms. We have described the Gunas at length already, but now describe them relative to the astrology Signs. Each Sign has a guna. Planets in any sign will be influenced by the quality of the guna operating through that sign.

The three gunas operating through the astrology signs reveal:

Sattwa: Inspiration and goodness, knowledge and light. Sattwic signs will influence the planets in them to act because of the possibility of doing something good or bringing peace and harmony into the world. They are interested in big themes, but may be disconnected from “individuals” needs.

Rajas: Desire and motivation that create turbulence and passion. Rajasic signs will compel the planet to act in order to fulfill personal desires or individual goals and / or experience pleasure with others. They seek achievement and interaction with others that make us happy.

Tamas: Difficulty and trouble are the main motivating forces here. Tamasic signs and planets in them will compel us to act because there are obstacles to overcome and problems to solve. They are interested in avoiding trouble or preventing it, for others or ourselves.

5. Feet — The number and type of feet will show the inherent strength and character of that sign and planets operating through it.

- Quadruped — The strongest overall — like the four legs of a table they are the most stable and steady. They are good at advancing forward, but not very adaptable.
- Biped — The next strongest — they are more adaptable than the quadruped, yet not quite as strong.
- Insect/Watery — Not as powerful as biped or quadruped overall, yet they are more clingy and tenacious and the best at evasive lateral movement.
- Footless — The weakest of all. Only Pisces is footless, and is he most free, but also the most dependent on the changing tides.

6. Appearance — The appearance of a rasi shows the nature of things produced there.

- Large — Likes to do big things, dramatic or in a large way.
- Long — There will be longevity to things produced here. Those things may get “worn out”.
- Even — There will be equality and equanimity to the things produced here.
- Bulky — There will be too much of something produced here, an excessive amount, an unnecessary accumulation is possible.
- Medium — There will be an average pace or quality to things here (not extreme).

- Slender/hairy — Will only keep what it needs; the hairy nature sends feelers that connect to its environment.

7. Body Part — The Zodiac is called the “Kala Purusha” (the being in time) and that being is described as having body parts — which also refer to deeper life lessons.

8. Directions, Locations and Other Attributes — There are other attributes in the texts that were important enough to also mention.

The 12 Zodiac Signs and Their Frameworks

As previously discussed, the zodiac is not just 12 individual signs. In Vedic astrology it is the “Kala Purusha”, the cosmic “being in time”. Just as we organize the human body into different systems, we can organize the cosmic body of the zodiac.

Below are several ways to organize the zodiac.

The Holistic Zodiac

This framework goes directly to the concept of the “Kala Purusha itself. Too often the zodiac is seen as a group of separate signs, with each sign independent of the others. Instead, every sign needs to be seen as one point in the zodiac in relation to every other point. For example, Gemini is not just a dual, air sign, ruled by Mercury, who is Rajasic. Gemini is also the 10th house / sign from Virgo, and the sixth house/sign from Capricorn, etc.

It is impossible to understand the depth of each sign without understanding its relationship to every other sign. Imagine doing this with our physical bodies. A person’s hands are only meaningful in relationship to the rest of their body. The same is true with the zodiac.

When we understand Gemini to be the sixth house from Capricorn, we understand why a Capricorn person has a lot of skill (Gemini) solving problems (6th house). We see why a Virgo brings a lot of skill and flexibility (Gemini) into their career and public life (10th house).

We can see the deeper motivations of each sign when we examine the zodiac holistically, and especially when we consider each planet as ruling two houses from each sign. For example, from the sign of Leo, Venus rules the 3rd and the 10th houses. This shows why Leo people derive a lot of happiness (Venus) from

their public life, duties and responsibilities (10th house). But they also may use a lot of ego and self-will (3rd house) to charm their way (Venus) into positions of power (10th house). Every planet for every sign should be assessed this way.

Note:

I examined this in great detail in my book “The Ascendant — 108 Planets of Vedic Astrology”

Three Modalities Through Four Elements

Another important way to organize the zodiac is through the elements and modalities. For example:

- Aries is a Cardinal fire sign. Leo is a fixed fire sign. Sagittarius is a mutable fire.
- Taurus is a fixed earth sign. Virgo is a dual earth sign. Capricorn is a cardinal earth sign.
- Gemini is a dual air sign. Libra is a cardinal air sign. Aquarius is a fixed air sign.
- Cancer is a cardinal water sign. Scorpio is a fixed water sign. Pisces is a mutable water sign.

A powerful structure emerges when we organize the zodiac signs this way. It is matching a psychological motivation, (related to the element) with the active intention (the modality) of that particular psychology.

Stated another way:

- Cardinal signs initiate: action (fire), value (earth), ideas (air), feeling (water).
- Fixed signs stabilize: action (fire), value (earth), ideas (air), feeling (water).
- Dual signs ponder and transform: action (fire), value (earth), ideas (air), feeling (water).

Three Quadrants — Birth, Stability and Change

The zodiac is broken up into three quadrants where the four elements repeat, beginning with a fire sign, followed by an earth sign, then an air sign, then

finally a water sign. Each section contains two signs of the same modality, then one sign of every other modality. The repeated sign modality of any quadrant shows its prime motivation, and how the evolution of that principle unfolds through the qualities of action (fire), value (earth), ideas (air), feeling (water).

For example:

- The first quadrant of the zodiac has two cardinal signs. (Aries and Cancer — with Taurus and Gemini also present)
- The second quadrant of the zodiac has two fixed signs. (Leo and Scorpio- with Virgo and Libra also present)
- The third quadrant of the zodiac has two dual signs. (Sagittarius and Pisces- with Capricorn and Aquarius also present).

This zodiac structure shows the principle of creation itself. Meaning, first life has to be created through the spark of initiation (cardinal signs, the first zodiac quadrant). Then, we seek to maintain that creation (fixed signs, the second zodiac quadrant). Then we seek to transform and transcend creation itself (the dual signs, the third zodiac quadrant).

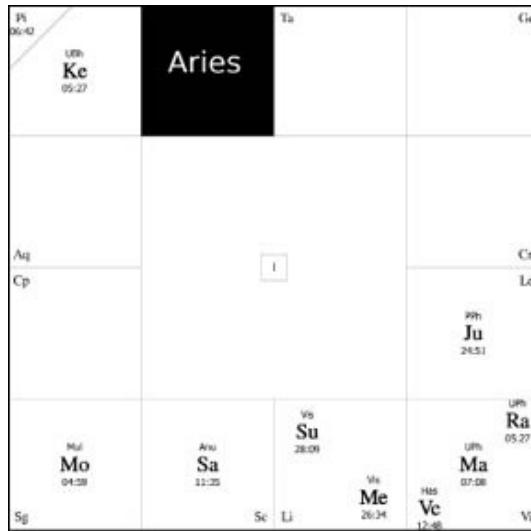
Additionally, this framework gives us the divine sequence of life through the elements. Meaning, regardless of the quadrant, first there is an action (fire), then a value derived from that action (earth), then an idea / exploration (air), then a reflection / feeling (water) about it.

Masculine and Feminine — Assertion and Reflection

The divine sequence referenced above, elementally from fire to water, also shows the interplay between the principles of masculine and feminine. Actions (fiery/masculine) produce tangible forms and also the need for rest and introspection (earth/feminine). This stability and comfort gives rise to curiosity, play, communication and intellectual exploration (air/masculine). These new interests and comrades create an internal feeling that takes us closer to our heart, or further from it (water/feminine).

Mesha (Aries) — The Ram

Rules the Head of the Kala Purusha



Sage Parashara states: *Red colored, large limbed, four-footed, valorous by night, dwelling in the East, a relative of kings, moving in rocky places, endowed with Rajas, back rising and fiery is the Ram ruled by Mars.*

Aries | Fire | Moveable | Male | Rajas | Quadruped | Large | Mars

Fire — Aries seeks to follow its inspirations and intuition.

Moveable — Aries will prefer the challenge of starting new things rather than perfecting the things they have already been started or being flexible enough to do either one.

Male — Aries is a positively charged sign — given to action and external life.

Rajas — Aries is primarily motivated by the possibility of fulfilling a desire.

Quadruped — Aries has four legs, which shows that they have a high capacity to move forward and persevere when things get tough.

Large — Aries will want to feel influential and want to do things in a large way; their presence will be a large one.

Mars — Aries is ruled by Mars, which shows a bold and courageous course through life.

Aries is the first sign of the zodiac. The symbol of Aries is the ram, who is sometimes seen with his head down banging into others. It is ruled Mars, the planet of energy and enthusiasm, operating in an external, masculine way. Aries is an initiating sign, which likes to start new things, but may not be thorough in completing what has already been started. Aries is a fire sign, which is focused on action in pursuit of truth. Aries is a Rajasic sign, which shows a tendency to

take motivated action towards pleasure and enjoyment. As being ruled by Mars, often those actions are without a lot of forethought. The motivation for this action is often to seize power in one way or another, as Aries represents the warrior class. Aries confidently moves forward, especially when handling difficult burdens in life, as quadruped signs do. But they have a hard time adjusting or retracing their steps. In some ways, they would rather die on their sword than retreat. With Aries, the bigger the challenge, the better they feel. They do things in a large way. You will see a blood red complexion with Aries and a tendency to wander off in the hills and rocky places where they can gather their thoughts. Aries rules the head, which make them headstrong and always following their personal inspirations.

Aries synthesis:

Symbolically, as the first astrology sign, Aries represents birth in all its glory. The screaming, bloody infant who wildly comes into the world is a potent image of Aries. However, this image must extend to the spark of inspiration that gives birth to all things in our life. It takes courage, enthusiasm, naïveté and the externalized force of will to actually make things happen in life. These are all potent metaphors for Aries, and planets in the sign. Ruling planet Mars also rules the eighth house from here, so there is an awareness of life's ups and downs and changes. The motto "you have to break a few eggs to make an omelette" is a resonant quote for Aries. Yet, in the uninvolved Aries type, this may simply be the cover story for a life of chaos and destruction.

Deeper spiritual lesson of Aries:

The enthusiasm and courage to align our actions with liberation and Dharma, rather than just worldly conquest is the highest spiritual lesson of Aries.

Vrishabha (Taurus) — The Bull

Rules the Face of the Kala Purusha

Pi 06-02		Ar	Taurus	Ge
Uph Ke 09-27				
Aq		I		Cs
Cp				Le
Mo 04-08	Aru Sa 11-37	Vn Su 28-09	Vn Me 20-24	Uph Ra 05-27
Sc	Li		Ma 07-08	His Ve 12-08
Vi				

Sage Parashara states: *White, ruled by Venus, long, four-footed, night strong, southerly, village living, a merchant, earthy, Rajas and back rising is the Bull.*

Taurus | Earth | Fixed | Female | Rajas | Quadruped | Long | Venus

Earth — Taurus seeks to follow a consistent and practical path.

Fixed — Taurus will prefer perfecting the things they have started rather than starting new things or being flexible and open to other possibilities.

Female — Taurus is a negatively charged sign — given to reflection and the internal process.

Rajas — Taurus is primarily motivated by the possibility of fulfilling a desire.

Quadruped — Taurus has four legs, which shows they have a high capacity to move forward and persevere when things get tough.

Long — Taurus will do the same thing for a long time and feel good about being able to continue long after others have given up.

Venus — Taurus is ruled by Venus, which shows a sensual and courteous path through life.

Taurus is the second sign of the zodiac. The symbol of Taurus is the bull, an animal of both value and labor in ancient India. Venus, the planet of beauty and enjoyment, operating in an internal, reflective way, rules Taurus. It is a fixed sign, which likes to hold onto the things they have and grow them. This may make them stubborn and resistant to change, but also make them great at manifesting what they want. Taurus is an earth sign, which seeks practical results, wealth and accumulation. Taurus is Rajasic, motivated by happiness and

personal pleasure. Taurus likes to gather beautiful things of the world, then enjoy and share them with others. There is a great capacity for hard work with Taurus, especially if the payoff includes something beautiful for themselves or their family. As a quadruped sign, they are great at advancing steadily toward their goal, and handling the pressures involved, although they are not so good at making adjustments and backtracking. Taurus likes to do things for a long time, sometimes too long, being resistant to change. Similar to the nature of a cow, Taurus likes being in communities and villages, and is associated with business and commerce. Taurus rules the face and the sense organs of pleasure, especially the mouth

Taurus synthesis:

The infant who was born in Aries, needs to be fed, safe and provided for in Taurus. Similarly, new projects, businesses or families need that same sort of stable attention. Taurus is the sign of the consistent, tenacious oversight and care that allows things to grow and flourish. Ruling planet Venus also rules the sixth house of duty, sacrifice and hard work. But it is not enough to just maintain, we also must enjoy the fruits of our labors, make them comfortable, beautiful and share them with others. Venus brings that happiness through each sacrifice. But we must also see beyond the material effects, to something more valuable, something more eternal. The deeper lesson is values, not just money or possessions.

Deeper spiritual lesson of Taurus:

Contentment with what we have, rather than a focus on unending acquisition is the deepest spiritual promise of Taurus.

Mithuna (Gemini) — The Couple

Rules the Hands, Arms and Shoulders of the Kala Purusha

Pi 06-02		Ar Ta	Gemini
		I	
Aq Cp			Cs Le
Mo 04-08	Sa 11-15	Su 28-09	Ra 05-27
Sc	Li	Me 20-24	Ma 07-08
			Ve 12-06
			Vi

Sage Parashara states: *Front rising, a pair of humans with mace and with lute, western, airy, two-footed, night strong, village roaming, Vata, normal limbed and grass colored is the Pair ruled by Mercury.*

Gemini | Air | Dual | Male | Rajas | Biped | Even | Mercury

Air — Gemini seeks to follow a fair and intellectual path.

Dual — Gemini will prefer being open to alternative possibilities of life, as they are equally able to start something new or perfect what they have.

Male — Gemini is a positively charged sign — given to action and external life.

Rajas — Gemini is primarily motivated by the possibility of fulfilling a desire.

Biped — Gemini has two legs, which shows an average capacity to move forward and persevere through life, yet a more adaptable nature than the quadrupeds as two-legged creatures move laterally with more ease.

Even — Gemini will want equality in their dealings and a fair exchange that allows flexibility and neutrality to seek intellectual truth

Mercury — Gemini is ruled by Mercury, which shows an intellectual and curious path through life.

Gemini is the third sign of the zodiac. A man holding a club and a woman playing a musical instrument is the symbol of Gemini. This epitomizes their capacity to see all perspectives at once. Mercury, the planet of communication and details rules Gemini, and asserts his masculine side here. This externalized Mercury embodies a dualistic nature, as Gemini seeks to see all sides of an issue simultaneously. This is easily accomplished when you consider Gemini is an air

sign, motivated by words and ideas to understand the world and connect it to others. In addition, Gemini is Rajasic, motivated toward pleasure and enjoyment. Ruling planet Mercury finds it easy to enjoy life and is a great business person, always looking to strike a fair deal as Gemini is part of the merchant caste. Gemini is great at making adjustments as a bipedal sign, and loves to discuss things. They handle issues in an “even” way, not too large or too small. Gemini enjoys social circles and carousing in villages, looking for good deal and good conversation. Gemini rules the neck, arms and hands as these things give us skill, dexterity and the ability to create or discover something new. This also allows for experimentation and play, which adds to our enjoyment and understanding of life.

Gemini synthesis:

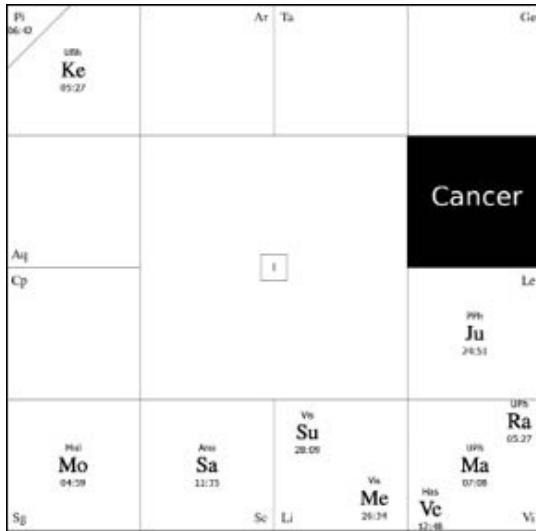
Once the young person is fed, cared for and loved in Taurus, it seeks stimulation, enjoyment and understanding of its surroundings. In Gemini (which rules the neck) we turn our head from side to side and take a look around, then reach out with our hands in curiosity and exploration. It is this interaction with the world that teaches us about our self and the nature of life and existence. If we are really going to understand things on our own terms, we must be neutral and sensible, not driven by preconceptions. Our experiences will show us this truth. In Gemini we take experience, and figure things out for ourselves. However, we may also simply wish to play with things, remain stimulated and not learn, or connect our information to a higher purpose.

Deeper spiritual lesson of Gemini:

Elevating the instinct to play and enjoy the endless stimulation of the world, is the deeper spiritual lesson of Gemini. Once elevated, discrimination and detachment from the trivial emerges. This provides a strong platform through which the soul can ascend.

Kataka (Cancer) — The Crab

Rules the Heart of the Kala Purusha



Sage Parashara states: *Pink, moving in water, a Brahmin, vigorous at night, many moving legs, a stout body, endowed with Sattva, watery and back rising is thought the Crab Rasi ruled by the Moon.*

Cancer | Water| Moveable | Female | Sattwic | Insect | Bulky | Moon

Water — Cancer seeks to follow a subjective path of connection and unity.

Moveable — Cancer will prefer the challenge of starting new things rather than perfecting the things they have already started or being flexible enough to do either one.

Female — Cancer is a negatively charged sign — given to reflection and the internal process.

Sattva — Cancer is primarily motivated by the possibility of doing something good.

Watery/Insect — Cancer has many legs (like an insect) which show a dexterous and side-to-side movement, which is mainly an evasive action and in a flowing, adaptable manner as is the nature of water.

Bulky — Cancer will bring heaviness to the things in their life, an accumulation that helps them feel connected.

Moon — Cancer is ruled by the Moon, which shows a subjective and feeling-centered course through life.

Cancer is the fourth sign of the zodiac. The symbol of cancer is a crab, who carries around its protective shell and burrows in the sand. The moon, the planet of sensitivity and feeling, rules Cancer. The moon rules emotions and cancer is

the sign of openness, and connection to the heart. But of course, this leaves us also feeling vulnerable and sensitive to others and our surroundings, as we try to connect our heart with their needs. Cancer is motivated by selfless love, Sattvic, pure love that does not need anything in return, like a mother's love for a child. Like a mother, cancer is a great teacher, wanting to guide and lead toward higher virtues. Yet, the fluctuating moods and emotions of the moon makes for a very indirect course through life, and a kind of sideways motion as shown by their "insect feet". Cancer is sentimental, and clings tenaciously to the past and reminders of love, creating a bulky appearance. Cancer rules the chest, the body part associated with the heart. It also shows how deeply our feelings are connected to our breath and the life force itself.

Cancer synthesis:

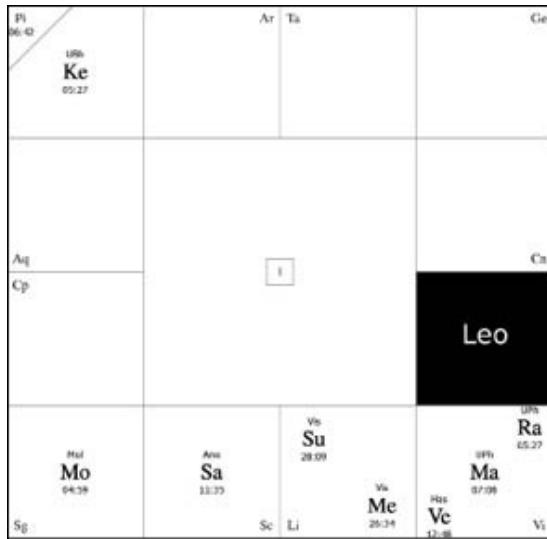
The ideas, skills and interests of Gemini create a feeling in the heart. We experience this feeling in cancer. The social connections we make and the people we meet also impact our heart. Cancer is like the "awkward teenager" within, who is just a jumble of emotions but with no strategy to change them. Moment to moment our emotions change, as we go through the different experiences in life. Like a mother needs to be sensitive to the ever-changing needs of her child, cancer is where we feel this emotional connection to the moment. When surrounded by those who can receive our selfless love, like children or pets, there is enormous satisfaction and devotion that emerges through the sign of cancer. But with (almost) everyone and everything else, there's often emotional longing and hurt feelings and difficult boundary issues.

Deeper spiritual lesson of cancer

Plunging into the ocean of love in our heart, rather than being tossed about on the waves of emotion is the deeper lesson of cancer.

Simha (Leo) — The Lion

Leo rules the Stomach of the Kala Purusha



Sage Parashara states: *The Lion, ruled by the Sun, is Sattva, four-footed, a Kshatriya, living in woods, front rising, large limbed, violet, eastern and vigorous during day.*

Leo | Fire | Fixed | Male | Sattwic | Quadruped | Large | Sun

Fire — Leo seeks to follow their inspirations and intuition.

Fixed — Leo will prefer perfecting the things they have started rather than starting new things or being flexible and open to alternative possibilities.

Male — Leo is a positively charged sign — given to action and external life.

Sattva — Leo is primarily motivated by the possibility of doing something good.

Quadruped — Leo has four legs, which shows that they have a high capacity to move forward and persevere when things get tough.

Large — Leo will want to feel influential and want to do things in a large way. Their presence will be a large one.

Sun — Leo is ruled by the Sun, which shows a powerful and capable path through life.

Leo is the fifth sign of the zodiac. Its symbol is the lion, a creature of courage and well known as “the King of the jungle”. The sun, which only has a masculine side, rules Leo; the Sun only knows how to give and act. The sun has been rising every day for 4.5 billion years to give life and power to the Earth. It is through that consistent fire and warmth that the earth has any life. This consistent focus is built into the Leo psyche. As being Sattwic, Leo is driven to

do good and provide regardless of how they feel. Much like a father will sacrifice for his family or a king provides for its kingdom, Leo is of Royal caste and is comfortable in power. The strength to carry these burdens and to keep moving forward is shown by Leo's quadruped nature. Yet a Leo is prone to stubbornness and self-righteousness. Their large appearance and dramatic nature is useful to accomplishing their many duties and responsibilities. They are strong during the day, usually rising with the sun. Leo rules the stomach, the bodily organ that shows our appetites and fulfillments. When we share our light, to empower others, like the sun in the sky, there is deep fulfillment.

Leo synthesis:

The fluctuating sensitivity and emotions of cancer turns into passion and conviction in Leo, like the young adult, set out to conquer the world, idealistic and full of courage. The foundation of our kingdom must be our hearts desire. When we just seek worldly power and achievement, our actions are inconsistent, our confidence waivers and is undermined by fluctuating emotions. But the father never allows his confidence issues to stand in the way of providing for his family. When connected to our hearts desire, we never falter and our life becomes an offering of our inner light to all who wish to benefit from it. But we don't typically follow that higher purpose. We sell out the divine king and queen within for some counterfeit version of power that is unworthy of our royal self.

Deeper spiritual lesson of Leo

If our kingdom is based on worldly success, we will be defined by the interpretations of others. But when we seek the light within, our life becomes an offering, a great sharing with others. Then, we simply radiate light from within, thereby helping others see themselves more clearly.

Kanya (Virgo) — The Virgin

Virgo rules the Bowels of the Kala Purusha

Pi 06:00		Ar Ta		Ge
09:27 Ke				
Aq		I		Cn
Cp				Le
				09:51 Ju
Ma Mo 04:29	Aru Sa 11:33	Vn Su 28:09	Vn Me 26:34	Virgo
Sg	Sc Li			

Sage Parashara states: *Living in mountains is the Girl Rasi, who, endowed with strength during day is front rising, medium limbed, two-footed, moving in the south with grain and fire, a Vaishya, clear/transparent, stormy, young, connected with Tamas, existing in children and ruled by Mercury.*

Virgo | Earth | Dual | Female | Tamasic | Biped | Medium | Mercury

Earth — Virgo seeks to follow a consistent and practical path.

Dual — Virgo will prefer being open to alternative possibilities of life, as they are equally able to start something new or perfect what they have.

Female — Virgo is a negatively charged sign — given to reflection and the internal process.

Tamas — Virgo is primarily motivated by the possibility of preventing or removing difficulty.

Biped — Virgo has two legs, which shows an average capacity to move forward and persevere through life, yet a more adaptable nature than the quadrupeds. Two-legged creatures move laterally with more ease.

Medium — Virgo will want to maintain moderation and balance in their presentation and activities, which allows them to remain realistic.

Mercury — Virgo is ruled by Mercury, which shows an intellectual and curious path through life.

Virgo is the sixth sign of the zodiac. The symbol of Virgo is a young girl with wheat in one hand and fire in the other, showing a purification of form and structure. Mercury, the planet of skills and communication, rules Virgo. Through

Virgo Mercury is operating in an internal, reflective way, showing the need to organize our internal mind and life. Virgo accomplishes this by being of dual nature, ready to adjust and accommodate people and situations when necessary. Practical results are favored over abstraction with Virgo as it is an earth sign. A focus on detail also makes us aware of dangerous details and one's we need to avoid. The Tamasic nature of Virgo seeks protection from danger. Virgo does not mind working hard, but may often engage in menial tasks, but will approach them with flexibility, being of bipedal nature. Virgo will reject the extremes, owing to their "medium nature". They are of variegated color, showing an amalgam of all things together. Virgo rules the intestines, the part of the body where diligent work and organization is most important.

Virgo synthesis:

The kingdom we build and the satisfaction it gives us, as shown through Leo, leads to a lot of work and many details in Virgo. As ruling the intestines, Virgo shows all of the many tasks we must perform in order to manifest the life we want. Every task must be done correctly or else there is danger of illness. We feel this pressure in Virgo. Most of the tasks are not enjoyable, in fact there can be drudgery and boredom associated with many of them. But when we are connected to our hearts desire, this hard work becomes service. We love our baby so we do not mind changing its diapers, feeding it the correct food, and doing the other million and one things correctly. Virgo must follow that path of love and surrender, and give up the fear-based illusion of control.

Deeper Virgo lesson:

Purifying our thoughts and our fears is the highest quality of Virgo energy, not micromanaging outer circumstances in hopes of achieving material perfection.

Thula (Libra) — The Man With A Scale

Libra rules the Hips/below the Navel of the Kala Purusha

Pi 06.0		Ar Ta		Ge
Uph Ke 09.27				
Aq		I		Cn Le
Cp				
Mal Mo 04.29	Aru Sa 11.13	Sc	Libra	Uph Ra 05.27
Sg				Hrs Ma 07.08 Vc 12-18 Vi

Sage Parashara states: *Front rising, the Balance Scale is rich in vigor during the day, blue, endowed with Rajasic, western, moving on land, killing/destroying, a Sudra, medium bodied, two-footed and ruled by Venus.*

Libra | Air | Moveable | Male | Rajasic | Biped | Medium | Venus

Air — Libra seeks to follow a fair and intellectual path.

Moveable — Libra will prefer the challenge of starting new things rather than perfecting the things they have already started or being flexible enough to do either one.

Male — Libra is a positively charged sign — given to action and external life.

Rajas — Libra is primarily motivated by the possibility of fulfilling a desire.

Biped — Libra has two legs, which shows an average capacity to move forward and persevere through life, yet a more adaptable nature than the quadrupeds. Two-legged creatures move laterally with more ease.

Medium — Libra will want to maintain moderation and balance in their presentation and activities, which allows them to remain realistic.

Venus — Libra is ruled by Venus, which shows a sensual and courteous path through life.

Libra is the seventh sign of the zodiac. The symbol of Libra is a man walking in a shopping bazaar carrying a scale. This is a great metaphor for Libra, who is ruled by Venus, the planet of beauty, values and mutual respect between equals. Venus expresses these lessons in an external, masculine way through Libra and through ideas, which is related to the air element. Libra is an initiating, assertive

sign, where we seek situations and start dialogues with the intention of creating greater value and harmony. Libra is a Rajasic sign, motivated towards pleasure and enjoyment with others. Libra belongs to the merchant class, interested in commerce and fair exchange. Adult relationships, romantic or professional are an example of this — with a “transactional” quality to them. There is an even mix of strength and flexibility with Libra, as a bipedal, human sign. They exhibit a medium type of energy, which is not too passionate in one direction or the other. Although they appear harmonious, Libra is one of the most mischievous signs, often initiating imbalance, only to harmonize it later. Libra rules the pelvic region, a place of both pleasure and disgust, showing a balancing between these two.

Libra synthesis:

The Virgo individual faced with details and the drudgery of life looks to connect with others, serve and enjoy themselves with others in Libra, the sign of “relationships based on mutual respect “. The driving force behind these relationships is the desire for happiness. Of course, this is typically expressed in romantic relationships, but we also see powerful Libra energy in all social communities, like in companies. The same skills that benefit individual’s in their personal life, will benefit them in their career. These skills are “Libran”. But with Libra there can be too much focus on human relationships and interactions. Shallowness may creep in and we may lose the bigger picture. Also, mental restlessness, expressing as the need to create disorder to harmonize later is a real shadow side of this sign.

Deeper spiritual lesson of Libra:

Universalizing our desires and connecting them with the divine, in service of “love itself” is the culmination of Libra. Ammachi “the hugging saint of India”, has a Libra ascendant and is a great example of embodying universal love, divine love.

Vrischika (Scorpio) — The Scorpion

Scorpio rules the Genitals of the Kala Purusha

Pi 96-0		Ar Ta		Ge
Uph Ke 09:27				
Aq		I		Cn Le
Cp				Ju 24:51
Mai Mo 04:29	Scorpio	Vn Su 28:09	Vn Me 26:34	Upn Ra 05:27 Ma 07:08 Hs Ve 17-48 Vi
Sg		Li		

Sage Parashara states: *Small limbed, many footed, a Brahmin, in a hole, abiding in the north, rich in vigor during the day, orange, exposed to water and land, bristles abounding and very sharp pointed is the Scorpion ruled by Mars.*

Scorpio | Water | Fixed | Female | Tamasic | Insect | Slender / Hairy | Mars

Water — seeks to follow a subjective path of connection and unity.

Fixed — Scorpio will prefer perfecting the things they have started rather than starting new things or being flexible and open to alternative possibilities.

Female — is a negatively charged sign — given to reflection and the internal process.

Tamas — Scorpio is primarily motivated by the possibility of preventing or removing difficulty.

Insect — Scorpio has many legs (like an insect), which show a dexterous movement that is mainly for evasive action. Also, there is increased tenacity as the Scorpio is a full insect.

Slender/Hairy — Scorpio will only hold on to what is necessary and let go of the rest, with sensitive hairs that allow it to feel into its environment.

Mars — Scorpio is ruled by Mars, which shows a bold and courageous course through life.

Scorpio is the eighth sign of the zodiac. The symbol of Scorpio is a scorpion, which is by far the smallest zodiac animal, easily crushed by the larger quadrupeds. The scorpion is always aware of this capacity to be crushed. Thus it lives in holes to protect its vulnerability, and carries in its tail a powerful poison

to numb its enemies. This numbing quality can be shown by its Tamasic nature, related to self-protection. Ruling planet Mars gives the scorpion the courage to take on larger prey, and face those fears. The courage of Mars is reflecting upon itself, strengthening the psychology in Scorpio. As a fixed water sign, Scorpio has enormous power to concentrate their emotions. They shine brightly when acting as a healer for others, as they are of the Brahmin caste. Scorpio has a slender/hairy appearance, which gives them the emotional antennae to feel into their world and the vibes around them. Scorpio is said to live on water and land and be sharp, as shown by the stinger in their tail. Scorpio rules the genitals, which are organs of pleasure, but also vulnerability, and reproduction/rebirth. These are all potent metaphors for Scorpio.

Scorpio synthesis:

The intense human interaction of Libra leads to the vulnerabilities of Scorpio. There are many imagined fears in this sign, but those fears have a basis in reality. Intimate relationships with others are dangerous. In most cases of murder, the perpetrator knew the victim. That is extreme, but even in the mundane sense, personal connections bring out our vulnerability. Scorpio is where we feel this vulnerability and try to assert control. In the more evolved scorpion, there is less manipulation and control, and more surrender. But Scorpions are great counselors, as they help others transform. Scorpions are great friends, loyal to the end, not scared by others dark sides. However, in intimate situations where Scorpio feels vulnerable, the shadow side of self-protection and “strike first before struck yourself” can be very damaging.

Deeper spiritual lesson of Scorpio:

Transforming our insecurities into strengths is the greatest lesson of Scorpio. This is a sign that needs to control their own emotions, not the emotions of others. Once they do, their naturally devotional heart takes them straight to the source of love itself.

Dhanus (Sagittarius) — The Half Man, Half Horse

Rules the Thighs of the Kala Purusha

Pi 96.0		Ar	Ta	Ge
Utt Ke 05.27				
Aq		I		Cn
Cp				Le
Sagittarius	Aeu Sa 11.20	Vn Su 28.09	Vn Me 29.34	Utt Ra 05.27 Ma Ho Ve 17.08 Vi
Sc	Li			

Sage Parashara states: *Back rising is the Bow owned by Jupiter, Sattvik, golden, vigorous at night, fiery, a Kshatriya, two-footed at the beginning, four-footed at the end, regular limbed, bearing a bow, standing in the east, moving on the ground and made splendid by Brahma.*

Sagittarius | Fire | Dual | Male | Sattwic | Biped/Quadruped | Even | Jupiter

Fire — Sagittarians seek to follow their inspirations and intuition

Dual — Sagittarians will prefer being open to alternative possibilities of life, as they are equally able to start something new or perfect what they have.

Male — Sagittarius is a positively charged sign — given to action and external life.

Sattva — Sagittarius is primarily motivated by the possibility of doing something good.

Biped/Quadruped — Sagittarius is biped in the first half, showing medium flexibility and stability at first. It is four-footed at the end of the sign, showing more stability and strength later on. The implication is that the native will grow in strength.

Even — Sagittarius will want equality in their dealings and a fair exchange, which allows the flexibility and neutrality to seek spiritual truth

Jupiter — Sagittarius is ruled by Jupiter, which shows a hopeful and inspired course through life.

Sagittarius is the ninth sign of the zodiac. The symbol of Sagittarius a bow, or a horse man with a bow and arrow. This symbol refers to the transformation

from animal fears to human insights and higher consciousness. We infer this from the symbol of half man half beast. It is human, bipedal in the first half and quadruped in the second half. Jupiter, the planet of teaching and wisdom, expressing his masculine, fiery self, rules Sagittarius. This leads to inspired actions towards higher goals motivated by goodness and righteousness, a Sattwic intention. As a truth seeker, many changes are likely. This is seen by the dual nature of Sagittarius. The motivations will be power, mainly spiritual power and gives the Sagittarian a “splendorous” nature. Given the human and animal struggle existing within Sagittarius, a truce is ultimately declared, as shown by their even appearance. Sagittarius rules the buttocks and the back of the thighs. It is these muscles that allow human beings to run long distances, which is akin to the Sagittarius aim to stay on course.

Sagittarius synthesis:

After the painful insecurities of Scorpio, the soul seeks a higher vision and deeper meaning in Sagittarius. Connecting to a greater sense of purpose and to the things beyond just this world is the main motivation of Sagittarius. It's the sign where we ask “what's the point of this”? If we don't have a good answer, we change course, seeking a clearer goal. But we also must be careful of orthodoxy and dogmatism when it comes to Sagittarius areas of life. We all have some beliefs about why things happen the way they do. If this belief remains unchecked and untested by experience, it leads to orthodoxy and fanaticism. Fundamentalism of all types can have a Sagittarius component. Testing and putting into practice what we believe transforms that orthodoxy into spiritual practice.

Deeper spiritual lesson of Sagittarius:

Elevating our religious views and beliefs into an authentic spiritual practice is the deeper promise of Sagittarius. More practical application and real world experience and less judgment is a requirement for this transformation.

Makara (Capricorn) — The Crocodile

Rules the Knees of the Kala Purusha

Pl	Ar	Ta	Ge
Ke 05:27			
Aq	I	Cn	Le
Capricorn		Ju 24:53	
Ma 04:29	Sa 11:29	Su 28:09	Ra 05:27
Sg	Sc	Me 29:34	Ma 07:08
	Li	Ve 12:48	Vi

Sage Parashara states: *Ruled by Saturn, Tamasic, earthy, southern, vigorous at night, back rising, large limbed, many colored, moving in watery ground, four-footed at the beginning and without feet at the end is imagined the water goer.*

Capricorn | Earth | Moveable | Female | Tamasic | Quadruped/Footless | Long | Saturn

Earth — Capricorn seeks to follow a consistent and practical path.

Moveable — Capricorns will prefer the challenge of starting new things rather than perfecting the things they have already started or being flexible enough to do either one.

Female — a negatively charged sign — given to reflection and the internal process.

Tamas — Capricorn is primarily motivated by the possibility of preventing or removing difficulty.

Quadruped/Watery — Capricorns are quadruped in the first half, showing a powerful stability at first. They are watery at the end, showing a tendency to more fluidity and flexible later on.

Large — Capricorns will want to feel themselves to be influential and want to do things in a large way; their presence will be a large one.

Saturn — Capricorn is ruled by Saturn, which shows a practical and serious course through life.

Capricorn is the 10th sign of the zodiac. The symbol of Capricorn is a crocodile, the literal meaning of the word “Makara”. We see this crocodile

nature affirmed by its appearance, being quadruped in the first half and watery in the second half. Capricorn has four legs on the earth, where it moves very slow. But then a long tail, which shows it moves in the water with grace and speed. Saturn, the planet of consequences, longevity and our fears, rules Capricorn. The internal, feminine, emotional quality of Saturn is shown by Capricorn. This internal nature is expressed in a tangible and practical way, as Capricorn is an earth sign. We must tangibly commit and work through our fears life, and commit to grow up and be mature about the nature of life. Avoiding pain is a big motivator for Capricorn, as it is a Tamasic sign. They will work hard toward any endeavor, as being from the worker caste. Capricorn will initiate many projects, and grow them to the heights, especially if the payoff is material security. They are said to be “moving in water”, and are strong in the South, the place of death. Capricorn rules the front of the thighs down to the knee, a place of support, mobility and vulnerability.

Capricorn synthesis:

The beliefs of Sagittarius become commitments and long-term goals in Capricorn. The things that give our life meaning also produce a lot of work, and ultimately lead to the great things we accomplish, for example, children. They fill our life with meaning and hope. But they take a lot of work, commitment and patience. The need to provide for our children or our family is a catalyst for greatness. But we must also be careful of possessiveness and feeling a sense of ownership and dominion over them. The shadow side of Capricorn is a dehumanizing possessiveness, where we see everything in our life, including our family, as a commodity, as something we have a stake in. This leads to controlling behavior, especially when it's “for their own good”. Instead, a deeper commitment must to be made to inner truth, silence and peace.

Deeper spiritual lesson of Capricorn:

Making a commitment to inner peace rather than external achievement is the highest lesson of Capricorn. The most valuable thing we can accomplish is peace of mind, solitude and maturity about the inevitable march of time.

Kumba (Aquarius) — Man With An Empty Pot

Aquarius rules the Calves of the Kala Purusha.

Pi 06.0		Ar Ta	Ge
Ke 09.27			
Aquarius		I	Cn
Up			Le
Mo 04.09	Asu Sa 11.13	Vn Su 28.09	Up Ra 05.27
Sg	Sc Li	Vn Me 26.10	Up Ma 07.08
		Hs Ve 17.08	Vt

Sage Parashara states: *Kumbha is a jar holding man, deep brown in complexion, medium bodied, two-footed, vigorous during day, standing in the middle of water, airy, front rising, Tamasic, a Sudra, abiding in the western region and lored by the son of the Sun (Saturn).*

Aquarius | Air | Moveable | Male | Tamasic | Biped | Medium | Saturn

Air — Aquarius seeks to follow a fair and intellectual path.

Fixed — Aquarians will prefer perfecting the things they have started rather than starting new things or being flexible and open to alternative possibilities.

Male — Aquarius is a positively charged sign — given to action and external life.

Tamas — Aquarius is primarily motivated by the possibility of preventing or removing difficulty.

Biped — Aquarius has two legs, which shows an average capacity to move forward and persevere through life, yet a more adaptable nature than the quadrupeds. Two-legged creatures move laterally with more ease.

Medium — Aquarians will want to maintain moderation and balance in their presentation and activities, which allows them to remain realistic.

Saturn — Aquarius is ruled by Saturn, which shows a practical and serious course through life.

Aquarius is the 11th sign of the zodiac. The symbol of Aquarius is a man holding an empty water pot. This conveys a feeling of personal emptiness, seen by ruling planet Saturn also ruling the 12th house of loss. Saturn, the planet of

commitments expresses his masculine, external side in Aquarius, an air sign. This refers to ideas we commit to and support. But these ideas often overwhelm our individuality, and may create a feeling of struggle and personal fear, as shown by Aquarian's Tamasic quality. Aquarius seeks stable ideas and social causes, like politics to serve and commit to, as they are a fixed sign. They are firmly established in the human kingdom, as a bipedal sign and also very comfortable in the marketplace, being of the merchant caste. It is said they are strong in the west, the place of death and they rule the "Shudras", the laborers. Yet often Aquarius themselves feel like servants, rather than happily being of service. Harmonizing their duties with their individual identity gives them a medium, harmonizing quality. Aquarius rules the calves, the body part that exists between two vulnerable and crucial joints, the knees and ankles. Aquarius feels themselves to be a bridge between several points of transition, this world / the next, their identity / culture.

Aquarius synthesis:

Facing our practical, tangible fears in Capricorn compels us to share what we have learned with others and serve things higher than just our own personal values. Aquarius is the sign of collective, universal and humanistic values. These are things that transcend our human life on earth. In Aquarius we learn to see beyond all of wins and losses of this life and make peace with the world, aspiring to leave things better than we found them. Politics, the arts and sciences, or causes for the betterment of the earth are all concerns with Aquarius. But Aquarius must be careful not to confuse service with servitude. When disconnected from their passion, life can feel like one joyless "duty" after another. Motivated by guilt or fear, life can feel very empty, like the empty water pot in the Aquarians hands.

Deeper spiritual lesson of Aquarius:

Aquarius must aspire to a life of dignified service, rather than a default "servitude", which is actually just a lack of confidence in disguise. This leaves everyone feeling drained and leads to bitterness and a "martyr" complex.

Meena (Pisces) — The Fish

Pisces rules the Feet of the Kala Purusha

Pisces		Ar Ta	Ge
Aq			Cn Le
Cp		I	Ju 24.51
Mai Mo 04.29	Aru Sa 11.23	Vr Su 28.09 Sc Li	U.P. Ra 05.27 Ma 07.09 Hrs Ve 17-18 Vi
Sg			

Sage Parashara states: *Two fish sticking to each other tail with face, the Fish Rasi is day strong, watery, richly endowed with Sattva, self-abiding, moving in water, footless, medium bodied, standing in the north, rising both ways and ruled by Jupiter.*

Meena | Water | Dual | Female | Sattvic | Footless | Medium | Jupiter

Water — Pisces seeks to follow a subjective path of connection and unity.

Dual — Pisceans will prefer being open to alternative possibilities of life, as they are equally able to start something new or perfect what they already have.

Female — Pisces is a negatively charged sign — given to reflection and the internal process.

Sattva — Pisces is primarily motivated by the possibility of doing something good.

Footless — Pisces has no feet and thus may find itself at the mercy of the tides of life.

Medium — Pisceans will want to maintain moderation and balance in their presentation and activities, which allows them to remain realistic.

Jupiter — Pisces is ruled by Jupiter, which shows a hopeful and inspired course through life.

The symbol of Pisces is two fish joined at the head and the tail. This is a metaphor of cosmic unity, like the yin/yang symbol. As a fish, they are deeply submerged in feeling. But it is not just the feeling of this world, it is the straddling of two worlds. Pisces is ruled by Jupiter, the planet of higher wisdom and the

optimism it gives us. Jupiter expresses this optimism in a philosophical way, and through Pisces there is a watery, emotional expansion. Pisces is a sign of duality, and seeing things from many perspectives, as shown by the symbol of the two fish. One perspective is from this world, and one is from beyond. The high principles of Jupiter align Pisces with a Sattvic intention. They are always interested in the highest good. But so much emphasis on cosmic unity, duality and emotionalism can make Pisces ungrounded, as seen by their “footless” mobility. They may drift, and lack direction. They see things in a “medium” way, uncomfortable with extreme reactions or results. They are always caught between what to hold onto and what to let go of. The body part of Pisces is the feet, but how ironic they themselves are footless. The foot is the symbol of support, direction and movement itself.

Pisces synthesis:

The worldly, humanistic values of Aquarius lead to the otherworldly, mystical perspective of Pisces. This is where the heart swims in the metaphysical, cosmic ocean of love and peace. This is all well and good, until you incarnate on the earth with a physical body and actions to perform. Then it gets tricky. Pisces would like to escape from the burdens of this world into alternative realms. The quickest and easiest way is chemically, through drugs or alcohol. Movies, TV and entertainment are also ways to escape from the burden of our false ego. Pisces shows how we escape and what we do when we are alone. We can either escape into a truthful reality through meditation or we can escape from the false ego into unconsciousness. This latter choice leads to the footless, wandering side of Pisces.

Deeper spiritual lesson of Pisces:

When Pisces escapes into the natural love and devotion in their heart, a deep mystical connection to the soul emerges. When they escape from their heart, into worldly pleasures and forms, they become lost and spoil the great gift of their life.



CHAPTER 7

Astrology Houses

Once we know the birth time of a native, we can read their chart correctly, because we will have the rising sign and all of the planets as house rulers, and the houses themselves, will be established.

From BPHS:

1-2. Importance of Hora. The word Hora is derived from Ahoratr after dropping the first and last syllables. Thus Hora (Lagnas) remains in between Ahoratr (i.e. day and night) and after knowing Hora the good and bad effects of a native be known. Śrī Vishnu, the Invisible is Time personified. His limbs are the 12 Rashis, commencing from Mesh.

Astrology Houses Framework

Our Earthly lives unfold through a physical body in a world of matter as shown through the Houses (called “Bhavas” in Sanskrit). Bhava literally means, “Coming into existence, Birth” — It also means “The Experience — Experiencing.” It is through what is shown through the Bhava’s that our karma is born materially. It is here that Purusha is expressed as Prakriti in a world of consequence. Each house has many attributes, yet underneath there is a deeper concept key to that house.

By connecting us to Earth, the Bhava's also reveal the deeper potential behind all of our actions. Vedic astrology has very specific house classifications based on the four stations of life. Those four stations of life are:

- Dharma — Right understanding expressed through our actions.
- Artha — Sustenance and Material comfort.
- Kama — Enjoyment and Pleasure
- Moksha — Liberation from the World

These four lessons are repeated three times in an astrology chart through the realms of the Individual Self — Other People — and in a Universalized sense. The chart below formalizes this idea.

DHARMA	ARTHA	KAMA	MOKSHA
<u>SELF:</u> 1 st House body, truth of actual experience	<u>SELF:</u> 2 nd House Values, family, money possessions	<u>SELF:</u> 3 rd House ego, interests, competition	<u>SELF:</u> 4 th House Feelings, emotions, inner peace
<u>OTHERS:</u> 5 th house Children, creation, our heart's desire	<u>OTHERS:</u> 6 th house hard work, effort, illness, service	<u>OTHERS:</u> 7 th house Others, compromise, sex	<u>OTHERS:</u> 8 th house loss of control, vulnerability
<u>UNIVERSAL:</u> 9 th house Higher meaning, teachers, beliefs	<u>UNIVERSAL:</u> 10 th house Duties, pressure, responsibility	<u>UNIVERSAL:</u> 11 th House highest desires and ambition, altruism	<u>UNIVERSAL:</u> 12 th House letting go, loss, surrender, escapism

Figure 7.1

The above chart shows the astrology houses broken out into the four Purusarthas (Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksha), and the three great evolutionary principles, related to the three Gunas: Self (Tamas), Others (Rajas), Universal (Sattwa).

We can use this chart to map how the individual grows, then how that individual's relationship with others grows, then how that evolves into more universal themes.

For example, first we need a body (1st house), which is cared for by a family with certain values (2nd house). But we also have our own interests beyond the family (3rd house). These interests create a feeling in our heart that either brings greater peace or not (4th house). This causes us to measure that feeling with our identity (1st house), then make adjustments if necessary, starting the process over again. Also, we take that feeling in our heart into our relationships with others (5th house).

We also see the evolution of the four Purusarthas through more and more complex issues. For example, Artha escalates from our personal wealth and value (2nd house), to how willing we are to sacrifice our own value and comfort for others (6th house) to how our values impact the world in the highest way (10th house).

I discuss these frameworks at great length in each Bhava description.

1st House — Personal truth — Body, Experience

Keywords: the body, our appearance, our level of presence, our truthful identity and personality, our energy level and vitality.

Seed principle: the physical body and its expression in the world, the appearance, prominent personality traits and attributes, general approach to life.

The body part of the 1st house has to do with the top of the head, which is the source of inspiration. We are meant to follow our own unique, individual course through life and establish our own personal authority based on what is highest and closest to god.

1st house people: you are the 1st house person; relationship partners are a mirror reflection to you (indicated by the 7th house) showing clarity through contrast.

Activities: all activities that occur in the present moment, which may include everything, if we are present to it; the perspective of the subjective self.

Environment: wherever you go, there you are — wherever we find ourselves currently is the 1st house.

Objects: our body and all of its senses and functions, anything in our immediate environment, the aggregate of the now.

Planetary indicators: the Sun and ruling planet (the 1st house ruler) are the planets related to the 1st house. Mercury and Jupiter have directional strength in the 1st house as they allow us to most easily gain wisdom (Jupiter) and adjust (Mercury) to life's experiences.

General Explanation:

The truth of our experience is the greatest teacher in life. That is what makes the 1st house a dharma house of truth. It establishes a physical body and presence for us to gain knowledge and through which to evolve.

The physical body is the only part of us that is present at all times. Every spiritual tradition knows that the main key to entering the kingdom of heaven is to be present in the moment. The constant chattering of the mind, the projection of emotions from the past into the future takes us away from the reality of the moment, which is the highest 1st house experience.

Our body (which includes our mind) contains the cumulative power and wisdom of the entire universe. It is the nexus of wisdom around which everything else in our life revolves. It is the anchor of our existence, taking care of enormously complex processes: from digesting our food, to pumping our blood, to continuously breathing. This is why all spiritual traditions in one way or another emphasize spiritual practices based on being present to the genius of the body.

Everything that we will become will happen as a matter of our real-time experiences through the body/mind/nervous system. The truth of who we are is directly mapped to the truth of what we have experienced. We may have a lot of ideas about who we are, but the truth can be seen in what we have experienced.

We have incarnated in this world of matter and form, and our body is that form. It establishes our present life circumstances, based on the cumulative results of our past karmas. These ever-changing karmic circumstances frame our free will through our current actions as they flow through the body in real time.

Based on the body and physiology we have, a truthful identity develops. This identity should not be confused with the ego. The identity of the 1st house is not the separate/willful identity of the ego; that is the 3rd house. The 1st house is the truthful self. Even painful mistakes and ignorant actions teach us because we are

present to experience the reality of them. That experience occurs through the 1st house.

The 1st house is also the lagna, or rising sign. It relates directly to the eastern horizon at the moment of birth, as the Earth was turning. The traits of this sign show our truthful identity in this lifetime (the Sun gives us our “non-embodied” truthful identity). It is from the 1st house that we come to know the most important qualities of any individual, and their main orientations in life.

Difficulties: Poor health and a weak constitution are some of the most immediate and urgent 1st house problems. When we are ill, it consumes so much of our mind. In a more abstract sense, the 1st house is our truthful identity. Losing ourselves in the interpretation and definition of others is one of the biggest 1st house crises. Losing ourselves to the many roles we must play, “this one’s father,” “this one’s son,” “this one’s employee” etc. is 1st house darkness.

The level of presence and intention we bring to each moment — one after the next — is the 1st house. A dull awareness or distracted individual is also trouble in the 1st house as we will not be present to our experiences.

Evolutionary process: “identification with the physical body and its power leads to expressing a strong, unique personality and identity toward others, which leads to seeing oneself as a creature of spirit, not of form or emotion.”

2nd House — Personal Value — Possessions and Money

Keywords: wealth, sustenance, values, self-esteem, our immediate environment, childhood, security, stability and structure.

Seed principle: actions of the physical body have results in the 2nd house; self-worth, money, speech, physical enjoyment through the senses and close friends; what we value the most.

The body part associated with the 2nd house is the face, the sense organs and in particular the mouth. What goes into our mouth and what comes out of our mouth directly correlates to our level of self-esteem. For instance, our diet generally improves as our values and sense of self-worth improves. We realize

we get so much more value out of life and can contribute so much more when our diet and routines improve.

Also, we realize what comes out of our mouth; our words have the potential to add value and meaning to our life and to the lives of others.

2nd house people: our family and close personal friends, people who affirm our values and are a reflection of them. As our values change and evolve we may outgrow the values of our past. Our blood family members may fall by the wayside and an alternative family grows — one that we have chosen in this lifetime.

Activities: activities that give us pleasure in the moment and make us feel connected; eating, talking, and socializing with relatives and friends.

Environment: our home or any place where we feel at home; the local bar where we feel safe, the spiritual center, or our cubicle at work that we have decorated and “made our own.”

Objects: clothes, jewelry, things that we collect and like to have around us, possessions themselves are related to the 2nd house; things that reflect our values and give us a sense of connection and identity.

Planetary Indicators: Venus has the most to do with the 2nd house. Venus is indicative of our values, how valued we feel and how much wealth we create based on it. Venus also has to do with our senses. Venus shows the promise of pleasure that begins the entire cycle of value, values, respect and how those things translate into wealth.

General Explanation:

As this is the 1st artha house, our personal values are the things that feed us and that we want next to us. As our values evolve so do the things we consume on all levels. These are all related to the 2nd house. How valued we feel has a lot to do with how much we think we deserve and it has a big impact on our capacity to earn a good living. Our need to grow in wealth and what we value the most is shown here.

We have many preferences, habits, and routines that are an expression of our identity, both who we think we are and how we feel about ourselves. The 2nd house puts our body in an environment of our design — a room with our stuff — our desk at work — designed to make us feel connected to Self.

We will also want to interact with certain types of people who reflect our values and our level of self-worth, namely our friends and family. This is why the 2nd house has to do with speech, communication and finding our voice. Feeling valued begins with valuing others enough to pay attention to what we are communicating to them. So, when we do not value others enough to pay attention to what we say, we devalue ourselves, and others stop listening to us.

As our values improve, our speech improves and we do not curse or speak harshly or angrily. Then we will also attract more “high value” people into our sphere. This translates into a better job and more money.

The 2nd house is the real bedrock of our existence. It is the stability and structure through which we live our life. This house also has to do with our past conditioning. It relates to the deep bonds of family and personal commitments we have made that do not change quickly. In many ways it shows the cumulative result of the things we have made a personal commitment to, and the deep grooves they have left in our life and our immediate environment.

We are hesitant to let others into our environment. We are reluctant to allow them to see us that deeply because rejection on that level makes us question our very identity.

The 2nd house is where we see the issue of self-worth playing out in someone’s life. Based on how we feel about ourselves, we ask for a certain wage from our job and expect a certain level of self-respect from others. This level of self-respect will also be a standard that we express through our speech, our diet, and our clothes and sense of style. As our identity evolves, these things will change.

Growing up, we inherited the values of our childhood. Our identity and values are an expression of how we were raised. As we get older, our true identity becomes clearer to us and our values change. The people in our life also change. We develop our own set of values and shed the values of our past that no longer apply.

Difficulties: 2nd house difficulties have to do with self-destructive patterns of consumption, low self-esteem, poor values, poor communication skills, staying

stuck in the past and being attached to negative family impressions and roles. All of these are related, and they tend to build on each other.

In particular, we can see how poor upbringing can lead to a negative self-image. This leads to poor eating habits, and often smoking and drinking. These behaviors lead to a generally unhappy feeling, which reaffirms a poor sense of self-worth. With poor self-esteem, we will not seek a high salary or perform the types of duties that would elevate our values, thus leading us into a destructive cycle of stagnation.

Staying stuck in the negative feedback loop of our poor childhood is mainly related to this house. Conversely, growing beyond the negative programming is the evolution of the 2nd house.

Evolutionary process: “a value system based on material wealth leads us to values based on social pressures and other people, which leads to the realization that true stability and our most vital asset is wisdom.”

3rd House — Personal Happiness — Interests and Skills

Keywords: siblings, self-will, power and prowess, lust, acquaintances, motivation, hobbies and interests, impulses and intentions that drive us, curiosity, rashness, displays of force, courage.

Seed principle: the source of our individual, self-willed actions and interests come through the 3rd house. Here our curious, individualized mind competes over ideas and develops strength, personal ingenuity and courage.

The body parts associated with the 3rd house are the neck, arms, shoulders and hands. This is the area of life where we are flexible and make adjustments. We turn our head from side to side and consider life’s many options in the 3rd house. Based on what we see, we reach out into the world and grasp something for ourselves. We experiment and play in order to develop skill. This is the nature of the 3rd house.

3rd house people include: siblings, coworkers, other individual peers, a fellow manager at work, or a fellow student in the same class. It is with these people

that we test our ideas, compete, and determine who is an ally and who may be an enemy.

Activities: writing, athletics, games; fun and stimulating activities, pursuing our personal desires. The 3rd house has to do with the initial stages of learning, where our curiosity pulls us into something new, novel and exciting. We have many interests, and many people we learn with along the way.

Environment: places where we have fun in pursuit of things we enjoy for ourselves, regardless of what anyone thinks of it; a workshop, a casino, a boudoir, an athletics field, a classroom, a bar, or any place where you have a good time.

Objects: computer, pen, video game console, weight lifting equipment, karaoke machine, and most electronic gadgets are 3rd house objects.

Planetary indicators: Mercury and Mars are the main planetary indicators of the 3rd house. Mercury has to do with curiosity and communication. Mars has to do with competition and aggression.

General Explanation:

As the expression of personal desires, the 3rd house shows the things we really enjoy doing. As the 1st kama house, there is a certain raucous, animalistic, sibling energy to it. Arguments are a part of this area of life, yet there is a stimulated, challenging, excitable and unpredictable quality to it.

Our values lead us to explore certain interests. This is where we grow, explore, test and develop these interests.

Our curious, individualized mind competes over ideas and tries things that we know may be “wrong.” In the 3rd house, we need to find the answers on our own and rebel against convention and family. We are developing ingenuity and courage, which includes the courage to act and think independently.

We must exert ourselves in order to establish boundaries, to grow and flourish; test our beliefs and experiment. Yet the 3rd house is limited. There is no grace flowing here. There is no higher wisdom beyond satisfying the desires or winning the battle of the moment, or understanding some attribute of the limited world. There is only so much we are able to accomplish or understand based on our own individual efforts. It takes God’s grace to make all actions complete.

The 3rd house is the most egoistic house in the astrology chart. This is where we are establishing a healthy ego so we can trust that we are not going to be abused by ideas or physicality. Understanding the nature of our separate self has to do with understanding the deeper lessons of the 3rd house.

The ego is the agency through which our separate, corporeal existence here on Earth must operate and function. We need to protect ourselves physically and intellectually. We need courage and intelligence to move through the world and to figure things out for ourselves. However, if this is taken to be an end in itself rather than a means to an end, there will be immense suffering.

The 3rd house gets us involved with competitors and those against whom we test ourselves. This is why the 3rd house is related to siblings. Our siblings and other equals are those with whom we must battle and compete.

The courageous exertion of intelligence and experimentation of the 3rd house develops our values and value systems beyond the entrenched habits of the past. This is where we learn relentless independence, which gives us the confidence to take care of ourselves in the world. But this is also the place of personal selfishness, lust and aggression.

Difficulties: 3rd house difficulties mainly have to do with over-asserting our ego and general selfishness. No one wants to be controlled by others. It is the 3rd house part of us that rebels and pushes back.

The 3rd house is also very lustful and selfish sexually. It is here that we want to satiate our personal desires. All types of stimulation are 3rd house in nature. The fastest way to get someone angry is to deprive him or her of pleasure or happiness or challenge their freedom to do what they want. Both of these things are related to the 3rd house.

Although it is important for us to figure things out for ourselves, the limited nature of the world and our desires makes the 3rd house one of the most painful lessons to learn.

Evolutionary process: “an amoral and stimulated posture leads to battling and competing with others in order to fulfill our desires, which leads to the courage to pursue and experience the truth.”

4th House — Personal Peace — Emotions and Feeling

Keywords: mother, emotions, our feeling potential, peace and happiness, property, upbringing, education, popularity, vehicles, what is internal and private, where we are most sensitive and most easily hurt.

Seed principle: emotional strength and the need for peace, the sensitive nature in our heart where we are easily wounded and always protective, where we feel personally vulnerable; the realm of innocent feeling.

The body parts associated with the 4th house are the chest and breasts. This is the heart region in our body, which also contains our lungs. The heart and lungs are our connection to the life force itself, the blood and breath of our existence. It is our personal connection to the depth of our being and the fertile field of consciousness itself; the creative principle of our mind.

4th house people: mother and other nurturers, those who take care of us, and who comfort us, those whom we comfort and nurture, including pets.

Activities: things we do to calm our emotional state, connecting with others emotionally, meditation, serving food, cooking, going to therapy, watching TV to be happy.

Environment: the home, the kitchen, a restaurant, a spa, a counselor's office, the living room, any place designed to nurture us and make us feel good.

Objects: our house, car, furniture, television, and other things that give comfort and relaxation.

Planetary indicators: the Moon is indicative of the 4th house because it shows our emotional environment based on what we have received: our defense mechanisms, vulnerabilities and the deepest parts of our psyche reside here. Here, we need to feel peaceful and settled.

General Explanation:

When there is pain in our heart, we don't know what to do to feel better. We may try to cover this feeling with external stimulation, but eventually we have to face

our feelings and ultimately we are compelled to change the activities that are disturbing us emotionally.

The 4th house is important because it shows what is anchoring us emotionally. It shows the deep roots from which everything grows in our life. Astronomically it is the place directly below us; the deepest point in the chart.

The interests and activities of the 3rd house lead to the 4th house; the level of peace and fulfillment we have in our heart. As the 1st moksha house, it is where we as individuals wish to be peaceful and clear-minded. It is where we get away from the activity and stimulation of the world. Though we may forget, our true nature is not stimulated or active. It is peaceful and at rest all the time. The 4th house is a place of rest and rejuvenation related to places of sanctuary: our home, car, and ultimately our inner self and heart. Beyond the external sanctuary of the house, there is meditation — the inner sanctuary that is always there and available to us. The 4th house is the main house of meditation.

Our identity, values, and our interests lead to an inner environment that feels a certain way. The deeper, feeling nature of the 4th house is what we would call our “intuition.” However, it is often experienced as emotion, which is the feeling nature mixed with desires and the stimulation of the world. Trying to calm our emotions and return to a state of peace is the work of the 4th house.

The quality of nurturing we have received from our childhood has a lot to do with this area of life. We read the quality of the mother’s love and emotional safety from the 4th house as well.

Difficulties: 4th house difficulties revolve around excessive emotions and sentimentality. In many ways, the purity of the 4th house is one of the most elusive. We are hardly ever settled psychologically. Rarely are we connected to the silent intuition that is our true nature. We usually experience the 4th house through the emotions, which are our feelings in a disturbed, restless state.

In fact, many astrology teachers call the 4th house “the house of emotions” as if feelings and emotions are the same thing. They are not. Emotions are our feeling nature mixed with our fears, desires, and all of the external things that we hope will make us peaceful internally.

If our main nurturers placed emotional pressure or conditions on us, or were angry and critical of us, the 4th house areas of life will tend to be very turbulent. Given the sensitive nature of our feelings, difficulties in the 4th house can be very hard to undo.

Evolutionary process: “a state of emotional self-absorption leads to the desire to nurture and feed others emotionally, which leads to the capacity to merge with cosmic love.”

Overview of Houses 1-4 (The Personal Houses)

These houses provide a structure for the evolution of our personal self by:

Giving us a physical body, presence and identity is the 1st house.

That physical body gathers things and develops certain habits that are based on what we find most meaningful and valuable in the 2nd house.

Based on those values, new interests and ideas are explored with deeper levels of courage and self-will in the 3rd house.

This activity creates an emotional environment, which leads to feeling and intuition of the heart in the 4th house.

A self-evolving/self-correcting process leads forward in sequence from the 1st to the 4th house, but also backwards from the 4th to the 1st house.

Activities and interests that disturb our fragile emotional/intuitive environment (4th house) lead to changes in our interests (3rd house), which lead to changes in our values; how we spend our money and what we keep around us (2nd house). This leads to a change in where we take our physical body, where we focus our presence, and ultimately who we are (1st house).

The evolutionary process of personal identity is shown by houses one through four and continues throughout our life as we unfold deeper and deeper levels of personal self-awareness. We take this level of personal self-awareness into our interactions with others through the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th houses.

5th House — Relational Intelligence — Power of Love

Keywords: children and all creative expressions, our heart’s desire, intelligence, education, speculation, romance, spiritual practices, luck.

Seed principle: the expansive, creative power of love, children, education, spiritual practices and the discrimination of the real from the unreal. As a dharmic house, the 5th house shows our desire to evolve creatively to fulfill our destiny.

The body part of the 5th house is associated with the stomach, that place where we are nourished, and from which we create everything. Feeling full, creative and content with life.

5th house people: children, students, creative partners, romantic partners, artists, stockbrokers, and others whom we really love and admire, growth of all sorts and the power of what we love the most to expand us and connect us to others.

Activities: expressing our heart's desire, teaching or learning what we love, creating art, courting the one we love, piano lessons, giving an astrology reading or a healing session.

Environment: the classroom, the recording studio, the floor of the stock exchange (where we grow our money), a child's music recital, art studio, place of worship.

Objects: things that help us grow and connect to the things we love; sacred books, prayer beads, musical instruments, art supplies, religious statues, bingo cards.

Planetary indicators: Jupiter is the main indicator of the 5th house as Jupiter shows things that grow and expand us. Jupiter shows the generous, gracious nature we step into when connected to the things that we love the most.

General Explanation:

The 5th house shows our biggest loves; for example: our children and the things we create based on the love we have for them. The pursuit and development of whatever is in our heart (4th house), is the 5th house.

As the 2nd dharma house, it shows the power of true love to expand our perception. It teaches us that we are more than just isolated individuals in this world. The interests from the 3rd house become deep knowledge in the 5th house. Any subject we explore authentically through love and devotion leads to the source of all knowledge and connects us to the universal being residing inside ourselves.

The deepest principle of the 5th house shows how we are always creating something based on our heart's desire. The 5th house shows that thing we can't stop thinking about. For many of us it's our children. But it may also be our art

or our spiritual teacher, or perhaps the darker side of our nature. If we love our darkness and our story of failure above everything else, then that is what we will create.

Perhaps the most fulfilling things in life are related to the 5th house. We become gracious and expanded through the power of love and inspiration of our heart to greatness. Children, romantic partners, works of art and creativity are all ways that the individual mind connects with the creative life force in the 5th house, the place of our deepest intelligence.

Difficulties: 5th house difficulty mainly revolves around taking pride in those things we love a great deal, like a parent who never stops talking about how great their child is. Everyone's child is great. Yet, in truth, we are overly romantic about our children, and the things of the 5th house. This is because the 5th house is our heart's desire. We just love it so much.

The "soul mate obsession" also comes from the 5th house and can create difficulty in our actual relationships, which are more about compromise and sharing than about romance.

Not following our heart's desire is often the problem with the 5th house. There can be deep suffering when we neglect the love and joy in our heart, due to a lack of confidence or another negative habit.

In general, the 5th house is one of the most fulfilling areas of life. There are not many downsides to it.

Evolutionary process: "material creativity through wealth and children leads to emotional creativity through romance or artistic pursuits, which leads to spiritual creativity leading to discrimination and intelligence."

6th House — Relational Values — Capacity for Sacrifice

Keywords: the unpleasantness of life, health and disease, immune system, work and service, foreigners, yoga, effort, our capacity to do hard labor, vanquish enemies and overcome obstacles.

Seed Principle: the drudgery of life, what we must do to maintain the things we want, managing daily routines and sacrificing momentary happiness for

something more worthwhile, work and effort we must expend (usually through connection to other people) if we are to manifest the things we want.

The body part associated with the 6th house is the intestines. The busy work of extracting and distributing the proper nutrients from our food to the different cells in our body comes from the intestines. They consume much of the body's energy and are known in Ayurveda to be the main key to our overall health.

6th house people: competitors, those who want some of what we have or who have some of what we want; the bill collector, distant relatives, our employees, those who work for us, those we control or serve, including pets.

Activities: paying bills, performing menial, unrewarding tasks (whatever that means to the individual), spending money (not as investment), dieting, sacrificing happiness in the moment for something bigger (service), fighting and arguing.

Environment: accountant's office, on your knees in the bathroom cleaning the toilet, bathtub and sink, the doctor's office, veterinarian's office, a service or labor-oriented job, a job we don't like doing.

Objects: vacuum cleaner, cleaning supplies and disinfectant, soiled diapers, broom, medicine.

Planetary indicators: Saturn and Mars are the main indicators of the 6th house. Saturn indicates menial tasks we must perform. Mars indicates competitors and unpleasantness we must overcome.

General Explanation:

The love and creativity of the 5th house produces many things that we want; yet those things require our attention and maintenance from day to day. The child we produce in the 5th house brings a lot of work that we must do in the 6th house. Difficulties happen in the 6th house once we start to resent the work we must do in order to maintain the things we have. Those resentments will produce strong opinions, likes and dislikes, and competitors. This is when we start to make enemies, accumulate debts and health problems, and we are prompted to exercise discipline.

When we surmount resistance to the drudgery of life, and we are willing to do what it takes to succeed without the expectation of enjoyment, we are manifesting the highest aim of the 6th house. What we love the most creates the most work. We must be willing to serve what we want to grow, rather than resent all the work it takes.

In this way, when we love liberation and truth the most, the 6th house becomes a great house of service and karma yoga. But there is a lot of ego attachment with 6th house activities because they protect us, especially our physical health. Problems occur with 6th house matters mainly through avoidance. We want to enjoy everything in life, but there is no enjoyment of 6th house matters — so we avoid them, creating bigger problems later, like health problems.

It is best to see 6th house tasks as things that add value (2nd house) to the things we love (from the 5th house). We love that child, but we don't love changing diapers. We love creating art, but it takes work, money and sacrifice. We would all love to make a living pursuing our hearts desire, but there's a lot of competition, sacrifice and training involved. When we handle these things with grace, we flourish. When we don't, we fail ourselves, lose to our enemies, and may bring about disease and health problems as a result.

Difficulties: Avoiding, problems rather than facing them is the biggest difficulty of the sixth house. Everything of value and meaning requires effort and sacrifice. Our ability to make this sacrifice is shown by a strong sixth house. We are never going to enjoy paying our bills, changing our child's diapers, brushing our teeth, in and of themselves. We do these things because we want something bigger, such as a house to live in with electricity, a happy child, and teeth to chew our food.

When we are dedicated to something higher than our own happiness, the sacrifices of the six house are not so difficult. But when we are looking to just fulfill our own desires, sixth house problems tend to destroy.

Evolutionary process: “the neglect of, or attachment to our daily physical routines leads us to struggling and battling against others and the hard work we must do, which leads to a dignified acceptance to serve something higher in our life.”

7th House — Relationship Desire — Sharing and Equality

Keywords: being opposite the ascendant, it shows intense interactions where there is mutual benefit and mutual need; long-term romantic relationships, general relations with others, business associates.

Seed Principle: our sense of self is at its lowest and our desires are high in this 2nd kama house; this is where we learn to compromise, deal with marriage partners and business associates, agreements with others, negotiation and playing fair, and giving up some of what we want in order to get something better.

The body part associated with the 7th house is the sacrum/lower pelvic area. It is this part of the body where the beautiful, sacred and the profane mix effortlessly. It contains the colon, where waste product is excreted and also the most sexually attractive area of the body. It also contains the sacrum, which is the seat of the kundalini and the higher conscious potential of human beings.

7th house people: romantic partners, and other people with whom we are in partnership, the strong needs and desires we want to fulfill with another, and the needs they want to fulfill with us.

Activities: sexual relations, business negotiations, diplomacy, enjoyable conversations with others, debates, respecting others' points of view, tolerance

Environment: the bedroom, the boardroom, the meeting room.

Objects: wedding rings, business contracts, mirrors, scales.

Planetary indicators: Venus is the strongest indicator of 7th house things. Venus is the energy that governs adult relationships, showing how we must navigate situations where mutual needs and desires are negotiated and at stake.

General Explanation:

The highly desiring nature of the 7th house is the glue that keeps us returning time and time again to face the opposite parts of ourselves represented by a committed, romantic partner, and others in general.

The 7th house is the furthest thing from us astrologically and in many ways represents our least integrated qualities — the things that feel the most unnatural to us. Coming face-to-face with our opposite, yet wanting to fulfill our desires, creates a bond that is not as easy as others to break. The desires of the 7th house are not exclusively sexual or romantic; they are also related to business and any situation where two people have an equal investment in each other.

The fallacy of romantic relationships, for example, is the idea that they are based on “selfless love.” This is not the case. Selfless love comes from the parent/child relationship, as we want nothing from the child. However, 7th house relationships are agreements we cannot overlook; our needs and desires as well as the needs and desires of another individual must be mutually fulfilled if we are to succeed — in our marriage or business, etc. To overlook either one would undermine the mutual goal.

The 7th house is the house where we begin as individuals to work on themes larger than our own personal happiness. For many of us, our desires and attachments with other people are where most of our life energy is spent and deepest attachments are formed. For this reason, the 7th house is also a “death” house (called a “Maraka”). Yoga teaches that our life energy mainly flows out through the sex center; that is why practices that cultivate higher awareness are often accompanied by “Brahmacharya” (celibacy). Sexual energy transformed and elevated results in kundalini awakenings.

But few things feel more rewarding than 7th house matters to bring about personal growth and eventually spiritual growth.

Difficulties: The inability to compromise, play fairly, and honor the autonomy of others is the biggest difficulty of the seventh house. Adult relationships flourish when there is equality and a willingness to stay engaged with another, rather than dominate them. The 7th is also a house of extremes. In order to get what we want we may sacrifice our principles to please another, in the moment. But eventually our principles will assert themselves willfully, as the other extreme.

Understanding our own “no compromise zones” and respecting another’s not only benefits our romantic relationships, but also our business partnerships and all interactions with adults.

Evolutionary process: “self-gratification through sexual desire and stimulation leads to the push and pull of self-willed romantic struggles, which leads to a

detached compromise with others.”

8th House — Relationship Freedom — Facing Fears

Keywords: transformation through difficulties, things breaking, destruction, dissolution, vulnerability, death, the occult, dark or hidden side of life, longevity, research, confronting our mortality.

Seed principle: Parashara calls this bhava the “cavity or flaw”: transforming insecurities into strengths, it is where we are faced with our mortality and endings, our insecurities in the face of another and our neediness and fears. The changes we undergo through the 8th house compel us to look more deeply into the hidden parts of our self and explore life.

The body part associated with the 8th house is the genitals, as the 8th house is where we feel the most vulnerable and exposed, yet it is these organs that create life itself. In many ways, the life we are creating emanates from the depth of our fear and insecurities, and the capacity to transform them into strengths.

8th house people: those we are afraid of losing, those we fear in general, a killer, those we cannot control, the astrologer, the hypnotist, the therapist, the insurance agent.

Activities: strengthening our insecurities and facing life’s deeper mysteries, hypnotherapy, counseling, exorcism, transformative work of any type, death.

Environment: mortuary, graveyard, bankruptcy court, disaster zone, dungeons, dark places, the office of the counselor, psychic or astrologer.

Objects: weapons and other dangerous things, tarot cards, astrology charts, insurance policies, inheritance.

Planetary indicators: Saturn is the indicator of the 8th house because he shows loss and the need to take things seriously and be careful.

General Explanation:

The hidden, shocking, scandalous, deceptive and unexpected events in life come through the 8th house. It’s related to endings, weakness and our deepest fears. It

is the 2nd moksha house and shows where we seek freedom through another person and also freedom from the influence of other people in general.

This is a deeply creative house if we have the courage to face its issues. 8th house trouble will relieve us of our attachments in one-way or another, either painfully or with ease. A person's deepest mistakes and darkest secrets can be seen here. Ultimately, how we handle the 8th house shows how much we grow in life — how much we mature — and how much our personal philosophy will be informed by wisdom and insight.

In many ways this house is the repository of our maturity around other people. It shows our maturity around death and loss. It shows our maturity around relationships. It reveals the shadow issues such as jealousy and fear. It also shows how we respond to these vulnerabilities. For instance: deceit, lying, treachery, murder and many of the darker parts of our psyche have their origin in the 8th house.

For many of us, our deepest illusions come through other people. Those illusions are shattered in the 8th house. Remaining childish at this stage can be very costly. When the illusions of relationship wear off and the truth of impermanence is revealed, it shows the manner in which we respond.

Difficulties: The inability to face our fears and be mature about life is the biggest difficulty of the eight house. As the song says “no one gets out alive”, and we already know that. How we handle our own mortality, and the things we cannot control, is one of the most important aspects of our life and shown by the 8th house.

Trying to maintain a feeble control over outer circumstances leads to enormous stress and irrational fears of the eighth house. When we embrace the uncertainty in life, rather than trying to control it, a deep inner peace and maturity arises from the irrational fears of the eighth house.

Evolutionary process: “Avoidance, denial and efforts to control our fears, leads to a measured and realistic exploration of life’s mysteries, which leads to penetrating wisdom and mastery over our fears and death itself.”

Overview of Houses 5-8

Houses 5 through 8 provide a structure for the evolution of our emotional self, mainly in relationship to others. The highest truth of our relationship with others

and our creative self comes through the 5th house of children and creativity. This creates a lot of work and requires the intensive efforts of the 6th house. Based on our willingness to serve those things we love, we may fulfill the highest desires of the 7th house in relationships and business. Those deep desires and sentiments with others result in our fears, insecurities, jealousies and losses in the 8th house, which also leads to the next phase of growth — universalizing our consciousness.

A self-evolving/self-correcting process leads forward from the 5th house through the 8th, but also backwards from the 8th to the 5th. The things we love (5th house) create the most work and the most sacrifice and effort (6th house). Our willingness to do that work connects us with the people we desire (7th house). The intense mutual needs of these interactions awaken our deepest fears, vulnerabilities and stresses (8th house).

Faced with such fear and vulnerability, (8th house) we hesitate before getting involved with others (7th house). This hesitation forces us to be more careful in battle and more willing to serve than win (6th house). This willingness to serve evokes a higher sense of who we are in relation to others, and shows us that we are all children of god (5th house).

This evolutionary process moving from the 5th through the 8th house continues throughout our life, as we unfold deeper and deeper levels of awareness with our emotions and others. Based on this level of awareness, we are led to interact in a more universal way.

9th House — Universal Intelligence — Highest Truth

Keywords: religious, philosophical or ethical principles, grace, life purpose, highest principles operating in the world; shaping our life events, or their inability to do so.

Seed principle: our capacity to be open to the flow of god's grace, luck, wealth, spiritual values and teachers, our ability or inability to recognize a good teaching.

The body part associated with the 9th house is the buttocks and back of the thigh muscles. It is our buttocks that allow human beings to run long distances, in

order to reach the goal.

9th house people: fathers, teachers, priests, lawyers, advisors, gurus and experts of any sort.

Activities: teaching, leading seminars, learning from teachers, discussing philosophy, preaching, leading others toward truth and righteousness, chanting mantras, making sacred offerings.

Environment: classroom, church, ashram, courtroom, yajnashala (place of sacred/ceremonial fire), any learning or sacred environment or situation and the authority and reverence it implies.

Objects: pulpit, podium, chalkboard/whiteboard, and sacred objects such as conch shells, incense, and flowers used for worship

Planetary Indicators: Jupiter is the indicator of 9th house activities as he shows a sense of righteousness, meaning and purpose.

General Explanation:

As the 3rd dharma house, it shows how our highest ideal informs our life and that of those around us. Our highest principles shape our world, and those influences are the 9th house.

The level of truth that comes through the 9th house is not personal, or related to other people or our own emotions. It is the relationship we have with the continuum of lifetimes, our higher ethical values and what the nature of dharma is. It comes after the 8th house, where we must face our mortality and realize that we have no control. The painful awareness, and even terror, of the 8th house compels us to seek the highest answers to the deepest and most disturbing questions.

For many people, 9th house issues take the form of religion, or some other belief. We all have some answer about why we are here and what it all means. Those answers and philosophies come through the 9th house.

Difficulties with 9th house matters or with the 9th house ruler in an astrology chart indicate a perverted sense of meaning. For instance, terrorism and spiritual renunciation are both related to the 9th house. Both of them show a certain action based on a sense of righteousness. It is best to think of the 9th house as our sense

of meaning and source of hope to continue another day. The deepest crises of the 9th house lead us to things such as suicide or total despondency, when we have no answer or no hope.

Difficulties: Excessive dogmatism and religious fervor is the main difficulty with the ninth house. Having faith in our teachers is important, but if we lack critical thinking it may simply be blind faith. This is not only damaging to us, but also leads to intolerant, fundamentalist thinking. All types of oppressive, fanatical organizations, be they political or religious, have a dysfunctional ninth house quality to them.

When authentic spiritual practice is sacrificed for simplistic worship we run the risk of becoming disconnected from the diversity of humanity.

Evolutionary Principle: “Where philosophical orthodoxy leads to having tolerance for all religious paths and man-made laws, which leads to the pursuit of answering life’s ultimate questions.”

10th House: Universal Values — Highest Impact

Keywords: career, public status, material achievement, skill, success, ability to affect the world, politics.

Seed principle: the power of our reputation and influence, our willingness to take responsibility and our capacity to handle pressure; this power is conferred to us from others and gives us the ability to impact the world.

The body part associated with the 10th house is the knee and front of the thigh. This part of the body shows both support and constant motion. These things together allow us to handle pressure and move and adapt to what comes our way. It is a very fragile and complicated part of the body; one wrong move can undo the entire structure.

10th house people: your boss, the president, your father (as an authority with power), leaders, and powerful people.

Activities: leading, doing your job or duty, meeting your obligations regardless of how you feel about them, handling public pressure, delegating tasks to others,

giving a presentation, enduring public discord or disgrace.

Environment: the workplace, the public eye, the center of attention, the government, places of business and finance, banks.

Objects: your desk or office, your reputation, status symbols, assets, the praise or censure of others.

Planetary indicators: the Sun and Saturn are the main planetary indicators for the 10th house. They are the main indicators of responsibility and handling pressure. The Sun takes responsibility because of all of the good we can accomplish with our power. Saturn takes responsibility to avoid difficulty in the future by building a powerful structure that will withstand the pressure of time.

General Explanation:

The 10th house will show the capacity of our actions to affect the world. As the 3rd artha house, the 10th house shows how our values can make a difference, and how we would like them to make a difference. Often it is relegated to just the career or job, but it does not always translate this way. For example, you may see a woman's 10th house related to raising children.

As our values change and evolve, so does our relationship with a job or a career. If our highest value is "feeding our family", then we may sacrifice a career (and the education it requires, etc.) in order to just get a job to make ends meet.

As our values change and develop, we would like those values to impact the world in a bigger way. Also if our personal values are out of alignment with the things we need to do to make money, there will be an inner conflict.

The 10th house is called the "karma" house, the action house. It shows how our actions impact the world, and the value to the world from our actions. These actions and impact return to us in the form of our reputation, which is conferred to us by others. This reputation gives us more and more potential to affect the world and earn more money as we create more value for others.

The 10th house shows our capacity to handle pressure and responsibility and our willingness to step into our highest duties, which should be based on our highest teachings if we are to ultimately be fulfilled.

Difficulties: Excessive power seeking and dominance over others is the biggest difficulty of the 10th house. When we seek name, fame and recognition in and of itself, disconnected to any larger purpose, we can get into situations where the ends justify the means, as long as we win. Most abuses of power are rooted in the dysfunctional qualities of the 10th house.

At best, our duties and responsibilities are merely the most visible expression of our core values and beliefs. At worst, we lose our core principles and values in the quest of fame and power

Evolutionary Principle: “excessive attachment to our status and reputation leads to a typical cycle of worldly achievement and pride in our accomplishments, which leads us to our highest values that are oriented toward humility and service.”

The 11th House — Universal Desires — Highest Wishes

Keywords: our highest aspirations and goals, financial and material gains, older siblings, large groups of people, our peers, impulse, abundance and excess; where we expand in life, our last desire.

Seed Principle: our highest ambitions for the world, including wanting to save it, what we desire in the highest sense, the soul becoming universalized.

The body part associated with the 11th house is the shins, existing between two flexible joints as a straight and solid bone. The 11th house exists between the 10th and the 12th house, two places of enormous change. The 11th house is the enduring, universal nature of the world and our need to stand tall in it, amidst the great pressures of life and ultimate transformations.

11th house people: public figures and public servants, politicians, celebrities, famous people, highly successful and/or wealthy people, highly ambitious and motivated people.

Activities: accumulations and money, winning, affecting large groups of people, saving the world.

Environment: the community, the world stage, a large gathering with people in “your clan,” such as at church, a convention, a rally.

Objects: lottery tickets, yachts and big things, anything in excess, trusts and heirlooms.

Planetary Indicators: Jupiter (large things, hopes) and Saturn (enduring things and ideas) are the planetary indicators of the 11th house.

General Explanation:

Through associations with large groups of people we compare ourselves, compelled to either serve them or defeat them, depending on our level of awareness.

Until our highest desires are fulfilled, we will keep incarnating into form. The 11th house is the place where our highest individual and collective inspirations are becoming universalized. This underscores the hope and disappointment cycle. It teaches us how our imagination gravitates toward “... one day.” We all hold out the dream of “... one day,” and how great things will be. But this is just a way to avoid the moment we are living in right now.

Once that “...one day” arrives, and it’s not what we thought, we are still stuck with ourselves. And yet, so much stress and effort has been put forth to arrive there. This hope and eventual disappointment with the world teaches us the nature of something beyond our individual accomplishments and hopes: our collective duties and responsibilities.

In this way the 11th house is also the highest house of service, where our individual effort and energy is put forth toward something bigger than ourselves, something more lasting than what our limited time can provide. This highest quality of the 11th house is what eventually leads very wealthy and successful people into altruism. They came and they conquered. Now it is time to give back to something larger than themselves and their limited desire to win.

Difficulties: There is a ruthless excess and desire for accumulation that is seen in the 11th house. With every new level of success there is an accompanying level of disappointment, then the bar gets reset to a higher position. The only lasting satisfaction we get from 11th house is when we serve something other than our own personal pleasure. Our highest desires leading to our deepest

disappointments transform the 11th house, and show us that nothing of this world is ultimately satisfying.

We keep reincarnating to satisfy our highest desires, as shown by the 11th house. This even includes the desire to save the world.

Evolutionary Principle: “the highly stimulated, lustful and ruthless quest to succeed leads to the typical give-and-take ambition/ disappointment cycle of growth, which leads to a path of dignified service through the realization that individual achievements are ultimately fruitless.”

12th House: Universal Freedom — Letting go

Keywords: our subconscious and hidden nature; it is the house of loss, liberation, isolation and decrease; wastage of energy is observed here, foreign journeys, isolated through sorrow or peace.

Seed Principle: where we must let go of things and learn to be alone, everything is temporary in life; it will change and we will lose everything eventually; it is through the 12th house that we lose things and must remain with the only thing that can never be taken away.

The body part associated with the 12th house is the feet and ankles. It is the feet upon which we stand, that touch the Earth, the source of our body and life on Earth. As such, our entire life on Earth is the result of our past lives and karmic choices. Our connection to the continuum of lives gives us a direction, or makes us directionless — as shown by the feet.

12th house people: a person in a dream, a fantasy person, a ghost, a baby in utero, a prisoner, someone incapacitated (such as in a hospital).

Activities: sleeping, dreaming, meditating, escaping from “reality,” taking drugs, watching TV, traveling to a foreign country.

Environment: foreign countries, hospitals, ashrams, opium dens, crack houses, the bardo (gap between lives), vacation.

Objects: drugs, sacred statues, crack pipe, meditation cushion, an airplane ticket.

Planetary indicators: Saturn as the indicator of solitude, stillness and letting go of things, and Ketu as the part of us that is not of this world. Rahu is also connected to the 12th house, as he has to do with foreign things.

General Explanation:

The 12th house exists before the 1st house, showing how there is a ‘prequel’ to our physical activities. Examples include: the dream state, in utero state, between lives, being in prison, meditation, as well as all states of existence where our physical activity is curtailed or negated.

Of the 12 houses, the 12th house is one of the most mysterious to talk about or think about because we are so rarely present to its truth. The dream state is a receptive, inactive state of mind or awareness. The between life state is another example, as is the in utero state. The 12th house exists before our physical identity, autonomy and presence.

It is a place of rejuvenation associated with cocooning, and the rebirth/metamorphosis process. All of this sounds interesting, but the way we usually experience the 12th house in real terms is through loss. If it’s not directly through loss, then it is letting go of things either willingly through surrender, or due to inattention, apathy, and neglect. For instance, if Venus, who is the indicator of relationships, enters the 12th house, we may neglect partners and have a hard time giving them attention.

The 12th house is the last house of “liberation,” showing where eventually we will be liberated of everything — we will lose everything. “Everyone wants to go to heaven, but no one wants to die,” could be the motto of the 12th house. Liberation sounds great, but as soon as we start losing things it feels painful.

Difficulties: Confusion, apathy and escapism are big problems in the 12th house. What we do when no one is looking has a lot to do with how much energy and focus we have. Instead of “tuning in” to our true self,(through meditation for example), we “tune out” and escape through distraction, entertainment or intoxicants.

We only have so much time and attention here on earth. We waste a lot of that time and attention through fantasizing and “checking out” in the 12th house. We

may check out from our partners, our career, our money or even ourselves.

Evolutionary Principle: “the highly stimulated, lustful and ruthless quest to succeed leads to the typical give-and-take ambition/ disappointment cycle of growth, which leads to a path of dignified service through the realization that individual achievements are ultimately fruitless”

Overview of Houses 9-12

Houses 9 through 12 provide a structure for the evolution of our higher sensibilities. These houses eventually empower us to desire transcendence from this physical plane entirely. The 9th house connects us with higher truths and teachings, giving us hope and inspiration. This leads to the potential that our highest value in life will be those teachings that shape our impact on the world in the 10th house. Based on that capacity to impact the world, and that reputation, we have ambitions, desires and goals in the 11th house. Ultimately we come to a point of futility with the world and our external goals, realizing the need to let go of it all at some point; the 12th house of loss and liberation.

A self-evolving/self-correcting process leads forward from the 9th to the 12th house, but also backwards from 12 to 9. The 9th house begins with the teachings of our family, in particular those of our father and his influence. Based on his teachings we have a certain amount of power to act and a sense of confidence and responsibility in our young life. This leads us to have certain ambitions, but eventually those things create disappointments in the 12th house. These disappointments compel us to align ourselves with other communities and ambitions in the 11th house. These different communities operate on certain values and principles that are impacted in the 10th house. Then, we evaluate the merit of those teachings in the 9th house and compare them to our philosophical paradigm of life.

This evolutionary process of houses 9 through 12 continues throughout our life as we unfold deeper and deeper levels of universal connection. Based on this level of universal connection, we interact with others in houses 5 through 8.

Astrology House Types

Vedic astrology is unique in its classification of astrology houses. Just as there are different qualities of planets — such as gentle and cruel, beneficial and

stressful — so too do the astrology houses in Vedic astrology vary. Like other principles outlined in this book so far, these are universal principles that apply to all astrology systems, not just Vedic astrology.

Astrology houses are classified according to similarities that indicate their intention. Many of these categorizations also exist in Western astrology proper, and several of them do not. Let's explore the different types of astrology houses.

Angular Houses — 1, 4, 7 and 10

These houses are always of the same modality relative to the astrology signs (moveable, fixed or dual). Angular houses support achievement. They are like the four pillars of a house, existing evenly apart from each other and marking the four directions in the chart. They form a square.

10th house	JU 10:02 Ash	Ke 17:17 Roh	1st house	Ve 10:18 Uth	JU 10:02 Ash	10th house	As 23:35 Pini
Me 02:06 Dha				7th house			
SU 28:34 Dha			MaR 26:44 Uth	SU 28:34 Dha		1st house	
7th house	Ra 17:17 Jye	SaR 05:27 Ch	4th house		4th house	SaR 05:27 Ch	Mo 22:05 Has

A square is a figure of stability, and, as such, these are houses of structure and consistent support, related to the Hindu God, Lord Vishnu, the maintainer of the universe.

As you read this, the chart of the moment where you are would show:

1st House — Eastern horizon, rising sign.

Brings support through our physical health, identity and presence.

It seems obvious to say, but the 1st anchor and pillar of our life is our physical body. Having a body is the single most important determining factor of life on Earth. We may take it for granted, but it is profound.

There are many levels of existence where we don't have a physical body. In the dream state, in other more sublime states, the physical form is not needed.

However, the sense of separateness and immediate urgency of our body is the deepest identifying factor of our existence on Earth. You have a very hard time separating yourself from your body, especially at its needs arise.

On Earth we have a physical body that experiences pain and pleasure very easily. This fact tempts us to subvert the hard work of prolonging gratification, creating a strong bias to avoid physical pain and discomfort. Yet, a lot of our spiritual growth comes when we do just that.

The reason for our life on Earth is to discover the unlimited being beneath the limited and separate world of matter. It must not just be a concept in our mind, it must be lived through our body. For the most part, our body is why we are here.

4th House — Nadir, directly below.

Brings support through emotional well-being and peace.

Whereas the 1st house gives a separate, material form through which all perceptions and growth must occur, the 4th house is the touchstone of inner, emotional strength and support that allows us to introspect, and look deeper. Our actions and presence create a certain feeling, a certain mood, an inner environment to which we must be sensitive. This is the 4th house. When it's powerful our entire life can be anchored on emotional strength.

The support of the 4th house is experienced as a sensitive, yet solid emotional state and one with the capacity to endure difficulty without crumbling and seeking a quick fix. The 4th house is analogous to the root system of a tree: as the tree grows high the roots must grow deep, to endure the wind, the elements and other anomalies that threaten to topple it. The 4th house is the emotional and psychological pillar of the chart.

7th House — Western horizon.

Brings support through partners and others in general.

Our connection to other people is arguably the most important connection we have in life, in terms of self-growth. It is the key to all of our success and all of our failures, as well as our hopes and dreams. In many ways, it is through the agency of other people that we come to know our self. The 7th house is a mirror reflection of the Self, our identity — plus our level of emotional peace and patience, as shown in the 4th house.

The 7th house refers to those interpersonal relationships that have a high level of mutual need and desire, such as romantic relationships or business relationships. If there is emotional capital or monetary capital on the line, and we have to go through another person to get it.

It is a great pillar in our life for that reason. When we're able to negotiate and play fairly with other equals in situations where the stakes are high, such as romantic relationships or business partnerships, life flows smoothly. The 7th house becomes a point of chaos and difficulty when we're unable to hear another's point of view and honor them, or if we compromise too much and do not honor ourselves.

10th House — Midheaven/ directly overhead.

Brings support through status, reputation — impact on the world, most powerful actions.

Opposite our emotional peace, and the depth of our root system, is the 10th house, the heights to which we can rise and the external power we have. This power is an aggregate result of our past actions and is the greatest support to our worldly life. It shows the culmination of our choices and identity, our inner peace and our ability to deal with people when the chips are down.

This is the true power we have, and it's a very delicate thing. That power can be abused, which leads to disgrace and a fall from the highest perch, the 10th house. It is called the Karma Bhava", the house of action, and shows the attachment we have to action, as well. As Lord Krishna said:

Ch.2 v.47–48 “Your right is to action alone; never to fruits”. It is attachment to the fruits of action that binds, not the actions themselves.

To summarize:

The houses build on each other and give rise in life through good health, emotional peace, relationships with others and the ability to take action. Strong planets in the 10th house help this rise in life, not only by helping the angle it is in, but also helping the other ones. Weak planets are harmful. For example, a weak planet in the 1st house will hurt our health which makes us emotionally fearful, which we may project onto our partners.

Trinal Houses — 1, 5 and 9

Trines are always of the same element, and thus they lead to intelligence and support relative to the area of life being developed. The trines are also equidistant from each other and form a triangle in the chart. A triangle is like an arrow pointing upward, or downward; thus the trines lead to greater growth and truth, through higher knowledge and wisdom.

Ve 10:18 UBb	JU 10:02 Ash	Ke 17:17 Roh	5th house	Ve 10:18 UBb	JU 10:02 Ash	Ke 17:17 Roh	1st house
1st house				9th house			
SU 28:34 Dha			MaR 26:44 U	SU 28:34 Dha			MaR 26:44 U
	Ra 17:17 Jye	9th house	Mo 22:05 Has		Ra 17:17 Jye	5th house	Mo 22:05 Has

These are lucky houses which lead to wealth and are related to the Hindu Goddess Lakshmi, the giver of beauty, wealth and happiness.

1st House — Growth through having a truthful sense of self identity and the fulfillment that results from it.

Too often the 1st house is mistakenly called the house of “ego,” but this is not the case in the Eastern sense of “ego.” The ego is the self-arrogating principle of limitation imposed on the unlimited, fulfilled self. Many times people get tied in knots over whether or not the things they are pursuing are “egotistical” or not.

The 1st house is our truthful identity in this lifetime. It is the creative being within we are trying to awaken. When the 1st house or its ruler is powerful, our sense of fulfillment is based on who we truly are. That sense of fulfillment and joy filters down into every part of life.

5th House — Growth through learning and intelligence.

Having a healthy sense of identity leads to being creatively fulfilled in the 5th house. This is the place where our imagination becomes entwined with

something we love greater than ourselves. This is the house of our heart's desire, which includes our children, our creations, our deep and passionate romantic partners and loves. The power of love to teach us our true capacities is the gift of the 5th house. Eventually this also leads to spiritual awareness as we create our higher self.

Not surprisingly, this is also related to our intelligence, which comes from a place of truthful identity. The power to discriminate is seen in the 5th house. This is why eventually we realize our personal creations are limited, regardless of how much we love them. The love of our children leads us to the source of love itself and we recognize this in the 5th house and aspire to treat all people as children of god.

9th House — Our highest sense of purpose and meaning.

Belief in a higher power and grace that flows from it.

Our personal creations and indeed loves lead us to things even beyond our personal sphere of enjoyment or influence. The most meaningful things in life come through the 9th house, where we find our teachers and our sense of meaning and purpose. There's a deep relationship between the 5th and the 9th house's. They are in many ways an extension of each other.

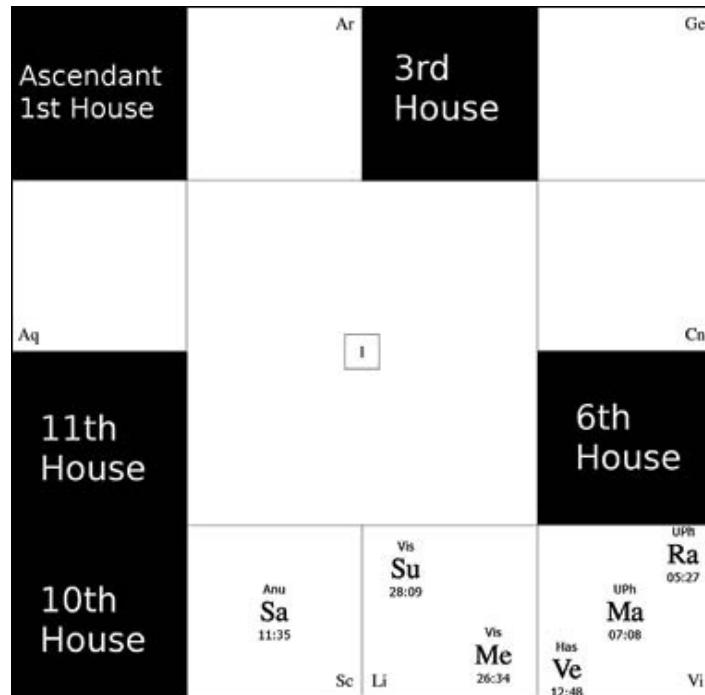
The 9th house is related to teachers, and for most of us the best teachers are our children and the things we love the most. As was said. Yet, with children, there is still a lot of possessiveness involved in our selfless love. In the 9th house, we are truly aligned with higher purposes, and it is the love of god and higher principles and values that become important. As such, the is related to religion and a sense of meaning and purpose beyond the things of this world that we may love or benefit from.

The trines also build on each other. A basic understanding of the value of good habits leads to greater intelligence, which will likely lead to belief in god. The trines are the houses where our truthful identity is learned and lived. The 1st house is both an angle and a trine, which underscores the importance of the 1st house for achievement and right understanding.

Upachaya (Increasing) Houses — 3, 6, 10, 11.

These are houses of increase. Their results get better over time. These houses are not related geometrically related to each other. Three of these houses are cruel in nature (houses 3, 6 and 11), thus in calling these houses of increase we acknowledge that these are the areas in life that are initially difficult.

Through the pain we experience in these areas of life we learn to act with more skill and thus these areas improve.



3rd House — Self-willed nature in pursuit of desires.

This is the main house of ego and a sense of separateness and suffering that comes with it. Yet this is probably the most independent and rebellious house in the astrology chart. It shows the things we like to do because we enjoy doing them. Not only that, it is where we will think independently and rebel against our teachers, convention and anything else we think may be trying to suppress us or lord over us without merit.

We are here to understand the world, and our teachers (9th house — opposite the third house) and if these things don't make sense to us, we will argue and rebel in the 3rd house. Yet, there is no grace flowing through the 3rd house. We may win some battles, but we will lose as many as we win. In the 3rd house, we have no luck or deeper insight beyond what are able to accomplish with our own

limited power or understand with our own limited intellect. This is the main house of ego. We spend most of our life acting through the third house.

6th House — The unpleasant details and hard work in life.

The 6th house is the repository of unpleasantness in life. The things we love create the most work for us and we must serve those things we love or else they will not continue to grow. 6th house problems occur when we begin to resent the hard work necessary to maintain the things we want to keep growing. We are never going to enjoy changing diapers or spending all of our money on our children, but we do it because our love for them is greater than our aversion to the work.

However, we do not love everyone. We will change our child's diaper, but if someone else asks us to clean up their mess, we will resist and will resent even being asked.

The best we can do with 6th house matters is serve, without the expectation that we will enjoy it. This area of life gets easier over time as we become less focused on our personal enjoyment and develop things of greater meaning in our life that teach us to sacrifice.

10th House — Attachment to our past actions and current circumstances.

The 10th house shows the amount of power we have in the world as well as the personal authority it gives us and the potential abuses that power may lead us into. There is a great deal of attachment to our story, and the impact that our past story has on our present situation. If we want to be free of the burdens of the past, rather than limited by them, we must align ourselves with the true source of greatness and power itself, that which is beyond this world and that which is of highest value.

Our greatest power in life is shown by what we value the most. When we're young and immature we may seek external value and the approval of others, in the form of status and recognition. But eventually our true values will be revealed, and the loss of status will eventually level the playing field.

Over time, we learn to align our self with what is truly valuable and act on that. These actions are based on our inner wisdom, good teachings (the

principles of the 9th house, the house before) and what is best in us.

11th House — Highest worldly ambitions.

This house follows the 10th house of power and karmic circumstances. Based on our level of power and circumstance we have ambitions. As our power and circumstances change, our ambitions change as well. When we're immature we may just chase excessive goals, stimulation and have a sort of bottomless pit of ambition. However, as we satisfy these worldly goals, an inner emptiness is revealed.

The world will never satisfy us in the way we have imagined. Therefore, over time, the excessive (and at times ruthless) ambitions of the 11th house become universalized into a sense of service to causes greater than our own personal happiness.

This more service oriented approach allows us greater fulfillment in life and in the world. As long as we still have desires for the world, we keep incarnating with attachments and desires to fulfill. It is not until the 12th house (the next house) that our desires with the world are finished, and we let go of them peacefully.

It is the great ambitions of the 11th house, in contrast to the great losses of the 12 house, that eventually free the soul and complete the karmic cycle.

Upachayas Build on each Other

The Upachaya houses also build on each other as we learn more skill in pursuit of our desires (3rd and 11th houses), learn the true value in life and learn to be less competitive in chasing wealth (6th and 10th houses). Learning more skill in these areas of life allows us to act with courage (3rd house) and humility (6th house) and to align our actions (10th house) for the good of humanity (11th house).

It is generally better in an astrology chart to get cruel planets (Sun, Mars or Saturn) in these houses because they will have the strength to overcome the cruel and difficult aspects of life and will thus be able to work toward improvement. Planets in these houses get stronger over time and the houses those planets rule improve.

Dusthanas — Difficult Houses

These are houses where things tend to get broken or destroyed. The planets that rule these houses bring a destructive quality. Also, when planets occupy these houses we can expect some difficulty with them.

6th House: Shows difficulties in areas of life that we must maintain or improve through effort. The biggest problem of the 6th house is neglect and avoidance of things we don't enjoy. Eventually, this avoidance will catch up with us. If the 6th house is fortified, or the ruler strong, we will simply manage those unpleasant tasks when they come up, then move on to the next thing — rather than avoid them. For example: brushing our teeth. No one is really excited about brushing our teeth, but we need to do that or else we will lose them. We also need to do many other things we do not enjoy, like eat healthy food, (rather than exotic, fattening food) exercise, etc. or else we will have a major health problem.

8th House: Shows the difficult effects of our past, and the things we can't control. Sudden and shocking events in life, lies and deceits, dangers and moral fears make an appearance in the 8th house. Facing these things make us mature and grown up. We must face them. In and of themselves, they are neutral. There is every possibility that when faced with death, we can dig deeply into the nature of life, and transforming that fear into a great strength. But it is also possible that when faced with death or fear, we will retreat and run, remaining foolish, ignorant and be reduced to controlling behavior. The 8th house breaks things when their time is due, then we must adjust or be broken ourselves.

12th House: Shows life draining away through fate, apathy or both. It shows the things we must let go of and where we must learn to be alone and accept our fate and limited power. Things leave through the 12th house, often in confusing and mysterious ways. We lack attachment and concern for things in the 12th house. Instead, we want to retreat and escape from them. Eventually, our neglect and escapism in the 12th house may become liberation through meditation, where we let go of our ego and identity. With the 12th house we are often not paying attention, oblivious to the matters of the world.



CHAPTER 8

Rahu and Ketu — The Lunar Nodes

Rahu and Ketu are the lunar nodes in Vedic astrology. They are grahas in that they grab and attach us to our karma just like the starry grahas, yet they do not rule over rasis like the other starry planets. They are shadows, the eclipse points where the Earth's orbit around the Sun intersects with the Moon's orbit around the Earth. Even though they are not physical planets they may be the most influential forces in the chart. It is along the Rahu/Ketu axis that main forces of karmic desire are seen. The myth of Rahu and Ketu sheds much light on their function and greater possibility.

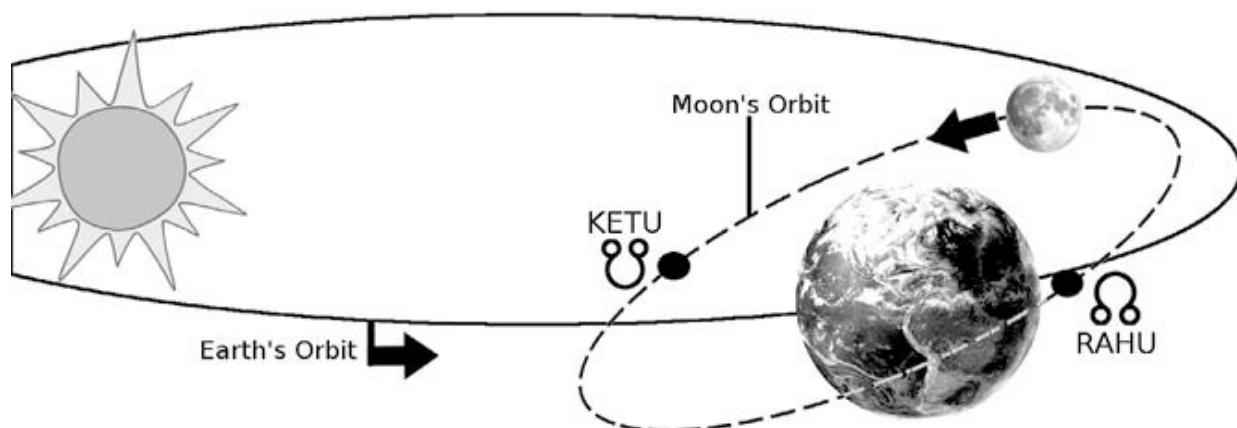
Shortly after the beginning of time, the gods and demons were in a terrible war, neither side making any progress. They decided to join forces and churn the milk ocean to get the pot of Amrita (immortal nectar) at the bottom. Once the nectar was extracted, then came the job of distributing it. The gods, not wanting the nectar to fall into the hands of the demons, devised a plan.

Lord Vishnu disguised himself as the enchanting and beautiful Mohini to distribute the nectar. The gods and demons were seated on two different sides of an aisle as Mohini distributed the nectar to the gods only. The demons were too enchanted by her beauty to notice she was not giving them any. However, one demon, Swarbhanu, noticed what was happening and disguised himself as a god and managed to get a drink of the nectar. As soon as this happened, the Sun and

Moon told Lord Vishnu what was happening and Vishnu returned to his form and released his sudarshan (discus), which chopped the demon in half, but only after it managed to take a drink of the immortal nectar.

Since the demon had taken a drink, and had become immortal, Lord Vishnu needed to find a place in creation for the two, now severed, parts of his body. So he placed them in the sky, as the intersecting points between the orbits of the Sun, Moon and Earth, and a few times each year they will exact revenge on the Sun and Moon by eclipsing them. The head is called Rahu and the body without the head is called Ketu.

Interpreting the Story Astronomically and Astrologically



Astronomically the nodes show where the Earth's orbit/the ecliptic (also the path all of the planets take as they move round the Sun) intersect with the orbital path of the Moon. There are three astronomical bodies needed to make the nodes: the Sun, Moon and Earth. Thus the nodes are the energetic points where their orbits intersect.

Because they are rarely visible, like the starry grahas with mass, some say the nodes are “invisible” or are just mathematical points in space. This is not a correct way to perceive them. Instead, you should think of the nodal axis as more like a magnetic field. Even though a magnetic field is not visible most of the time, it is real. We see the reality of the magnetic field when objects get close to it. In the case of the nodes, we see them when the Sun and Moon get close to them. At those times we have eclipses.

Any planets that are close to the nodal axis in a birth chart also feel the distortion field of the nodes.

The nodes bring together the energetic power of the three main forces of life, spirit (Sun), mind (Moon) and form (Earth). This makes them some of the most influential forces in all of astrology.

The Power of Confusion

The nodes produce external results based on the planets, houses and signs they rule. But unlike the planets of form, the nodes produce results based on our imagination, psychology, and direct connection with things not necessarily of this world.

Instead, both nodes are like a direct portal into experiences and influences that do not follow the traceable time/space continuum. Meaning, it is typical for us to formulate an opinion or arrive at a conclusion based some worldly experience (like a conversation), or even a random string of ideas.

As an example, if someone insults us or is rude to us, we get angry. But even something as strange as:

1. walking down the street
2. seeing a dog
3. remembering our childhood dog
4. remembering how our father punished us for feeding the dog table scraps
5. reliving the feeling of fear associated with our father
6. working ourselves up into a state of anger as we remember the last time we spoke to our father,... somehow seems logical. We do not question how that “makes sense” to us.

Something as random as seeing a dog culminates 10 seconds later in us being angry at our father, and it all seems perfectly natural, because this is how the mind works and we are used to it. Some external stimuli sends us off on a train of thought that arrives somewhere completely unpredictable. At another time, seeing the dog may have just reminded us of how much we loved our dog, and we may have just felt good about it.

Confusion or Perception

With the nodes, however, we may be walking down the street, and suddenly a flash comes into our mind of something real or imagined that is just as visceral, perhaps even psychic, about our father. We may even feel his presence in our mind, or hear his voice in our head. Then, 10 seconds later we get a text message from our sister telling us our father just had a massive heart attack. How do we explain such things?

This sort of accelerated perception comes from the nodes. We have all had these “psychic experiences.” We all have a direct channel to the source of all knowledge and information. Astrologically the nodes show this channel.

Yet, most of the time this “voice in our head” does not pan out into anything at all. It is just the voice of paranoia or delusion. But in the moment we are confused and we tend to disproportionately remember the times when our “abilities” are correct (called “confirmation bias”). Also, many times the Nodes and this voice is not focused, but is rather just a random anxiety or stress about something that we need to do / a compulsion we have that we can’t explain or other such thing.

One thing we can say for sure, about both Nodes, is that they lead to confusion about what to do. This confusion leaves us no option but to follow our own instincts and take action (Rahu), which may also include doing nothing (Ketu).

As I began pondering the deeper implications of the Nodes I had to ask myself “Why would god want us to be confused?” The answer: because when we’re confused we don’t listen to anyone, we have to follow our own authority.

One thing to remember about both nodes is that they are where we will not to listen to anyone, just like the demon in the story. We are meant to take action, and find our own path where the nodes exist.

Rahu — The Advancing Army

From BPHS

Chapter 3 V. 14-15. Grah cabinet. Rahu and Ketu form the Grah Army.”

Rahu is a head without a body. Try to hold the visual of a head simply floating around trying to eat everything it comes in contact with, but lacking a digestive system or body. For Rahu, everything it comes into contact with

becomes an obsession, like a person with a voracious appetite, but no digestion. Imagine if you ate something and did not have a throat and digestive tract. This is a good symbol for Rahu.

Rahu represents the desire to experience and “taste life,” but because he is not a physical planet he operates on the subconscious level. Rahu obsesses over things so we can experience them and eventually be freed of them. He shows areas of life where the soul is inexperienced, and therefore needs to conquer territory through direct experience. There are certain lessons we can only learn in a physical body, and in a physical world of experience. Rahu’s obsessions indicate those things. Rahu shows obsessions and imbalances based on action.

There are certain things we absolutely must do for ourselves, and certain lessons we will only learn by making our own mistakes. No amount of guidance or coaxing from others can help. With Rahu, we must make our mistakes and act on the basis of our own inner authority, even if we have none, which is often the case — at least in the beginning.

Ketu — The Occupying Army

Ketu is the other half of the demon, the headless body. Whereas Rahu obsesses over the things of this world, in order to gain experiences the soul needs, Ketu wants to be free of the world. Ketu shows the power of our past conditioning, and the things we have learned very well, perhaps even mastered at a high level.

The obsessions of Ketu revolve around the illusion of mastery. Because we have “been there and done that,” we have enormous experience in the areas of life influenced by Ketu. This experience is also a very high standard, which takes the form of a rigid, critical mindset. We are eternally unsatisfied with anything we or others can do wherever Ketu exists.

Whereas Rahu wants to grow and experience new things, Ketu wants to fall back on the familiar and withdraw into the certainty of experience. This tends to create a kind of disgust with the typical mundane things (and people) of the world.

But in many ways, the external disgust of Ketu is simply our self-criticism turned outward. Ketu is trying to perfect the areas of life he influences. Eternally unsatisfied, his energy reveals what is missing from whatever he is influencing.

An example:

Imagine listening to a virtuoso musician, a concert pianist. We may easily enjoy the music she produces. However, because she is so developed musically, she may only notice the mistakes she makes — and may not enjoy the performance at all if she's too much of a perfectionist. She only notices what was missing.

The Parent/Child Example

I have noticed an interesting phenomenon with the nodal axis. If you recall, in the story, the demon did not get to experience what he was promised. In fact, the gods trick the demons by offering them an equal share of the nectar, and then renege on the deal. This demon was able to outsmart the gods and managed to take a drink. But there was an injustice.

We entered this world with a similar feeling, that life is not fair on some level. We all have a different version of that injustice, based on our childhood circumstances. We were all conditioned in a specific way. There were pressures we didn't ask for, judgments made against us that didn't ring true, points of view that we inherited that were incongruent with our deeper nature.

The skill and capacity to deal with these cosmic misinterpretations are the same skills, criticisms and perfections of Ketu.

Rebelling against those interpretations, and living autonomously in spite of them, are the things of Rahu.

In general, the Rahu/Ketu axis shows the areas of immaturity that are being developed (Rahu), which exist in direct opposition to the lessons we have learned, where we have a certain amount of expertise, and that we are finishing (Ketu).

We often experience Ketu as a “disapproving parent” within our own mind. We experience Rahu as the “immature child” within, restless and gathering experience and making mistakes of their own accord.

The lessons of Rahu are usually noticeable, because they are active and external, whereas the lessons of Ketu are harder to work on because they are buried and hidden from us, much like we hide the pain of our childhood. Most of us cringe at the thought of how similar we are to our parents, especially in modeling some of their worst tendencies. Have you ever caught yourself noticing how you sound exactly like your mother or father, in the worst way?

Both nodes create confusion and both nodes show areas of life where we will not listen to others or take advice easily.

Rahu does not take advice because in order to learn we must make our own mistakes in order to gain experience.

Rahu shows the ignorance of immaturity.

Ketu doesn't take advice because we have already "been there and done that."

Ketu shows the ignorance of certainty, which cuts us off from greater possibilities.

Assessing their specific influence in an astrology chart is complicated and beyond the scope of this text. However, in a simple way, we can say that both nodes exaggerate whatever they are influencing — whether they are planet signs or houses. Rahu makes things bigger externally. Ketu tends to concentrate them internally and try to perfect them to the highest degree.



CHAPTER 9

The Nakshatras (Distant Stars)

The Nakshatras are the Distant Stars in the Vedic astrological horoscope. There are 27 Nakshatras that exist to emulate the Moon's mean daily motion of 13:20. It takes 27 days for the Moon to revolve around the Earth, and there are thus 27 Nakshatras (not including Abhijit, a special 28th Nakshatra used in special circumstances).

Actually, the 1st zodiac was a Nakshatra based lunar one, based on the Moon in relation to these distant stars. The system of 12 signs came later. The 12 signs emulate one lunar cycle (from New Moon to New Moon) and relate the Moon to the Sun.

Important Nakshatra Details and Patterns

The Nakshatras exist energetically behind and through the rashis. The rashis show four elemental signs (fire, earth, air, water) that repeat three times, through different modalities (Cardinal, Fixed, Mutable). The Nakshatras also energetically repeat as the nine planetary lords are expressed through the three gunas.

- The first group of nine Nakshatras (Aries-Cancer) is rajasic; they activate the cycle. There is a prominent “Creation Story” that plays out over several Nakshatras.

- The second nine are tamasic (Leo-Scorpio), stabilizing the cycle. There are many “Adityas” in the Nakshatras of this section of the Zodiac. Adityas are Solar deities that bring sustenance, stability and amicability to life on Earth.
- The last group is sattwic (Sagittarius-Pisces), completing and transcending the cycle. There are many supernatural deities and groups of forces in this final section of the Zodiac.

Each Nakshatra is related to a Graha in the Vimshottari dasa scheme (discussed later), presided over by a Vedic deity and also have many other important attributes (see the Nakshatra table at the end of this Chapter).

The deities who rule the Nakshatras show the Shakti (power) of these sectors of the sky. The Nakshatras show our connection to the transcendent forces at play in our everyday lives. In a birth chart, all planets reside in a sign and a Nakshatra.

The Nakshatras also provide stability in the flow of energy through the zodiac. Although a rashi changes, usually there is the force of the Nakshatra to hold the energy together behind the “Sandhi” points, the places where the Rashis change.

As Aries becomes Taurus, which then becomes Gemini, then Cancer, there is the energy of the Nakshatra existing behind it.

The 3 male Planets, (Sun, Mars and Jupiter) rule the Nakshatras responsible for this bridging of the Rashis. It is called Gandantha, at the points where there is no Nakshatra bridging the Rashis (between the Water and Fire Rashis)

The Nakshatras of Aslesha/Magha, Jyeshta/Mula and Revati/Ashwini are Gandantha.

There are usually some difficulties with planets in these signs, especially in the last degrees. (The last 3:20 of the water sign and the first 3:20 of the next Fire sign to be exact)

Nakshatras and Rasi Connections

- 1. Ashwini
- 2. Bharani
- 3. Kritikka
- 4. Rohini
- 5. Mrigashira
- 6. Ardra
- 7. Punarvasu
- 8. Pushya
- 9. Aslesha
- 10. Magha
- 11. Purva Phalguni
- 12. Ultara Phalguni
- 13. Hasta
- 14. Chitra
- 15. Swati
- 16. Vishaka
- 17. Anuradha
- 18. Jyeshta
- 19. Mula
- 20. Purva Ashada
- 21. Ultara Ashada
- 22. Shravana
- 23. Dhanishta
- 24. Shatabishak
- 25. Purva Bhadra
- 26. Ultara Bhadra
- 27. Revati

Aries	Sun ruled Kritikka
Taurus	Mars ruled Mrigashira
Gemini	Jupiter ruled Punarvasu
Cancer	Cancer / Leo
Leo	Gandnatha Point
Virgo	Sun ruled Uttara Phalguni
Libra	Mars ruled Chitra
Scorpio	Jupiter ruled Vishaka
Sagittarius	Scorpio / Sagittarius
Capricorn	Gandantha Point
Aquarius	Sun ruled Uttara Ashada
Pisces	Mars ruled Dhanishta
Pisces	Jupiter ruled Purva Bhadra
Pisces	Pisces / Aries
Pisces	Gandantha Point

Rajasic Nakshatras: Aries-Cancer

The first group of Nakshatras has to do with beginnings, and origin of creation. The story arc of the creation myth (starting with Rohini Nakshatra) shows this clearly. This is where Lord Prajapati (the God of creation) make the physical universe and creatures out of bodies, so they can act in accordance with the karma.

Ashwini — Power of the Horses, the Horsemen

Ashwini shows the quality of Aries that is innocent, active, courageous and initiating.

Deity: Ashwins (Physicians of the gods)

Sign(s)/Degrees: 0:00 — 13:19 Aries

Planetary Ruler: Ketu

Symbol: Horse's head

Nature: Light/Swift

Race/Gana: Deva

Animal: Horse

Story: The Sun had a romantic engagement with his wife's sister, Chaaya (Shadow), which produced offspring (including Saturn). When the Sun's wife found out, she fled the celestial realm, turning herself into a mare. The Sun changed into a stallion and chased her to Earth. They eventually reconciled and made love. This union produced twin horse offspring, the Ashwins, who were left on Earth to be the first healers, representing hidden, metaphysical healing. The Sun is exalted in Ashwini.

In Practice: the first Nakshatra of the zodiac, Ashwini has a lot to do with speed, initiation and fast (if not impulsive) movements. It is the part of Aries that can be rash and sudden, similar to horses running in opposite directions. Yet, all things considered, there is a deep relationship between the breath, prana and energetic healing in Ashwini. Exploring power, speed and movement is often a fascinating topic when natives have planets in Ashwini.

Bharani — Bearing, Enduring/The Bearers

Bharani shows the quality of Aries that is disciplined and controlled, but may also be punishing.

Deity: Yama (god of the soul's course)

Sign(s)/Degrees: 13:20 — 26:39 Aries

Ruler: Venus

Symbol: Female sexual organ

Nature: Fierce/Severe

Race/Gana: Manushya

Animal: Elephant

Story: Bharani is the star of restraint — where we need to bear the fruits of our actions. We can see the connection to Ashwini, as the Lord of Bharanai, Yama was the offspring of Surya. Yama was said to be the first man to have died — due to the results of his actions (karma). The term “Yama” means “control”. In yoga we practice pranayama as a means control the vital energy. Yama is said to show up at the time of death and is related to Saturn, said to be his half-brother.

Saturn is debilitated in Bharani. The issue in this Nakshatra is vitality. Saturn takes our vitality and Venus (the planetary ruler) replenishes it.

In Practice: this Nakshatra follows Ashwini, the asterism of impulse and the need to focus our energy. Bharani has to do with consequences of all sorts. In a very neutral way, our energetic will penetrates reality and creates a result. Those who have prominent planets in Bharani are often very aware of their mistakes, as well as those of others. They also may feel the need to be punished for those mistakes, and the need to punish others — accounting for their “fierce/severe” nature.

A higher, more creative choice is being learned that has to do with honoring time and the moment, instead of waiting for catastrophic results to be produced. Letting go of the past is another important lesson.

Krittika — Razor/Cutter

Krittika shows the transition point from cardinal fire to fixed earth in the spirit of purification, ritual and sacrifice — Like a fire pit, where the flame is contained by earth.

Deity: Agni (god of fire, sacrifice and ritual)

Sign(s)/Degrees: 26:40 Aries — 9:59 Taurus

Ruler: Sun

Symbol: Razor/dagger

Nature: Soft/Dreadful

Race/Gana: Rakshasa

Animal: Goat

Story: In Hindu mythology, it is said that the stars of the Big Dipper were the seven sages, called rishis. They were happily married to seven sisters named the Kṛttikas. These wives then became the Kṛttikā after being divorced from their husbands due to a mysterious romance between Agni and Svaha. According to the Mahābhārata, Svāhā impersonated six of the seven wives of the Saptarsi and made love to Agni. The 7 Rishis, hearing of this incident and doubting their wives' chastity, divorced them.

The Moon is exalted in Krittika, as the Moon gets its light from the Sun. This Nakshatra is where our own Sun was nurtured, after being born in the nearby Orion Nebula.

In Practice: this Nakshatra is related to the fire that purifies and illuminates. The appearance of light in itself is enough to remove darkness and allow us to cut through the veils of illusion in the mind. It is those illusions that lead to our greatest attachments in life, and our greatest suffering. This Nakshatra bridges Aries and Taurus and is related to the sacrificial fire pit constructed in Vedic ceremonies.

We must feed the flame of light and wisdom with the good food of love and pure intention. We feed the fire in Vedic ceremony with sweet food such as ghee, sweet pudding and other delicacies. This mixture of fire and food can be seen in the mix of the “soft/dreadful” nature of this Nakshatra.

Rohini — Ruddy cow, Red, Growing

Rohini shows the earthly, creative nature of Taurus. There is much beauty, but also attachment to its form if we are not careful.

Deity: Prajapati

Sign(s)/Degrees: 10:00 — 23:19 Taurus

Ruler: Moon

Symbol: Chariot

Nature: Fixed

Race/Gana: Manushya

Animal: Serpent

Story: Prajapati, the creator, wanted to create beings to populate the cosmos (rather than just immortals, god's and the stars), so that god may experience himself with senses and a dense form. But the problem arose of how to create mortal beings to enjoy this creation and, as the creator, it was up to him. He realized that mortal beings of flesh would need to be created of flesh, and thus through sex. As he was creator and all was his own creation, there was no way to avoid fornication with one of his own daughters in order to make mortal beings. His most beautiful daughter is Rohini, and he wanted to make the most beautiful beings from the most beautiful of his daughters. Thus, Prajapati is the Lord of Rohini.

In this Nakshatra there is a high degree of sensual pleasure, attractiveness, wealth and growth of all kinds.

In Practice: The Word “Rohini” means “growth.” It coincides with the bright red star Aldebaran and is considered the favorite wife of the Moon, the most pleasant. There is enormous connection, peace and stability in this Nakshatra. But there can also be a certain amount of attachment and clinging to material objects, seen in the “fixed” nature of this star. Also, there could be enormous beauty indicated, and also jealousy or vanity.

The deeper promise here has to do with “value,” and what is truly the most valuable. This is the part of Taurus that wants to have it all, and have it be beautiful and long-lasting. But the most beautiful thing we create is eternal and internal, not material and temporary.

Mrigashira — Deer/Antelope’s Head

Mrigashira shows the transition of fixed earth into mutable air, showing both the gentle demeanor of Taurus and the longing, wistful side of Gemini.

Deity: Soma (immortal nectar of bliss)

Sign(s)/Degrees: 23:20 Taurus — 6:39 Gemini

Ruler: Mars

Symbol: Antelope’s head or a deer

Nature: Soft/Tender

Race/Gana: Deva

Animal: Serpent

Story: Continuing from the story of Rohini, she was not happy to be receiving the sexual attention of her father, so she fled from him. She changed herself into a beautiful deer and ran away from her home, in her portion of the sky — running from Taurus to Gemini. Prajapati also changed into a deer and pursued her in this Nakshatra. His intention was not one of pure lust, but of chasing the ephemeral vision of beauty and love, so that the beings born of this necessary union would be the best and the highest beings.

Soma, the god of bliss, is the lord of this Nakshatra. The god's would drink Soma to become intoxicated with divine truth. This outer celebration of Soma refers to the inner experience of bliss, the highest potential of the mind.

In Practice: a deer is a perfect symbol to bridge the signs of Taurus in Gemini. It is a gentle, grass-fed animal like a cow (Taurus), but fast and restless, like Gemini. Owing itself to the story being played out between Prajapati and his daughter, there is a quality of pursuit, longing and searching here. It is often called "the wandering star." The god Soma is the god of immortal nectar, thus there is a searching for beauty shown here. Yet the search is a gentle one, as this is the first "soft/tender" Nakshatra in the zodiac.

Ardra — Moist

Ardra shows the volatile, eccentric, rebellious and cruel nature of Gemini.

Deity: Rudra

Sign(s)/Degrees: 6:40 — 19:59 Gemini

Ruler: Rahu

Symbol: Tear drop/gem

Nature: Sharp/Dreadful

Race/Gana: Manushya

Animal: Dog

Story: Continuing the "Story arc of creation". The other gods, Agni and Indra and Vayu and others were appalled at Prajapati's behavior, chasing his daughter to fornicate with her. However they were not powerful enough to stop him, since Prajapati was the creator. So they devised a plan. They took the most ferocious

parts of each other and made one badass deity called “Rudra”. He would be able to stop Prajapati given that he was made from the fiercest parts of each one of them.

Rudra stalked Prajapati, in his present form as a deer, then pierced him with an arrow. Prajapati then crashed to Earth.

This act prevented mortal creatures from being born of pure god energy. A “fall from grace” as depicted in all religions has its origin in this section of sky — as astronomically this is where the plane of the galaxy runs. In a modern sense, Rudra is the fierce form of Lord Shiva. He is the lord of the hunt and protector of the Soma.

His powerful, sharp and dreadful nature is expressed in Ardra, which also means “moist” and represents the tears of devotion and the inner storm as felt through the dark night of the soul.

In Practice: The energy of Lord Shiva is in this Nakshatra. This is the energy of change, transformation and the courage to defend the truth and act in accordance with righteousness and principle. However, at the same time, Lord Shiva does not operate within traditional, cultural norms. In this Nakshatra, anything is possible and often things change suddenly, for good or ill.

There are many natural and man-made disasters that occur here. The symbol of a tear drop also refers to flooding, deluge and catastrophe. The half male, half female version of Shiva, called “Ardhanishwara,” is meaningful here and related to Gemini, the sign of male/female duality.

Punarvasu — Return of the Light

Punarvasu shows the transition from mutable air to cardinal water, where information must be integrated into the heart.

Deity: Aditi (Earth Mother)

Sign(s)/Degrees: 20:00 Gemini — 3:19 Cancer

Ruler: Jupiter

Symbol: Quiver, house, bow

Nature: Moveable

Race/Gana: Deva

Animal: Cat

Story: Thirty-three sons were born to Aditi. Twelve of them are called Adityas and they are all forms of the Sun. The 12 Adityas are: Dhata, Aryama, Mitra, Sakra, Varuna, Amsa, Bhaga, Vivasvan, Pusan, Savitri, Tvastar and Vishnu. Among the other 21 sons are 11 Rudras (also called the Maruts or children of Indra) and eight Vasus. Aditi is the Earth Mother and the sustenance that occurs after the flood of emotion in Ardra. She gave birth to the Adityas to sustain this worldly creation and allow for transition to the next level.

In Practice: There is a feeling of hope, growth and progeny here — like a parent's love for their children. There is also the sense of disappointment that comes once children grow up, and the sense of meaning and purpose we give to them wanes. This is a creative and expansive Nakshatra. It represents the bright, sunny day and the hope that follows the flood and drama of Ardra. It is the sign where Gemini becomes Cancer, where details and information (Gemini) are absorbed in the heart (Cancer).

Pushya — Nourisher, Flower, the Best

Pushya shows the conservative and devotional nature of Cancer.

Deity: Brihaspati

Sign(s)/Degrees: 3:20 — 16:39 Cancer

Ruler: Saturn

Symbol: Teat of a cow, arrow, flower

Nature: Light/Swift

Race/Gana: Deva

Animal: Goat

Story: Brihaspati was the teacher of the gods and married to the lovely and desirable Tara. He was much older than Tara and very formal in his expression of affections, being a Brahmin. One day, the charming and romantic Moon god, Soma, became infatuated with the beautiful Tara and her with he. The two scandalously ran off together to the shock and dismay of the gods. Brihaspati insisted that Soma return his wife, but Soma refused. Soon a war began; with Soma utilizing the help of the Asuras (demons) against the gods in an effort to keep Tara.

By this time Tara was pregnant and would not say who the father was, which made Brihaspati threaten to kick her out until the child was born. At that moment, the child, Mercury, was born of his own will. Tara then confessed that the child belonged to Soma. Brihaspati was furious, though unable to resist the charming child Mercury, thus named “Budha.” Mercury is the god of discrimination and intellect (Buddhi). He was born of consciousness (the Moon) and the power of our higher principles.

Jupiter is exalted in Pushya, as the Vedic priest Brhaspati is the ruler of this Nakshatra and an incarnation of Jupiter.

In Practice: this is a Nakshatra of loyalty and conservative forms of love and worship. It is the part of Cancer related to the mother’s milk itself, as the symbol is the breasts. Family legacy and parentage is important here, as is education and “feeding” others in all forms. Good conduct that supports a successful family and the grace that flows easily is shown in Pushya. Of course, raising a family also takes money and success, and these things also come easily in Pushya.

Problems occur here when feeding on impure actions or motivations. This leads to a waste of emotional strength, resources and a misguided sense of connection.

Aslesha — Entwiner, Embracer, Intimate Connection

Aslesha shows the emotionally turbulent side of Cancer

Deity: Sarpa

Sign(s)/Degrees: 16:40 — 29:59 Cancer

Ruler: Mercury

Symbol: Wheel, serpent

Nature: Sharp/Dreadful

Race/Gana: Rakshasa

Animal: Cat

Story: Ruled by the serpent king, Sarpa, this Nakshatra is called the entwiner. Imagine a snake entwining and entangling itself around you. But the serpent can also go deep into holes and explore hidden mysteries of life. Lord Vishnu sleeps on the couch supported by the thousand-hooded serpent Adishesha. This

symbolizes the hypnotic nature of the world and how our embodied life is an attempt to awaken Lord Vishnu, the lord of manifested creation.

In Practice: This is the section of Cancer where we become emotionally entangled in our feelings, and need more dispassion and discrimination. When our entanglements revolve around fulfilling personal desire, it can lead to deep pathologies and chaos. When impure attachments exist, Aslesha can show eating disorders, mental illness and even suicide.

But when the emotional entanglements revolve around truth and pure love, like the love of a mother for child, the deep feelings of Aslesha may take us straight to the source of love itself. Those who have planets in this Nakshatra may have a sort of ‘snake eyes’ effect on others — a hypnotic effect that may stop others in their tracks. But this can be equally dangerous, as these natives may also become easily enticed and seduced by life’s pleasures.

The Tamasic Nakshatras: Leo-Scorpio

The second group of Nakshatras (1-9) has to do with maintaining creation. As we have noted, Tamasic energy has to do with solid structures and forms.

Magha — Beneficent, Mighty

Magha shows the love of family and tradition shown in Leo.

Deity: Pitris

Sign(s)/Degrees: 0:00 — 13:19 Leo

Ruler: Ketu

Symbol: Throne, Palanquin, Royal Court

Nature: Fierce/Severe

Race/Gana: Rakshasa

Animal: Rat

Story: Magha shows our connection to lineage, family and tradition. It is said by Krishna in the *Bhagavad Gita*, “There are seven great rishis, the four preceding Manus, partaking of my nature, were born from my mind: from them sprang the human race and the world.”

The Saptarshi (the seven rishis) are the regents of the seven stars of the Great Bear (Orion), and therefore of the same nature as the angels of the planets, or the

seven great planetary spirits.

In Practice: These first stars of Leo place the king squarely on the throne, directly on the seat of power itself. The king is not elected, his power comes from lineage and succession. Similarly, our power in life originates with our birth family, but it also comes from the universe itself. In this way, the celestial teachers (rishis) are our divine family.

The true power of Magha is in cultivating a relationship with primordial power. When we do this, we become the king of eternal territory, time and space — rather than wasting our life looking to control a small parcel of earthly land.

Purva Phalguni — Previous Red One

Purva Phalguni shows the affectionate and passionate nature of Leo. It may also show laziness and vanity.

Deity: Bhaga

Sign(s)/Degrees: 13:20 — 26:40 Leo

Ruler: Venus

Symbol: Legs of a cot, stage

Nature: Fierce/Severe

Race/Gana: Manushya

Animal: Rat

Story: Bhaga and many of the other Adityas were gathered at the Yagya of Daksha (Lord Shiva's father-in-law) when Lord Shiva was being ridiculed. Bhaga was one of them. He turned his eye toward Daksha and winked in agreement when Daksa was slandering Lord Shiva. When Shiva took revenge on those in attendance, Bhaga's eyes were gouged out.

Often we experience joy and delight through our eyes. We love to look and savor beautiful things and experiences. But we may also be envious or build up a lot of attachments based on what we see.

In Practice: Ruled by the god “Bhaga,” one of the Adityas, the god of delight. It is good to be king. But there are also many, many duties that must be performed with humility and in service to the kingdom, rather than in service to our desires.

The generosity of being a good king and sharing the spoils of wealth with others is important in this Nakshatra. The potential for laziness and abuse of

power is seen here, existing side-by-side with the potential for enormous generosity and love for all. This is known as the “star of courtship,” referring to the level of joy and earthly delight seen here.

Uttara Phalguni — Later Red One

Uttara Phalguni shows the orderly and official nature of the Leo/Virgo juncture

Deity: Aryaman

Sign(s)/Degrees: 26:40 Leo — 10:00 Virgo

Ruler: Sun

Symbol: Legs of a cot, bed

Nature: Fixed

Race/Gana: Manushya

Animal: Cow

Story: Ruled by Aryaman, who is another of the Adityas. He was the protector of mares and his path was said to be the Miky way itself. He is often invoked with the God Mitra — the God of friendliness. Aryaman is responsible for things that are proper and official, such as marriage and other sorts of contracts.

Courtship takes place in Purva Phalguni, but marriage takes place in Uttar Phalguni.

In Practice: A kingdom takes a lot of work to run and maintain. This is the Nakshatra of concentrating power into official business, work and delegating details to others. Establishing contracts also implies amity and friendliness. This is why Aryaman is often depicted with the god of friendliness, Mitra. Like a marriage, all contracts are founded with the intention of concentrating creative joy into a powerful structure. This is the Nakshatra where the power of Leo filters into the many tasks and details of Virgo.

Hasta — Hand

Hasta shows the practical and attached nature of Virgo.

Deity: Savitru (Aditya)

Sign(s)/Degrees: 10:00 — 23:20 Virgo

Ruler: Moon

Symbol: Hand

Nature: Light/Swift

Race/Gana: Deva

Animal: Buffalo

Story: Saviturn is the deity of this Nakshatra. He is one of the Adityas, and the god invoked in the Gayatri mantra.

Om Bhur Bhuvah Svaha

Tat Savitur Varenyam

Bhargo Devasya Dhimaahi

Di yo yo nah Prachodayat

Saviturn gives the power to place what we want in the palm of our hand.

Mercury is exalted here. He was born from the seed of the Moon and exalted in the Moon's Nakshatra, but in a sign ruled by Mercury.

In Practice: Hasta is a great "manifestation" Nakshatra. As our worldly life and kingdom take shape, it must be beautified and perfected. This Nakshatra is related to skill and handiwork, but also detachment from the fruit of our efforts. Hands are related to karma and attachment. To see all of our creation as the lord's work, as a divine manifestation, is the highest principle of Hasta.

In order for this to occur, there must be detachment from the fruits of our efforts and the realization that our hands are just an extension of god's hands.

Chitra — Brilliant/Distinguished

Chitra shows the practical, creative dynamic of the Virgo/Libra juncture.

Deity: Tvastar (Viswa Karma)

Sign(s)/Degrees: 23:20 Virgo — 6:39 Libra

Ruler: Mars

Symbol: Pearl

Nature: Soft/Tender

Race/Gana: Rakshasa

Animal: Tiger

Story: Vishwa Karma, the divine architect, created the Sun and all the heavens. He gave his own daughter to Surya (the Sun God) for marriage. One day his

daughter, Sanja (consciousness), came to him with a complaint. Her husband, Surya, was so bright as to be completely overpowering. So Vishwa Karma put Surya on the cosmic lathe and cut him down to a less overbearing size. The sparks that flew off formed the other planets in the solar system. Vishwa Karma, the divine architect, is another of the Adityas.

Venus is debilitated on the Virgo side of Chitra. The practical, technical quality of this Nakshatra does not allow for the highest qualities of Venus to unfold. Those qualities include unconditional love.

In Practice: This nakshatra exists equidistant between Virgo and Libra, showing important qualities of both. The skill and precision of Virgo becomes a higher aesthetic, and forms a connection with culture and people in Chitra Nakshatra. Yet the root word for This Nakshatra is “creativity.”

Whether creating solid structures to support our life and universe, or creating children to populate it (and the desire to make them), Chitra is a passionate and exciting energy, where the kingdom is not only functional, but also beautiful.

Svati — Independent, Sword

Svati shows the volatile, eccentric and lustful nature of Libra. It shows the power to scatter and disperse and the need to gather that energy.

Deity: Vayu

Sign(s)/Degrees: 6:40 — 20:00 Libra

Ruler: Rahu

Symbol: Coral, Sapphire

Nature: Moveable

Race/Gana: Deva

Animal: Buffalo

Story: Vayu roams all over the Earth and the heavens though his home is in the north-west. Vayu broke off the top of Mount Meru, then hurled it into the sea where it became the island of Lanka (present-day Sri Lanka).

Vayu was also lustful and indiscriminate: though he was married to a daughter of Vishwakarma, he had offspring by many notable female characters of Hindu myths. One of his most famous illegitimate offspring is Hanuman, the monkey god and hero of the *Ramayana*. Hanuman was the general of the army

of monkeys. He shows the power of the mind and prana when directed and focused.

The Sun is debilitated in Swati, showing how a scattered mind is detrimental to the focus and vitality of the Sun.

In Practice:

The vitality of the breath and the mind is important in Swati Nakshatra. It is important to gather this energy and these thoughts and concentrate them on something worthy. When we do this, there's enormous mental clarity and focus. However, when we do not focus our energy or attention, we are "scattered."

This nakshatra has the power to scatter like the wind, making it good for public relations and media. But we must ensure that our thoughts and energy is focused. Hanuman was the general of the army of monkeys, a symbol of the "monkey mind" gathered and focused toward a goal.

Vishaka — Branched, Forked Branches

Vishaka shows the transition from cardinal air to fixed water through this Nakshatra — bridging intellectual strength and emotional power.

Deity: Indra Agni

Sign(s)/Degrees: 20:00 Libra — 3:19 Scorpio

Ruler: Jupiter

Symbol: Leaf-decked triumphal gate, Potter's wheel

Nature: Soft/Dreadful

Race/Gana: Rakshasa

Animal: Tiger

Story: This Nakshatra is ruled by both Indra (lightning) and Agni (fire). You can see their stories in the descriptions of Kritikka and Jyeshta. These are the two most celebrated deities from the *Rig Veda*. They are both incarnations of protection, duty and dharma. As such, this Nakshatra is principled and inspired toward righteousness, given that they are ruled by both divine fire and divine sky/lightning together.

Saturn is exalted at the very degree in Libra where Vishaka begins, showing the power to uplift one from depression and deliver the highest fruits of the harvest (the Shakti of Vishaka).

The Moon is debilitated at the very end of Vishaka, showing the restless, worldly and motivated energy of Vishaka is not the most conducive for allowing the highest qualities of the Moon to unfold, especially in watery Scorpio.

In Practice: This nakshatra bridges Libra and Scorpio, the place where worldly entanglements with others lead to stress and control issues. This can be a place of self-righteousness if we are not careful. But it is also high standards, both for our self and others. Often, greater compassion for human frailty and weakness is needed when planets are in This Nakshatra. However, there's also a great need to elevate the concept of "relationship" to something more universal and less about personal needs and desires. Often you see great teachers and leaders with prominent planets here. But success might come later in life, as they learn to manage self-righteousness and judgment.

Anuradha — Subsequent Success/Following Radha

Anuradha shows the sensitive, intuitive side of Scorpio as well as its devoted and spiritual nature.

Deity: Mitra

Sign(s)/Degrees: 3:20 — 16:40 Scorpio

Ruler: Saturn

Symbol: Heap of rice, umbrella

Nature: Soft/Tender

Race/Gana: Deva

Animal: Deer

Story: "Anuradha" literally means "following Radha." Radha is the most devoted to the Lord (Krishna). One day Lord Krishna felt so ill everyone was afraid he would die, so his physician called all of his devotees together. The only cure for the Lord required an action by another that would curse them to hell for thousands of lifetimes. None of Krishna's wives or devotees would offer themselves for this, except Radha.

Anuradha is ruled by another Aditya, Mitra, the god of friendship and congeniality in the Vedas.

In Practice: If one can manage the psychological fears and attachments of Anuradha, there is enormous devotion possible. One of the keys to transforming

this fear into devotion is in understanding the concept of “god as the divine friend.” Mitra, the god of friendliness is the ruler here. With our friend, there is more detachment. We don’t feel as possessive. We do not have as much at stake and we are without judgment.

So often you see god depicted as the divine friend in Hindu scriptures. Both the *Bhagavad Gita* and the *Ramayana* have tales of beautiful friendships. In both Radha (Krishna’s devotee) and Hanuman (Lord Ram’s devotee) we see the willingness to die for a pure love that has no selfish aim. This is the emotional heroism of Scorpio — and the promise fulfilled in This Nakshatra.

Jyestha — The Eldest

Jyestha shows the courageous nature of Scorpio, but also where hubris and power can run amok, as shown by the ambiguous nature of Indra.

Deity: Indra

Sign(s)/Degrees: 16:40 — 25:59 Scorpio

Ruler: Mercury

Symbol: Kundal (earring), umbrella, talisman

Nature: Sharp/Dreadful

Race/Gana: Rakshasa

Animal: Deer

Story: Lord Indra got into an epic battle with the demon Vrtra, who stole all the water from the Earth. This demon swallowed Indra, but Indra was able to sever the demon’s belly and return all the water to Earth.

In another instance, Indra pushed open the cave that had crushed all of creation, liberating the sky from the Earth. Thus he is known as the king of the sky. In later myth, however, Indra was also an example of the abuse of power and the foolishness of ego.

In Practice: In This Nakshatra the forces of light are challenged to overcome the forces of dark. In victory, the Soma (immortal nectar) gets released in the mind and into all of creation. Lord Indra is the deity here, the king of the gods, and the great hero. We need the courage to fight the good fight, but also need to make sure the battle is worthy and not just toward selfish/egoistic ends. Remembering the true kingdom within is the most important key in this struggle.

Sattwic Nakshatras: Sagittarius-Pisces

This section of the sky is about transcendence. Many of the Nakshatra deities in this section of the zodiac are obscure, bewildering forces and creatures or combinations of energies.

Mula — Root, Commencement

Mula shows the quality of Sagittarius that is courageous, fierce and independent.

Deity: Nirriti

Sign(s)/Degrees: 0:00 — 13:20 Sagittarius

Ruler: Ketu

Symbol: Tail of lion, crouching lion

Nature: Sharp/Dreadful

Race/Gana: Rakshasa

Animal: Dog

Story: The deity of this Nakshatra “Nirriti” is one who evokes much fear in the *Rig Veda*. Nirriti is the goddess of destruction. But destruction is not necessarily bad, if we are destroying the right thing. The image of Goddess Kali destroying our ignorance and negative tendencies is the most potent image of this energy. Kali was assembled to defeat the great buffalo demon and all the other demons. She wears a garland of skulls and a skirt of arms, representing our wrong ideas and wrong attachments. But once she begins destroying, it’s hard to get her to stop.

This Nakshatra exists at the Galactic core, the center of the Milky Way Galaxy. In Vedic Cosmology it is referred to as the “the Vishnu Nabi (the navel of Vishnu).”

In Practice: This is the first Nakshatra in the last section of the zodiac, where the soul is realizing the limits of Earth and the solid forms we are so attached to. This first Nakshatra is where we “uproot” the darkness and ignorance and plant seeds of truth in that vacant spot. After the stress and fear of Scorpio, a higher meaning and purpose is sought in Sagittarius.

Purva Ashada — Earlier Victory

Purva Ashada shows the devotional nature of Sagittarius and the need to have discrimination with our beliefs, otherwise we become fanatical.

Deity: Apas

Sign(s)/Degrees: 13:20 — 26:39 Sagittarius

Ruler: Venus

Symbol: Hand fan, winnowing basket, tusk, square

Nature: Fierce/Severe

Race/Gana: Manushya

Animal: Monkey

Story: Apas, the ocean as sacred water, is the deity of this Nakshatra. In the Shatapatha Brahman it states that lord Brahma was born from the union of the Supreme Being (Brahman) and the female energy (Maya). In order to build the universe, Brahma first created the waters, into which he placed his seed. This seed became a golden egg, from which Brahma appeared.

According to another legend, Brahma is self-born out of a lotus flower which grew from the Vishnu Nabi (the navel of Vishnu). If you recall, Mula Nakshatra is Vishnu Nabi.

In Practice: The seeds we have planted in Mula Nakshatra need to be watered and cared for in this Nakshatra. Purva Ashada Nakshatra is ruled by the God Apas, the ocean. This is related to the ocean of love and devotion that flows from our heart, and from which we create.

This nurturing and love is what determines the “earlier victories” in life, similar to how the love and nurturing of our childhood plays a big role in our later victories in life. How well we water and nurture those things in our life determines the “later victory” that comes in the next Nakshatra.

Uttar Ashada — Later Victory

Uttar Ashada shows how the Sun sustains the powerful and relentless qualities of Sagittarius and Capricorn.

Deity: Vishwa Devas

Sign(s)/Degrees: 26:40 — 9:59 Capricorn

Ruler: Sun

Symbol: Machan, Elephant tusk, Square

Nature: Fixed

Race/Gana: Manushya

Animal: Mongoose

Story: The Vishwa devas (universal gods) and were born from the God Dharma and the Goddess Vishwa. There are ten universal principles, such as truth, time, goodness, desire, and skill, to name a few. These universal powers govern this Nakshatra. We can see them illustrated in many Indian epics such as in the Bhagavad Gita. The struggle between dharma and kama (desire) is illustrated in the *Bhagavad Gita*. When Arjuna gained knowledge of the self, the imperishable soul, he remembered his duty and was willing to act in accordance with a greater truth than just his likes and dislikes.

In Practice: The inspiration of Sagittarius becoming the concrete reality of Capricorn takes place in this Nakshatra. The later victory in life comes as a result of how well we handle the universal gods/forces — the Vishwa Devas. Dharma (truth), kama (desire), karma (action), kala (time) are chief among the Vishwa Devas.

There is always a victory of one thing over another. Perhaps it is the victory of our struggle over our triumph. But if we fall in love with our failures, then they become truth, and we take action based on them and spend a lot of time (kala) on them. If we want to produce a different result, we need to take different actions, connect to a different truth. It is the power of the Vishwa Devas to grant victory. Our adherence to these universal laws guarantees it. The soul's liberation depends on how well we handle the Vishwa Devas.

Sravana- Famous, Hearing

Sravana shows the manifesting power of Capricorn and its ability to make the spiritual concrete.

Deity: Vishnu

Sign(s)/Degrees: 10:00 — 23:19 Capricorn

Ruler: Moon

Symbol: 3 Footprints, Arrow

Nature: Moveable

Race/Gana: Deva

Animal: Monkey

Story: Lord Vishnu incarnated as Vamana, the dwarf that covered all of creation in his three steps as a way to restore dharma from the evil King Bali. In this way something as small and dwarf-like as a single word can grow to encompass all of creation when aligned with dharma and righteousness.

In Practice: Sravana means “listening.” Not just listening for words or sounds, but listening for the truth beyond the words that are spoken and listening to silence, the substratum of sound. A deep connection to silence is a deep connection to what binds all things together.

Once mastered, the sacred art of listening and connection allows for great outer and inner manifestations. Also, the power of a good name and reputation is seen here. However, care must be taken not to fall into the lower qualities of speaking, such as gossip and negativity.

Dhanista — Very Rich, Very Swift

Dhanista shows cardinal earth becoming fixed air, where structure is shared for the benefit of all.

Deity: The eight Vasus

Sign(s)/Degrees: 23:20 Capricorn — 6:39 Aquarius

Ruler: Mars

Symbol: Mridanga (drum)

Nature: Moveable

Race/Gana: Rakshasa

Animal: Lion

Story: The eight Vasus show the raw creative elements of life. (Earth, Water, Fire, Wind, Sky, Sun, Stars, Moon). These are the five elements of Earth, as well as the celestial elements beyond, which eventually take us to the heavenly abode.

In the *Mahabharata*, the great warrior Bhishma was born as one of the Vasus, after a family curse compelled him to live a long life of sacrifice and duty. He was steadfast in his commitments and later died on a bed of arrows upholding his vows.

Mars is exalted in the Capricorn portion of Dhanista, showing the highest functioning of Mars as operating the primordial substances and energies of the universe. Mars is the great architect and alchemist as ruling earth-bound fire (Agni).

In Practice: This Nakshatra is equidistant between Capricorn and Aquarius, the two Saturn ruled signs. We see a shift from inner silence to outer service, where the individual's fears and needs are being universalized and socialized. This is a highly creative Nakshatra, related to personal and metaphysical alchemy.

There's a strong connection to Lord Nataraja and Lord Shiva in the form of the cosmic dance. There is both creation and destruction in this dance, with the simultaneous evolution of both, metered by the Mridangam (drum of creation).

Wealth takes many forms here, monetary and spiritual especially. Because success and power may come easily here, we must watch the lower forms of domination. This Nakshatra is related to the Sushumna Nadi at the seat of the kundalini and its entrance at the Muladhara chakra.

Shatabishak — 100 Medicines or Doctors

Shatabishak shows the eccentric and charged quality of Aquarius, its determination to find answers and natural healing capacity.

Deity: Varuna

Sign(s)/Degrees: 6:40 — 19:59 Aquarius

Ruler: Rahu

Symbol: Circle, flower

Nature: Moveable

Race/Gana: Rakshasa

Animal: Horse

Story: Varuna is the deity. He is one of the Adityas and one of the most important deities from the *Rig Veda*, responsible for the seasons and the separation of the day and night and cosmic order. Once upon a time Varuna and Mitra lusted after the same nymph. She chose Mitra, but Varuna was so excited that he released his seed. That semen was then captured in a pot (kumbha). There is a stimulated and eccentric energy in this Nakshatra, that can be either lustful or motivated toward a higher outcome.

In Practice: The upper atmosphere charged with kinetic potential is a good metaphor for this Nakshatra. Imagine ionized clouds ready for the spark of heaven to come down from above. Metaphysically, there's a sense of being between two worlds and many lifetimes.

Reconciling and healing the duality of life, as we unfold higher states of consciousness, is important here. This often leads to a worldly crisis that compels us to seek “100 doctors” and move between this world and the other, similar to the deity Varuna. He separates the day from the night and keeps the seasons and earthly rhythms intact.

Purva Bhadra Pada — Earlier Blessed Result

Purva Bhadra Pada shows the lightning strike of blessing, truth and inspiration connecting us to heaven. This Nakshatra connects Aquarius with Pisces, where the universalized man becomes the cosmic man.

Deity: Aja Eka Pada

Sign(s)/Degrees: 20:00 Aquarius — 3:20 Pisces

Ruler: Jupiter

Symbol: Double-faced man, stage, front legs of cot

Nature: Fierce/Severe

Race/Gana: Manushya

Animal: Lion

Story: Aja Ekapad (one-footed goat) is the deity here. He and Ahi Bhudnya (the deity of Uttara Bhadra) are usually evoked together as a pair of celestial deities, and serpents of the sky. They are Rudras, attendants of Lord Shiva who help liberate the soul of man. Aja Ekapad is related to lightning, which strikes in one spot, like a one-footed goat, the fire of heaven hitting us suddenly. The word “pad” (foot) is about tangible results as feet are what we have on the ground.

In Practice: This Nakshatra connects Aquarius with Pisces, where the universalized individual merges into the cosmic man. No longer even a cultural citizen with a stake in the world, the goal is now liberation. Purva Bhadra Nakshatra shows the lightning of inspiration that comes from heaven and strikes the Earth. This lightning strike gives us a glimpse into our true nature. In Buddhist traditions this is called “satori.”

But care must be taken not to mistake a glimpse of truth for having reached the goal. Often there is fanaticism and unchecked, unintegrated fantasy projections about “enlightenment” or other delusions of grandeur shown here.

Uttara Bhadra Pada — Later Blessed Result

Uttara Bhadra shows the soul determined to reach the depths of truth, not satisfied with just the glimpse.

Deity: Ahir Bhudnya

Sign(s)/Degrees: 3:20 — 16:39 Pisces

Ruler: Saturn

Symbol: Double-faced man, Stage, back legs of cot

Nature: Moveable

Race/Gana: Manushya

Animal: Cow

Story: Ruled by Ahi Bhudnya (serpent of the deep). Whereas Purva Bhadrapad and Aja Ekapad come from above, Uttara Bhadrapad and Ahi Bhudnya drill down into the depths, after the lightning strike gives an experience. This serpent goes deep down into the holes in our psyche, transforming our fear of awakening into a deep strength. Another of the Rudras, he is a part of Lord Shiva that is fierce and transformative.

In Practice: Whereas Purva Bhadra shows a glimpse of our eternal soul, Uttara Bhadra is where we make a commitment to discovering the hidden depths of the mind and psyche. This Saturn ruled Nakshatra in metaphysical Pisces shows the determination and commitment to reach the goal.

It also shows the willingness to be of service to others. It is the part of Pisces that is very humble and reverent, especially toward ancient knowledge and sacred teachings.

Revati — Wealthy, Rich

Revati shows the gentle and devoted nature of Pisces as well as its love of animals and all helpless creatures.

Deity: Pushan

Sign(s)/Degrees: 16:40 — 29:59 Pisces

Ruler: Mercury

Symbol: Mridanga (drum), Fish

Nature: Soft/Tender

Race/Gana: Deva

Animal: Elephant

Story: Pushan is the deity. He is one of the Adityas. He had his teeth knocked out at the same ceremony where Bhaga had his eyes poked out (Daksha's yagya). Pushan is the shepherd of the gods, leading the animals and souls home after a weary journey around the zodiac. He also protects the road home and allows lost objects and animals to be found. He may be the most gentle and selfless of all deities.

Venus is exalted in this Nakshatra. As the bringer of divine love, Venus is operating in her highest form in the last degrees of the zodiac. In many ways Venus is the worldliest of planets and yet it is she to whom the physical world becomes pointless.

In Practice: Revati is the Nakshatra that exists at the very end of the zodiac. As such it is analogous to the soul completing its journey around the zodiac, weary and full of life lessons. At this point the gentle shepherd Pushan guides the soul home. This is the part of Pisces that is totally self-sacrificial, at times to the detriment of one's self or a situation that may demand greater individual autonomy. There can be some extreme boundary issues and unrealistic, fantasy projections in this Nakshatra as well. All things considered, it may be the most gentle and selfless of them all

	Name	Degrees	Meaning	Symbol	Planet Ruler	Race	Animal	Nature
1	Aswinni	00 - 13:20 Aries	the horsemen	horses head	Ketu	Deva	Horse	light, swift
2	Bharani	13:20 - 26:40 Aries	the bearers	female sexual organ	Venus	Manusha	Elephant	fierce, severe
3	Krittika	26:40 Aries - 10 Taurus	razor/cutter	dagger/razor	Sun	Rakshasa	Goat	soft/dreadful
4	Rohini	10 - 23:20 Taurus	ruddy cow, red, growing	chariot	Moon	Manusha	Serpent	Fixed
5	Mrigashira	23:20 Taurus - 6:40 Gemini	dear or antelope's head	head or a deer	Mars	Deva	Serpent	soft, tender
6	Ardra	6:40 - 20 Gemini	the moist	tear drop, gem	Rahu	Manusha	Dog	sharp, dreadful
7	Punurvasu	20 Gemini - 3:20 Cancer	return of the light and goods,	quiver/ house, bow	Jupiter	Deva	Cat	Movable
8	Pushyami	3:20 - 16:40 Cancer	nourisher, flower, the best	teat of cow, arrow, flower	Saturn	Deva	Goat	light, swift
9	Aslesha	16:40 - 30:00 Cancer	entwiner, embracer,	wheel, serpent	Mercury	Rakshasa	Cat	sharp, dreadful
10	Magha	00 - 13:20 Leo	beneficent, mighty	throne, palanquin,	Ketu	Rakshasa	Rat	fierce, severe
11	Purva Phalguni	13:20 - 26:40 Leo	previous red one	legs of a cot, stage	Venus	Manusha	Rat	fierce, severe
12	Uttar Phalguni	26:40 Leo - 10 Virgo	later red one	bed, legs of a cot	Sun	Manusha	Cow	Fixed
13	Hasta	10 - 23:20 Virgo	hand	closed hand	Moon	Deva	Buffalo	light, swift
14	Chitra	23:20 Virgo - 6:40 Libra	brilliant, distinguished	pearl	Mars	Rakshasa	Tiger	soft, tender

15	Svati	6:40 - 20 Libra	independent, sword	coral, sapphire	Rahu	Deva	Buffalo	Movable
16	Vishaka	20 Libra - 3:20 Scorpio	forked branches	leaf decked triumphal gate,	Jupiter	Rakshasa	Tiger	soft/dreadful
17	Anuradha	3:20 - 16:40 Scorpio	following Radha	or bali (heap of rice), umbrella	Saturn	Deva	Deer	soft, tender
18	Jyesta	16:40 - 30 Scorpio	the eldest	kundal (ear Ring), talisman	Mercury	Rakshasa	Deer	sharp, dreadful
19	Moola	00 - 13:20 Sagittarius	root,	tail of lion, crouching line	Ketu	Rakshasa	Dog	sharp, dreadful
20	Purva Ashada	13:20 - 26:40 Sagittarius	earlier victory	winnowing basket, tusk,	Venus	Manusha	Monkey	fierce, severe
21	Uttara Ashada	26:40 Sagit - 10 Capricorn	later victory	elephant tusk, square	Sun	Manusha	Mongoose	fixed
22	Sravana	10 - 23:20 Capricorn	famous, hearing	3 footprints, arrow	Moon	Deva	Monkey	movable
23	Dhanishta	23:20 Cap - 6:40 Aqua	very rich, very swift	mridanga (drum)	Mars	Rakshasa	Lion	movable
24	Shatabishak	6:40 - 20 Aquarius	100 medicines or doctors	circle, flower	Rahu	Rakshasa	Horse	movable
25	Purva Bhadra Pada	20 Aquarius - 3:20 Pisces	earlier auspicious one	double faced man, legs of a cot	Jupiter	Manusha	Lion	fierce, severe
26	Uttara Bhadra Pada	3:20 - 16:40 Pisces	later auspicious one	last bed, legs of a cot two men	Saturn	Manusha	Cow	movable
27	Revati	16:40 - 30 Pisces	rich, wealthy	mridanga (drum), fish	Mercury	Deva	Elephant	soft, tender



CHAPTER 10

Harmonic Charts

In Vedic astrology 16 different harmonic charts are employed. These charts allow us to look more deeply into the specific areas of life they rule. The charts are calculated as subdivisions of each astrology sign from the Rasi (natal / astronomical) chart.

For example the D3 is calculated by dividing up each sign into 3 portions. The D9 divides up each sign into 9 portions. Each chart has a specific means of calculation.

For example, with the D3, each of the three portions are divided based on the sign elements.

For example:

The first Drekkana (name of the D3) of Taurus is Taurus

The second Drekkana of Taurus is Virgo (the next Earth sign)

The third Drekkana of Taurus is Capricorn (the next Earth sign).

In the case of the Drekkana, these are 10 degree portions (30 degrees divided by 3).

Each Harmonic chart gives us an intense micro view of the area of life it rules. We read these charts the same way we read the Rasi chart, including all qualities of planetary strength and weakness, principles that affect the ripening of karmas, etc. (described in greater detail in Chapter 12)

The 1st seven harmonic charts also correlate to a planet that rules the area of life indicated by the chart in question.

Because the harmonic charts measure smaller amounts of time, they allow us to drill down to a very specific birth time.

There are many subtleties to consider when reading harmonic charts and interlacing their indicators with the rasi chart. Given that, I will explore advanced uses of harmonic charts in an upcoming book.

Below is a chart that describes the general features of each harmonic chart.

Harmonic Chart Table

#	<i>Sanskrit Name</i>	<i>Planet</i>	<i>Domain</i>
D1	Rasi	Sun	Health, Overall Life — the main birth chart.
D2	Hora	Moon	Wealth, Peace — shows the things we gather and our relationship to them.
D3	Drekkana	Mars	Siblings, Competition — the force of our will, curiosity and interests.
D4	Chaturtamsa	Mercury	Property, Sustenance — solid structures in our life, such as our house.
D7	Saptamsa	Jupiter	Children, Meaning — creativity and the things that inspire us.
D9	Navamsa	Venus	Relations, Value, Merit — connections to others and the merit it has given.
D10	Dasamsa	Saturn	Duty, Accomplishment -often these results are shown in our career.
D12	Dwadasamsha	Rahu	Relatives, Legacy — grandparents and family history are included.
D16	Shodasamsha	---	Happiness, Acquisition — general prosperity — compounding 4X4.
D20	Vimsamsha	---	Embodied wisdom — the alchemy of 5 th and 4 th house themes.
D24	Siddhamsa	---	Life Lessons — alchemy of 4 th and 6 th house, effort to strengthen our mind.
D27	Bhamsha	---	General Strengths — related to the Nakshatras. Our overall “celestial” imprint.
D30	Trimsamsha	---	General Weakness — alchemy of 3 rd and 10 th house themes. The force of our desires.
D40	Khavedamsha	---	Illusions, Mysteries — alchemy of 5 th and 8 th house themes. Confusion and insight.
D45	Aksha Vedamsha	---	Psychic/Spiritual Insight — alchemy of 5 th and 9 th house themes. Spiritual merit.
D60	Shastiamsha	---	All Things Past and Future — alchemy of 5 th and 12 th house themes. Wisdom through all lifetimes.



CHAPTER 11

Important Planetary Factors — Aspects and Yogas

Before we explore reading the astrology chart, we need to investigate how the planets share their energy with each other. Planetary aspects and yogas are two of the most important ways. The planets are the beings of light. As such, they have vision that allows them to see, and therefore influence, areas of life beyond the sign and house they inhabit. This sight is commonly referred to as an aspect. But the proper (Sanskrit) word for it is “drishti” (glance).

I will describe the general tendencies of planetary aspects in this book, as they are the most commonly used. But Vedic astrology also uses Rasi aspects (the Signs aspect each other) and other nuances with regard to planetary aspects. These subtleties will be discussed in a future book.

The planets look at each other, and different areas of life, and spread their influence to that area. Think of what it's like when you're trying to work but there is a very attractive, even sexy person watching you (Venus aspect). How does that affect your work? Suppose a grouchy old man is watching you (Saturn aspect). How does that influence your work?

In general, the gentle planets (Jupiter, Venus, Mercury, the Moon) offer assistance through aspect. The cruel planets (Saturn, Mars, Sun) tend to be disruptive or bring stress.

However, it is not that simple. Gentle planets can also bring about laziness (Venus and Moon), distraction (Mercury), or over-optimism (Jupiter). Cruel planets can also give determination and willingness to endure difficulty (Saturn), ability to bust through obstacles and act with courage (Mars), and willingness to sacrifice comfort for duty (Sun).

All of the planets bring divine energy and, in general, all aspects have favorable potential (through the positive quality of the aspecting planet) or negative potential (through the difficult quality of the planet). In truth, all aspects are a mix of both. The good astrologer measures the preponderance of difficulty or ease — and the moment in question (based on the dasa cycle or transit in the sky).

Planetary Aspects

Below are the major Planetary aspects in Vedic astrology. For the sake of ease at this point, all aspects will be considered as “Full”.

All planets aspect the 7th house from themselves.

Mars aspects the 4th and 8th house's forward.

Jupiter aspects the 5th and 9th house's forward.

Saturn aspects the 3rd and 10th house's forward.

As with everything in Vedic astrology, aspects are calculated/ counted inclusive from the sign where the planet resides.

Common | Shared Aspects

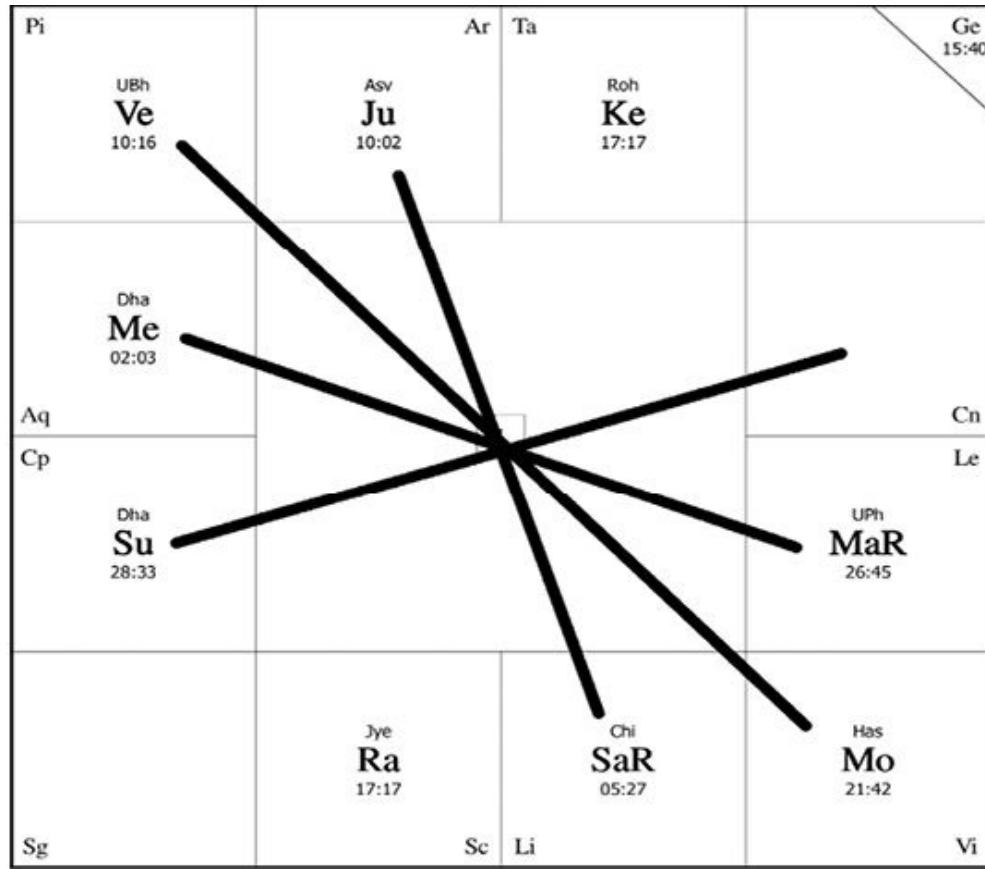


Figure 11.1

The Diagram above illustrates the aspects of the Sun (Su), Mercury (Me), Saturn (SaR) and Venus (Ve). Notice that the 7th house aspect is directly across, akin to someone standing right in front of you.

In this chart, the Moon and Venus aspect each other, Mars and Mercury aspect each other, and the Sun aspects the sign of Cancer, but there are no planets there. Jupiter and Saturn also aspect each other through the 7th house aspect.

Planets also aspect the signs/houses, spreading their influence to those areas of life. But priority should be placed on planetary aspects to each other. In that case the planet not only influences the aspected sign and house, but also the planet and (most importantly) the houses that aspected planet rules.

Mars Aspect Chart

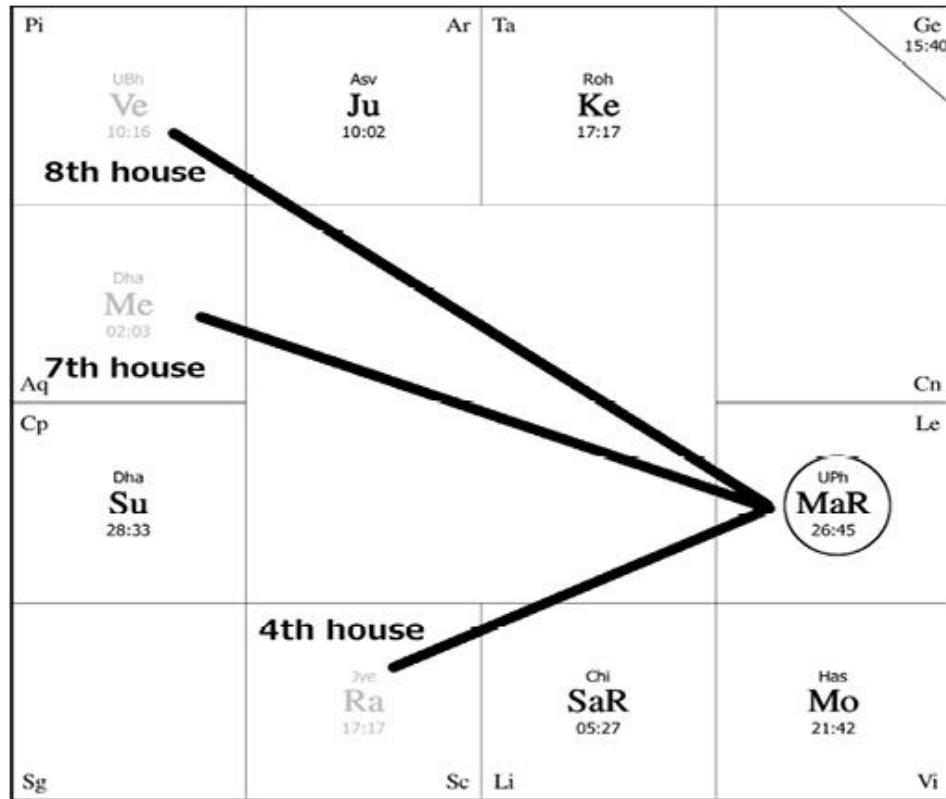


Figure.11.2

The chart above shows the Mars aspects. Notice the same 7th house aspect as in the Sun, Mercury, and Venus chart above, but there are two additional aspects shown. Mars also aspects the 4th house and the 8th house from his placement. And in this case, Mars will not only spread his influence to Scorpio, Aquarius and Pisces, but he will also share his influence with Rahu, Mercury and Venus, as they occupy those signs.

The houses Mercury and Venus rule will be influenced by the willful enthusiasm of Mars. It is easy to see in this chart why Mars is difficult in romantic relationships, as he aspects the 7th house (partners) and the 8th house (sudden losses, cheating and hostility). Often when a person has Mars in the 1st house of their natal chart, they will cheat on their partners.

Jupiter Aspect Chart

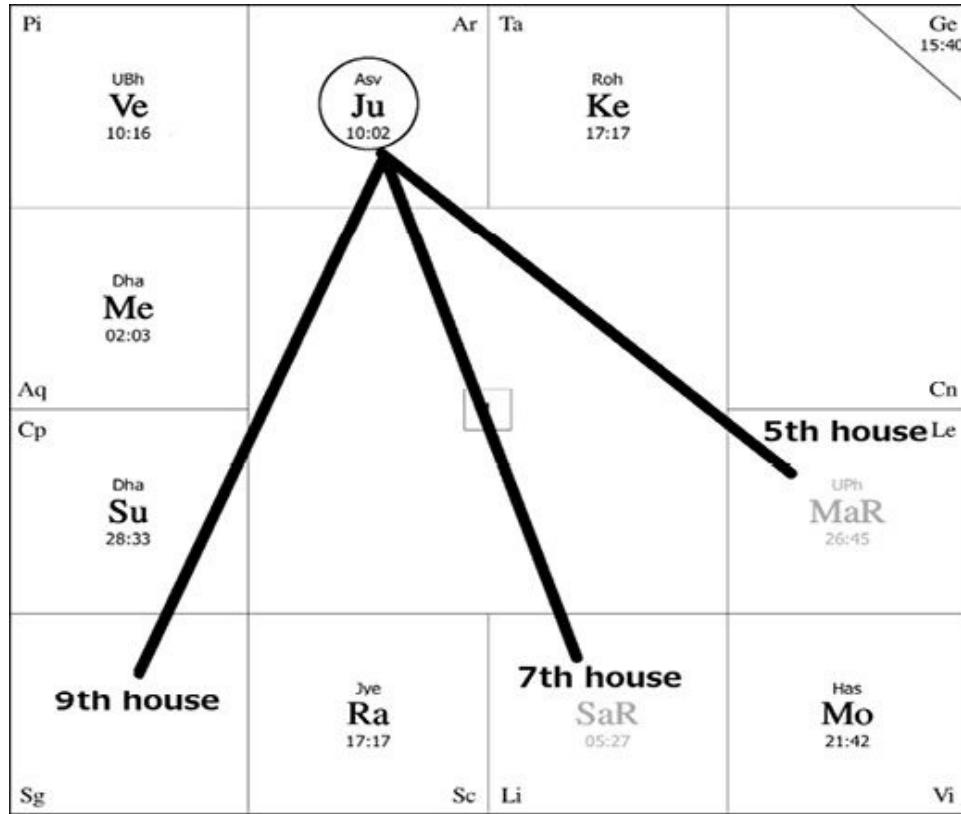


Figure 11.3

The chart above illustrates Jupiter aspects. Notice how these aspects are spread out evenly. The 5th, 7th and 9th houses receive his beneficial glance. Houses 5 and 9 are called trines, and you can see why. Jupiter's aspects form a triangle, a symbol of purpose, strength, stability, and also hope, as it points upward. The trine is related to dharma and purpose. Any area of life affected by Jupiter will usually be blessed.

In this case Jupiter also aspects Mars and Saturn. Those planets, and the houses they rule, will all benefit from the wisdom of Jupiter.

Saturn Aspect Chart

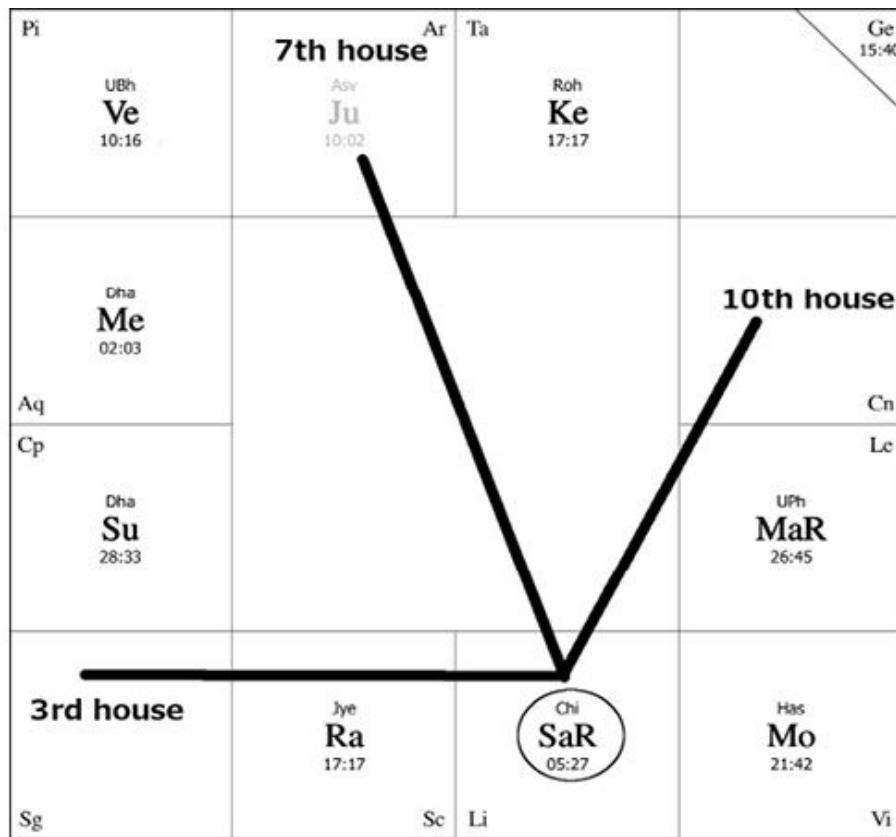


Figure. 11.4

The Chart above illustrates Saturn's aspect. Saturn is a planet of duty, responsibility and effort. The 3rd, 7th and 10th houses receive his aspect. The 3rd house is about self-will, the 7th house is other people and the 10th house is about pressure. These are all big themes with Saturn and the great gains he brings.

In the chart above, Saturn also aspects Jupiter, showing his unflinching determination being spread to the Jupiter areas of life.

Mahapurusha Raja Yogas

As we now know, the planets rule different signs. It is effective to view them as landlords of different properties. When a planet occupies one of the houses it rules it becomes a very strong force of intelligence. In addition to the properties the planets rule, there is also a sign that is perhaps even more powerful, its exaltation sign.

The angular houses are important for giving support. They are related to a physical body (1st house), emotional state (4th house), partners and relationships

with others (7th house), and our capacity to assume responsibility and rise in life (10th house).

Rule For Mahapurusha Raja Yogas

Any time a planet is either in its own sign or sign of exaltation and also in one of the angular houses it is called a Maha Purusha Raja Yoga (Great Person Royal Association).

The astrology chart should always be scanned for the great person yoga's. They mark the individual and their character in a favorable way, usually. Unlike most other indicators, you can (almost) always expect this formation to give great results in the area of life it influences. The potential "danger" is that the individual may use that energy too much.

As was stated earlier, each one of these planets/forces maintain the thing they do very well and do everything else badly.

For instance, Mercury is the speaker and communicator. Mars is our vital energy in the moment directed toward a goal. If Mars is speaking (Mercury's job), he's too impatient trying to get to the goal too fast or interrupting and moving his own agenda forward. If Mercury is trying to get to the goal (Mars's job) it may take a while because he likes having fun, talking, trying new things and playing around.

Let's analyze each of the Mahapurusha Raja Yogas.

Mars — Ruchaka Yoga

When Mars is in Aries, Scorpio or Capricorn and in an angle from the lagna he forms the Ruchaka Yoga. Ruchaka means "sharp or pointed," like the spear he carries. The highest quality of Mars will emerge here, which will be a courageous and daring course through life. Discipline and right action allows the Ruchaka native to confront their mental preconceptions and seek inner truth instead.

The Ruchaka Yoga is not possible for Gemini, Virgo, Sagittarius or Pisces.

Mercury — Bhadra Yoga

When Mercury is in Gemini or Virgo and in an angle or trine he forms a Bhadra Yoga. Bhadra means "blessed or fortunate." The highest quality of Mercury will be seen here, as the native will be able to clearly discriminate, speak and manage

the details that will bring success in life. Of all the Maha Purusha Yogas, the Bhadra Yoga is considered the most auspicious because of the importance of Mercury, the facilitator in all of life's affairs.

Showing his exclusive nature, the Bhadra Yoga is only possible for Mercury or Jupiter ruled ascendants.

Jupiter — Hamsa Yoga

When Jupiter is in Sagittarius, Pisces or Cancer and in an angular house he forms a Hamsa Yoga. Hamsa means “swan,” as the swan is a metaphor for spiritual practice, Ham-Sa is also a powerful mantra, which means, “I am that.” (The inverse of So-ham.) The Hamsa Yoga allows for guru to shine forth from the person, giving a connection to god’s grace and higher wisdom.

The Hamsa Yoga is not possible for Taurus, Scorpio, Leo and Aquarius, the fixed signs.

Venus — Malavya Yoga

When Venus is in Libra, Taurus or Pisces and in an angle he forms a Malavya Yoga. Malavya indicates an area of Ancient India. The native with a Malavya Yoga will be keenly aware of the price we all must pay for our happiness and they will rarely pay too high of a price. As Venus rules life’s pleasures and our desire to fulfill them, much of life’s suffering results from paying too high of a price to fulfill our desires. This high price leaves us feeling devalued and devaluing others in the process.

In keeping with her generous nature, the Malavya Yoga is possible for all.

Saturn — Sasha Yoga

When Saturn is in Capricorn, Aquarius or Libra and in an angle he forms a Sasha Yoga. Sasha means “rabbit,” which shows the nature of this native. The rabbit is the symbol of uncertainty and fear; the native with this powerful Saturn will often be a fear-based individual. In response to this fear-based outlook, there will be a very practical nature, one where the many details of life will be brought under control.

The Sasha Yoga is not possible for Gemini, Virgo, Sagittarius or Pisces.

Other Important Classical Yogas

Planets not only share their influence by aspecting each other, but most charts also have planets joined. When this happens, their influence is shared, for good or ill. In Brihat Parashara Hora Sastra specific guidelines are given for Raja Yogas based on the planets as house rulers.

In BPHS there are several main sutras dedicated to Raja Yogas.

From the chapter on Raja Yogas we read:

“11-12. Lordships of Kendras and Konas. If there be an exchange between a Lord of a Kendr and a Lord of a Kon, or, if a Lord of a Kendr is yuti with a Lord of a Kon in a Kendr, or in a Kon, or, if a Lord of a Kon is in a Kendr, or vice versa, or, if there happens to be a full Drishti between a Lord of a Kendr and a Lord of a Kon, they cause a Yog. One born in such a Yog will become a king and be famous.”

13. If one and the same Grah gets the lordships of a Kon, as well as a Kendr, or, if a Grah is in a Kendr, or in a Kon, it will prove specially a Yog Karak.”

Translation

1. When an angle ruler and a trinal house ruler join or exchange with each other in an angle or a trinal house, a powerful yoga is formed.
2. If an angle and a trinal house ruler aspect each other, A Raja Yoga will be formed.
3. Or if the lord of an angle is in a trinal house or vice versa a yoga is formed.
4. The planet that owns both angle and a trinal house by itself creates a Raja Yoga. When this occurs that planet becomes in some ways more important than the lagna lord.

Mars for Cancer and

Saturn for Libra and Taurus

Venus for Aquarius and Capricorn

All form Raja Yogas by themselves when they are in an angle (houses 4, 7 or 10) or a trine (houses 1, 5 or 9).

Classical Raja Yogas with Rahu and Ketu

16. Rahu and Ketu. *Rahu and Ketu give predominantly the effects, as due to their yuti with a Bhava Lord, or, as due to the Bhava they occupy.*

17. If Rahu and/or Ketu are in Kendr, receiving a Drishti from, or in association with the Lord of a Kon, or of a Kendr, it will become Yog Karak.

Translation:

1. Rahu and Ketu give the effects of the planets they're joined as a house ruler (and also as a planet). If they're not joined to a planet, they modify the house they occupy (and also of course, the sign).
2. Rahu or Ketu in an angle joined to a trinal lord or vice versa forms a Raja Yoga — it becomes a yoga Karaka.

Dhana Yogas (Wealth-Producing)

When the rulers of the 2nd, 5th, 9th or 11th houses occupy any of those houses, wealth can be produced. For example, the 2nd house ruler in the 5th house or the 9th house ruler in the 2nd house or the 5th house ruler in the 11th house or the 5th house ruler in the 5th house, all form Dhana Yogas.

Many times you will see a planet that rules one of these wealth houses also ruling another house that forms a Raja Yoga, as mentioned above.

For example, Jupiter is a wealth-producing planet for Scorpio, just naturally. This is because Jupiter rules the 2nd and the 5th houses. Any time Jupiter is in the 2nd, 5th, 9th or 11th houses or an angle for a Scorpio, a wealth yoga is formed.

Almost every chart has wealth-producing yogas. Those that don't will often show very difficult financial hardships. Often you can see the most powerful wealth-producing yoga is how the person earns their money.

Also, trinal house lords (1,5 and 9) are very wealth producing. Any combination of trinal house rulers with each other and / or in each other's houses can produce wealth.



CHAPTER 12

Timing Factors — Dasa and Transits

One of the amazing things about Vedic astrology is its remarkable precision, especially when it comes to astrological timing. In fact, this is the primary reason why many Western astrologers began to integrate Vedic astrology into their practice.

Dasas — the Cycles of Unfolding Karma

There are many dasa systems in Vedic astrology. They allow us to foresee the karmic events as they unfold here on Earth. The most prominent is the Vimshottari dasa system. It is a system that uses a 120-year cycle in which each planet rules a certain number of years; this is also broken down into sub-periods from there.

According to BPHS — Chapter 46. Dashas of Grahas V.14

“In Kali Yuga the natural life-span of a human being is generally taken, as 120 years. Therefore Vimshottari Dasha is considered to be the most appropriate and the best of all Dashas.”

The planetary dasas in the Vimshottari dasa system unfold in the following order. This order is also reflected in the planetary lords of the Nakshatras we

discussed earlier in the Nakshatras Chapter .

1. Ketu 7 years
2. Venus 20 years
3. Sun 6 years
4. Moon 10 years
5. Mars 7 years
6. Rahu 18 years
7. Jupiter 16 years
8. Saturn 19 years
9. Mercury 17 years

The sub-periods are in the same order and divided relative to the dasa length above. For example, Ketu dasa starts with Ketu/Ketu, then Ketu/Venus, then Ketu/Sun, etc.

Very accurate results are possible using this dasa system to predict what karmas will unfold at what time.

The Moon in the Vimshottari Dasa Scheme

The start of the 1st Vimshottari planetary dasa cycle is reckoned from the Nakshatra placement of the Moon at birth. The planetary ruler of the Moon Nakshatra will determine the 1st dasa period. The percentage of the amount of distance traversed by the Moon through that Nakshatra is deducted from the balance of the mean dasa length to determine the 1st dasa length.

Example — if the Moon had traveled $\frac{1}{4}$ of the way through the Nakshatra of Bharani, ruled by Venus, then $\frac{1}{4}$ of the length of Venus dasa would be deducted from the mean length of 20 years (the length of Venus dasa). Thus the 1st dasa would be Venus for 16 years. Then after measuring the portion of the first dasa, the others unfold in the length and order shown above (after Venus, then 6 years of the Sun, 10 years of the Moon, 7 years of Mars and so on).

The Vimshottari dasa is shown from the Moon because it is from the Moon that everything grows, first in our consciousness then later in the world. As we have discussed, karma first enters the mind as a tendency, based on the past. It is through the Moon that we experience these tendencies (called samskaras).

When a planetary dasa runs, first we get the samskaras from that planet, based on our past karma with it. If we have misused that planet's energy in past

lives / this one, we get those difficult samskaras when the dasa runs, thus experiencing our difficult tendencies and hopefully learn from them. If we have used that planet well, we get those samskaras also, and we see a time of great benefit and gain.

It is important to note that assessing dasa periods in a general way is quite dicey. There are as many possibilities with dasas as there are charts. Venus for instance is a first rate benefic, yet if she rules difficult houses or has trouble, her periods can seem like hell. This is because of what is mentioned above. A planet in bad dignity will show the difficult karmas associated with it. In that case the themes stated below will be the areas of loss and suffering experienced.

As an example, if Venus is harmed we will feel pain in relationships, wealth, happiness, etc. when her dasa runs, because those are the things she rules. The planets have an innate quality and energy and when their period runs we will feel that energy for good or ill.

When referring to these dasa periods we are also referring to their sub-periods

Ketu — 7 Years

First and foremost the Ketu's job is help us complete the karmas we are finishing in this life. Worldly success is just as possible in Ketu dasa as any other, but often Ketu gives things that only last through his dasa and no further — at least relative to what he rules. If Ketu is powerful it can be a time when past-life expertise wakes up and we step into a version of ourselves that we could have never imagined. This is because Ketu hides the painful things from our past that we have learned from. Often those things show our deepest, most untapped skills. In particular, Ketu supports esoteric and healing careers such as astrology, yoga or other sacred healing practices. If we are too attached to a meaningless life of materiality, Ketu can hurt us deeply.

His dasa follows Mercury, who is a very worldly planet and a builder, so often the worldly gains of Mercury are parsed by the south node and his need for a Spartan existence. Ketu is a malefic planet and a cruel one so his energy will feel harsh, even when he is giving good things.

Medical indications: Ketu can give Mars type of accidents and diseases as well as mysterious illnesses, muscular or nervous system disorders. Psychologically he gives self-doubt as well as a hyper-criticism and scrutiny of all he is associating with.

Venus — 20 Years

Venus is a time when we will mainly seek worldly happiness and a loving connection with others. Coming after Ketu dasa, Marriage is often a theme in Venus dasas or a marriage that has more loving qualities of Venus. Wealth is also an important theme, as are women, children, community and other people in general. Venus as a benefic will want to give things to us and we must be careful not to fall into the worldly trappings of laziness, indulgence, excessive people pleasing and sensual pleasures in her dasa. She is a brahmin, a teacher, and she would like to teach us in a gentle way, but unfortunately, we may not learn life's deep lessons when we are happy in the world, and thus Venus dasa can also be a long comfortable sleep. This great benefic would like to give us the kingdom of god on a silver platter (with a good meal!). Even when we suffer during her dasa there are lessons to learn and it is as gentle as possible.

Medical indications: As a sensual planet she can give illnesses related to sensual/sexual weaknesses, reproductive organs, as well as the kidneys, diabetes.

Sun — 6 Years

Coming after the worldliness of Venus dasa, the Sun dasa shows the time when the soul's energy burns deeply into our life. We would like to purify and hone our personal expression down to only that which serves to take us to the heights we have imagined, whether others approve or not. It is the time when we are finding our true selves. We may experience a crisis of confidence, which spurs the need to seek inner truth. Education, spirituality, politics, business, and affecting the world in a big way can also be themes of the Sun dasa.

Usually both inner and outer explorations take place, but the inner life is the focus. If the Sun is weak, we will feel hurt by the inability to project the confidence we need to blaze a path to truth and light that we have envisioned. His strength and forbearance would like us to sacrifice something, especially after the excess and hedonism of Venus dasa. The nature of the Sun as a cruel Graha is that he will separate us from those things extraneous and in the way. So we may also suffer, as the Sun will burn the impurities we have gathered and separate us from those who do not support or comprehend our new and unique path.

Medical Indications: The Sun rules the basic vitality in the body. If he is weak, there may be an overall decline in vitality. Also, he rules the heart and can

give heart attacks in his dasa period as well as other issue related to fire and taking on excessive responsibility, like heart attacks, hypertension, fevers and strokes.

Moon — 10 Years

After individuality of the Sun, the Moon dasa is a time when we seek connection. Marriage, family and motherhood (especially for women) will be themes. This may also include activities involving us with the public and other people. A strong or well-supported Moon can make its dasa the best time of our lives. A weak Moon can make us feel that everyone else has that “normal life” and those connections that we don’t. If the connections to family and children and home are absent, there could be much suffering in Moon dasa. It is also a time when memories of our own childhood can become major themes as the Moon rules our memories. We will likely revisit our own childhood through the evolution of our growing family or lack thereof. How we’re nurtured and how we nurture others will be played out and this possible loss experienced. If indicated, we may experience some deep mental crises at this time. The Moon is basically our “mental state”, and because more people do not have a very settled mentality, the Moon dasa can be painful and show the need to calm our mind — especially through things like meditation. Just as the Moon itself is the most sensitive part of us, so too the Moon dasa can be the most vulnerable part of our life.

Medical Indications: The Moon shows the overall constitution and water in the body, the water that maintains our tissues. If the Moon is weak it will be dried up, creating excess vata (wind), which makes for nervousness and anxiety in her dasa period. The Moon also rules female organs, especially the breasts, and can show breast cancer or tumors when harmed. Mental illness is also related to the Moon.

Mars — 7 Years

After the connections and feelings of the Moon, we assert ourselves in the Mars dasa is a hot and fast dasa. It is a time when we will be involved in pursuing our goals with energy and passion. There will likely be a sense of excitement and energy during this time as well as a daring course through the seven years of Mars dasa. Expressing our individuality will be important, so will fitness and

strength, Sports, competition, etc. Mars is the planet that makes us want to improve our life by destroying what is not working and getting more disciplined. His dasa will either bring us closer to that improvement, or farther from it, when Mars is compromised. In that case there will be battles with others and arguments preventing our authentic growth. This will either bring complacency or bring us into conflict with others through arguments, fighting and power struggles. Associates, allies and those that we do battle with will also be themes in Mars dasa, as well as siblings and business relationships. Mars also rules landed property, so buying a home may be important. Mars is a malefic planet, so even when he gives things there is a harsh quality to it.

Medical Indications: He brings stress, hypertension and overexertion, so health problems like heart attacks and other stress related ailments might appear during his dasa. Also, problems with the blood, such as leukemia, are possible, as Mars rules the marrow.

Rahu — 18 Years

After the individuality of Mars, Rahu dasa is a time when our life can spin out of control. Rahu is the planet of our material attachment and obsessions. Rahu eclipses our mind on a subconscious level, so his dasa period can feel like we are being controlled by things we do not understand. Mysterious scenarios will unfold and put us in places we would have never imagined. Then unexpectedly, everything changes and we are doing something totally different. His energy is similar to Ketu (the other half of the node), but with Rahu it is our subconscious obsessions that are controlling us, compelling us to develop those parts of ourselves that are in need of developing. Yet Rahu can bring enormous success during his dasa period as he will be focused and determined to explode the worldly quality of whatever he is associating with. There are also psychic events and kundalini experiences possible with Rahu. But in general, during his dasa periods we are likely to feel out of control as we accumulate or experience without wisdom or maturity.

Medical Indications: Rahu creates mysterious illnesses, often of the nervous system, such as weird allergies, toxic poisonings and environmental diseases. Difficult physical ailments that occur during Rahu periods are especially hard to cure because of the obscuring nature of this node. Many times a person will not

become cured until the Jupiter dasa, when suddenly something changes and they are better.

Jupiter — 16 Years

After 18 years of Rahu we get the dasa of the great benefic Jupiter. As guru, Jupiter will always teach us something and give us something. His dasa periods bring children, marriage, wealth as well as titles and honors. Jupiter is the planet of hope, faith and optimism that allows us to keep going because we believe our best days are yet to come. He can make us religious, put us in touch with our guru, and give the right moral conduct and the awareness to do the good rather than the bad. When Jupiter is weak his dasa may make us unrealistic, overly optimistic or give us a sense of entitlement or a haughty view. It may also make us lack hope and give up easily when faced with trouble. We may forget our teachings. We may also look to expand monetarily, rather than spiritually, leading to greediness and excess.

Medical Indications: As a planet of expansion and a kapha planet, Jupiter can create obesity. Also, he has to do with allergies and excess phlegm. As ruling tissue he can be the excess mass that is shown by the body producing cancer cells. Liver and sugar disorders and ear problems are also possible.

Saturn — 19 Years

The expansive nature of Jupiter gives way to the practical persevering quality of Saturn. His dasa is a time when we will face our limitations. The inescapable truth is that our limited body and mind will perish one day. Saturn makes us aware of this through the aches and pains in our body; the death of our loved ones, chronic illness and the resulting fear of these things getting worse. The more attached we are to worldly gain and pleasures, the more Saturn dasa may hurt us. However, great success is also possible, as Saturn is a planet of practical efforts and perseverance leading us toward our goals. He gives a very responsible nature and high levels of ambition. His dasa can place us in hospitals; make us deal with old people, death, legacies and inheritance. Insurance, wills, banks, things attached to legacies and family history are relevant. Saturn is the great karmic taskmaster who rules with an iron grip, bringing suffering commensurate to our avoidance of truth. As such, a Saturn dasa is also a time when enormous spiritual growth and progress is possible

through perseverance and facing the truth alone. He teaches us to thrive in isolation rather than crave worldly distractions. He teaches us to get by with less and simplify our lives, and he teaches us humility and sensitivity to others, because when we suffer we develop compassion for others who suffer.

Medical: Saturn is the indicator of chronic illness. He is a vata planet that brings pain to the joints and drying to the body. Arthritis, paralysis, constipation, cancer as well as problems with the knees, teeth and bones are possible in Saturn dasa. Psychologically, he brings depression, anxiety, fear, cynicism, bitterness and depression.

Mercury — 17 Years

The limitations and restrictions that define Saturn dasa give way to the playful and curious energy of Mercury dasa. Mercury dasa is a time of learning, experimentation, curiosity, mental stimulation and pursuing our interests. But he can also be a time of excessive stimulation and unfocused action. The neutral quality of Mercury is always a potential problem. He does not judge, he builds. It is his job to find the right details necessary to succeed and build our life. Saying the right things, making the right decisions, and talking to the right people are what allow us to succeed, or not succeed.

Mercury will show if we effectively manage the details or become overwhelmed by them. Whatever is influencing Mercury will show how we go about things and how they will manifest in the world. Thus, Mercury dasa is a time when our career and worldly life could skyrocket or plummet. We can either ascend to the heights by devising an effective plan or become overwhelmed by the many tasks and details of life, which can spiral into mental escapism, lethargy and fantasy. He is the lightning fast quality of the mind. That speed is necessary for the equanimity that he brings. The capacity to see all possibilities at once and prioritize and assess them accurately is what makes Mercury the god of discrimination. More than any other planet, Mercury gives us detachment from our emotions, which is truly discrimination in action.

Medical: Lungs, allergies, skin problems, speech defects. Mercury is a planet of the mind, like the Moon, so serious afflictions to him can manifest as mental illness.

Planetary Transits and Karma

In addition to looking at the dasa cycles for timing factors, we must also consider where the planets are moving in real time. The movement of the planets in real time is called “Planetary transits” (“transits” for short). The transits are often more present in our mind and psychology than the dasa cycle, as transits show how our chart (a static factor) is interacting with the living sky (a dynamic factor). The interaction between the dasas and the transits show what happens, why it happens, and how we will feel about it.

Special attention should be paid to the slower moving planets by transit and aspect to sensitive points in a natal chart. Pay attention to the transits of:

- Saturn: This will be the stresses and pressures of any 2.5 year stretch of time.
- Nodal Axis: This shows the emerging and collapsing axis of karma for 18 months.
- Jupiter: This shows the great teachings, hope and optimism for the next 12 months.
- The common signs/planets being aspected by both Jupiter and Saturn, by transit.

Always notice and pay closer attention to when these planets, or others:

- Transit through the natal 1st house
- Transit over the natal Moon
- Transit over any natal planet (especially the ruling planet and / or the current dasa or sub-dasa planet)
- Pay attention to natal planets as house rulers being affected by planets in transit.

For Example:

Saturn in transit over the 10th house ruler will bring stress and pressure to the career, over the 7th house ruler he will bring stress and pressure to relationships, etc.

Planets in Transit Through Rasis

Planets transiting through rasis will take on the motivation of that rasi.

1. Planets transiting Aries will have initiative and act in a bold, competitive and fiery way.
2. Planets transiting Taurus will be receptive and gather energy before acting with care and purpose.
3. Planets transiting Gemini will be mentally stimulated, act on information and develop skills.
4. Planets transiting Cancer will be emotionally centered and seek connection and peace with others.
5. Planets transiting Leo will be confident and powerful and lead to greater individual expression.
6. Planets transiting Virgo will be careful and precise and lead to improvement and purification.
7. Planets transiting Libra will be social and just and lead to interaction and harmony with others.
8. Planets transiting Scorpio will be sensitive and probing, which leads to intense scrutiny and regeneration.
9. Planets transiting Sagittarius will be hopeful and inspired, acting through their faith and ideals.
10. Planets transiting Capricorn will be practical and determined, acting to reach their goals.
11. Planets transiting Aquarius will be selfless and humble, which leads to a spirit of sacrifice and altruism.
12. Planets transiting Pisces will be mystical and may lack direction, which leads to confusion or surrender.

Planets in Transit Through Bhavas

Planets transiting through bhavas will affect that area of life.

1st house —Physical body and health in general, shows the head, identity and personality, general prosperity and well-being, basic self-expression, physical constitution.

2nd house — Values, close friends, gathering and holding of resources, food, livelihood, speech, childhood and domestic tendencies, financial success (or not) through career, face.

3rd house — Siblings, self-will, power and prowess, people we compete with, ego, hobbies and interests, personal desires. Curiosity, rashness, displays of

force, courage.

4th house — Mother emotions, our feeling potential, peace and happiness, property, upbringing, education, vehicles, what is internal and private, where we are most sensitive.

5th house — Children and all creative expressions, our heart's desire, intelligence, education, speculation, romance, past life credit, spiritual practices, ability to give birth to our ideas.

6th house — The unpleasant tasks in life, Health and disease, immune system, work and service, pets, effort, our capacity to do hard labor, vanquishing enemies, overcoming obstacles.

7th house — Adult relationships with equals including long-term romantic relationships, business associates or connections where mutual desires can only be fulfilled with them.

8th house — Transforming insecurity, letting go of control, things breaking, destruction, dissolution, death, the occult, dark/hidden side of life, longevity, research, confronting our mortality.

9th house — Religious, philosophical or ethical principles, grace, dharma, Gurus, the highest teachings that give our life meaning and direction, Higher education, inspiration

10th house — Duty, pressure and responsibility, Career, public status, material achievement, success, our ability to effect the world, the power we have based on our reputation.

11th house — Our highest aspirations and goals, ambitions, financial and material gains, large groups of people, altruism, competing against others or serving them

12th house — Our subconscious and hidden nature, loss, liberation, isolation, a wastage of energy, Isolated through sorrow or peace.



CHAPTER 13

Chart Analysis

SOUTH INDIAN VEDIC
ASTROLOGY CHART

Pisces	Aries	Taurus	Gemini
Aquarius		Cancer	
Capricorn			Leo
Sagittarius	Scorpio	Libra	Virgo

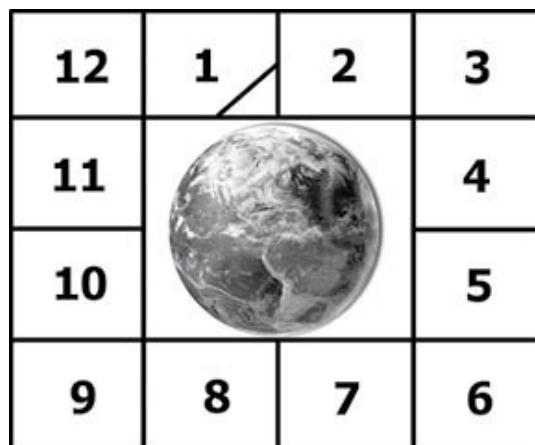
Above is the South Indian astrology chart. For ease, this is a chart we will use in this book. I prefer to use this chart when teaching for two reasons. First of all, it

is an astronomically correct chart. Meaning, as seen above, if you visualize the Earth in the center of the circle of squares, you get an accurate picture of the sky represented by the astrology chart.

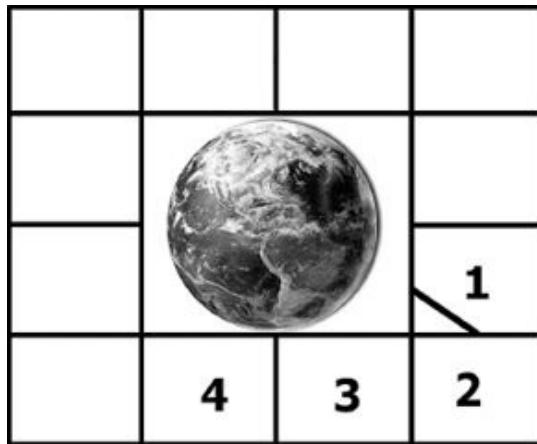
Too often astrology is taught as a way to “read charts,” as if the chart is something separate from the sky or us. The astrology chart should be seen as a portrait of the living sky at a certain moment. Secondly, it is my experience that aspects and planetary relationships are much easier to see using this chart, as the signs are always fixed in the same place.

Vedic astrology places supreme importance on the rising sign, not the Sun sign, as is popular in modern Western astrology. “Your sign” in Vedic astrology is actually the rising sign, based on the sidereal zodiac. In order to start deciphering the Vedic astrology chart you must first find the ascendant, which is usually delineated by a diagonal line in one of the signs. From there you begin to count the houses inclusively, from the ascendant.

In the chart below, the native is an Aries, as the box with the diagonal line (ascendant) is Aries. Taurus is the 2nd house, Gemini the 3rd house, etc. Regardless of where the line falls (which sign) the houses are counted inclusively from that point.



The chart below shows another example. In this case it is of a Leo (the sign where the diagonal line exists). Virgo is the 2nd house, Libra the 3rd, etc.



When reading a chart, it is easy to become overwhelmed with the many possibilities. But actually it is very easy to understand how to read charts conceptually. You simply take the traits of the planet, sign, house and Nakshatra and merge them together. Qualities that the planet, sign, house and Nakshatra share get strengthened. Qualities that are not shared show difficulties and stress. It is really that simple, yet there is much complexity in this process.

Here are the most important things to look for.

Synthesizing the Graha, Rasi and Bhava

It is not possible to assess a Graha, rasi and bhava without considering all three components together. Here are a few rules about determining these three factors:

Bhavas are counted inclusive from the ascendant (as we just did in the previous charts).

2. A planet must reside in a house, sign (and Nakshatra).

3. To determine the effects for an area of life where no planets reside, simply find the lord of that bhava and how it is affected. The lord rules the rasi of the bhava.

For example, Mercury is the 2nd bhava lord for Leo because it rules Virgo, the 2nd sign from Leo.

Keyword Templates for Chart Reading

Using keywords and templates can be an excellent way to jump start your chart reading ability. Next are a few keyword lists and templates to use to start the evaluation process.

Planet Keywords

Sun — soul, confidence, generosity, power, ego, father

Moon — feeling/emotions, connection, family, others, mother

Mars — vitality, focus, aggression, logic, innocence, friends, brothers

Mercury — speech/communication, skills, intellect, flexibility, humor

Jupiter — wisdom, meaning, optimism, children, teachings

Venus — pleasure, sex, happiness, beauty, comfort, laziness, lovers

Saturn — fear, hard work, commitment, stress, isolation, old people

Rahu — obsessions, attachment, exaggeration, expanded perception

Ketu — dissatisfaction, detachment, solitude, scrutinizing, anonymity

Sign Keywords

Aries (Male Mars — HEAD — Moveable Fire) courage, strength, bold, brash, sharp minds, action, impulsive

Taurus (Female Venus — FACE — Fixed Earth) comfort, pleasure, steady, devoted, sensual, family, food

Gemini (Male Mercury — ARMS — Dual Air) speech, knowledge, sensation, skilled, curious, unfocused

Cancer (Female Moon — CHEST — Moveable Water) intuitive, emotional, attached, nurturing, shy

Leo (Male Sun — SOLAR PLEXUS — Fixed Fire) inspired, uplifted, overpowering, burning, domineering

Virgo (Female Mercury — BOWELS — Dual Earth) responsible, dutiful, worried, pure, critical, alone

Libra (Male Venus — HIPS — Moveable Air) hesitant, love of beauty, other people, social, shallow

Scorpio (Female Mars — GENITALS — Fixed Water) obsessive, sensitive, secretive, probing, self-protective

Sagittarius (Male Jupiter — THIGHS — Dual Fire) generous, optimistic, faith inspired, adventurous, orthodox

Capricorn (Female Saturn — KNEES — Moveable Earth) serious, ambitious, reserved, practical, responsible

Aquarius (Male Saturn — CALVES — Fixed Air) humility, servitude, humanitarian, focus on others

Pisces (Female Jupiter — FEET — Dual Water) fantasy, imagination, spiritual, endings, creativity, devotion

House Keywords

1st house (Sun) truthful nature, body, general health, the head, personality

2nd house (Mercury, Venus) values, self-expression, income, security, childhood, speech, self-esteem

3rd house (Mars, Mercury) self-will, siblings, power and prowess, friends, motivation, zeal, rashness, curiosity

4th house (Moon) emotional state, mother, feeling potential, peace, property, deepest sensitivity, inner life

5th house (Jupiter) intelligence, creativity, children, education, romance, past life merit, mantras

6th house (Mars, Saturn) unpleasant tasks, illness, debt, things breaking, immune system, hard work, service.

7th house (Venus, Jupiter) long-term relationships, general relations with others, business associates

8th house (Saturn) transformation, other people's money, dissolution, sex, death, hidden side of life, research

9th house (Jupiter) religion, philosophical or ethical principles, god's grace, dharma-shaping life events

10th house (Mercury, Jupiter, Sun) career, public status, fame, success, impact on the world, politics.

11th house (Jupiter) highest aspirations and goals, financial gains, impulse, excess, large groups of people

12th house (Saturn, Ketu) subconscious, hidden nature, isolated through sorrow or peace, liberation, loss

Rhythm of Opposites

Look to the opposite rasis and bhavas to see which traits the native must develop. This is especially useful where the Nodal axis exists and / or any major oppositions of planets.

Bhavas and Their Opposite

1st house — our self

7th house — our partner
2nd house — our values, money and security
8th house — other people's values, money, our insecurity
3rd house — what we get through our self-will and intelligence
9th house — what we can only get through god's grace not will
4th house — our inner life
10th house — our public life
5th house — personal, creative inspiration, heart's desire
11th house — outer, public aspirations and service
6th house — duty, things we must work hard to finish
12th house — freedom from duty, responsibility and work

Rashis and Their Opposite

Aries — Acts on instinct, impulsive, self-motivated
Libra — Acts with caution, careful, other-motivated
Taurus — Wants stability and consistency, practical
Scorpio — Wants intensity and drama, creates upheavals
Gemini — Experimental, quirky, unfocused, literal
Sagittarius — Faith inspired, orthodox yet abstract
Cancer — Subjective and emotional
Capricorn — Material and practical
Leo — Self-interested and confident
Aquarius — interested in others, poor self-image
Virgo — Attached to actions — feels responsible
Pisces — Resigned to karma, irresponsible

A Simple Reading Formula

1. Identify the lagna. The attributes of the lagna are the main qualities of the person.
2. Identify the lagna lord.
3. Identify the sign that holds the lagna lord.
4. Identify the house the holds the lagna lord.
5. Identify the planet that rules the sign that holds the lagna lord.
6. Find Rahu and Ketu in the chart by sign and house and conjunction.
Rahu and Ketu are the main forces of karma; Rahu is what we are

currently developing, Ketu is what we have recently learned.

7. Planets in the lagna will show personality traits, areas of interest and natural skills.
8. Planets joined to the lagna lord will show their effects on the person.
9. Any house with three or more planets in it will be a major area of focus in life.

WORKSHEET - Go here to download this worksheet:

<http://vedicartandscience.com/worksheet1/>

Generate Your Chart here

<http://vedicchartcalculator.com/>

1. Lagna — As shown by the sign of (*insert rising sign here*) the basic outlook, personality and energy is one which displays (*insert traits of the rising sign here*).
2. It is ruled by the planet (*insert rising sign planetary ruler here*), which shows (*insert traits of planetary ruler here*) will be important qualities of the native.
3. They will be challenged to develop the traits associated with the opposite sign of (*insert sign opposite of the rising sign here*), those traits are (*insert sign opposite traits here*).
4. Lagna lord is in the (*insert house where the rising sign ruler resides*), which shows (*those traits*) will be very important to the person.
5. Lagna lord is in the sign of (*insert sign where the rising sign ruler resides*), which shows (*those traits*) type of psychology will be influencing their behavior.
6. Rahu is in the (*insert house where Rahu resides*) house, which shows the main attachments and areas of life this person is trying to develop in order for their soul to evolve are about (*Rahu house traits*).
7. Rahu is in the sign of (*insert sign where Rahu resides*), which shows the main mental and emotional energy this person is trying to develop in order for their soul to evolve are (*Rahu house traits*).
8. Rahu is conjoined the planet(s) (*insert planets joined Rahu*), which shows an obsession to develop more (*insert traits of those planets*).
9. Ketu is in the (*insert house where Ketu resides*), which shows the main areas of detachment and dispassion in this person's life. These are

generally areas of neglect as having been recently developed in past lives. There may be expertise, but not a lot of satisfaction with (insert traits of Ketu's house).

10. Ketu is in sign of (insert sign where Ketu resides), which shows they will likely have mental and emotional skill and maturity with (insert traits of Ketu's sign).
11. Ketu is conjoined the planet(s) (insert planets joined Ketu), which shows skill and development, yet dissatisfaction with (insert traits of those planets).
12. There are three or more planets in the (insert house with three or more planets) house, giving an extra focus on (insert traits of the house with three or more planets).
13. There are three or more planets in (insert sign with three or more planets) sign, giving a psychology strongly oriented toward (insert traits of the sign with three or more planets).
14. They have (insert planets in lagna), which shows (insert traits of the planets in the lagna) to also be very prominent.
15. They have (insert planets joined the lagna lord) conjoined the lagna lord, which shows (insert traits of the planets joined the lagna lord) to also be very important to the native.
16. These planets are forming Maha Purusha Yogas, giving these traits: ...

Case Studies Using the Worksheet

Angelina Jolie's Chart Using the Worksheet

Below is the chart of Angelina Jolie.

Pi	Ju 23:54 Rev Mo 19:33 Rev Ma 17:11		Ar	Ta Roh Su 19:54 Kri Ke 07:22	MeR 28:48		Ge
Aq		Angelina Jolie June 4, 1975 9:07 AM San Francisco, CA			Pus Ve 04:38 03:24 Cn Le		
Cp			Ana Ra 07:22	Sc	Li		Vi
Sg							

1. Lagna — As shown by the sign of Cancer, the basic outlook, personality and energy is one that displays qualities such as intuitive, emotional, attached, nurturing, shy.
2. It is ruled by the planet the Moon which shows that feeling/emotions, connection, family, others, mother will be important qualities of the native.
3. They will be challenged to develop the traits associated with the opposite sign of Capricorn. Those traits are: serious, ambitious, reserved, practical, responsible.
4. Lagna lord is in the 9th house, which shows that religion, philosophical or ethical principles, god's grace, dharma-shaping life events will be very important to the person.
5. Lagna lord is in the sign of Pisces, which shows that fantasy, imagination, spirituality, endings, creativity, devotional type of psychology will be influencing their behavior.
6. Rahu is in the 5th house, which shows the main attachments and areas of life this person is trying to develop in order for their soul to evolve are about intelligence, creativity, children, education, romance, past life merit, mantras.
7. Rahu is in the sign of Scorpio, which shows the main mental and emotional energy this person is trying to develop in order for their soul

- to evolve are obsessive, sensitive, secretive, probing, self-protective.
8. Rahu is conjoined with no planets.
 9. Ketu is in the 11th house, which shows the main areas of detachment and dispassion in this person's life. These are generally areas of neglect, having been recently developed in past lives. There may be expertise, but not a lot of satisfaction with highest aspirations and goals, financial gains, impulse, excess, large groups of people.
 10. Ketu is in the sign of Taurus, which shows they will likely have mental and emotional skill and maturity with comfort, pleasure, steadiness, devotion, sensuality, family, food.
 11. Ketu is conjoined with the planets Sun and Mercury, which shows skill and development, yet dissatisfaction with: **Sun** — soul, confidence, generosity, power, ego, father; and **Mercury** — speech/communication, skills, intellect, flexibility, humor.
 12. There are three or more planets in the 9th house, giving an extra focus on religion, philosophical or ethical principles, god's grace, dharma-shaping life events.
 13. There are three or more planets in Pisces, giving a psychology strongly oriented toward fantasy, imagination, spirituality, endings, creativity, devotion.
 14. They have Venus (4th house ruler) in the lagna, which shows pleasure, sex, happiness, beauty, comfort, laziness, lovers to also be very prominent and 4th house qualities of motherhood and emotional peace and comfort.
 15. They have Mars and Jupiter conjoined with the lagna lord, which shows vitality, focus, aggression, logic, innocence, friends, brothers AND wisdom, meaning, optimism, children and teaching to also be very important to the native.
 16. These planets are forming Maha Purusha Yogas, giving these traits: None.

A Synthesis of Angelina Jolie's Chart

To get an overall feeling of someone's mind and consciousness using the astrology chart, we must look for confluence. That is, several themes repeated

over and over again. This confluence will affirm important priorities in the person's life.

In Angelina Jolie chart we see her most important tendencies reaffirmed several times. This, in spite of what we see on the surface, her beauty and celebrity.

First of all, we see that she has a Cancer rising sign, which is the sign of motherhood and nurturing. In addition, we see that she has the 4th house ruler (the ruler of the house of motherhood) in the 1st house. That planet is Venus, the planet of beauty and comfort. Of course, she is known for beauty and we see hers clearly, as Venus is in her first house.

In addition, we see that her ruling planet is joined Jupiter (the planet of children) and also Mars, the planet who rules the 5th house (the house of children).

Rahu, the planet of obsessions, is in her 5th house, the house of children. But in her case, she is also a "leader of mothers," having established a new category of service based on the adoption of Third World children.

In addition, she is an inspiring figure to many. The planets in her 9th and 11th houses have elevated her status beyond just celebrity and sex symbol. She has been appointed a special envoy to the United Nations based on her humanitarian concerns and work. In 2013, when faced with a major health crisis, she chose to speak out on behalf of breast cancer awareness, inspiring many women in the process.

Her Ketu in the 11th house gives skill, yet dissatisfaction with ambitions — even though she is at the pinnacle of achievement, she mainly chooses now to serve higher causes. Ketu joined the Sun shows problems with father (she had a hard relationship with her father, actor Jon Voight), and a hard childhood, showing Mercury the 2nd lord joined Ketu.

John McEnroe Chart Using the Worksheet

Below is the chart of John McEnroe

Pi		Ar	Ta	Roh	Mo	Ge
Rev Kc 20:55				Kri Ma 09:30	16:01	
PBh Ve 27:20	Dha Me 06:20	Dha Su 04:10		John Mcenroe 2/16/1959 22:20 Weisbaden, Germany	Cn	Le
Aq	Cp					
Sg	Mul Sa 11:05	And Ju 07:19	Sc	Li	Has Ra 20:55	24:09 Vi

1. Lagna — As shown by the sign of Virgo, the basic outlook, personality and energy is one which displays responsible, dutiful, worried, pure, critical, solitary traits.
2. It is ruled by the planet Mercury, which shows that speech/ communication, skills, intellect, flexibility, humor will be important qualities of the native.
3. They will be challenged to develop the traits associated with the opposite sign of Pisces, those traits are: fantasy, imagination, spirituality, endings, creativity, devotion.
4. Lagna lord is in the 6th house, which shows that competition, illness, debt, things breaking, immune system, hard work, service will be very important to the person.
5. Lagna lord is in the sign of Aquarius, which shows that humility, servitude, humanitarianism, focus on others will be influencing their behavior.
6. Rahu is in the 1st house, which shows that the main attachments and areas of life this person is trying to develop in order for their soul to evolve are about our truthful nature, body, general health, the head, personality.
7. Rahu is in the sign of Virgo, which shows that the main mental and emotional energy this person is trying to develop in order for their soul

- to evolve are responsible, dutiful, worried, pure, critical, alone.
8. Rahu is conjoined with no planets.
 9. Ketu is in the 7th house, which shows the main areas of detachment and dispassion in this person's life. These are generally areas of neglect as having been recently developed in past lives. There may be expertise, but not a lot of satisfaction with long-term relationships, general relations with others, business associates.
 10. Ketu is in the sign of Pisces, which shows that they will likely have mental and emotional skill and maturity with fantasy, imagination, spirituality, endings, creativity, devotion.
 11. Ketu is conjoined with no planets.
 12. There are three or more planets in the 6th house, giving an extra focus on competition, illness, debt, things breaking, immune system, hard work, service.
 13. There are three or more planets in Aquarius, giving a psychology strongly oriented toward humility, servitude, humanitarianism, focus on others.
 14. They have Rahu in the lagna, which shows obsessions, attachment, exaggeration, expanded perception to be important to him.
 15. They have Venus and the Sun conjoined with the lagna lord, which shows pleasure, sex, happiness, beauty, comfort, laziness, lovers AND soul, confidence, generosity, power, ego, father to also be very important to the native.
 16. These planets are forming Maha Purusha Yogas, giving these traits: none.

A synthesis of John McEnroe's chart:

We see a consistent theme of competition, hard work and aggression with many planets in the 6th house. We also see a connection to large groups of people, service and larger themes, things associated with Aquarius.

We must be careful not to just think of John McEnroe as the hot-tempered tennis player, for as ornery as he was, he has managed to be a well-known celebrity, and well-liked publicly. When he was playing, McEnroe was known to be a strong advocate of "doubles," and was one of the best doubles players of all time, if not the best.

Mr. McEnroe is also known and respected as one who advocates the “tennis community” and the advancement/progress of the sport, as well as advocating the international competition known as the Davis Cup. He was even the Davis Cup captain for a few years. Three planets in Aquarius, as well as the tendency of Virgo to be of service, reaffirm this theme.

Rahu in his 1st house makes him quite eccentric, even touted as a genius on the tennis court. However, his Rahu-like personality problems and eruptions tended to overshadow his on-court brilliance.

Yet his skill was undeniable, and shown by his Virgo rising sign. Virgo is ruled by Mercury, the planet of skill.



CHAPTER 14

Making Predictions Using Dasas and Transits

This material may be too advanced for many reading this book, but I want to introduce these concepts now. They will be further exposed in Volume II in this series.

I remember when I first started to learn astrology. I found it hard to believe it possible to make predictions about what would happen in someone's life based just on the planets in their birth chart.

I spent many years rifling through the texts and testing certain methods, looking for the ones that worked reliably. What I discovered is also what ultimately led to this book. Accurate results are only possible using methods based on universal principles, the same principles found in Yoga and all healing systems.

The deeper we go into those systems, the deeper the answers we get. I was (and still am) astounded by the simple and powerful elegance of how astrology shows our karmas ripening, and how those karmas connect the spiritual and psychological with the physical.

When looking into the *timing* of karmas ripening, there are two main frameworks that are used:

1. The dasa sequence

2. Planets in transit, as they move through the sky.

It is helpful when learning to make predictions to list everything that the planet rules in its dasa sequence, then look for confluence and important repetition/restatement of those themes. In the chart analysis examples below, I will do just that.

Dasa Cycles and Karma

When making predictions about events, the first thing we need to look at is the dasa cycle. The planetary dasas determine which karmas will be ripening at which time. Based on very precise and specific rules, karmas unfold at their given time. This is how the planets deliver their experiences to us, from the subtle to the gross realms.

When the planetary cycles run, events get produced based on a few specific rules. Karmas are produced based on the planet as a:

- A: Karaka (Planetary indicator)
- B: House ruler (Where the signs fall from the rising sign)
- C: Ruler of a planet in its rasi
- D: Ruler of a planet in its Nakshatra

There is no hierarchy in the above list. You need to look for a confluence of factors to see what the most prevalent issues will be:

A FEW KEYS:

1. As it relates to karmas, the planets deliver results based on what they are and what they rule.

For example:

- A. The Sun is the spiritual force of power, which we experience in the form of confidence, etc. (The Karaka)
- B. If the Sun rules the 2nd house (Cancer lagna — like Angelina Jolie) it is also the planet of wealth, values and income.
- C. If there are planets in Leo, the sign the Sun rules, it will also produce those planets — especially during the sub-cycle of that planet.

- D. If there is a planet in Kritikka Nakshatra, it will also get produced, because the Sun rules that Nakshatra.

Pay close attention when a Maha Dasa planet rules the sub-dasa planet.

For example: A Mercury/Jupiter cycle with Jupiter in Mercury's sign or Nakshatra will be very active for showing major changes relative to what is indicated. Because in this case Mercury is ruling Jupiter, the Maha Dasa planet is ruling the sub-dasa planet.

Planetary Transits and Karma

In addition to the dasa cycles, we must look at where the planets are in the sky. Regardless of the dasa, transits over natal planets (from the birth chart) bring about strong feelings / factors that color the events being shown through the dasas.

In addition, the planets in the sky by transit aspect each other and those planets in the natal chart. We will examine Ms. Jolie's chart and Mr. McEnroe's chart, by examining a major event in their lives and considering these dynamic factors.

Angelina Jolie Breast Surgery Chart



Quick Chart Analysis:

Ms. Jolie has a Cancer rising sign, which is ruled by the Moon. This makes her

naturally sensitive, nurturing and maternal. She also has Venus in her 1st house, which shows beauty and refinement. If planets join our ruling planet they will have a strong impact in our life. When Ms. Jolie was born her ruling planet, the Moon, was in the 9th house with Mars and Jupiter. The 9th house has to do with philosophies, teachings and seeking higher meaning and purpose. Thus, these things will be major themes in her life.

For Ms. Jolie, Mars rules her 5th house (the house of children and creativity) as well as her 10th house (the house of career and impact). Mars is a planet that makes Cancer people often pursue a creative career, as it combines the 5th and 10th houses. In addition, Mars is a planet of courage.

Jupiter rules her 6th house (life's struggles and problems) and her 9th house (teaching and inspiration). Jupiter is the planet that makes Cancer people experts at finding the higher meaning and purpose in life's setbacks and problems and makes them work hard in order to teach things they believe in.

We can see by her life path, beyond her successful film career, that she is an advocate of children and global peace. We also notice how she lives for higher themes and causes.

Dasa Analysis of Breast Surgery:

Ms. Jolie was in her Venus/Mercury dasa at the time of her first breast surgery.

For Ms. Jolie Venus rules:

- 4th house (Libra) — mother, the breasts, emotional comfort, peace of mind (or not)
- 11th house (Taurus) — the public, ambition, desires, recognition
- The Sun (Taurus) — 2nd house ruler — purification, doctors, surgery, values, self-expression, family and close connections, earned income
- Mercury (Taurus) — 3rd and 12th house ruler — courage, self-will, fears, loss and letting go, hospitals, intelligence, siblings
- Ketu (Taurus) — finishing karma, cutting, precision, skill

For Ms. Jolie Mercury rules:

- 3rd house (Virgo) — skills, interests, courage, communication
- 12th house (Gemini) — loss, expense, fears, letting go, hospitals, foreign countries

- Saturn: (in Gemini) — the 7th and 8th house ruler — partner, illness, death and loss, cancer (the illness), facing hardship, fears
- Jupiter (in Revati Nakshatra) — The 6th and 9th house ruler — teaching, learning, health problems and learning from mistakes/enemies, children
- Mars (in Revati Nakshatra) — The 5th and 10th house ruler — Creativity, children, recognition, career and pressure. Cutting and surgery
- Moon (in Revati Nakshatra) — 1st house ruler. Physical body, identity, breasts, motherhood

Recurring themes based on what the dasa planets RULE:

- Breasts — 4th house (ruled by Venus), Moon (in Revati ruled by Mercury)
- Surgery — Sun (in Taurus ruled by Venus), Ketu (in Taurus ruled by Venus), Mars (in Revati ruled by Mercury)
- Illness, Danger, Loss, Hospitals — 12th house (Mercury is ruler), Saturn (indicator of death and cancer (disease) — Mercury is ruler), Jupiter (ruler of 6th house — Mercury is ruler), Ketu (in Taurus ruled by Venus)
- Children — Jupiter (Karak in Revati ruled by Mercury), Mars (5th lord in Revati ruled by Mercury)
- Recognition, praise, leadership — Jupiter (in Revati ruled by Mercury), Venus (11th house ruler of three planets)
- Courage and ingenuity — Mercury (3rd house ruler), Mars (in Revati ruled by Mercury)

Venus is in the 1st house, the house of the physical body, in her natal chart. This reveals that her physical appearance and beauty will be important in the Venus cycle. Shortly after it began, in 1995, she became a mega-famous movie star, known for her beauty and sex appeal.

The chart above was drawn on the date of the first procedure in her mastectomy, a “nipple delay.” It was a cosmetic procedure designed to save her nipples. Venus rules cosmetic procedures.

Venus rules the 4th house, the house of the breasts. Venus is also the ruler of Taurus, and as such rules Ketu, the Sun and retrograde Mercury — all related to

surgery and cutting. We see two indicators of loss; both Mercury (12th house ruler) and Ketu are related to loss in the Venus cycle. In addition, Mercury is retrograde, which often shows something being reversed or taken away (especially if it rules the 12th house of loss).

Remember, one of the key rules is:

“Pay close attention when a Maha Dasa planet rules the Bhukti planet.”

We see this in full force with Ms. Jolie, as Venus (Mahadasa planet) rules Mercury (Bhukti planet), and the loss ripens in Venus/Mercury.

These losses are magnified because Mercury himself is a planet of loss (the 12th house ruler). In addition, Mercury rules planets of struggle, loss and fear (Saturn in Gemini in the 12th house and Jupiter the 6th house ruler).

These losses come in the form of things being cut or removed (all three indications of surgery are activated, Sun, Mars and Ketu). We see that the breasts are vulnerable because both indicators of the breasts are also getting activated, Venus (4th house ruler) and the Moon, the ruler of the breasts (in Mercury's Nakshatra).

Much of the public admiration and appreciation is also shown by the heavy Mercury influence, as Mercury is the communicator and speaker. Mercury is also the 3rd house ruler and the ruler of Mars (both indicators of courage). Thus it is not surprising that Ms. Jolie was regaled for her courage.

Also, it is not surprising that the strong themes of “children” surrounded the entire issue: both her children and her lineage (to her as a child). This is due to Mercury ruling both Jupiter (the Karaka of children) and Mars (the 5th house ruler). As was said, they are both in Mercury's Nakshatra (Revati).

Transit Analysis:

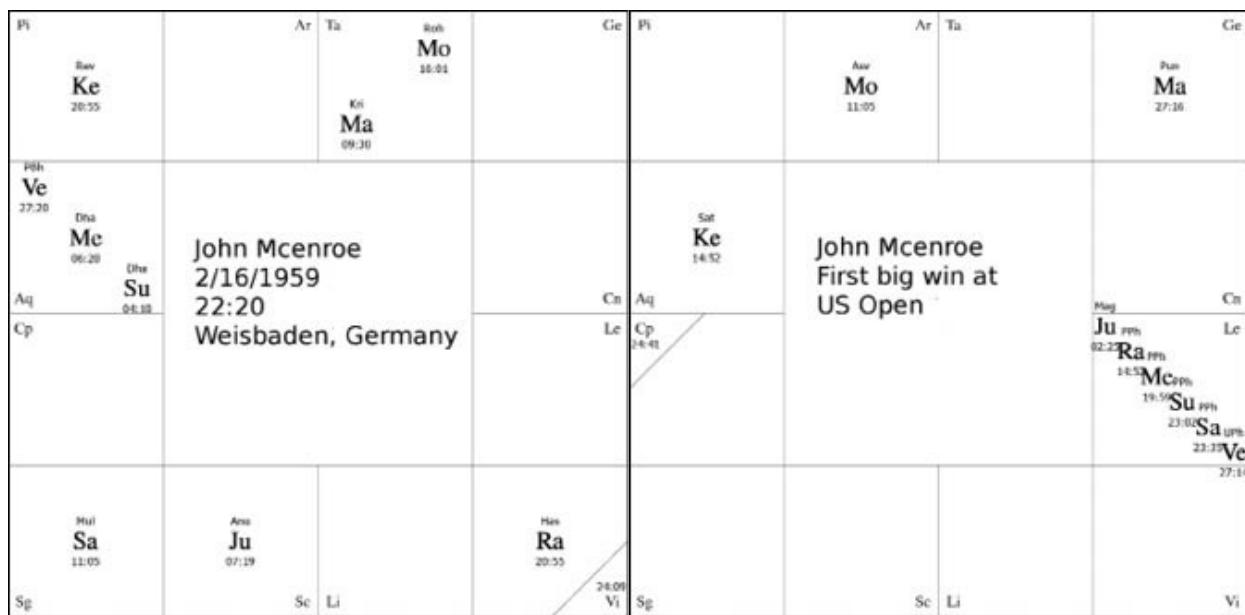
The Chart of February 2, 2013 shows the nipple delay transits. If we compare that with the chart of Ms. Jolie, we see:

- Her natal Mars at 17° 11 min. of Pisces. It is in exact 8th house aspect to transiting Saturn, at 17° 15 min. of Libra. This is a case where the natal special aspect is potent. Transiting Saturn is hitting the 8th house aspect of natal Mars to the second!
- Mars on Feb 2, 2013 is at 6° 27 min. of Aquarius, in a very tight 4th house aspect to Ms. Jolie's natal Ketu at 7° 20 min. of Taurus. Again,

we see an aspect to within 1° of orb.

- Saturn is aspecting her ascendant. Even though Saturn has gone past the exact degree, we can infer that months earlier Ms. Jolie was feeling the enormous pressure of Saturn passing over the exact degrees of her ascendant, by aspect.
- 7th house Venus aspect to her ascendant and natal Venus, showing the “cosmetic nature” of this surgery.

John McEnroe — First Big Win Chart



Quick Chart Analysis:

McEnroe is a Virgo in Vedic astrology, because Virgo was the rising sign when he was born. He has the north node, Rahu in the 1st house, bringing a strong emphasis on his own identity and personality. We may call this “self-interested,” or even “selfish.” But generally, Rahu in the 1st house makes a person who is developing a strong identity. They can be a very polarizing figure.

Wherever the ruling planet goes, much importance is put into that area of life. Mercury is the ruling planet, and it goes to his 6th house with the Sun and Venus. The 6th house has to do with competition, and facing life’s struggles.

However, the conjunction of Mercury and Venus for a Virgo person, like McEnroe, is very auspicious, regardless of which house it falls in. This is because Mercury rules two angular houses and Venus rules a trinal house. Based

on the rules of Raja Yogas, this brings together accomplishment (angular houses) with luck and skill (trinal house). In McEnroe's case we see this clearly. The Raja Yogas fall in the 6th house of competition, enemies and overcoming obstacles. It is noteworthy that he is known as much for his temper tantrums, outbursts and battles as he is for his tennis victories.

Dasa Analysis of Success:

John McEnroe was in his Rahu/Mercury dasa when he won his first US Open tennis tournament. During this cycle four of his seven career Grand Slam tournament wins occurred.

For Mr. McEnroe, Rahu produces:

- 1st house effects — (Rahu is in the 1st house) — self-growth, identity, fitness, health and vitality

For Mr. McEnroe, Mercury produces:

- 1st house effects — (Mercury rules the 1st house) — self-growth, identity, fitness, health and vitality
- 10th house effects — (Mercury rules the 10th house) — career growth, personal impact, power, responsibility
- Rahu effects — (Rahu is in Mercury's sign — Gemini) — self-growth, personal growth, fitness, health and vitality
- Ketu effects — (Ketu is in Mercury's Nakshatra) — 7th house matters, other people, relationships, compromise and cooperation.

In Mr. McEnroe's case only a few areas of life are affected in the Rahu/Mercury cycle. If Rahu is not joined to any planets, as in Mr. McEnroe's case, then Rahu will only give the results of planets in his Nakshatras. And in Mr. McEnroe's case, there are no planets in Rahu's Nakshatras either. Thus, Rahu only gives the results of the 1st house.

The lack of variety should not be mistaken for a lack of intensity. In fact, many times karmas become highly concentrated when the dasa planet is not ruling many other planets. In those times ALL of their karmas revolve around just a few things. It may be described as "obsessive", especially if Rahu is involved. This is the case with Mr. McEnroe.

His karma at this time is highly concentrated around a couple of themes: himself (1st house), his power and his career (10th house). Everything points in this direction.

There is a strong 6th house quality to these life lessons, as both the ruler of Rahu and Mercury are in the 6th house (of course, as we have seen, Mercury is ruled by Rahu). Therefore, the important themes of hard work, overcoming adversaries, competition, arguing and battling are important.

In addition, the important conjunctions with Mercury, joined with the Sun and Venus, give invaluable insight into how these karma's unfold.

Mercury is McEnroe's ruling planet, his lagna lord, and also the ruler of Rahu. It is in his 6th house (competition) and joined with his 2nd and 9th house ruler Venus (2nd and 9th houses are wealth producers). Mercury also rules McEnroe's 10th house (Gemini), his career house.

Thus, in Rahu/Mercury, with Mercury actually ruling Rahu, we see fame and wealth being produced through career, competition and with a certain amount of grace and luck.

Transit analysis:

As we would expect, the transits should be concentrated around the same influences we outlined above, Rahu and Mercury. Also, because this is a career success, the 10th house (from his natal chart) should also be involved.

- Remarkably, Jupiter, Mercury, Saturn, the Sun and Venus all aspected his natal Mercury in Aquarius on the day in question! This brings together luck (Jupiter), skill (Mercury), vitality (Sun), hard work and commitment (Saturn) and a sense of desire and happiness (Venus) to the event.
- Mars is closely aspecting his ascendant on the day in question (4th house Mars special aspect), from the 10th house, the house of career. This shows the fighting spirit and competitiveness needed to win, elevating his status and power.
- Saturn's special aspect by transit is affecting his 9th house, the house of luck and wealth, and his Mars/Moon conjunction in the 9th house. Saturn had been in Leo for the previous 1.5 years influencing his 9th house and his Mars/Moon conjunction, steadyng his mind and volatile emotions.

- The special aspect of Jupiter falls on his natal Saturn in the 4th house, conferring grace after years of sacrifice and hard work. His natal Saturn forms a powerful Raja Yoga — being the 5th house ruler in the 4th house.



CHAPTER 15

Mantras, Remedies and Devotion to Planets and Deities

In Vedic astrology the planets are not just big rocks moving around in the sky; they are the intelligent, activating forces of life. When you have a problem, it is a wake-up call from the cosmos, alerting you to a part of yourself that needs attention. In the language of yoga, problems are tamasic (darkness, fear and confusion) compelling you to learn greater sattwa (light, love and wisdom).

As was said, the planets are the agents of sattwa, the wise forces of creation we are waking up to. That is why they are revered as Gods, the incarnations of Lord Vishnu. They create and influence events (astrology houses), your feelings about those events (astrology signs), and the deeper wisdom and lessons you are supposed to learn from those events (the planets / light within).

The Vedic rishis developed many remedies to help us heal difficult planetary energies. Many of these remedies come from Ayurveda, or at least have a correlation to ayurveda. Astrological remedies include herbs and diet, mantras, pujas (religious ceremonies), gemstones, aromatherapy, yoga postures and others. In ancient India many bewildering combinations of activities that correspond to days of the week, colors and other things were prescribed. Such as “feed black seeds to a black dog wearing an iron collar, facing West on Saturday” — for Saturn.

I personally feel that too much is made out of certain types of remedies, especially gemstones, pujas and the strange actions mentioned above. I'm not saying those things are ineffective, just that too often people are looking for these Vedic remedies to be a certain "Indian Prozac," to take away the pain of their circumstances by masking the symptoms of their karmic ills.

Often times a client will tell me an astrologer recommended they get a puja, wear a gem or perform certain confusing activities. Yet the astrologer did not even explain why they should be doing those things. Meaning, the astrologer might say the remedy is "for Saturn," but unraveling a greater awareness about Saturn is overlooked — the need to transform fear into service and solitude. Instead Saturn is portrayed as "punishing them", with his wrath needing to be appeased.

Any type of remedies can be a help to us, especially if our intention is to invite the wisdom of the planet into our life, rather than fear it (or lust after it, in the case of Moon, Venus or Jupiter). Remedies or activities that increase our understanding of that planetary force are the most important.

As the planets are the activating forces in life, the forces of intelligence, all suffering is due to a lack on intelligence of that planet. The outer problem is a reflection of this lack of intelligence:

For Example:

Saturn can be difficult, because he shows things we cannot control, and the hard truths we must accept, like death. Facing these things make us mature while avoiding them keeps us foolish. When Saturn cycles run we are challenged to handle those themes and our level of maturity, compassion and fear will be revealed.

Remedies for the Planets

There are many ways that we can heal, integrate and strengthen planetary forces in our life and mind when their cycles run. Remedies can have the effect of both strengthening energies that are weak and calming those that are too active.

Below are remedies for each of the planets.

The Sun — Problems with the Sun include a lack of confidence, vitality, lack of direction and purpose, inability to move forward in life, heart problems

Activity: Working out, getting outdoors, physical activity,

Color: Orange

Mantras: Om Soom Suryaya Namaha

Gem: Ruby, Garnet

Deity / God: Shiva, Narayana

The Moon — Problems with the Moon include excessive emotions, attachment, smothering behavior, fear of bonding, unable to let go of the past

Activity: Meditation, care for a pet, service

Color: Opaque White

Mantra: Om Soam Somayai Namaha, Om Chum Chandrayai Namaya

Gem: Moonstone, pearl

Deity: Durga, Lakshmi, Kali, Lalita

Mars — Problems with Mars include anger, a lack of courage, lack of enthusiasm, domination of others, physical weakness, inability to complete our tasks, hypertension, herpes, acne.

Activity: disciplined actions like Yoga or martial arts, waking early, acupuncture, fire rituals

Color: Red, Maroon

Mantra: Om Koom Kujayai Namaha

Gem: Coral

Deity: Skanda, Kartikeyya

Mercury — Problems with Mercury include communication problems, confusing speech (including speech impediments), feeling stuck, skin problems, allergies

Activity: Journaling, mantra chanting, speech therapy, studying a new subject, cultivate fun and lightness

Color: Green

Mantra: Om Buhm Budhayai Namaha

Gem: Emerald, tourmaline

Deity: Vishnu, Narayan, Saraswati

Jupiter — Problems with Jupiter include a lack of hope, over optimism, unrealistic standards, judgmentalism, dogmatism, disappointment

Activity: Physical activity, working out, getting outdoors.

Color: Yellow

Mantra: Om Brim Brihaspatayai Namaha, Om Gum Gurave Namaha

Gem: Yellow sapphire, topaz

Deity: Ganesha, Shiva, Indra

Venus — Problems with Venus include sensual indulgence, longing for romance, excessive people pleasing, kidney problems, sexual problems (with the organs / intercourse)

Activity: Buy flowers or burn incense (if weak), perform service to groups (if strong), devotion/bhakti yoga

Color: Pastel White, Pink, Floral Colors

Mantra: Om Shoom Shukraya Namaha

Gem: Diamond, quartz, clear faceted stones

Deity: Lakshmi, Saraswati

Saturn — Problems with Saturn include avoiding things, fear, controlling behavior, facing death, difficulty ending things / ending them too quickly, anti-social behavior, worrying

Activity: Eat less food, cultivate silence, get enough rest, do not strain yourself, socialize, cultivate presence and trust

Color: Dark Blue, Deep Purple

Mantra: Om Sham Shanischarayai Namaha

Gem: Amethyst, Onyx, Obsidian

Deity: Brahma, Yama

Rahu — Problems with Rahu include obsessions, blowing things out of proportion, willfulness, confusion, mysterious illnesses, accidents, thrill-seeking

Activity: Slow down and digest food / information, gather less integrate more, fire ceremony / puja, fasting, moderation

Color: Same as Saturn

Mantra: Om Ram Rahuve Namaha

Gem: Hessonite Garnet

Deity: Sarpa

Ketu — Problems with Ketu include excessive criticism, withdrawal, perfectionism, neuro-muscular disorders, explosiveness

Activity: More forgiveness and tolerance of mistakes, group activities, spiritual activities and groups, mystical practices

Color: Same as Mars

Mantra: Om Kem Ketave Namaha

Gem: Cat's eye

Deity: Ganesha

Hymn to the Nine Planets:

Brahma- Muraari-s- Tripuraant-kaari, Bhanu, Shashi, Bhoomi-Suto Budha-scha
Guru-s-cha Shukra Shani Rahu Ketavah

Kuruvantu Sarve Mam Suprabhatam aadityaaya somaaya maN^galaaya
budhaaya cha | guru shukra shanibhyashcha raahaveketave namaH ||

Navagraha Stotra (Nine Planet Verse)

Sun:

Japaakusumasa.nkaashaM kaashyapeyaM mahadyutim.
tamo.ariM sarvapaapaghnaM praNato.asmi divaakaram.

Translation: I pray to the Sun, the day-maker, destroyer of all sins, the enemy of darkness, of great brilliance, the descendent of Kaashyapa, the one who shines like the japaa flower.

Moon:

DadhishaN^khatushhaaraabhaM kshirodaarNavasaMbavam. namaami
shashinaM somaM shambhormukuTabhuushhaNam **Translation:** I pray to the Moon who shines coolly like curds or a white shell, who arose from the ocean of milk, who has a hare on him, Soma, who is the ornament of Shiva's hair.

Mars:

DharaNigarbhasaMbhuutaM vidyut kaanti samaprabham.
kumaaraM shaktihastaM chamaNgalaM praNamaamyaham.h

Translation:

I pray to Mars, born of Earth, who shines with the same brilliance as lightning, the young man who carries a spear.

Mercury:

PriyaNg gukalikaashyaamaM RuupeNaapratimaM budham.h
SaumyaM saumyaguNopetaM taM budhaM praNamaamyaham.h . **Translation:**
I pray to Mercury, dark like the bud of millet, of unequalled beauty, gentle and agreeable.

Jupiter:

DevaanaaM cha R^ishhiiNaaM cha guru.n kaaJNchanasa.nnibham.h .
buddhibhuutaM trilokeshaM taM namaami bR^ihaspatim.h

Translation:

I pray to Jupiter, the teacher of gods and rishis, intellect incarnate, lord of the three worlds.

Venus:

HimakundamR^iNaalaabhaM daityaanaaM paramaM gurum.h .
sarvashastrapravaktaaraM bhaargavaM praNamaamyaham.h

Translation:

I pray to Venus, the ultimate preceptor of demons, promulgator of all learning, he who shines like the fiber of snow-white jasmine.

Saturn:

Niilaa.njanasamaabhaasaM raviputraM yamaagrajam. ChhaayaamaartaNDasaM
bhuutaM taM namaami shanaishcharam.h

Translation:

I pray to Saturn, the slow moving, born of Shade and Sun, the elder brother of Yama, the offspring of Sun, he who has the appearance of black collyrium.

Rahu:

ArdhakaayaM mahaaviirya.n chandraaditya vimardanam. si.
nhikaagarbhasaMbhuutaM taM raahuM praNamaamyaham.h

Translation:

I pray to Rahu, having half a body, of great bravery, the eclipser of the Moon and the Sun, born of Simhikaa.

Ketu:

Palaasha pushhpa sankashaM taarakaagraha mastakam.

RaudraM raudraatmakaM ghoraM taM ketuM praNamaamyaham.h

Translation:

I pray to Ketu, who has the appearance of Palaasha flower, the head of stars and planets, fierce and terrifying.

For Sage Vyasa (Author of the Stotram)

Iti vyasamukhodgiitaM yaH paThetsusamaahitaH.

Divaa vaa yadi vaa raatru vighnashaantirbhavishhyati

Translation:

Those who read the song sung by VyAsa, will be joyous, sovereign and powerful, and will succeed in appeasing obstacles, occurring by day or by night.

Naranaariin RipaaNaaM cha bhaved duHsvapna Naashanam. AishvaryamatulaM

TeshhaamaarogyaM pushhTivardhanam.

Translation:

Bad dreams of men, women and kings alike will be destroyed and they will be endowed with unparalleled riches, good health and enhancing nourishment.

GRihanakshatraqaaH piiDaa Staskaraagnisamudh bhavaa
taaH sarvaaH prashamaM yaanti vyaso bruute nasanshayaH

Translation:

All the pain, devastation caused by fire, planets and stars will be of the past, so spoke VyAsa, emphatically.

Iti shriivyasaasavirachitaM navagrahastotraM saMpuurNamah.

Translation:

Thus ends the praise of the nine planets composed by VyAsa.



CHAPTER 16

Onward to Volume II

In this book I have shown the roots of Vedic astrology, its connection to yoga and the common philosophies and practices that underpin both. This book is meant to introduce an approach to Vedic astrology based on these universal, Indian principles.

I have attempted to show how, both conceptually and practically, Vedic astrology shows how and when our karma takes form and how that leads to our conscious evolution.

As well as introducing Vedic astrology, this book is a companion guide for the American Academy of Vedic Art and Science Vedic Astrology Certification Course.

But this book is just Volume I — an introduction. Volume II will focus on ways to accurately predict karmas, by integrating the natal chart with transits, harmonic charts and expand on the material in this volume.

In addition, future titles will cover more specific topics such as:

- Advanced Chart Reading Principles and Methods
- The Nakshatras
- Rahu / Ketu and Karma
- The Astrology Houses
- Relationship Astrology
- Ayurveda and Vedic Astrology

All of these titles are currently in the works.
Please look for them.

Glossary of Special Terms

Artha — the Sanskrit word for wealth.

Bhadra Yoga — The Mahapurusha Raja Yoga created by Mercury

Bhagavad Gita — literally translates as ‘the song of god’. It is one of the most important texts in Indian literature, where Lord Krishna assists the warrior Arjuna on the battlefield of life.

Bhakti Yoga — The type of Yoga based on devotion

Bhava — The Sanskrit word for Astrology houses — it also means “experience”.

Brihat Parashara Hora Sastra — The main authoritative text in Vedic astrology, written by the Rishi Parashara

Budha — The Sanskrit word for the Planet Mercury

Caste — an ancient system that organized citizens into different classes. There were four castes: warrior, worker, merchant and teacher.

Chakra — It literally means “wheel”. In yoga and tantra a Chakra refers to a plexus of Nadi’s or energy currents in the astral body. Chakras correspond to organs and sections of the body. Planets also rule different Chakras. Our karma’s enter our mind/body through the Chakras.

Chandra — The Sanskrit word for the Moon

Dasa — The timing cycle used in Vedic astrology

Dhana Yoga — Astrological placements that indicate wealth

Dhanu — The Sanskrit word for the Astrology sign, Sagittarius

Dharma — An Indian concept connected to action (karma). Our actions should be based on principles, duty and righteousness (dharma) rather than simply our likes and dislikes (kama).

Dusthana — Houses 6, 8 and 12 in Vedic astrology — Generally these are difficult houses that create hardship or take away something.

Ecliptic — The path the planets travel as they orbit the Sun.

Graha — The Sanskrit word for Planets — It shows how the planets “Grab” us and attach us to karma.

Guna — the term used to define the ‘qualities of nature’. There are three Gunas in yoga/ Samkya philosophy: Tamas, Rajas and Sattwa. Together they form the rope of Maya/illusion.

Guru — The Sanskrit word for the Planet Jupiter

Hamsa Yoga — The Mahapurusha Raja Yoga created by Jupiter

Harmonic Charts — A system in Vedic astrology where each of the astrology signs are broken up into smaller portions. Harmonic charts allow us to look into specific areas of life.

Hatha Yoga — The type of Yoga based on physical practices

Indriya — In Samkya philosophy it shows how the ‘power’ of action (Karma Indriya) and wisdom (Jnana Indriya) allow us to evolve. The indriyas are related to senses and sense organs.

Jnana Yoga— The type of Yoga based on intellect and discrimination

Kanya — The Sanskrit word for the Astrology sign, Virgo

Kama — The sanksrit word for personal desire. It is often at odds with dharma, the things we know are right, but are not easy.

Karma — Means “action”, the results of our actions, and how those things teach us the truth.

Karma Yoga — The type of Yoga based on service and action

Kataka — The Sanskrit word for the Astrology sign, Cancer

Ketu — The Sanskrit word for the South Nodes of the Moon

Kosha — Literally means “sheath”. In Samkya philosophy it refers to the layers that obscure our deeper, divine nature.

Krishna — One of the main incarnations of Lord Vishnu, the deity who maintains the physical universe. Lord Krishna was the main deity in the Maha bharata and the Bhagavad Gita.

Kumbha — The Sanskrit word for the Astrology sign, Aquarius

Kundalini — the invisible power in the astral body. Through spiritual practices, especially Yoga, the kundalini rises and opens the Chakras.

Mahabharata — Means “Great Bharat (India)” — the Mahabharata is a complex tale of 2 royal families immersed in the dramas amnd turmoil of the world. The Bhagavad Gita is derived from the Mahabharata.

Mahapurusha Raja Yogas — Mean “5 Great person yogas”. They are specific astrological configurations that strongly mark an individual with the highest qualities of the planets forming them.

Makara — The Sanskrit word for the Astrology sign, Capricorn

Malavya Yoga — The Mahapurusha Raja Yoga created by Venus

Mangala, Kuja — The Sanskrit words for the Planet Mars

Mantra — A sacred power encased in a sound structure. Mantras activate the sacred powers of life. The forms of Deities are merely ways to illustrate the power of their mantras / sounds.

Maya — the Sanskrit word for “illusion”. It refers to the notion that the world and our separate identity are but a limited reality and our attachment to this limitation causes suffering.

Meena — The Sanskrit word for the Astrology sign, Pisces

Mesh — The Sanskrit word for the Astrology sign, Aries

Mithuna — The Sanskrit word for the Astrology sign, Gemini

Moksha — the Sanskrit word for “Liberation”.

Nadi — An energy channel that runs through the astral body — Nadis are the same channels referred to in Chinese medicine as “meridians”. There are said to be 72,000 Nadis in the human body.

Nakshatra — A Sanskrit word that means “star”. In Vedic astrology, Nakshatras refer to the stars / star sections along the ecliptic. There are 27 Nakshatras.

Nodes of the Moon — It is the place where the orbits of the Sun, earth and moon intersect. Eclipses exist near, and because of, the Lunar Nodes.

Patanjali — The 8th Century sage who wrote the “Yoga Sutras”, the outline for 8 limbed (Ashtanga) Raja Yoga.

Puranas — A group of texts mainly related to Deities and their exploits. Main Puranas include the Vishnu Purana, the Skanda Purana and the Shiva Purana.

Purusarthas — The Sanskrit term for the “4 Stations of life”. According to Sanatana Dharma, life unfolds through dharma, artha, kama and moksha.

Rahu — The Sanskrit word for the North Node of the Moon

Raja Yoga — The form of Yoga based on discipline and self-mastery

Raja Yoga (in astrology) — Means “Royal Union”. It refers to powerful planetary interactions through conjunction or aspect, especially the interactions between planets that rule angular and trinal houses.

Rajas — The Guna related to desire, passion and stimulation

Rasi — The Sanskrit word for Astrology Signs.

Ruchaka Yoga — The Mahapurusha Raja Yoga created by Mars

Samadhi — When one is immersed in the true Self, and existing in an unbroken state of non-dual awareness. This awareness is beyond the intellect and the thinking mind.

Samkya — The philosophy of embodied creation, referred to in Yoga, Ayurveda, Vedic astrology. Components of Samkya philosophy include the 3 Gunas, the 5 elements, Nadis, koshas and other structures.

Sasha Yoga — The Mahapurusha Raja Yoga created by Saturn

Sattwa — The Guna related to wisdom, peace and stillness

Shani — The Sanskrit word for the Planet Saturn

Shukra — The Sanskrit word for the Planet Venus

Simha — The Sanskrit word for the Astrology sign, Leo

Surya — The Sanskrit word for the Sun

Tamas — The Guna related to the physical body, structure and heaviness.

Thula — The Sanskrit word for the Astrology sign, Libra

Trine, Trikona — A type of astrology house that falls in the 5th or 9th house from another. Trine is also used to indicate an aspect from Jupiter.

Upachaya — A classification of astrology houses. Upachaya houses get better over time as we learn to manage their affairs better

Upanishads — Called the “Cream of the Vedas”. They are a group of texts that distill the essence of Vedic thinking into salient philosophies and practices.

Vedas — The oldest texts of India — the source of its ancient Cosmology and wisdom. There are 4 main Vedas.

Vimshottari — The most popular timing sequence in Vedic astrology.

Vrischika — The Sanskrit word for the Astrology sign, Scorpio

Vrishaba — The Sanskrit word for the Astrology sign, Taurus

Yoga — Means “union”. Yoga is a system of self-awakening that unites our smaller self with our true Self.

Yoga (in Vedic Astrology) — When planetary energies join, aspect or arrange in certain ways; they are called “Yogas” in Vedic astrology.

Bibliography

- Devananda, S. V., 1959. *Complete Illustrated Book of Yoga*. s.l.:s.n.
- Devananda, S. V., 1999. *Meditation and Mantras*. s.l.:s.n.
- Geppi, S., 2004. *The Ascendant 108 Planets of Vedic Astrology*. s.l.:s.n.
- Kalyanaraman., D. V. R. a. D. S., n.d. *Nava Graha Stotram*. s.l.:s.n.
- Svoboda, R., 1998. *Your Ayurvedic Constitution: Prakriti*. s.l.:s.n.
- Translation Sharma, G. C., 1994. *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*. s.l.:s.n.
- Yukteswar, S., 1894. *The Holy Science*. s.l.:s.n.

Index

Page numbers in the Index reflect page numbers in the print book.

A

Astrology Houses

- 2nd House, [192](#)
- 3rd House, [196](#)
- 4th House, [199](#)
- 5th House, [202](#)
- 6th House, [205](#)
- 7th House, [207](#)
- 8th House, [209](#)
- 9th House, [212](#)
- 10th House, [214](#)
- 11th House, [216](#)
- 12th House, [218](#)
- Angular Houses, [221](#)
- First house, [189](#)
- House types, [221](#)
- Overview Houses 1-4, [202](#)
- Overview Houses 5-8, [211](#)
- Overview of Houses 9-12, [220](#)
- Trinal Houses, [225](#)
- Upachaya Houses, [227](#)

Astrology is Sacred Astronomy

- Age of Solar System, [11](#)
- Astrology is Science, [26](#)
- Astrology of the Past and Future, [24](#)
- Ego and Planetary Evolution, [21](#)
- Hindu Deities, [15](#)
- How Astrology Works, [27](#)
- Mystical Number, [13](#)
- Science of Karma, [30](#)

Astrology Signs

- Aquarius, [181](#)
- Aries, [160](#)
- Cancer, [166](#)
- Capricorn, [178](#)
- Gemini, [164](#)
- Important Sign Attributes, [147](#)
- Leo, [168](#)

Libra, [172](#)
Organizing the Signs, [156](#)
Pisces, [183](#)
Sagittarius, [176](#)
Scorpio, [174](#)
Taurus, [162](#)
Vedic View of Zodiac, [146](#)
Virgo, [170](#)

C

Chart Analysis

Case Studies for chart analysis, [313](#)
Chart reading formula, [311](#)
House keyword template, [309](#)
Planets keyword template, [308](#)
Rhythm of Opposites, [310](#)
Signs keyword template, [308](#)
Synthesizing Planet, Sign and House, [307](#)

H

Harmonic Chart table, [276](#)

L

Lunar Nodes - Rahu and Ketu

Ketu - the Occupying Army, [238](#)
Rahu - The Advancing Army, [237](#)

M

Maha Purusha Yogas, [284](#)

Jupiter - Hamsa Yoga, [286](#)
Mars - Ruchaka Yoga, [285](#)
Mercury - Bhadra Yoga, [286](#)
Saturn - Sasha Yoga, [287](#)
Venus - Malavya Yoga, [286](#)

Mantras and Remedies

Hymn to the Nine Planets, [335](#)
Navagraha Stotram, [336](#)
Planetary Remedies, [332](#)

N

Nakshatras

Anuradha, [260](#)
Ardra, [249](#)
Ashwini, [244](#)
Aslesha, [252](#)
Bharani, [245](#)
Chitra, [257](#)
Dhanishta, [266](#)
Hasta, [256](#)

Important Patterns, [241](#)

Jyeshta, [261](#)

Krittika, [246](#)

Magha, [253](#)

Punarvasu, [250](#)

Purva Ashada, [263](#)

Purva Bhadra, [269](#)

Purva Phalguni, [254](#)

Pushya, [251](#)

Revati, [270](#)

Rohini, [247](#), [248](#)

Shatabhishak, [268](#)

Shravana, [265](#)

Swati, [258](#)

Uttara Ashada, [264](#)

Uttara Bhadra, [270](#)

Uttara Phalguni, [255](#)

Vishaka, [259](#)

P

Planetary Aspects, [280](#)

Jupiter aspect, [283](#)

Mars aspect, [282](#)

Saturn aspect, [284](#)

Shared aspects, [281](#)

Planets, [111](#)

Jupiter, [131](#)

Mars, [124](#)

Mercury, [128](#)

Moon, [121](#)

Saturn, [138](#)

Sun, [118](#)

Vedic Traits, [112](#)

Venus, [135](#)

Predictions Using Dasa and Transits, [319](#)

Angelina Jolie Breast Surgery, [322](#)

John Mcenroe case study, [326](#)

R

Raja Yogas, [287](#)

Dhana Yogas, [289](#)

Yogas with Rahu and Ketu, [288](#)

T

Timing through Transits, [300](#)

V

Vedic astrology overview, [87](#)

Vedic Astrology Overview

Astrology and Chakras, [93](#)
Astrology and Karma, [92](#)
Astrology and the 5 Elements, [96](#)
Brihat Parashara, [88](#)
Planets and 3 Gunas, [97](#)

Vedic Principles, 63

3 Gunas, [68](#)
5 Sheaths (Koshas), [70](#)
Chakras, [75](#)
Indriyas and Elements, [73](#)
Karma and 5 Elements, [67](#)
Karma Revisited, [77](#)
The 5 Elements, [63](#)

Vimshottari Dasa

Jupiter Dasa, [298](#)
Ketu Dasa, [293](#)
Mars Dasa, [296](#)
Mercury Dasa, [299](#)
Moon Dasa, [295](#)
Rahu Dasa, [297](#)
Saturn Dasa, [298](#)
Sun Dasa, [295](#)
Venus Dasa, [294](#)

Y

Yoga, 33
Yoga Principles, 33
Integral Yoga, [60](#)
Samkya Philosophy, [43](#)
Texts - Bhagavad Gita, [45](#)
Texts - Brahmanas, [38](#)
Texts - Epics, [40](#)
Texts - Puranas, [39](#)
Texts - Vedas, [37](#)
Texts - Vedic Sciences, [41](#)
Texts - Yoga Sutras, [52](#)



Get a 50% Discount on the Yoga and Vedic Astrology Home Study Course

Here is the link:

<http://yogaastrologyclass.info>

**Just enter the Coupon Code:
bookdisc**

 AMERICAN ACADEMY OF
VEDIC ART AND SCIENCE
for those interested in Vedic research and living

**Forecasts, Classes and
Community** With Sam Geppi

YOUR COURSES

Yoga, Ayurveda and Vedic Astrology

 Main Course Download

 BONUS CLASS DOWNLOAD

Yoga, Ayurveda and Vedic Astrology

Dear,
Thanks for getting these course. I'm sure you will love them.

*Note:
The Ayurveda Course is Audio and PDF Manual ONLY and Located in the Download

Day 1 – Video 1



This is a very popular course. It is a recording from a live weekend course — where I break down all of the principles from this book to a group of students and answer all of their questions as well — 12 hours long.

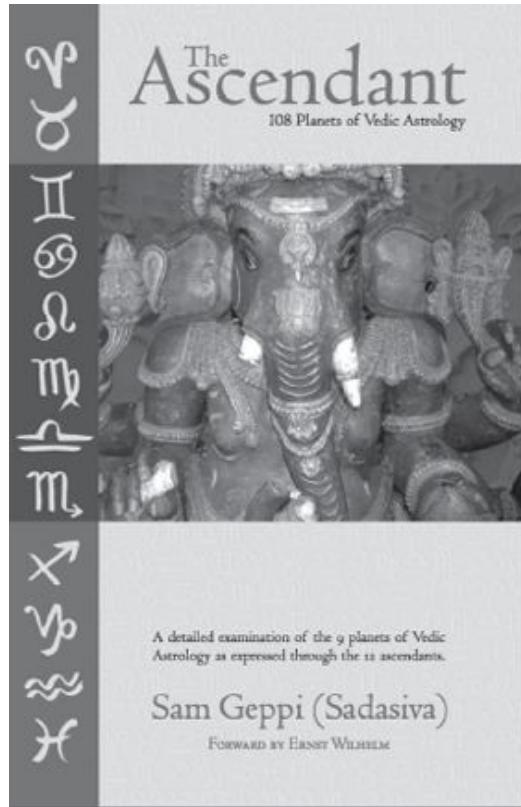


Please also look for my first book

on VedicAcademyPress.com

The Ascendant: 108 Planets of Vedic Astrology

The Ascendant: The 108 Planets of Vedic Astrology Paperback – August 15, 2005
by Sam Geppi • (Author)
★☆☆☆☆ • 29 customer reviews





Everyone should learn Vedic astrology.

I have developed a Certification course that has more than 120 graduates, as of October 2015. This revolutionary online course has been taken by people from more than 20 countries. It is all online and interactive.

American Academy of Vedic Art and Science
Vedic Astrology Certification Course Website:

<http://vedicartandscience.com>

Home

Navigation

Home

Site news

Courses

Main menu

Site news

Astrology Courses of American Academy of Vedic Art and Science

Available courses

Module 5 - Harmonic Charts - Yogas - Predictions and Deeper Subtleties
Deeper Subtleties of Vedic Astrology

Module 4 - Dasas, Nakshatras and Vedic Methods
We explore the Vedic specific methods in Astrology.

Module 3 - Houses, Nodes and More
We discuss astrology houses and other universal astrological principles.

Module 2 - Planets and Their Signs
We discuss planets and signs using the vedic frameworks.

Module 1 - Indian Science and Culture
A 4 week immersion in the Indian / Vedic Sciences, traditions, literature and their modern application for Vedic astrology and life.

Level 2 - Module 1
A deep dive into the techniques of Chart Reading from Level 1 - using many templates and case studies

Calendar

◀ November 2015 ▶

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Login

Username:

Password:

Remember username

[Lost password?](#)



About Sam Geppi the Author:

Sam Geppi (Sadasiva) is the author of “The Ascendant-108 Planets of Vedic Astrology”. He is the founder of the American Academy of Vedic Art and Science — which offers level 1-3 Certification programs in Vedic Astrology. Currently the Academy has more than 120 students enrolled. Sam is certified level 1 and 2 through ACVA and CVA and was hired by Dattatreya Shiva Baba to teach the first Astroved Vedic Astrology Certification Program in 2010.

Certification — Free Classes and Updates:

American Academy of Vedic Art and Science

<http://vedicartandscience.com>

Astrology Books and Media

Vedic Academy Press

<http://vedicacademypress.com>



COLLECTION OF VARIOUS
→ HINDUISM SCRIPTURES
→ HINDU COMICS
→ AYURVEDA
→ MAGZINES

FIND ALL AT [HTTPS://DSC.GG/DHARMA](https://dsc.gg/dharma)

Made with

By
Avinash/Shashi

[creator of
hinduism
server!]

