

Foundation of Vedic Astrology – The Philosophy

*A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single
step. — Lao-tzu*

1.1 Creation

Creation of the Universe has been a popular theme with philosophies and so also with Vedic Astrology. Parasara¹ teaches that the entire manifested² Universe is but one-eighth portion of the body of Narayana³. The size of the unmanifested Narayana is infinite and just like dividing infinity by any number the quotient is still infinity, so also the size of the manifested portion of Narayana is infinite⁴. Essentially, the absolute Narayana is *Nirguna*⁵ but as a part of His pleasure⁶, does attain the three *Guna*⁷ due to Yoga (union) with the three kinds of *Shakti*⁸.

The whole body of Narayana is divided into four parts called (1) Param-Brahmā, (2) Maha-Vishnu, (3) Sada-Shiva and (4) Vasudeva. These parts cannot really be differentiated from the whole as the pure nectar pervades them and the names used here are merely to aid understanding. Thus, Narayana with *Sri*⁹ Shakti is called Maha-Vishnu and is of pure¹⁰ Satwa Guna; Narayana with *Bhu*¹¹ Shakti is Param-Brahmā and is of pure Rajas Guna; while Narayana with *Nila*¹² Shakti is Sada-Shiva and is of pure Tamas Guna. These three parts are full of nectar and are imperceptible. The fourth part of Narayana is Vasudeva. This quarter is further divided into two parts – one part that is perceptible (with three Shakti i.e. Sri-Shakti, Bhu-Shakti & Nila-Shakti and three Guna's

¹ BPHS 1.9

² The manifest is referred to as 'Maya' or illusion, and in the Bhagavat Gita is called the Akshara' (syllable), immutable Brahma. Thus, if Narayana is said to be even above this sound syllable.

³ Narayana is composed of two words 'Nara' meaning 'any body' and 'Ayana' meaning 'Goal'. Thus the composite word Narayana means the ultimate goal of every body both living and non-living or mobile and immobile. In a more subtle sense it refers to the individual soul (Microcosm) endeavoring to attain Union (Yoga) with the Universal Soul (Macrocosm). Thus, Narayana also means this universal soul or supreme personality of God.

⁴ *Poornamada poornamidam poornatapoornamudachyate; poornasya poornamadaya poornamevavasisyate.*

⁵ Nirguna means untouched by material contamination - [Prabhupada]. Beyond the Guna's or without Guna.

⁶ Bhagavat Gita 9.8

⁷ Guna are the material qualities of Prakriti (personified nature) as Satwa (Goodness), Rajas (Passion) and Tamas (Ignorance).

⁸ Shakti literally means strength or power and specifically indicates the strength to achieve an objective. The three primary objectives are creation, preservation and dissolution.

⁹ Sri Shakti is the phoneme causing Satwa Guna and is personified as Maha-Lakshmi. Satwa Guna is of the nature of Goodness causing preservation.

¹⁰ The word 'pure' has been used to indicate the presence of Amrita (nectar) that causes immortality or perceived immortality in a relative time concept.

¹¹ Bhu Shakti is the phoneme causing Rajas Guna and is personified as Maha-Saraswati. Satwa Guna is of the nature of Passion causing creation.

¹² Nila Shakti is the phoneme causing Tamas Guna and is personified as Maha-Kali. Tamas Guna is of the nature of Ignorance causing destruction.

intermingling) and the other part that is imperceptible (with two Shakti's: Sri-Shakti & Bhu-Shakti).

1.2 The Expansion of Vasudeva

The perceptible part of Vasudeva is *Karanodakasayi-Vishnu* or the principal evolver and the first intention of creation is seen in the evolution of the sixteen principles of material action¹³. Srila Prabhupada¹⁴ opines that many such universes come out of the pores of the skin of *Karanodakasayi-Vishnu*. This is the first expansion (first Pada) of Vishnu of the three Pada¹⁵ (steps) in which the Lord manifests. Having created the universes Vasudeva/Vishnu enters into them for continuing the process of creation. In the next two-stages/ steps, He is known as *Garbhodakasayi Vishnu* and *Kshirodakasayi Vishnu*.

The three-fold division continues into the next level due to the expansion of this perceptible part of Vasudeva with the motive of entering into each universe. Vasudeva takes the form of *Garbhodakasayi Vishnu* lying within the half of the universe, which is full with the water of His perspiration from the pangs of multiple births. Vasudeva (*Garbhodakasayi Vishnu*) with Neela Shakti (Tamas) evolves as the Shankarshana; with Bhu Shakti He expands into Pradyumna (Rajas) and with Sri Shakti He evolves as Aniruddha (Satwa Guna)¹⁶. There is an intermingling of the Guna's (modes of nature), and the prevailing modes shall dominate the nature of the expansion.

Figure 1: Narayana & Creation

¹³ SB 1.3.1

¹⁴ SB 1.3.1 purport

¹⁵ *Trinipada vichakrame Vishnur-gopa adabhya. Atho dharmani dharayen. RV*

¹⁶ This postulation of Parasara (BPHS 1.14 –1.17) is corroborated by the Sloka - *Om namastubhyam Bhagavate Vasudevaaya dhimahi. Pradyumnayaaya, Aniruddhaaya namah Sankarshanaaya cha*. In addition we are taught that the intellect 'Dhi' evolves with these expansions which in turn, results in the creation of (a) Brahma and the 14 Loka, (b) Ahankara that creates living beings and (c) Maha Tatwa. These expansions are spontaneous without any time lag.



The expansions of Sankarshana (Neela Shakti – Tamas) further evolve into the Maha Tatwa (the primordial five states of physical existence) while those of Pradyumna (Bhu Shakti – Rajas) evolve into Ahankara (individual ego) and Aniruddha (Sri Shakti – Satwa) evolves into the demiurge Brahma (Ahankara murti). This is conceived as the stem of the lotus (akin to the umbilical chord) growing out of the navel of Garbhodakasayi Vishnu (as Aniruddha). The stem has a thousand petal lotus as its apex (like the Sahasrara Chakra – thousand petal Chakra in the cranium) on which resided Brahma. The stem has been equated to the three Loka (planes of existence) or to fourteen Loka depending on the context. Such brilliant imagery helps to clear many a misconception. For example there is this never ending debate about the correct time of birth – as to (a) whether it is the *Garbha pravesha* or coming out of the uterus, (b) *Nadi sodhana* – cutting of the umbilicus or (c) *Prathama rodana* – first cry? If we were to accept this imagery of Brahma on the umbilicus of Garbhodakasayi Vishnu as symbolizing birth, then it is time of cutting of the umbilical chord, which is the correct birth moment.

Figure 2: Karanodakasayi-Vishnu



Ahamkara born of predominant Rajas further evolves into three parts based on the Guna's. A more Satvic expansion (born from Satwa or goodness) is into a Deva; Rajasik expansion (born from Rajas or Passion) is unto the *Indriya's* {five *Gyanendriya* or senses related to knowledge (1) smell, (2) taste, (3) sight (4) hear and (5) touch or feel and five *Karmendriya* or five primary actions (1) speech, (2) grasping, (3) walking, (4) evacuation/cleansing and (5) procreation}; and the Tamasik expansion (born of Tamas or ignorance) is into *Pancha Bhoota* (five states of physical existence) called (1) Agni – fire/energy (2) Prithvi – earth/solid (3) Jala – water/liquid (4) Vayu – wind/gas and (5) Akash – ether/vacuum. The *Dhi* (Supreme intelligence of Vasudeva) enters the process of creation through Ahamkara and besides the creation of the Tanmatra {five subtle elements – (1) Energy – Agni (2) Solid – Prithvi (3) Liquid – Jala (4) Gas – Vayu and (5) Akash – Vacuum in the physical sense but an ethereal substance in the metaphysical sense} and the *Indriya* as indicated, also creates the Mana (Mind or consciousness). All these creations are 'active' as they arise with their individual Shakti's. In fact, Ahamkara itself has been created from the Rajas of Pradyumna and in turn its creations will also exhibit such traits as associating for the purpose of creating active elements and bodies that are principally Rajasik. Thus all creatures and living bodies are created from Ahamkara.

Figure 3: Garbhodakasayi Vishnu



The Vishnu Purana confirms this postulation and adds that the 'Paramatma' is the 'Purusha' and adds that He is 'Kaala' or time (the controller of the sixteen laws of material action). Thus evolved the concept of Kaala Purusha (personification of time as

an aspect of God) and the Bha-Chakra (zodiac) as the celestial clock that not only represents the Kaala Purusha but also indicates the quality of time. *Kshirodakasayi Vishnu* or the Paramatma expands from Vasudeva/Garbhodakasayi Vishnu into the body of Brahma (through the Satvic incarnation Aniruddha) and thereafter enters the body of every living being to reside in the heart (lotus¹⁷). By a similar process, the Jeevatma (or the individual personal soul) also enters the body and shares a berth next to the Param Atma in the heart. Parasara¹⁸ has opined that the Paramatma resides in all Jeeva's i.e. all living beings have a portion of the divine spark of Vishnu within their hearts. The potency of this spark of Vishnu is called Paramatma-amsa whereas the potency of his or her own individual soul is called Jeeva-amsa.

Sankhya Shastra has a similar postulation (as taught by Sri Krishna in the Srimad Bhagavat Gita and Kapila Muni an incarnation of Vishnu in the Srimad Bhagavatam) in so far as the expansion of *Garbhodakasayi Vishnu* is concerned. This teaching is grossly different from the fundamental atheism of the Sankhya Shastra given in the Sankhya Karika of Isvarakrishna attributed to Kapila. Kapila Muni the legendary founder of this system of philosophy¹⁹ gave this knowledge to His mother Devahuti and is different from Kapila Muni as indicated in the Bhagavatam. The principal difference is in the view of the Purusha as being the prime creator (Krishna/Kapila) and just an inactive spectator of the evolution of Prakriti (Isvarakrishna).

The expansion of Vasudeva is based on twenty-five principles (Tatwa). The first principle is [1] the Purusha or Vasudeva the principal evolver Who glances at [2] Prakriti (Shakti - personified as Mother Nature) while lying on the Karana Sagar (causal ocean). The Purusha has three forms²⁰ as (a) Maha Vishnu or Karanodakasayi Vishnu, (b) Garbhodakasayi Vishnu and (c) Kshirodakasayi Vishnu at the three levels of evolution. At the first level, the exhalation of Karanodakasayi Vishnu produces innumerable universes that start as a seed and expand as they float above the causal ocean. At the second level, Garbhodakasayi Vishnu enters each of these universes and interacts with Prakriti in its three constituent qualities called Guna to produce besides others, [3] Intelligence (*Dhi* or *buddhi* called Maha 'the Great One'). From intelligence is produced [4] *Ahamkara* (Self consciousness).

Ahamkara interacts with Neela Shakti in the mode of Tamas to produce the *Tanmatra* (five forms of material existence in the particle form). The Tanmatra or particle forms of physical existence are [5] *Akash* - Vacuum or ether depending on context, [6] *Vayu* – Gas, [7] *Jala* – liquid, [8] *Prithvi* – Solid, and [9] *Agni* – Energy. The five forms of gross physical matter called Maha Bhoota was created from these molecular forms. These are also named as the molecular forms (as they are not different from their constituent molecules) as [10] *Akash* - Vacuum or ether, [11] *Vayu* – Gas, [12] *Jala* – liquid, [13] *Prithvi* – Solid, and [14] *Agni* – Energy.

Ahamkara interacts with Bhu Shakti in the mode of Rajas to produce the five sense organs called Gyanendriya – [15] hearing, [16] touch, [17] sight, [18] taste and, [19] smell and the five organs of action called Karmendriya - [20] speech, [21] grasping, [22] walking, [23] procreation and, [24] evacuation. Each of these organs and senses

¹⁷ Ref. Appendix-1 – Heart lotus is the Hridaya Padma or a psychic energy center in the region of the heart.

¹⁸ BPHS 1.21 -24

¹⁹ There are six systems of Philosophy called Shad-Darshan. Refer Appendix-4 for more details.

²⁰ Laghu Bhagavatamrita, Purva Khanda, 33

correspond to a Tanmatra/Maha Bhoota respectively. The final product of Ahamkara is the Mana (Mind) that interacts with the various Gyanendriya and Karmendriya and is influenced by the Tanmatra and Maha Bhoota i.e. the mind is the link between the senses and organs that are in constant interaction with the molecular and gross material forms.

1.3 Shakti

Shakti is viewed as the principal field of evolution and in that sense is construed as a feminine personality but is viewed as a potency or energy type. Narayana, the Supreme Lord has two types of energies. These are the superior Spiritual energy and the other is the inferior material energy that manifests. The spiritual energy is further classified as internal and marginal. These are called *Antaranga Shakti* (internal spiritual energy), *Tathastha Shakti* (marginal spiritual energy) and *Bahiranga Shakti* (external material energy). Just as light loses its intensity as it goes further from the lamp (bulb source), so also the *Antaranga Shakti* is viewed as the concentrated effulgence existing within the Lord and is called *Para Shakti* as it exists only at the Para level. *Tathastha Shakti* is like the light just outside the lamp (glass cage of the bulb) and is also spiritual in the sense that it does not serve the purpose of making objects visible. The light which is outside the bulb helps us to see objects by reflecting from their surface and in a similar manner the *Bahiranga Shakti* is the original effulgence, field or potency that is involved in the process of creation.

The *Antaranga Shakti* (internal spiritual energy) has three attributes. One is called *Hladini Shakti* and is like *Neela Shakti* or the pleasure potency and this internal quarter of the Supreme Lord is akin to *Sadashiva*. The other attribute is called *Sandhini Shakti* which is like *Sri Shakti* or the existential potency and this quarter portion of the Supreme lord is *Maha Vishnu*. The third attribute of the spiritual energy is called *Samvit Shakti* and is like *Bhu Shakti* or cognitive potency and this quarter of the Supreme Lord is *Param Brahma*. Refer Figure-1 where these are schematically shown as the three complete quarters in the imperceptible portion. The Padma Purana refers to these as the *Tri-Pada – Vibhuti* (three quarters) and provides elaborate details. It adds that the material manifestation is in the *Eka-Pada-Vibhuti* (one quarter).

The *Tathastha Shakti* is present in the fourth quarter as the margin or meeting point between the internal *Antaranga Shakti* and the external *Bahiranga Shakti*. As mentioned above, this is also spiritual energy and is viewed by Parasara as having two attributes - *Sri Shakti* and *Bhu Shakti*. Narayana in His interaction with the *Tathastha Shakti* is known as Vasudeva and is represented as a half of the fourth quarter in the schematic diagram (Figure-1). This portion is also imperceptible. Vasudeva in His multiple expansions as *Kshirodakasayi Vishnu* is the Paramatma (Universal soul or Macrocosmic expansion). The name *Kshirodakasayi 'Vishnu'* implies the yoga (union) of Vasudeva and Sri Shakti and indicates the perception of the Paramatma as being of pure Satwa Guna. This is viewed as the pure white light as indicated by the descriptive term *Kshirodakasayi*²¹. The other Yoga of Vasudeva is with Bhu Shakti and this multiple expansion is called the Jeevatma (Individual spirit soul or Microcosmic expansion). These are like the various colors of visible light as well as the invisible 'dark' ultraviolet. Just as the diffracted light colors are like the original white light in every possible sense

²¹ *Kshira* means milk and *Kshirodakasayi* means sleeping on the ocean of milk thereby referring to the pure white effulgence of the Paramatma.

except the breadth of their spectrum, so also the Jeevatma have the potency of the Paramatma but are different in their individual potency.

These Jeevatma or Jeeva's are like water particles that have acquired excessive energy ('Rajas' from Bhu Shakti) to become steam and have left the surface of the boiling water. Having moved away from the surface of the water these tiny water particles acquire various forms in various substances and being to believe in their independent existence in these substances as being different from the water reservoir from where they originated. In a similar manner the Jeevatma dwelling in the material substances begin to believe in their independent existence as different from the Paramatma. The closest contact that any being has with God is the juxtaposition of the Jeevatma and the Paramatma in the heart (lotus).

The external *Bahiranga Shakti* is present in the other half of the fourth quarter and has Yoga with Vasudeva as *Sri, Bhu* and *Neela Shakti* for the process of creation.

Whereas Sri Jiva Gosvami lists twenty Shakti's in the Bhagavat Sandarbha, Parasara lists forty Shakti's in two groups of twenty each as the potencies of the spiritual energy. This shall be discussed in a separate volume under Vimsamsa.

1.4 Deva

Most scholars misinterpret the word 'Deva' as meaning 'God'. In reality, there are 33 Deva's with about 330 million forms. The word is derived from the root *Divu* that has ten meanings²² (for a better understanding, refer to the glossary) –

1. Krida - sporting
2. Vijigisha - conquest
3. Vyavahar - occupation/pursuit
4. Dyuti - intellectual inspiration or brilliancy
5. Stuti – praise
6. Moda – pleasure
7. Mada – exhilaration, intoxication
8. Swapna – dream
9. Kanti – splendor
10. Gati – direction, movement

These words define the purpose of a Deva. Jaimini defines Deva or Devata as indicated by the Devata Karaka²³ planet. This is the third in the hierarchy (of spiritual needs) after the Atmakaraka (helps in the determination of the Ista/Isa directing emancipation from the cycle of rebirth) and Amatya Karaka (deity symbolizing sustenance in this world). Thus Deva or Devata is the Guru and guides or illuminates certain inherent abilities that will develop in this life or the spiritual path or that which leads to fulfillment of desires etc. Nirukta²⁴ defines Deva as that which (a) confers benefits (*Danada*) (b) illumines (*Deepanad*) or (c) is the source of such knowledge or illumination (*Dyutanad*). Thus, translating deva as God is conceptually incorrect. This view is further confirmed without an iota of doubt in the Aitereya Brahmana²⁵ as well as the Sathapatha Brahmana²⁶. The

²² Dhatupatha

²³ Refer Chapter 8

²⁴ ibid 7.16

²⁵ Sloka 1.6 *Satya samhita vai deva*

²⁶ Sloka 3.7.3.10 *Vidmanso hi deva*

natural question is ‘if Deva’s are not Gods, then who or what are the Deva’s and in what manner are they linked to Jyotish’?

Sathapatha Brahmana 14.16:

Katame te trayastrimshat iti ashtou vasavah; ekadasa Rudra, dwadasa-Adityah ta ekatrimshat; Indraschaiva Prajapatischa trayatrimshaviti.

(We) speak of the thirty three (Deva) of which eight Vasu, eleven Rudra and twelve Aditya add up to thirty one. Indra and Prajapati included bring their number to thirty three.

1.4.1 Asta Vasava (Eight Vasu’s)

Sathapatha Brahmana 14.16:

Katame Vasava iti. Agnischa prithivi cha vayusch-antarikshamchaadityascha dyouscha chandramascha nakshatrani chaite Vasava aetesu hidam sarve vasu bitam aete hidam sarve vasayante taddyudidam sarve vasayante tasmad Vasava iti.

The Sathapatha Brahmana gives the list of eight Vasu as (1) Agni (2) Prithvi (3) Vayu (4) Antariksha (5) Aditya (6) Dyou (7) Chandrama and (8) Nakshetra. Prima facie this may seem a bit contradictory as Aditya has also been mentioned separately but here it refers to the Sun, Chandra refers to the Moon, Nakshetra are the lunar mansions or the constellations and the remaining five represent the states of material existence. These eight form the primary source of enlightenment about the self. They represent the basic variables that define every creation and its original source of illumination in the ten methods defined earlier as the purpose of the deva. The Vishnu Purana makes this more lucid in the definition of the Vasu’s as

Q1) *Apa* – Jala Tatwa or liquid

11. *Dhara* – Prithvi Tatwa or solid

12. *Anila* – Vayu Tatwa or Gas

13. *Anala* – Agni Tatwa or Energy

14. *Dhruva* – the pole star representing

- a. Akash Tatwa – the sky or Vacuum and
- b. fixity of the zodiac i.e. the relevance of Ayanamsa

15. *Soma* – The Moon

16. *Pratyusha* – the recurring dawn representing

- a. The Sun – as causing the night and day i.e. the source of light behind the dawn,
- b. Lagna – The ascendant or the point in the eastern horizon as representing the self and is equated to the dawn.

17. *Prabhasa* – splendorous lights of the stars that are grouped into 27/28 Nakshetra (Constellations).

This list is the first principle of Jyotish where the bodies that create all beings as well as guide them through various activities are defined. These include (a) the Sun, (b) the Moon, (c) the constellations called Nakshetra and (d) the Pancha Tatwa or (the guidance/direction from) the five states of existence of all matter and energy. Thus, the luminaries (Sun & Moon), the five planets Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus & Saturn [ruling the five states of energy (Agni), solid (Prithvi), ether (Akash), liquid (Jala) and gas (Vayu) respectively] and the 27 (or 28) lunar mansion called Nakshetra form the first principle. Birth implies creation and this is the Satvic principle of sustenance of the born or created being.

1.4.2 Ekadasa Rudra

Sathapatha Brahmana 14.16:

*Katame Rudra iti. Dasheme purushe praanaa atmaikadashah te yadasmad
martyaacchreeradtkranti aha rodanti tad yad rodayanti tasmad Rudra iti.*

The eleven Rudra²⁷ are defined as Deva's. Ten of these are Rudra are responsible for holding the 'Prana' (vital life force or air) within the body that sustains the breathing and life. Thus, their nature is akin to Marut or storm god and in a sense like Vayu (the air element). The eleventh Rudra is Maheswara and is responsible for the Atma (soul). These are called Rudra from the root *Rud* meaning to weep as their 'going away' results in the death of the native and the near and dear ones weep.

These eleven Rudra (including Maheswara) are responsible for the destruction of everything that has been created and form the second principle of Jyotish. In the first stage there is the destruction of the physical body by the 'going away' of any of the ten Rudra. Thereafter the Atma (soul) is separated from the Mana (mind) by Maheswara (Shiva) the eleventh Rudra. The two nodes of the Moon called Rahu & Ketu are the destroyers. Rahu has the responsibility of destroying the Luminaries and the signs (Dwadasa Aditya). Ketu destroys the material creation represented by the Pancha Tatwa (in Jyotish the five planets Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus and Saturn) and the Nakshetra. The Rudra can be viewed as the binding forces in any created being, both living and non-living. They symbolize the strength of God and are also the strength of the created being as their going away results in the weakness of the body and it is destroyed.

1.4.3 Dwadasa Aditya

Sathapatha Brahmana 14.16:

*Katame Aditya iti. Dwadasamasah samvatsarasya
Aeta Adityah aete hidam sarvamadadaanayanti taddwididam sarvamadadaana yanti
tasmaditya iti.*

Dwadasa means twelve and Masa means the month – thus the Dwadasa (twelve) Aditya are the twelve months represented by the twelve signs in the zodiac. The month is variously defined in Jyotish and this specific reference indicates the motion of the during the period between two consecutive conjunctions with the Moon. This is the synodic month and is about 29.5 days, which for convenience is taken as 30 days. Since the average geo-centric motion of the Sun during 30 days is 30 degrees, this defines the Saura Masa (solar month) which is the third principle of Jyotish. Twelve such '30 degree motions' result in the Sun returning to its original position and this defines the Samvatsara or 'solar year'. **Thus, the third principle of Jyotish is that of time & space which is defined by the Dwadasa Aditya (twelve signs of the zodiac with the Sun as their overlord). The solar month and solar year are the foundation of Vedic astrology and that further sub-divisions of time are to be determined based on solar motion.** The word Samvatsara means 'year' and specifically 'solar year' as this is based on the Dwadasa Aditya. This knowledge is of vital importance in determining the period of influence of the planets called 'dasa'. Often astrologers are bogged down with misconceptions about using the solar or lunar year or even other variously defined time

²⁷ Jaimini has given considerable details on calculating these eleven Rudra (infact ten Rudra and the eleventh he calls Maheswara or Shiva Who is responsible for delivering the soul). These have been discussed in Volume VIII (Ayur Khand – Longevity).

periods. This indicates the lack of appreciation of this principle of time & space relationship as defined by the Dwadasa Aditya.

They are called Aditya as they are the distributors of food and all materials required for creation and sustenance (*Dana*) as well as inspiration, exhilaration, intoxication, sexual vitality and vigor (*Mada*). The Aditya are the givers and everything comes from them. Thus, the twelve signs represent all the material forms of creation.

1.4.4 Indra & Prajapati

Sathapatha Brahmana 14.16:

*Katama Indrah katamah prajapatiriti. stanayitnurevendro yagyah prajapatiriti. Katama eko
deva iti sa Brahma tyadityachakshate.*

Stanayitnu means thunder or lightening and refers to the electrical impulses that are used by the brain to control the senses. Thus Indra is the demigod controlling the senses and the working of the brain as well as the intelligence of all creation. *Yagyam* is the worship or praise for Prajapati the progenitor. **This is the fourth principle of Jyotish and is called Lagna or the ascendant representing the seat of Prajapati the progenitor and the ‘praise worthy one’. Indra is seated on the throne of the zodiac indicated by the point in the mid-heaven. This is the area of the tenth house counted from the Lagna or ascendant sign.**

The zodiac at any point of time, is divided into two halves by the line of the horizon. Since the earth rotates from the west to the east, the planets and other stars seem to move in the opposite direction from any stationary point of observation on the earth. The Sun rises in the east in the morning, ascends to mid-heaven (middle of the sky) by mid-day and then starts descending till it sets in the western horizon. Lagna is the point in the eastern horizon that is just about to ascend or rise into the heavens signified by the visible half of the zodiac and is akin to sunrise. This is called the ascendant. Similarly the point in the western horizon which is just about to descend or go under the horizon is called the descendant. The zodiac is divided into two halves called the *Drusya* (visible) and *Adrusya* (invisible) by the line of the horizon with the sky in the visible half and the portion below the horizon in the invisible half. The *Drusya* Rasi or zodiac signs (complete or portions) in the visible half are the heavens called *loka* whereas the *Adrusya* Rasi or zodiac signs (complete or portions) in the invisible portion or below the horizon are called hell or *Tala*. There are two postulates based on (1) material or physical existence and (2) spiritual existence to describe these heavens and hell.

THE THREE MATERIAL WORLDS

The physical universe can be classified into three parts called *Bhu loka* (earth), *Bhuva loka* (firmament or the solar system which contains the nava graha) and *Swarga loka* (Sky containing the fixed stars which is the residence of the demi-gods). The geocentric zodiac (Bhu loka as its center) limited to the Bhuva loka is called the Vishnu chakra (Tropical zodiac where the weather and other phenomena of the atmosphere and beyond are experienced). The geocentric zodiac based on the fixed stars in the sky is called the Narayana chakra (Sidereal zodiac). These terms find specific mention in the Vishnu purana. The pious Hindu recited the prayer “*Om Bhur-bhuva-svah*” every morning for the blessings of this material creation as a prefix to the Gayatri mantra.

THE FOURTEEN SPIRITUAL WORLDS

Thus, there are seven heavens and seven hell. The heavens called *loka*²⁸ are in seven parts:

- i. Visible portion of the Lagna (ascendant sign/house) that has ascended i.e. from the start of the sign to the longitude of the ascendant called *Satya loka* symbolized by the thousand petal lotus on which rests Prajapati (form of Brahma) the progenitor. This is the seat of the creator and He is praised by all His creation. It shows fame as a consequence of the praise and health and vigor.
- ii. Visible portion of the seventh house/sign that is about to descend or go into the invisible half i.e. from the longitude of the descendant to the end of the sign called *Bhu loka* (the earthly plane). It shows the death and re-birth as this is also the *Mrityu loka* or ‘where death occurs’.
- iii. The tenth house/sign (with the mid-heaven as the throne of Indra in it) called *Svah* or *Swarga loka*.
- iv. The remaining signs/houses in the visible portion (8th, 9th, 11th & 12th) are the *Bhuva*, *Maha Gyanah* and *Tapah loka*.

Thus, the seven heavens are *Bhu*, *Bhuva*, *Svah*, *Maha*, *Janah*, *Tapah* & *Satya loka*²⁹ and the deities of the planets Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, Moon, Saturn and Jupiter respectively, preside over these loka. The seven hell are the seven signs in the invisible portion of the zodiac called *Atala*, *Bitala*, *Sutala*, *Talatala*, *Rasatala*, *Mahatala* and *Patala* respectively. There are seven *Narka* (most inferior hells for punishment) below these seven Tala and are all situated at the nadir i.e. the point exactly opposite mid-heaven in the fourth house. The spiritual Hindu recites the mantra “*Om Bhur- Om Bhuva – Om svah – Om Maha – Om Gyana – Om Tapah – Om Satyam*” everyday as a prefix to the Gayatri mantra aspiring for the highest heavens.

Thus, in any chart, the seventh house is examined for death and rebirth. If death occurs during the period of the planet in the seventh house or its lord, then rebirth is sure to occur. The place of rebirth can be guessed from the planet / sign in the seventh house. If Mars is in the seventh house, then rebirth shall be in an island like Sri Lanka. Others indications can be read from standard texts. It is also for this very reason that Parasara recommends the Mritunjaya Mantra with its prayer for Moksha (emancipation from the cycle of rebirth) during such periods of planets connected with the seventh house. The 12th house or the portion just before the Lagna is the Satya Loka, the highest spiritual point and beyond this is the spiritual region of no-return. By constantly repeating *Om Tat Sat* and living a truthful life, the worshipper attains Satya Loka and the highest heavens beyond from where there is no return to this Mrityu loka.

Thus, we conclude that the 33 Deva’s are the basic paradigm of Jyotish and that they can also be grouped based on mobility. These groups would include:

- c. The immobile or stationary stars form the group of 27 (or 28) **Nakshetra**,
- d. The space and time divisions form the group of **Rasi** or Dwadasa Aditya and

²⁸ The names of the seven loka as given here are from the Markandeya Purana. Human beings reside in the *Bhu loka* (earthly plane) while birds, clouds and the demigods reside in the *Bhuva loka*. The names given for the seven heavens indicated by the seven signs are different in other Vedic literature. However, the names given here are accepted as authentic as Rishi Markandeya was the recipient of the Vedic knowledge from the Maharishi’s through Rishi Chyavan & Daksha Prajapati. He was also the grandfather of Parasara.

²⁹ The names of the seven loka as given here are from the Markandeya Purana. Human beings reside in the *Bhu loka* (earthly plane) while birds, clouds and the demigods reside in the *Bhuva loka*. The names given for the seven heavens indicated by the seven signs are different in other Vedic literature. However, the names given here are accepted as authentic as Rishi Markandeya was the recipient of the Vedic knowledge from the Maharishi’s through Rishi Chyavan & Daksha Prajapati. He was also the grandfather of Parasara.

- e. The luminaries (1) Sun & (2) Moon, the Pancha Tatwa controllers (3) Mars, (4) Mercury, (5) Jupiter, (6) Venus & (7) Saturn and the Rudra representatives (8)Rahu & (9)Ketu form the third group of mobile bodies called **Graha**. Since these are nine in number, they are called Nava Graha. We shall use the forced definition of ‘planets’ to indicate these nine mobile bodies. The Sun is not mobile within the solar system but from a geocentric viewpoint i.e. assuming the earth to be stationary, its movement is translated to be the movement of the Sun.

1.5 Pancha Tatwa

The five principal forms of existence of all matter and energy which is the physical manifestation from Tamas are called Pancha Tatwa (lit. Five elements). These five forms of existence are Agni (Energy), Prithvi (Solid), Jala (Liquid), Vayu (Gas) and Akash (Vacuum). Thus every body or physical manifestation in this Universe must exist in one or more of these five principal forms of physical existence. This is a well known principle of Physics and that these forms of existence are mutually convertible i.e. matter and energy can change from one form to another or that the Tatwa are changing from one to another all the time. Gasoline (petrol) is primarily a liquid substance (Jala Tatwa) which is ignited in the engine of a car and is converted to energy (Agni Tatwa) that propels the car. The human being consumes solid food (Prithvi Tatwa) and various liquids (Jala Tatwa) which are digested at various levels and the necessary elements are extracted into the blood especially glucose (the gasoline for the human body). For ignition, the presence of oxygen is necessary and this is drawn from the air (Vayu Tatwa) we breathe. Oxygen also gets dissolved into the blood which is like the engine of the car where the glucose and oxygen meet and are ignited to give energy (Agni Tatwa) to the muscles to work.

The Pancha Tatwa are not Deva’s in their physical manifestation but their ability to guide the life process and course through various forms and manifestations is the Deva. Water for example, is Jala Tatwa and is primarily a physical element (Bhoota) born from Tamas. However, the knowledge that water can quench thirst is a Deva. This difference between the physical element itself and the body of knowledge associated with it should be understood as the difference between the Bhoota and the Deva. In the human body, neither the food nor liquids consumed nor the air we breathe nor the ignition and energy formed are Deva. They are simply the Tatwa or the elements working as per the natural laws.

1.6 Guna

Guna is the state of being of a body (or element composed of the principal forms of existence). It is a measure of the energy level as well as the nature of the motion. If the motion is balanced, then it can continue without resistance for infinite time like the rotation of the planets around the Sun has been going on for ages. Such bodies possess Satwa Guna or the quality of goodness in good measure that causes them to continue in perfect motion for a long time. It is for this reason that Parasara teaches that the planets possess the goodness that causes them to represent the Dasavatar (ten forms of Vishnu - Sustainer, the embodiment of Goodness). Others tend to accelerate with excess energy and then decelerate as the energy level is diminished until they come to a standstill. The process of uneven motion is called Rajas Guna and is a sign of life (Brahma – Creator). The point where the body comes to a standstill or has no motion is called Tamas guna and is a state equated with death (Shiva- Destroyer).

From a heliocentric viewpoint, the planets possess Satwa Guna, but this situation changes from a geocentric view point, where we find the planets accelerating, decelerating and also coming to a standstill. These motions have been studied and various mental attitudes have been attributed to them. For example, a planet that is accelerating and moving very fast is said to be in *Bheeta avastha* i.e. frightened and is running away.

1.7 Divine Incarnations

From the above it is evident that every aspect of this manifested universe is a part of Vishnu and thus, every being is but an incarnation of God. There are umpteen incarnations of Vishnu as given in the Bhagavat Gita³⁰, Srimad Bhagavatam³¹ and other literature. The translations of Srila Prabhupada are recommended for study and these will require an elaborate commentary to fully appreciate each incarnation from the Jyotish viewpoint and understanding. The Bhagavatam is also the best source for understanding the principles of creation and what has been given here is merely a gist.

One of the important teachings of the Bhagavatam is that the different incarnations and forms of God are worshipped by people for attainment of different desires.

Recommended reading:

1. Brihat Parasara Hora Shastra Vol 1 & 2
2. Satapatha Brahmana
3. Srimad Bhagavatam

³⁰ BG 10.19 – 10.37

³¹ SB 1.1.7,

Primary Divisions

We must not forget that it was the Hindus who discovered what is known as the precession of the Equinoxes, and in their calculation such an occurrence takes place every 25,827 years. Our modern science, after labors of hundreds of years has simply proved them to be correct.

Count Viscount Cheiro

2.1 Time and Space

Time and space are like endless rings without a beginning and without an end. The definition of the beginning of a linear time scale or the starting point of the Universe has been the vexed question of many a thinker and this thought leads the mind to a definition of God as being imperceptible. The great Vedic thinkers personified God as Kalapurusha³² and harmonized these two concepts of time and space into the four-dimensional model of Bhachakra (geocentric zodiac). Normally the Bhachakra is represented as a two dimensional figure for easy reading on paper, but the other dimensions of a dynamic linear time and the vertical declination of the planets were also examined and noted. *Thus, the first and foremost point to bear in mind is that every division of the zodiac has a similar or matching division of time.* As we study each of the divisions, we will also examine the time measure represented by it and will get additional clues to interpret results and delineate the effect of time on the division.

2.2 Rasi & Nakshatra

The division of the zodiac into twelve signs and twenty seven (or twenty eight Nakshatra) is the primary division in the paradigm of Vedic Astrology. Every now and then a new planet is seen and the doubts arise in the minds of the learned on the continued validity of the twelve sign zodiac. To clear these doubts, it is necessary to understand the basis of this primary division called Rasi. The zodiac of 12 signs and 27 constellations was prepared by carefully observing the movement of the Sun and Moon in the geocentric model of the universe.

2.2.1 Rasi – twelve Sun signs.

The relative motion between the Sun & Moon shows that the Synodical Month (new moon to new moon or full moon to full moon) is 29D 12H 44M 3S = 29.53059D. Rounding off to the next higher integer we get 30 days during which, the average solar

³² Kala- time, Purusha – God personified as Man. Hence, Kalapurusha is the personification of time as the ultimate representation of God.

motion is 30 Degrees. Finally, dividing the Bhachakra of 360 degrees by 30, we get 12 signs, or the 12 sun signs as the Sun³³ gets over-lordship of all signs being their pater. The twelve signs are Mesha (Aries), Vrisabha (Taurus), Mithun (Gemini), Karkata (Cancer), Simha (Leo), Kanya (Virgo), Tula (Libra), Vrischika (Scorpio), Dhanus (Sagittarius), Makara (Capricorn), Kumbha (Aquarius) and Meena (Pisces).

Figure 4: The Sun sign Zodiac

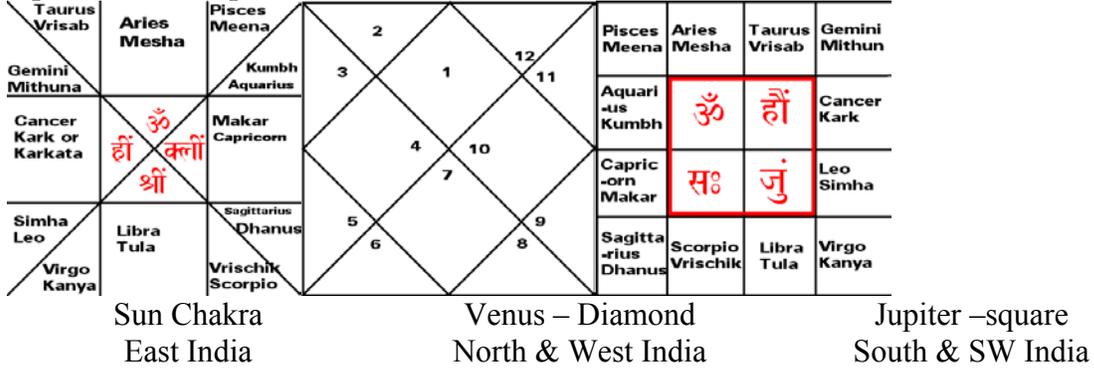
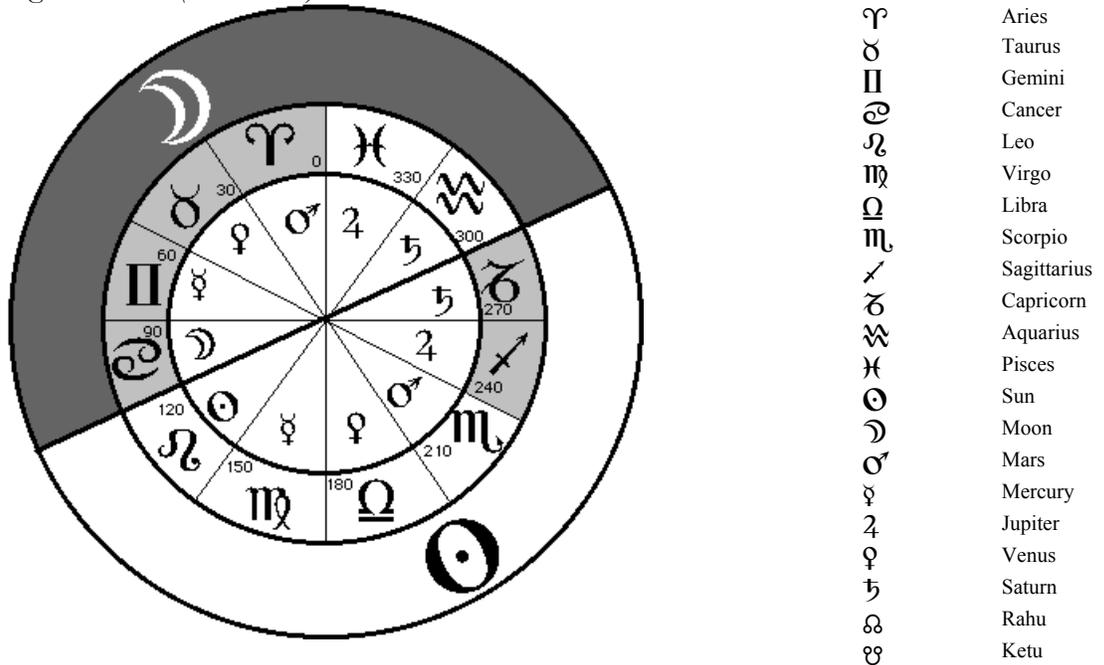


Figure 5: Hora (Aho-Ratra)



2.2.2 Hora (based on ecliptic)

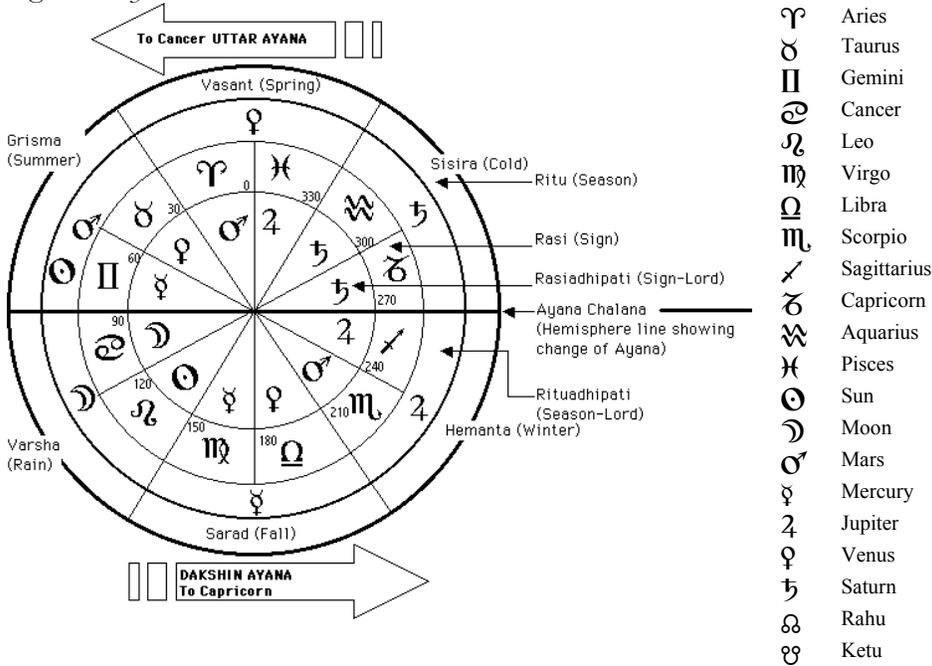
This method of division of the Zodiac into two halves is based on the distance of the sun from the earth. This divides the zodiac along an imaginary line passing through the zero degrees of Leo and Zero degrees of Aquarius into two halves. Half or Hora is derived from the word Aho-Ratra³⁴ indicating the two-fold divisions of the day into equal halves of light and darkness. Thus, this division of the zodiac was into the two parts called Solar

³³ Hence the name Rasi where Ra refers to the Sun God.

³⁴ Aho means day and Ratra means night.

and Lunar halves³⁵ or *Surya Hora* and *Chandra Hora* respectively. The solar half or *Surya Hora* included the six signs in the zodiacal order from Leo to Capricorn and the lunar half or *Chandra Hora* included the six signs from Cancer to Aquarius in the reverse order. This division has nothing to do with Ayana. The Sun and Moon own adjoining signs (i.e. Leo & Cancer respectively) in their Hora's while the five other planets in the order of Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn (based on their geographical distances from the Sun i.e. Mercury is closest and Saturn is the most distant) shall own the signs in their proximity to Leo (and Cancer) reckoned in the zodiacal (or reverse) order³⁶ (Figure - 2)

Figure 6: Ayana



2.2.3 Hora - (based on solstice)

The Rishi's also observed the two solstices' where the length of the day (i.e. daylight duration) was the longest and shortest respectively called the summer and winter solstice³⁷. The Summer solstice is the longest day and marked the end of the hot summer season and beginning of the rainy season. So also the winter solstice marked the end of the long nights. Thus, the zodiac was divided into two halves along an imaginary line passing through the Zero Degrees of Cancer and Zero Degrees of Capricorn, which showed the position of the Sun at these two extreme points of longest day and longest night. This formed the two Ayana or halves of the zodiac comprising three seasons each. The specific terms used are Uttar-Ayana or Northern Goal and Dakshin-Ayana or Southern- Goal and refers to the 'goal' of the Sun as it seeks to reach the northernmost

³⁵ Kalyan Verma – Saravali 3.09

इयदस चाकं वगानासतसयाठखम सिमहताख रविनामटा ॥ ककभत्कातत्र पञ्चतिलाखमाम ससी तयानयाखजपि तउसयानातत्र ॥ ॥

³⁶ Kalyan Verma – Saravali 3.10

वानाखरठखम विहगाख सूरसतखजासिवानारुचा साहसिका ॥ ससिनाख मादवाष्साखमया सारुवागयायुता पञ्चजायानतख ॥ ॥

³⁷ Note that the term summer and winter refers to the northern hemisphere and is actually reversed in the southern hemisphere. The Summer solstice marks the end of summer i.e. when the Sun reaches its maximum northern latitude, whereas the winter solstice marks the end of winter when the Sun reaches its maximum southern latitude.

point of the zodiac (i.e. Zero degrees of Cancer) or southern-most point (i.e. zero degrees of Capricorn). This can also refer to the goal of seeking the northernmost latitude³⁸, which coincides with summer solstice, or the southernmost latitude³⁹, which coincides with winter solstice.

2.2.4 Kendra (Quadrant)

The beginning of the zodiac was fixed based on the position of the sun on equinoxes i.e. when the days and nights are equally long and this was at the zero degree of Aries and Libra. In this manner, the four crucial points of the zodiac were determined as zero degrees of Aries, Cancer, Libra and Capricorn. The Rishi's realized that there were actually two zodiac's – one where the solar system could be considered as an independent system in itself and another in which the solar systems movement around another ellipse center called VISHNU-NABHI is also accounted for. These two zodiac systems are called Sayana (Tropical) and Nirayana (Sidereal) Bhachakra. The primary difference between the two being the motion of the solar system in the universe which is measured by the period of precession of the equinoxes - 25,800 years and when calculated from the point when the same is zero (i.e. sidereal and tropical zodiac coincide) is called *Ayanamsa*⁴⁰. Now, the difference between the starting points of the two zodiac's at any point of time is called *Ayanamsa*. In the concept of the Hindu calendar⁴¹ we realize that Varahamihira's advocacy of using the Suklanta Masa had a lot to do with the nomenclature of the Months on the basis of the normal Nakshatra position of the Full Moon and this determined the start of each lunar month (and not the Amanta Masa system as is in vogue in most of India today). In any case the star 'Chitra' was observed as the point of fixation and 'Chitra Paksha' referring to the opposite point from 'Chitra'⁴², represents the beginning of the zodiac.

The basic point is that the zodiac was divided into four parts of ninety degrees each by the four points representing the beginning of Aries, Cancer, Libra and Capricorn and that these four points defined the four goals of human existence as (a) Dharma – righteousness and adherence to natural and societal principles (b) Moksha – Spirituality and emancipation from the cycle of rebirth, (c) Kaama – existence of desires and their fulfillment or denial as the cause of rebirth and (d) Artha – wealth. The four parts, on the other hand, divided the life into four ashrams, which form the foundation of Hinduism. This is also the concept in 'Chatuspada'⁴³ Dharma'.

The Sankhya Shastra teaches extensively about the Pancha Tatwa or the five forms of existence of all bodies. These forms of existence are (1) Prithvi (Solid state), (2) Jala (Liquid state), (3) Vayu (Gaseous state), (4) Agni (Energy state) and (5) Akash (ethereal or vacuum state). Vacuum permeates the entire universe and hence, the Akash Tatwa is

³⁸ Tropic of Cancer at 23° 27' N Latitude.

³⁹ Tropic of Capricorn at 23° 27' S Latitude.

⁴⁰ Different average rates of precession have been given for *Ayanamsa*, but the fact remains that Surya Siddhanta has been very close to the truth in using 24000 years!. The average rate is 360 Degrees divided by 25,800 years = 50.232558 seconds per year. Note also that the word is composed of 'Ayana' + 'Amsa' or literally, *portion of the Ayana*.

⁴¹ Refer appendix-1 for details.

⁴² Here we are referring to the Yogatara of Chitra.

⁴³ Chatuspada literally means four feet and also refers to the sign Sagittarius which is the ninth house representing ones fortune or Bhagya. The four feet of Dharma are defined as the duty towards (a) Universe/Nation (b) Society (c) Family and (d) self in that decreasing order of importance. It is noteworthy that Parasara uses the term 'Bhagya' while referring to the Chaturthamsa's results.

present throughout the Bhachakra. The other four Tatwa were found to be in a predominant form in Aries (Agni), Cancer (Jala), Libra (Vayu) and Capricorn (Prithvi).

2.2.5 *Trikona (Trine)*

In a similar manner, the Trikona (trine) should also be understood as being the division of time into three aspects of past, present and future. Using (a) Manu Smriti statement that ‘a day in the life of the Gods is a year in human life’ we arrive at the basic equation of 1 Deg (=day motion of Sun) representing 1 year in Human life, and (b) Parasara’s statement that the Param Ayus for human beings is 120 years, we arrive at the angle of 120 Degree representing the present life, next 120 deg representing the future and 120 degree representing the past. The span of 120 degrees of the zodiac covers 9 Nakshatra and thus, a group of nine Nakshatra before Janma (birth) Nakshatra represents the past, the group of nine from Janma represents the present while the remaining group of 9 represents the future.

This three-fold division is very fundamental to Vedic Astrology and we have the three types of Chara (Movable), Sthira (Fixed) and Dwisbhava (Dual) signs. Since the three types are based on the original longevity equation of Parasara (120 Deg = Full life), this is used in the most basic methods to estimate longevity.

2.2.6 *Ritu – The Six seasons.*

The change of seasons formed the primary basis for the Hindu calendar where the year was divided into six seasons called *Ritu*. Rains were considered the blessings of the Gods and the rainy season was considered as that during which life came to this earth. This formed the principle behind determining the life giving portion of the zodiac as well as the concept of the coming down of the individual soul from the heavens above with the raindrops⁴⁴. The distribution of the seasons in each Ayana, their extent in the zodiac and ruling planets are given in Table-1. Furthermore, the *Ritu* should be understood only from the solar months⁴⁵ (i.e. Sun’s transit) and not the lunar months. Since the Sun was accepted as the cause of all seasons, it was natural to give the over lordship of the seasons to him.

Table 1 – Division of the seasons

Ayana	Season		Lord of Season	Sun signs covered	Lord
Winter	Varsha	Rain	Moon	Cancer	Moon
				Leo	Sun
	Sarad	Fall	Mercury	Virgo	Mercury
				Libra	Venus
	Hemanta	Winter	Jupiter	Scorpio	Mars
				Sagittarius	Jupiter

⁴⁴ The *Bṛhadaranyaka Upanishad* explains the Karma theory with reference to the theory of Transmigration of the soul (*samsara*). The pious and good souls who have lived a *dharmic* life depart for the abode of the forefathers and other such *loka*. After a period of temporary bliss, they move on to emptiness via the Moon. From emptiness, **they descend to the earth with the rain** and enter the food that is consumed by the prospective father. From the food they become spermatozoa and are offered to the prospective mother in the altar of fire (copulation). Then the birth occurs. The *Upanishad* adds that the unrighteous are incarnated as birds, insects, animals or plants on the basis of the *Karma* of the past lives. It is generally taught that conduct and adherence to the moral code determined these changes. Thus good karma would promise an exalted future while bad *karma* will tend to degrade the soul in the lines of ‘as you sow so will you reap’. This doctrine of Karma (literally “action”) provides a very satisfactory explanation for the various social inequalities that exist as well as the troubles or grief that one faces as it is the result of one’s own acts or misdeeds in the past. These *Karma* are divided into two categories called *Sanchita* and *Prarabdha*. The results of *Sanchita Karma* will be exhausted in the various heavens and hells after death whereas only experiencing them can lessen the results of *Prarabdha Karma*. Thus, it is this *Prarabdha Karma*, which is the cause of rebirth.

⁴⁵ indicated by Mukunda Daivagyna in Nasta Jataka

Summer	Sisira	Cold	Saturn	Capricorn	Saturn
				Aquarius	Saturn
	Vasant	Spring	Venus	Pisces	Jupiter
				Aries	Mars
	Grisma	Summer	Mars & Sun	Taurus	Venus
				Gemini	Mercury

2.2.7 Nakshatra – (Lunar Mansions)

Having divided the zodiac into 12 signs based on the Sun's movement, it was necessary to also divide this into parts to study the effects of the movement of the Moon. Considered independently, the Moon takes 27D 7H 43M 11.5S to go around the earth. This is called the Sidereal month. Taking the integer 27 we get the 27 Nakshatra or Lunar Mansion (each 13° 20' of arc). Each Nakshatra was identified with a star, (or star cluster) and derived its name from it. The 7-¾ hour shortfall in a sidereal lunar transit was made up by a short-span intercalary (hypothetical) Nakshatra called Abhijit. The span of Abhijit is determined proportionally as (7h 43m 11.5s/ 24 hrs) x 13° 20' = 4° 17' 20". This span is from 276° 40' to 280° 57' 20" overlapping the 21st Nakshatra (Uttarasadha). This becomes the 28th Nakshatra, which is used in some Chakra like the Kala Chakra and the Sarvatobhadra Chakra etc.

Table 2: Nakshatra – Lunar Mansion

Number	Nakshatra	Deity	Planetary Lord-ship (Vimsottari)	Pada 3°20' each	Extent in Rasi	Rasi
1.	Aswini	Aswini Kumar	Ketu	4	13°20'	Aries (Mesh)
2.	Bharani	Yama	Venus	4	16°40'	
3.	Krittika	Agni	Sun	1	30°	
				3	10°	Taurus (Vrisabha)
4.	Rohini	Brahma	Moon	4	23°20'	
5.	Mrigasira	Chandra	Mars	2	30°	Gemini (Mithun)
				2	6°40'	
6.	Ardra	Rudra	Rahu	4	20°	
7.	Punarvasu	Aditi	Jupiter	3	30°	Cancer (Karkata)
				1	3°20'	
8.	Pusya	Brihaspati ⁴⁶	Saturn	4	16°40'	
9.	Aslesha	Sarpadeva ⁴⁷	Mercury	4	30°	Leo (Simha)
10.	Makha	Pitri ⁴⁸	Ketu	4	13°20'	
11.	Poorva Phalguni	Bhaga	Venus	4	16°40'	
12.	Uttar Phalguni	Aryama	Sun	1	30°	Virgo (Kanya)
				3	10°	
13.	Hasta	Savitur ⁴⁹	Moon	4	23°20'	
14.	Chitra	Tvashta	Mars	2	30°	Libra (Tula)
				2	6°40'	
15.	Swati	Vayu	Rahu	4	20°	
16.	Visakha	Mitra	Jupiter	3	30°	Scorpio (Vrischika)
				1	3°20'	
17.	Anuradha		Saturn	4	16°40'	
18.	Jyestha	Indra	Mercury	4	30°	Sagittarius (Dhanus)
19.	Moola	Nirriti	Ketu	4	13°20'	
20.	Poorva Ashada	Jala ⁵⁰	Venus	4	16°40'	
21.	Uttar Ashada	Viswadeva	Sun	1	30°	

⁴⁶ Jupiter

⁴⁷ Snakes ruled by Rahu

⁴⁸ Pitri refers to the forefathers and when the Sun is in this place, in the Krishna Paksha (called Pitri Paksha), the devout Hindu worships the manes and forefathers.

⁴⁹ Others – Vishwakarma, Aditya etc.

⁵⁰ Water personified as the protector

				3	10 ⁰	Capricorn (Makara)
22.	Sravana	Vishnu	Moon	4	23 ⁰ 20'	
23.	Dhanista	Asta Vasava ⁵¹	Mars	2	30 ⁰	Aquarius (Kumbha)
24.	Satabhisaj	Varuna	Rahu	4	20 ⁰	
25.	Poorva bhadrapada	Ajaikapad	Jupiter	3	30 ⁰	Pisces (Meena)
26.	Uttara bhadrapada	Ahribudhanya	Saturn	4	16 ⁰ 40'	
27.	Revati	Pooshan	Mercury	4	30 ⁰	

2.3 Divisions of a sign

Division refers to an orderly division of the 30 degrees of a sign into parts called Amsa. The charts constructed on the basis of the ownership of these divisions⁵² are called Divisional Charts or simply D-Charts. The sign is divided into 'N' number of parts where 'N' refers to the Varga number. Each part is called an Amsa and maps into a specific sign of the D-N Chart. If any planet or Lagna is placed within an Amsa, then it is also in the mapped sign of the D-Chart.

To understand this, let us consider the chart of a person born on the 7th of August 1963. Some of the planetary positions are Lagna 14⁰ Pisces, Jupiter 26⁰ 07' Pisces, Moon 19⁰57' Aquarius and Saturn 26⁰50' Capricorn. The Rasi (D-1 Chart) will have Jupiter and Ascendant in the first house in Pisces, Moon in the 12th house in Aquarius and Saturn in the 11th house in Capricorn. Let us attempt to determine the Drekkana divisions and D-3 chart. Here 'N' = 3 and each sign of 30⁰ longitude is divided into three parts of 10⁰ each. Each of these divisions is called an 'Amsa' and more specifically a Drekkana or 'Trine division'. The three Drekkana of all signs would be in the longitude range (1) 0-10⁰, (2) 10⁰-20⁰ and (3) 20⁰-30⁰. The first Drekkana of a sign is mapped to itself, the second is mapped to the sign in the fifth from it and the third is mapped to the sign in the ninth from it.

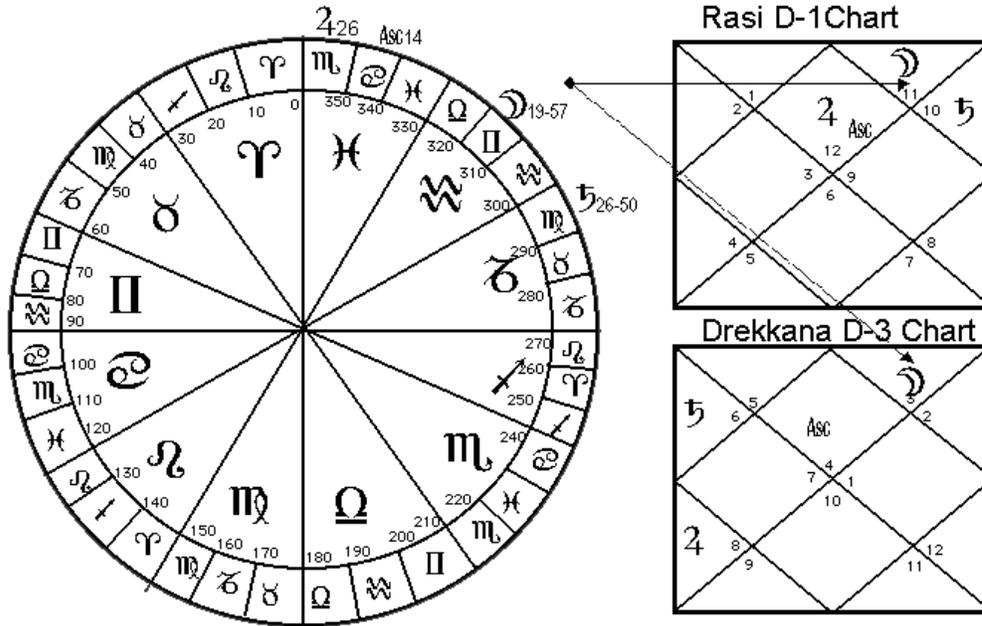
Figure 7: D-Chart construction

⁵¹ Vasudeva

⁵² The ownership of individual divisions & signs by planets has been mentioned in traditional literature:

भौमाच्छविचन्द्ररविज्ञशुक्रवकेज्यमदारकमरेज्याः । मेपादिभानामद्यिपाः क्रमेण तदंशकानामपि ते भवेयुः । । *Trans: Mars, Venus, Merc, Moon, Sun, Merc, Ven, Mars, Jup, Saturn, Saturn & Jupiter are the lords of the 12 Rasi's reckoned from Aries. These planets (in the said order also) lord the Amsa's (Divisions).* Vyankatesh Sharma - Sarvartha Chintamani (Sloka 1.06)

कजभृगुवुधेन्दुरविशिशुतसितरुधिरार्यमन्दशनिजीवाः । गृहपा नवभागानामजमृगतुलकर्कटाद्याश्च । । *Kalyan Verma (Saravali Sloka 3.11)*



Thus, Lagna at 14⁰ Pisces is in second Drekkana and is mapped into Cancer the fifth house from Pisces. Jupiter at 26⁰ is in the third Drekkana of Pisces and this is Scorpio in the D-3 Chart. Moon is in the second Drekkana of Aquarius and is placed in Gemini in D-3 Chart. Saturn at 27⁰ is in the third Drekkana of Capricorn and is mapped to the ninth house from Capricorn (i.e. Virgo) where it is placed in the D-3 Chart.

2.3.1 Nomenclature

The divisions of the zodiac and the divisional charts constructed on the basis of ownership of these divisions are named on various criteria. These include:

1. **The division number:** This is the number by which the sign is divided into parts. For example 'Saptamsa' composed from *Sapta* meaning seven and *amsa* meaning portion. Thus, this is the one-seventh division of a sign.
2. **Other reference numbers:** For example, it is well known that there are 27 Nakshatra. Hence the name Nakshetramsamsa coined from Nakshatra and Amsa (portion) refers to the one - twenty seventh ($1/27$) division or the divisional chart prepared from this division occupied by the Lagna and nine planets.
3. **Usage and focus:** Every divisional chart (or division) has a specific use and a clearly defined focus on a specific area of activity. For example, Siddhamsa is coined from Siddha referring to that body of knowledge which a person learns and achieves perfection in and Amsa means portion. So, Siddhamsa refers to the division/divisional chart where we study the learning process. This is the 24th division (D-24 Chart). This is also called the Bhamsa from the word 'Bha' (as in Bha-chakra which is the primary representation of the zodiac as composed of 27 Nakshatra).
4. **Multiple names:** Divisions (D-charts) can have multiple names from either of the three aforementioned methods. For example the 16th division is called Shodasamsa [Shodas (sixteen) Amsa (portion)]. This is also called Kalamsa based on the 16 Kala's in a 24-hour day.

5. **Rao's Method:** The nomenclature introduced by Dr.K.N.Rao refers to each divisional chart directly by its division number. For example, the Siddhamsa is simply called the D-24 Chart or just D-24 when the division in the Rasi chart is being referred to.

Table 3: Nomenclature

Division	Primary Name	Other names
D-1 Chart	Rasi	Bhagana, Bha chakra
D-2 Chart	Hora	
D-3 Chart	Drekkana	
D-4 Chart	Chaturthamsa	Tureeyamsa
D-5 Chart	Panchamamsa	
D-6 Chart	Shastamsa	Kauluka
D-7 Chart	Saptamsa	
D-8 Chart	Astamsa	
D-9 Chart	Navamsa	Dharmamsa
D-10 Chart	Dasamsa	Swargamsa
D-11 Chart	Rudramsas	Labhamsa
D-12 Chart	Dwadasamsa	Suryamsa
D-13 to D-15 Charts Not used in Vedic Astrology		
D-16 Chart	Shodasamsa	Kalamsa
D-17 to D-19 Charts Not used in Vedic Astrology		
D-20 Chart	Vimsamsa	
D-21 to D-23 Charts Not used in Vedic Astrology		
D-24 Chart	Siddhamsa	Chaturvimsamsa
D-25 to D-26 Charts Not used in Vedic Astrology		
D-27 Chart	Nakshatramsas	Bhamsa, Saptavimsamsa
D-28 to D-29 Charts Not used in Vedic Astrology		
D-30 Chart	Trimsamsa	
D-31 to D-39 Charts Not used in Vedic Astrology		
D-40 Chart	Khavedamsa	Swavedamsa
D-41 to D-44 Charts Not used in Vedic Astrology		
D-45 Chart	Akshavedamsa	
D-46 to D-59 Charts Not used in Vedic Astrology		
D-60 Chart	Shastyamsa	
Some higher Divisional charts		
D-72 Chart	Asta-Navamsa	
D-81 Chart	Nav-Navamsa	
D-108 Chart	Astottaramsa	Nav-Dwadasamsa, Dwadas-Navamsa, (are the two methods of chart construction),
D-144 Chart	Dwadas-Dwadasamsa	
D-150 Chart	Nadiamsa	Chandra-Kala Amsa
D-300 Chart	Ardha-Nadiamsa	

1. **Other systems:** There are other totally different Varga Charts based on other criteria. Example - **Astakavarga:** The Varga charts constructed on the basis of the contribution of Rekha⁵³ and Bindu⁵⁴ by the eight factors (Lagna and seven planets from Sun to Saturn).

2.3.2 Technical terms

Like every other system, there are various technical terms used in the examination of Divisional charts. Getting accustomed to the verbiage helps in understanding and using the system.

⁵³ Rekha lit. vertical line

⁵⁴ Bindu lit. Dots. Thus, Rekha and Bindu refer to marks and dots contributed by the individual planets (and Lagna).

- 1) **Varga:** Division or Divisional Chart in general usage.
1. **Amsa** means portion and generally refers to the division of a sign. It also refers to individual D-charts when used in conjunction with the reference to the division. Example: Navamsa – Nav (Nine) + Amsa (division) refers to the one-ninth portion of a sign and the D-9 Chart specifically.
 2. **Yoga** means union and refers to the association of two bodies, whether mobile planets/Lagna or static signs in any of the four methods of **Sambandha**⁵⁵. Any planet that brings about an association between the Lagna, Hora Lagna and Ghatika Lagna by ownership, placement or aspect is termed a **Yogada**.
 3. **Subhapati:** Subha means benefic and specifically refers to the Moon, as it is the sustainer of this life. Subhapati is the dispositor of the Moon and its dignity in the various divisional charts is examined to determine the health and longevity of the native. If the Subhapati aspects or conjoins the Lagna or Atmakaraka, it is elevated to the position of a **Kevala**. In addition if it associates with the Hora Lagna (HL) or Ghatika Lagna (GL) it is further elevated to a **Kevala Yogada** and if both HL and GL are also associated with the Kevala, then it is a **Kevala Mahayogada**.
 4. **Karya Rasi** is the house, which is the center of focus of the activity related to a Divisional chart. A D-chart may have many important houses like a Dasamsa where the sixth house is examined for service related matters or the seventh house is examined for business, but the focus is the tenth house and for the Dasamsa, the tenth house is the Karya Rasi. The Lord of the Karya Rasi in the Rasi Chart should be well placed in the concerned divisional chart for the activity (Karya) to prosper.
 5. **Karyesh** is the significator of the Karya (activity) and will vary from one chart to another depending on the activity involved. For example, in the Dasamsa (profession) a person can have many Karyesh depending on the activities he is involved in. As an example let us consider President Bill Clinton. He is a politician and also a lawyer. The Karyesh for politics is the Sun (note - Moon is for Bureaucracy) and that for a legal profession is Jupiter. Depending on the placement and strength of these planets in the Dasamsa, the rise or fall or changes in career can be studied and predicted. The concept of **Argala** is vital to determine as to which of these Karyesh shall bloom or perish at any point of time as the dasa's change.
 6. **Karaka** means significator and are classified into the three categories of Naisargika, Chara and Sthira karaka. Details about Karaka and other basic principles like Rasi & Graha drishti, Argala etc, can be learnt from any standard book.

2.4 Harmonics

Since the twelve sign division is the primary division, it follows that all sub-division of the sign will fall in a sequence that repeats after every twelve divisions. Thus, for example, the D-16 Chart (*Shodasamsa or Kalamsa*) will be the first harmonic (or second cycle) of the D-4 Chart (*Chaturthamsa*). This can be expressed mathematically as $16 =$

⁵⁵ Two planets can associate by (a) conjunction (b) mutual aspect (c) exchange of signs or constellations, or (d) aspect/placement in each others signs.

(12 x 1)+ (4); where 1 represents the first harmonic. Similarly, the D-40 (*Khavedamsa*) Chart is the third harmonic (or 4th cycle) of the D-4 Chart as $40 = (12 \times 3) + (4)$.

Table 4: Divisional Charts Cycle

Level of Consciousness	Cycle/ Harmonic	Divisional Charts range
Physical	Primary	(D-1 to D-12)
Conscious	Secondary/ First harmonic	(D-13 to D-24)
Sub-Conscious	Tertiary/ Second harmonic	(D-25 to D-36)
Super- Conscious	Quaternary/ Third harmonic	(D-37 to D-48)
Supra- Conscious	Pentenary/ Fourth harmonic	(D-49 to D-60)

The **first cycle** of divisional charts from Rasi chart (D-1) to Dwadasamsa (D-12) rules over the **physical plane** and covers such matters as physical body (D-1), material wealth (D-2), brothers & sisters (D-3), immovable properties (D-4), children (D-7), authority over others (D-5), spouse (D-9), work (D-10) and parents (D-12). The **second cycle or first harmonic rules over the conscious plane**. Technically it covers charts D-13 to D-24, but Parasara has restricted the scope to the three primary areas of mental activity namely Shodasamsa or Kalamsa (D-16) ruling over matters of general mental happiness, luxuries, vehicles etc; Vimsamsa (D-20) wherein spiritualism, occult studies etc are examined and Chaturvimsamsa (D-24) for all kinds of learning (which is actually considered a heritage from the society). The **third cycle or second harmonic rules over the sub-conscious plane** covering charts D-25 to D-36. Parasara advises us to focus on two charts in this group, namely, Nakshetramsamsa (D-27) for strengths & weaknesses and Trimsamsa (D-30) for all evils. For example if the Moon is exalted and placed in a quadrant in the D-27 Chart, we can infer that the native is mentally very strong. A weak Mercury in this chart can show speaking disorders or a weak speech. The **fourth cycle or third harmonic rules over the super-conscious plane** covering charts D-37 to D-48. However, the good & bad accruing to the destiny of the individual due to the Matrilineal karma (seen from Khavedamsa D-40 Chart [as $40 = (12 \times 3) + 4$] and that from the Patrilineal Karma (seen from the Akshavedamsa D-45 Chart [as $45 = (12 \times 3) + 9$] are considered important in the Shodasavarga scheme of Parasara. The **fifth cycle or fourth harmonic rules the supra-conscious plane** covering the charts D-49 to D-60. At this level, the heritage (equivalent of D-12) of the karma from past births is relevant and the Shastyamsa (D-60 Chart) is vital. Parasara gives the highest weightage to this chart in the Shodasavarga scheme. There are much higher planes of Consciousness and some other divisional charts like the *Nava-Navamsa* (D-81), *Ashtorramsamsa* or *Navamsa-Dwadasamsa* (D-108) and *Dwadasamsa-Dwadasamsa* (D-144) are used.