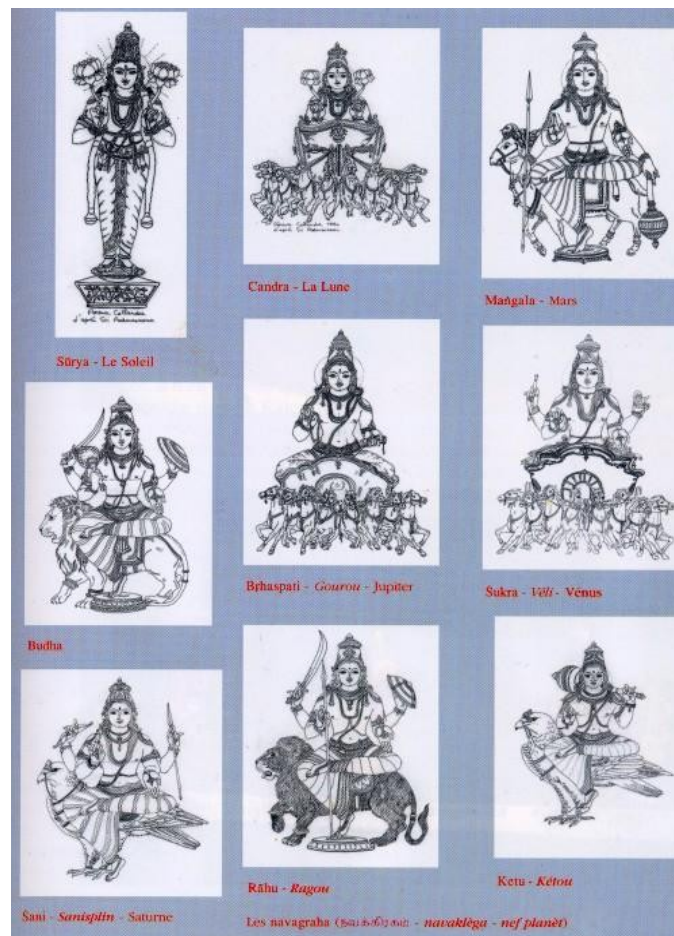


Basic Introduction to The Navagraha's



The 9 Planets (Navagrahas)

*** DO NOTE... The following rendition is not so much about Vedic/Indian Astrology rather it's more about the 9 Planets (Navagrahas) as the sub-menu suggests.

What's the difference between Vedic astrology and Western astrology?

Vedic astrology differs from Western or Tropical astrology mainly in that it uses the fixed zodiac as opposed to the moving zodiac. Because of the gradual tilting of the earth in space on it's axis, the zodiac, if you calculate it from the Sun's relationship to the Earth, appears to be moving at the rate of a little less than 1/60th of a degree per year. Currently, the relative or movable zodiac is off or out of alignment with the fixed or real star-based zodiac by roughly 23 degrees, which is almost one whole sign of the zodiac.

So, first and foremost you should know that Vedic astrology sticks with that original, star-based zodiac and thus another term to describe Vedic astrology is that it is "sidereal astrology", which simply means that the real zodiac is used to locate **WHICH SIGNS THE PLANETS ARE CURRENTLY LOCATED IN.**

The signs the planets are in is one important part of astrology. Because the two systems are skewed from each other by nearly one whole sign, most people's "Sun Sign", that which you can get from the paper each day, is usually one sign back when the chart is refigured using Vedic astrology.

So, the first surprise using Vedic is that you are no longer the Sun Sign you always thought you were. This happens with many charts. However, if you were born in

the last 5 days or so of the Western Sign month, then you will probably still be that sign in Vedic since the difference is 23 degrees currently, and signs are 30 degrees long in space (12 signs times 30 degrees each, each a 360 degree circle surrounding the Earth).

Vedic astrology also has a great number of techniques for studying the charts once they are cast which give Vedic a predictive edge. For example, the "dashas" or "planetary ruling periods" system which is a part of the Vedic system give Vedic astrologers a tool to predict (fairly accurately) the trends, changes and events in your life regarding dating (time) when things will take place. Therefore, Vedic astrologers are less limited to talking about your general overall self and can get more deep into what's going to happen in your life.

So back to our explanation about the Navagrahas...

The Sanskrit word "Graha" (meaning to seize, laying hold of, holding) is a 'cosmic influencer' on the living beings. In Vedic/Hindu astrology, the Navagrahas (The 9 seizers or influencers) are some of these major influencers. All the Navagrahas have relative movement with respect to the background of fixed stars in the zodiac. This includes the planets: Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, and Saturn, the Sun, the Moon, as well as positions in the sky, Rahu (north or ascending lunar node) and Ketu (south or descending lunar node). According to Vedic Astrology, the planets (Navagrahas) are relay stations for the reception and transmission of stellar energies. In Vedic Astrology, the seven major or visible planets are normally listed in order of the days they rule: Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn for Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. These seven planets along with the shadowy planets (lunar nodes) Rahu and Ketu are called as the NAVAGRAHAS in Vedic Astrology (Jyotish). All the principles and theories of Jyotish or Vedic astrology is based on the planetary positions and house position of the Navagrahas.

The Graha (planet) literally meaning a Seizer, is one of a group of astral forces which can enter one's physical/mental/astral body and take control of one's being. A Graha grabs hold of your being with its emanations and directs you, for better or worse, to perform particular actions that you might not otherwise perform, in pursuit of goals which may not agree with your personal dharma. The Grahas, who are the agents of the Law of Karma, direct you to experience, at specific moments, the reactions (repercussions) to the actions you have previously performed. Your birth chart horoscope is a map of your karmas, drawn to the specifications of the Nine Seizers (Navagrahas). Generally speaking, your individual karmas are stored in the warehouse of your causal body (the 'sheath' made of transcendent wisdom) and your shared karmas (the karma you share with your family, clan, and race, and with your fellow citizens in the country you reside in) in your greater causal body (the 'sheath' made of bliss). As these karmas ripen to fruition, they project into the subtle or astral body (the 'sheath' made of mind), the home of your self-image, where they affect the mind. The mind thereupon directs the etheric body (the 'sheath' of the prana {life airs}) to energize the physical body (the 'sheath' made of food) to perform or avoid certain events, so that the stored karmas may thus be worked out (one's karma can be exacted and their punishment/reward doled out/granted).

Furthermore the images of the Nine Planets possess us so subtly that it sometimes appears that it is the Grahas themselves which direct our deeds. Any action with which you identify yourself as the doer is a karma, and, just as surely as seeds gives fruits after maturing into a plant, each karmic action will, as soon as it ripens, produce a karmic reaction. As these karmic seeds mature they project into the subtle or astral body, where they affect your mind by strengthening one or another of the qualities of the Grahas whose images you carry. Your mind then directs your body to perform or avoid certain actions, which produce the beneficial or detrimental results demanded by the stored karmas. Your destiny is the sum of

your past actions, and the Nine Planets see to it that you reap, without fail, what you sow, for they are the executive officers of the Law of Karma, which is the Law of Action and Reaction (similar to Newton's third Law of Motion). Each Graha acts on you according to his own unique "job" description. Though we like to believe that we make our own decisions, most of us are so thoroughly under the control of our past actions that when we act it is usually those past actions which act through us.

Of the Navagraha's, the Sun and the Moon, as the two luminaries are most important. Next in importance are Mars, Jupiter and Saturn as the major planets beyond the orbit of the earth. Then come Venus and Mercury as the major planets within the orbit of Earth and therefore always close to the Sun. The Lunar nodes, north and south, called Rahu and Ketu, regarded as shadowy or secondary planets, Grahas influence the auras (energy bodies) and minds of beings connected to the Earth. Each Graha carries a specific energy quality, which is described in an allegorical form through its scriptural and astrological references. The energies of the Grahas are connected in a specific way to the individual auras of humans at the time they take their first breath in a given nativity. These energy connections remain with the natives of Earth as long as their current body lives. The nine planets are transmitters of universal, archetypal energy. The qualities of each planet help to maintain the overall balance of polarities in both the macrocosmic and the microcosmic universe.

Humans are also capable of tuning themselves to the chosen energy of a specific Graha (planet) through Samyama (Sanskrit - meaning holding together, tying up or binding) with that Graha or its presiding deity. The effects of worship of specific deities are manifested according to the layout of their relative energies in a given nativity of a worshipper in question, in particular depending on the Bhavas (Houses in one's birth chart/kundali) occupied by the respective Grahas. The cosmic energy we always receive contains different energies coming from different celestial bodies. When we repeatedly utter a Mantra of a specific planet we are tuning to a particular frequency and this frequency establishes a contact with the cosmic energy and drags it into our body and surroundings.

In Indian Astrology, movement of the Navagrahas is considered to have a major role in influencing the fortunes of any individual. In order to mitigate the negative effects of a planet which is debilitated (weak and infirm) in one's birth chart (Janma Kundali) or to provide more potency to a planet that is in an exalted (strong and positive) state, devotees undertake certain vratas, fastings, chanting of mantras, charities, pilgrimage etc to a designated Navagraha, to perform these prescribed fasts, donations, etc. Devotees also partake in pilgrimage to said Navagraha's temple, etc.

Just as we control and take care of our pets, similarly, the devas control and take care of us. The ant living in our garden may not know that we control the garden because we are so large and completely not present in their little world. Nevertheless, their ignorance of us does not make us less real, or less potent and capable. Indeed, with a single stroke of our spray bottle, we can wipe out an entire colony of ants who never knew it was us who did this to them. Similarly, the devas can with, a single stroke or thought, annihilate an entire continent on our teeny dust ball in space known as Earth.

Another way to understand the planets' relationships with ourselves is to see that the guards in a prison are not responsible for the prisoners being in a prison, but once the prisoners are in the prison, it's the duty of the guards to keep them in the prison and administer various punishments and disciplinary actions, but also to protect the prisoners from each other, to feed them and provide for them (whilst they are in said prison). This is similar to our position. We live in Durga Dham (this material world) which means we live in

the prison world. The devas simultaneously provide for us and punish us, but it's not them that are doing that(this) to us. They are only carrying out the will, order and need of the greater whole which they are also a part of. They are simply above us, but they also have their superiors. Amongst the devas, they have their own hierarchy, or rank and order, and ultimately they are all within the material creation except for Lord Brahma who is right on the edge of this material world. Shree Sadashiva (Lord Shiva) is beyond the material creation, but barely. Lord Vishnu's planets alone are securely above and beyond all material consideration and the highest of those is Krsna Loka or Goloka Vrndavana, the personal planet of the most personal and sweet form of the Lord, Shree Krishna. This is explained in detailed in Srimad Bhagavatam Maha Purana 3rd Canto... We have outlined the above in our article on DIPIKA named "The Difference between Lord Vishnu & Lord Krishna", for further reading.

So Vedic astrology is the science of the effects of the planets on all things in this material universe. Lord Brahma has taught humanity that, although what we see is his material creation and in a way an illusory cover to keep us in ignorance, still by studying the movements of the heavenly bodies, we can know the particular way in which the devas have cast their will and effects upon a person. The positions of the various planets at the time of birth of a particular individual dictates, controls and reflects the way in which the devas and the Navagrahas will control and manipulate the life of that particular individual or thing.

All living organisms - whether they are humans or other forms - are created and destroyed within the great cycles of this universe. Thus we are all creations of the great cycles and systems functioning within this universe. We are not separate. Vedic astrology is the science of reading the imprint of the universe upon the human or thing at the time of their birth and from that chart or imprint knowing and foretelling the nature and life events destined to be enjoyed or suffered by that person or thing.

When we study the birth chart of an individual, we are studying their life as well as their past life. When we study the birth chart of a question, we are studying the outcome and the answer. When we study the birth chart of a material item such as a vehicle, the christening of a house or boat for example, we are studying the "lives" of those things. Vedic astrology can apply to questions, things, people, pets, etc. All things within this universe are subject to the controls of the Devas, and therefore, astrology applies to all things and all people of this world no matter what race or religion you belong to, as when the Sun rises in the morning it doesn't only shine on Hindu people, but on all religious denominations, race(s) (and/or) or being(s).

The Navagrahas and their Qualities of Nature

The Navagrahas are generally given the three qualities as follows:

QUALITIES (mode)	NAVAGRAHA
Sattva (goodness)	Sun, Moon and Jupiter
Rajas (passion)	Mercury and Venus
Tamas (ignorance)	Mars and Saturn (also Rahu and Ketu)

In Vedic Astrology the Navagrahas bestow their results depending upon the benefic (good) and malefic (bad) nature. The nature or prakriti of the Navagrahas are as follows:

NATURE	PRAKRITI	NAVAGRAHA
Greater	Benefic	Jupiter
Lesser	Benefic	Venus

General	Benefic	Moon and Mercury
Greater	Malefic	Saturn and Rahu
Lesser	Malefic	Mars and Ketu
General	Malefic	Sun

Did Lord Raam install the Navagrahas in India?

Yes - according to the Sthala Puranas, Shree Raam marched towards Shree Lanka to free Srimati Sita-devi from Ravana's captivity. Before undertaking this journey (and as prescribed in our scriptures), Shree Raam performed the Vinayaka (Ganesh) Puja in Uppur (which is a village in Tamil Nadu, India) and the Navagraha puja in Devipattinam a.k.a Devipur (which is 69 km from the famous holy city of Rameshwaram in S.E. India) by installing each of the 9 planets with a handful of sand and calmed the high tides by raising His lotus hand. The Navagrahas installed by Shree Raam are the Nava Bashanas (9 stones) gracing the devotees in Devipattinam. Shree Raam installed the Navagrahas in this way and thus nine stones represent the 9 planets. The Navabashana Navagrahas are installed in the midst of calm sea and are noted for its divinity ensuring total bliss. The Navabashana temple has the added pride of their installation by the lotus-like hands of Shree Raam and is the number one choice of a holy place to perform Tarpan (water of oblations) for one's ancestors. The devotees generally perform the worship and pujas themselves. This holy place is also where Lord Raam Himself was relieved of Saturn's malefic effects. Shree Raam was also blessed by Lord Shiva and Mother Parvati here as well. This Navagraha temple in the midst of the sea is a divine wonder since the Puranic days. Below are some pictures of this most holy of places...





Srila Prabhupada's backing of Vedic Astrology

12/29/73 Conversations: Los Angeles, California

Svarupa Damodara: Wolfe, he was telling me that, because I was telling him that I did not believe in astrology. Then one day Srila Prabhupada was talking on astrology. Then Wolfe said, "If Srila Prabhupada said, then you believe. And if it is not said by Srila Prabhupada, you don't believe."

Srila Prabhupada: "No. We believe in astrology. But because it is a difficult science, people do not understand it properly. That is another thing. In my practical life I see. In my horoscope, everything is written, what I am doing. Everything is written. So..."

Svarupa Damodara: "That would be called like genius. Sometimes. If somebody can predict what is going to happen in the future, can be, just like, taken..."

Srila Prabhupada: "No, these astrologers can give everyone exact, the history of life, what is going to happen, what happened."

Svarupa Damodara: "But it is true, though Srila Prabhupada, in our family life, when we want to do something, they always go to a..."

Srila Prabhupada: Astrologer. Yes."

Svarupa Damodara: "And then they... (break) (end)"

12/29/1973 Los Angeles, California

Srila Prabhupada: "Just like the astrology. Astrology, by calculation through the shastra, astrological calculation can say what you were in your past life and what you will become in your next life. There is an astrological system. They can say like that. So through the shastra, by right calculation, we can understand."

3/24/74 BG Bombay

Tamala Krishna: "What is the position of astrology in Krishna consciousness?"

Srila Prabhupada: "Astrology is a science. Krishna consciousness has nothing to do with astrology, but it is the general custom that as soon as a child is born the astrologers come. That is the Indian system, Vedic system."

8/04/69 Conversations: Los Angeles, California

TRANSLATION:- On another day an astrologer came who was supposed to know everything -- past, present and future. Thus Shri Caitanya Mahaprabhu received him with all honour and put this question before him.

PURPORT:- Brahmanas generally used to become astrologers, Ayur-vedic physicians, teachers and priests. Although highly learned and respectable, such brahmanas went from door-to-door to distribute their knowledge. A brahmana would first go to a householder's home to give information about the functions to be performed on a particular tithi, or date, but if there were sickness in the family, the family members would consult the brahmana as a physician, and the brahmana would give instruction and some medicine. Often, since the brahmanas were expert in astrology, people would also be greatly inquisitive about their past, present and future.

Caitanya Caritamrta, Adi-lila 17.103

TRANSLATION:- "Please tell Me who I was in My previous birth," the Lord said. "Please tell Me by your astrological computations." Hearing the words of the Lord, the astrologer immediately began to calculate.

PURPORT:- Through astrology one can know past, present and future. Modern Western astrologers have no knowledge of the past or future, nor can they perfectly say anything

about the present. Herein we find, however, that after hearing Shree Caitanya Mahaprabhu's order, the astrologer immediately began his calculations. This was not a façade; he actually knew how to ascertain one's past life through astrology. A still-existing treatise called the Bhrgu-Samhita describes a system by which anyone can immediately get information about what he was in the past and what he is going to be in the future. The brahmanas who went door to door as if beggars had perfect command of such vast knowledge. Thus the highest knowledge was easily available even to the poorest man in society. The poorest man could inquire from an astrologer about his past, present and future, with no need for business agreements or exorbitant payments. The brahmana would give him all the benefit of his knowledge without asking remuneration, and the poor man, in return, would offer a handful of rice, or anything he had in his possession, to satisfy the brahmana. In a perfect human society, perfect knowledge in any science - medical, astrological, ecclesiastical and so on - is available even to the poorest man, with no anxiety over payment. In the present day, however, no one can get justice, medical treatment, astrological help or ecclesiastical enlightenment without money, and since people are generally poor, they are thus bereft of the benefits of all these great sciences.

Caitanya Caritamrta, Adi-lila 17.104:- So as before giving birth there is a reformation ceremony, similarly, immediately child is born, there is another reformation ceremony that is called jata-karma. Jata-karma means immediately learned scholar, brahmanas, astrologer, will come and they will make the horoscope of the child. So here it is said, yatha hi sutyam abhijata- kovidah samadisan. As they foretold, that "This child will be hero like this, he will be like this, like this..." That are described in the Bhagavatam. And it was also said at that time that "This child will die, being cursed by a brahmana." That was also foretold. It is still, such kind of astrology there in India. They will speak what you were in your last birth and what you are now, and what you will be in your next birth. That is astrology. So still there are Bhrgu-samhita. Anyone go, and you simply give them your exact time of birth, then they will make immediately horoscope, immediately. Still there is. As I told you that in my horoscope it was declared that after seventieth year, I shall go to foreign countries and I shall establish many temples. In my horoscope that is. Now I see it is coming practically. You see? So that is horoscope.

12/29/73 Srimad Bhagavatam: Los Angeles, California

Woman (1): "Is astrology of any importance to a way of life, I mean..."

Srila Prabhupada: "Yes. This is a science. It is a science. That science is acceptable by the human society. Medical science, legal science, engineering science. Similarly, astrology also, another science. But the astrology is simply useful so long you have got this body. But as soon as your body is finished, there is no more use of astrology.



The Naming Ceremony of Lord Krsna performed by Garga Muni***

Sastras again and again stress the importance of astrology. Srimad Bhagavatam 10.5 states, “after the birth of baby Krsna, Nanda Maharaja called for learned astrologers and Brahmins to perform the birth ceremony. After the birth of the child the astrologers thereafter calculated the moment of the birth and made a horoscope of the child’s future life”

***** Garga Muni:-** was one of the greatest sages of the Puranic times. Garga Muni was the

son of the Sapta-Maha-Rishi's Bharadwaja Maha-Rishi. Garga Muni was the family pundit of Nanda Maharaja. Garga Muni named Lord Krishna as "Krishna" after receiving the name by pure meditation. Garga Muni compiled the Garga Samhita ("The narrations of Garga") which deals with the life of Shree Krishna.

In the Caitanya Caritamrita Adi Lila 14.18 it is stated that "Giving a child a particular name is among the purificatory processes and on the day of such a ceremony one should worship Narayana and distribute prashad."

The individual souls in the material world engage in different activities according to their past unfinished desires. After the dissolution of a particular body, the individual soul forgets everything, but the all-merciful Lord, who is situated in everyone's heart as the witness, the Supersoul, awakens him and reminds him of his past desires, and thus he begins to act accordingly in his next life. This unseen guidance is described as fate, and a sensible man can understand that this continues his material bondage in the three modes of nature. (Purport in the Srimad Bhagavatam by Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami 3.6.3)

kalam karma svabhavam ca
mayeso mayaya svaya
atman yadrcchaya praptam
vibubhusur upadade

The Lord, who is the controller of all energies, thus creates, by His own potency, eternal time, the fate of all living entities, and their particular nature, for which they were created, and He again merges them independently. (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.5.21)

A note of constructive criticism by a renowned 19th century Swami (whom I shall not mention out of respect for the selfless service he did for humanity) - he said "Astrology and all these mystical things are generally signs of a weak mind; therefore as soon as they are becoming prominent in our minds, we should see a physician, take good food, and rest". Of course reading this statement I had to give my comments of his statement, please read below...

Firstly I offer my humble respects to Swami-ji. Dear Swami-ji I respect what you have said, but then again I have to differ on this statement... As a priest who has researched and researched for most of my life I find this statement rather sad and unfortunate...

Firstly Vedic Astrology is just not some "mystical thing", the great and most respected Muni, Srila Parashara Muni, is a Rigvedic Maharishi and author of many ancient Indian texts. Parashara was the grandson of the great Mahamuni Vashishta Muni, the son of Shakti Maharshi, and the father of Srila Vyasadeva (the compiler of all Vedic shastras). There are several texts which give reference to Parashara Muni as an author/speaker. According to the Vedas, Lord Brahma created Vashishta Muni who, with Arundhati, had a son named Shakti-muni who sired Parashara. With Satyavati, Parashara fathered the compiler of the vedas called Srila Vyasadeva. Texts attributed to Parashara Muni are verses in the Rigveda: recorded as the author of RV (put Rig Veda after first abbreviation – so in future it is irrefutable) 1.65-73 and part of RV 9.97. Parashara Smriti (also called Parashara Dharma Samhita): a code of laws which is stated in the text (1.24) to be for Kali Yuga. Speaker of Vishnu Purana considered by scholars as one of the earliest Puranas. Speaker of the Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra. It is considered a foundational text of Vedic astrology. The Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra is the most comprehensive extant work on natal astrology in Hindu astrology ascribed to any Rishi or sage. When Shree Raam and Shree Krishna appeared, the family firstly consulted their family astrologers initially to

name their child, etc... If Astrology is a sign of a weak mind do you think the family astrologers (who were great Rishis themselves) would have consulted their Panchang?. And remember that the great Mahamuni, Garga Muni, was Nanda Maharaja's (Shree Krishna's father) family pundit/Astrologer. He consulted with his Panchang and gave the name Krishna...Many great and respected Munis and Rishis have written books on Astrology. So I rest my case here, I do not want to start an argument, etc, as I don't have the time for that, but I got to protect Dharma when its being "attacked", Jai Hind Jai Srila Parashara Muni

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Thank you so much for taking the time to read this article. We pray that this article will assist you in some way and we also pray that it helps you to appreciate the beauty and remarkable foresight of our ancient Hindu culture. We wish to educate all readers and demystify the path of Hinduism (Sanatan Dharma). Please feel free to share these articles with friends and family who do not have direct access to our website or articles. If you use the articles in any form including blogs and/or as part of other articles kindly credit our website as a source. We hope that the articles serve as a reference to you and your family when you need clarification of certain topics. Jai Hind... Jai Shree Radha Krsna.

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