

## Questions and Answers on the Navagrahas

**QUESTION:- Why one worships the 9 Planets (Navagrahas)?**

**ANSWER:-** The Navagrahas are very powerful Deities that were assigned duties by the Supreme Lord. Worship in their name enables a person to propitiate them. This not only minimises their malefic influences towards a person but also confers benefits on them as well. Yajnavalkya Smriti 12<sup>th</sup> chapter reveals that planets which are casting their influences should be offered worship to the respective planet(s) and the planets in turn have been instructed by Lord Brahma to remove the malefic influences and bestow beneficial results to that devotee. When we offer prayers to the Sun Deity, we are in fact offering them to the Supreme Personality of Godhead – Shree Krishna. One is describing the Lord's qualities as the Sun's. Lord Krishna is present in the Sun, so when we offer prayers to Suryadeva we are actually seeing Lord Krishna within the qualities of the Sun planet.

**QUESTION:- Is there anything such as fasting for 9 days for the 9 planets?**

**ANSWER:-** No!!! This is a fabrication by whoever has advised and this is definitely not backed by our Shastras. We cannot make it easy for a person - one has to perform the recommended rituals to nullify the adverse affects of a particular planet. Another way to view this question - if the priest views your birth chart (Janma kundali), and if you are adversely affected by, let's say, Mars, then the recommended fast will be to observe a 21 Tuesday-Saltless fast from sunrise on Tuesday to sunrise on Wednesday. If you are being advised in any other way [by anyone else] to observe a saltless fast then you are being advised incorrectly.

Remember Grahas (planets) affect you from the time you are born until you expire in a positive or malefic way.

**QUESTION:- Does one “open book” every year for the Navagraha prayer?**

**ANSWER:-** Well if you have a renowned and qualified Astrologer to guide you then he/she can advise you a few years into the future. The Astrologer can advise you (for e.g.) maybe you have to perform two fasts for that year but for the next 5 years maybe there will only be one fast to observe. So we can deduce that one must only fast when it's necessary... For example, if you have a malefic Saturn Graha sometimes you have to fast just once in three years. When an astrologer checks one birth chart for some people they don't have to fast for like 5-10 years because there is no need to fast. Just mantras are chanted. From the time we are born till the time we die we all have planets helping us or causing problems for us. They are not bad Deities it's just that they have a duty to perform to punish or reward us for our deeds in this life time or past life times. So to answer the question – no, there is no need at all. This (this is, I've observed, a way in which ...) I find some priests/astrologers way of making money, and this upsets me. I hate when some people take advantage of others' miseries. Don't you agree?

**QUESTION:- What is the Rasi-mala?**

**ANSWER:-**Vedic Astrology analyses your life by looking at three major astronomical factors that have a major effect on the life of an individual. These are THE MOON BIRTH SIGN, THE STAR CONSTELLATION BIRTH SIGN and THE SOUND VIBRATION NAME at the time of birth. They are therefore referred to as THE RASI, THE NAKSHATRA, and the CHARRAN. The word MALA refers to a Circle representing the Garland of the Universe

around which all planets and astronomical objects orbit. The Rasi mala would be the circle or garland of Zodiac Signs starting from Aries leading up to Taurus as occupied by the Moon degree position. The Nakshatra Mala is a book about the Circle of Star constellations as given by the Moon position as well. The Charran Mala would be the circle of Vibrations in the universe as given by the 27 constellations in the universe. The latter decides the name or frequency identification of the person. Usually this sound starts the person's name he/she is called for the rest of his/her life. All three books provide a description of your Karmic path as well as the possible experiences you will have based on the position of all the planets at the time of your birth. Armed with the knowledge found in these three books, a person can plan and live a successful life in the universe. The personality description of an individual in The Rasi Mala, when matched with the Karmic description of your possible experiences in the Nakshatra Mala, and the powerful vibrations of the name vibration can be used to determine the prosperity, success and peace of mind of that individual. Each person's life can be made long and happy if they understood the reasons why they are here on earth, who they really are and why they experience certain low periods and high periods in their life. The material in these books have guided millions of people for thousands of years in the fields of career, wealth, health, love, marriage and family. But while the Rasi Mala guides you like a life reading, the Grahas (planets) still affect you from the time you are born until you expire in a positive or malefic way.

**QUESTION:-** A person has to suffer for one's bad karma that he/she has incurred. The 9 planets during their transit light up those sins of one's past. A man has to exhaust his bad karma first, so then how can the worship of the 9 planets obviate this desire of one's past karma?

**ANSWER:-** One who has the capacity to do a piece of action also has the capabilities to do other kinds of work. Likewise the planets, in addition to throwing light on our past sins, have the power to mitigate the punishment of our past sins and also to confer blessings upon that devotee. In the Srimad Bhagavatam it is stated that "the air, sky, the moon, the planets, and so forth are all part of the limbs of the Supreme Lord Narayana". In the Briharanyaka Upanishad it is also stated that " The Navagrahas are from the body of Lord Narayana, and the worship offered to the planets are only accorded to Lord Narayana". Bhagavad Gita Chapter 7 verses 21/22 Lord Krishna states " I am the Supersoul, and as soon as one desires to worship a particular Deity, I make his faith steady so that he can devote himself to that particular Deity. Endowed with faith, he endeavours to worship a particular Deity and obtains his desires. But in actuality these benefits are bestowed by Me alone", and finally from the Brahma Sutra states "All strength is derived from the One deity – Lord Narayana - who confers the benefits of the planets".

**QUESTION:-** So why don't I pray to Lord Krishna directly and how can one say that the planets themselves directly show their blessings to a devotee?

**ANSWER:-** an analogy can be used in this instance : Tax levied by a king is collected by the village official and given to the King. Thereafter the King confers his blessings OR punishment for a failure to pay taxes NOT directly but through the village official. In a similar manner prayers offered to the planets come back to us in the form of blessings through the planets from Lord Krishna.

**EXAMPLE** Devotee's prayers => planet => Lord Krishna => Planet => devotee's

blessings.

If I had to pay a fine, I wouldn't pay it to the President of this country - rather to the nearest police station and if I don't pay the fine, I will receive punishment from the officers on the order of the president.

**QUESTION:- How can the karma of one's past be wiped out by propitiation of a particular planet?**

**ANSWER:-** Though the Law of Karma is simply stated (as) - 'as you sow, so shall you reap' - it is no simplistic, tit-for-tat theory, nor is it an arbitrary human creation. The Law of Karma is another name for Newton's Third Law of Motion: 'for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.' As such, it is inherent in the universe's structure: 'The doctrine of karman and phala, act and fruit, is less a product of man's sense of justice, that one shall be punished for what one has done, than a necessary consequence of the doctrine of the inherent efficacy of the acts'. The three degrees of karmic intensity which may apply to one, many, or all areas of a person's life are:

1. **Dridha (fixed) Karma**
2. **Dridha - Adridha (fixed/non-fixed) Karma**
3. **Adridha (non-fixed) Karma**

**Dridha Karma:-** Dridha Karmas give fixed results because they are so difficult to change that are practically non-changeable. These karmas, pleasurable or painful, are destined to be experienced because of the intensity of their causes. Most people have noticed that from time to time an experience simply 'happens', despite all efforts to avoid its occurrence. If, for example, a pregnant woman who has enjoyed perfect health before and during her pregnancy and who has had the best of medical care delivers a child with a congenital deformity (abnormalities of the body at birth), a Jyotishi might well find that she was experiencing Dridha Prarabdha Karma concerning children, and that her child was experiencing Dridha Prarabdha Karma concerning its body. Remember that this kind of karma may be pleasurable as well as painful; as we all know, those who seem the least deserving are often those who get ahead in life. Dridha Karmas appear in a horoscope where confluence exists. Confluence occurs wherever many astrological factors converge in their indications. The greater the number of indications for good OR for bad in a particular area of a horoscope, the more obvious its results will become.

**Adridha Karma:-** Adridha Karmas are said to give non-fixed results because they are easily altered. Wherever no confluence exists in a horoscope, Adridha Karmas are present. This state is akin to having a clean slate on which you may write as you please. When a child of normal physical stature exercises and his/her body responds with increased strength so that the gain is directly proportionate to the effort made, and no unforeseen hindrances or other unanticipated variances occur, it is a case of Adridha Prarabdha Karma in the area of his/her physique. This type of karma can be averted by proper propitiatory ceremonies - mainly fasting and performing charities for the Navagrahas. The Atharva Veda prescribes certain hymns accordingly and the performance of Shanti prayers to atone for the sins of the past

and gives health to a diseased person. By performing good deeds, the bad deeds of the past can be countered. Thus propitiation performed to the 9 planets confers good to the worshipper

**Dridha-Adridha Karma:-** Dridha-Adridha Karmas occur wherever some (but not most) horoscopic factors relating to a particular area converge in their indications. These karmas, good OR bad, can be changed through the concentrated application of creative will, though considerable effort is required. They give fixed or non-fixed results according to the quantum of effort employed. If the congenital deformity in the child mentioned above is corrected or substantially alleviated through surgery, prolonged diet, intensive exercise, or some other corrective, then its Prarabdha Karma was of the Dridha-Adridha variety.

**How to choose between which remedial measures to choose from:**

Every living entity is composed of three principal parts: the body called Sareera, the mind called Mana and the soul called Atma. Thus, Vedic remedial measures have three levels of operation. Depending on the level at which the astrologer wishes to operate on and depending on a host of other factors like spiritual development, type of self control/direction etc, the remedial measures should be prescribed. Sometimes two or more remedial measures are prescribed.

**MORE Questions and Answers to follow...**

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