
Graha Sutras

*A translation with extensive commentary of Brihat
Parashara Hora Shastra's Sutras on the planets, with
supplementation from other ancient texts.*



Ernst Wilhelm

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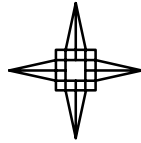
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To my many wonderful Students over the past two years who I have had the good fortune to have in my life, who, through their keen interest and sharp minds, have been a primary source of inspiration and motivation for my continued study and work in Astrology.

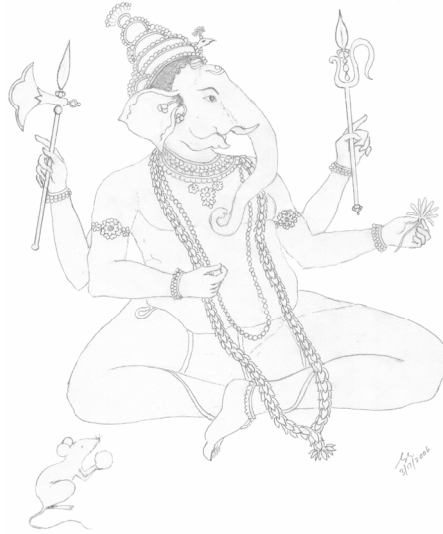
अथाहं परमं ब्रह्म तच्छक्तिं भारतीं पुनः ॥ ५ ॥

athāyaṁ paramaṁ brahma tacchaktiṁ bhāratiṁ punaḥ.

सूर्यं नत्वा ग्रहपतिं जगदुत्पत्तिकारणम् ।

वक्ष्यामि वेदनयनं यथा ब्रह्ममुखाच्छ्रुतम् ॥ ६ ॥

sūryam natvā grahapatim jagadutpattikāraṇam,
vakṣyāmi vedanayanam yathā brahmamukhācchrutam.



Lord Ganesha

Patron Deity of Astrology

“Now I (Parasbara), having bowed to the most excellent Brahma and Bharati, his power, and to the Sun, the lord of the planets and the cause of the birth of the world, I shall tell the leading Veda (astrology) as heard from the mouth of Brahma.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of the Process of Creation, 5-6

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Surya



*“Lotus seated, lotus in hand, brilliant as a lotus flower and sitting
in a seven horse drawn chariot with two arms is the Sun.”*

Introduction

This text, *Graba Sutras*, is largely a commentary on the Sutras on the planets from *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*. *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*, “Parashara’s Monumental Astrological Scientific Text,” is quite a mysterious text. First, it is written as a recorded dialogue between the Rishi Parashara and his disciple Maitreya. Parashara was the father of Vyasa, Vyasa being the esteemed composer of the *Mahabharata*, *Srimad Bhagavatam* and the *Bhagavad Gita*, in addition to which he is credited with having compiled and scribed the Vedas. And Parashara was his father. Maitreya was himself an exalted Rishi and is referred to throughout the text as Twice Born, Wise and other such names exemplifying his spiritual status. Being a dialogue between two such great souls, the brilliance of Parashara’s astrological text comes as no surprise. The question and the mystery, however, is whether *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* is actually a work of Parashara.

The origins of *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* are controversial. Sanskrit scholars are of the opinion that it is a relatively modern text, post 600 AD, which is actually a compilation of texts that had come before it and that it is written in the colorful style of the dialogue between Parashara and Maitreya, though no such dialogue actually took place. Scholars hold this view on account of the fact that the Sanskrit style in which it is written is not that of age of the *Mahabharata*. Additionally, there is certainly evidence of compilation in the version available to us at this time, which will be discussed shortly.

Most Astrologers, however, are inclined to believe, with religious fervor, that *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* is from the time of the *Mahabharata*, for in the text Parashara makes mention of a planetary combination that the current emperor, Yudhishtira, the emperor at the time of the Mahabharata, supposedly possessed.

In my opinion, the truth in this matter most likely lies somewhere in the middle. In order to explain this I must first explain what techniques *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* consists of and the nature of the currently available version of *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*.

The greatest astrological scholar and writer in the 10th century was Bhattotpala. Bhattotpala made extensive commentaries of the important astrological texts of his time, wrote his own texts and was certainly the most learned astrologer of his day. In his commentaries he wrote that though he had heard of the *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*, he had never seen it. Thus we know it was lost for at least nine hundred years. The available version of *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* was compiled and rewritten in the 19th century by a scholar who visited many Pundits in an attempt to scrape the text together, for it had been lost for at least nine hundred years. On account of it having been recompiled and rewritten, we have to approach the text with a careful eye for it is quite likely that mistakes have crept in and that parts may have been added which do not actually belong.

The available version of *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* consists of seven distinct major parts:

1. Descriptions of Grahas, Rasis, Bhavas and Vargas (the basics).
2. Mathematically precise techniques such as Shad Bala, Vimshopaka, Subha and Asubha Phala, and Ishta and Kashta, which are used along with five Avasthas to make predictions through Nakshatra Dasas.
3. Rasi-based techniques and Dasas that are similar to those which are found in Jaimini's *Upadesa Sutras*.
4. Yogas.
5. Ashtakavarga.
6. Propitiations and remedies for inauspicious births.
7. Determining character from one's body parts.

Of the first mentioned portion, that of the descriptions of Grahās, Rasis, Bhavas and Vargas, the descriptions found in *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* are more complete as well as more accurate than those found in any other available astrological text. This is especially true in the context of Vargas. This inclines me to believe that these parts are attributable to Parashara.

The mathematically precise techniques are unique to *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*, as are the inclusion of all five important Avasthas. These combined with Nakshatra Dasas and the directions given throughout the text provide a perfect system of predictive astrology. This system, in my opinion, can only be from Parashara, as it dwarfs all other techniques found in any of the other classical texts such as *Brihat Jataka*, *Jataka Parijata*, *Phaladeepika*, etc, which at best only hint at the techniques without providing any methodological or scientifically replicable techniques. After working with the techniques provided in *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*, as well as the techniques provided in other texts and by other astrologers, it is my tested opinion that these techniques are the backbone of true Parashara style astrology. (This text, *Graba Sutras*, is the first in a long line up of texts that will instruct in these methods, beginning with the fundamentals.)

The Rasi-based techniques such as Upapada, Pada, Chara Karakas, etc. and the Rasi Dasas, which are similar to those found in Jaimini's *Upadesa Sutras*, cannot be part of the original *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*, or else they are so corrupt as to be useless. My reason for stating this is that they are all too often at variance with what is given in *Upadesa Sutras* or miss an important point that is provided in *Upadesa Sutras* with the result that the techniques as given in *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* simply do not work effectively whereas the precise methods in *Upadesa Sutras* do. These parts in *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* are better ignored. If one wishes to learn the Rasi based Jaimini techniques they must turn their attention to *Upadesa Sutras*, a proper and useful translation of which is as of yet unavailable.

Many of the Yogas found in *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* are commonly found in other astrological texts, except for the unique 144 Bhava Yogas – the effects of each Bhava lord in each Bhava, which are not a common mark of other texts. It is quite likely that these 144 Bhava Yogas are attributed to Parashara as his system deals extensively with this aspect of astrology. With regards to the other Yogas it is difficult to ascertain. Were they taken from an older version of *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* by the authors of other ancient texts or were they accidentally included in the available version of *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*? The Nabhasa Yogas and the important named Yogas such as Gajakesari Yoga are clear and work in practice, so we can apply them with confidence even without knowing to whom they are attributable. The Raja Yogas given in *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* are, to a large degree, corruptions of that which is given in *Upadesa Sutras*, so it is better to turn to *Upadesa Sutras* for those. In conclusion, while some of the Yogas (outside the 144 Bhava Yogas) may be original to *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*, they are not unique to it and are found in many other texts as well. The 144 Bhava Yogas, however, are unique to *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* and thus a very important contribution.

More must be said in the context of the 144 Bhava Yogas given by *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* as they are very unique in the astrological literature. Other texts give the effects of planets in signs and planets in houses – these effects are hit and miss since they do not evaluate the planet in question. *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* does not attempt such a foolish thing; rather it gives perfect mathematical techniques and Avasthas which allow the astrologer to determine with exactness the effects of a planet in a sign or in a house. Additionally it gives the effects of each house lord in each house – the 144 Bhava Yogas. These Yogas are important in the context of the larger predictive method presented by *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* and thus must be unique and original to the work.

Ashtakavarga, an involved system of transit effects, is found in many, many other texts over the past two millennia and as such we can no more be sure if these are unique to *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* or not.

The propitiations of the Grahas and remedies from inauspicious births are not a normal feature of astrological texts and may be attributable to Parashara, or they may only be appendages of what is common knowledge to the Indian priest. They are, however, of use and certainly unique to astrological texts.

Chapters on determining characteristics from an individual's body are not unique to astrological texts with many texts devoting time to this very useful subject. Whether it is original to Parashara or not there is no way of ascertaining.

In conclusion, what does appear unique to Parashara and what is certainly the most important part if not the gist of *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* are its descriptions of the Grahas, Rasis, Bhavas and Vargas and the mathematically precise predictive techniques of Shad Bala, Vimshopaka, Ishta and Kashta, and Subha and Asubha Phala and the five groups of Avasthas: Baladi Avasthas, Jagradadi Avasthas, Lajittadi Avasthas and Shayanadi Avasthas. These together with the Nakshatra Dasas given in *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* are a perfect system for predicting events. This text, *Graha Sutras*, is the first of many exploring these most important parts of *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*.

Now that you have the background of the great *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* of which I have translated portions for this text, I can proceed to tell you a bit about the purpose of this text. There are many, many ways in which the Grahas are put to use. No matter what techniques an astrologer may use the Grahas for, all the techniques have one thing in common – they all require an understanding of the Grahas. The purpose of this text is to provide that understanding so that when you do learn the astrological techniques, you will be able to derive the full value from the techniques. Furthermore, to proceed with a scientific system of predictive astrology the fundamental astrological components and

principles that are used in everything and all things astrological must be clearly understood. There can be no errors in the understanding of these principles or any derivation from the principles as given by the ancient Rishis, or else the divine science of astrology will cease to be scientific. All too often the available translations, as well as the modern books and teachings which are based on the available translations, are laced with such inaccuracies, which are a result of poor translation and translations being done by those who are not knowledgeable in the context of the Sutras being translated and so there are bound to be some errors. Over the past several years, as my Sanskrit studies have progressed, I have become more and more aware of these types of errors, many of which I had propagated myself in my earlier books which were based on the available and inaccurate translations and teachings. So in hopes in remedying that and in providing a solid foundation for your and other's studies I present this text.

This text is largely a commentary of *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra's* Sutras on the Grahas. The translation will often be found to be slightly different than what is in the available translations as I have striven to give a more precise and literal and, as mentioned, more accurate translation than most. Where my translations differ on significant points I have explained my reasoning as to the correctness of my translation. In addition to the Sutras provided by *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*, I have found it worthwhile to add a few Sutras from other important texts such as *Jataka Parijata* and *Yavana Jataka*. Lastly I have included two chapters entirely my own: one on Grahas and numbers and the other on the myths surrounding the Grahas. My intention is thus to present an entirely complete manual for the study of the Grahas, after which you will only be in need of deepening your contemplations on this vast subject.

Ernst Wilhelm

March 2006

1

The Grahās

In Vedic Astrology a planet is known as a Graha, which means, “seizing.” A planet is called a Graha since it seizes man (as well as all other things) and puts upon him his astrologically fated destiny. Grahās are, however, much more significant entities than mere tools of destiny. The true import of the Grahās is given in *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*:

अवताराण्यनेकानि ह्यजस्य परमात्मनः ।

जीवानां कर्मफलदो ग्रहरूपी जनार्दनः ॥ ३ ॥

avatārāṇyānekāni hyajasya paramātmanaḥ,
jivānām karmaphalado graharūpi janārdanaḥ.

“The Supreme Unborn Spirit has had many descents. Janardana, in the form of the Grahās, rewards the fruits of the Karma of the Living Beings.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of Avatars, 3

In this Sutra, *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* tells us that the Grahās are nothing but aspects of God and that the purpose of these Aspects of God is to bestow the results of Man’s, and other creatures, actions. The term used to signify God in His taking the form of the Grahās is Janardana – the one who agitates Man, causing fear and worry. No doubt, ill-disposed Grahās give us much to fear and worry, however, we should remember that the Grahās themselves are aspects of God and thus we should not fear them irrationally any more than we should fear God. Nor should we fear that which they bestow any more than we should fear that which God bestows upon us. Yet, since the fruits of our actions are often undesirable, we may often find ourselves fearing Janardana and the Grahās, so the next Sutra tells us the benefit of the Grahās so that

we may understand that they are here to help us and that indeed we have no need of fear.

दैत्यानां बलनाशाय देवानां बलवृद्धये ।

धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय ग्रहाज्जाताः शुभाः क्रमात् ॥ ४ ॥

daityānām balanāśāya devānām balavṛddhaye,
dharmaśamsthāpanārthāya grahājātaḥ śubhāḥ kramāt.

“Destroying the strength of the Daityas, increasing the strength of the Devas, aiming to establish Dharma, the Auspicious Births proceed regularly from the Grabas.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of Avatars, 4

Hindu religion and mythology holds that God occasionally incarnates on Earth in order to help mankind. These are the auspicious births mentioned in the Sutra. These incarnations of God are known as Avataras. The Avataras come to Earth to establish Dharma (which is living righteously and living in accord with one’s God-given innate nature), destroy the Daityas who are the demonic forces, and to strengthen the Devas who are the divine forces. There is a lot to learn from the fact that the birth of these divine incarnations that come to help mankind proceed from the Grahas. If these divine incarnations come from the Grahas and have their goal to establish righteousness, destroy the demonic forces and to strengthen the divine forces, then that must also be the very goal of the Grahas themselves. So the Grahas are not here to punish us and make our lives miserable or to reward us and make our lives pleasant and easy, rather, they bestow the fruits of our actions so that we will refrain from performing ill, so that we will indulge in doing that which is beneficial and so that we will become individuals secure in our innate nature and that we will follow the righteous path that our innate nature dictates. One of the ways in which the Grahas help us to do these things is by allowing us to

study Astrology as one of the greatest benefits of Astrology is that it helps us become secure in our innate nature, understand our Dharma and recognize our place in the world.

रामोऽवतारः सूर्यस्य चन्द्रस्य यादुनायकः ।

नृसिंहो भूमिपुत्रस्य बुद्धः सोमसुतस्य च ॥ ५ ॥

rāmo'vatāraḥ sūryasya candrasya yādunāthakaḥ,
nṛsiṁho bhumiputrasya buddhaḥ somasutasya ca.

वामनो विबुधेज्यस्य भार्गवो भार्गवस्य च ।

कूर्मो भास्करपुत्रस्य सैहिकेयस्य सूकरः ॥ ६ ॥

vāmano vibudhejyasya bhārgavo bhārgavasya ca,
kūrmo bhāskaraputrasya saimhikeyasya sūkaraḥ.

केतोर्मीनावतारश्च ये चान्ये तेऽपि खेटजाः ।

परात्मांशोऽधिको येषु ते सर्वे खेचराभिधाः ॥ ७ ॥

ketormīnāvātāraśca ye cānye te'pi khetajāḥ,
parātmāṁśo'dhiko yeṣu te sarve khecarābhidhāḥ.

जीवांशोह्यधिको येषु जीवास्ते वै प्रकीर्तिताः ।

सूर्यादिभ्यो ग्रहेभ्यश्च परमात्मांशनिः सृताः ॥ ८ ॥

jīvāṁśohyadhiko yeṣu jīvāste vai prakirtitāḥ,
sūryādibhyo grahebhyaśca paramātmāṁśaniḥ sṛtāḥ.

रामकृष्णादयः सर्वे ह्यवतारा भवन्ति वै ।

तत्रैव ते विलीयन्ते पुनः कार्योत्तरे सदा ॥ ९ ॥

rāmakṛṣṇādayaḥ sarve hyavatārā bhavanti vai,
tatraiva te vilīyante punaḥ kāryottare sadā.

जीवांशनिः सूतास्तेषां तेभ्यो जाता नरादयः ।

तेऽपि तत्रैव लीयन्ते तेऽव्यक्ते समयन्ति हि ॥ १० ॥

jivāṁśaniḥ sūtāsteṣu tebhyo jātā narādayaḥ,
te'pi tatraiva liyante te'vyakte samayanti hi.

“The Avatara Rama from the Sun, from the Moon – the Yadu Lord (Krisbna), Nrisimba from Mars, Buddba from Mercury, Vamana from Jupiter, Bhargava (Parashurama) from Venus, Kurma from Saturn, from Rabu – Sukara (Varaba), and from Ketu the Avatara Miina, and all others are also planetary born. Those with Para Atma as the larger portion are all known as heavenly. Those with Jiva as the larger portion are known as the living beings. The Para Atma portion has gone forth from the Grahas, the Sun, etc. and given birth to Rama, Krisbna, and all Avataras. Then they are absorbed at their end after concluding their purifying business. The Jiva portion goes forth and is born as humans, etc. Similarly, these also then melt at their end into the imperceptible.

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of Avatars, 5-10

Here *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* tells us the names of the more important Avataras of the Hindu religion that have proceeded forth from each of the Grahas. These will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. All others are also considered to be brought forth from the Grahas. This means you and me as well as all divine incarnations and all other creatures. All births have Para Atma nature, which is the nature of the Supreme Spirit, and Jiva, which is the nature of the living beings such as dwell on Earth. If the Para Atma portion is the larger portion of a birth, then that birth is the birth of a holy personage such as the nine mentioned Avataras as well as those such as Christ or Mohammed. If the Jiva portion is larger, the birth is of some other earthly creature. So there is a difference between births, a difference in the amount of Supreme

Spirit and the amount of the nature of an earthly creature. It is because of this difference that the followers of the holy personages are never able to completely emulate the actions of the holy personage whom they adore or to completely understand their teachings, unless they themselves have a larger portion of Para Atma. However, by adoring himself or herself to a holy personage whom their innate nature draws them towards, the Jiva portion is slowly but surely replaced with more and more Para Atma.

There is an important similarity between all births, whether that of holy personages or other simple earthly creatures – they are brought forth by the Grahās and upon their physical demise they are reabsorbed back through the Grahās. For this reason the Grahās can be looked upon as distant parents who provide for our existence, instruct us to behave and to better ourselves, and though they may do this harshly at times, we should adore or at least appreciate them as the helpful parents that they are.

सूर्यादयो ग्रहाः सर्वे ब्रह्मकामद्विषादयः ।

एते चान्ये च बहवः परमात्मांशकाधिकाः ॥ २३ ॥

sūrādayo grahāḥ sarve brahmakāmadviṣādayaḥ,
ete cānye ca bahavaḥ paramātmāṁśakādhikāḥ.

“All the Grabas the Sun, etc. Brahma, Siva, etc. these and others are more Para Atma abundant.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narrating the Succession of the Created, 23

The Grahās are endowed with Para Atma consciousness, for if they were not how could they give birth to the many divine incarnations? The Grahās, being direct manifestations of Vishnu, could have no less than Para Atma consciousness. The Grahās are thus not simple lumps of dirt, minerals and gases, but divine entities that have an important role in all of our lives. The Para Atma consciousness of the Grahās make them living, acting beings that we can have a relationship with, for which reason Puja and Mantras

for the Grahas are effective. The Roman gods, just one example of many ancient cultures, were identified as the planets. For all individual's of religious bent, God is alive and well, for the astrologer, however, the ancient gods are also available to enrich his life.

Avataras of the Grahas

Though there are many, many divine incarnations, Hindu mythology gives primary importance to nine of them – one for each Graha. As a student of astrology it is well worth studying the lives of these Avataras as they shed some important light upon the nature of the Grahas. The lives of these Avataras are portrayed in the *Srimad Bhagavatam*, the reading of which is highly recommended as it provides spiritual, philosophical, psychological and even astronomical insights. For now, I will briefly describe the Avataras associated with the Grahas as there is much to be learned from the Avataras about the Grahas.

Rama “Dark” – Avatara of the Sun

Long ago during the Treta Yuga (the second highest age) there was an Asura (titan) king by the name of Ravana who was displaying great selfishness and arrogance, and who was fast breaking every code of Dharma. Ravana, though arrogant, had won many boons due to the strict penance he had performed. These boons made him so powerful that no one could conquer him or end his display of unrighteousness and so Adharma (unrighteousness) was becoming rampant in the world. Brahma and the Devas (the gods) went to the all-pervading Vishnu to request his assistance in riding the world of Ravana. Vishnu promised to incarnate as a lord in the Solar Dynasty and put an end to Ravana and his unrighteous rule.

Vishnu was thus born as Rama, who exemplified all of the ideals of Dharma throughout the entirety of his life. Rama was of royal birth and was the crown prince of Ayodhya, however, through the scheming of one of his father’s wives the throne was unjustly taken from him and he was exiled to the forest for fourteen years. To insure that his father’s good name would remain unblemished,

Rama willingly accepted the exile with even-minded calmness and detachment, even though his father had already died due to the grief caused by Rama's exile. Rama's wife, Sita, and his brother, Lakshman would not part from Rama and followed him to the forest. Many adventures befell Rama during his exile and not even once did he stir from the strict path of Dharma.

After many years of living and wandering in the forest, news of Sita's beauty reached the ears of the titan Ravana, who then abducted Sita, hoping to make her his wife. Rama was heartbroken and made every effort to find Sita and rescue her from Ravana. After much time and effort, Rama destroyed Ravana, and Sita was returned to him. At that point the purpose of Rama's incarnation had been fulfilled; he had destroyed Ravana and exemplified Dharma.

The trials of Dharma, however, are hard and Rama, after conquering Ravana, still had one more ideal to establish. After returning to his native city and becoming crowned, Rama heard that one of his subjects spoke ill of his wife. His subject declared that once a woman resides under the care of another man she should not be allowed to return to her husband, though Rama might accept her because he was infatuated with her, he would never accept her. That Sita was taken against her will, that she remained outside Ravana's palace, only eating roots and fruits so as to eat what her husband Rama was eating in the forest while she waited for him to rescue her was not considered by this critic. Rama, feeling that as king his highest duty was to please his subjects, abandoned Sita to the ashram of Rishi Valmiki. Sita was pregnant at the time and after giving birth to Rama's twin sons she died. At hearing of Sita's death Rama was sunk in sorrow, but he remembered that a king has no right to have feelings of his own so he concentrated on ruling the earth until his death.

Rama's life was marked by sacrifice – the sacrifice of his kingdom, which once regained led to the sacrifice of his beloved. It is the Sun that provides the strength to make the hard sacrifices in

life. The Sun also demands personal sacrifices for the sake of duty, the well-being of others, and for one's spiritual development. If the Sun is strong and well disposed in the horoscope, an individual will have the ability to make the necessary sacrifices.

Rama means "dark," and lord Rama was named this on account of having a dark cast to his skin. While the Sun is not, of course, dark, those people and races living on Earth that are exposed to the Sun darken.

Krishna "Dark" – Avatara of the Moon

Krishna is the most beloved Avatar of the Hindus. The stories of Krishna are many and his devotees never tire of hearing them.

Krishna was born of two saintly parents while imprisoned by Krishna's uncle, the evil King Kamsa. Kamsa had imprisoned Krishna's parents because a voice from the sky had told him that their eighth child would be the death of him. Kamsa first killed Krishna's six younger siblings as soon as they were born, but failed in killing the seventh. The seventh was instead magically transferred to the womb of Rohini, a woman in the neighboring village of Gokula. This seventh was Balarama; an incarnation of Adishesha, the thousand-headed serpent, who was to become Krishna's lifelong companion.

When Krishna was born, the doors to his parent's prison magically opened. His father carried him away to Gokula, and exchanged Krishna for the newborn daughter of Yashoda.

When Kamsa heard of the eighth child being born, he rushed to kill it. When he raised up the child, who was actually Yashoda's child, in order to smash and kill it, the child slipped from his fingers, flew into the air and, before magically disappearing, told Kamsa that the eighth child was hidden safely away.

Krishna spent his early life in sweet contentment among the people and cowherds of Gokula. Kamsa sent many demonic types to kill him, but Krishna, though just a small child, vanquished them all. When not destroying the demons sent to kill him, Krishna was a

delight to all, and entertained them with the music of his flute and his constant pranks.

At the age of fifteen Krishna left Gokula to kill the evil Kamsa and release his parents. Krishna thus became known as a hero and in his life destroyed many Asuras and Rakshasas. The people, therefore, always came to Krishna for aid and comfort. Krishna is best known for his role as friend, advisor and comforter to Arjuna and the Pandus during the great Kurukshetra war between the Pandus and Kurus, depicted in the *Mahabharata*. The spiritual teachings of Krishna are preserved in the *Bhagavad Gita*.

The Moon indicates the early environment and the need to be loved and cherished. Krishna grew up in a contented atmosphere among the cowherds where he was loved and cherished by everyone. The Moon also rules cows as well as dairy and butter, Krishna's favorite food. Krishna spoke always of the importance of Bakti (devotion) – keeping God always in mind. He loved his Baktis (devotees) more than all else, even more than Brahma and all the other deities. It is when the mind, the Moon, is kept centered in the heart that Bakti is cultivated.

Among Avatars, it is many of Krishna's activities that are questionable. But as his mind was always one with God – for, in fact, he was God, nothing he did could ever be construed as degrading to his spirit. Many things may befall a person and an individual may even be prompted by fate to perform less than idealistic deeds. In times such as these, the Moon allows a person to feel okay about themselves, if the Moon is well disposed. On the other hand, if the Moon is afflicted, even while performing good deeds an individual does not feel worthy, loveable or acceptable.

Krishna means “dark,” even so dark as to be black. The Moon is the lord of the night, the time of darkness. Krishna was called this on account of having very dark skin.

The fact that the two greatest and most famous Avatars: Rama and Krishna both had names that meant dark is significant. Black, darkness is that which is beyond creation. The world of Man is

illuminated by the Sun; the worlds of the heavens and afterlife are illumined by the astral lights. That which is God, which is that one pointed most tiny and most heavy from which all things manifest is dark. Black, therefore, symbolizes the highest state of spiritual realization, the state beyond all physical and astral forms of realization. For this reason the Graha of liberation, Ketu, rules black. This same idea holds true with respect to our Milky Way Galaxy and its center. The center of the Milky Way is thought to be a large black hole whose gravitational force is so great that it sucks in matter from its north and south poles with such force that it spews the matter out again at its sides, forming the spiral pattern of the Milky Way. The gravitational force of the center of the galaxy is so great that eventually all that which was spewed out will once again be attracted towards the galactic center, upon which a Day of Brahma, the Creator, will come to a close. The same happens in the evolution of Man. At first Man reaches further and further away from himself until he comes to realize that fulfillment is an internal process and then he seeks to look into himself until he becomes Guru (which literally means “heavy”), upon which he attracts everything towards himself, just like a black hole, and thus experiences all fulfillment.

Nrisimha “Manlion” – Avatara of Mars

Very long ago there was an Asura by the name of Hiranyakashipu. He had won many boons and had become very powerful. He conquered the three known worlds, forcing the Devas to become his vassals. The Devas appealed to the Supreme Lord Vishnu, who told them that Hiranyakashipu would soon have a saintly son and that when Hiranyakashipu was mistreating his son, He, Vishnu, would come and destroy him.

Hiranyakashipu's youngest son, Prahlada, expressed all of the qualities of a saint. He was truthful, disciplined and loved all living beings. He had his senses under control and his conduct was faultless. Whenever his father asked him what he had learned, Prahlada spoke of the Lord. Needless to say his father was not

pleased at this. He commanded Pahlada's instructors to teach Pahlada worldly ways and to make sure that he saw no devotees of Vishnu.

Pahlada's instructors asked him who had instilled him with such thoughts. Pahlada answered that like iron attracted to a magnet his mind was always pulled towards God. With the threat of punishment they taught him their ways and he acted as though he was learning, but his mind was always with God. They then brought him to his father who was interested in his "progress." Again Pahlada spoke of God. His father was enraged and commanded that he be tortured. Pahlada was undaunted by the tortures and continued to speak of God. Hiranyakashipu, therefore, ordered that Pahlada be killed. Though many methods were tried the Asuras were unable to kill this child of five. Pahlada's instructors finally told the king that since they were unable to kill the boy, in time he might reform, and so Pahlada was taken back to his studies.

There then came a time when the instructors were away and Pahlada began converting the other students. When the instructors returned they were furious at this, especially since the other students would no longer heed them in their lessons. The instructors rushed to Hiranyakashipu who became enraged and decided that he would kill his son with his own hands.

Hiranyakashipu then sent for Pahlada who came and greeted him respectfully. Hiranyakashipu chastised Pahlada, who remained undaunted, speaking only of God to his father in a respectful manner. Pahlada told his father that he could benefit from God who was greater than even him. His father asked him where this "Lord" was who was greater than he was. Pahlada replied that He was everywhere. His father asked him if He was in a pillar which he pointed to. Pahlada said that He was. Hiranyakashipu then told Pahlada that he was going to kill him now so, if indeed the Lord was in the pillar, He should come out and rescue Pahlada from death.

Hiranyakashipu then hit the pillar with his great fist. There was a terrible noise and the pillar split. Out of it came Lord Vishnu in a

terrible form. He glowed like molten gold. His head and face were that of a lion, his chest also. His lower half was that of a man. He was Nrisimha, the Man-lion. Everyone was afraid except for Hiranyakashipu. He thought what a strange beast this is; it is neither man nor animal. He then remembered the time when he had asked Brahma for a boon of immortality. Brahma had been unable to grant the boon, as he was not immortal himself. However, Brahma granted him that he would not be killed by one of His creations; he would not be killed by man or animal, during day or night, inside or outside, on the earth or in the sky. Brahma did definitely not create this thing that came out of the pillar; could this be his death?

Hiranyakashipu, being no coward, hit Vishnu in His beastly form with his mace. They fought, until finally Nrisimha lifted him and carried him to the threshold of the hall; thus it was neither inside nor outside. The sky was deepening into darkness; thus it was neither day nor night. Nrisimha placed Hiranyakashipu in his lap, thus not upon the earth or in the sky. Being great himself, Hiranyakashipu was still unafraid. He looked at Prahlada as if to say that perhaps he was right, that there was someone more powerful than he. Nrisimha then ripped out his entrails, killing him.

Upon fulfilling his bloody task, Nrisimha sat on the throne of the vanquished Hiranyakashipu. He was so angry that no one dared approach him, the Earth was trembling, and the heavens were scorching from His heat. The Devas went to get Lakshmi, the Lord's consort. Even She dared not approach Him; She had never seen him so angry before. Finally Prahlada went to the Lord, who raised him up, His anger vanishing at the site of his beloved devotee.

Nrisimha portrays the martial ability to fulfill a task through logic and necessary aggression, even when the task appears impossible. Hiranyakashipu was effectively immortal, having the boon to not die inside or outside, on Earth or in the sky, during day or night, by man or beast. For every problem or difficulty, there is a logical answer that Mars can provide, just as Nrisimha provided for

the destruction of Hiranyakashipu. If Mars is strong and well situated in the horoscope the individual will have the capacity to logically work through problems.

Mars, like Nrisimha, is very impassioned and fiery with his tasks. This fire is just for giving the energy to complete the task. As soon as the task is completed Mars relaxes, just as Nrisimha's anger dissipated upon seeing the sound and unharmed Prahlada. If Mars is well situated in the horoscope, one's anger is never frustration, but rather righteous anger that subsides as soon as an important task is complete. If Mars is weak, an individual will not have the necessary strength and passion to funnel into their tasks. If Mars is afflicted, the individual will easily become angry and frustrated when it is uncalled for, and even after fulfilling a task that required all their strength and energy, they will still remain restless or frustrated.

Buddha “Awakened” – Avatara of Mercury

Buddha means “awakened.” As a name of an Avatara, it is not quite clear which Avatara is meant, as there has been more than one great soul with this name. It is quite possible that Guatama Siddhartha, the founder of Buddhism is meant, who is certainly the Buddha who has had the largest impact upon Man, being the founder of the largest religion in the world. Buddhism ranks low as a religion in the medieval Hindu texts, which consider it an atheistic religion to some degree, since it does not revolve around the established Hindu gods. The medieval Hindu distaste for Buddhism is quite likely the result of the political turmoil of the times more than any differences in religious practices. Buddhism is more a religion of processes, methods and behaviors that bring about spiritual development than it is a religion of deities, which marks the Hinduism of the medieval period. The processes, methods and behaviors of Buddhism are all found, though perhaps in slightly different variations, in Hinduism, and Siddhartha was himself born a Hindu, so Buddhism is nothing different than a methodical and behavioral branch of Hinduism that has concentrated its studies on

the methods and behaviors rather than on the Hindu deities. Paramahansa Yogananda similarly concentrated his teachings around methods and behaviors, leaving out the many colorful deities. Just as Yogananda cannot be classified as an atheist merely for not revolving his teachings around the Hindu deities, neither should the Buddha, Siddhartha.

Siddhartha was born as a prince in the kingdom of Sakyas, on the border of present-day Nepal and India. Learned Brahmins who read his palms and bodily features declared that he would become either a world monarch, if he remained at home, or a Buddha, if he left home. But there was one Brahmin who said he would definitely become a Buddha.

As a result of these predictions, Siddhartha's father was always concerned that Siddhartha might desire to leave home and become an ascetic. He therefore always did his best to influence Siddhartha in favor of the worldly life, keeping him happy and contented with every comfort and luxury.

When Siddhartha was twenty-nine years of age his life took a sudden turn. When he was out driving with his charioteer he saw a decrepit, old man. Siddhartha asked his charioteer what had happened to the man. The charioteer explained that the man was old, that all men became old. This greatly perturbed Siddhartha. Another day he saw a sick man that had fallen in his own excrement. His charioteer, seeing that Siddhartha was perplexed, explained that the man was sick, that all men succumb to sickness. On another occasion Siddhartha saw a dead body. Again his charioteer explained that the man was dead, that all men must die. Next Siddhartha saw a man with a shaven head wearing yellow robes. He was impressed with the calm demeanor and serenity of the man. That day Siddhartha decided to follow suit and become a wandering ascetic. During the night he quietly slipped out of the palace, leaving his wife and newborn son.

Siddhartha thus devoted his life to the search for truth and it was not long before he met two sages who became his teachers and through their teachings he reached very high spiritual states. This

was not enough for Siddhartha who continued his quest for Truth. After almost dying from practicing severe bodily austerities for six years in a woodland grove along with five other ascetics, Siddhartha realized that such mortification could not bring him to what he wanted. He changed his ways and began eating and taking care of himself in a more balanced fashion. His five companions, on seeing this, lost faith in him and left in disgust.

From this point forward Siddhartha followed his own path. Soon after he attained enlightenment at the foot of a Bodhi tree after determining that he would not rise from the foot of the tree before attaining enlightenment. After several tests he obtained his goal and became the Buddha.

Buddha then began attracting disciples. His first disciples were the five ascetics who had earlier abandoned him. He spoke of a balanced “middle path” avoiding both self-indulgence and self-mortification. This became known as the Noble Eight-fold Path. This path consisted of right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right living, right endeavor, right mindfulness, and right concentration. Buddha's teachings rapidly spread through himself and his many enlightened disciples.

Buddha is unique amongst the Avatars in that he was born with human consciousness being predominant and through practices became awakened. The other eight Avatars associated with Grahas maintained a consistency of divine consciousness from birth onwards. This process of the human consciousness becoming awakened is ruled by Mercury. The normal mind is only able to cognize the things of the material world. Enlightenment consists of the mind being awakened to where it may cognize spirit. While Jupiter rules all philosophical teachings, the actual practice of the teachings is governed by Mercury. Practicing, through the ability of Mercury, the teachings and methods of Jupiter, awakens one to the perception of Truth. If Jupiter is well situated in the horoscope, one will possess wisdom and the knowledge of spiritual practices and behaviors, but without Mercury, one will not effectively practice

that which they know in such a way as to awaken their consciousness. A further point in regards to Mercury's importance in spirituality is that Mercury rules the Buddhi, the discerning intelligence that comprehends the Sat, "real substance" from the Asat, "unreal substance." Each and every individual who, through practices and devotion, finds their mind awakened is a "Buddha." Buddha, more than any other of the eight Avatars related to the Grahas, has treaded the path that all spiritual seekers tread.

Vamana "Short Stature" – Avatara of Jupiter

Long ago there was a great and powerful Asura by the name of Bali. He grew to such strength that he chased Indra, the king of the Devas, from the heavens. He then ruled the heavens and the world from what had been Indra's city. Bali's fame spread all over the world and though an Asura, he was famous, not only for his might, but especially for his unusual good character, fairness and generosity.

The mother of Indra was unhappy over the vanquishing of her son by Bali. She performed a mantra upon which Vishnu came to her and told her not to worry; He would be born to her as a son in order to provide help to Indra and the Devas.

A son was born to her who is known as Vamana. Vamana, as a small boy, approached Bali during a spiritual rite that he was performing. Such was Vamana's brilliance that it appeared as if a bright light was coming over the horizon towards Bali and the other onlookers. When Bali saw that he who came was such a glorious Brahmin boy he honored him and fell at his feet. "Welcome," said Bali, "by your coming I have been blessed. Tell me what I can do for you?"

Vamana answered him; "I want from you three paces of ground measured by my stride."

Bali was taken aback, "You do not know what is good for you, boy. You are just a child. Instead of asking me for islands you ask me for three paces of ground measured by your tiny feet. Please,

ask again, and ask for enough land to keep you comfortable for all your life.”

Vamana said, “If a man has not conquered desire all things in the world will not be enough to satisfy him. One who is not satisfied with three paces of ground will not be satisfied with the seven continents and all their wealth. I therefore ask you only for three paces of ground.”

Bali was prepared to grant Vamana's request. At this time, however, Shukra (Venus), Bali's Guru, stepped in and said, “Do not give. He is deceiving you in order to help the Devas. He is Vishnu in disguise and with one pace of his foot He will cover the world, with another He will cover the heavens and the third step He will take on your head. You do not have to keep your promise of a gift to him, for he is deceiving you and intends to take all that you have.”

Bali listened to his Guru and said, “I believe what you say, I do not have to honor my promise as all my possessions and security are at stake, but I do not fear losing all that I have. I only fear the infamy of speaking an untruth.”

Shukra was angry with Bali for this and cursed him to fall from grace and lose all his wealth and success. Bali, however, was not perturbed by his Guru's curse and granted Vamana's request.

Vamana then grew to huge proportions and took the immense form of Lord Vishnu. With one step he covered the world, and with another the heavens. He then resumed the form of Vamana. Bali was then tied up, but he smiled, for he knew why the Lord had done this to him, to rid him of the two sins, “I” and “Mine.” By taking away all that he had, the Lord rid him of the sin of “Mine.” The Lord now wanted to show the world that only by surrender could one rid oneself of the sin “I.”

Vamana looked at Bali, “You promised me three paces of ground. I have taken only two and there is nothing left. Tell me, where should I place my third step? You have not kept your word.”

Bali was not frightened, “I do not consider my words to be lies there is still a place for your third pace. Please place your foot on

my head.” Upon which Vishnu in the form of Vamana stepped upon his head. Upon this, Brahma came to Vamana and said, “Please release Bali; he has given you all he has and has surrendered himself to you. He should be rewarded.”

Vishnu then said, “When I want to destroy a man I grant him all the wealth and power in the world. He then gets involved in them and forgets his true nature. When I want to save a man from this delusion I take away his all. Becoming rid of all his faults he will become Mine. Bali has never swerved from the path of truth. Blessed by me he will become the Indra during the next Manvantara (another cycle of creation). Until then he will go to Sutala (a heavenly realm) where I will always be with him.”

Vamana took everything from Bali, but after Bali surrendered to Him, He blessed him to be the next Indra. In the same manner Jupiter may take away in order to allow for greater blessings to follow. If Jupiter is well disposed in the horoscope, upon loss one looks with hope for a better future and sees the loss not as a punishment, but as an opportunity. If Jupiter is afflicted, however, the individual is unable to see past the loss or appreciate the benefits of the loss.

Vamana graced Bali, a mere Asura, to become the next Indra, the next king of the Devas. In the same manner, Jupiter turns all that is gross into the most favorable, thus the influence of a strong and favorable Jupiter is always an asset in the horoscope.

Bali had never swerved from truth and when he was ready to grow, Vamana, in taking, freed Bali from his attachments so that he could grow. In the same manner Jupiter, when we are ready to grow, may free us from those things that are preventing our growth. He particularly does this when in league with Venus (Shukra) during Jupiter/Venus and Venus/Jupiter Dasas.

Parashurama “Rama with the Axe” – Avatara of Venus

Parashurama was the son of Jamadagni. Due to some misbehavior of his grandmother, Parashurama, though born in a Brahmin (priest caste) family, had the qualities of a Kshatriya (warrior).

Once upon a time in the early life of Parashurama, Kartavirya, a powerful and arrogant king, came to the ashram of Parashurama's father. So impressed was he of Jamadagni's divine cow of plenty that he stole her. When Parashurama found this out, he pursued Kartavirya and killed him and his entire army single-handedly, returning the cow to his father.

His father was disappointed in him and scolded him for his impatience and for the sin of killing a king. He requested Parashurama to go on a one-year pilgrimage to the sacred rivers in order to purify himself of the sin.

A year passed and Parashurama returned home. Shortly thereafter, his mother, while fetching water on the banks of the river, saw a demigod playing in the water and thought how handsome he was. When she returned, Jamadagni saw with his mind's eye the thought she had. The thought that a man, other than her husband, was handsome was a sin. Jamadagni called his sons and commanded they kill her. They were hesitant to kill their mother at their father's angry command. Jamadagni then called Parashurama, who was his youngest son, and commanded that he should kill his mother and brothers. Without hesitation, Parashurama did so. Jamadagni was pleased with him and told Parashurama to ask for any boon. Parashurama asked that his mother and brothers be returned to life and that they not remember what had happened.

In the meantime Kartavirya's sons were nursing their hatred against Parashurama for killing their father. During a time when Parashurama was out hunting, they came to his father's ashram and murdered his saintly father. When Parashurama heard the cries of his mother and saw his dead father he left everything in the hands

of his brothers, grabbed his huge ax and ran from the ashram. At that moment he had decided to kill all Kshatriyas.

Parashurama killed all the 10,000 sons of Kartavirya, but this did nothing to appease his anger. His pride rampant, he would not brook any insult, not resting until he had punished the offender. With his pride as an excuse he went around the world twenty-one times killing Kshatriyas. He performed sacrificial rites to purify himself of the sins of killing so many kings. It is said that his purpose was to rid the world of evil Kshatriyas. A Brahmin by birth, he punished Kshatriyas that disrespected Brahmins.

Parashurama was very loyal and devoted to his father. Venus is the Graha of loyalty and devotion. If Venus is well situated in the horoscope a person is capable of great loyalty and devotion.

Parashurama instigated many a fight due to his pride, the pride that is a characteristic of Venus, the most proud amongst the Grahas. The pride of Venus is the pride that knows that all people are created equal and should thus receive equal treatment. Upon receiving insulting treatment from the evil kings of his day, Parashurama would instigate a fight. If Venus is well disposed in the horoscope an individual has a proper sense of self worth, of inherent pride. Individuals with an afflicted Venus suffer from a lack of self-worth and thus often find themselves in insulting or degrading circumstances.

It is hard to imagine the gentle Venus being associated with the very ruthless Parashurama. Venus, however, rules the Water element which is responsible for providing growth. Death of one thing naturally leads to growth of another, for that reason Saturn, who is death, is exalted in Venus ruled Libra. The many deaths caused by Parashurama allowed for the upward mobility and growth of others, others in fact, who were more deserving than the evil Kshatriyas that Parashurama was born to kill. The highest use of death is growth – Saturn exalted in the Rasi of Venus. Likewise, in nature, the dead make the best fertilizer.

Parashurama spent much of his time performing rites that would free him from the sin of killing so many kings. Venus is the Graha that rules such cleansing and all those rituals and rites with which we may cleanse the stain of our actions.

Kurma “Tortoise” – Avatara of Saturn

Very long ago at the time of the very beginning of the world, there was, as usual, war in the heavens between the Devas and the Asuras. The Devas could not stand against the fierceness of the Asuras, and many of them were dying. Indra and the others thus went to Lord Brahma for help. Brahma advised that they pray to the Supreme Lord Vishnu. The Devas, along with Brahma, accordingly prayed to Lord Vishnu and asked him to take pity upon the plight of the Devas.

Vishnu appeared and counseled them to make peace with the Asuras in order to buy time. He then stated that they must obtain the Amrita, the nectar of immortality, in order to thwart the death-causing Asuras. In order to obtain the Amrita they must churn the ocean using Mount Mandara. The task was so huge, however, that they would need the help of the Asuras. Vishnu promised that he would assist in the process and that he would moreover guarantee that the Asuras received none of the Amrita. Vishnu also cautioned the Devas that many things would come into manifestation from the churning of the ocean and that they were not to oppose the Asuras in anything that the Asuras desired; their only aim should be to gain the Amrita.

The Devas thus made peace with the Asuras who agreed to help them for their fair share of the Amrita. First the Devas and Asuras attempted to carry the mountain, Mandara, to the ocean, but it was so heavy and they dropped it crushing many Devas and Asuras in the process. Lord Vishnu then appeared, lifted the mountain and carried it to the ocean. A serpent, Vasuki, was then tied to the mountain, so that the Devas and Asuras had something to hold onto as they churned the ocean. Vishnu and the Devas went to the head of the serpent and grasped it in their hands. The Asuras were

angry with this and complained that they would not hold onto the tail of the serpent as it was beneath their dignity. Vishnu and the Devas, therefore, allowed the Asuras to take hold of the head. The churning of the ocean then began, but the mountain was very heavy and sank into the ocean. This happened because they had failed to pay reverence to Lord Ganesha. Vishnu then dove into the water and took the form of a huge tortoise, Kurma, and lifted the mountain on his back. The Devas and Asuras were so concentrated on their difficult task that only a very few noticed why the mountain had sank and how it had come up again. The churning then began in earnest and the serpent being pulled upon belched fire and poisonous smoke, causing the Asuras to suffer greatly.

The difficult churning continued and many things of great value and beauty rose up from the ocean. The Devas took only that which the Asuras did not want until at last Amrita rose to the surface in a vessel of gold carried by a divine-looking being. The Asuras quickly took the Amrita, ran away, and began fighting amongst themselves over who should have the first taste. The Devas appealed to Lord Vishnu, reminding Him of their promise to them. Vishnu told them not to worry, for had He not already promised them that they would receive the Amrita.

A woman then appeared among the scrabbling Asuras – Mohini, a woman of such beauty that the Asuras stopped quarreling. Mohini, with her beauty and skillful glances, caused each and every Asura to believe that he was her favorite. The Asuras thus gave the Amrita to her and asked for her to decide who should taste the Amrita first, each believing that she would choose him first. She said that she would do so, but that they must promise to accept her actions, which the Asuras, fools in love, readily agreed to.

This woman was actually Lord Vishnu who knew it was not right to give the Amrita to the Asuras because they were cruel by nature. He then, in the guise of Mohini, seated the Devas and the Asuras in separate groups. Her smiles and loving glances were all for the Asuras, but all the while she was giving the Amrita to the Devas. The spell of romantic glances and gestures she cast on the

Asuras prevented them from realizing that the Amrita was all being given to the Devas. They were so enamored by her beauty that they thought how terrible it was that the Devas could only think of the Amrita and had no appreciation of true beauty. They were quite happy for the Devas to have their share first, for they were enjoying a rare beauty and the Amrita could wait.

One Asura, Svarbhanu, however, was not so foolish. Taking the appearance of a Deva, he sat between the Sun and the Moon and thus partook of the Amrita, upon which the Sun and Moon recognized him as an Asura and gestured to the Lord, who proceeded to cut off Svarbhanu's head with his Chakra (the ecliptic). The Amrita, however, had already fallen into Svarbhanu's mouth, making him immortal. (Vishnu allowed Svarbhanu to become immortal because Brahma had previously granted a boon to this Asura that he was to become a Graha, and to become a Graha, Svarbhanu must live the long life of the universe.) Upon having his head severed, Svarbhanu's head became Rahu and his body became Ketu. Rahu and Ketu forever after have had bitter enmity with the Sun and the Moon which they "swallow" during an eclipse.

After the Devas had consumed the Amrita, Mohini disappeared and Vishnu returned to his normal form. Though the Asuras had worked as hard as the Devas, they were not rewarded with any Amrita, as Vishnu had promised the Devas.

Kurma made it possible to perform the difficult churning of the ocean by raising the mountain after it had sunk into the ocean and holding it on His back during the churning. It is Saturn who provides the capacity to persevere through difficult tasks. It is also Saturn who is slow and persevering, just like a turtle. Kurma lifted the great mountain and made the great process of churning the ocean possible, yet, only the very few most wise noticed this. Similarly, Saturn is responsible for performing all the many actions that usually go unnoticed, but which make great things possible. In society, Saturn rules the laborer whose actions often go unnoticed

but without which no great society could develop. If Saturn is well disposed in the horoscope an individual cannot only work hard, but perform the tedious, seemingly unimportant and unnoticed things that are the foundation of great deeds.

The Asuras, being small-minded and empty beings, felt disrespected upon being placed at the tail of the serpent, upon which they promptly complained and demanded the “better” end of the serpent, the head. As it turned out, the head was the worst place to be and so the Asuras suffered terribly. In the same manner, Saturn often causes emptiness and lack that makes a person unwilling to accept what they are given and when they try to get or demand more, they actually end up with less.

The Asuras churned the ocean with attachment and desire. The Devas churned the ocean with the goal of the Amrita which they needed for their divine survival. It was a simple matter for Mohini to charm the Asuras, as one desire is easily forgotten in the face of another. If Saturn is weak and afflicted and if one, as a result, performs actions with attachment and desire paramount, then one will not succeed as successfully in their goals, for there are countless desires that will be happy to interfere.

Varaha/Sukara “Boar” – Avatara of Rahu

In the beginning of the creation of this Kalpa (cycle of time), Brahma, the Creator, commanded his son to begin creating. “But please tell me where my creations are to live. The earth has been submerged during the great deluge,” his son replied. “She is now in the Nether Regions. Only if you can retrieve her I will be able to do as you wish.”

Brahma thought to himself, “Lord, you have commanded me to create, so it is up to you to help me solve this problem.” Brahma then thought of the Supreme Lord and became absorbed in meditation. All of a sudden a tiny boar, Varaha, jumped out of his nostril and began to grow and grow until it had assumed immense proportions. All those who were watching realized that the

Supreme Lord had donned the form of a boar in order to raise the earth from below.

The Supreme Lord then, in the form of the boar, plunged into the waters. Swimming to the bottom, He found the Earth and raising the Earth on his tusks, the boar began to rise up. A demon attacked Him as he was on his way up, but was killed after a ferocious battle. (This demon was the brother of Hiranyakashipu who would eventually be slain by Nrisimha.) Varaha then emerged from the water with the Earth, which he placed on the dents formed by his hoofs. Brahma and the others praised him and his glory, “We salute you and your wife, Mother Earth.” Varaha, after listening to their words, vanished from their sight, but not before giving the essence of Yagyās; rites for manifesting desires, making changes, and creating karmic balance.

Varaha, the Avatara associated with Rahu, was necessary in order to create life on Earth, the physical plane, after the causal and astral planes had been created. Rahu indicates many deeper lessons and desires, and the need to create karmic balance in underdeveloped areas, which make it necessary for us to reincarnate on the physical plane. This is also symbolized by the Earth’s salutation as Varaha’s wife.

When Varaha was raising the Earth from the water, an Asura attacked him. Many “demons” of phobias, hallucinations, pretensions, confusions, compulsions and unfounded expectations similarly attack our consciousness as we attempt to develop the areas indicated by Rahu’s placement.

Miina “Fish” – Avatara of Ketu

At the end of the previous Kalpa, Brahma, the Creator, went to sleep and the world became submerged under the Waters. When Brahma was sleeping, an Asura stole the Vedas from him and disappeared under the waters. Previous to this event of the world becoming submerged under the Waters, a saintly king by name Satyavrata ruled the world. One day Satyavrata was performing his ablutions on the banks of the river Kritamala. When he took up the

water in his cupped palm he found a tiny fish in his hands. He promptly dropped the fish back in the water. The fish spoke and said, “O king, have pity on me, I am so small and afraid of the big fish which threaten to eat me up. Please take me away and protect me.” The king was touched by the fish and took it home and placed it in a suitable vessel filled with water.

The next morning the fish said, “There is not enough space, please place me in a wider pot.” Sure enough, the fish had outgrown his new home overnight. Satyavrata wondered at this and placed the fish in a much wider pot, but within an hour the fish had outgrown the new pot. Satyavrata then placed it in a pond and the same thing happened. He kept placing the fish in larger and larger ponds and lakes but the fish kept growing and complaining that it did not have enough space. Finally Satyavrata took it to the ocean and dropped it there.

The fish said, “The Ocean is full of sharks and whales which will surely eat me up. Why did you bring me here?”

Satyavrata smiled and said, “You are no ordinary fish. I know who you are. You are the Supreme Lord who has donned this form for some good purpose.”

The Lord, in the form of the fish, then said, “You are right. Seven days from today the three worlds will be submerged under the Waters. The great deluge is coming. When the world goes completely under you will see a boat. Take your place in the boat with the Seven Rishis. I will be in the waters. When you see me, tie the boat firmly to me. I will play on the Waters for the duration of Brahma's night (the period during which Brahma is sleeping and creation is submerged), and you will be safely with me.”

All happened as was said. The deluge came, the worlds were submerged and the Seven Rishis along with Satyavrata sailed away under the power of Miina. During the deluge Miina fought an Asura who had stolen the Vedas, which he returned to Brahma at the end of the great deluge, who would need them in order to create the worlds properly. The Lord, in the form of the fish, also taught Self-realization to Satyavrata.

Miina was a fish who was discontented with all smaller vessels except for the ocean of Spirit. Similarly Ketu is never contented with anything of the world and only finds contentment in Spirit. Miina taught the knowledge of Self-realization to Satyavrata and returned the wisdom of the Vedas; Ketu provides the Jnana (knowledge) of Truth and is the producer of Moksha, liberation.

FULL AVATARAS

रामकृष्णादयो ये ये ह्यवतारा रमापतेः ।

तेऽपि जीवांशसंयुक्ताः किंवा ब्रूहि मुनीश्चर ॥ १ ॥

rāmakṛṣṇādayo ye ye hyavatārā ramāpateḥ,
te'pi jivāṁśasamyuktāḥ kimvā brūhi munīścara.

“Ramaapati's Avataras, such as Rama, Krishna, etc., are they joined with a portion of Jiva? Please tell me Lord of Munis.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of Avatars, 1

We have discussed in the previous chapter how all beings are brought forth from the Grahas and that beings have a greater proportion of Jiva consciousness or Para Atma consciousness and that those with a greater portion of Para Atma consciousness are Avataras, divine incarnations. In this Sutra, Parashara is asked if the Avataras of Vishnu (the name used in the Sutra for Vishnu is Ramaapati, “the husband of Ramaa,” Ramaa being a name of Lakshmi, the goddess of prosperity) have a portion of Jiva consciousness or whether they are possessed fully of Para Atma consciousness. Parashara answers this astrologically important question in the next Sutra.

रामः कृष्णश्च भो विप्र नृसिंहः सूकरस्तथा ।

एते पूर्णावताराश्च ह्यन्ये जीवांशकान्विताः ॥ २ ॥

rāmaḥ kṛṣṇaśca bho vipra nṛsimhaḥ sūkarastathā,
ete pūrṇāvatārāśca hyanye jivāṁśakānvitāḥ.

“Rama, Krishna, O’ Wise, likewise Nrisimha and Sukara (Varaha), these are full Avataras; the others are possessed of a Jiva portion.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of Avatars, 2

The four Avataras: Rama, Krishna, Nrisimha and Varaha, the Avataras related to the Sun, Moon, Mars and Rahu are full Avataras who possess only Para Atma consciousness. These four are the highest manifestation of God and being in their presence is considered no different than being in the presence of God. There is an interesting story that exemplifies this:

One of the greatest of the ancient Rishis is Vasishtha around whom many ancient legends revolve. Vasishtha was directed to be the Guru of the Solar Dynasty, a task he did not wish and which he attempted to refuse since he did not wish to remain embodied on Earth. He was told, however, that one day, far in the future, Lord Vishnu would be born in the Solar Dynasty as a great king, as Rama Avatara. Upon hearing this Vasishtha was very happy to undertake the duty, even though it required him to serve as the Solar Dynasty family deity for generations before the fated birth of Lord Rama. The opportunity to meet a full Avatara was so great that even a great Rishi such as Vasishtha could not refuse, for being in the direct presence of God is a rare thing indeed, even for the greatest of souls such as Vasishtha.

The other Avataras: Budha, Vamana, Parashurama, Kurma and Miina have a Jiva portion, which means that these Avataras were first born as living beings and through the spiritualizing influence of Time became predominant in Para Atma consciousness and where then reborn on Earth as great beings with the task of uplifting and protecting mankind.

The fact that the full Avataras were brought forth through the Sun, Moon, Mars and Rahu is an important fact. These four Grahas, more so than the other Grahas, rule the self. The sun is the true self and the light of consciousness, the Moon is the individual

consciousness, Mars represents how the individual exerts what is in his consciousness and Rahu represents the birth of the individual consciousness. Thus, these four Grahas all have to do with the self, though in very different ways, as you will come to see as you read this text.

In the Kingdom of the Body, it is the self who is dominant and who rules, just as in the Kingdom of the World, it is God. Just as God has full sway and power, a full Avatara who is possessed of only Para Atma consciousness has full sway and power. Since the full Avatars were brought forth through the Sun, Moon, Mars and Rahu, these four Grahas are the Grahas that endow a person with presence and power. Individuals with these four Grahas prominent and strong have greater power to create, to make things happen and to rule in their lives. These people will more likely rule in their relationships, business, family, friendships and in their profession, which means to be self-employed or independently employed. If the Lagna or 10th lord is joined with one of these Grahas or if these Grahas are in the Lagna or 10th such will likely be the case. These Grahas allow the individual to be the master of their own lives in accordance with the general strength of the individual's character and of these Grahas.

Names of the Grahas

अथ खेटा रविचन्द्रो मङ्गलश्च बुधस्तथा ।

गुरुः शुक्रः शनी राहुः केतुश्चैते यथाक्रमस् ॥ १० ॥

atha kheṭā ravicandro maṅgalaśca budhastathā,
gurūḥ sukraḥ śanī rāhuḥ ketuścaite yathākramas

“Now the planets: the Sun, Moon, Mars and Mercury, so also Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, Rahu and Ketu successively.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 10

Vedic Astrology considers nine Grahas: the Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, Rahu (the north node of the Moon) and Ketu (the south node of the Moon). The last word in the Sutra above, “successively,” is of particular importance as it points out that the order of the Grahas, as mentioned in this Sutra, is the normal order of the Grahas. This is important as many Sutras give information about each Graha that is meant to be taken in the order of the Grahas. Many such Sutras will be presented later in this text.

In regards to anything that is preserved in the Sanskrit language, the name by which it is known always has much to reveal. In addition to the names mentioned in the above Sutra, each of the Grahas has several names that are well worth studying.

Names of the Sun

The Sun has more names than any of the other Grahas, which is no surprise since the Sun is the most obvious object in the sky and a daily object of reverence of the ancient Vedic culture. The most common name of the Sun is *Surya* “the Supreme Light,” though the Sun is also commonly referred to as *Ravi* “the Fire

Bird,” as the hot object soaring through the sky. Another very commonly used name of the Sun is *Arka*, “the ray,” as the prime illuminating ray of light and heat.

The Sun is also known as *Aditya* “the Son of Aditi,” Aditi being the mother of the gods whose name refers to the ideals of freedom, boundlessness, perfection and infinity. The Sun thus represents these qualities to the greatest capacity that they can be achieved.

The role of the Sun as the cause of the day is emphasized by his names *Dinakrit*, *Dinakarta* and *Divakara*, all which mean “the maker of the day.” As the producer of day, the Sun banishes the darkness of night as well as the darkness of the ignorance of the self. The Sun as *Dinesha* “the lord of the day,” repeats this idea and as *Tamohanta*, “darkness killing,” confirms the idea.

Sunlight is known to purify and thus the Sun is known as *Pusha* and *Pushan*, both of which mean “the best purifier.” The Sun does this in the horoscope by representing the purifying fire of the body as well as representing the inexorable self that brings about the eventual purification of all our actions and desires.

The Sun is *Savita*, “the vivifier,” as that which energizes and propels everything; as *Ina*, “the powerful,” as that which holds the greatest power over the Earth as the cause of the seasons, weather and even the course of the Earth, and as that which holds the greatest power in the horoscope.

The Sun, being the soul, is also *Hamsa*, “swan;” swans being a symbol for the soul. The whiteness of the swan represents the purity of the soul, while the migratory nature of the swan represents the soul’s migration from body to body, life to life.

The Sun is *Mitra*, a child of Aditi and the ruler of the Saura (solar) month of Sagittarius. Mitra means friend, and this name of the Sun symbolizes that the only true friend is the soul. As one discovers their soul nature, they thus become a friend to all – those who have reached the goal of self-discovery are the true friends of man. The Sun is also *Shura*, “hero,” giving the capacity to rise above oneself in order to fulfill great deeds.

Obvious names of the Sun are *Tikshnamsha*, “hot rayed,” *Tapana*, “the burning,” *Prabhakara*, “radiance maker,” *Bhanu*, “light” and *Bhaskara*, “the light maker.” A more colorful name of the Sun is *Aruna*, which is the reddish color in the sky at dawn for which the Sun is responsible. *Divamani*, “the day jewel,” and *Dyumani*, “the sky jewel,” reveal the esteemed value of the Sun and all that it represents. Finally, of especial interest to astrologers, the Sun is known as *Graharajna* and *Grahapati*, the king and lord of the *Grahas*, which, of course, all revolve around the Sun.

A surprising name of the Sun mentioned in the medieval Vedic Astrological texts is *Heli*, a Greek name for the Sun. Though the Sun is not referred to this name in the *Sutras* giving astrological techniques and *Yogas*, it is often mentioned by this name, along with other names, in the lists of planetary names given in several texts, most notably *Brihat Jataka*. The fact that this name of the Sun is found in the Indian astrological texts gives a hint of the interchange that took place between the learned men of the Greeks and the learned men living on the Indian subcontinent during the centuries following Alexander the Great.

Names of the Moon

The most common name of the Moon is *Chandra*, “shining.” Similar names such as *Chandrama*, *Chandrika* and *Chandraka* also refer to the Moon as the shiny orb in the sky. *Indu*, meaning “bright drop,” is also very commonly used for the Moon.

The Moon’s relationship to the stars is a very important feature in Vedic philosophy and thus the Moon is known as *Udupati* or *Udunatha*, “the lord of the stars,” as well as *Nakshatranatha*, “the lord of the *Nakshatras*,” to whom the Moon is husband.

In contrast to the Sun, the Moon’s light is cool and thus the Moon is known as *Shitagu*, *Shitamshu*, *Shitarashmi* and *Himanshu* all meaning, “cool rayed,” and as *Shitadyuti*, “cool brightness.”

The Moon is the obvious sight at night and thus the Moon is known as *Rajanipati* and *Ratrisa*, “the lord of night” as well as *Ratrimani*, “jewel of the night,” and *Nishakara*, “night maker.”

The Moon is known as *Vidhu*, meaning “lonely” or “solitary” which is ironic in view of the fact that the Moon shares the heavens with his twenty-seven wives, the Nakshatras. Though having many wives the Moon still roams the skies looking to quench his love-sickness and though even having had an affair with Jupiter’s wife, his loneliness remains unquenched. It is because of this that an afflicted Moon leads to love affairs.

The Moon is known as *Kumudinipati*, “the lord of white lotuses,” whose flowers open only at night. This appellation indicates that the Moon holds sway over all things active during the night.

The Moon makes more erratic changes in latitude than does any other Graha and is thus known as *Shashi*, “containing a hare,” and as *Shashanka*, “hare marked,” as a hare similarly bounces along. The Moon is also known as *Mriganka*, “deer marked,” due to its markings which are thought to resemble the spots on a deer and also due to its gentle nature, which is symbolized by a deer.

The Moon is *Samudraka*, “oceanic,” due to its influence on the tides. The Moon is also simply known as *Glan*, “the round lump,” and this may refer to the Moon being a lump that has separated from Earth.

One last very common and very important name of the Moon is *Soma*, “juice,” which refers particularly to the juice of the sap in the plants and thus makes the Moon the lord of plants and vegetation. The juice is also the blood in the animals, the nectar of immortality of which the Moon is the receptacle, and all life-giving and nourishing fluids.

Names of Mars

The most common name of Mars is *Kuja*, “born of the Earth.” *Bhumija*, *Kshitija*, *Mahija* and *Mahisunu* mean the same and *Bauma*, “coming from the Earth,” represents the same idea. These names give the clue that Mars represents all those things that come from the earth – most notably minerals and gems. A more colorful name of Mars relating him to the Earth is *Bhusutavadidhiti*, “light brought

forth from Earth.” These names also confer the idea of just how life on Earth is, it is martial – a constant battle.

Mars is also very commonly known as *Mangala*, “lucky, auspicious” as Mars represents the auspicious things of the Earth that a person can be lucky to find. It is a known fact that most of the large gold, valuable mineral and diamond deposits were stumbled upon by some lucky individual. More than this, Mars gives the luck to survive on Earth. When we look at the food chain, we see that it is just a matter of luck that some mice and insects live while most become food. While man is not part of the food chain, he has always been part of the destruction of nature’s fires, storms and quakes that leave one man’s house destroyed while his neighbor’s is left standing. One is indeed lucky to have an auspicious Mars with which to overcome the many difficulties encountered in the world. Mars enjoys the challenges of Earth and is thus known as *Kshitinandana*, “Earth Rejoicing.”

Though having many auspicious faces, Mars is also considered as the cruelest of the *Grahas* as he can give great challenges and is thus known as *Kruranetra*, “cruel eyed,” and *Kruradrik*, “cruel sighted.”

On account of the movement of Mars, which appears quite different from the perspective of Earth than that of the other *Grahas*, Mars has some interesting astronomically based names. Mars is known as *Ara*, “swift,” since he at times can move more swiftly than any other starry *Graha*. This is a very important point – though the average motion of Mars is relatively slow as compared to Venus and Mercury, occasionally he travels very quickly. For this reason, Mars provides the ability for quick, sudden bursts of heat, power, speed, excitement, and intensity. He is also *Vakra*, “crooked,” due to having more erratic motions than the other *Grahas*. Similarly he is known as *Chara*, “moving, changing.”

Visibly Mars is red and is thus known as *Rakta*, *Rbudhira* and *Lobitaka*, all meaning red, as well as *Lobitanga* and *Raktanga*, “red-limbed.” Most probably on account of his red color, Mars is known

as *Gaganolmuka* and *Kholmuka*, the firebrand in the sky and space respectively. He is similarly known as *Angaraka*, “charcoal.”

Mars is related to Shiva as *Shivagharmaja*, “born from the heat of Siva.” This indicates the role of Mars as a Graha of penance and austerity, since Shiva is the lord of the Yogis.

Names of Mercury

The most commonly used name for Mercury is *Budha*, “awakening,” which refers to the intelligence that awakens from consciousness. *Bodbana* is also used to signify Mercury and has much the same meaning. This term signifies Mercury’s lordship over the intellect. Intellect is the faculty of the mind by which one can arrive at understanding and is of two kinds, perceptive and spiritualized. Perceptive intellect derives understanding from that which it can perceive, which is not always what is true. The understanding derived from perceptive intellect is also twisted by our personal perceptions, feelings and attitude. This is why humans, who are intellectually centered, tend to disagree over so many things. The bottom line is that perceptive intellect only allows us to arrive at limited understanding and not at the truth. Spiritualized intellect, known as *Buddhi*, is attracted towards that which is real and thereby helps us determine what is real. Mercury as *Buddha* represents the awakening of both these types of intellects, first by making us cognitive beings and then by attracting our cognizance towards that which is real. Along a similar vein, Mercury is known as *Vid*, “knowing,” and *Jna*, “wise.”

An important related point is that Mercury is the offspring of the Moon, which is shown by its names: *Induputra*, *Somaja* and *Vidbusuta*, all meaning the child of the Moon. Similarly, Mercury is *Saumya*, “belonging to the Moon.” The Moon represents consciousness, and Mercury being the child of the Moon is that which comes from consciousness: cognizance and intelligence. Since Mercury is the child of the Moon, Mercury well placed can offset the poor effects of an ill-placed Moon. An ill-placed Moon, however, indicates Mercury’s source is weak and thus Mercury itself

cannot be as productive. These two *Grahas* influence each other and the full judgment of one cannot be made without considering the other.

Mercury is friendly and is thus known as *Priyakrit*, “doing kindness,” and as *Sushila*, “good-tempered.” Mercury is not as bright as most of the other *Grahas* and is thus known, though very rarely, as *Shyamanga*, “dark-limbed.” Physically, Mercury does tend to give dark hair.

Names of Jupiter

The most commonly used name of Jupiter is *Guru*. *Guru* simply means heavy, and Jupiter is the heaviest of the planetary bodies orbiting the Sun. *Guru* has a secondary meaning in referring to those that are heavier in knowledge – the true weight of a man. *Guru*, therefore, also refers to Jupiter’s role as the spiritual teacher for which he has many names: *Suraguru*, *Suracharya*, *Devamantri* and *Devejya*, all of which mean, “the teacher of the divinities.” Jupiter’s role as the teacher of divinities refers to his role in providing spiritual, psychological and behavioral counsel. Jupiter’s counsel is directed towards our spiritual selves and helps us uplift ourselves above our daily problems and direct us towards God realization, thus he is the teacher of the divinities. Due to being the teacher of the deities, he is *Sureshta*, “desired by gods.”

Jupiter is known as *Vacaspati* and *Vagisha* both meaning “lord of speech,” as well as *Vacasampati*, “lord of eloquence.” This would appear to infer that Jupiter grants speech, but that, as will be discussed later, is Mercury’s role. Jupiter, however, rules the sounds brought forth from the vocal cords, which are made meaningful as speech through Mercury. Jupiter is also the lord of speech in the sense that he is in command of what he says and only says what is worthwhile. He, in fact, says very little, but what he does say is well worth listening to. He does not waste the power of speech. His name of *Mantra*, the hymns of power, confirms Jupiter’s ruling over speech that has power and importance. *Mantra* also refers to the instrument of thought, and it is Jupiter that rules the organ of the

brain. In the philosophical texts, Jupiter's most common name is *Brihaspati*, "lord of prayer" – again we see him not wasting his speech and indeed saying that which is most important.

Several of Jupiter's names refer to his venerability as he is called *Arya*, "honorable," *Ijya*, "to be revered," and *Suri*, "sage." Jupiter is also known as *Angirasuna*, the son of Rishi Angira, who is one of the seven great Rishis. Only Jupiter and Venus, the two counselors amongst the Grahas, have the distinction of being born from Rishis. This is an important fact, for to give proper counsel, the counselor has to be able to relate to and understand those they counsel. Jupiter and Venus, being born from Rishis who, though divine, are human incarnations, can understand the suffering and state of man in a way that the other Grahas, who are not born from humans, cannot. Angira was one of the authors of the Rig Veda and Jupiter shares the spiritual knowledge of his father. Jupiter, in fact, rules the Rig Veda. Jupiter is also *Apremeya*, "immeasurable" due to ruling the ether and knowledge both of which are immeasurable.

Jupiter has a particular ability to make things work out for the best and thus Jupiter is *Samsiddhikarma*, "connected with successful works." For anything to be truly great, Jupiter must be influencing it. Even in a dismal horoscope, a well placed Jupiter can save the day. For this, as well as his wisdom, Jupiter is *Purubuta*, "invoked by many."

One last very important name of Jupiter and also one very commonly used is *Jiva*, which means living or causing to live. Jupiter has an important role in producing life. He rules the liver, through which the newborn is fed and kept alive through the attachment to the umbilical cord. More importantly, Jupiter rules conception and offspring, the continuance of life. Jupiter's name of Jiva has much deeper connotations when taken in regards to his name of Mantra. Mantra is much more than the hymns of power. According to Shiva, Mantra is that which maintains the life of all living creatures: "*The in-breath and the out-breath, which together hold the life of all the living things of Brahma, even that of a worm, are called Mantra.*" Through the proper awareness and use of Mantra, of the in-breath and the out-

breath, a person becomes spiritually realized and thus Jupiter rules those spiritual practices that concentrate on the breath and upon the life force.

Names of Venus

The most commonly used name of Venus is *Shukra*, “bright” referring to Venus as the brightest of the starry Grahas. *Sita* means the same and *Accha*, “not shaded, clear,” conveys much the same meaning but hints at Venus’s lordship of clear things such as the lens of the eye and eyeglasses.

Venus is known as *Kama*, “desire, love” and *Ushana*, “with desire.” These names are not to reduce Venus’s stature, but only to reveal that Venus is clear on its desires and what its desires will cost. Knowing these two things is necessary in order to safely negotiate the world of desires. For this reason, Venus is *Kritajna*, “knowledgeable in conduct,” and the Graha of manners and decorum.

Venus is *Bijanidhi*, “store of seeds,” and thus rules all grains and seeds as well as semen. Seeds store the genetic material and so Venus rules DNA.

Venus is *Bhrigusuta* and *Barghava*, the offspring of Rishi Brigu. Brigu is not one of the Saptarishis, but a very prominent Rishi nonetheless. He and his child Venus are amongst the best of astrologers and in myth are portrayed as better astrologers than is Brihaspati (Jupiter). As the child of a great Rishi, Venus is *Karya* and *Kavi*, both meaning wise, insightful, poet, and a sage, names indicative of Venus’s ability to see meaning where there is none.

Venus is *Daityapujya*, “honored by demons” and *Daityaguru*, “Guru of demons.” This is in contrast to Jupiter who plays the same role for the divinities. The demons of Vedic mythology are not the same as the crude fire dwelling demons of Christian imagination; they are more akin to the giants of Greek and Norse myth. As the Guru of the demons, Venus’s counsel is that of the non-secular realm. Venus counsels by providing practical advice that improves a person’s lot in life and by giving predictions.

Predictions can be made with a system such as astrology, but many predictions can be made with simple understanding and common sense: “if you do this, this is what will happen.” Venus is master at making predictions both ways. Providing practical counsel and making predictions comforts a person’s fears, worries, doubts and insecurities, thus Venus is the teacher of the demons of fear, worry, doubt, etc. An astrologer who provides spiritual counsel and counsel that helps one understand oneself is using Jupiter, while the astrologer who provides practical counsel and predictions is using Venus. Like Jupiter, Venus is the offspring of a Rishi and can thus relate to the human condition and provide meaningful counsel.

Venus is *Dinavejya*, “offering to the miserable” in its role as nurse, comforter and counselor and as *Shodashamshu* “sixteen rayed,” sixteen being a number that symbolizes the comfort and ease that Venus can provide.

Names of Saturn

On account of Saturn taking the longest time to transverse the heavens, the most common names of Saturn are *Shani* and *Manda*, both meaning “slow” and so Saturn rules all that is slow. Similarly, he is *Shanaishcara*, “slow moving.” Why is he slow? Because he is *Pangu*, “lame,” and rules all those things that are somehow crippled or only partially operating.

Saturn is the furthest of the visible Grahas and thus not very visible and he also has a darker color than the other Grahas. Saturn is thus known as *Krishna*, *Kala*, both meaning “dark,” and as *Asita*, “not bright.”

Saturn is quite commonly known as the child of his parents, the Sun and Shadow. As *Suryaputra*, *Arki*, *Taranitanaya* and *Sauri* he is the offspring of the Sun. As *Chayasunu*, *Chayasuta* and *Chayatanaya* he is the child of Shadow. The more important aspects of Saturn can be understood by his parentage. Sun and Shadow, two opposites, two irreconcilables and two inseparables and Saturn is their child, in fact, their illegitimate child. No wonder that Saturn is miserable and represents our psychological complexes. Spirit, the

Sun, manifesting the created world results in separation between the spiritual consciousness and the individual consciousness. The misery indicated by Saturn is the result of this separation.

The Sun and Saturn, as father and child, influence each other and the full judgment of one cannot be made without considering the other. If the Sun is ill placed in the horoscope, but his child Saturn is well placed, the low self-esteem indicated by the poor Sun will not be as seriously injured, nor will Saturn be as strong in resisting its fears since his father is weak. Yet more significant, if Saturn is poorly disposed, which indicates greater fears and vulnerabilities, but the Sun is well disposed, the person will have a stronger foundation with which to resist the fears of Saturn.

Saturn often goes under the name of one of his presiding deities, *Yama*, the deity of death who leads disembodied souls into one of the darker or brighter regions of the astral world in accordance with each individual's merit. Saturn, therefore, is a measure of a person's merit; it particularly is a record of a person's ill merit. Yama literally means, "Restraint" and thus Saturn is the Graha of self-restraint and represents the very important and difficult to maintain "won't power." Through the will power of the creative Sun and the won't power of Saturn, which prevents us from doing things that would set us back, all great successes become possible.

Surprisingly, Saturn is *Prasiddha*, very accomplished. Saturn in the right place makes a person the most accomplished, whereas a poor Saturn makes accomplishment impossible. Anything done has its tedious aspect that most do not enjoy. Without a favorable Saturn nothing great can be accomplished, since the tedious work necessary to complete the activity perfectly will not be done. Also, any great accomplishment requires the solitude necessary to perfect the skill, idea, mind, body, etc. Without a favorable Saturn, one will not enjoy or take advantage of the necessary solitude.

Finally, Saturn is known as *Pratitakarma*, "acknowledged action," and thus indicates that which we are convinced that we must do and that which we are resolved to do. Saturn not only

makes clear that which we must do but, when strong, makes us resolute in doing so.

Names of the Moon's North Node

The most commonly used name for the north node of the Moon is *Rahu*, “the seizer,” in his role in seizing the Sun and Moon during the time of eclipse. Rahu is considered to especially enjoy eclipsing the Moon and is thus *Vidhumtuda*, “moon troubler;” Rahu eclipsing the Moon will cause more trouble than will Ketu eclipsing the Moon, all other factors equal.

Rahu has no actual form that reflects light and is thus known as *Agus*, “without rays” and as *Tama*, “darkness, gloom,” which also refers to his nature of indicating that of which we are ignorant.

Rahu is considered serpentine and is thus named *Sarpa*, *Phani*, *Bhujanga*, *Bhujaga* and *Abi*. His name of *Phanindra*, the serpent king reveals his importance and that he is no ordinary snake. Phanindra is the great thousand-headed serpent, Shesha, who couches and canopies the sleeping Vishnu during the dissolution between cycles of creation, of whom more will be told later.

Rahu also goes by the name *Svarbhanu*; the Asura that was cut in half after the churning of the ocean whose story was told previously as part of the story of Kurma Avatara. Svarbhanu means “space of light” which could likely refer to the space through which the Moon travels and it is this space that is severed by Vishnu’s famed weapon, the Sudarshana Chakra (the ecliptic), and thus Svarbhanu is severed in half, creating Rahu and Ketu. Rahu started his existence as an Asura and having become immortal and more powerful and important than any other Asura is known as the *Asura*.

Rahu also has some less desirable names, two of which are *Ghata*, “destruction” and *Pata*, “falling.” Rahu is very capable of bringing about both of these if he is poorly placed in the horoscope or severely afflicting other Grahas. He can destroy that which is desired and have us fall from position, fall from grace or fall into

Chandra



*“White, dressed in white, divine, ten horses, white adornments,
mace in hand and two armed is fixed the Moon, O’ Twice Born.”*

Saumya and Krura Grahās

तत्रार्कशनिभूपुत्राः क्षीणेन्दुराहूकेतवः ।

क्रूराः शेषग्रहा सौम्याः क्रूरः क्रूरयुतो बुधः ॥ ११ ॥

tatrārkaśanibhūputrāḥ kṣīṇendurāhūketavaḥ,
krūrāḥ śeṣagrahā saumyāḥ krūraḥ krūrayuto budhaḥ.

"The Sun, Saturn, Mars, the waning Moon, Rabu and Ketu are Krura (cruel). The remaining Grahās are Saumya (gentle). Mercury is Krura if joined with a Krura."

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahās, 11

There are several ways in which Grahās are divided into supportive and disruptive influences. One such way is based upon their natural tendencies. On account of their natural tendencies there are two distinct types of Grahās: Saumya "gentle" Grahās and Krura "cruel" Grahās. Saumya Grahās are those Grahās whose innate nature causes them to be helpful, supportive and comforting towards those other Grahās that they influence. Krura Grahās are those Grahās whose innate nature causes them to be harmful, disruptive and pain causing towards those other Grahās that they influence.

Each Graha has an ill as well as a desirable aspect. The essential difference between cruel and gentle Grahās is that a cruel Graha gives whatever ill it has to the Grahās that it influences while holding back anything desirable that it may have. A gentle Graha, on the other hand, gives whatever desirable thing it may have to the Grahās that it influences while holding back any ill that it may be suffering. In this way Grahās operate exactly as do people: A cruel person gives whatever trouble he can to the people he is around and holds onto any desirable thing he may have for himself. A

gentle person, on the other hand, gives whatever desirable thing he can to the people he is around and holds back any ill that he may be suffering.

Krura Grahas provide the many lessons and hardships in life while Saumya Grahas provide the capacity to learn the lessons and the aid to survive them healthily. Krura Grahas provide the stress that is strengthening while Saumya Grahas provide the comfort which is nurturing. Together they help a person to develop healthily. Alone, Krura Grahas would only break a person's mind and body, while Saumya Grahas alone would only cause excess and stagnation of the mind and body.

Regardless of whether a Graha is Saumya or Krura, each Graha has something desirable and good to give. Saturn, for instance, represents longevity and the ability of the body to resist bacteria before succumbing to disease. Mars represents buildings, without which none of us would have a home. Each Graha is very important for our survival, well-being and happiness.

Grahas manifest effects on many different levels. It is only in the context of being supportive and disruptive towards each other's natural indications that Grahas behave as Saumya and Krura. On other levels any Graha may be supportive or disruptive, so do not be too quick to judge any one Graha's effects. Any Graha, for instance, can be productive or destructive towards the Bhava in which it is placed, and this has nothing to do with its Krura or Saumya nature. As a result of this, Krura Grahas will quite often produce very good things and Saumya Grahas will just as often disrupt desirable things.

It will be noticed that there are more Krura Grahas than there are Saumya Grahas. There are many Krura Grahas: Sun, Mars, Saturn, Rahu, Ketu, the Moon during the half time that it is waning and Mercury when joined with a Krura Graha, while there are only a few Saumya Grahas: Jupiter, Venus, the Moon during the half time that it is waxing and Mercury when Mercury is alone or joined

with a Saumya Graha. This fact reveals that life is very hard. There are more Krura Grahās, which give difficulties, lessons and hardships than there are Saumya Grahās, which give ease, comfort and luxury. This reveals what we already know, Earth is no paradise, it is a school for personal development and we are constantly having our character strengthened and tested by the Krura Grahās.

Every significant event in life, whether it is a favorable or unfavorable event, comes in order to awaken the individual to spiritual realization. The Saumya Grahās represent the validation of our self and the support that we can lean on, while the Krura Grahās are the hard knocks that we need in order to wake up and the painful realizations about ourselves with which we must come to term.

Saumya and Krura Grahās are similar in the fact that on account of their experiences, they attempt to find happiness, security, well-being, etc. by developing the Bhava in which they are placed. The experiences of Saumya Grahās, however, are quite different than the experiences of Krura Grahās. Saumya Grahās support the natural indications of the Grahās which they influence. As a result of the individual experiencing the resultant peace and happiness the individual has the time, luxury and resources to develop the Bhava in which the Saumya Graha is placed and in developing that Bhava, they find fulfillment. Krura Grahās harm the natural indications of the other Grahās that they influence. The harm, loss, pain, etc. that the native experiences motivate the individual to grow and change and to become strong, which they do as they develop the Bhava in which the Krura Graha is found.

Sun

The Sun represents the growth of the self, which is the result of sacrifice and thus the Sun is a Krura Graha. The natural effects of those Grahās which the Sun influences are those things from which a person becomes separated. In becoming separated from these things, the individual realizes the importance of being an honorable,

dutiful and inspired person. In separating us from these things, the Sun demands that we become better people, stronger, more able and more self-reliant – a person better able to provide for others. On account of the losses that the Sun causes towards those Grahas that it is influencing, a person becomes inspired to become the best of what they can be in the context of the Bhava in which the Sun is placed. For example, if the Sun is placed in the 10th Bhava, a person becomes inspired to be the best leader that they can be, in the 3rd Bhava the Sun inspires a person to be the strongest and most talented that they can be, in the 2nd Bhava the Sun inspires a person to become the most responsible that they can be. In whichever Bhava the Sun is placed, a person works towards being the best they know how to be as a result of suffering the losses of those Grahas that the Sun influences.

On account of experiencing separation in respect to those things indicated by the Grahas that the Sun influences, the individual will come to realize that they can never truly be part of something or bonded to something of this world. All they can truly possess and be with is their own honor and esteem and so they attempt to develop the Bhava in which the Sun is placed as a means to live honorably and not so that they can share and find happiness in the things of the Bhava, which can never bring the experiences of the soul that one is truly desiring.

Moon

When the Moon waxes, the Moon builds and grows, when the Moon wanes, he releases and lets go, thus the waxing Moon is Saumya and the waning Moon Krura.

The Saumya waxing Moon causes those things indicated by the Grahas which it influences to grow healthily and to flourish. These things then become a source of abundance and fulfillment for the individual. As a result of experiencing the abundance and fulfillment, the Moon attempts to develop the Bhava in which it is placed, this Bhava being a very important potential source of peace and happiness for the person. On account of experiencing the

happiness and fulfillment with those things indicated by the Grahās which the waxing Moon influences, the person develops the healthy mental attitude with which to attempt to develop those needs that they have in respect to the Bhava in which the waxing Moon is placed.

The Krura waning Moon causes those things indicated by the Grahās which it influences to wither and wane, resulting in these things being unable to provide fulfillment or happiness. As a result of experiencing the wane of these things and the lack of fulfillment, the individual is forced to come to terms with the need for inner, rather than outer, nourishment. The individual will then be able to attempt the development of the Bhava in which the waning Moon is placed, not for the sake of the fulfillment which the Bhava may provide, but for the sake of the internal growth that occurs as one develops the Bhava.

Mars

Mars represents the struggles and efforts we make to find security in a world full of threats and dangers. All these things are difficult and painful, and so Mars is a Krura Graha. The natural effects of the Grahās that Mars influences become things of great difficulty, struggle and pain, which cause the native to realize the importance of their security needs; just as a child who scrapes his knee realizes the need of their mother as they rush, crying, to her. Due to the pain and difficulty experienced in those things ruled by the Grahās that Mars influences, the native does whatever it takes to carve out the security they seek, this security being founded in the Bhava in which Mars is placed. For example, if Mars is placed in the 2nd Bhava security will be founded upon wealth and family, in the 9th Bhava upon philosophy and knowledge, in the 6th Bhava in the practical ability to fight the ills of the world, in the 3rd Bhava upon one's will and strength, in the 10th Bhava upon power and authority, in the 5th Bhava upon one's intelligence.

On account of experiencing pain and frustration in respect to those things indicated by the Grahās that Mars is influencing, the

individual will be very protective and defensive at the slightest hint of danger to the Bhava in which Mars is placed and they will fight furiously to protect and establish the indications of that Bhava. As the individual emotionally matures and becomes stronger, they realize that to be secure is a state of character and a state of consciousness, at which point they will strive to develop a healthy consciousness and character. They will then find it much less important to fight and struggle for a security that is, at best, only fleeting.

Mercury

Mercury represents the application of our intelligence and skills, the communication that is a necessary part of virtually anything, and the concrete manifestation of all things. The natural effects of those Grahas influenced by Mercury are realized through the application of one's skills, intelligence and communication, or simply because these things are meant to manifest as part of a person's material life. The individual not only realizes the concrete manifestation of all those things ruled by the Grahas that Mercury influences, but also attempts to be skillful and productive in respect to the Bhava in which Mercury is placed.

If Mercury is joined with a Krura Graha he becomes the "apprentice" of that Graha and will thus have similar lessons to teach and shortcomings to reveal as that of the Krura Graha that he joins. Mercury will still maintain many of his positive qualities, especially that of being able to pull things together and make them happen, but these things will be directed only towards the Bhava in which Mercury is placed and the Krura Graha with which he joins and not towards the Grahas that Mercury influences. Those Grahas that Mercury influences will suffer the same fate as the Krura Graha joining Mercury would cause. Mercury will likewise attempt to develop the Bhava in which it is placed along the same lines of that as the Krura Graha that it joins. When Mercury becomes Krura due to joining a Krura, simply treat Mercury as if he were the Krura Graha that he joins.

If Mercury is joined with both a Krura Graha and a Saumya Graha, then he will behave as his normal Saumya self if he is closer to the Saumya Graha, but if he is closer to the Krura Graha, he will behave as a Krura.

Jupiter

Jupiter represents wisdom, abundance and “luck” or “grace.” The natural effects of those Grahas that Jupiter influence abound and may have their liabilities overcome through luck and grace. Wisdom will guide the native in the enjoyment of these things while forgiveness and understanding will help maintain the favorable constancy of these things. The application of wisdom and abundance will also be directed towards the Bhava in which Jupiter is placed, which will be a Bhava that the individual will likely enjoy in abundance and a Bhava in which the individual will have innate knowledge.

Venus

Venus is full of love and devotion towards that which is fulfilling and helps us to make decisions that result in our highest fulfillment. The natural effects of those Grahas that Venus influences flourish under the light of love and we are able to evaluate these things accurately, even to find meaning in them when there seems to be none, and thus Venus helps us make the most effective decisions regarding these things. The Bhava in which Venus is placed is a Bhava that we attempt to develop through love and devotion, and a Bhava which we will understand in a multi-dimensional manner.

Saturn

Saturn represents the attrition and perseverance we develop as we weather the many difficulties and losses of life, thus Saturn is a Krura Graha. The natural effects of the Grahas that Saturn influences are those things that the individual loses, if not entirely,

at least partially. Suffering loss in respect to these things causes the individual to attempt to hold onto and make the most of those things indicated by the Bhava in which Saturn is placed. The person will not necessarily be successful in holding onto these things – that depends upon the capacity of Saturn. They will, however, make their best effort and suffer as much difficulty as they are able before relinquishing.

On account of experiencing loss in those things indicated by the Grahas that Saturn influences, the individual will experience fears revolving around the possible loss of those things indicated by the Bhava in which Saturn is placed, however, these are mere fears. If they are able to persevere through these fears they will find that Bhava to become a fulfilling Bhava in their life. The more they develop the Bhava, however, the greater the fears may become and thus they must be careful to have a conscious attitude towards their fears and worries and not a compensative attitude which will only cause the eventual loss of the Bhava or the inability to enjoy the Bhava.

Rahu

Rahu represents the birth of the individual consciousness. The birth of the individual consciousness separates from all that is true and thus Rahu is a Krura Graha. This quality of separation extends to the material world and thus the individual is separated from the indications of the Grahas that Rahu is influencing. On account of experiencing this separation, the individual attempts to develop the Bhava in which Rahu is placed. The sting of Rahu's separating nature leaves a residual consciousness of separation, which makes it impossible for the individual to fully enjoy the fruits of the Bhava in which Rahu is placed. Not being able to fully enjoy the fruits of one's efforts, the individual must necessarily turn towards that which may grant complete fulfillment, which brings us to Ketu.

Ketu

Where Rahu is the birth of the individual consciousness, Ketu is the termination of the individual consciousness. The individual consciousness becomes terminated upon being absorbed in the holy vibration, AUM, and thus Ketu is the producer of spiritual liberation. This terminating nature of Ketu, though the best of all things, is harmful towards those things that exist in this world and thus Ketu is a Krura Graha. On account of Ketu's terminating nature, the natural indications of those Grahas influenced by Ketu are destroyed. As a result of experiencing this destruction, the individual realizes his personal limitations and attempts to develop the Bhava in which Ketu is placed, not for its mundane concerns, but as an avenue towards developing a wider and more all-encompassing vision. The limited consciousness is thus expanded.

EXTENT OF SAUMYA AND KRURA NATURE

गुरुशुक्रौ शुभौ प्रोक्तौ चन्द्रो मध्यम उच्यते ।

उदासीनो बुधः ख्यातः पापा रव्यार्किभूमिजाः ॥ ८ ॥

guruśukrau śubhai proktau candro madhyama ucyate,
udāsīno budhaḥ khyātaḥ pāpā ravyārkibhūmijāḥ.

पूर्णेन्दुज्ञेज्यशुक्राश्च प्रबला उत्तरोत्तरम् ।

क्षीणेन्द्रकार्किभूपुत्राः प्रबलाश्च यथोत्तरम् ॥ ९ ॥

pūrṇenduñjējyaśukrāśca prabalā uttarottaram,
kṣīṇēndvarkārkibhūputrāḥ prabalāśca yathottaram.

“Jupiter and Venus are spoken of as auspicious, the Moon is said to be somewhat so, Mercury is neutral, called evil are the Sun, Saturn and Mars. The waxing Moon, Mercury, Jupiter and Venus are more and more strong, and the waning Moon, the Sun, Saturn and Mars's strength succeed one another.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra, Yogakarakas, 8-9

In these Sutras, *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* states which Grahas are felt as more gentle and which as more cruel. While any Krura Graha can equally harm the Grahas that it influences, the different Krura Grahas will cause a different degree of pain when they do harm the Grahas that they influence. Similarly, while any Saumya Graha will support the Grahas that it influences, the different Saumya Grahas will cause a different degree of happiness and comfort when they do provide their support.

Amongst the Saumya Grahas, the waxing Moon is felt the least gently, Mercury more gently, Jupiter yet more gently and Venus is experienced the most gently. Venus is thus the greatest of the Saumya Grahas. Venus is experienced the most gently because he provides the greatest comfort and luxury and fulfills one's heartfelt needs to the greatest extent. Jupiter is just one step behind and while he offers the greatest protection against adversity, he does not grant the same level of comfort that does Venus and so is not considered quite as gentle. Mercury certainly helps one to get ahead, but requires an equal effort on the part of the individual and so is not as enjoyable to experience as are Jupiter or Venus. The waxing Moon certainly provides for the healthy growth of those Grahas it is influencing, but only because our attention is focused upon them. We must then use the abilities of the other Grahas to bring about the success of those things upon which our attention is focused, and so the Moon is the least gentle of the Grahas.

Amongst the Krura Grahas, the waning Moon is the least cruel, Mercury with a Krura is a bit crueler, the Sun is yet crueler, Saturn is much crueler than the Sun and Mars is the cruelest. The waning Moon certainly causes us to let go of those Grahas that it is influencing, but there will be the need to let go and so the loss will not be as painful. The waning Moon is thus the least cruel of the Krura Grahas. Mercury joined with a Krura Graha is only slightly crueler and while causing difficulties with those Grahas it is influencing, it does so on account of being involved with those things that are felt as more urgent. The Sun will cause separation with those Grahas it influences, but this will be because of

something else that must be done and will not necessarily be a permanent separation and so is not felt as painfully as the separation caused by Saturn. Saturn is much crueler as he causes separations that are more or less permanent and which are experienced as a huge loss. Most of Saturn's separations, however, are those that one expects in life. All things come to an end in time. Those we know and love will die or, at the very least, we will part from them. These are the types of separations that Saturn causes and, their being normal to life, they are not the cruellest because they are more or less expected – they are the painful eventualities of life. Mars, on the other hand, is the cruellest, for he gives the crisis and pains that are not part of the natural process of life and death – the unexpected and sharp pains of life. The smashing accident, the fire that burns, the attack of a mugger – the dire things that happen but which are not the norm.

CONCLUSION

Krura means “cruel” and refers to what is generally termed a malefic. In this text we will use Krura/cruel, as it describes the effects of these Grahās more accurately than does malefic. Saumya means “gentle” and refers to what is often termed a benefic. Saumya/gentle is a much more accurate term of a Graha's nature than is benefic, so we will use that term in this text.

The Saumya and Krura quality of the Grahās represent their innate natures. Saumya Grahās are gentle, kind, accepting, comforting and support the natural indications of the other Grahās that they influence. Krura Grahās are cruel, hard, demanding, stressful and harm the natural indications of the other Grahās that they influence, all while forcing us to work on ourselves if we want to be happy.

Saumya Grahās will always be supportive in some instances and Krura Grahās always disruptive. On other levels, however, they can both be givers or takers; it depends upon their exact situation in the horoscope. Each Graha, whether Saumya or Krura, has the end

goal of developing the Bhava in which it is placed. Grahas are not, however, always successful in this endeavor and may, in fact, destroy the Bhava instead. This is a matter of predictive astrology and beyond the scope of this text which has as its goal the dissemination of the knowledge of the Grahas.

Self Aspect

सर्वात्मा च दिवानाथो मनः कुमुदबान्धवः ।

सत्त्वं कुजो बुधैः प्रोक्तो बुधो वाणिप्रदायकः ॥ १२ ॥

sarvātmā ca divānātho manaḥ kumudabāndhavaḥ,
sattvaṁ kujo budhaiḥ prokto budho vāṇipradāyakaḥ.

देवेज्यो ज्ञानसुखदो भृगुर्वीर्यप्रदायकः ।

ऋषिभिः प्रोक्तनैः प्रोक्तश्चायासूनुश्च दुःखदः ॥ १३ ॥

devejyo jñānasukhado bhr̥gurvīryapradāyakaḥ,
ṛṣibhiḥ proktanaiḥ proktaśchāyāsūnuśca duḥkhadaḥ.

“The Sun is Sarva Atman, the Moon Manas, Mars Sathvam, the consciousness spoken is Mercury giving speech, Jupiter is joy giving knowing, Venus the giver of Virya, and Saturn grants sorrow, as told by the ancient Rishis.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 12-13

Each of the Grahas represents some essential part of the self. Combined, the Grahas represent the complete living, breathing and functioning person.

Sun – Sarva Atman

Sarva Atman means, “Whole Self.” This has several connotations. Spiritually, Sarva Atman is the soul and thus the Sun represents the soul. Soul, of course, being beyond creation, cannot be truly represented by anything in creation, including any Graha. What the Sun actually represents is the individual’s intuitive knowing of his or her soul nature. The intuitive knowing of one’s soul nature provides confidence, self-esteem, nobility and the

capacity to sacrifice the things of the world for higher purposes. The Sun thus represents all of these “soul” qualities.

Physically, the “whole self” represents the body. The Sun thus represents the body in its entirety. A robust and non-afflicted Sun largely insures the integrity and health of the physical body.

Being the “whole self” the Sun represents us as a complete person. A person with soul and body, a mind, character, communicating what is in his or her consciousness, possessing the capacity for knowledge and joy, with vital energy and bearing one’s sorrows. In short, a person made up of all seven Grahas.

Moon – Manas

Manas is the mind, but not the Western idea of the mind of intellectual processes, but rather the mind that experiences. Through Manas, all the five senses are experienced and in experiencing the five senses, one is receptive to the qualities of creation and thus lives and breathes in the world. Manas consists of Jiva, the living consciousness, and Ahamkara, the “I,” the idea of separate existence.

The Jiva is the living being of consciousness that experiences the entirety of creation through the five senses. The first thing which the Jiva experiences is itself, which gives rise to the ego, and thus the Jiva is always accompanied by ego. The ego is nothing more than the idea of separate existence. The idea of separate existence gives rise to the consciousness of “I,” which creates the consciousness of “Mine,” and all the resulting attachments. The Moon thus represents the individual consciousness experiencing all of its joys and sorrows.

Mars – Sattvam

Sattvam is strength of character. Character is nothing more than the manner in which an individual expresses themselves in life. The strength with which one does this is Mars. Said another way, the strength which with one lives his convictions is Mars.

The Jiva, the living individual, as we have seen is found as part of the Manas and is thus represented by the Moon. How one perceives the world is represented by the Moon and thus an individual's convictions are also formed by the Moon. Mars thus represents the strength with which we express that which is in our consciousness, which is much the same as saying that Mars is the strength with which we live our convictions. Mars is, therefore, the strength with which we express our Moon, our individuality, our convictions, our character.

The Manas of the Moon is naturally pure in character; only when the pure nature becomes corrupted does the mind become impure and the individual caused to suffer. Mars, therefore, most essentially represents the strength to express that which is pure in one's consciousness. Mars thus represents all actions to do good, to develop and to become better. Mars is the Bhramachari, the celibate student who, taking no care for himself, concentrates on training and strengthening his body, mind and spirit.

In conclusion, Mars represents the expression of good character. When afflicted, however, the desire to express goodness can become twisted and warped or frustration may develop with the result that the individual expresses the very illness that they had hoped their goodness would overcome.

Note: Sattvam in this Sutra is often translated simply and imprecisely as "strength," inferring that Mars represents one's physical and perhaps mental strength. Mars is much more than that, as has been discussed. Mars, in fact, has nothing at all to do with raw physical strength. (The training and discipline of Mars do, however, serve to hone one's physical strength.) Mars rules athletes not because athletes require strength, but because athletes attempt to be the best they can be in the discipline that their mind has attached them to. The raw strength of the athlete, however, comes from Venus.

Mercury – The Consciousness Spoken

Speech, the verbal expression of that which is in our consciousness is ruled by Mercury. Whatever an individual may say, be it in anger, in joy, in jest in or in seriousness, for them to say it, it must be in their consciousness. Listening to what a person says, not only when they are serious or when they claim to be telling the truth, but at all times, reveals that upon which their consciousness dwells.

Myth has it that Mercury is the son of the Moon. The individual consciousness from which speech emerges is ruled by the Moon. While the spoken consciousness, or speech, is ruled by Mercury. In this instance we can see the truth of this myth as the speech of Mercury is born from the consciousness of the Moon.

Jupiter – Joy Giving Knowing

Jupiter represents the knowing of that which is true and joyous. Knowing this, there is contentment with the world and happiness within. In order to be happy with anything, we have to know happiness. The unhappy person is happy with nothing, while the truly joyous person is happy with everything. The stronger and better situated Jupiter, the more knowledge there is of joy. Those Grahas influenced by Jupiter represent those things through which we may more readily know joy, and thus happiness can easily be found in these things.

Venus – Virya

Virya is virility, from which stems strength, energy and luster. Virility is the force that invigorates our bodies and impassions our activities. Venus represents the strength of our bodies and the vigor we put into those activities that are important to us. To possess bodily strength and vitality is to possess a happy body. To live enthusiastically and passionately is to live happily. Venus provides for both of these. Whatever we may hope for, whether it is spiritual or mundane, if it is not pursued with enthusiasm and passion, it will

not be captured and thus Venus is important for invigorating all of our activities.

A robust Venus in the horoscope increases bodily strength and vigor. The body becomes more capable of recovering from the ill effects of disease, from the difficulties of surgery, from traumas to the body and from hard physical exertions. On account of providing the body the ability to recover from physical exertion and on account of providing strength, Venus is found to be an important Graha for athletes. Without a healthy Venus the body will not be strong enough or capable of recovering from the hard training necessary for peak athletic performance. The virility of Venus is not limited to the body and so a robust Venus will likewise assist in recovering from and getting over the painful traumas and changes in life.

Note: Virya is often translated as “semen.” While virility is most concentrated in the semen, it is virility that is meant – not the seminal fluid itself – which has nothing to do with the Grahas in respect to composing an individual personality.

Saturn – Sorrow

Saturn is that part of us which provides for sorrow, difficulty, pain, etc. The word used in the Sutra to describe that part of us which is Saturn is Duhkha, which literally means “bad emptiness.” This is very revealing as the pain and sorrow of Saturn is the result of the emptiness that we carry within. In this respect, Saturn is the opposite of Jupiter. Where Jupiter represents the knowing of joy, Saturn represents the emptiness where nothing is found or known and thus only the “badness” of pain and sorrow are experienced. Indeed, for us to feel unhappy with anything we must first have the unhappiness within us, the empty vacuum of pain ruled by Saturn. For us to feel lonely, we must first have the vacuum of separation and isolation within us.

Those Grahas influenced by Saturn represent those things which we approach with a consciousness of emptiness and

separation and thus it is very difficult to have happiness with these things. Even if one possesses these things, the consciousness of emptiness and separation prevent one from enjoying them. Until the empty vacuum of Saturn is overcome by Jupiter's knowing of joy, happiness will not be found.

Planetary Kingdom

रविचन्द्रौ तु राजानौ नेता ज्ञेयो धरात्मजः ।

बुधो राजकुमारश्च सचिवौ गुरुभार्गवौ ॥ १४ ॥

ravicandrau tu rājānau netā jñeyo dharātmajah,
budho rājakumāraśca sacivau gurubhārgavau.

प्रेष्यको रविपुत्रश्च सेना स्वर्भानुपुच्छकौ ।

एवं क्रमेण वै विप्र सूर्यादीन् प्रविचिन्तयेत्

preṣyako raviputraśca senā svarbhānupucchakau,
evam krameṇa vai vipra sūryādin pravivintayet.

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

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 14-15

The Grahas are looked upon as forming a kingdom with each Graha playing an integral part in the kingdom. The Grahas also play these very same roles in the kingdom of the self.

Sun and Moon – The Sovereigns

The Sun and Moon are the two sovereigns. The Sun is the king and the Moon the queen. In a democratic society the Sun is the president or elected official in charge and the Moon is the gentle face of the presidency – normally the first lady.

In the kingdom of the self the Sun and Moon are also the rulers – the Sun the soul and the Moon the individuality. The Sun gives the self the intelligence and confidence with which to act, the

strength of the king. If the Sun is well situated the individual is confident, acts intelligently, steadfast and reliable. If the Sun is afflicted, the individual is insecure, inconstant and acts out of fears, compulsions, peer pressure, etc. In short, not due to their intelligence. The Moon provides social confidence and the ability to interact, the strengths of the queen. If the Moon is well situated, the individual is secure in relating to others, is sensitive to others and enjoys interacting with his fellow man. If the Moon is afflicted, the individual is uncomfortable in relating to others, insensitive and shuns relating with his fellow man.

Mars – The Overseer

Mars is the overseer, he who directs, at the command of the two sovereigns, all the important activities of the kingdom. He does this as the commander in charge of military activities, as the engineer in building projects, as the knights of ancient days, etc. Mars is the right arm of the king and queen who acts upon and attempts to fulfill all of their directives.

In the kingdom of the self, Mars is the logical faculty with which we govern and direct our actions. Whatever may enter our minds and whatever we may hope to do, we must exert ourselves in such a way as to achieve it, which means to act logically. If Mars is well situated in the horoscope, the individual exerts himself in such a fashion that is sure to result in the achievement of their goals. If Mars is poorly situated in the horoscope, the individual will exert himself in such a way that success can only elude him.

Note: The Sanskrit word to describe Mars is Neta, which means “guiding” and alludes to the idea of guiding in the fashion that the eyes (Netra) guide us. Neta, in this Sutra, is often translated as “army chief,” however, that is a somewhat limited view as Mars is he who leads and guides any project. I have translated the word simply as “overseer,” he who sees to it that what is to be done is done, whether he oversees the army, security, the national forests, government construction, etc.

Mercury – The Young Sovereign

Mercury is the young sovereign, the crown prince who will govern the kingdom upon the demise of the king. Mercury, being the young sovereign, shares many of the leadership, managerial and inspirational abilities of the Sun. In fact, it is only through Mercury's speaking and negotiating abilities that one can lead, manage and inspire effectively. A solid Mercury is an asset to every ruler's horoscope, without which they are bound to mismanage their country. In medieval times when kings reigned, a king who did not produce an heir was a failure to his country, and his failure invariably led to conspiring and bloodshed as many sought the power of the throne.

In the kingdom of the self, the young sovereign represents the intellect, the intellect being how much of ourselves we consciously know and understand. The intellect, being the young sovereign, has much to learn and has many inaccurate perceptions, but as it ages and matures, it more and more learns the true nature of itself until it becomes ready to inherit the throne – which is to grasp the true nature of itself and all things. At this point the intellect is awakened to the truth of things and becomes Buddhi, the discerning intelligence that comprehends the Sat, “real substance” from the Asat, “unreal substance.” If Mercury is well situated in the horoscope, the individual is able to understand that which they put their minds to. If Mercury is afflicted, preconceptions, misconceptions and personal conceptions will interrupt their ability to see the true nature of that which they are attempting to understand.

The Sun is itself the soul, but it is only through Mercury that we are able to cognize the omniscience of the soul, for this reason Mercury orbits closest to the Sun. As we mature spiritually, we cognize more and more the true nature of things, until we are awakened to the knowledge of the soul.

Jupiter and Venus – The Counselors

Jupiter and Venus are the two counselors to the king. Jupiter is full of spiritual wisdom and thus counsels along the lines of religion. His advice is such as to help the king understand his duty and himself. Jupiter is the Pope, the spiritual Guru, the psychologist, etc.

In the kingdom of the self, Jupiter provides for our philosophical nature, which directs us towards a meaningful life of purpose, happiness and virtue. The cornerstone of our philosophical nature is our wisdom, which provides for a healthy and happy outlook. If Jupiter is well situated in the horoscope, the individual finds each moment to be full of purpose and happiness, regardless what they may find themselves doing. They thus enjoy a life of contentment and activity natural to their self. If Jupiter is afflicted, the individual finds each moment to lack meaning and purpose and either falls into despair or seeks meaning and purpose, but often in ways and things which are not innate to their nature.

Venus is full of worldly knowledge and thus provides advice on handling practical and mundane concerns. Venus is the diplomat, the president's advisory cabinet, the minister of state, the counselor on human relationships, etc.

In the kingdom of the self, Venus provides for our evaluative nature, our capacity to evaluate and make choices. In all the large as well as small choices which we must make everyday we evaluate our options in order to decide which option is more worthwhile. Venus helps us to see which option is the most worthwhile. If Venus is well situated in the horoscope, we make worthwhile choices in life. Worthwhile choices being those choices that provide for health, fulfillment and a solid foundation in the world for spiritual development. If Venus is afflicted, the individual is unable to healthily evaluate the worth of their opportunities and will thus often choose that which results in debility and depression and which destroys the foundations in their life, their marriage, their health, etc. The cornerstone of our evaluative capacity is our self-worth. The individual with a healthy Venus recognizes his own

inherent self-worth and is thus able to evaluate the choices in life against the measure of their worth. The individual with an unhealthy Venus does not recognize his inherent self-worth and instead believes himself to be more deserving or of little worth. In either case, they will then evaluate the choices in life against an inaccurate measure.

Saturn – The Menial

Saturn represents menials, of which the majority of the kingdom exists. Saturn performs all those many tasks, though often unnoticed, which if not performed, nothing great could be done. Saturn also rules all those people who perform tasks that are routine, boring, tedious or undesirable, but which if not performed would cause the quick collapse of society.

In the kingdom of the self, Saturn represents one's ability to do what they have to do, even though they may have no desire to do it. Even in performing great tasks, there are many tedious, boring and routine things that must be done. Saturn provides the ability to do these things. Also, life is a progress of moving forward and so one often finds him or herself at the bottom of the ladder. Saturn provides the ability to be at the bottom and still find happiness in what one is doing. If Saturn is afflicted, a person struggles with being at the bottom or is unwilling to be at the bottom, even though it may be necessary in order to achieve their goals.

Rahu and Ketu – The Army

An army has two purposes, to defend and protect secured territories, and to move outward and conquer new realms. This is what Rahu and Ketu do in their role as the planetary army. Ketu represents the reserve armies that maintain and protect the sovereign country and established territories so that there is always a safe place to fall back and recuperate. Established areas eventually run out of space, resources, adventure, etc. This gives rise to the desire, or need, to march into undiscovered realms. This task is

given to Rahu; the aggressive front of the army that marches forward to conquer new territory, often with little knowledge of what the march may bring. The unexplored realms that the army of Rahu marches into are wild and unpredictable, very different from the secured and established areas that Ketu guards. Rahu rules all exploratory and conquering forces while Ketu rules all protective “at home” forces. Rahu, for example, rules the CIA, Ketu the FBI.

The armies of Rahu and Ketu do the hard work of expanding the kingdom. In the kingdom of the self, this means expanding the consciousness of the self and thus Rahu and Ketu represent the path the self must travel in order to grow and develop. Rahu indicates the new territories towards which we must march if we hope to grow and become stronger. Ketu represents the areas where we find security and fall back upon in times of stress or duress, just as an army falls back upon being overcome.

Complexions and Races of the Grahas

रक्तश्यामो दिवाधीशो गौरगात्रो निशाकरः ।

नात्युच्चाङ्गः कुजो रक्तो दूर्वाश्यामो बुधस्तथा ॥ १६ ॥

raktaśyāmo divādhiśo gauragātro niśākarah,
nātyuccāṅgaḥ kujo rakto dūrvāśyāmo budhastathā.

गौरगात्रो गुरुर्ज्ञेयः शुक्रः श्यावस्तथैव च ।

कृष्णदेहो रवेः पुत्रो ज्ञायते द्विजसत्तम ॥ १७ ॥

gauragātro gaururjñeyaḥ śukraḥ śyāvastathaiva ca,
kṛṣṇadeho raveḥ putro jñāyate dvijasattama.

“The Sun is red brown, fair limbed is the Moon, not very large bodied and red is Mars, in the manner of brown grass is Mercury, fair limbed is known Jupiter, Venus is brown and dark bodied is known Saturn, O’ Good Twice Born.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 16-17

This Sutra provides the complexions that the different Grahas may grant an individual. Many translators incorrectly translate this Sutra as referring to the colors of the Grahas in the context of which color a house, vehicle, or some other such object may be. The Sutra, however, very clearly states limbs and bodies, so the fact that the complexions of the human form are meant is obvious. Furthermore, if the actual color of objects were meant, we would expect to at least be given the full spectrum of primary and secondary colors: red, orange, yellow, green, blue and violet. But they are not. There is in fact, no authoritative Sanskrit text that provides actual colors for the Grahas. The reason being is that the Grahas rule those things that have tangible form, while color is an effect of light, not form and, therefore, cannot be ruled by the

Grahas. Colors are rather bestowed by the twelve Rasis, the Bhachakra “circle of light.”

Some Western astrological texts do provide colors for planets, though none of them even remotely agree. The fact that none of them come close to agreeing reveals that these are simply poor attempts to define something that is not meant to be defined.

Complexion, on the other hand, is ruled by the Grahas because complexion defines the physical form. Complexion defines the physical form in accordance with race, with each of the Grahas ruling one race. This Sutra, therefore, is not simply stating the different complexions, but also the race that each Graha rules.

The authors of the ancient astronomical texts knew of the Earth being round and that the Sun took six months to rise at the poles at least a thousand years before Columbus. So it should not come as any surprise that *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* would make mention of the different races of man.

Categorizing the many, many races of Man is no easy task, as any sociologist or evolutionary scientist will admit. The problem stems from at least two thousand years of trade between races and regions which has quite naturally resulted in a great intermingling of the races. Additionally, there are distinguishable genetic characteristics between the different Native American civilizations and also distinguishable genetic characteristics between the different regional races of India, the different Asiatic races, the European races and so on. These many racial groupings, however, have some distinctive as well as geographic similarities that allow them to be loosely grouped together into one larger racial group for each of the seven Grahas.

Sun – Reddish Brown

The Sun rules the brown race that has a tinge of red. It is difficult to know for sure what race exactly this is. A likely candidate is the brown race of the Indian subcontinent, for this race has a tinge of ruddiness to the hair and even the skin. As the race of the Sun, we would expect to see solar qualities in this race. Indians have

records of dynasties from the ancient times and have, as per the nature of the Sun, steadfastly maintained a continuance of culture much more so than any other race. India's *Surya Siddhanta*, if legend is true, is the oldest astronomical teaching in existence that is said to have been provided by the Sun itself. More so than any other race, Indians live in the cradle of the world's spirituality, with Buddhism having come from an Indian and even Christ was visited by "the three wise men from the East," who are rumored to have been Indians.

Moon – Fair

The word used to describe both the Moon and Jupiter is Gaura, which means fair. Other translators of this Sutra, however, translate Gaura as white for the Moon and as yellow for Jupiter, which is not correct. Rather, the Moon and Jupiter each rule one of the fair skinned races, with the Moon ruling the fair skinned European geographical race. One of the unique qualities of the fair European area race is that a much greater percentage of the people have the ability for Lactase production into adulthood, whereas a larger percentage of people of other races tend to lose the ability for Lactase production after infancy. Lactase is the enzyme responsible for digesting Lactose, the sugar found in milk and it is the Moon that rules milk and all dairy products. The changeability of European culture is also in accordance with the nature of the Moon. European cultures have been marked by change much more so than other cultures and so there is not the consistency of culture as that possessed by the other races. The Moon's adaptive behavior, however, has allowed this race to evolve very rapidly to become a power in a very quickly changing world over the past 500 years, leaving the other races to catch up. Now that the industrial and electrical age has settled in, the other races are beginning to come to great power and it won't be long before the other races enjoy the power and success of the Northern European race.

Mars – Red

Mars rules the red-man of the Americas. The Native Americans lived in harmony with the Earth and recognized the divinity of nature and the interdependence of Earth, life and heaven. Since Mars is the child of the Earth, we would expect to see such a philosophy in the Native Americans. Native Americans were largely nomadic and lived for adventure, honor and most importantly the path arranged for them by nature. Some, however, were great engineers and architects responsible for building the largest pyramids in the world, which are located in Central America. While most of the Native Americans that lived in North America reside on reservations, there are many Native American tribes living their traditional lifestyles in South America. The Mars race is also very populous as the mixed Mestizo race (European and Native American mix, including Mexicans).

Mercury – Brown Grass (Golden Brown)

Mercury rules those of the color of brown-grass. This part of the Sutra is often incorrectly translated as, “green like grass,” since the translators incorrectly believe that spectral colors are meant; not understanding that it is actually the complexions and races of the Grahas that are being defined. The word brown is very clear in the Sutra and it is only by ignoring that word that the “translators” are able to arrive at “green like grass.”

Brown grass is golden brown and thus the golden tinged Asiatic race is meant. The Asiatic race is not only found in Asia, but also found as the Aleuts of the Aleutian Islands and the Eskimos of Western Alaska. The Asiatic race is marked by an artistic culture, right down to their script, which is more art than letter. It is Mercury that represents the skill of art. The Asiatic culture has a tradition of healing that is 5,000 years old if not older and it is Mercury that is largely responsible for creating healers. Asiatic cultures have been rich in inventions and the intellectual acumen and business skill of the Asians is well known and respected these days – all these things being ruled by Mercury.

Jupiter – Fair

Jupiter rules the fair race of the Middle East, which extends into North Africa and includes the Egyptians, Persians, Babylonians, Mesopotamians, Jews, etc. and all of their modern derivatives. These cultures were far advanced in knowledge and boasted one of the earliest literate civilizations. One of the symbols used in India for Jupiter is a drawing board, revealing Jupiter's connection to literacy. While India has been the cradle of the world's spirituality, the Middle East has been the cradle of the world's most influencing religions, with Judaism, Christianity and Islam all having originated there.

Venus – Brown

Venus rules the brown race, which is most likely the Polynesian race. Polynesians were great sailors, the greatest sailors of ancient times sailing thousands of kilometers, and it is Venus that rules vehicles and the Water element. Over the past thousands of years, many now unoccupied Pacific islands were inhabited by Polynesians. While the Polynesian race is the smallest race these days, scientists are certain the Polynesian population was once much larger and that it is indeed an ancient race of immense size and achievement. The brown-skinned Micronesian race (of Guam, Yap, Pohnpei, etc.) is classified separately by scientist on account of their different (relatively) recent geological origins, but can be considered to fall under the rule of Venus as well. These people of Venus are marked by large strong bodies, in accordance with Venus ruling Virya and in accordance with Venus ruling the Water element which is responsible for “increasing,” as will be discussed in the “Five Elements” chapter.

Saturn – Dark

The Native Africans, Australian Aborigines and the Melanesians of New Guinea are of the dark race ruled by Saturn. The Native Africans on the one hand and the Australian Aborigines and

Melanesians on the other hand have several physical and genetic differences on account of the different geological regions that they occupy, much like the differences found in the many Asian races or like those found between the Polynesians and Micronesians. These dark races, however, can all be classified under Saturn. The Negro races have, more often than any other race, found themselves on the hard end of the political or economic scale and have thus suffered greatly, but as is Saturn's nature, hardship has not diminished the Negro population nor prevented great men and women to emerge from this race.

COMPLEXION

The seven Grahas caste their racial colorations upon the individual: The Sun castes a reddish brown. The Moon and Jupiter lighten the complexion. Mars causes ruddiness, Mercury a rich golden brown, Venus the brown of a natural healthy tan and Saturn darkens the caste. These influences, however, must be considered in respect to the racial background of the native as the Grahas will have somewhat different influences upon the complexion depending upon the race. The Sun grants a brownish red complexion, which may appear coppery. In those of European descent the Sun often manifests as a copper tone to the hair and coppery colorations to the skin. In excess, the Sun creates redheads in the fair races. Saturn, in all cases, darkens the normal tone of the race. In Negroes and the brown races, Saturn indicates much darker skin. In fair races, Saturn indicates dark brown or black hair and a slightly darker shade to the skin. The Moon and Jupiter lighten the complexion. In those of fair races, the Moon and Jupiter create blondes. In the brown and dark races, the Moon and Jupiter merely lighten the skin and hair. Venus tans and bronzes the fair races and increases the luster of the other races, while Mercury adds an attractive golden tint. Mars adds ruddiness to the fair races or makes strawberry blonds and tinges with red the other races.

Presiding Deities

वह्न्यम्बुशिखिजा विष्णुविडौजः शचिका द्विज ।

सूर्यादीनां खगानां च देवा ज्ञेयाः क्रमेण च ॥ १८ ॥

vahnyambuśikhijā viṣṇuviḍaujaḥ śacikā dvija,
sūryādīnāṃ khagānāṃ ca devā jñeyāḥ krameṇa ca.

“Vabni (Fire), Ambu (Water), Shikhija, Vishnu, Vidauja (Indra), Sacha, and Ka (Brahma), O’ Twice Born, from the Sun and the other Grabas in their order are known the Devas.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 18

The Grahas are considered to be under the operational power of several deities. More than one deity operates through each of the Grahas, thus there are seeming contradictions between different texts. It is not that these texts contradict each other, rather on different levels of existence and activity there are different deities. The most useful arrangement of deities is given by *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* and Jaimini’s *Upadesa Sutrās*. The deities that operate through the Grahas in order to establish and maintain creation are those provided by *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*. The deities related to the Grahas in *Upadesa Sutrās* are those that indicate the different types of spiritual paths to which the truth seeker may devote him or herself. Here we will largely, but not entirely, ignore the arrangement of deities given by *Upadesa Sutrās* and concentrate on describing the deities given by *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*, along with a few extra thoughts as believed necessary for a well-rounded study.

Vahni/Agni – Sun

Vahni literally means, “Conveyor” and alludes to the idea that Fire conveys that which it burns upward, to the “realms of the gods.” This Fire itself is known as Agni. Agni and Vahni are interchangeable names for this very same Fire. Like fire is hidden in wood, Agni represents the spirit hidden in matter. Agni is the cosmic light that permeates all things, thus being the support of all things. To return to this light is to lose form, just as are the sacrifices that are consumed in the fire. Agni, as the presiding deity of the Sun, “burns up” in sacrifice those things which one must necessarily be removed from, so that one may become a greater being. To sacrifice is to give up something small; something that one can afford to give up, though the giving up may be painful in order to achieve something greater. The sacrifices demanded by the Sun are, therefore, gateways to greater opportunities.

Ambu – Moon

Ambu is simply Water, Water being the cosmic force that grows all that is. While Agni permeates all that is, what is created and what grows, changes and adapts does so through the force of Ambu. Ambu is thus the lord of all creative forces. That which is created and that which grows must die and decay. That which dies and decays serves as nourishment for that which grows. That Water causes both growth and death and decay is shown in nature. When it rains the plants immediately begin to grow. The plants are then eaten by other life forms that then also grow. Upon the expiration of life, the more water the dead plant or animal life form is exposed to the more quickly it decays, water being the universal solvent. Also, during the great transitional periods on Earth, Ambu, in the form of great floods and tides, causes death and destruction on a wide scale, such as that experienced by the biblical Noah. On account of this dual nature of water, the Moon has both a waxing and waning period. The waxing period is the period during which Ambu creates growth. The waning period is the period during which Ambu causes decay.

Ambu, being a deity, not only governs the force of water, but also governs the force of consciousness which causes both the growth of and the letting go of all the things in our life. When we hold strongly in our consciousness some desire, ambition or goal, the force of Ambu causes that which we hold in our minds to manifest in our lives. When we have had enough of something our consciousness lets go of it, upon which Ambu allows it to drift out of our lives.

Varuna

Varuna is another deity associated with the Moon. Varuna means “all enveloping sky” and refers to the God of the Firmament who placed, according to the Rig Veda, the Nakshatras in the heavens. In later mythology Varuna is considered as the god of the oceans and water, in which case he must rule Ambu. In older Vedic mythology, he is not strongly associated with water, so he is not identical with Ambu, though sharing many of the same qualities. *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* gives Ambu as the presiding deity of the Moon, for on Earth it is water that is responsible for growth. In the Vedas, Varuna is considered as the most excellent and preeminent of all deities, as the primal maker and upholder of the universe. Varuna can be looked upon as the greater force of consciousness that grows and creates the universe while Ambu may be considered as that very same force specifically upon Earth. Both Varuna and Ambu being forces that create and grow reveal the importance of the Moon-ruled mental attitude in creating our reality.

Shikhija/Kartikeya – Mars

The presiding deity of Mars has several commonly used names: Skanda, Subramanya, Kartikeya, all referring to the second son of Siva. The name of Shikhija used in *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* means, “producer of the peacock” on account of Kartikeya defeating an Asura whom he then turned into a peacock. The peacock then became his vehicle.

The peacock symbolizes the evolutionary trend of spirit over matter. Spirit is unconscious in the minerals, conscious in the plants, semi-self-conscious in the animals, self-conscious in man, and super-conscious in the enlightened man. That Kartikeya brought forth the peacock and that he rides the peacock reveals that he is the master of the natural process of evolution. There is a natural order to this evolution that, like mathematics, is perfect in its logic. Logic is the means by which Mars arrives at knowledge and logic is a very important part of the spiritual process, for the very process of evolution follows a pattern of ordered logic. The great astrologer and Guru, Sri Yuktesvar, emphasized the importance of logic in saying of spiritual matters that if they are not logical they are not true. The very process of our earthly experiences enlightening us is ruled by Mars, who is Kujā, “born of the earth.”

Kartikeya is the god of war, though he is just a seven-day-old child. He is the supreme warrior-general among the Devas, who commands the armies of the Devas in their battle with the Asuras and leads them to victory. Within man, Kartikeya represents the perceptive power of the pure and innocent mind that has the discrimination to control the passions and lend them a spiritual focus. He does this by freeing the mind from its concepts and ideas, these being what we fight for, rendering the mind more innocent (like the mind of a child) so that it may have true perceptions. The mind that is filled with personal concepts and perceptions is unable to see the simple truths and simple paths, which are the logical truths and logical paths. It is because the mind of Man is filled with personal concepts and perceptions that men ceaselessly argue amongst themselves, even when they have a common goal. Kartikeya, through Mars, reveals these incorrect concepts that we cling to due to personal weaknesses by causing us to feel frustrated and angry about things. Where we are angry is where we need to establish innocence and pure perceptions, upon which the inner war of the Devas and Asuras is won by the higher aspect of Man symbolized by the Devas.

Vishnu – Mercury

Vishnu is considered as the absolute aspect of God who has manifested a portion of Himself as the whole created universe. Through the property of the Mercury-ruled Earth element, the One has been differentiated into the many. The many have only been differentiated, not changed; they are still the One known as Vishnu. Thus all that Is is a manifestation of Vishnu. All that sees is Vishnu. All that gives is Vishnu. All that is given is Vishnu. All that receives the gifts is Vishnu. Vishnu gives Mercury the ability to perceive what is real, which is Vishnu. There is nothing else. On account of this, Mercury is a very important Graha to consider when judging an individual's capacity to have true spiritual perceptions while living on the earthbound, material plane.

Vidauja/Indra – Jupiter

Vidauja means, "Power of the people" and is an appellation for Indra. Indra is the king of the Devas and thus represents the most powerful source of succor for Man as well as symbolizing the greatest source of strength within Man. Indra is portrayed very differently in the age-old Vedas than he is portrayed in the latter mythological Puranas. It is Indra's portrayal in the Vedas that is important, for the Puranas do not have the sanctity of the Vedas.

In the Vedas, Indra is one of the most important deities, ranked in importance with Agni, the presiding deity of the Sun. This is quite an interesting fact since Jupiter, being the heaviest of all the Grahas, has a significant impact on the motion of the Sun and the solar system. Largely, on account of Jupiter's large gravitation force upon the Sun, the Sun, and therefore the solar system, revolves around a point in space called the Barycentre. The Sun rotates around the Barycentre in approximately twelve years, the time it takes for Jupiter to make one revolution around the Sun. It is Jupiter and the Sun, therefore, who have the largest impact upon the solar system and who are presided by the two all-important Vedic deities, Agni and Indra.

Indra is witnessed as the lord of thunder and lightening and the resulting rains and has many parallels to the great Thor of Viking mythology. Indra primarily gives succor to the people through providing the all-essential rain, which falls upon the Earth following the clash of Indra's lightening bolt that shatters the dark clouds, allowing the rain to fall. Esoterically a symbolically similar event takes place. The "lightening bolt," of the spinal energies is brought upward through spiritual practices and thus "shatters" the "dark clouds" of ignorance, watering the perceptions with the rain of higher consciousness.

Indra is the all-conquering and means, "one who is the conqueror of the Indriyas," the Indriyas being the senses. This conquering takes place upon the satiation that comes from spiritual perceptions, just like the conquering of thirst is brought about by the fall of rain and not simply by imagining oneself not to be thirsty. Conquering the senses is not brought about through forced renunciation, but only by spiritual practices which give a "taste" of something better than that for which the senses beg. This is an important point for the spiritual aspirant to consider. All too often the spiritual aspirant, hearing about the behavior of saints, attempts to behave in a spiritual way which is not natural to their way of being, when what is necessary is to practice spiritual rites until the behavior of a saint becomes a natural by-product of one's experiences. Many who study scriptures such as the *Bhagavad Gita* without full attention fall into this same trap. In "Chapter One" of the *Bhagavad Gita*, the players in the Great War, the war which takes place within each spiritual aspirant, are introduced. In "Chapter Two" the behavior of a Spiritually realized soul are dictated, but in this chapter Krishna does not state that one should attempt to behave this way, he merely illustrates the Goal. In Chapter Three and the following chapters the means to obtain this goal are given. It is important that the spiritual aspirant focuses upon practicing these means; else one is in the danger of falling into hypocrisy or, worse, imagining him or herself to be possessed of a more exalted spiritual state than they actually are.

Sachi – Venus

Sachi, or Sachi Devi as she is more appropriately called, is the consort of Indra. Sachi accompanies Indra in all of his exploits, though more so in spirit than in body. Sachi is very much the “woman behind the man” who is Indra. Only through the talismans that she places upon Indra is he able to become victorious. Sachi empowers Indra and is inseparable from him. She thus has equal influence, though working behind the scenes. While Indra represents the active divinity that succors man, Sachi is the passive divinity who heals, nourishes and satiates without her presence even being known. If she is scorned, if the good she has to freely offer is rejected, she quickly becomes angry and jealous and, thereafter withholding her gifts, man succumbs to illness and ill fate.

Indra performs the actions which allow for well-being and satiation, but Sachi is the object of well-being and satiation. Indra is the thunder and lightening which frees the rain from the clouds, but the rain itself is Sachi. And the rain is, of course, an aspect of Ambu. This relationship between the three of Indra/Jupiter, Sachi/Venus and Ambu/Moon is revealed by the fact that Jupiter is exalted in the Rasi of the Moon, the Moon is exalted in the Rasi of Venus and Venus is exalted in the Rasi of Jupiter.

Inwardly, Sachi/Venus and Indra/Jupiter have a similar effect and always accompany each other. Indra/Jupiter represents virtuous action and moral deeds, but Sachi/Venus gives the healthy pride that empowers Man to live virtuously. If Venus is afflicted, an individual does not have the self-respect necessary for good actions to feel worthwhile. Indra/Jupiter represents the spiritual practices, but Sachi/Venus represents the devotion which motivates the spiritual seeker and the satiation that comes from the performance of the practices.

Lakshmi

Lakshmi is another deity associated with Venus. Lakshmi is the consort of Vishnu and the goddess of prosperity. She is not a deity of wealth, but of prosperity, prosperity being the ability to acquire

at will that which one needs in order to fulfill their Dharma. As the goddess of prosperity, she is the power through which Vishnu is able to manifest. Manifesting always requires the means, the prosperity to manifest.

Brahma – Saturn

Brahma is the Creator who has actively created the three worlds of Heaven, Earth and the Nether Regions. In order to manifest creation, the Absolute must hide behind a veil in order to give the idea of creation being separate from Himself. This veil is termed as Maya and is created by each individual's Avidya – ignorance of his soul nature. It is Saturn who is responsible for this Avidya. Saturn creates this ignorance through governing the flow of the life force into the nerves. As a result of the life force and, therefore, the consciousness descending into the nerves, we perceive things as soft, solid, bright, dark, colored, hot, cold, mother, father, etc. In other words, not as God, and thus the created worlds of Brahma are experienced. In this way Brahma requires Saturn in order to create.

Yama

A common deity associated with Saturn is Yama, the god of death, who leads the disembodied souls into one of the darker or brighter regions of the astral world according to each individual's merit. The word Yama means "control" and specifically self-control. Among all forms of self-control, the control of the life force is the most essential. Through Yama, there is the enforced control of the life force as it is withdrawn from the body at death. Saturn is the Graha that represents death as well as the restraining self-control of "won't power," which is so necessary for avoiding many of the ills, both small and large, of life.

WORSHIP AND PRAYER

These seven deities are most responsible for establishing and maintaining creation, thus if one is having difficulty in some area of life or in some period of life, prayer to and worship of the appropriate deity can alleviate one's ills.

Prayer to and Puja (honoring) of Agni strengthens foundations, supports all that needs supporting and alleviates difficulties experienced in the periods of the Sun.

Prayer to and honoring of Ambu assists in manifesting that which is in one's consciousness and in letting go of what is no longer desirable or necessary, while also alleviating any difficulties experienced during the periods of the Moon.

Prayer to and honoring of Kartikeya assists in combating difficulties, whether external or internal frustrations, while also alleviating any difficulties experienced in the periods of Mars or Ketu.

Prayer to and worship of Vishnu assists in seeing the truth of things, whether mundane or spiritual, while also alleviating any difficulties brought about in the period of Mercury. The *Vishnu Sahasranama* is particularly effective and recommended by *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* for remedying ills under Mercury's periods, while also being of great spiritual benefit. (The regular practice of the *Vishnu Sahasranama* was, in fact, also recommended by Adi Sankaracharya, the enlightened reorganizer of the Hindu monastic orders.)

Prayer to and honoring of Indra uplifts one's consciousness and brings those things into one's life that are of benefit to one's physical and spiritual survival and progress, while also alleviating any difficulties brought about in the periods of Jupiter.

Prayer to and honoring of Sachi Devi brings about satiation and well-being of body and mind and brings about peace with people that have been treated unfairly while also alleviating any difficulties brought about in the periods of Venus.

Prayer to and honoring of Brahma, Brahma being the first and therefore oldest manifestation of God, provides security and

confidence in what may be a very threatening world when it is not understood with maturity, while also alleviating any difficulties experienced in the periods of Saturn or Rahu.

RAHU AND KETU

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra does not provide deities for Rahu and Ketu, the reason being that *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* names the deities primarily responsible for creating and maintaining the world, a responsibility which does not much befall Rahu and Ketu. Other texts give Adishesha for Rahu and Brahman for Ketu.

Rahu – Adishesha

Adishesha is the great thousand-headed serpent that couches and canopies the sleeping Vishnu during the dissolution between the different cycles of creation. Shesha means “that which remains,” and refers to the preserved potentialities of creation that, in a suspended state, await expression in the next cycle of creation. Rahu similarly indicates the potentials that the individual is due to experience upon this, their latest birth.

During creation, Adishesha supports all spheres of manifestation through the agency of cosmic delusion or Maya. Maya itself consists of each individual’s Avidya, which is represented by Saturn as discussed previously. The relationship of Rahu and Saturn is, therefore, a tightly knit one.

Ketu – Brahman

Brahman is the Absolute, Unmanifested God beyond creation; “the origin of all knowledge and love, the root of all power and joy.” Brahman rightly presides over Ketu, the producer of liberation, the only Graha who is never satisfied with any love, knowledge, information or happiness that creation, in its many aspects, has to offer. Ketu, as the producer of liberation, represents the death of the individual consciousness so that it may merge with the great consciousness that is Brahman.

Grahas and Gender

क्लीबौ द्वौ सौम्यसौरी च युवतीन्दुभृगू द्विज ।

नराः शेषाश्च विज्ञेया भानुर्भौमो गुरुस्तथा ॥ १९ ॥

klibau dvau saumyasaurī ca yuvatīndu bhr̥gū dvija,
narāḥ śeṣāśca vijñeyā bhānur̥bhaumo gurustathā.

“Eunuch are the two Mercury and Saturn, young women are the Moon and Venus, O’ Twice Born, and men are to be known the remaining: Sun, Mars and Jupiter.”

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

The Grahas are all male deities and so are referred to as male throughout this text. They each behave, however, in a more masculine, feminine or neuter manner. Similarly, they each produce male, female or neuter creations. So while all being male deities, the Grahas are responsible for differentiating the qualities of gender.

MASCULINE GRAHAS

Masculine Grahas are initiating, action-centered and pro active. They feel loved, happy and worthwhile when they are respected and appreciated for what they do, say and think. They find gratification in helping those weaker, more vulnerable or less able than themselves. When they do something beneficial or productive, they feel happy and satisfied. Masculine Grahas have the capacity to do something even when they do not feel like it.

Sun

The Sun is the most masculine of all Grahas. He is one hundred percent masculine, which is shown by the fact that the Sun rules only one Rasi, Leo, which is male as compared to the other male

Grahas that rule both one male Rasi and one female Rasi. The Sun is action centered, but not rash. He is steady and consistent in his action. If the Sun is poorly situated in the horoscope, then a person will lack consistency and steadfastness. As all masculine Grahas do, the Sun feels loved and happy when respected for what he says, does and thinks, however, the Sun particularly feels loved when his actions to take care of and provide for others are appreciated. The Sun feels happy when he fulfills his duty to lead and when his lead provides for the betterment of that for which he is responsible. The Sun feels most unhappy when he is unable to lead those he loves and cares for to a better future and when he finds himself unable to fulfill his duties.

Mars

Mars is very action centered and enjoys activity much more so than the Sun and needs a change of scene more so than does the Sun, so Mars is not quite as steadfast and will more often change his direction upon the advent of a new opportunity to seize. Mars is action centered, so he very much feels loved when his actions are respected. Mars is also the logician, so he also equally feels loved when his ideas are respected. Mars feels most gratified when he helps others overcome problems by his direct assistance. Mars feels most unhappy when he makes mistakes that cause trouble for others.

Jupiter

Jupiter is the Graha of wisdom and Vacaspati, “the lord of speech.” Jupiter thus feels most appreciated when what he says is respected. Jupiter is most gratified when others respect his teachings and counsel by following them and becoming better through them. For a male Graha, Jupiter is very easygoing; he is the male Graha who has discovered the action-centered path of non-action. Seeing his role in view of the larger picture, he finds contentment in things such as failure and ridicule, which the other

male Grahas could never appreciate. Being the most accepting and forgiving Graha, Jupiter accepts and forgives himself as easily as he does others. Jupiter feels most unhappy when he is unable to provide wise counsel or when he gives counsel that somehow becomes a source of ill to others.

FEMININE GRAHAS

Feminine Grahas are receptive, discriminative and emotional. They feel loved, happy and worthwhile when they have their feelings respected and when they are appreciated for who they are. They find gratification in being available for good purpose and in taking care of and improving themselves so as to become more self-fulfilled and available for greater purposes. When they feel fulfilled and happy, they live productively and become of benefit to all around them. Feminine Grahas do things when they feel like it and never do things when they don't feel like it. Their feelings are a guidance system that helps them choose that which they should be doing.

Moon

The Moon is the most feminine of all Grahas. Though a male divinity like all the Grahas, he is one hundred percent feminine in character, which is shown by him ruling only one Rasi, Cancer, which is a female Rasi. The Moon is the most receptive of the Grahas and has a strong need to bond. The Moon discriminates through feeling, what feels good is accepted and what feels bad is refrained from. The discrimination of the Moon is perfect; it is based upon the Moon's capacity for inner knowing and not upon desire. If the Moon is poorly situated in the horoscope, then a person will be far removed from their inner knowing and make many confused choices since they will not be able to discriminate effectively. As all feminine Grahas do, the Moon feels most loved when his feelings are respected and when he is appreciated for himself. The Moon is happy when he has a good self-image and he

will then live a productive and beneficial life. The Moon is most gratified when he is able to be part of something greater than himself. The Moon is most unhappy if he becomes a burden or a source of pain to others.

Venus

Venus, like the Moon, is a male divinity but of feminine nature. Venus feels most loved when he is appreciated for who he is. His worth is important to him as is the inherent worth of others. Venus puts us in touch with our inherent self-worth, which is the measure upon which everything else in our life is evaluated. Venus discriminates by evaluating the worth of all the possible choices available and choosing the most worthwhile avenue. Venus feels happy to the degree of appreciating his own self-worth and when feeling worthwhile, Venus does productive and beneficial deeds. If Venus is afflicted, a person will make poor choices and get involved with things that are not worth their while or which are even destructive. Venus feels most gratified when he is involved in opportunities that are of benefit or desirable for others which at the same time equally benefit himself, the way a marriage should equally benefit both members. Venus feels most unhappy when he feels taken advantage of and when the good he has to offer goes ignored by someone who instead prefers something else; like the way a wife feels hurt when her husband goes to another woman for something she could just as easily provide.

NEUTER GRAHAS

Neuter Grahas possess an even mix of male and female qualities. These Grahas bring about the activities of the male Grahas when that is what is most suitable or they bring out the receptivity of the female Grahas when it is that which is most suitable. Neuter Grahas, however, do not have the initiating and pioneering qualities to the extent of the male Grahas, nor are they as completely dependent for direction as are the female Grahas.

Neuter Grahas allow for harmonious and balanced activity. When neuter Grahas are well placed, a person will have the perspective necessary to see whether they will best be served through the utilization of their male or female Grahas. If the neuter Grahas are ill placed, then a person will behave in a male manner when they should be operating in a female manner and vice versa.

Mercury

Mercury is the great manager amongst the Grahas. He is not a leader like the Sun, he is a manager. His feminine aspect allows him to be receptive to his duties though he is not the creator and initiator of his duties. His masculine aspect takes the actions and initiative that are required to fulfill the duties. He is very directed, creative and initiating once his duties have been pointed out to him.

Saturn

Saturn is the servant who does all the hard work. Like Mercury, Saturn uses his feminine side to be receptive to his duties. He then uses his masculine side to complete his tasks, many of which he does not feel like performing, but which his masculine side helps him complete regardless.

Kuja



12/10/2005

“Wearing red garlands and clothes, a spear, trident and mace and blessing, four armed is Mars riding a ram.”

10

Five Elements

अग्निभूमिनभस्तोयवायवः क्रमतो द्विज ।

भौमादीनां ग्रहाणां च तत्त्वानीति यथाक्रमम् ॥ २० ॥

agnibhūminabhastoyavāyavaḥ kramato dvija,
bhaumādināṁ grahāṇāṁ ca tattvānīti yathākramam.

“Fire, Earth, Elber, Water and Air, in that order, O’ Twice Born, from Mars and the other Grabas in their order are the Tattvas.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 20

The Five Elements are known as the Pancha Tattvas, Pancha meaning, “five” and Tattva meaning, “true essence.” The Pancha Tattvas are the five primordial causes of all that is created. The Grahas themselves are caused by the Pancha Tattvas as we are told in *Surya Siddhanta*:

“Mars, etc. were produced in succession from Fire, Earth, Elber, Water and Wind.”

Surya Siddhanta: 12.24

Thus we have Mars as Fire, Mercury as Earth, Jupiter as Ether, Venus as Water and Saturn as Air.

The Pancha Tattvas are themselves created by God and are considered the causal body of Purusha, Purusha being God in his manifested form. Each of the Pancha Tattvas, and, therefore, the Grahas, has its own responsibilities. The responsibilities of the Pancha Tattvas are described by the *Srimad Bhagavatam*:

“Providing access for the Tattvas, causing exteriors and interiors, and housing Prana, the Indriyas and the individual self are the characteristics of Ether.”

Srimad Bhagavatam: 3.26.34

Ether is the space in which creation unfolds and thus Ether provides for the space that the other elements and creation require. By housing Prana, the life force, Ether provides the room for life and for this reason, amongst others, Jupiter is known as Jiva, “life.”

“Shaking, displacing, penetrating everywhere, carrying substance of sound, etc. and vitalizing all the Indriyas (sense organs) are the characteristic acts of Air.”

Srimad Bhagavatam: 3.26.36

Air shakes and moves things, and so separates and displaces, and is thereby the cause of differentiation (which is completed by the Earth element). Since air shakes, displaces and separates, Saturn rules all shakers, mixers and separators. Air penetrates everywhere and carries the substance of sound, touch, color, taste and smell and thus Saturn rules the radio waves that travel in the air and carry the substance of sound and the light waves that carry the substance of color. Air also carries the substances of all the senses: hearing, touch, sight, taste and smell through its Graha, Saturn, which rules the movement of the life force through the nervous system through which the organs of sense function. In this way, Air vitalizes the sense organs.

“Illuminating, ripening, intoxicating, destroying cold, drying, and causing hunger and thirst are the characteristics of Fire.”

Srimad Bhagavatam: 3.26.40

Fire causes light and therefore color. Mars therefore rules projectors and lights. The heat of fire ripens and matures so that things become nourishing and useful. Fire intoxicates in the sense

of exiting to passion, such as the intoxication of warriors charging a field, or the passion and excitement of some burning desire. Fire destroys cold and dries and thus Mars rules heaters and dryers. Thirst and hunger are caused by fire and thus individuals with a strong Mars are found to be constantly hungry and have a fast metabolism.

“Moistening, cohesing, satiating, maintaining Prana and life, removing heat and increasing are the characteristics of Water.”

Srimad Bhagavatam: 3.26.43

Water moistens, and thus Venus rules lubricants and lotions. Water causes things to stick together and thus Venus rules glues. Water satiates, maintains Prana and life and increases, and thus Venus rules food. Water removes heat and thus Venus rules air conditioners, refrigerators, coolers and the sweat that cools the body.

“Manifesting, standing, holding, desiccating the real, and differentiating all good qualities are the characteristics of Earth.”

Srimad Bhagavatam: 3.26.46

Earth manifests and thus Mercury is the Graha required to bring anything to concrete realization. Mercury is, therefore, very important in all affairs. Earth provides the solidity necessary for things to stand upon each other and the solidity required for one thing to hold another. Mercury therefore rules all foundations. Mercury also rules all jars and anything that is meant to hold another, such as the concrete form made to hold water for a swimming pool. Earth differentiates the Real – the good quality that is the Real becomes differentiated and appears as better in one thing and worse in another. Since it is Earth that differentiates, it is the Graha Mercury who has the ability to see the one Real behind all the appearing differences.

FIVE SENSES

Each of the Pancha Tattvas has an elevating, or Sattvic, attribute, which is one of the five senses, and thus each of the starry Grahas rules one of the senses, known as Jnanendriyas, “organs of knowledge.”

Ether – Jupiter – Hearing: Acquires knowledge from Sound.

Air – Saturn – Touch: Acquires knowledge from Tangibility.

Fire – Mars – Sight: Acquires knowledge from Colors.

Water – Venus – Taste: Acquires knowledge from Savors.

Earth – Mercury – Smell: Acquires knowledge from Odors.

The five senses are often maligned in spiritual texts due to the tendency for humans to abuse the senses to the point of causing harm. The senses, however, have a higher purpose, that of allowing us to acquire knowledge that is important for our growth and survival, and thus they are known as the Jnanendriyas, “organs of knowledge.”

The senses are not only physical organs, but also astral organs, thus it is not only possible to gain knowledge through the physical organs but also through the astral organs. Those that are psychically sensitive regularly rely on their astral organs and may acquire knowledge through clairaudience, palpitation, clairvoyance, a psychic taste or a psychic nose. Hindu texts that deal with spirits even describe the smells of spirits that one with a psychic nose may experience.

For a person to have their sight afflicted, Mars must be afflicted. For a person to have a poor sense of smell, Mercury must be afflicted. To be deaf, Jupiter must be afflicted. To have a poor sense of taste, Venus must be afflicted. To be unable to feel touch requires Saturn to be afflicted. When one of these Grahas is

particularly strong and favorable, the individual will have a heightened sense.

It is quite interesting how our speech reflects the relationship between the senses and the Grahas. When something appeals to our wisdom (Jupiter) it “sounds” good. When something is difficult (Saturn) it is described as “hard,” which is a tactual impression. When we have an accident (Mars) we didn’t “see” it coming; and when we are prepared to overcome a difficulty we “saw” it coming. In regards to something that is desirable (Venus) we have good or bad “taste” in music, food and the opposite sex. When our intellect (Mercury) is struggling for understanding, something “smells” funny.

FIVE ORGANS OF ACTION

Each of the Pancha Tattvas also has an active, or Rajasic, attribute. These are the five powers of action, known as Karmendriyas, “organs of action.”

Fire/Mars: Motion – Primary power is in the feet.

Earth/Mercury: Excretion – Primary power is in the anus.

Ether/Jupiter: Sound – Primary power is in the vocal cords.

Water/Venus: Generation – Primary power is in the sexual organs.

Air/Saturn: Manual Skill – Primary power is in the hands.

Mars is thus responsible for motion which is guided by sight. While the primary organs of motion are the feet, Mars empowers all motion of the body. For a person’s motion to be impaired Mars must be afflicted.

Mercury is responsible for excretion which is known by its smell. While the anus is the primary organ of excretion, all organs through which the body excretes what is harmful or unnecessary are empowered by Mercury. For any lack of excretory ability, Mercury, which empowers the excretion, must be afflicted.

Jupiter is responsible for producing sound, which is produced in the vocal cords. Mercury skillfully and systematically uses the sound created by Jupiter to create speech. For an individual's vocal cords to be unable to produce sound, Jupiter must be afflicted. However, a person with healthy vocal cords may still have speech defects, which are caused by the affliction of Mercury.

Venus is responsible for generation, which is done via the sexual organs. Taste, the sense of Venus, is very important during sexual intercourse. Venus is also responsible for generation as the regeneration of one's own body, which is done by the Shukra – the vitality of the body. Shukra is the common name of Venus who has the power to bring his disciples back to life and thus Venus's role in regenerating the body by replacing the dead and dying tissues is revealed. If Venus is afflicted, the vitality of the body is low and one is unable to procreate or to regenerate and rebuild their own body. When this vital energy is depleted the body can no longer be repaired and quickly expires.

Saturn is responsible for manual skill which requires a delicate and precise touch and which is most capably found in the hands, though it is not limited to the hands. For an individual to have poor manual dexterity Saturn must be afflicted.

Note: The Elements are subtle energies and thus the organs of action are the forces that empower these actions and not the actual body parts through which these things are physically done. Mars, for instance, does not rule the feet; it only rules the *power* of motion, which is considered to be the most concentrated in the feet. The word Indriya, translated as “organs,” just as well means “power.”

FIVE OBJECTS OF THE SENSES

Each of the Pancha Tattvas has an obscuring, or Tamasic, attribute, which are the objects of hearing, touch, sight, taste and smell – namely sound, tangibility, color, savor and odor. These are known as the Tanmatras. Tanmatras interact with the organs of

sense through the agency of the organs of action to bring about the experience of creation and to satisfy the desires of the heart.

It is important to understand that the purpose of the senses, the organs of action and the sense objects is to satisfy the desires of the heart. The individual consciousness, represented by the Moon, being unable to experience the whole of the Universe, or God, is naturally awakened to a desire. Upon having a desire, the whole universe musters itself towards the fulfillment of that desire, and upon the fulfillment of that desire, the individual consciousness is pacified and returns to its natural state of peace and joy. In this way the senses, the organs of action and the sense objects satisfy the desires of the heart as they were intended to. The average individual, however, suffers from fear, worry and lack of confidence and is thus unable to attract the fulfillment of their desire from the Universe. Their desire remaining unfulfilled, one desire is immediately followed by another and so the individual consciousness is always perturbed and restless. Due to these many desires and the accompanying restlessness, the individual consciousness cannot attract to itself the fulfillment of the desire and so unhappiness, despondency and eventual ill health result. Upon death, the individual consciousness is full of numerous desires which require that the individual consciousness must be reborn in another body in another life. It becomes, therefore, very important that the individual consciousness is focused upon the obtainment of one desire with full confidence and attention and that one avoid absentminded and inattentive behavior. (Those individuals, however, whose whole minds are absorbed in one thing, may rightly be absentminded in regards to other things.) By being mentally present and focusing on the obtainment of one desire or goal, the individual consciousness will attract from the Universe the fulfillment of the desire and feel peace and then be better able to return to its natural state of peace and joy. By half-heartedly pursuing many desires simultaneously and with less than full attention, no desire is completely fulfilled. The individual

consciousness thus experiences no fulfillment and is much too scattered to return to its natural state of peace and joy.

The Five Objects of the Senses combine to produce the five forms of gross matter: space, gases, fire, liquids and solids, all of which have the quality of sound, tangibility, color, savor and odor, though to different proportions. All that is materially created is created via the five elements and thus the five starry Grahas are responsible for producing everything that is experienced. The luminaries, the Sun and Moon, Atma and Manas, are the self and consciousness that do the experiencing.

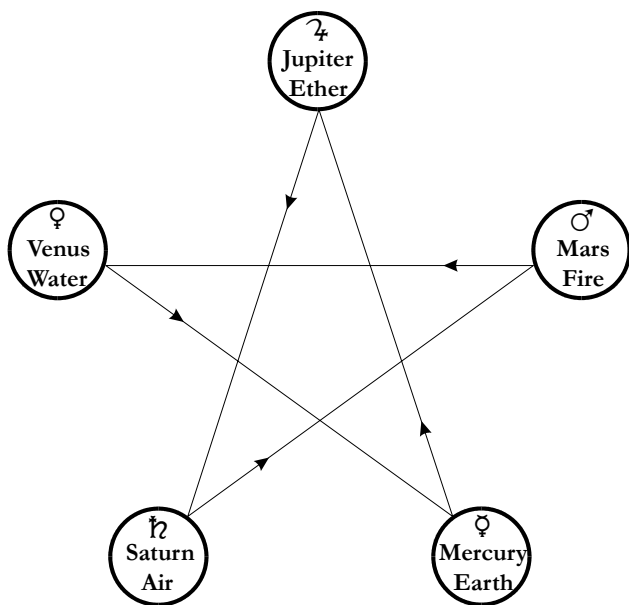
GENERATIVE CYCLE OF THE TATTVAS

There are many ways in which the five elements interact, which means that there are many ways in which the five elemental Grahas interact. Understanding these interactions is very important, especially in the context of medical astrology.

Ether is the subtlest of the elements and generates Air. From Air comes Fire, from Fire comes Water, and from Water is generated Earth:

Ether – Air – Fire – Water – Earth

However, this is a cyclical relationship as indicated by the star connecting the elements in the diagram below.



Generative Cycle

Ether gives space for Air, which combusts and generates Fire. Fire creates steam and thereby moisture, Water. Water collects through its cohesive nature and gives rise to Earth. Similarly, out of faith, wisdom and purpose (Jupiter) comes a proper sense of duty (Saturn) from which comes disciplined and meaningful activity (Mars) by which things are increased and a person's desires satiated and goals fulfilled (Venus) from which arise security and accomplishment (Mercury). Out of security and accomplishment, arises greater purpose and the cycle begins again.

If one of the elemental Grahās is weak, it will cause a disturbance in the cycle. If Jupiter is weak, there will be a lack of faith, purpose and meaning in life – this will disturb Saturn and result in a poor sense of duty. If Saturn is weak, there will be a poor sense of duty and a greater consciousness of lack – this will disturb Mars who will be unfocused with many desires to fulfill and he will thus squander his energy and abilities while being angry, forceful or opinionated in an attempt to change the world in order to fulfill the

lack of Saturn instead of performing the disciplined activity that Mars is meant to perform as a part of duty. If Mars is weak, a person is unable to maintain any disciplined activity and the character that is the result of disciplined activity is thus not developed. This will disturb Venus, who will not be able to satiate the person and so the person remains with many desires and goals unfilled and with no increase in life. If Venus is weak, a person's desires are not satiated and so the person becomes lustful for some object of the senses or addicted. This disrupts Mercury, who is less able to experience a sense of accomplishment and whose security is destroyed by the wasteful lust or addiction. If Mercury is weak one will be less able to manage the many details that any accomplishment requires. This disrupts Jupiter, who is unable to focus on a greater purpose because there are too many loose ends to take care of as a result of Mercury's negligence.

If one of the elemental Grahas is particularly robust and strong it will have a beneficial influence upon the elemental Graha that it produces. If Jupiter is particularly healthy, one will have an innate sense of faith and purpose and thus find meaning in all of life's situations, be they great or small. This will fulfill Saturn and cause Saturn to happily go about doing the many things that it must. If Saturn is particularly healthy, there will be a strong sense of duty and a healthy detachment and fulfillment that prevents any burning need or impatience to fulfill the duty. This will focus Mars in a peaceful and patient manner. If Mars is particularly healthy, a person uses his will power in a balanced fashion and reveals good character in his pursuits. This will increase Venus's ability to provide internal as well as external fulfillment and thus the person will be much more satiated and comfortable. If Venus is particularly healthy, a person is easily satiated and his senses are thus unperturbed. This empowers Mercury to feel accomplished and successful as all one's needs are more easily met. If Mercury is particularly healthy, the person is organized and efficient. This allows Jupiter to focus on greater and great purposes.

DISSOLUTION CYCLE OF THE TATTVAS

Each element has not only the capacity to generate another element, but also the capacity to dissolve the element. Upon dissolution the generative process is reversed: Earth is dissolved in Water, Water is evaporated by Fire, Fire is blown out by Wind, and Wind is stilled by Ether. This cycle is shown in the previous diagram by following the reverse direction of the arrows. The fact that an element cannot only generate an element but also dissolve that element is important for keeping balance in nature. If Ether only gave Air room to move, the world would have long ago been destroyed by storms, but since Ether also gives wind the space to dissipate, balance is maintained. If Wind could only fan fire, the world would have long ago been consumed in fire, but since Wind can also blow fire out or blow it back upon itself, balance is maintained. If Fire only distilled water, the world would long ago have been drowned, but since fire also evaporates Water, balance is maintained. If Water only cohered into Earth, the world would long ago have been a dead rock, but since Water also dissolves Earth, balance is maintained. This cycle of dissolution is also known as the “Control Cycle” as it controls the balance of things.

The Grahas similarly interact to maintain balance. The need for Mercury to establish security and accomplish concrete goals is curbed by Venus’s capacity to feel satiated, or else one could live constantly attempting to accomplish something that is really not necessary. The need for Venus to feel satiated and comfortable is curbed by Mars who finds happiness in developing strength and character through disciplined activity, or else one could live constantly seeking comforts and fulfillment. The need for Mars to be involved in disciplined activity is curbed by Saturn’s ability for detachment, or else one could burn out by constant activity and overtraining. The need for Saturn to fulfill duty is curbed by Jupiter’s ability for forgiveness and understanding or else one would live a rigid life of empty duty. The need for Jupiter to have meaning and purpose is curbed by Mercury’s ability to accomplish a task and find worth in doing so, or else a person could become a fanatic.

Also, the need for Jupiter to search for knowledge is curbed by Mercury's ability to see God manifested in all of creation.

EXCESSIVE ELEMENTS

The five elements maintain balance but they are not rigid. They are living and interacting. As a result, imbalances often occur for a short time. In fact, the five elements are always imbalanced to some degree, or else life would be static, which is to say that life would not exist. Over all of time, however, their activity is perfectly balanced.

Keeping in mind the generating relationship of Ether – Air – Fire – Water – Earth. What would you expect to have happen if there was excess Fire? Air would be consumed to excess and fire itself would run out of Air and be extinguished for lack of fuel. An element taken to excess destroys the very element that generates it, and in so doing, destroys itself. How often do we see those with a great ability taken to extremes become destroyed by that very ability. It is the same principle. Balance is healthy – all else is disease.

Similar results happen to the other elements when they are in excess: If there is excess Ether, Earth is destroyed by a vacuum and so Earth is unable to hold the empty space. If there is excess Air, Ether loses its capacity for stillness and Air itself is destroyed in the chaos the same way that radio waves may interfere with each other and cancel each other out. If there is excess Water, fire is extinguished which results in water collecting instead of evaporating in order to fall and flow as is its nature. If there is excess Earth, water is absorbed, there is no erosion and change and Earth loses its property of differentiation.

The Grahas may similarly undergo a period of imbalance. If Jupiter is excessive, a person may have unrealistic faith and expectations and as a result Mercury is destroyed and details are not properly taken care of and affairs are managed sloppily. Upon details being mismanaged, no purpose of Jupiter can be furthered.

If Saturn is excessive, a person will be to overly concentrated on the performance of their duty or overly dogmatic and miss the whole point, such is the result of the destruction of Jupiter. Upon losing sight of the goal, one's Saturnine duties become meaningless. If Mars is excessive a person may be so focused on some disciplined activity or inspired task that they neglect the duties of Saturn. Upon neglecting their duties, one lives as a child and no better character (which is ruled by Mars) is developed. If Venus is excessive, a person may be so concerned with getting nourished, pampered and fulfilled that they are unable to energize themselves for the martial process and climb to success. Upon not being energized to exert oneself, no fulfillment of Venus is possible. If Mercury is excessive, a person can be so focused on establishing stability and material security that they are unable to allow Venus any satiation that requires spending. Upon not becoming satiated, one becomes weak and unhappy and can thus not enjoy or benefit from their Mercurial holdings.

A Graha may become excessive when it is joined with Saturn, Rahu or Ketu or when it receives a strong Graha aspect from Saturn. In these cases, the conjunction or Graha aspect from Saumya Grahas will do much to alleviate the excess.

DEFICIENT ELEMENTS AND THE INSULTING CYCLE

If an excessive element drains its generating element it follows that a deficient element will cause its generating element to become excessive. When a deficient element causes its generating element to become excessive, the generating element will eventually become a source of harm to the deficient element. A deficient element is thus not only harmed by its own weakness, but also by its own generating element. This is known as the "Insulting Cycle."

If Jupiter-ruled Ether is deficient and there is a lack of acceptance and a lack of a higher purpose, then Earth becomes excessive and too much emphasis is placed on material security and accomplishment. Earth will then have an insulting and non-tolerant

attitude towards idealism. If Saturn-ruled Air is deficient and there is a lack of detachment and a resultant fear, then Ether becomes excessive and there will be the tendency to hope rather than to risk doing, to believe rather than risk acting. Ether will then have an insulting and critical attitude towards one's progress and capacity. If Mars-ruled Fire is deficient, causing one to not be hungry and so exert oneself in such a manner as to progress towards any goal, then Air becomes excessive and indifference and laziness will mark the personality. Air will then have an insulting attitude towards any inspired activity. If Venus-ruled Water is deficient and one is unfulfilled and undernourished, then Mars becomes excessive and very hungry and overly willful. Fire will then have an insulting and non-accepting attitude towards any comforting, relaxing, fulfilling and nourishing activities of Venus. If Mercury-ruled Earth is deficient and there is a lack of material capacity, accomplishment and security, then Venus becomes excessive and the desire for emotional fulfillment, pleasure and comfort becomes excessive to the point of haphazard attempts at emotional fulfillment. Water will then have an insulting attitude towards material success and fulfillment while itself expecting fulfillment in such an ungrounded way that no lasting fulfillment is possible.

An elemental Graha most notably becomes deficient when it does not meet its minimum Shad Bala requirement or when it is debilitated or in a great enemy's or enemy's Rasi.

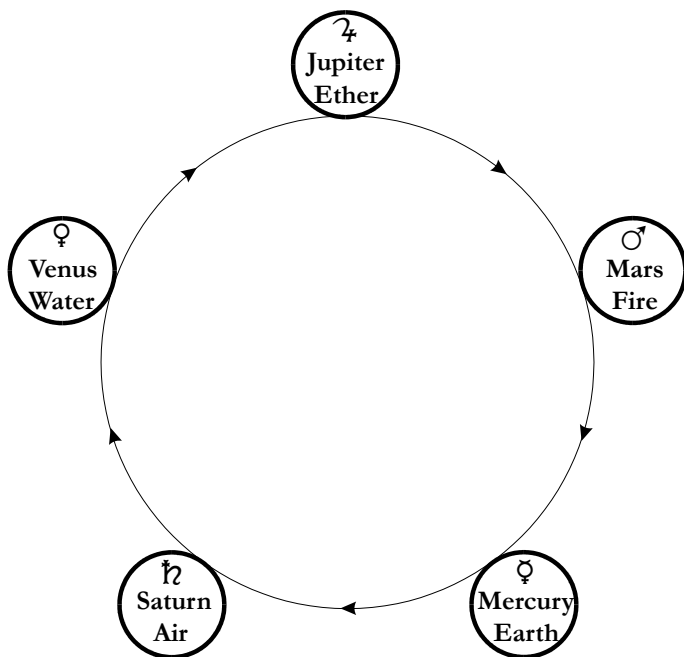
LIFE-PROMOTING CYCLE

The life force is Prana. Ether provides the housing for Prana, which vitalizes the Indriyas via Air, and matures via Fire. This Prana, which is now life, is maintained by Water and cohered into form, which is differentiated via Earth. While Ether provides the housing for the life force, the life force begins its generation of life at Air where it vitalizes the Indriyas. From Air, therefore, begins another important cycle of the elements, what we will call the Life-promoting Cycle, in which Air promotes Water which promotes

Ether which promotes Fire which promotes Earth which promotes Air.

Air – Water – Ether – Fire – Earth

This is a cyclical relationship as illustrated in the diagram below:



Life-promoting Cycle

If an element is weak, its life-generating element will be required to compensate for the deficiency and there will thus be a drain on the life-generating element. This cycle is very important and basic to medical astrology, but has its ramifications on all other things as well. If Saturn is weak and as a result one is fearful, then Mercury must provide greater material security, consistency and reliability to placate Saturn. If Venus is weak and as a result one is unfulfilled, not satiated and unable to find comfort in difficulties, then Saturn must provide greater detachment and perseverance. If Jupiter is

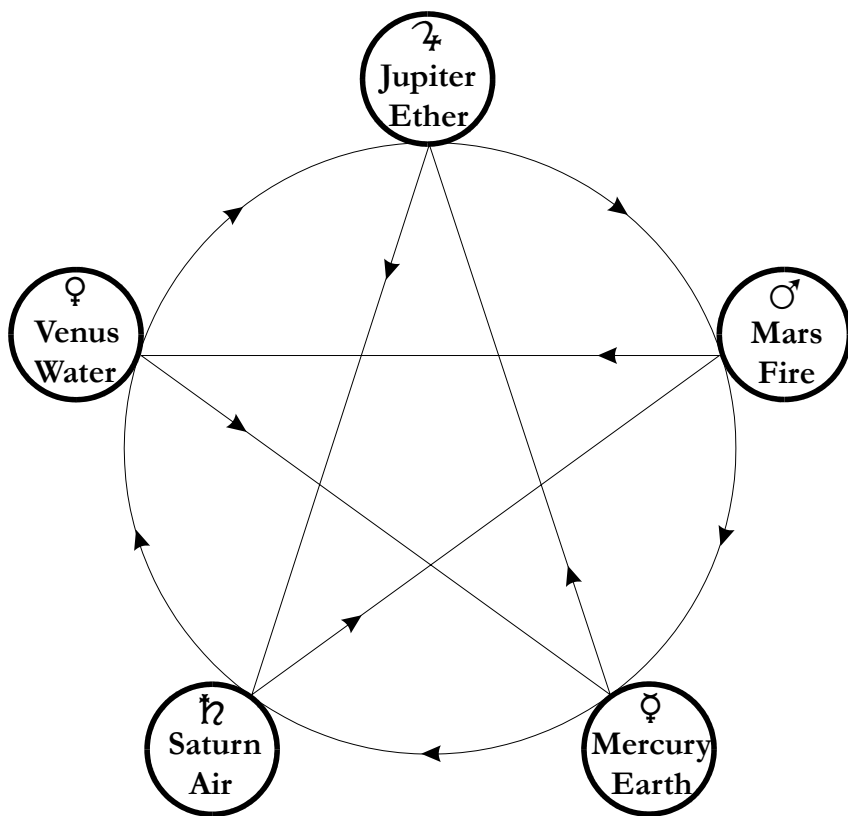
weak and as a result one is lacking hope or faith, then Venus must provide greater fulfillment and comfort so that one has some happiness as well as greater ease so that difficulties do not tax one's lack of faith. If Mars is weak and as a result one is slow to exert oneself, then Jupiter must provide greater luck so that things left undone do not become a source of harm as well as greater understanding and contentment with which to accept the difficulties that having an ineffective Mars will sooner or later cause. If Mercury is weak and as a result one is not an effective manager, then Mars will have to provide greater energy and logic with which to combat the difficulties that result from poor management.

INTERACTIONS OF THE VARIOUS CYCLES

The elements primarily interact in three different ways: Each element generates another element, as shown by the Generative Cycle: Ether generates Air generates Fire generates Water generates Earth. In the reverse these same elements dissolve into each other – Earth is dissolved into Water, Water is dissolved into Fire, Fire is dissolved into Air, and Air is dissolved into Ether. Thirdly, each element promotes the life of another element as shown by the Life-promoting Cycle: Air promotes Water, Water promotes Ether, Ether promotes Fire, and Fire promotes Earth. We have discussed how an afflicted, a weak or an excessive elemental Graha will disrupt or affect other elemental Grahas in accordance with these three cycles. Likewise, emphasizing any element through training, focus of will, gems, diet, etc. will have an effect upon the other elements. Thus emphasizing Water/Venus through the consumption of healthy vitalizing foods will promote the life of Jupiter and one will naturally feel more optimistic and happy. Emphasizing Water/Venus in this way will always generate more Earth/Mercury and so one will manage their affairs more effectively and be more grounded and efficient. Emphasizing Water/Venus in this way will also control Mars through the Dissolution Cycle and thus hunger, anger and excessive passion will be reduced.

Emphasizing just one element will thus affect three other elements, so only making slight improvements in life will improve things four-fold. God has created the elements to operate in this manner and thus it is said that if we only do 25%, God will do the rest.

The following diagram illustrates the combination of the different cycles.



The star indicates the Generative Cycle. Reversing the arrows in the star indicates the Dissolution Cycle. The Circle represents the Life-promoting Cycle.

The interactions of the five elements are simple though complex in their ramifications. Learning how the five elements interact will allow the astrologer to deeply see and understand the complexities of life in such a manner as will allow for the most simple and effective treatment and advice. This Five Elements chapter is a very long chapter in this text for a reason – learn the principles of the Five Elements well.

RESULTS OF THE FIVE ELEMENTS

In addition to learning about the interactions of the Five Elements, all the subtleties of which will take a lifetime of study, *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* provides some very simple and effective ways in which to apply the Five Elements.

अथ पञ्चमहाभूतच्छायाज्ञानं वदामि ते ।

ज्ञायते येन खेटानां वर्तमानदशा बुधैः ॥ १ ॥

atha pañcamahābūtacchāyājñānaṁ vadāmi te,
jñāyate yena khetānāṁ vartamānadaśā budhaiḥ.

“Now I tell the lustrous knowledge of the five great elements, by means of which the wise discern the present Dasa of the planets.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Results of the Five Elements, 1

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra devotes an entire chapter to the Five Elements. In this Sutra the Elements are called Bhutas, Bhuta meaning “real” and referring to the fact that all that is perceived as real is the result of the Five Elements, which operate through the Five Senses, the Five Organs of Action and the Five Objects of the Senses, as already explained.

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra declares that it is possible to determine the Dasa in which a person is by the effects of the Five Elements upon an individual; the method of which he provides later. First, he explains the significant effects of the Five Elements.

शिखिभूखाम्बुवातानामधिपा मङ्गलादयः ।

तत्तद्वलवशाज्ज्ञेयं तत्तद्भूतभवं फलम् ॥ २ ॥

śikhibhūkhāmbuvātānāmādhīpā maṅgalādayaḥ,
tattadbalaavaśājñeyaṁ tattadbhūtabhavaṁ phalam.

सबले मङ्गले वह्निस्वभावो जायते नरः ।

बुधे महीस्वभावः स्यादाकाशप्रकृतिगुरौ ॥ ३ ॥

ṣabale maṅgale vahnisvabhāvo jāyate naraḥ,
budhe mahīsvabhāvaḥ syādākāśaprakṛtīgurau.

शुक्रे जलस्वभावश्च मारुतप्रकृतिः शनौ ।

मिश्रैर्मिश्रस्वभावश्च विज्ञेयो द्विजसत्तम ॥ ४ ॥

śukre jalsvabhāvaśca mārutaprakṛtiḥ śanau,
miśrairmisrasvabhāvaśca vijñeyo dvijasattama.

सूर्ये वह्निस्वभावश्च जलप्रकृतिको विधौ ।

स्वदशायां ग्रहाश्छायां व्यञ्जयन्ति स्वभूतजाम् ॥ ५ ॥

sūrye vahnisvabhāvaśca jalaprakṛtiko vidhau,
svadaśāyāṁ grahāśchāyāṁ vyamjāyanti svabhūtajām.

“Fire, Earth, Elber, Water, Air are ruled by Mars, etc. The existent elemental effects are known from that which is strong at birth. The person born when Mars is with strength is of fiery nature, when Mercury of earthy nature; ethereal nature when Jupiter; when Venus of watery nature; windy nature when Saturn; when mixed of mixed nature is to be known O’ Good Twice Born. And during the Sun of fiery nature, watery nature during the Moon. The luster of the element of the Graba whose Dasa is running dominates.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Results of the Five Elements, 2-5

The strongest of the five elemental Grahas at birth will indicate an individual's dominant element. To determine the strongest of the Grahas for this purpose, examine the Shad Bala. Of the five elemental Grahas, the one with the highest measure of Shad Bala will indicate the dominant element.

In addition to an individual's inherent dominant element, during the Dasa of a Graha, the element of that Graha will increase in the individual. If the Dasa is of the Sun or Moon, neither of which rule an element, the Dasa of the Sun will give rise to Fire and the Dasa of the Moon will give rise to Water.

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra then continues to detail the effects of the individual's dominant element.

Fire Element Dominant

क्षुधार्तश्चपलः शूरः कृशः प्राज्ञोऽतिभक्षणः ।

तीक्ष्णो गौरतनुर्मानी वह्निप्रकृतिको नरः ॥ ६ ॥

kṣudhārtaścapalaḥ śūraḥ kṛśaḥ prājño'tibhakṣaṇaḥ,
tikṣṇo gauratanurmāni vahniprakṛtiko naraḥ.

“The fiery natured person is disturbed by hunger, moving to and fro, heroic, lean, filled with knowledge, eating exceedingly, sharp, fair bodied and of opinionated.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Results of the Five Elements, 6

The individual with the Fire element dominating has a very fast metabolism and so is hungry, though eating a lot. They maintain a lean body unless there are other metabolic disturbances. They are also hungry to do, act and perform and though doing more than the average person, they remain hungry to do more and rarely stop to indulge in their successes before venturing forever onwards. They are thus “moving to and fro.”

Fire spurs them forwards and thus grants them courage where others may fear or hesitate to go and thus the individual is “heroic.”

Being spurred forwards also causes them to be sharp and poignant in nature.

The Fire-dominated individual is very intelligent and knowledgeable, oftentimes surprisingly more so than their haphazard or “to and fro” manner would suggest. Fire, however, is intuitive and logical and so these individuals quickly learn anything that they put their minds to. Being intelligent and fired up, these individuals are strong minded and often opinionated.

Fire tends to lighten the complexion and thus these individuals are generally “fair bodied,” and thus more sensitive to the Sun. Having plenty of Fire within themselves, they require less heat and fire from the Sun.

Earth Element Dominant

कर्पूरोत्पलगन्धादयो भोगी स्थिरसुखी बली ।

क्षमावान् सिंहनादश्च महीप्रकृतिको नरः ॥ ७ ॥

karpūrotpalagandhādhyo bhogī sthīrasukhī bālī,
kṣamāvān simhanādaśca mahīprakṛtikō naraḥ.

“The earthly natured person is well endowed with camphorous and lotus smells, one who enjoys, firmly happy, strong and patient, with a lion’s roar.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Results of the Five Elements, 7

The individual with the Earth element dominating is secure and grounded and thus enjoys operating in the world, which they do competently and with little stress. These individuals more easily see the world in a healthy and proper perspective and are thus happy. Their outlook borders on the spiritual or is fully spiritual and thus they are said to have the smell of two spiritually symbolic substances: camphor and lotus.

The force of Earth is unalterable and thus produces strength to move mountains as well as patience to perform any task.

Earth-dominated individuals have a “lion’s roar,” which refers to the fact that that which they say is important and generally acknowledged. The listener will usually have regrets if what the Earth individual has to say is not acknowledged. Timid or shy Earth-dominated individuals may not speak much, but when they do, their words will prove important.

Ether Element Dominant

शब्दार्थवित् सुनीतिज्ञो प्रगल्भो ज्ञानसंयुतः ।

विवृतास्योऽतिदीर्घश्च व्योमप्रकृतिसम्भवः ॥ ८ ॥

śabdārthavit sunītijño pragalbho jñānasamyutah,
vivṛtāsyo’tidirghaśca vyomaprakṛtisambhavaḥ.

“The Ether originating is one wise in taking advantage from words, knowledgeable in policy/conduct, confident, joined with wisdom, open to that and very tall.”

Bṛihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Results of the Five Elements, 8

The individual with the Ether element dominating “is wise in taking advantage from words,” which is to say that the individual pays attention to the words he hears or reads and thus learns from them. Individuals with prominent Ether influence are also fine grammarians.

Ether creates an inner happiness from which blooms confidence and assurance as well as the ability to perform difficult tasks without worry. Ether also causes the individual to know proper conduct and to follow the policies necessary to fulfill their duties and activities.

From Ether comes all things and thus from Ether also comes the greatest wisdom. The Ether individual is, therefore, wise and, since Ether is expansive, always open to greater wisdom.

Ether is space and thus the Ether individual takes up more space and is taller. Their height is matched by their girth and so they are not tall skinny people, but rather tall and well-built individuals

Water Element Dominant

कान्तिमान् भारवाही च प्रियवाक् पृथिवीपतिः ।

बहुमित्रो मृदुर्विद्वान् जलप्रकृतिसम्भवः ॥ ९ ॥

kāntimān bhāravāhi ca priyavāk pṛthivīpatiḥ,
bahumitro mṛdurvadvān jalaprakṛtisambhavaḥ.

“The Water originating is lovely and burden bearing with affectionate speech, a lord of the Earth with many friends, gentle and learned.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Results of the Five Elements, 9

The individual with the Water element dominating is “lovely” on account of soft and gentle features. Their personality is likewise gentle and affectionate, thus they maintain well their friendships and so have many friends.

Water comforts and soothes and thus these individuals are capable of bearing great burdens. Water provides the comfort that allows them to carry great burdens with less strain. Wives, ruled by Venus, are able to bear the greatest burden of all – bearing children. All those things that allow one to carry burdens or bear difficulties more easily are also provided for by Water and thus ruled by Venus. Saddle blankets, cushions, and the shock absorbing soles in running shoes are just a few examples.

Water is both receptive and devotional in nature and thus these individuals learn well that which they are drawn towards. Devotion attunes their minds towards those studies which are dear to them, upon which they are receptive to the many truths of that which they study.

Water is very important on Earth, a fact which is shown by the Earth being largely covered with water, thus the Water element provides an innate knowledge of the affairs of the Earth. Venus, in fact, is considered to be full of worldly knowledge. The Water-element dominated person is thus considered a “lord of the Earth”

as their great worldly knowledge makes them very equipped to rise to the top.

Air Element Dominant

वायुतत्त्वाधिको दाता क्रोधी गौरोऽटनप्रियः ।

भूपतिश्च दुराधर्षः कृशाङ्गो जायते जनः ॥ १० ॥

vāyutattvādhiko dātā krodhī gauro'ṭanapriyaḥ,
bhūpatiśca durādharṣaḥ kṛśāṅgo jāyate janah

“The person born with an abundance of the air element is giving, angry, fair, fond of roaming about, a lord of the Earth, difficult to assail and thin bodied.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Results of the Five Elements, 10

The Air element has the responsibility of changing and displacing, thus the individual with the Air element dominant is always giving and roaming and traveling. For the same reason, the Air individual does not hold onto any extra weight and is thus thin in body.

Air gets stirred up quickly and thus these individuals are easy to anger. Their anger, however, becomes a source of strength that fuels their ambition and desires.

Air element individuals are said to be “difficult to assail.” This is very true. Air element individuals are hardy and tough – disease has a difficult time assailing their bodies. They are survivors and much more difficult to overcome than one would think. Mentally, they are also tough as well as tenacious debaters.

Success is a combination of two things: performing great deeds and not being held back. The individuals with the Air element strong do not allow themselves to be held back under any circumstances and thus their successes are more marked and so they are said to be “a lord of the Earth.”

Note: The effects indicated by the dominant element represent some of the individual's finest qualities. However, the individual will often not be of the exemplary quality described in the Sutras. The individual may simply be a less capable person as a whole, and thus their elemental capabilities will also be less. So when attributing the qualities of the dominant element to an individual, consider the elemental effects in respect to the horoscope, and thus the person, as a whole.

DASA EFFECTS OF THE FIVE ELEMENTS

The Five Elements have their ebbs and flows in the individual in accordance with the Dasa influence. The lord of the Dasa will indicate the element that is rising in the individual during any particular time. While the majority of the individual's characteristics will be indicated by the dominant element, the rising element, in accordance with the Dasa, will significantly influence the individual's life during that period.

The Dasa of the Sun will bring about the rise of the Fire element, the Moon that of the Water element, Rahu that of Saturn's element, Ketu that of Mars' element, and the other Grahas the element associated with them.

Fire Element – Dasas of the Sun and Mars

स्वर्णदीप्तिः शुभा दृष्टिः सर्वकार्यार्थसिद्धिता ।

विजयो धनलाभश्च वह्निभायां प्रजायते ॥ ११ ॥

svarnaḍiptiḥ śubhā dṛṣṭiḥ sarvakāryārthasiddhitā,
vijayo dhanalābhaśca vahnibhāyām prajāyate.

“Shining like gold, appearing auspicious, accomplishing all affairs engaged in, victorious and acquiring wealth when the brilliance of Fire is brought forth.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Results of the Five Elements, 11

The periods during which the Fire element is on the rise, particularly the periods of Mars and the Sun and secondarily that of Ketu, are the periods during which the most success and progress are possible in the least amount of time. Sudden and high rises are most possible in these periods, that is, if Mars or the Sun is in an angle or trine, strong in Shad Bala, and not unduly afflicted. If Mars or the Sun is afflicted by Krura Grahas, weak in Shad Bala, and in a Dusthana, the very opposite may happen; the individual may be unable to rise to the challenges of the Dasa and will instead lose wealth and be unable to accomplish any ambitions.

These periods of high Fire element influence are the periods during which one is most ready to follow their inspirations. Following one's inspiration charges the body and mind and thus energizes the body so that there will be health. If the Fire-causing Grahas are weak or afflicted, then inspirations will not move forward and the individual's foundation for life and health will not be developed, with the result that they will more easily succumb to physical ills.

Earth Element – Dasa of Mercury

इष्टगन्धः शरीरे स्यात् सुस्निग्धनखदन्तता ।

धर्मार्थसुखलाभश्च भूमिच्छाया यदा भवेत् ॥ १२ ॥

iṣṭagandhaḥ śarīre syāt susnigdhanakhadantatā,
ḍharmārthasukhalābaśca būmicchāyā yadā bhavet.

“Perhaps an agreeable scent to the body, glossiness of the nails and teeth and acquiring righteously gained happiness when the Earth luster is produced.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Results of the Five Elements, 12

The period during which the Earth element rises, namely the period of Mercury, is a period during which the individual may experience happiness in all their affairs, especially in the affairs that are interesting to them. Further, in finding happiness they will not

be a source of pain or trouble to others. This is the case if Mercury is well disposed, strong in Shad Bala and in an angle or trine. If, however, Mercury is weak in Shad Bala, in a Dusthana and afflicted by Krura Grahas, this will not be the case. Instead, they may experience trouble with others, even litigations, and poor planning will lead to stress and financial loss.

The period during which the Earth element rises is also the period during which the body is most able to build and store its wealth of health-producing minerals, which brings about the “glossiness of the nails and teeth.” Thus, this is often a period during which one’s diet improves. If Mercury is weak or afflicted, however, then the needed stores will not be replenished and the body will be left weaker to succumb to disease and disorders.

Ether Element – Dasa of Jupiter

स्वच्छा गगनजा छाया वाक्पटुत्वप्रदा भवेत् ।

सुशब्दश्रवणोद्भूतं सुखं तत्र प्रजायते ॥ १३ ॥

svacchā gaganajā chāyā vākpaṭutvaprada bhavet,
suśabdaśravaṇodbhūtaṁ sukhāṁ tatra prajāyate.

“When the clear luster of Ether is brought forth, eloquence is produced and by listening to and learning that which sounds well, happiness is then brought forth.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Results of the Five Elements, 13

The period during which Ether rises, namely the period of Jupiter, is a period during which an individual will expand their mind, consciousness and abilities as a result of being receptive to wisdom, guidance and instruction. All these things bring about the growth and expansion of the self, which brings about a sense of meaning and purpose. This is the case if Jupiter is strong in Shad Bala, not unduly afflicted and in an angle or trine. If Jupiter is weak, afflicted by Krura Grahas and in a Dusthana, then the individual may break from or be isolated from those truths that may expand

their life and consciousness. Or they may find themselves attempting to expand their life and consciousness in ways that will not result in a greater sense of meaning, understanding or truth. The individual may even follow precepts that are not suited for them or which are laced with falsehoods though appearing truthful.

Water Element – Dasa of the Moon Venus

मृदुता स्वस्थता देहे जलच्छाया यदा भवेत् ।

तदाऽभीष्टरसस्वादसुखं भवति देहिनः ॥ १४ ॥

mṛduta svasthata dehe jalacchāyā yadā bhavet,
tadā'bhiṣṭarasasvādasukham bhavati dehinaḥ.

*“Soft and healthy in body when the luster of Water is produced,
happiness upon the finest desirable flavors and becoming slender.”*

Bṛihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Results of the Five Elements, 14

The periods during which the Water element is increased, namely the periods of Venus and the Moon, are the periods during which healing takes place, whether of the body, mind or relationships. This is because it is the Water element's responsibility to regenerate and to nourish. If Venus or the Moon is strong in Shad Bala, not unduly afflicted and in an angle or trine, regeneration, nourishment and growth take place. If Venus or the Moon is afflicted by Krura Grahas, weak in Shad Bala, and especially if in a Dusthana, then the needed repair and regeneration of the body and mind will not take place and so the individual's health may suffer greatly.

Venus and the Moon, when well situated, are responsible for returning the body to a state of health, thus a person may become healthily slender in their periods. If, however, Venus or the Moon is afflicted, the very opposite may happen on account of hormonal imbalances and water retention.

Air Element – Dasa of Saturn

मालिन्यं मूढता दैन्यं रोगाश्च पवनोद्भवाः ।

तदा च शोकसन्तापौ वायुच्छाया यदा भवेत् ॥ १५ ॥

mālinyaṁ mūḍhatā dainyaṁ rogāśca pavanodbhavāḥ,
tadā ca śokasantāpau vāyucchāyā yadā bhavet.

“Impurity, ignorance/degeneracy, depression and disease when Wind is produced, and then pain and burning.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Results of the Five Elements, 15

The periods during which the Air element rises, namely the period of Saturn and secondarily that of Rahu, are periods during which the body most easily succumbs to disease. Saturn and Rahu in a Dusthana, weak in Shad Bala, or afflicted by Krura Grahas will particularly indicate this. These periods are especially difficult for health when they come later in life. Any disease causing tendencies which are found in the horoscope tend to manifest during the Dasas of Saturn and Rahu.

The rise of the Air element also reveals to the individual their weaknesses, inabilities and complexes and so it can be an emotionally trying time. These are the times during which the individual has to find happiness inwardly, or else face depression.

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Elemental Grahas

एवं फलं बुधैर्ज्ञेयं सबलेषु कुजादिषु ।

निर्बलेषु तथा तेषु वक्तव्यं व्यत्ययाद् द्विज ॥ १६ ॥

evaṁ phalaṁ budhairjñeyaṁ sabaleṣu kujādiṣu,
nirbaleṣu tathā teṣu vaktavyaṁ vyatyayād dvija.

“In this manner results should be known by the wise when Mars, etc. are with strength. No strength to those, then what has been said is reversed, O’ Twice Born.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Results of the Five Elements, 16

All the favorable effects that may be produced upon the rise of an element only happen if the Graha causing the rise is strong in Shad Bala, in an angle or trine, and not unduly afflicted by Krura Grahās. A Graha in a Dusthana, afflicted by Krura Grahās, and/or weak in Shad Bala will produce the opposite effects and troubles as a result.

नीचसञ्चुभगैश्चापि विपरीतं फलं वदेत् ।

फलाप्तिरबलैः खैटैः स्वप्नचिन्तासु जायते ॥ १७ ॥

nīcasatrubhagaīścāpi viparītaṁ phalaṁ vadet,
phalāptirabalaīḥ khetaīḥ svapnacintāsu jāyate.

“And also standing in debilitation or enemy house the stated effects are reversed. The planet deprived of results without strength lives only in dreams and thoughts.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Results of the Five Elements, 17

A Graha in inimical Rasi or in debilitation cannot give good effects due to its element and will actually give effects that are a result of an elemental imbalance or weakness. Examine this in not only the Rasi chart but also the other Vargas. Any Varga in which the Graha is debilitated or in an enemy's Rasi will be a Varga in which that element will fail the individual. The results of which will be that the individual will suffer ill consequences in respect to the indications of that Varga.

तदुष्टफलशान्त्यर्थमपि चाज्ञातजन्मनाम् ।

फलपत्त्या दशा ज्ञेया वर्तमाना नभःसदाम् ॥ १८ ॥

tadduṣṭaphalaśāntyarthamapi cājñātajanmanām,
phalapaktyā daśā jñeyā vartamānā nabhaḥ sadām.

“That malignant affecting needs pacifying and the birth time not being known, the present Dasa can always be connected to the effects and known.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Results of the Five Elements, 18

By a careful examination of the individual's changing traits and health, the element that is on the rise will be apparent and thus the experienced astrologer can determine the Dasa even without a horoscope. This is especially important if the individual is suffering troubles, in which case they will be in need of pacifying some Graha. By determining the element whose weakness or affliction is causing the problems, the astrologer can recommend suitable remedies.

If the individual is unable to follow their inspirations due to low confidence, low energy or frustrating circumstances, the results of which will be that the energizing life force will not flow freely in the body, then the fire element will need remedying through measures to pacify Mars such as given in the *Graha Shanti* chapter towards the end of this text.

If the individual is unable to strengthen their body through good nutrition or if they find themselves unable to absorb the nutrients from their food, then the Earth element will be in need of strengthening through the measures used to pacify Mercury.

If the individual is unable to find happiness in anything due to there being a lack of meaning and purpose or due to philosophical confusion, or if they are consuming excess sugary foods, then the Ether element will be in need of strengthening through the measures used to pacify Jupiter.

If the individual is unable to heal from emotional or physical ills or if their body is unable to regenerate or grow strong, then the Water element will be in need of strengthening through the measures used to pacify Venus.

If the individual is unable to withstand stress and hardships to the mind or body and as a result suffers from depression or illness,

then the Air element will be in need of strengthening through the measures used to pacify Saturn.

FIVE ELEMENTS AND THE CHINESE SYSTEM

The five elements of the Hindu system are the same as the five elements of the Chinese system; only some go by a different name:

Hindu Element	Chinese Element
Ether	Wood
Air	Metal
Fire	Fire
Water	Water
Earth	Earth

11

Caste

गुरुशुक्रौ विप्रवर्णौ कुजाकौ क्षत्रियौ द्विज ।

शशिसोम्यौ वैश्यवर्णौ शनिः शूद्रो द्विजोत्तम ॥ २१ ॥

guruśukrau vipravarnau kujārkau kṣatriyau dvija,
śaśisomyau vaiśyavarnau śaniḥ śūdro dvijottama.

“Jupiter and Venus are of the Wise (Brahmin) caste, Mars and the Sun are Kshatriyas, O’ Twice Born; the Moon and Mercury are Vaishya caste and Saturn is a Sudra, O’ Good Twice Born.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 21

The caste system is an ancient method of grouping individuals of like-minded nature and tendency. The caste system groups people into four different classes: Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra. The Brahmin caste is considered the most evolved, followed by the Kshatriya, Vaishya and finally the Sudra caste.

All people are multidimensional, but each person will have dominant qualities that are innate to their individuality and it is due to these dominant characteristics that they are grouped according to a certain caste. Since the origination of this concept, the caste system has become corrupt and dependent upon birth instead of innate nature and has, therefore, been a source of unfairness and social restriction. However, the original idea of the four-caste system is at least as good of a concept as any of the methods of categorizing man that the modern psychologist and sociologists have developed.

The *Bhagavad Gita* gives descriptions of the four castes.

Brahmins – Jupiter and Venus

“Mind control, sense control, self-discipline, purity, forgiveness, honesty, wisdom, self-realization, and faith in a hereafter constitute the duties of Brahmins, springing from their own nature.”

Bhagavad Gita: 18.42

Brahmins are those that have the innate desire to learn and gain knowledge or those who are particularly empathetic to the plight of mankind. Ultimately the Brahmins’ goal is Moksha – spiritual liberation – as the devoted study of any subject results in the realization that perfect knowledge comes only from God. Those of Brahmin mentality serve society best as teachers, scientists, counselors and authors of philosophical and scientific texts. However, it is the mentality that determines a person’s caste, not the work in which they find themselves. The person whose mind is naturally attracted towards acquiring knowledge and spiritual realization is a person of Brahmin mentality. Spiritually, Brahmins are those who know the Brahman, the absolute aspect of God. The greatest enemy of Brahmins is the pride that having knowledge can result in if it is not pursued with humility.

Jupiter and Venus are the two Brahmin Grahas. Jupiter is the spiritual philosopher, the spiritual teacher, spiritual counselor and the author of philosophical texts. Venus is the mundane teacher, the advisor on worldly affairs, the college professor, the scientist and the author of scientific and educational texts.

Kshatriyas – Sun and Mars

“Valor, radiance, resolute endurance, skillfulness, not fleeing from battle, generosity, and leadership are the natural duties of the Kshatriyas”

Bhagavad Gita: 18.43

Kshatriyas are those that have an innate desire to lead, promote ideals and protect their fellow man. Ultimately, the Kshatriyas goal is to act in accordance with Dharma – with some greater ideal. Dharma guides the Kshatriya in his actions so that he makes the

correct decisions when called upon to make the difficult decisions that leaders must make. Kshatriyas serve society best as policeman, firefighters, government officials and soldiers. However, anyone who has the mentality to protect and lead is a person of Kshatriya mentality. Will is the primary characteristic of Kshatriyas, which not only helps them to lead and protect but, more importantly, helps them to live in accordance with their principles. Spiritually, Kshatriyas are sense-fighters, those who struggle to overcome the desires of the senses. The greatest enemy of Kshatriyas is anger, which is the result of being attached to the results of their duties, so they must learn to fulfill their duties with detachment.

The Sun and Mars are the Kshatriya Grahas. The Sun is the leader, politician and promoter of ideals. Mars is the protector, firefighter, soldier and policeman.

Vaishyas – Moon and Mercury

“Tilling the soil, cattle breeding, and business are the natural duties of the Vaishyas.”

Bhagavad Gita: 18.44

Vaishyas are those that have an innate desire to gain or to promote some aspect of themselves while at the same time being of benefit to others. Due to this, Vaishyas take pride in their work or skills and thus do the very best that their ability allows. The Vaishyas' primary goal is Artha, which translates roughly as gain but also includes fulfilling one's responsibility towards one's fellow man. Artha also has the goal of fulfilling one's desires while learning to control the senses, such as a gentleman of taste and refinement would display. Vaishyas serve society best as businessmen, engineers, craftsman, artists, athletes, doctors, agriculturists, food vendors, office managers, reporters, authors of novels, actors, musicians and all other professions requiring skill. Actors, athletes, artists, musicians and Vaishya-type authors all excel in promoting themselves as unique individuals through their unique skills while providing the benefits of entertainment to their fellow man. Any

person who mentality is most focused on developing their skills and living a productive and gainful life for both themselves as well as others is a person of Vaishya mentality. Spiritually, Vaishyas are preparing themselves for a more earnest spiritual effort through learning and cultivating wisdom. The Vaishya's active engagement in the world offers plenty of opportunity for this. The danger of Vaishyas is to become caught up in the very interesting world, which they must some day leave, without remembering who is the source and cause of it all.

The Moon and Mercury are the Vaishya Grahas. These two Grahas find it important to take care of themselves, but they are both social Grahas and so they also wish to take care of their fellow man or be of benefit or use to their fellow man. Both the Moon and Mercury are doctors, food vendors, agriculturists, authors and journalists. Musicians are ruled by the Moon, which gives them rhythm. Mercury rules businessmen, athletes, artists, craftsmen, managers and actors.

Sudras – Saturn

“Actions that are of service to others are the natural duty of the Sudras”

Bhagavad Gita: 18.44.5

Sudras are those who have an innate desire to fulfill the simple desires of the senses, eating, procreation and the desire for entertainment or those that want the immediate realization of their desires. The Sudras' primary goal is Kama, which is the desire for and activity of the life of the senses. Sudras differ from Vaishyas in that Vaishyas are educated and knowledgeable about those things that they hope to gain, while the desire of a Sudra is for the raw sense pleasure alone. As an example, a Vaishya with a fondness for alcohol will have knowledge of wines and even have a wine cellar of exotic wines if he can afford it, while the Sudra with a fondness for alcohol will only know the alcohol. Sudras serve society best as unskilled laborers, crop pickers, servants, etc. in short, largely through bodily labor. However, anyone whose mentality is mostly

drawn towards the immediate enjoyment of worldly pleasures is a person of Sudra mentality. Spiritually, Sudras are body bound and cannot make much spiritual advancement on their own. Their spiritual development comes largely through the company they keep and thus it is a fortunate Sudra who has the company of those wiser and more evolved than himself. The Sudras must be cautious not to waste their life away in oversleeping or idleness that would prevent them from bettering themselves in some manner. In other words, they should make what efforts of self-development that they can, which will usually revolve around physical self-development or the development of any talents that they have.

Saturn is the one Sudra Graha. Saturn rules all those who have the simple aptitude of finishing a good day's work so that they can enjoy the few good things in life.

In ancient days, each of these castes was respected, as each caste was important towards creating and sustaining a healthy society. The lowest of the four castes, the Sudras were not considered an undesirable caste. Useless members of society, which were useless due to extreme laziness, bad attitudes, begging mentality, etc., were considered separate, undesirable castes. The four castes, however, worked together to achieve a better society. The higher castes respected the lower castes and understood that it was not many lifetimes ago that they themselves had the mentality of a lower caste and that if they squandered their God-given abilities, they would likely find themselves with a lesser mentality in a future birth. The higher caste accepted members of the lower caste knowing that each was doing the best that they could do with their God-given abilities and God-given innate natures. In time, each individual would evolve until each becomes an enlightened Brahmin.

If we were to study modern society in the context of the four caste system, we would quickly realize that most of the problems in today's society are the result of many involving themselves in roles that are for a higher or lower caste than their innate nature provides. We have Vaishyas in political offices since the modern

method of campaigning requires the politician to be self-promoting, so positions are won through presenting an image rather than earned by one's service to Dharma. This results in leaders who are not Kshatriyas and not following some principle of Dharma, but instead following the Vaishya duty of self-promotion and gain, and though they attempt to be of benefit to their fellow man, if they do not follow some principle of Dharma, they can never be of true benefit to those they lead. We have Sudras who call themselves artists, a Vaishya role, who sit around waiting for something exciting instead of spending eight hours a day developing their skills. We have Sudras becoming businessmen, engineers and technicians who are not as concerned with the quality of their product or the quality of their work as they are with getting done with work so that they can go enjoy themselves. We have Kshatriyas who are idealistic and want to lead and protect becoming teachers and not having the patience and wisdom with which to accept and properly guide their students, so these "teachers" become angry and frustrated with their jobs. (The person of Brahmin mentality does not get frustrated with his students because he sees God behind everything and realizes there is nothing to achieve in teaching other than to take the action of teaching.) We have Brahmins taking on Vaishya duties, since modern governments and well-to-do Vaishyas do not fund enough religious and scientific projects. The caste is determined by the dominant mentality of a person; any person who is a teacher has some desire for knowledge, but is that his dominant desire? Or is mutual gain the dominant desire? Finally, as a student of astrology, we will even come across Vaishyas trying to be astrologers, who learn astrology as a skill that interested them at some time but who have a much greater desire for gain than for knowledge and spend more time figuring how to promote their business and spend the money they earn through their consultations than they do studying astrology or developing their spiritual practices. Those who are truly suited for Brahmin-type careers are those who spend their lives studying the unfathomable knowledge of their profession, whether it is a science,

religion, psychology, mathematics or astrology, or those who spend their lives developing their spiritual practice.

Perhaps if we lived in a society where people accepted themselves and each other, a person would not have the motivation to occupy themselves in some field that there are not truly suited for, and instead keep their minor interests as hobbies. So a Sudra would not have to pretend to be an artist just because they do not feel accepted as a Sudra, instead, they could live a good and productive life as a Sudra. As the concluding chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita* states:

“Better than the well-accomplished duty of another is one’s own duty, even though lacking in merit. He who performs the duty decreed by his inborn nature contracts no sin.”

Bhagavad Gita: 18.47

“O’ Offspring of Kunti (Arjuna), one should not abandon one’s inborn duty, even though it has some imperfection, for all undertakings are marred by blemishes, as flame by smoke.”

Bhagavad Gita: 18.48

“O’ Offspring of Kunti, shackled by thine own Karma, inborn in thy nature, what though delusion you would not do, though will helplessly be compelled to do.”

Bhagavad Gita: 18.60

This last Sutra has particular importance in the context of a person maintaining the integrity of the caste innate to their mentality. If a person attempts to operate in the field of a higher caste than their nature makes them fit for, it will only be a matter of time before they are operating at the level that their nature makes them suited for. Thus a person of Vaishya mentality may aspire to gain knowledge and help his fellow man and thus take the profession of a Brahmin, but in time his natural tendencies will preclude that he will think more of promoting his abilities than of developing his knowledge and the service he had hoped to provide to humanity out of his innate love and compassion. Neither should

a person attempt to operate in a field of a lower caste than their nature makes them fit for, or else they will soon feel great lack and purposelessness in their life. A person must be honest with him or herself and find happiness in him or herself as they are, or else all work that they do, no matter how seemingly beneficial can only become a source of ill.

Occasionally, an individual may find themselves at a level of mental development that is almost fifty/fifty; they may be equally suited for two castes. At this point it can be quite difficult for the person to know which path to take. The spirit of surrender, carefully watching one's mind to see what it is aspiring towards, and a bit of patience will reveal the correct path in these instances.

RAHU AND KETU'S CASTE

The four castes are all considered important for the healthy maintenance of society. Then there are those individuals who do not fall into one of these four castes; these are ruled by Rahu and Ketu.

राहुश्चाण्डालजातिश्च केतुर्जात्यन्तरस्तथा ।

rāhuścāṇḍalajātiśca keturjātyantarastathā,

"Rahu is born a Chandala, Ketu is of different castes."

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 41

Rahu rules Chandalas. Chandala means, "the worst," and refers to those who are of no benefit to society and which are, therefore, only a burden to society. Those who only do ill or cause damage and who are not productive are Chandalas. Individuals who become mentally ill to the point that they can perform no duties or give no love to anyone and those addicts who can likewise perform no duties and give no love are Chandalas.

Ketu is of different castes. In ancient days, this means to be born from parents of different castes, where the mother was of the higher caste. It is always, however, the innate nature that is important and thus Ketu rules those that are equally split in tendencies so that it becomes difficult to find happiness in the field of either caste. Thus Ketu rules those that find it difficult to find their place in the world and they stand out as eccentrics or unusual people in their careers. Those individuals strongly influenced by Ketu find it difficult to fit in the world and must come to terms with themselves if they are to find happiness.

Budha



“Wearing yellow garlands and clothes, brilliant like a Karnika flower, handling a sword, shield and mace, on a lion and blessing is Mercury.”

Guna

जीवसूर्येन्द्रवः सत्त्वं बुधशुक्रौ रजस्तथा ।

सूर्यपुत्रधरापुत्रौ तमः प्रकृतिकौ द्विज ॥ २२ ॥

jīvasūryendravah sattvaṁ budhaśukrau rajastathā,
sūryaputradharāputrau tamaḥ prakṛtikau dvija.

“Jupiter, the Sun and Moon are Sattva, Mercury and Venus are Rajas, and Saturn and Mars are Tamas in nature, O’ Twice Born.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 22

The Guna is the activating quality that spurs one towards activity. There are three Gunas: Sattva, Rajas and Tamas.

SATTVA

Sattva literally means “true essence” and alludes to strength of character, wisdom and goodness. Actions that are done with the motivation of strengthening one’s character, the motivation of developing and dispersing wisdom and love, and those actions which are motivated by one’s true nature or inspiration are Sattva.

Actions that are performed out of Sattva are those actions which are innate to the individual. Sattva-motivated actions will thus always be inspiring and fulfilling to the individual, come what may in their life. An individual who practices spiritual activities out of love and devotion and not out of fear will always practice spiritual activities, no matter where they find themselves. An individual who takes up a study on account of inspiration and not out of attempting to prove themselves will always enjoy and find meaning in the study. Jupiter, the Sun and Moon are the Sattva Grahas.

Jupiter

Jupiter is full of knowledge and thus his actions are motivated by the desire to disperse his knowledge. Being full of knowledge, Jupiter reaches for the high things in life while simply accepting the low and difficult things in life. Jupiter is the Graha of purpose and so Jupiter motivates by inspiring meaning in one's life. The purpose that Jupiter inspires one towards is that which is based on one's innate and God-given nature and which cannot fail; as compared to those purposes that are motivated by emptiness and lack, which are never fulfilling. If Jupiter is well situated in the horoscope, a person feels an innate sense of purpose; they feel that which they are inspired towards is worth doing and so live life fully. If Jupiter is poorly situated in the horoscope, a person questions if that which they are inspired towards is even worth doing and often doubting their purpose they live life haphazardly or slothfully.

Sun

The Sun is a noble Graha that causes each person to be the best that they can be. The Sun is the king, or noble leader who is inspired to care for those he loves and thus disperses love the way a leader cares for his people. The Sun is the Atman, the Self, and thus can only motivate a person by the inspiration that comes from their true self. A person with a well-situated Sun in their horoscope is able to follow their inspirations, while a person with a poorly situated Sun in their horoscope doubts their qualities and is thus unable to follow their inspirations.

Moon

The Moon is, "full of knowing" and a very social Graha that naturally disperses its goodness when opportunity provides. Being a social Graha, it is also motivated by the dispersion of love. The Moon craves being bonded to something greater than itself and is thus drawn towards higher things to which it can attach itself. The Moon is important for following one's inspirations by being the

imagination that envisions the inspirations. When the Moon is well situated in the horoscope a person is able to maintain the vision of their inspirations and is thus happy and motivated. If the Moon is poorly situated a person is unable to maintain the vision of the great things they hope to do or the great person they hope to become and they thus suffer depression.

TAMAS

Tamas literally means darkness and alludes to the idea of hell and the negative emotions such as anger, depression and addiction. Actions that are done in order to remove oneself from the many “hells” or sufferings of life or those done to rid oneself of negative emotions are those actions that are motivated by Tamas – by the idea that there is suffering and that there is “darkness” to avoid. If we look at our lives closely we will see that many of the good things that we do are done more to remove ourselves from misery than they are done to create any good, they are in fact motivated by Tamas. Mars and Saturn are the Tamas Grahas that motivate us to overcome the difficulties and ills of the world.

Actions that are motivated by Tamas are taken only so long as the ill reason for taking those actions exists. When the ill reasons are no longer present, the action is ceased. When an individual exerts themselves to break down a door to get out of a burning house, their exertions will subside as soon as they find their way to safety. Likewise, if someone pursues their spiritual life out of fear of death, when the fear of death leaves them their spiritual activities will subside. If a relationship is pursued due to inner emptiness, when the inner emptiness is overcome the motivation to have the relationship will subside.

Mars

Mars represents all those difficulties and troubles that action will resolve. If one is physically threatened, The Tamasic nature of Mars motivates one to overcome or avoid the threat. If failure

threatens, Mars rushes in to avoid the failure. If there is competition and the potential for loss, Mars makes the best effort to win. If one is weak, Mars helps a person develop strength by training and other disciplined actions. In all these examples, Mars is used when there are very tangible problems; however, Mars is constantly being used in similar, though smaller activities throughout the day.

Mars is also used in our daily life by identifying problems. All day long we see things that we think are wrong or which should not be. Right or wrong, things are as they are in accordance with God's design, but our understanding may not allow for them to be acceptable and thus we find a large portion of our lives filled with frustrations over the way things are. The Tamasic nature of Mars inclines him to desire to overcome these things. The normal way in which this is attempted is by changing them, which is a good way if these things are one's duties, but if they are not, then it is a very poor way indeed. The other way to change these things is to change the understanding of things by allowing for acceptance and by filling the mind with the child like quality of innocence. By doing this we use the presiding deity of Mars, the seven-day-old infant Kartikeya to create peace in our minds.

Saturn

Saturn rules all of those troubles in life that can never be overcome, but which can only be kept at bay or persevered. Whereas the battles of Mars can be won, Saturn's are never won; at best they are not lost. One of primary ills of life that cannot be overcome is death; death will come, eventually, to all. Saturn cannot overcome this fact, but, he can adopt simple living habits that promote longevity. If one suffers from losing a beloved, whether to death or to fate, what can be done? Nothing – he or she will never be returned. In this case Saturn helps us to persevere despite the pain of the loss. All people have lost something dear and all have failed in something greatly important. Persevering is one way, regret is the other option, but the best option is to use Saturn's growth-promoting presiding deity, Vishnu, the absolute aspect of God who

has manifested himself as everyone and all in creation. Vishnu, through Saturn, helps us be happy with loss. What is one man's loss is another's gain, what is the difference? In either case it is Vishnu who gains and Vishnu who loses. A woman can only be loved by one man, what is the difference? Vishnu can only be with her as one man, and whether it is he or I it matters not at all. In this way Saturn provides for true detachment.

RAJAS

Rajas literally means "mist" and creates the illusion that one is the doer instead of that being done. All actions that are done with the consciousness of, "I am doing..." are those actions that are tinged with Rajas. These actions are "misted" because the person believes that he is the doer of the action instead of realizing that the action actually acts upon him. Due to believing that one is the doer, one becomes passionate – passionately excited about those things that they like to do, passionately angry or upset about those things that they do not want to do, and passionately frustrated or upset when mistakes are made. Rajas tinges all actions, whether actions performed out of inspiration, love, fear, pain, etc. with attachment. Mercury and Venus are the two Rajas Grahas.

Mercury

Mercury is the Graha that is responsible for manifesting the many things in life and for bringing anything to concrete realization. Mercury does this by ruling the many things that are done to make something happen. For instance, if one wishes to purchase an automobile, one must first travel (Mercury) to the auto dealer. Then one must study the details (Mercury) of the different automobiles. Then one must experiment (Mercury) with the different models by test driving them. Finally, the selling contract (Mercury) is signed and the transaction (Mercury) of purchasing the automobile is complete. So it is in every aspect of life and so Mercury is constantly used throughout the day. The Rajas quality of Mercury

makes us believe that we are doing all of these things, when in fact it is God who is doing all of these things. Because we think that we are doing so much and that we are responsible for so many things to do, we often feel overwhelmed and stressed by our daily lives, especially if Mercury is weak or afflicted.

Venus

Venus is the Graha of choice that helps us decide what is worth doing. Throughout the day, we make countless decisions, small decisions such as, “Should I go and have lunch now, or should I finish up this bit of work?” Venus decides if having lunch now is a more worthwhile activity or if finishing up the work is a more worthwhile activity. We also make big decisions in life that Venus is equally responsible for, such as, “Should I marry this girl and settle down, or would I be happier taking the job in Europe?” The Rajas quality of Venus makes us believe that we are making all of these decisions and thus we get passionate about them, when in fact, it is God that is making all of these decisions.

Rajas is part of every action we take, including those actions motivated by Sattva and Tamas and thus Mercury and Venus are involved in all of our actions. If Sattva prompts us to go to the temple, we still must travel (Mercury) to the temple, and we must still decide (Venus) which temple to attend. If Tamas prompts us to seek medical care for an illness, we must still decide (Venus) which type of treatment to take and then make an appointment (Mercury) to see the doctor or healer.

A person becomes spiritually realized upon becoming free from the Gunas, which means to become detached from the desire and need to do uplifting actions (Sattva) and also detached from the desire and need for actions that remove suffering (Tamas). The key to doing this is to become free from Rajas, free from the mentality that one is the doer, upon which an individual becomes detached and a man of non-action, though many great and small things happen in his life. This is, of course, not easy. As always, the cure is

in the cause and so the Rajas Grahas provide the answer. Through Mercury, whose presiding deity is Vishnu, the absolute aspect of God who has manifested himself as all in creation, one can learn to see God as everything in life. Through Venus, whose presiding deity is Lakshmi, who though able to bestow all worldly gifts she herself only clings with devotion to the chest of Lord Vishnu, one can cultivate love towards God until having no need or desire to make decisions, the same way that one completely in love has no need to make decisions other than that of following the beloved.

Note: In respect to all three of the Gunas, the Gunas of the Grahas in no way influence whether a person does a good or bad deed, the Gunas only reveal the motivation for what one does. Many, many ill deeds have been done by those motivated to create a good society (motivated by Sattva) while others have performed many good deeds with the same motivation. Many good deeds have been performed by those motivated to avoid suffering (motivated by Tamas), so also have many bad deeds been done with the same motivation. So it is not the Guna that indicates the quality of what one does, rather it is the high or low behavior that one is operating under that determines one's deeds. The high or low behavior that one is operating under is astrologically determined by determining the well-being of the Grahas, thus any Graha, whether Sattva, Rajas or Tamas, may be indicative of high or low behavior.

IMPORTANCE OF SATTVA GRAHAS

There are more Sattva Grahas than there are either Rajas Grahas or Tamas Grahas. This is because the natural state of Man is that of Sattva. The natural state of man is to be an inspired source of love and knowledge. In practice, we find that this is rarely so. The reason it is not so is because of the corruption of Sattva. The three Sattva Grahas: the Sun, Moon and Jupiter all represent important parts of the self. The Sun is self-esteem, the Moon is self-image and Jupiter is self-knowledge. Self-esteem gives strength for

noble actions. Self-image gives the ability to see the true image of oneself in the context of all other things. Self-knowledge gives the intuitive knowing without which no words, no love, no reason, no thought and no purpose feels true. When Sattva becomes corrupted, Man attempts to compensate for his lack and thus performs activities that are troublesome.

If the Sun is poorly situated, Sattva becomes corrupted and a person has poor self-esteem which results in their not having the courage to do the noble things that they are inspired to. Feeling like a failure, no concentrated effort is made to better themselves or to provide for others. Instead, one gets attached to the moment's distraction, pretending it to be important so as to believe they have something worth doing, when in fact, they are not doing what they are inspired to do; thus life has become motivated by Rajas and not by Sattva. Not following one's inspiration, life becomes toil to be escaped and thus life is motivated by Tamas and not by Sattva.

If the Moon is poorly situated, Sattva becomes corrupted and a person has a poor self-image that causes them to see themselves in a worse light than they actually are. Seeing themselves in a poor light, the need to prove oneself arises and one becomes unhappily attached to their actions; thus life is motivated by Rajas and not by Tamas. Seeing themselves in a poor light, they do not believe that they will be taken care of by life and by others and so worry and anxiety arise until life becomes one long battle to avoid trouble and difficulties that are more in the mind than in the environment. Thus life has become motivated by Tamas and not by Sattva. Many difficulties seen in the environment will be the threat of others who may get something that the person themselves desires and thus others become a source of competition rather than a source of love and thus life is motivated by Tamas and not by Sattva.

If Jupiter is poorly situated, Sattva becomes corrupted and a person is unable to realize the truth of things. Being unable to realize the truth of things, one cannot fulfill the inspirations of greatest truth, namely realizing and dispersing love and knowledge. Not realizing the truth of realizing and dispersing love and

knowledge, one resorts to lesser things with attachment or imagines themselves to be realizing and dispersing love and truth when in fact it is not so since the true inner realization is not present. In either case, life is motivated by Rajas and not by Sattva. Being unable to realize the truth of things, one does not see his true place in the context of things and life loses its sense of purpose until the only motivation is to avoid death and so life is motivated by Tamas and not by Sattva.

The Sun, Moon and Jupiter are the important Grahas for creating a good and solid character. If these Grahas are well-situated in the horoscope, a person does no ill deeds and all afflictions in the horoscope become as naught to them as they will have confidence, proper regard for themselves and proper understanding of themselves. If these Grahas are poorly situated, a person feels empty, insecure and lacking. These ill feelings are at the root of all unhappiness, producing behaviors from selfishness to addictions.

Astronomical Characteristics of the Grahas

	Sun	Moon	Mars	Mercury	Jupiter	Venus	Saturn	Earth
Mean Distance from Sun	N/A	App. the same as Earth	227,941,040 km	57,910,000 km	778,330,000 km	108,200,000 km	1,426,940,000 km	149,600,000 km
Sidereal Period of Revolution	N/A	27.3217 Days	686.980 Days	87.9694 Days	11.86 yrs	224.7 Days	29.46 Years	365.256 Days
Mean Synodic Period	N/A	29.531 Days	779.94 Days	116 Days	>1 year	584 Days	>1 year	N/A
Inclination of Orbit to Ecliptic	N/A	N/A	1.850°	7.004°	1.3°	3.4°	2.5°	Cause of Ecliptic
Mean Orbital Velocity	N/A	N/A	24.1 km/s	48 km/s	13.06 km/s	35 km/s	9.67 km/s	29.79 km/s
Eccentricity of Orbit	N/A	0.055	0.093	0.206	.048	0.007	0.056	0.0167
Tilt of Axis		1.5°	24.936°	0°	3.12°	177.36°	25.33°	23.45°
Axial Rotation Period	25 Days at equator, 35 at pole	27.322 Days	24h 37m 23s	58.6461 Days	9hrs 50 min at equator.	243 Days (opposite)	10h 39.4 min	23h 56m 4s
Diameter	1,390,000 km	3,476 km	6793.8 km	4,878 km \pm 2km	142,984 km	12,102.5 km	120,536 km	12,756.28 km
Mass	1.989e30 kg	7.353e22 kg	6.418e23 kg	3.30e26 kg	18.99e26 kg	4.87e24 kg	5.685e26 kg	5.976e24 kg
Density	1.41 g/cm ³	3.34 g/cm ³	3.9 g/cm ³	5.44 g/cm ³	1.33 g/cm ³	5.24 g/cm ³	0.69 g/cm ³	5.52 g/cm ³
Surface Gravity		162 cm/s ²	372 cm/s ²	370 cm/s ²	2,2888 cm/s ²	860 cm/s ²	896-1,214 cm/s ²	980 cm/s ²
Primary Composition	Hydrogen	Silicates	Silicates Iron Sulphur	Iron Nickel Silicates	Hydrogen Helium	Silicates Iron Nickel	Hydrogen Helium	Silicates Iron Nickel
Moons	N/A	N/A	2	none	16	none	>20	1

A study of the astronomical characteristics has much to reveal about the Grahas.

Description of the Grahās

Bṛihat Parashara Hora Śāstra, as well as most classical astrological texts, provides character descriptions of the Grahās. These descriptions fill out the characters who are the Grahās and provide many of the physical and personality traits of the Grahās. These descriptions provide many of the qualities which the Grahās will bestow upon the individual.

PITTA, KAPHA AND VATA

As part of the descriptions to be given for the Grahās are their temperaments, whether Pitta, Kapha or Vata. These are important principles that need to be properly understood.

Sun – Pitta

Moon – Kapha and Vata

Mars – Pitta

Mercury – mix of Pitta, Kapha and Vata

Jupiter – Kapha

Venus – Kapha and Vata

Saturn – Vata

Rahu and Ketu – Vata

Pitta is the energy of activity that fuels anything that we actively do and pursue. The more the Pitta, the more a person acts, does, caretakes, provides, etc. There are many things we must do and many things that we want to do, Pitta provides for us to do all of these things. Pitta is equivalent to the Yang of Chinese thought.

Kapha is the energy of stillness that provides the ability for stability, rest, recuperation, receptivity, contemplation, patience, etc. In life there are many needs for our body, minds and souls that cannot be fulfilled through activity and exertion; it is Kapha that

provides for these things. Kapha is equivalent to the Yin of Chinese thought.

Vata is the energy of movement that provides for change. It is particularly important as the movement between Pitta and Kapha. After activity comes rest. After resting one must act in order to provide for one's needs. It is Vata that allows for this harmonious interplay of Pitta and Vata. Life is full of change, indeed, change is what makes life. Non-changeability is the property of the non-created, the created is always undergoing some state of change and it is Vata that allows for the change to be harmonious. Vata allows us to make the change from one job to another, to suffer the change of a broken relationship, to relocate and to do all of these things and more harmoniously. If Vata is deranged, a person has fears, worries and other turbid emotions when the natural process of change comes into their life. Vata is the movement that is seen in the popular Yin-Yang symbol that symbolizes the eternal interplay of Yin and Yang.

The energies of Pitta, Kapha and Vata may become deranged or excessive in which case they become a Dosha, a "fault" an ill affection. As long as Pitta, Kapha and Vata are harmonious, the mind and body remain strong and healthy. If Pitta, Kapha and Vata become deranged, the mind and body suffer illness and disease. Due to the fact that Pitta, Kapha and Vata become easily deranged, these three are often referred to as the Tri Doshas, "the three faults." Pitta, Kapha and Vata are necessary to life and healthy living and only when they become deranged are they harmful.

SUN

मधुपिङ्गलदृक्सूर्यश्चतुरस्रः शुचिर्द्विज ।

पित्तप्रकृतिको धीमान् पुमानल्पकचो द्विज ॥ २३ ॥

madhupīṅgaladr̥ksūryaścaturasraḥ śucirdvija,
pittaprakṛtiko dhīmān pumānalpakaco dvija.

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

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 23

The Sun has honey-yellow eyes, which is to say that he sees the sweetness around him. The ability to see the sweetness around him causes the Sun to never harm anything more vulnerable or weaker than himself and causes the Sun to always help that which is in greater need.

The Sun is square in build; however, “square” also symbolizes stability and steadfastness. The Sun thus provides for consistency in thought and therefore action and so provides steadfast, committable and reliable behavior.

The Sun is the great purifier; it is Agni, the vital fire responsible for purifying the body of toxins and impurities. Psychologically, the Sun is pure in mind and thinks of what it must do and what it is responsible for, instead of what it desires. Spiritually, the Sun represents the pure, untouched nature of the soul.

The Sun has a Pitta, or fiery temperament. Pitta makes the Sun physically and materially active, psychologically taking joy in the success his actions bring. Pitta provides intelligence and the Sun’s desire to rely on his intelligence. Pitta causes the Sun to have no need for security, comfort or acceptance, but only for the fair respect its actions merit. Pitta makes the Sun courageous, dynamic and magnetic and enjoying the spirit of competition. Pitta links the Sun to the all-pervading fire that is within everything, which fills the heart of the Sun with boundless energy and enthusiasm with which to support and uphold everything and everyone.

The intelligence of the Sun is the left-brained intelligence, the rational and pragmatic intelligence and the intelligence of common sense.

Physically the Sun will be seen to give less hair or a balding appearance when in the Lagna or with the Lagna lord. Hair is the one part of our bodies that is out of our immediate control – it is

blown by the wind, falls in accordance with gravity and cannot be moved by itself but only with the help of another appendage. Since the Sun has little hair, he is not very interested in that which he has little control over, and what he has, he likes to have under his dictate. Hair is also the one part of our bodies that does not have any sensory perceptions, and thus the Sun is not very interested in that which he is not perceptive of. Hair does keep a record of our past, in the impurities within it and the subtle markings upon it. Since the Sun has little hair, he is not much interested in the past, but in where he is going. Nor is he hung up or restricted by past events. Spiritually, hair represents the extraneous things that distract from spiritual realizations and the record of our past misdeeds, none of which are of much importance to the spiritually-inspired Sun. “The past is the past,” says the Sun, “all of whose is littered with acts of low nobility. Everything, however, will improve if you make a spiritual effort now.”

MOON

बहुवातकफः प्राज्ञश्चन्द्रो वृत्ततनुर्द्विज ।

शुभदृढमधुवाक्यश्च चञ्चलो मदनातुरः ॥ २४ ॥

bahuvātakaphaḥ prājñaścandro vṛttatanurdvija,
śubhadṛṇmadhuvākyaśca pañcalo madanāturah

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

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 24

The Moon is said to be round and it is the Moon that is responsible for the hormones that create the feminine form of women. The round nature makes the Moon mentally and emotionally capable of quickly changing direction, as the circumstances in life require.

The Moon has an agreeable and pleasant appearance, especially to the face, that brings peace and comfort to the viewer. Psychologically, the pleasant appearance of the Moon indicates the ability of the Moon to see the good in all and to be accepting of what is less than desirable. Spiritually, the favorable appearance of the Moon represents the receptivity capable of attracting the most powerful spiritual inspirations.

The Moon is a mix of Vata and Kapha. Vata makes the Moon physically less powerful, but excitable. Kapha makes the Moon emotional, peace loving, forgiving and appreciative of comforts. Kapha physically makes the Moon softer and rounder, and Vata makes the form slender. Spiritually, Kapha promotes a devotional nature in the Moon while the Vata moves the Moon towards spiritual devotions. If the Moon is spiritually sick, Vata will cause endless worries and fears and Kapha will cause deep depressions.

The Moon can be seen to fluctuate from day-to-day as it goes through its cycle of waxing and waning. Physically, the fluctuations of the Moon can be seen in women's bodies, which the Moon strongly influences, as the weight of women's bodies often fluctuates throughout the month. Psychologically, fluctuations are seen in the emotional changes that are dependent upon the stimulus from others. In a healthy Moon this is not codependent emotional fluctuation, but the Moon harmonizing with the greater whole. Spiritually, the fluctuating nature of the Moon allows adjusting to the constant change of an inconstant world.

Whereas the Sun uses his intelligence to follow a rational process in order to arrive at the truth of things, the Moon is filled with knowing and must only look within herself to discover the truth of any matter. That is why the Sun, the king, should always listen to the advice requested from the Moon, his queen, else he will certainly have regret.

The Moon not only has a sweet sounding voice but also desires to say sweet words for words are seen as things to help people feel good first and to provide facts secondly.

The Moon is lastly said to be lovesick, an interesting fact in light of all of her very auspicious qualities. Since feminine energy, which the Moon symbolizes, is negative, it is aware of what it does not have and thus yearns for union with something positive, or something that knows what it has and is confident in what it has. This quality makes the Moon very relationship centered. Physically, the lovesick nature of the Moon causes the Moon to desire physical affection. Psychologically, it causes her to desire emotional intimacy, and spiritually it causes her to desire spiritual union. All human souls are, in fact, negative souls that yearn for union with the one positive soul.

MARS

क्रूरो रक्तेक्षणो भौमश्चपलोदारमूर्तिकः ।

पित्तप्रकृतिकः क्रोधी कृशमध्यतनुर्द्विज ॥ २५ ॥

krūro raktekṣaṇo bhaumaścāpalodāramūrtikaḥ
pittaprakṛitikaḥ krodhi kṛśamadyatanurdvija.

*“Cruel with red eyes is Mars, moving to and fro, of lorn form,
Pitta nature, angry, with a lean medium-sized body, O’ Twice
Born.”*

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 25

Mars is cruel, not in a malicious sense, but in the sense that he cares little for the pleasantries and mannerisms that create comfort in human relationships – he gets to the point. Mars is quick to anger; he has things to do and often barrels through it with the force of anger. The anger of Mars is not frustrated and destructive anger, but anger used as fuel with which to succeed in difficult tasks. Only when Mars is afflicted does his anger become frustrated and destructive.

The red eyes of Mars reveal his action centered nature; he looks for that which he must do and does it effectively with an

effectiveness bordering on cruelty. He is always ready to take the next challenge and pursue the next adventure and thus he is “moving to and fro” whether physically in the physically inclined individual or mentally in the mentally inclined individual.

The action-centered nature of Mars always results in some physical damage and thus he is of “torn form.” Physically he is otherwise lean in the sense that he burns all that he consumes and does not hold onto extra weight.

Like the Sun, Mars has a Pitta temperament and will thus share many of the qualities of the Sun. Mars is also physically and materially active and psychologically takes joy in the success of his actions. Pitta provides Mars with a sharp and logical intelligence. Mars has also no need for comfort or acceptance, finding happiness rather in his successes and attempts. Pitta makes Mars courageous and competitive; in the case of a healthy Mars, competitive with himself and always striving to surpass his past achievements and limits.

MERCURY

वपुःश्रेष्ठः श्लिष्टवाक् च ह्यतिहास्यरुचिर्बुधः ।

पित्तवान् कफवान् विप्र मारुतप्रकृतिस्तथा ॥ २६ ॥

vapuḥ śreṣṭhaḥ śliṣṭavāk ca hyatihāsyarucirbudhaḥ,
pittavān kaphavān vipra mārutaprakṛtistathā.

“The most excellently formed, of metaphorical speech, and taking pleasure in laughter is Mercury, having Pitta, having Kapha, O’ Wise, and of Vata nature.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 26

Mercury is the “most excellently formed” in the sense that he creates the most balanced of proportions and that he builds the most balanced body type. Not too fat, not too soft, not too hard, not too tall, not too small, etc.

Mercury is a balanced mix of Pitta, Kapha and Vata, for which reason he builds the balanced and proportionate body type. The Pitta, Kapha and Vata mix also makes Mercury the most versatile. Pitta makes Mercury capable of action when directed towards activity. Kapha makes Mercury receptive to the actions he should take and thus less of an initiator than are the Pitta Sun and Mars. Vata helps him move between action and receptivity so that he acts when necessary while also being receptive to that which may improve his actions. When in a relaxing Kapha state, he is quick to act when opportunity arises. Mercury is quick to make changes and adjustments as required so that his actions will be more precise and effective.

Mercury enjoys wit and thus says things with flair, with “metaphorical speech,” while always seeing the humor in things.

JUPITER

बृहद्गात्रो गुरुश्चैव पिङ्गलो मूर्द्धजेक्षनैः ।

कफप्रकृतिको धीमान् सर्वशास्त्रविशारदः ॥ २७ ॥

br̥hadgātro guruścaiva piṅgalo mūrdhajakṣṇaiḥ,
kaphaprakṛtiko dhīmān sarvaśāstraviśāradah.

“Large bodied is Jupiter, and also tawny haired and eyed, of Kapha nature, intelligent and proficient in all Shastras.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 27

Jupiter is large bodied, that does not make him fat, just large (none of the Grahas are fat in an obese sense because obesity is not a natural state). He is tall in height and proportionately large in girth. Jupiter is a blonde, “tawny,” golden yellow haired and eyed.

Jupiter is the one Graha that is fully Kapha, the other two Kapha Grahas: the Moon and Venus are only partially Kapha with their remainder being Vata. This is a very important and interesting part of Jupiter for he is a male Graha who is fully Kapha though

Kapha is a quality more associated with the feminine. This is part of Jupiter's greatness. As a male Graha his function is to act. As a Kapha Graha he is receptive in nature. Jupiter is thus receptive to those things that he is meant to do and then does them, though never initiating from self-interest of any sort those actions which he performs. This makes him a proper channel for God's work and thus Jupiter is the great Guru amongst the Grahas. The *Tao te Ching* states that one should, "know the male but keep to the female," a practice at which Jupiter is very adept.

Jupiter is very intelligent and has the capacity not to learn but, more importantly, to understand and is thus "proficient in all Shastras," for to be proficient in any science requires not that one simply memorize but that one truly understand the subject matter. Jupiter's capacity to understand comes from the highest part of the brain, the capacity to understand through contemplation.

VENUS

सुखी कान्तवपुः श्रेष्ठः सुलोचनो भृगोः सुतः ।

काव्यकर्ता कफाधिवयोऽनिलात्मा वक्रमूर्धजः ॥ २८ ॥

sukhī kāntavapuḥ śreṣṭhaḥ sulocano bhrgoḥ sutoḥ,
kāvyakartā kaphādhikyo'nilātmā vakramūrdhajah.

"Pleasing, lovely formed, the most splendid and beautifully eyed is Venus, who is poetical, abounding in Kapha, of Vata nature and curly haired."

Bṛihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 28

Venus creates a very healthfully-fleshed form of average size. The eyes are beautiful, watery and devotional. The hair tends to curl and Venus is responsible for providing curly hair. If Venus is influenced by Saturn the curls get even tighter. On account of possessing curls, Venus rules all those things that have a spiral or curly form, even such spiral forms such as vortexes, whirlpools and

tornadoes – of course for tornadoes, air, Saturn, must also be present.

Venus is “splendid” in the sense of appearance taking one’s breath away and also in arranging for splendid events that provide happiness to all that may enjoy them. Venus desires to please and is thus civil-mannered and respectful and rightly expects the same honorable treatment in return.

Venus is said to be poetical. The poetical ability of Venus, known in Sanskrit as Kavya, is the ability for insight, to see meaning where there is none; to know what happens before it happens. These are all qualities of the great poems, poems laced with deeper meanings and even poems laced with prophecies.

Like the other feminine Graha, the Moon, Venus is both Kapha and Vata. Kapha makes Venus peace-loving and appreciative of comforts while Vata makes Venus eager for new experiences. Kapha also allows Venus to be nourished and to recuperate, regenerate and heal. Vata allows Venus to flow with change. Due to the combined effect of Kapha and Vata, Venus is particularly adept at healing from painful and difficult changes and traumas.

SATURN

कृशदीर्घतनुः शौरिः पिङ्गदृष्ट्यनिलात्मकः ।

स्थूलदन्तोऽलसः पंगुः खररोमकचो द्विज ॥ २९ ॥

krśadīrghatanuḥ śauriḥ piṅgadṛṣṭyanilātmakaḥ,
sthūladanto’lasaḥ paṅguḥ khararomakaco dvija.

“Thin and long bodied is Saturn, and yellow eyed, Vata natured, large toolbed, indolent, lame and having coarse hair, O’ Twice Born.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 29

Saturn is tall like Jupiter, but thin, the thinnest of all the Grahas. Though thin, he is wiry and tough.

Saturn is Vata and so he is responsible for many of the big changes in life, the greatest of which is death. All other changes that require letting go and loss are due to Saturn. Saturn is also the Graha that helps us deal with these inevitable changes. Having no Kapha, Saturn is blocked from receiving. Having no Pitta, Saturn is blocked from activating his desires. All Saturn can do is survive.

Saturn is said to be “indolent” and so he is not one to pursue ambitions and inspirations, rather he is pushed through life. The need for survival is what gets him up in the mornings. Saturn is the part of us that gets up to struggle, for if we don’t struggle we will fall behind. In this regard he is very important, even in respect to one’s ambitions and inspirations. No inspiration will be reached if one is not willing to struggle. While it is the Sun that gives the inspiration and ambition, it is Saturn who helps us to struggle until we realize the inspiration.

Saturn is considered to be lame and as such he represents our weaknesses and our liabilities, whether physical, mental, psychological or financial. Just as a lame man is still able to make a journey, Saturn gives us the capacity to succeed even in the face of our weaknesses and liabilities. It is never a question of whether a person is weak – weakness is in everyone and everyone has liabilities. It is whether we are willing to struggle onward with our weaknesses that is important, and a quality that a good Saturn will provide.

Saturn’s coarse hair reveals his animal tendencies, which are nothing more than the instinct to survive, which requires food for personal survival and sex for the survival of the species.

RAHU AND KETU

धूम्राकारो नीलतनुर्वनस्थोऽपि भयंकरः ।

वातप्रकृतिको धीमान् स्वर्भानुस्तत्समः शिखी ॥ ३० ॥

dhūmrākāro nīlatanurvanastho’pi bhayaṁkaraḥ,
vātaprakṛtiko dhīmān svarbhānustatsamaḥ sikhi.

“Smoky, dark bodied, forest dwelling, terrible, of Vata nature and intelligent is Rahu; similar is Ketu.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 30

Rahu and Ketu are smoky, unclear and not fully distinguishable. For this reason they create mystery with all that they influence. Rahu and Ketu are also dark, emitting no light, thus their true form is veiled. These two qualities, that of smokiness and darkness, result in there always being something hidden where Rahu and Ketu are concerned.

Rahu and Ketu live in forests rather than in civilized areas, as such they are responsible for views and ideas that are not popular in society.

Rahu and Ketu are terrible, responsible for the greatest traumas and difficulties, the shocks that no one could have imagined. Those difficulties, diseases, plagues and disasters that come without warning are all due to Rahu and Ketu.

Rahu and Ketu, like Saturn, are Vata and thus responsible for changes. Unlike Saturn who creates the inevitable changes that each individual must at some time experience, Rahu and Ketu are responsible for the changes that are unexpected or unique to each individual. Many of our unique experiences, therefore, are due to Rahu and Ketu.

Though terrible and uncivilized, Rahu and Ketu are intelligent, highly intelligent in fact and responsible for many of the most amazing, though often destructive, feats that man has performed.

Sapta Dhatus

अस्थि रक्तस्तथा मज्जा त्वग् वसा वीर्यमेव च ।

स्नायुरेषामधीशाश्च क्रमात् सूर्यादयो द्विज ॥ ३१ ॥

asthi raktastathā majjā tvag vasā vīryameva ca,
snāyureṣāmadhiśāśca kramāt sūryādayo dvija.

“Asthi (bone), Rakta (blood), Majja (nerve), Tvag (skin), Vasa (fat), Virya (semen) and Snayu (sinew) are ruled by the Sun, etc. in their order, O’ Twice Born.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 31

Sapta Dhatus are the seven constituents of the body of which all the different bodily organs are composed. The Sun rules bone, the Moon blood, Mars nerves, Mercury skin, Jupiter fat, Venus semen and Saturn rules the sinew. These must not be simply understood as bodily parts or as organs of the body; the Dhatus are much more profound. Each organ and part of the body has all seven Dhatus in its makeup. Some organs have more of one Dhatu than another, but they all have the seven Dhatus as their constituent parts.

Sun – Asthi

The Sun rules the foundation matter of the body, which is the elemental base of the body. The bones contain the majority of the body’s elements, though all other organs are also composed of elements. There are twenty four essential elements in the body: Hydrogen, Oxygen, Carbon, Nitrogen, Calcium, Phosphorous, Potassium, Sulfur, Sodium, Chlorine, Magnesium, Iron, Iodine, Copper, Zinc, Manganese, Cobalt, Chromium, Selenium, Molybdenum, Fluorine, Tin, Silicon and Vanadium.

Moon – Rakta

The Moon rules the body's water, which is largely contained as blood. Water is nothing but the predominant molecule in the body, H₂O. Thus the Moon actually rules the molecules of the body. Molecules are nothing but a combination of elements – a combination of that which the Sun rules; and thus the Sun and Moon are, as always, inseparable. Here we see the Sun and Moon ruling the body – since the elements and molecules compose the body.

Mars – Majja

The word used for Mars's Dhatu is Majja, which means “seated within” and refers to the electricities that are “seated within” everything. The electricities seated within matter become activated upon molecules becoming dissolved by the most important molecule of all, water, upon which ionization takes place. The electricities are most prevalent as nerve impulses in the nerve tissue. Fire is also considered to be seated within everything and the electricities are nothing but fire, the element of which is associated with Mars.

Mercury – Tvag

The word used for Mercury's Dhatu is Tvag, which means cover, thus Mercury rules the coverings of the body. This means many things. Each cell has its own covering – the cell membrane. Each organ has its own covering and the body itself has its own covering – the skin, which is itself an organ composed of all seven Dhatus. It is the cover of one type of cell that largely differentiates it from other types of cells. Mercury, through its association of the Earth element, is thus responsible for the differentiation of the body cells. Body cells are differentiated by their protein content, and thus Mercury rules the protein of the body.

Jupiter – Vasa

Jupiter rules the fats, more appropriately the lipids of the body. Lipids are the nonwater-soluble portions of the body that have two primary functions: that of storing energy and insulating. The energy stored as fats in the body is metabolized by the cells as needed. Lipids not only work to insulate the body from cold as the fat layer under the skin, but also work as electrical insulators within the cells and within the nerves. Without being properly electrically insulated, the body could not operate any better than an electrical device that had all the insulation on the wires removed so that all the wires were touching each other and shorting out. Whether storing energy or insulating energy, lipids house “Prana” which is the duty of the Ether element associated with Jupiter.

Venus – Virya

Venus rules Virya, which is the genetic material in the body, the nucleic acid DNA. The genetic material is in all cells, though it is of greatest importance in the semen and ovum. This genetic material is responsible for generating all the different cells of the body by determining the different protein structures that differentiate the cells. It will be remembered that generation is the duty of the Water element associated with Venus.

Saturn – Snaya

Saturn rules Snayu, which is that which binds, namely the connective tissues that hold the body together. On the cellular level, Saturn rules the Ligands which bind to proteins and help determine the many different functions performed by proteins. This is closely related to Mercury’s ruling protein. This is one example, amongst many, of how Mercury and Saturn constantly interact with each other. Another example is how the skin of Mercury also binds the body together, though in a somewhat different way than does the sinew of Saturn.

DHATUS IN ALL THINGS

The concept of the seven Dhatus is prevalent in all things. Everything that exists has within it all seven Dhatus and so it is important to understand the concept of the Dhatus so that one can assign the Grahas to all the other things in the world.

For example, a computer is composed of all seven Dhatus. The elements of which the computer is made, largely iron and aluminum and the carbons in plastic are ruled by the Sun. These elements are not found separate, but are in molecular form ruled by the Moon. The Sun and Moon, therefore, rule the body of the computer just as they rule the body of a person. Mars rules the electrical impulses that the computer reads so as to perform all of its calculations, as well as the copper core of the wires and the gold and copper on the circuit boards through which the electrical impulses flow. Jupiter rules the insulation of the wires and the insulators on the circuit boards. Saturn rules all the connectors that attach one circuit to another. Venus rules the operating software on the computer: the operating system and BIOS. Mercury rules the many different installed types of software.

If a computer is purchased when the Sun and Moon are afflicted, the body of the computer will one day get damaged. If Mars is afflicted a wire or circuit will be damaged. If Jupiter is afflicted, a circuit will short out due to damaged insulation. If Saturn is afflicted a PCI slot, an electrical plug or some other such connector will get damaged. If Venus is afflicted, the operating system will get corrupted or get erased or the BIOS will become corrupt. If Mercury is afflicted, the installed software will not perform their expected tasks correctly or effectively.

In this manner should the Dhatus be understood for all other things as well. Upon doing so, the astrologer will be able to discern which Graha is responsible for each and every subtlety that they may ever need to examine in the chart.

Residence and Environment

देवालयजलं वह्निक्रीडादीनां तथैव च ।

कोशशाव्योत्कराणान्तु नाथाः सूर्यादयः क्रमात् ॥ ३२ ॥

devālayajalam vahni kṛīḍādīnām tathaiva ca,
kośaśavyotkarāṇāntu nāthāḥ sūryādayaḥ kramāt.

“Residences of Devas, water, fire, places of games and sport, place of treasure, bed and rubbish are occupied by the Sun, etc. in their order.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 32

These are the several places indicated by the Grahas that are useful for determining where something will happen or where something may be lost.

Sun – Residences of Devas

Residence of Devas refers to all places of spiritual worship: churches, temples, mosques, pilgrimage spots, etc. Texts on Vastu Shastra, the science of Architecture, do not consider it favorable to live next to temples. The Sun is a cruel Graha and placing ourselves next to him in the form of a temple may be too intense for promoting daily well-being and health. However, if the Sun is influencing a person's residence, they may well find themselves in the vicinity of a temple.

Within one's own house the Sun represents the room in which an altar, deity or place of worship is placed. A small personal altar room is not considered unfavorable; it is, in fact, favorable.

Moon – Places of Water

The Moon rules all places where water is prominent. Lakes, rivers, oceans, swimming pools, etc. are all places that the Moon seeks. The Moon is a gentle Graha and thus living next to water is considered favorable, though rivers should be well situated in respect to the property in accordance with Vastu Shastra or else it becomes unfavorable, the same way that the Moon is cruel when waning. The basic principle is that the property should be sloping towards the East or North and that any stream or river should be on the right as one faces towards the slope.

Within one's own home, the Moon rules the water-dominated bathroom.

Mars – Places of Fire

Mars seeks all places of fire and may cause a person to live next to a brick factory, smelter, weapons manufacturing plant, military testing and training ground, cremation ground, etc. Needless to say, these are not ideal places to reside as would be expected since their ruler Mars is a cruel Graha. Even places that have been scourged by fire and that have charcoal remains are ruled by Mars and unfavorable to live next to.

Within one's own residence Mars rules such places as the kitchen where food is cooked, the barbecue, heater, fire place, etc.

Mercury – Places of Play and Sport

Mercury rules all places of play and sport: baseball fields, cricket fields, play grounds, stadiums, boxing rings, casinos, golf courses, etc. Since Mercury is a Saumya Graha, these places are quite acceptable to live next to.

In one's own home, Mercury rules recreational rooms, the television room, basketball court, billiards room, etc.

Jupiter – Places of Treasure

Jupiter rules all places where wealth is stored, which these days are primarily banks. Since Jupiter is a Saumya Graha, places where wealth is stored are acceptable to live next to.

Within one's own home, Jupiter rules safes, vaults, jewelry boxes, places where valuable collections are stored, etc.

Venus – Places of Beds

Venus rules all places with beds: inns, resorts, etc. Since Venus is a Saumya Graha, these places are acceptable to live next to.

Within one's own home, Venus rules bedrooms, particularly the master bedroom.

Saturn – Places of Rubbish

Saturn rules all places where rubbish is kept: dumps, wrecking yards, junkyards, sewer disposal sites, etc. Saturn is a cruel Graha and so it is not considered favorable to live next to such places.

Within one's own home, Saturn rules the place that trash is kept, the compost pile, latrine, etc. The latrine ruled by Saturn is ideally kept separate from the bath, which is ruled by the Moon.

RAHU AND KETU

वेश्मकोणनिलयावहिकेतू ॥ २४ ॥

veśmakōṇanilayāvahiketū.

“The corner of the house is the residence of Rahu and Ketu.”

Jataka Parijata: 2.24

Rahu and Ketu both reside in the corners where they are somewhat hidden, though there is a difference. Rahu sits in the corner and tries to be noticed, Ketu sits in the corner and hopes to be invisible. A person with a prominent Rahu, therefore, will

choose the corner of the room but draw attention through dress, comments, gestures, etc. A person with a prominent Ketu will sit in the corner and attempt to appear not withstanding and may even avoid meeting anyone's glance.

ANTHILLS

शिखिस्वर्भानुमन्दानां वल्मीकं स्थानमुच्यते ॥ ४१ ॥

śikhisvarbhānumandānām valmīkaṁ sthānamucyate.

“Ketu, Rahu and Saturn stand on anthills.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 41

Texts on Vastu Shastra state that it is not favorable to choose a building site that has anthills, so for Ketu, Rahu and Saturn to stand on anthills is not favorable. The fact that they stand on anthills reveals that their foundation is weak and disturbed. These three Grahas all create expectations that have no basis. Saturn creates expectations that some achievement will compensate for a person's inner lack. Rahu dreams for happiness that never comes and has expectations based on hopes and fears rather than on experience and know how. Ketu has ideas about the way things are that prove inadequate at the most inconvenient times, thereby forcing one through crisis to deepen their insights and understanding.

These three Grahas indicate a weak foundation and thus if they are influencing a person's real-estate they often indicate problems with the real-estate. Oftentimes, especially in the case of Rahu, these problems are unknown at the time of purchase, thus anyone who has these influencing their 4th Bhava or the Karaka of real-estate Mars should be cautious when purchasing real-estate.

ENVIRONMENTS

In addition to the actual places that the Grahas reside, as presented above, the Grahas prefer different environments and rule things from particular environments.

जलाशयौ चन्द्रसुरारिवन्द्यौ बुधालयग्रामचरौ गुरुज्ञौ ।

कुजाहिमन्दध्वजवासरेशा भवन्ति शैलाटविसंचरन्तः ॥ १३ ॥

jalāśayau candrasurārivandyaubudhālayagrāmacarau gurujñau,
kujāhimandadhvajavāsareśā bhavanti śailāṭavisancarantah.

“Lying in water are the Moon and Venus; villages housing the wise are inhabited by Jupiter and Mercury; Mars, Rahu, Saturn, Ketu and the Sun move in forested mountains.”

Jataka Parijata: 2.13

Moon and Venus – Lying in Water

The Moon and Venus enjoy water in their environment and rule those things that come from water. For example, if a gem is indicated, the gem will be a water-derived gem such as coral, pearl or prized shell. If a food is indicated, the food will be from water or from the sea such as rice, fish, seaweed, hydro-agriculturally grown products, etc.

Mercury and Jupiter – Inhabiting Villages of the Wise

Mercury and Jupiter prefer inhabited areas and rule those things created by Man. For example, if a gem is indicated, it may be a manmade gem, precious glass or a faceted or carved gem. If a food is indicated, it will be food that is somehow processed so as no longer in its naturally occurring form or shape.

Sun, Mars, Saturn, Rahu and Ketu – Moving in Forested Mountains

The Sun, Mars, Saturn, Rahu and Ketu prefer places of nature and rule substances in their natural or crude form or substances derived from nature but not from water. For example, if a gem is indicated, it will be in its natural form or it will be a mineral specimen. If a food is indicated it will be in a natural and unprocessed state

16

Kala – Time

अयनक्षणवारर्तुमासपक्षसमा द्विज ।

सूर्यादीनां क्रमाज्ज्ञेया निर्विशंकं द्विजोत्तमा ॥ ३३ ॥

ayanakṣaṇavārartumāsapakṣasamā dvija,
sūryādīnāṃ kramājjñeyā nirviśaṅkaṃ dvijottamā.

*“Ayana, Kṣana, Vara, Ritu, Masa, Pakṣa and Sama, O’
Twice Born, are known from the Sun, etc. in their order, O’ Best
Twice Born.”*

Bṛihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 33

This Sutra refers to the different periods of time ruled by the Grahas. True time, known as Kala, is measured astronomically and bears only some semblance to the largely random measurement of time used in the modern calendar. Astronomical measurements of time are very important in astrology. In fact, the earliest Jyotish texts dealt largely with the correct calculation of time.

The periods of time ruled by the Grahas are largely used in Prashna astrology for determining when an event will materialize. A study of these periods of time also has much to say about the Grahas.

Sun – Ayana

Ayana simply means, “Going” and refers to the path of the Sun, more specifically, to the half path of the Sun from solstice to solstice. This is a period of six months and there are two such periods in the year: Uttara Ayana is the period during which the Sun travels from the winter solstice up to the time the Sun reaches the summer solstice, or from approximately December 21st to June 21st – this is the period during which the Sun moves north and the time

when the Sun moves from zero degrees Capricorn to zero degrees Cancer. Dakshina Ayana is the period during which the sun travels south, from summer solstice to winter solstice, or from approximately June 21st to December 21st – the time during which the Sun moves from zero degrees Cancer to zero degrees Capricorn. It is this northern and southern movement of the Sun that is the cause of the seasons, the resultant growth and decay of life on earth, and the evolution of man as well as all other creatures. It is the Sun's motion that is the consistent motion of the solar system, at least from the point of view of Earth, thus the Sun rules this period as the Sun rules all things that are consistent and all those steady efforts that yield sure results in time.

Moon – Kshana

Kshana means “Moment” and refers to short moments of time. Astrologically, Kshana refers to what is known as a Muhurta or Tithyamsa, which is one thirtieth of a day, or approximately forty-eight minutes. The Kshana is the shortest period of time ruled by the Grahas and it is the Moon who is suited to rule this period as it is the emotional Moon who lives in the moment. If the Moon is afflicted, then a person worries about the future, but if the Moon well situated, then a person can fully enjoy each moment.

Mars – Vara

Vara means “turn,” as in a player taking his turn at a game. Vara refers to the turn of each Graha ruling a period from sunrise to sunrise as measured at the ancient astronomically-correct prime meridian at Yamakoti, which lay in ancient days upon the equator at 165 degrees 46 minutes East longitude. The Sun has his turn on Sunday, the Moon on Monday, Mars on Tuesday, Mercury on Wednesday, Jupiter on Thursday, Venus on Friday and Saturn has his turn on Saturday. The Vara is dependent upon the relationship of the Earth to the Sun, each turn of the Earth towards the Sun is

one Vara, and since all things produced by the Earth are ruled by Mars who is the Earth-born, the Vara is ruled by Mars.

Mercury – Ritu

Ritu refers to a period of time that is fixed for some special occasion, in this case, the occasion of the seasons. The six Vedic seasons will be discussed fully in a later chapter, for now it is enough to know that a season is two solar months, approximately 61 days. It is the seasons that differentiate the year, and differentiation is the responsibility of Mercury through his association with the Earth element.

Jupiter – Masa

Masa is a month, specifically, the lunar month. Masa is in fact another name of the Moon. A lunar month is one synodic cycle of the Moon, the period of one Sun Moon conjunction to another. The lunar month is the important measure for determining religious festivities and for determining auspicious (Jupiter) moments to begin important activities.

Venus – Paksha

Paksha means, “flank, side, half” and refers to the two halves of the lunar month, the waxing half and the waning half. The waxing half, during which the Moon becomes brighter each day, is known as Shukla Paksha, the “bright half.” The waning half, during which the Moon becomes darker each day, is known as Krishna Paksha, the “dark half.” It is the waning and waxing periods of the Moon that are responsible for the tidal movements, growth of plants and thus generation of life. Venus rules the Paksha since it is Venus who is responsible for generation through his association with the Water Element. The Paksha is equivalent to the fortnight often used in older English literature.

Saturn – Sama

Sama has meanings of equal, same and whole. Sama is the period of a Solar year, which is the period of the two Ayanas mentioned above, thus two equal parts make the whole of the year. The Solar year begins approximately March 21st when the Sun enters Aries. The year is the longest period of time and thus suitably ruled by Saturn, who is the slowest of the Grahas. Also, Saturn rules age, which is measured by the year.

RAHU AND KETU

Rahu and Ketu do not rule any specific period of astronomical time, those all being ruled by the seven Grahas as mentioned. They do however have their allotted time periods.

अष्टौ मासाश्च स्वर्भानोः केतोर्मासत्रयं द्विज ॥ ४६ ॥

aṣṭau māśāśca svarbānoḥ ketormāsatrayaṁ dvija.

“Eight months are of Rahu and Ketu is three months, O’ Twice Born.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 46

This particular Sutra is found at the end of the Sutras dealing with the Ritus, which will be discussed shortly in a following chapter. Rahu’s allotted period of time is eight months or four Ritus, while Ketu’s is three months or one and a half Ritus. Rahu, therefore, indicates a bit of a delayed time, almost as long as Saturn’s year. Ketu indicates quite a normal time; three months being the time it takes to sort out or complete the average task.

Rasa – Taste

कटुक्षारतिक्तमिश्रमधुराम्लकषायकाः ।

क्रमेण सर्वे विज्ञेयाः सूर्यादीनां रसा इति ॥ ३४ ॥

kaṭukṣāratiktamiśramadhurāmlakaṣāyakāḥ,
krameṇa sarve vijñeyāḥ sūryādināṃ rasā iti.

“Pungent, salty, bitter, mixed, sweet, sour and astringent are known all the Rasas from the Sun, etc. in their order.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 34

Rasa literally means, “essence,” and refers to the taste of something. Rasas, however, is much more than merely taste. The essence of something is in its chemical makeup and thus Rasas more specifically has to do with the chemical essence of something. Taste reveals the essence of something because taste is a sense that is dependent upon chemoreception. The taste buds on the tongue, the palate and the back of the throat are receptive to the chemicals composing a food and thus reveal the essence of the food by its taste. The taste buds themselves, however, are only receptive to five different stimuli; they are not receptive to the pungent or astringent Rasas of the Sun and Saturn.

For hundreds of years scientists have recognized four tastes: sweet, salty, sour and bitter. In recent years, scientists have recognized a fifth taste, umami. Taste buds contain receptors for each of these five tastes. Taste buds do not contain receptors for pungency and astringency. These are “tasted” due to their extreme reactions on the skin. The heat of ginger and chilies is felt as readily on the skin of the arm as they are felt on the skin inside the mouth. Astringent substances are felt to cool and tighten the skin wherever they are applied, whether the arm, leg or mouth. So the two Rasas:

pungent and astringent, are not actually tastes, though they very much describe the essence, the Rasa, of a substance.

Sun – Pungent

The pungent Rasa is not a taste in the true definition of stimulating specific the receptors of the taste buds; rather it is the sensory experience of the heat in a substance. The Sun being hot naturally rules pungent substances. Heat brings things to the surface, diffuses, flares and pushes things out.

Moon – Salty

The salt taste is dependent upon the receptors that are stimulated by chemical salts, by those substances that contain sodium. Salt is most abundant in the Moon-influenced oceans and thus rules the salty taste.

Mars – Bitter

The bitter taste is stimulated by a chemically diverse group including alkaloids (such as caffeine, nicotine, and morphine), cocoa and several toxic plant substances. Most other poisonous substances also taste bitter. Bitter substances are largely toxic and have immediate toxic effects or toxic effects if consumed over lengthy periods, such as coffee, black tea and chocolate. Bitter substances often have medicinal qualities and can be of benefit when taken judiciously, but not when taken regularly as food or beverages. Herbalists are often fond of saying, “Good medicine is always bitter.” It is the duty of Mars to protect us, which he does by alerting us to potential toxins through the bitter taste. It is also the duty of Mars to fight the battle for survival, which he does through making us aware of the potential medicinal benefit of many bitter substances. Later it will be discussed how Mars rules those edible, medicinal plants which are bitter.

Mercury – Umami (savory)

The umami taste is stimulated by glutamate, an amino acid. Glutamate and the umami taste is found in Kombu seaweed, mushrooms, tomatoes, parmesan cheese, cooked onions and meat. Umami does not have a strong, dominating taste of its own, but is a taste that serves best as a base for other tastes and makes all things delicious. Japanese have used Kombu seaweed stock to flavor their dishes. Italians use tomatoes as a base for all their sauces. Indian dishes use tomatoes or onions for their base. The meat eater enjoys the flavors of his condiments which work together with the umami taste of the meat to become delicious. The savor of Parmesan makes everything delicious. The delicious taste of fine wine that is absent from cheap wine is the result of umami, which develops as the wine ages. There is no exact English word to describe the umami taste; the taste is perhaps best conveyed as savory.

The umami taste is the taste ruled by Mercury, as it is the taste that mixes and blends other tastes into a savory dish. Without umami, mixing the other strong and distinctive tastes does not result in the same savor and deliciousness. Also, glutamate, which provides the umami taste, is an amino acid, a component of protein and it is Mercury that rules protein as has been discussed in the *Sapta Dhatus* chapter.

Umami taste was discovered in 1907 by Kikunae Ikeda who isolated glutamate as the taste-giving component of Kombu seaweed. This taste has been synthesized as MSG, which is nothing more than a poor and somewhat toxic replacement for the health promoting Kombu. Though the taste was isolated in 1907, it was only in the year 2000 that the presence of an umami taste receptor was verified by scientist Nirupa Chaudhari and her team.

Jupiter – Sweet

The sweet taste is dependent upon the receptors in the taste buds being evoked by glucose or by other organic molecules with similar chemical structures such as saccharin and aspartame. Jupiter

rules the insulin secreting pancreas which is responsible for glucose utilization by the cells and thus rules the sweet taste.

Venus – Sour

The sour taste is dependent upon the receptors that are stimulated by acids which contain a free hydrogen ion. Hydrogen is the primary component in water, the element associated with Venus.

Saturn – Astringent

Astringent substances stimulate the skin rather than the taste receptors in the taste buds. The astringent Rasa of Saturn is the very opposite of the pungency of the Sun; it is the sensory experience of cold in a substance. Cold, most notably, constricts.

EMOTIONS

The idea of the Rasas of the Grahas can be carried over to other things as well. Anything that is hot is ruled by the Sun, anything that is salty is ruled by the Moon, anything that is bitter is ruled by Mars, anything that is sweet is ruled by Jupiter, anything that is sour is ruled by Venus and anything that is constricting is ruled by Saturn. Anything that is balanced is ruled by Mercury.

In respect to emotions, the hot emotion of righteousness and the emotional heat of inspiration are ruled by the Sun. Demure emotions and emotions of withdrawal (which pull one inward as salt pulls water into it) are ruled by the Moon. The emotion that is the result of needing to do something undesirable and which “leaves a bitter taste” is ruled by Mars. Also, frustration that turns to bitterness is ruled by Mars. The sweet emotion of happiness is ruled by Jupiter. The sour feeling of being used is ruled by Venus. Sour is also stimulating and thus the feeling of being stimulated is also ruled by Venus. The constrictive feeling of fear that tightens the lungs is ruled by Saturn. Hate, which “chokes” one on the object of their hatred, is also ruled by Saturn. Mercury represents

the balanced emotional state which is the foundation from which we can experience all other emotions. Love that comes from goodness and wisdom that is sweet and brings joy is ruled by Jupiter. Love that is stimulating but which may turn sour is ruled by Venus.

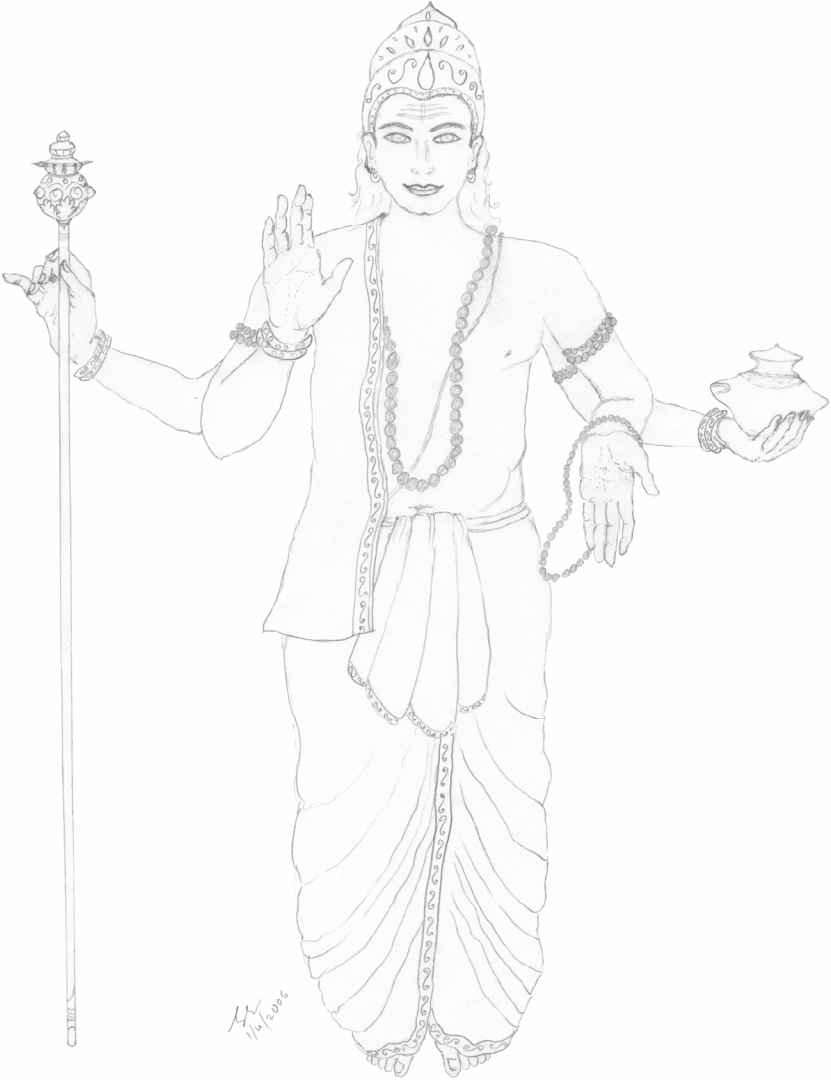
SMELL

Smell is the other sense that is dependent upon chemoreception. Olfactory glands are stimulated by chemical substances that are air born to the nose. Smell is a much more sensitive sense than is taste, with the nose being capable of discerning countless unique aromas. The unique flavor of foods is largely due to the sense of smell which allows us to enjoy the many different and subtle flavors of food rather than only seven flavors.

Since smell is also dependent upon chemoreception, the Rasa, or essence of something can also be determined by its dominant smell. Smells that burn the nose are ruled by the Sun. Salty smells are ruled by the Moon, bitter smells by Mars, savory smells by Mercury, sweet smells by Jupiter, sour smells by Venus and smells that tighten or wrinkle the nose are ruled by Saturn.

Though taste and smell are both senses based on chemoreception, the difference between taste and smell is that taste is a property of the Water element ruled by Venus while smell is a property of the Earth element ruled by Mercury. For taste to operate, the chemicals in the food must be in water, a dry tongue cannot taste. Smell directly senses the chemicals.

Suru



"Jupiter... is yellow... four armed, staff, blessing, offerings, rosary thread and Kamandalu."

Plants

सूर्यो जनयति स्थूलान् दुर्भगान् सूर्यपुत्रकः ।

क्षीरोपेतांस्तथा चन्द्रः कटुकाद्यान् धरासुतः ॥ ३९ ॥

sūryo janayati sthūlān durbhagān sūryaputrakaḥ,
kṣīropetāmstathā candraḥ kaṭukādyān dharāsutaḥ.

पुष्पवृक्षं भृगोः पुत्रो गुरुज्ञौ सफलाफलौ ।

नीरसान् सूर्यपुत्रश्च एवं ज्ञेयाः खगा द्विज ॥ ४० ॥

puṣpavṛkṣaṁ bhṛgoḥ putro gurujñau saphalāphalau,
nīrasān sūryaputraśca evaṁ jñeyāḥ khagā dvija.

“The Sun generates stout, those with bad portions from Saturn, those having milky sap from the Moon, bitter edible ones from Mars, blossom-bearing plants from Venus, Jupiter and Mercury respectively produce those with fruit and those without fruit, and wilbered are from Saturn, thus are known the plants, O Twice Born.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 39-40

The plant kingdom itself is ruled by the Sun and Venus, which will be discussed in a subsequent chapter. Within the plant kingdom, different Grahas rule different types of plants. The above Sutra refers to the plants that man makes uses.

Sun – Stout Plants

The Sun rules those trees that are broad enough to cut into lumber; for this reason the Sun rules wood. Oaks, maple when harvested for wood, pines when harvested for wood and redwoods are examples of trees ruled by the Sun. A note should be made on

maples – it is not considered favorable to use the wood of sweet trees for construction.

Moon – Milky Plants

The Moon rules those trees that are harvested for their sap. Rubber trees, maple trees when harvested for syrup and pines when harvested for their sap are examples of trees ruled by the Moon.

Mars – Bitter Plants

Those edible plants that have a bitter or undesirable taste are ruled by Mars, such as dandelion and neem. Plants that are harvested for their healing value rather than their food value (since they do not taste well enough to serve as food) are those ruled by Mars.

Venus – Blossom Bearing Plants

Venus rules all plants which are planted in order to enjoy the beauty of their flowers or which are harvested for their flowers. Roses, pansies, flame of the forest and all other garden flowers are all ruled by Venus.

Jupiter – Fruit Bearing Plants

Jupiter rules plants and trees that are harvested for their fruit. Fruits are the parts of plants that hold the seeds. Thus Jupiter not only rules all the standard sweet fruits, but also tomatoes, squashes, cucumbers, beans and grains. While Venus rules the actual germ in the seed or bean, the majority of the seed or bean is a storehouse of energy for the germ and is thus ruled by Jupiter.

Mercury – Plants without Fruit

Mercury rules those trees and plants that man harvests which do not have fruit but which have other uses, such as cotton, bamboo and the many plants harvested as food that are not fruit, such as lettuces, spinach and carrots.

Saturn – Withered and Plants with Bad Portions

Saturn rules two types of plants; those trees that are suitable for lumber, but which have blemishes such as knots and cracks which prevent them from being desirable for construction and craftsmanship. These trees are very suited for firewood and other temporary uses such as scaffolding. Saturn also rules all plants that have use upon their being withered, such as straw, hemp, tobacco and the many useful dried leaves. Wood is also dried, rather cured, before use. The difference, however, between the withered plants of Saturn and the wood ruled by the Sun is that the withered plants of Saturn do not hold their shape or dimension upon drying.

Shukra



*“Venus is white... four armed, staff, blessing, offerings, rosary
thread and Kamandalu.”*

Garments and Cloth

चित्रकन्था फणीन्द्रस्य केतोश्छिद्रयुतो द्विज ।

citrakanthā phaṇīndrasya ketośchidrayuto dvija,

गुरोः पीताम्बरं विप्र भृगोः क्षौमं तथैव च ।

रक्तक्षौमं भास्करस्य इन्दोः क्षौमं सितं द्विज ॥ ४३ ॥

guroḥ pītāmbaram vipra bṛghoḥ kṣaumarī tathaiva ca,
raktakṣaumarī bhāskarasya indoh kṣaumarī sitarī dvija.

बुधस्य कृष्णक्षौमं तु रक्तवस्त्रं कुजस्य च ।

वस्त्रं चित्रं शनेर्विप्र पट्टवस्त्रं तथैव च ॥ ४४ ॥

budhasya kṛṣṇakṣaumarī tu raktavastraṁ kujasya ca,
vastraṁ citraṁ śanervipra paṭṭavastraṁ tathaiva ca.

“Conspicuously patched garments are of Rahu, Ketu’s are torn and joined, O’ Twice Born... Jupiter is dressed in yellow garments, O’ Wise, and Venus likewise in linen. Red linen is for the Sun, the Moon is in white linen, and, O’ Twice Born, Mercury is in dark linen and red garments are for Mars. Garments that are conspicuous are for Saturn, O’ Wise, so likewise are the cloths.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 42-44

The different Grahas rule and dress in different colors of clothes. A person will quite often dress in the colors of prominent Grahas in their horoscope. Both Rahu and Saturn wear conspicuous clothes, the difference is that Rahu’s are patched. Saturn’s clothes may be conspicuous due to a variety of colors, unusual or outdated style or due to some other reason. Rahu’s clothes are conspicuous due to their having obvious or different colored patches or on

account of being conspicuous before being patched. Ketu's are torn but repaired by joining the tears together and not by patching. Ketu's clothes may be of any one solid color. Venus dresses in clothes that are not dyed and so have the natural color of the fiber. Mercury wears dark clothes, which may be any dark shade: blue, black, chocolate brown, etc. It may come at a surprise that Mercury wears dark clothes, however, his name of *Shyamanga*, "dark-limbed," warrants him to wear dark clothes. The two hot Grahas, the Sun and Mars dress in the hot color of red. The Grahas rule the same kind of cloth as are their clothes.

The symbolism of the color of the clothes can be carried over into other characteristics of the Grahas. Makeup for example: Venus, who dresses in natural colors is a "natural" beauty and unless afflicted by Rahu or Saturn will not be excessive with makeup, and perhaps wear none at all. At most, Venus will accentuate the natural features with makeup. Rahu and Saturn, on the other hand, like many strong colors or very obvious and conspicuous makeup and more easily tend to wear makeup in excess when trying to enhance beauty. Rahu will wear makeup particularly for "patching" blemishes. Mercury, when wearing makeup, will resort to products like dark eyeliners and mascara to accentuate its beauty or dye its hair dark. The Sun and Mars will resort to rouge and red toned lipsticks or dying the hair red. The Moon may resort to white cover up, but not much color in the makeup, or the Moon may bleach the hair. Jupiter likes to dye the hair blond. Ketu may cover scars and pits, but does not do a complete cover up; it only concentrates on the scar or pit.

स्थूलाम्बरं नूतनचारुचेलं कृशानुतोयाहतमध्यमानि ।

दृढांशुकं जीर्णमिनादिकानां वस्त्राणि सर्वे मुनयो वदन्ति ॥ २२ ॥

sthūlāmbaram nūtanacārucelam kṛśānutoyāhatamadhyamāni,
dṛḍhāṁśukam jīrṇaminādikānām vastrāṇi sarve munayo vadanti.

“Thick garments, pleasingly new garments, singed, washed, intermediate, durable and worn out, from the Sun, etc., are the garments say all the sages.”

Jataka Parijata: 2.22

Other texts, such as *Jataka Parijata*, give the type of clothes instead of the color. The Sun rules clothes that are made from thick and sometimes course cloth. The Moon delights in new clothes due to his changeable nature. Mars rules clothes that have burns, but which were not made useless by the fire or acid, whatever it may have been, that burnt the clothes. Mercury rules clothes that have been washed, so clothes that are not new, but which have been recently washed and which are spotless. Jupiter rules clothes that are neither new nor worn out; they are not spotless, nor excessively soiled. Jupiter’s clothes, in short, are average in age and cleanliness. Venus rules well-made clothes. Saturn rules clothes that are worn out, thinned, with holes appearing. Again, the Grahas will rule the same types of cloth.

The ideas behind these descriptions of the Grahas clothes will hold true in other matters. Automobiles for example: The Sun indicates large and heavy automobiles. The Moon drives a new car. Mars’s car has some slight dents. Mercury’s car is not new, but washed and waxed. Jupiter’s car is not filthy, but it is not spotless and regularly waxed. Venus drives a well-made car such as a Mercedes. Saturn drives a worn out car that is constantly giving problems and which is in need of replacement. These qualities are often combined. For instance, at the time of this writing I am driving a Saturn/Venus car – a worn out Mercedes.

The principles revealed in this Sutra are very important. The Sun likes things to be thick, so when building a wall, it will be a thick wall; when buying a mattress, it will be a thick mattress; and when buying a pad of paper, it will be a thick pad of paper.

The Moon likes everything to be new and will prefer buying things over and over as compared to buying one thing that will last many years. If buying good quality and durable things, the Moon will still replace them before they are worn out, when the mood to do so has him.

Mars likes things that are in need of repair, but which are not worn out; thus a car with dents that is repaired to show-car condition. Mars likes a house that needs a few fixes. Mars will feel restless if what he owns is not in need of some improvement, but he does not like owning junk that is not worth putting effort into.

Mercury likes everything looking like new, but is practical and so does not insist on new things. Mercury takes the best care of that which he owns. The car will be washed, oiled and lubed on schedule. The lawn will be mowed, the house cleaned.

Jupiter takes care of things as required, but does not expect them to look or work like new forever. He is happy with what he has as long as it does the job, when it no longer does the job, he replaces it.

Venus rules the best in quality of everything. Venus insists on quality. Venus will prefer to have nothing if it cannot have that which is of good quality. Venus knows that paying more for something of good quality is a better investment than buying something cheap and having to replace it over and over again.

Saturn likes used things, sometimes to the point of them being practically worthless. Saturn will make something that is worn out and which should be replaced keep on working, no matter how frustrating it may become. As usual, Saturn can persevere, this time with worn out utensils, appliances, tools, vehicles, clothes, etc.

Ritu – Season

भृगोर्ऋतुर्वसन्तश्च कुजभान्वोश्च ग्रीष्मकः ।

चन्द्रस्य वर्षा विज्ञेया शरच्चैव तथा विदः ॥ ४५ ॥

bhṛgorṛturvasantaśca kujabhānvośca grīṣmakah,
candrasya varṣā vijñeyāḥ śaraccaiva tathā vidah.

हेमन्तोऽपि गुरोर्ज्ञेयः शनेस्तु शिशिरो द्विज ।

hemanto'pi guroṛjñeyah śanestu śīśiro dvija,

“Venus’s Ritu is Vasanla, of Mars and the Sun is Grishma, the Moon’s is Varsba, Mercury’s is Sharad, and, O’ Wise, Hemanta is known to be of Jupiter and Saturn’s is Shishira, O’ Twice Born.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 45-46

Ritu refers to a period of time that is fixed for some special occasion, in this case, the occasion of the seasons. Six Ritus are acknowledged. Each Ritu lasts two Saura, “solar” months. A Sauru month is thirty degrees of the Sun’s movement in respect to the equinoxes and solstices; it is the same as the tropical month of which the well-known Sun Signs are derived. In fact, the Saura months are known as Aries, Taurus, Gemini, etc. in the Astronomical Siddhantas in exactly the same manner as the Sun Signs. The first Ritu is known as Shishira and starts at the beginning of Uttara Ayana when the Sun crosses the winter solstice (0° tropical Capricorn). Following are the six Ritus:

Shishira “cold” – Saturn: Sun in tropical Capricorn and Aquarius.

Vasanta “brilliant” – Venus: Sun in tropical Pisces and Aries.

Grishma “hot” – Mars: Sun in tropical Taurus and Gemini.

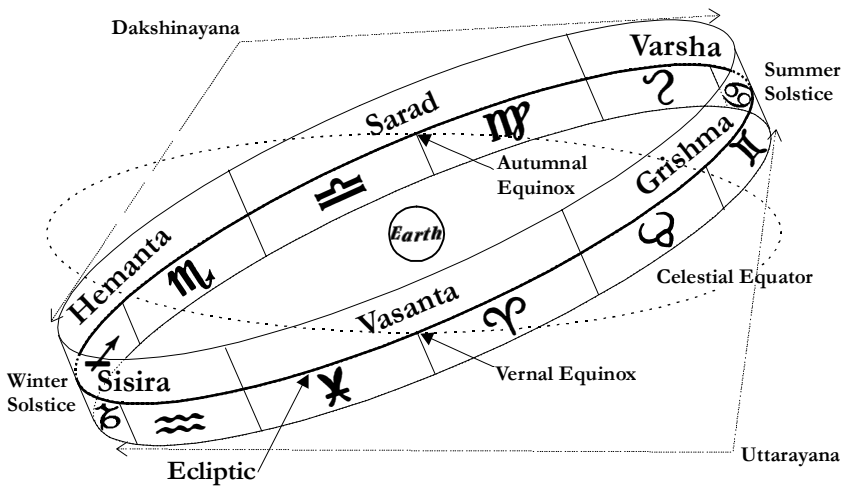
Varsha “rainy” – Moon: Sun in tropical Cancer and Leo.

Sharad “mature” – Mercury: Sun in tropical Virgo and Libra.

Hemanta “frost” – Jupiter: Sun in tropical Scorpio and Sagittarius.

The Sun is a secondary ruler of Grishma though the most important Graha in respect to the seasons due to being their cause.

The Ritus (for the Northern Hemisphere) are illustrated in the diagram below.



Saturn rules the coldest part of the year. The season of Saturn is colder than the season of Jupiter because the Earth is actually further from the Sun in its revolution during that time. Venus rules the generative and brilliant-flowered period that roughly equates to spring. Mars rules the hot months during which the Sun gets hotter and hotter each day. The Moon rules the rainy months that water the crops. Mercury rules the period during which the crops and fruits mature. Jupiter rules the “frosty” months during which the leaves fall and the cold begins to set in.

A year of six seasons is a very ancient convention, old enough to be mentioned in the *Rig Veda*. The approximate dates of the Ritus are shown in the table below:

Saturn	Venus	Mars	Moon	Mercury	Jupiter
Shishira	Vasanta	Grishma	Varsha	Sharad	Hemanta
Dec, 21-Feb, 19	Feb, 20-Apr, 20	Apr, 21-Jun, 20	Jun, 21-Aug, 21	Aug, 22-Oct, 21	Oct, 22-Dec, 20
♄/Cap	♌/Aqu	♊/Pis	♈/Ari	♉/Tau	♋/Gem
♊/Can	♈/Leo	♌/Vir	♋/Lib	♉/Sco	♈/Sag

Please note that in the Southern Hemisphere the Ritus will be reversed as per the table below:

Moon	Mercury	Jupiter	Saturn	Venus	Mars
Varsha	Sharad	Hemanta	Shishira	Vasanta	Grishma
Dec, 21-Feb, 19	Feb, 20-Apr, 20	Apr, 21-Jun, 20	Jun, 21-Aug, 21	Aug, 22-Oct, 21	Oct, 22-Dec, 20
♈/Cap	♌/Aqu	♊/Pis	♈/Ari	♉/Tau	♋/Gem
♊/Can	♈/Leo	♌/Vir	♋/Lib	♉/Sco	♈/Sag

All life on Earth is influenced by the Grahas in the cycle of the Ritus. The cycle of the seasons is well illustrated by plant life. Shishira, the Ritu of Saturn, is considered to begin this cycle. During the Ritu of Saturn the life force is concentrated in the roots of plants and many plants are all but dead. The following spring season of Venus, Vasanta, the concentrated life force in the roots springs forth with power and virility as leaves and flowers. The Grishma Ritu of Mars is marked by a battle for available sunlight, space, soil and water – the stronger plants live, the weaker are overshadowed and die or do not fully mature. The Varsha Ritu of the Moon then nourishes the strong plants with an abundance of water so that they may mature and grow to a new and ideally fuller stature in the Sharad Ritu of Mercury. In the Hemanta season ruled by Jupiter the leaves of the trees wither away, change to orange and drop off as the life force of the tree retreats from the leaves into the roots in preparation for the next cycle to begin.

A similar cycle happens to the human species as well, which is seen to be apparent in athletes and fitness lovers. During the

Hemanta Ritu the glycogen stores of the body can be most effectively increased and so endurance is best developed during this period. During the Shishira Season of Saturn the ability for long and hard efforts is most effectively increased. During the Vasanta Ritu the human body is most capable of gaining strength and power as Venus rules Virya – vitality and strength. The Grishma Ritu of Mars is most effective for developing speed and for reaching high levels of performance. The Varsha Ritu is most suitable for developing one's innate physical attributes; be it speed, strength, endurance, etc., as the Moon nourishes one's natural abilities. Sharad Ritu is the period during which maturity is reached as a result of the work done in the previous Ritus and so is not effective for further athletic development. It is rather the period of fruition. Just as ripe fruit on the tree does not benefit from extra water, attempting to force physical improvement during this period is not effective and usually only results in wasted vitality and energy, which can create setbacks, injury and illness.

USES OF RITUS

The Ritus are used in Prashna astrology to time events and even for finding out the time of birth from the Prashna chart. Furthermore, if a Graha is indicative of ill health, there will be more problems with the health during the Ritu ruled by the Graha. Arthritis sufferers know this when their Saturnine illness becomes more painful in the cold season. Similarly, if a Graha is strong and strengthens the body, the Ritu of the Graha will allow for the rebuilding of the body's strength. Ritus can also be used for weather forecasting. The trend of the weather during a season can be judged by the condition of the lord of the Ritu.

Mineral, Plant and Animal Kingdoms

राह्वारपंगुचन्द्राश्च विज्ञेया धातुखेचराः ।

मूलग्रहौ सूर्यशुक्रौ अपरा जीवसंज्ञकाः ॥ ४७ ॥

rāhvāpaṅgucandrāśca vijñeyā dhātukhecarāḥ,
mūlagrahaḥ sūryaśukrau aparā jīvasañjñakāḥ.

“Rahu, Mars, Saturn and the Moon are known as Dhatu planets; the Mula Grabas are the Sun and Venus; the others are the creators of Jivas.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 47

Dhatu refers to the mineral kingdom, Mula refers to those things with roots – the plant kingdom, and Jiva refers to the living beings of the animal kingdom and Man. The Dhatus of a Graha have many uses. They are used in Prashna to determine whether the concern in the mind of the querist is about an inanimate object, a Dhatu; a plant or plant-derived object, a Mula; or about a person or animal, a Jiva.

DHATU – MINERAL KINGDOM

Minerals are initially formed by the cooling of the magma that is below the crust of the Earth. Magma is molten slurry containing the mineral-building elements. Magma is thus minerals without form and is thus ruled by the formless Rahu. Occasionally magma is brought to the surface of the Earth by volcanic activity which is, therefore, ruled by Rahu.

Hot liquids can hold more dissolved substances than can cool liquids. As magma cools, therefore, it cannot hold as many elements and thus minerals, in the form of crystals, are formed out of the cooling magma. These minerals are known as igneous minerals,

which are ruled by Mars. The well-known experiment of sugar crystals demonstrates the process. Sugar is first dissolved in heated water to the point of saturation and a string is suspended in the solution. As the liquid cools it cannot hold all the dissolved sugar and thus sugar crystals begin to grow on the string, to quite large sizes. Quartz and tourmaline are well-known igneous minerals that grow in this manner.

Due to the movement of the Earth's crust, crystals are pressed together under extremely high pressures to form other crystals with completely different properties. These minerals are known as metamorphic minerals, which are ruled by Saturn. Diamond, which is the carbon element pressed at extremely high pressure, is a prime example of a metamorphic mineral.

Rock and crystals erode due to wind and especially due to water. The tiny eroded products are brought together by the downward washing of water and upon evaporation and sedimentary pressure form crystals once again. These minerals are known as sedimentary minerals, which are ruled by the Moon. These crystals are generally very tiny and not large like the crystals ruled by Mars or Saturn, though millions of tiny crystals group together to form large crystalline masses. Turquoise and malachite are well-known sedimentary minerals.

MULA – PLANT KINGDOM

It is an important point that the plant kingdom is labeled as Mula, “root,” as this allows for the plant kingdom to be broken down into two groups depending upon the nature of the root. The firm Sun rules those plants that are rooted to the ground in one fixed place. Venus rules those plants that spread with their help of their roots, such as ferns, creepers, grass and water lilies. The plants with the creeping roots, ruled by Venus, are very important for the generation of life on Earth. Remember, Venus rules generation through its association with the water element. Ferns are especially important in this respect. Ferns put out spores that are carried long

distances, over miles of ocean to land in the smallest crack where only a bit of dust is enough for them to get rooted in and begin the cycle of life. As ferns break down more complex plants grow until there has been enough decomposition for there to be the fertile soil necessary for the firmly fixed plants of the Sun to root.

JIVA – HUMANS AND ANIMAL KINGDOM

Mercury, Jupiter and Ketu rule humans and the creatures of the animal kingdom. Mercury rules the great differentiation of life that is the millions of species of animals from single-celled amoebas to whales. Jupiter rules the human species, which are marked by their brain capacity, the organ of the brain being ruled by Jupiter. Ketu rules bacteria, which are unique in respect to other living creatures in that they do not have a true nucleus in their single-celled bodies. Due to ruling bacteria, Ketu is responsible for bacterial plagues and bacterial diseases.

Shani



*"Brilliant like blue sapphires, trident, blessing, riding a vulture,
holding arrow and bow is known Saturn, O' Twice Born."*

People

अधुना सम्प्रवक्ष्यामि स्थिराख्यानं कारकग्रहान् ।

स पितृकारको ज्ञेयो यो बली रविशुक्रयोः ॥ १८ ॥

adhunā sampravakṣyāmi sthirākhyān kārakagrahān,
sa pitṛkāraḥko jñeyo yo bali raviśukrayoḥ.

चन्द्रारयोर्बली खेटो मातृकारक उच्यते ।

candrārayorbalī kheṭo mātṛkāraḥka ucyate,

“Now I tell the fixed Karaka Grabas, the producer of the father is known from the stronger of Venus and the Sun. The stronger planet of the Moon and Mars is the producer of the mother.”

Bṛihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Karakas, 18-19

The different Grahas represent the different relatives and influential people in a person's life. Each Graha is responsible for producing a few of these important people and is thus known as a Karaka, “producer.” There are two types of Karakas, Sthira, “fixed,” and Chara, “changeable.” A Graha is a Sthira “fixed” Karaka in respect to those people it is inherently responsible for producing and it is responsible for those people in each and every horoscope; its role is fixed. A Graha is also a Chara “changeable” Karaka and represents different people in every horoscope on account of its degrees and so its role in this instance is changeable. It is the Sthira Karakas which are being discussed here. Many of the Sthira Karakas presented by *Bṛihat Parashara Hora Shastra* are different than those presented by the medieval astrological texts. In all cases, however, the Karakas as given by *Bṛihat Parashara Hora Shastra* have given better results than those Karakas presented by

the other texts. Additionally, the other most revered text, *Upadesa Sutras*, gives the same Karakas as does *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*.

Sun and Moon

The stronger of the Sun or Venus becomes the Karaka of the father and the stronger of the Moon and Mars becomes the Karaka of the mother. The method by which to determine the stronger will be illustrated at the end of the chapter.

It may appear odd that Venus, a feminine Graha, could play the role of the father and that Mars, a male Graha, could play the role of the mother. This is because each parent has an active and passive role and it is Venus who plays the passive role of the father while Mars plays the active role for the mother. Both the Sun and Venus bestow qualities dependent upon the father's influence and both the Moon and Mars bestow qualities dependent upon the mother's influence. The stronger one, however, represents the dominant influence and when the dominant influence ends, the parent dies. For this reason, these Karakas for the mother and father are important for determining the longevity of the parents and it is primary for that reason that the stronger is taken, even though the weaker also has an influence.

The father represents the first exposure to masculine energy in our lives. Masculine energy is the initiating and active energy with which we do. The Sun represents the energy of inspiration which prompts all good actions and which is idealized in the father. This is the father in his active role and has the result of instilling nobility and esteem. Venus represents the genetics contained in the Venus-ruled semen that gears us for specific tasks and gives us the specific abilities, talents and strength with which to do. This is the father in his passive role. The stronger of the two will represent the stronger influence and thus the father.

If the Sun is the stronger, a person's self-development and what they do is more due to the influence of their father's actions, for better or worse. The father's actions are responsible for developing the self-confidence with which anything worthwhile can be done.

If Venus is the stronger, a person's self-development and what they do is more genetic, again, for better or worse. If the Sun is well disposed, the person develops a healthy self-esteem as a result of their father's influence. If Venus is well disposed, the person has strong and healthy genetics.

Similarly, the stronger of the Moon or Mars becomes the Karaka of the mother. The mother represents the first exposure to feminine energy in our lives. Feminine energy is receptive, the energy we use to receive what is desirably healthy and to turn away from that which is undesirable or unhealthy. The Moon represents this pure receptive consciousness which is experienced as virtue, patience, tolerance and acceptance in the mother. These are the passive qualities of the mother which provide for a happy childhood, and which instill virtue, peace and a healthy self-image within the child. Mars represents the hardships the mother must bear from pregnancy onwards and thus represents the mother in her active role. First is the growth within the womb. Second is the birth itself; just as Mars is born from the body of the earth, we are born from the body of our mother. Then there are all the Mars-ruled chores that the mother must perform such as preparing food for the child and protecting the child in addition to disciplining the child so that he or she does not do, eat or touch anything dangerous. The mother in her active Mars role is responsible for providing for the physical well-being of the child while also teaching the child about the dangerous things to avoid. In her passive Moon role, she is responsible for providing the internal well-being. As the Moon, the mother trains the consciousness of the child about what is good, while as Mars the mother trains the consciousness of the child about what is ill.

If Mars is the stronger, the person's consciousness develops under the influences of do and don't, should and shouldn't and what the mother is able to do for the child. What the mother is able to do for the child begins upon conception for even then the fetus is dependent upon the mother's physical resources for its

nourishment; thus, if Mars is well disposed, the child is physically well provided for from its beginning in the womb onwards.

If the Moon is the stronger, the person's consciousness develops under the influence of comfort, cherishing and acceptance and as the result of the mother's nature, or as the lack of these things if the Moon is poorly disposed. If the Moon is well disposed, the child develops a healthy self-image and qualities conducive to peace and happiness.

The two luminaries, the Sun and Moon, represent the parent's role in developing the character of the person. It is, therefore, more important that these two are well disposed than it is for Venus and Mars to be well disposed. Venus and Mars represent the parent's role in what they give to the child, Venus the healthy genetics and Mars the nourishment for the child to grow healthy and strong. Venus as the father is likened to a seed that contains all the genetic material. Mars as the mother is likened to the soil in which the seed is planted. A healthy seed planted in healthy soil yields the strongest plant. In humans however, health is relative to character, so if the Sun and Moon are well situated a person's character gets them through any deficiencies that they may be born with or through any physical lack that they may suffer at an early age.

Mars

भौमतो भागिनी श्यालः कनीयान् जननीत्यपि ॥ १९ ॥

bhaumato bhāgini śyālah kaniyān janānītyapi.

"From Mars – sisters, brother-in-law, youngers and also the mother."

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Karakas, 19

Mars is responsible for producing sisters, younger brothers, brother-in-law and the mother. Sisters-in-law are inferred as well. Naturally, all of these people will be different in a person's life even

though they are all produced by Mars. The difference occurs because Mars produces each of these people through a different Bhava. Mars produces the mother through the 4th Bhava, younger brothers and sisters through the 3rd Bhava, older sisters are produced through the 11th Bhava, brother and sister-in-laws of the younger brother and sisters are produced through the 9th Bhava while brother and sister-in-laws of the older brother and sisters are produced through the 5th Bhava.

All younger siblings are produced by Mars; the older sister is produced by Mars as well, though the older brother is not. The elder sister is produced by Mars as the elder sister often behaves as a second mother to her younger siblings as she helps her mother provide for the family. The elder brother, as will be discussed soon, is not ruled by Mars.

It will be noted that the mother is again related to Mars, this is because Mars always rules the mother in the context of the mother as an individual, who she is and what she does. The influence of the mother upon the native, however, is determined by both the Moon and Mars with the stronger indicating the greater influence. When looking at the mother in the context of herself, look at Mars. When looking at the mother in the context of her remaining in the individual's life, look at the stronger of the Moon or Mars.

Mercury

बुधान्मातृसजातीया मातुलाद्याश्च बान्धवाः ।

budhānmātr̥sajātiyā mātulādyāśca bāndhavāḥ,

“From Mercury – those like the mother, maternal uncles, etc. and relatives.”

Bṛihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Karakas, 20

Mercury produces maternal aunts and uncles, relatives in general and those that take a motherly role in one's life, such as a nanny, step-mother and in cultures where a man has more than one wife,

the mother's co-wives. Mercury produces maternal aunts and uncles through the 6th Bhava, unless they are older than the mother in which case they are produced by the 2nd Bhava. Mercury produces relatives in general through the 4th Bhava. Step mothers are produced through the 3rd Bhava while nannies are produced through the 6th Bhava. In cultures where a man may have more than one wife, if the mother is the first wife, the co-wives are produced through the 6th Bhava. If the mother is not the first wife, the older wives are produced through the 2nd Bhava.

Jupiter

गुरोः पितामहः शुक्रात् पतिः पुत्रः शनैश्चरात् ॥ २० ॥

guroḥ pitāmahāḥ śukrāt patiḥ putrah śanaishcarāt.

“Guru (Jupiter) – paternal grandfather, (influence) from Venus, husband, (influence) from Saturn, children.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Karakas, 20

First and foremost, Jupiter is responsible for producing his namesake, Guru, the teacher. This is not explicitly stated in *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*, though it is stated in *Upadesa Sutras*. Jupiter also produces the paternal grandfather, the husband in a woman's chart and children. *Upadesa Sutras* simply gives the husband and children to Jupiter, while *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* qualifies Jupiter to indicate husband if influenced by Venus and children if influenced by Saturn. To clarify this: Jupiter is always responsible for producing the husband and children, but he is especially concerned with doing so if influenced by Venus and Saturn respectively. Venus is the Graha that rules the institution of marriage and thus Venus influencing Jupiter points strongly towards Jupiter as the husband. Saturn rules debts and since children are those that one owes a debt towards which is paid by raising and providing for the child, Saturn influencing Jupiter points strongly towards Jupiter being a child. Jupiter produces children through the

5th Bhava, the husband through the 7th Bhava and the paternal grandfather from the 5th Bhava.

Venus

विप्रान्तेवासिनः पत्नीपितरौ श्वशुरौ तथा ।

मातामहादयश्चिन्त्या एते च स्थिरकारका ॥ २१ ॥

viprāntevāsināḥ patnī pitarau śvaśurau tathā,
mātāmahādayaścintyā ete ca sthīrakārakā.

“O’ Wise, consider Antevāsina (student, Venus) as wife, father, mother and father-in-law and maternal grandfather, etc. Thus are the fixed Karakas.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Karakas, 21

In this Sutra *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* uses a unique name for Venus, Antevāsina, which is a student that lives in the house of the teacher; *Upadesa Sutras* uses the same name, they do this for a reason – Venus represents students who, through devotion to their teacher and studies, acquire knowledge. Venus also represents the wife, father, mother and father-in-law and the maternal grandfather. Students are produced through the 5th Bhava, wife from the 7th Bhava, father from the 9th Bhava, mother-in-law from the 10th Bhava, father-in-law from the 3rd Bhava and the maternal grandfather is produced from 12th Bhava.

The father is again related to Venus, this is because Venus always rules the father in the context of the father as an individual. The influence of the father upon the native, however, is determined by both the Sun and Venus with the stronger indicating the greater influence. When looking at the father in the context of himself, who he is and what he does, look at Venus. When judging the father in the context of remaining in the individual’s life, look at the stronger of the Sun or Venus.

Saturn

ग्रहेषु मन्दो वृद्धोऽस्ति

grāheṣu mando vṛddho'sti.

“Amongst the Grabas, Saturn exists as the oldest.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 48

In the chapter on Karakas in *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* no responsibilities are given to Saturn for the production of any specific person. The above Sutra comes from an earlier chapter and reflects the same that is stated by *Upadesa Sutras* under the Karakas. Saturn is thus assigned the elder brother. Saturn produces the elder brother through the 11th Bhava. Elder sisters are considered from Mars as has already been mentioned.

In traditional societies the elder brother's inherited gain was the younger sibling's loss, and since loss is ruled by Saturn, Saturn takes the role of the elder brother. Additionally, Saturn is the son of the Sun, and so has many similarities to the Sun, who is one of the Karakas of the father. Saturn as the elder brother reveals the many similar responsibilities as that of the father that the elder brother fulfills. Saturn is a neuter Graha and thus some of his influence is on account of the father's actions (such as the inheritance given to the elder brother) while some of his influence is the result of his self-directed actions (such as how he treats his younger sibling and what he does with the inheritance). While inheritance are not so rigidly structured in today's cultures, the theme of Saturn as the elder sibling causing loss does hold true. The mother spends much of her patience and ideals upon her first born and thus has less to spare upon her younger children. Younger siblings also want that which the older sibling has, and not getting it, they feel lack, a quality of Saturn.

PRATHAMA PRANA

In order to determine the stronger of the Sun or Venus and the stronger of the Moon or Mars a special type of strength must be considered, which is known as Jaimini's *Prathama Prana*, "First Strength." Prathama Prana determines the strongest Rasi and that of the Sun or Venus, or the Moon or Mars which is in the stronger Rasi becomes the significant Karaka for the father or mother. There are several steps to determine the stronger Rasi:

1. The Rasi with the most Grahas, not including Rahu and Ketu, is the stronger.
2. If both Rasis have the same amount of Grahas, then the Rasi with the Graha in highest dignity is the stronger. Exaltation is the highest dignity, followed by Mulatrikona, Own Rasi, Great Friend's Rasi, Friend's Rasi, Neutral's Rasi, Enemy's Rasi, Great Enemy's Rasi and Debilitation. If both Rasis have a Graha in the same high dignity, then check the dignity of the next highest dignified Grahas in the Rasis.
3. If both the Rasis have Grahas in the same dignity, then the dual Rasi is the strongest, followed by the fixed Rasi with moveable Rasis being the least strong.
4. If both the Rasis are moveable, both fixed or both dual, similarly check the strength of the Rasis in which the lords of the Rasis in question are placed.
5. If the lords of both the Rasis are the same strong, the lord with the highest degrees in its Rasi indicates the strongest Rasi.
6. If the lord of the Rasis are the same, the male Rasi is stronger if the lord is in a female Rasi and the female Rasi is stronger if the lord is in a male Rasi.
7. If the Sun and Venus are in the same Rasi, or if the Moon and Mars are in the same Rasi, then the stronger will be the one with higher dignity. If the dignity is the same, the stronger will be the one with more degrees.

Example: The Prathama Prana horoscope will be used as an example for finding the most significant Grahas to represent the parents. The stronger of the Moon and Mars will most significantly represent the mother. The Rasis containing the Moon and Mars both have only one Graha and are thus equal in strength on account of the first condition. We must thus consider which Rasi has Grahas in higher dignity. Mars is in its own Rasi. The moon is in Mercury's Rasi, who is a great friend of the Moon, thus the Moon is in great friend's dignity. Own Rasi is a higher dignity than is great friend's Rasi and so Mars is in higher dignity and stronger and thus the most significant Graha representing the mother.

The stronger of the Sun and Venus will indicate the father.

The Sun's Rasi, Pisces, holds two Grahas: Mercury and the Sun. Venus's Rasi, Aquarius, holds Venus and Ketu, though we do not count Ketu in this matter and thus Aquarius has only one Graha in it that grants it strength. Pisces is, therefore, stronger and thus the Sun is most representative of the father.

MeR Su ☿	Ma ♂	Ju Sa ♄	Mo ☾
Ke Ve ♁	Prathama Prana		☾
♁			Ra ☼
♈	♍	♎	♏

Luminous, Starry and Dark Grahās

प्रकाशकौ शीतकरप्रभाकरौ ताराग्रहाः पञ्च धरासुतादयः ।

तमः स्वरूपौ शिखिसिंहिकासुतौ... ॥ ८ ॥

prakāśakau śītakaraprabhākarau tāragrahāḥ pañca dharāsutādayaḥ,
tamaḥ svarūpau śikhisimhikāsutau...

“The luminaries are the Sun and Moon, the starry Grahās are the five beginning from Mars, and dark of form are Rahu and Ketu.”

Jataka Parijata: 2.8

There are three types of Grahās: luminaries, starry and dark. The two luminaries: the Sun and the Moon, represent the self. These two Grahās, therefore, reveal who the person is. The five starry Grahās: Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus and Saturn, represent the aspects of the self with which the individual uses to move through life. These five Grahās, therefore, represent the abilities of the individual. The two Dark Grahās: Rahu and Ketu, represent the evolutionary path of the self, which is dark and obscure and from which one never wanders far.

PRAKASHAKA “LUMINOUS” GRAHĀS

The two luminaries, the Sun and the Moon, represent the self. The Sun represents the core self, the soul, and its well-being indicates the individual’s intuitive awareness of their core self. The Sun also represents the part of the core self that the individual is inspired to express. The Moon represents the conscious self and its well-being indicates the consciousness and attitude with which the individual perceives themselves and, by extension, life. While the Sun represents that which the individual is inspired to express and

achieve, the Moon represents that with which the individual is most comfortable, familiar and at home.

TARA “STAR” GRAHAS

The five starry Grahas: Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus and Saturn represent qualities of the self as well as being the “arms and legs” with which the self performs its activities. Mars represents the vigor with which one expresses what is in one’s consciousness. Mercury represents the expression of what is in the consciousness through the act of speech. Jupiter represents the happiness and joy producing wisdom that the self experiences. Venus represents the bonds of love and devotion that the self creates with others, knowledge, the divine or anything else towards which the self may be devoted. Saturn represents the sorrows that the self experiences.

The self uses Mars to logically and effectively overcome the obstacles and difficulties that present themselves to the path of the body and self. The self uses Mercury to negotiate and manage its way towards success and productivity in whatever realm the self may find itself involved. The self uses Jupiter to safely guide itself through the many possible pitfalls in life, and to forgive and to provide good will to others. The self uses Venus to evaluate the opportunities that come its way. The self uses Saturn to weather the unavoidable difficulties and losses of life.

TAMA “DARK” GRAHAS

The two dark Grahas: Rahu and Ketu are Grahas “seizers” in the sense that they seize the native and yoke them to the fruits of their karmas. They are, however, more a type of “Lagna” than they are a planet. The Lagna and the Descendant are themselves the result of the intersection of the horizon plane, which is caused by the surface of the Earth revolving around the axis of the Earth, with the Zodiac. Rahu and Ketu are the result of the intersection of the Moon’s revolution around the Earth with the Zodiac – the Zodiac being the plane of the Earth’s rotation around the Sun. So

the Lagna/Descendant and the Rahu/Ketu axis are intersecting points to the Zodiac, one intersecting point is of the revolving horizon, the other of the Moon.

The Lagna/Descendant, being the intersection of the Earth's horizon with the Zodiac, represents the path of the physical body – of physical life and death. The Lagna represents the birth of life, while the 7th represents the exit of life from the body upon death. Rahu and Ketu, being the intersection of the Moon's revolution with the Zodiac, represent the path of the Jiva, the living being of consciousness symbolized by the Moon. (Remember that the Moon is the Manas, in which resides the Jiva, the living being, along with Ahamkara, the ego, or the idea of separate existence.) Just as the Lagna represents the birth of the physical form, Rahu represents the birth of the individual consciousness – that which draws the individual consciousness forth from the Greater Consciousness. Just as the Descendant or 7th Bhava represents the exit of life from the body, Ketu represents the termination of the individual consciousness – the individual consciousness becoming merged with the Greater Consciousness, and thus Ketu is the Karaka of spiritual liberation. While the Lagna and Descendant represent the path that the physical body must take, Rahu and Ketu represent the path that the conscious self treads. Rahu draws the individual consciousness into its earthly incarnation for the purpose of developing the self in the areas of life indicated by Rahu's placement. As the self becomes sufficiently developed, Ketu merges the individual consciousness with the Greater Consciousness by withdrawing it from its narrow vision towards a wider and all-encompassing vision that is relevant to the areas of life indicated by Ketu's placement. The Bhava in which Ketu is placed will, therefore, indicate the manifestation of Spirit which is most relevant to the individual's experiences.

Rahu and Ketu are the path of the conscious self and, since the self is constantly evolving towards greater consciousness, Rahu and Ketu represent the evolutionary path. Since Rahu and Ketu mark different ends of this path, they operate differently, even though

they are ultimately the same, just as two ends of a stick are essentially the same. Ketu is a very introverted force, and gives completions and liberation. Those things that Ketu is influencing are being completed and resolved in this lifetime. Rahu, on the other hand, propels us into new things, so it appears to be doing the opposite of Ketu. In fact, it propels us into the new in order to create balance where there is imbalance, for as long as there is imbalance there can be no completion or liberation. Even though Rahu is initiating new things into the life, it does so only to create balance where there is imbalance, and not for any reason of those things. The balance Rahu forces us to create is in those areas that are underdeveloped as a result of focusing instead, in recent past lives, on those areas Ketu is influencing. Since the areas affected by Rahu are out of balance and weakly developed, there is generally not the necessary past Karma to easily sustain these things and so much work has to be done in order to develop and maintain them. There is also a lack of knowledge and experience, making it yet more difficult to manage those things influenced by Rahu.

Rahu and Ketu are always opposite each other. The law of opposites holds that opposites are the same when taken to their furthest extreme. Rahu and Ketu are, therefore, similar, as *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* states, “Similar is Ketu.” If the area influenced by Rahu is underdeveloped, then the area influenced by Ketu cannot truly be developed either. It is, in fact, only developed from one point of view, and not in a balanced fashion. Without balanced development there can be no fulfillment, nor spiritual consciousness. The balance that Rahu forces us to learn is, therefore, of great importance. For only in involving ourselves in those things that Rahu dictates can we perfect Ketu, which is to become liberated.

Though operating differently, Rahu and Ketu are actually working together. Ketu is overly premeditative and self-controlled, sometimes to the point of implosion, while Rahu is lacking discrimination, and chaotic, lacking any control. Rahu creates the chaos that forces Ketu to let go of control and develop flexibility,

surrender, and detachment instead. The more overly controlled Ketu, the more chaotic will be Rahu. Thus managing Rahu allows for Ketu to experience detachment, acceptance and true peace.

Ketu's placement indicates areas where the native has very strong ideas of should and should not, do and don't along with the ability to live in accordance with these ideas. Where Rahu is placed, on the other hand, the native has unclear or unrealistic ideas and a lack of ability to live in accordance with any preconceived ideas. Rahu, therefore, serves to cause chaos and instability that serves to free the native from the strong ideas indicated by Ketu and make it impossible for them to live life in accordance with their ideas of should and should not, which if maintained would result in unbalanced development.

Both Rahu and Ketu create the need for spiritual comfort and so push one forward, by creating one of three things:

1. Compulsions.
2. Discontent.
3. Radical and uncontrollable changes.

These three things manifest as a forth thing:

4. Transformation in the spiritual man, or destruction in the individual with no spiritual focus.

The compulsions pull the native into those things required to create balance. The discontent motivates a searching. The radical changes bring to the surface the true individuality of the native, and also free them from attachments that would be binding. More specifically Ketu creates compulsions that destroy or free the native from things. Rahu creates compulsions that pull one into things that they have little knowledge or skill in, and where they are therefore bound to suffer difficulty. Ketu creates discontent due to the old and the familiar. Rahu creates discontent due to the impossibility of anything being as good as the wish; dreams are always better than reality, until of course the world is seen as a dream. Rahu creates

radical changes that force one to rely on or accept something unfamiliar. Ketu creates radical change to liberate one from attachments, or those things that are completed and therefore have no more purpose in the native's development. These transformations serve to change the individual's attitude about something that seems impossible by forcing them to look at it from a higher perspective where it becomes possible. It is this transformation that is most important. Rahu forces the native to have breakthroughs that result in understanding where there was confusion. Ketu transforms things by forcing the native to let go of the ego's perceptions and attachments, allowing them to see things with a broader perspective.

The three forces of Rahu and Ketu: compulsions, discontent, and radical change plague every man. If the individual handles these three with a consciousness of discipline, forbearance and growth, then transformation occurs. If the individual is unable to do this then these serve to destroy the happiness in his life and he is unable to safely tread the path of Rahu and Ketu. If Saturn is well situated in the horoscope, then one will much more effectively handle the dictates of Rahu. If Mars is well situated, then one will much more effectively handle the dictates of Ketu. Always look towards Saturn and Mars to get an idea of how strong the individual is in walking the path of consciousness. Saumya Grahas planetary aspecting Rahu and Ketu indicate an easier and smoother path, while Krura Grahas planetary aspecting make the path so much the more difficult.

Rahu's and Ketu's Aspects

On account of being intersection points just as is the Lagna, Rahu and Ketu do not cause planetary aspects any more than does the Lagna itself. They do, however, have an aspectual influence through the Rasi that they are placed in. The Rasi that is holding Rahu or Ketu is, obviously, colored by the influence of Rahu or Ketu. The Rasi holding Rahu or Ketu will, therefore, quite naturally influence the Rasis it aspects with a Rahu or Ketu coloration.

Forms of the Grahas

दिवाकरज्ञौ विहगस्वरूपौ सरीसृपाकारयुतः शशाङ्कः ।

पुरन्दराचार्यसितौ द्विपादौ चतुष्पदौ भानुसुतक्षमाजौ ॥ १२ ॥

divākarajñau vihaḡakharūpau sarisṛpākārayutaḥ śaśāṅkaḥ,
purandarācāryasitau dvipāḍau catusṣpadau mānusutakṣamājau.

“The Sun and Mercury possess the form of a bird, possessed of a creeping form is the Moon, Jupiter and Venus are two-footed, four-footed are Saturn and Mars.”

Jataka Parijata: 2.12

The forms of the Grahas are very useful for defining things astrologically. For example, animals, as has been discussed, are ruled by Mercury. There are, however, many kinds of animals and after determining from a horoscope that animals are a concern, the next step is determining which type of animal. The forms of the Grahas are the key to doing so. When animals are indicated, the Sun and Mercury indicate a bird. The Moon influencing indicates creeping animals: multi-legged animals, insects and arachnids, as well as snakes which have no legs but which creep forth. Jupiter or Venus influencing indicates a two-footed animal – an ape or monkey, or even a human. Saturn or Mars influencing indicate a four-footed animal such as a horse, cow, cat or dog.

The concept of these forms is relevant to other areas of life as well. All types of vehicles, for instance are ruled by Venus. There are, however, many types of vehicles. Amongst vehicles, the Sun and Mercury indicate airplanes, the Moon indicates boats, Jupiter and Venus indicate two-wheeled bicycles such as bicycles, scooters and motorcycles, while Saturn and Mars indicate four-wheeled vehicles such as automobiles and skateboards.

Additionally, those things that hang high or which are in the sky are ruled by the Sun and Mercury. Those things which are so low to the ground so as to touch are ruled by the Moon. Those things which are powerful (for four footed animals are most powerful) or which increase strength and physical ability are ruled by Saturn and Mars, including tools that increase man's ability to perform physically laborious tasks. Those things which do not increase man's physical abilities but which increase the use of their mental abilities and skills or which increase well-being, happiness or comfort are ruled by Jupiter and Venus, as two footed creatures, namely humans, largely seek these things.

Branches of Veda

शाखाधिपा जीवसितारबोधना

śākhādhīpā jīvasitārabodhanā

“The rulers of the branches are Jupiter, Venus, Mars and Mercury.”

Jataka Parijata: 2.15

The branches referred to in the above Sutra are the four branches of the Veda: the Rik, Yajur, Sama and Atharva Veda. Veda simply means knowledge and the four Vedas are generally considered as the oldest of philosophical texts that were passed down orally long before they were ever composed into writing. The four Grahas: Jupiter, Venus, Mars and Mercury each rule one of the Vedas.

Jupiter – Rig Veda

The Rig Veda, ruled by Jupiter, is by far the oldest composition and largely contains hymns and praises about the different manifestations of God, particularly as manifested in nature as the Sun, Fire, Wind and Water. The Rig Veda is marked by the quality of *Awe*, the true quality of being in awe of everything as an aspect of God. One who has the quality of Awe has no need for religion, for he already sees God everywhere. It is only when man loses his sense of Awe that he is in need of turning to religion.

Venus – Yajur Veda

The Yajur Veda is largely a handbook of religious rites. The Yajur is primarily marked by the quality of religion, though it has many similarities to the Rig Veda from which it is derived. Venus rules this Veda that presents the religious rites that strengthen a

person's spiritual foundation because Venus is the Graha that helps us build our spiritual foundation. Venus builds our spiritual foundation by ruling institutions such as marriage and by providing other such rules of conduct that protect us from destroying our spiritual lives. It is only when Venus is afflicted that the ills that destroy a person's spiritual life come about. As long as Venus is in good condition, it provides the foundation of good behavior and spirituality.

Mars – Sama Veda

The Sama-Veda is also derived from the Rig Veda and is marked by religious rites much the same as is the Yajur Veda, though it is composed in metre instead of prose, as is the Yajur Veda. Also, the religious rites of the Sama Veda are somewhat different than that of the Yajur Veda in that they are marked more by their quality of helping one taste the essence of God, rather than of building the spiritual foundation, as are the rites in the Yajur Veda. Mars rules the Sama Veda because Mars rules all actions of self-discipline that benefit the character, which the rites of the Sama Veda very much do.

Mercury – Artharva Veda

The Atharva Veda is unique as compared to the Yajur Veda and Sama Veda in that it is not derived from the Rig Veda. The Atharva Veda contains mantras and prescriptions for appeasing negative forces, gaining mundane favors, improving health, etc. In short, it contains the means for managing one's practical affairs by esoteric means. It can almost be called a "spell book." Mercury rules the Atharva Veda because Mercury is the Graha of managing all our mundane concerns. Mercury is the great manager, and management is largely overcoming problems and ensuring the smooth operation of that which one is responsible for. The principles set forth in the Atharva are those that every astrologer who recommends Mantras,

gems, Pujas, etc. is somewhat familiar with. Astrologers with poor Mercury are not inclined to make such recommendations.

OTHER SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE

The Four Vedas cover any and all areas in life in which a person may wish to make improvement or which they may desire to understand. Other books and sources of learning and knowledge are similarly ruled by these four Grahas. Jupiter rules all those books and sources of knowledge which somehow cause one to think of God and spiritual matters, or which tell the tales of spiritual figures. Venus rules all the sources and self-help books that teach us to understand proper behavior and relationships or which help us to live more healthfully and productively in the world. Mars rules all those books and sources that provide disciplined procedures, training manuals, and step-by-step instructions with which to reach a goal. Mercury rules all those books and sources that give practical procedures with which to alleviate troubles, from health, medical and dietary texts to texts on debt management, spells, and any other mundane “how to” books.

Rahu



“Gaping mouthed, sword, shield, trident, granting wishes, on a lion and dark colored is fixed Rahu.”

Slopes of the Grahās

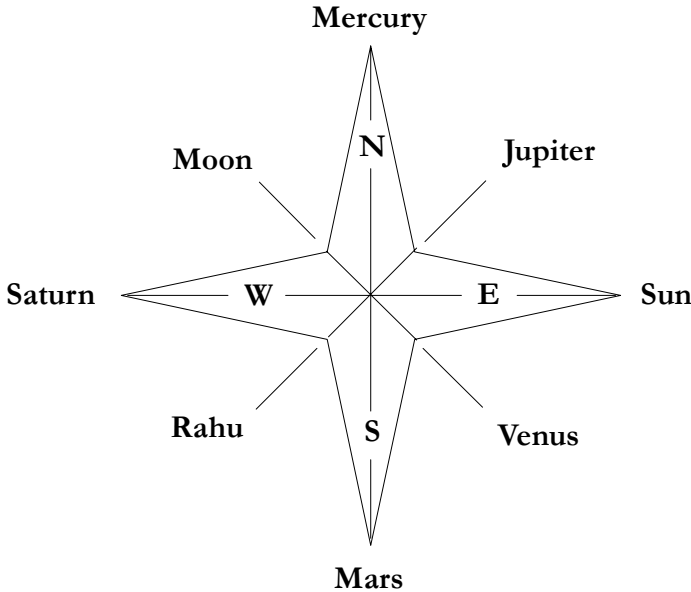
प्रागादिका भानुसितारराहुमन्देन्दुविदेवपुरोहिताः स्युः ।

prāgādikā bhānusitārārāhumandenduviddevapurohitāḥ,

“Beginning from the East, the Sun, Venus, Mars, Rahu, Saturn, the Moon, Mercury and Jupiter.”

Jataka Parijata: 2.23

This Sutra refers to the Plava, “slope,” of the Grahās. The Sun rules slopes that slope East, Venus slopes that slope Southeast, Mars slopes that slope South, Rahu slopes that slope Southwest, Saturn slopes that slope West, the Moon slopes that slope Northwest, Mercury slopes that slope North and Jupiter rules slopes that slope Northeast, as shown in the following diagram:



It is considered favorable to live on properties that slope down towards the East or North, the directions of the Sun and Mercury. These are the two stable Grahas, especially the Sun, and so property sloping in these directions is stable, safe and secure as compared to property sloping in other directions. For most people, property that slopes towards the East is most favorable, while property that slopes North is considered most favorable for Brahmins and temples. Property that slopes West or South, the directions of Saturn and Mars are considered unfavorable. Properties sloping in intermediary directions are not considered ideal.

The slopes of the Grahas are also useful for choosing favorable times for travel. In order to make the journey a quick and easy journey the Graha that slopes in the direction of travel should be strong and preferably in an angle. If the Graha that slopes in the direction of travel is weak or unfavorably placed, then the journey will be “uphill” all the way.

Details of accidents and such things can also be determined by the slopes of the Grahas. An accident will usually take place in the direction indicated by the slope of the Graha causing the accident or by accidentally going of course in the direction of the slope of the Graha.

Sights of the Grahas

अथोर्ध्वदृष्टी दिननाथभौमौ दृष्टिः कटाक्षेण कवीन्दुसून्वोः ।

शशांकगुर्वोः समभागदृष्टिरधोक्षिपातस्त्वहिनाथशन्योः ॥ ३२ ॥

athordhvaḍṛṣṭī dinanāthabhaumau ḍṛṣṭiḥ kaṭākṣeṇa kavīndusūnvoḥ,
śaśāṅkagurvoḥ samabhāgaḍṛṣṭiradhokṣipātaḥstvahināthaśanyoḥ.

“Upward looking is the gaze of the Sun and Mars, side looking are Venus and Mercury, the Moon and Jupiter look everywhere equally, glancing down are Rabu and Saturn.”

Jataka Parijata: 2.32

Where an individual directs his gaze has a lot to say about the personality of the person as well as their mode of thinking, thus the sights of the Grahas are revealing. Those who look up when they think are visual thinkers, those who look sideways when they think are auditory thinkers, those who look down when they think are tactile thinkers.

Sun and Mars – Upward Looking

Upward looking Grahas are ambitious and always envisioning the great things they hope to do in the future. These Grahas appraise what they look at and the measure they use is some respected principle. The Sun looks up towards the responsibilities and duties he is inspired to lead. The Sun measures those he looks at against the principles of honor and esteem. Mars looks up towards the challenges he desires to tackle and surmount and the increase in strength and ability for which he trains. Mars measures those he looks at against the principles of courage and strength of personality.

Individuals with prominent upward looking Grahas tend to learn best visually, which means they need to see or read that which they are learning. They also tend to think visually, which is to think in pictures.

Mercury and Venus – Side Looking

The side looking Grahas look for opportunities, options and possibilities. Mercury looks for opportunities to invest in and possibilities for improvement and efficiency. Venus looks for the best possible choices in all matters.

Individuals with prominent side looking Grahas tend to learn best in an auditory manner, which means they need to hear that which they are learning. They also tend to think in sound, which means they hear their thoughts.

Saturn and Rahu – Downward Looking

Downward looking Grahas more easily lend towards lethargy as when the eyes are directed downwards it naturally brings about sleep. The two downward looking Grahas, Saturn and Rahu, are the two Grahas that create low self-esteem, and so if a person is not looking down due to depression, they are looking down at someone in an effort to think themselves better. Saturn particularly tends to feel depressed and insecure and is thus often attempting to compensate for the ill feelings. When the eyes are directed downwards the mind enters the subconscious, where the fears and fantasies of our psyches lay. Rahu particularly causes us to dwell on our fantasies. These are, however, only the potential negative aspects of the downward looking Grahas.

Individuals with prominent downward looking Grahas tend to think tactually, which makes them effective thinkers when what they have to think about is in front of them. Their ability, however, to think about something or mull something over when that thing is not in front of them is low, as it is difficult for their minds to create a picture of the thing that they may wish to think about. The mental

process of tactile thinkers is slower, as is the nature of Saturn, however, they can be every bit as effective thinkers as anyone else, in accordance with the marks of intelligence indicated in the horoscope. Such individuals also learn best tactilely, which means they need to physically touch and feel that which they are learning or else study very concrete examples. When learning to count, such an individual would learn best touching and moving the blocks as they are counted. When designing, such individuals work well with models to arrive at wonderful designs.

The Moon and Jupiter – Looking Everywhere Equally

The two Grahas that look everywhere equally see the whole picture. These Grahas are accepting since their thinking is not narrow or confined. They are also capable of deep insights. The Moon is “filled with knowing” and so is very receptive to the truth around him. Jupiter has understanding and so is likewise receptive to the truth around him.

Individuals with these Grahas prominent think effectively whether thinking tactilely, visually or in an auditory manner.

Ketu

Ketu is not given a sight since he does not have a head, being only the tail and trunk of the Asura Svarbhanu. Ketu is the introvert who, not seeing what is happening around him, is less influenced and not so much conditioned by the events taking place in his environment.

With this knowledge of the sights and the mental processes it is possible to determine a person's thought process and a prominent Graha in their makeup. If an individual looks up when he thinks, then he is a visual thinker and the Sun and/or Mars are prominent. If an individual looks to the side when thinking, then he is an auditory thinker and Mercury and/or Venus are prominent. If an

individual looks down when thinking, then they are a tactile thinker and Saturn or Rahu will be prominent. If an individual looks in different directions when thinking, then they are relatively balanced in their thought processes and the Moon and/or Jupiter will be prominent.

Dry and Moist Grahas

मन्दार्काराः शुष्काश्चन्द्राच्छौ सजलौ जलर्क्षगौ ज्ञेज्यौ च ॥ ६५ ॥

mandārkarāḥ śuṣkāścandrācchāu sajalau jalarkṣagau jñejyau ca.

“Saturn, the Sun and Mars are dry, the Moon and Venus are with water, and barely going in water are Mercury and Jupiter.”

Jataka Tattva: 1.65

The Sun, Mars and Saturn have a drying influence while the Moon and Venus have a wetting or moistening influence. Mercury and Jupiter are in the middle – not excessively wet or dry.

Amongst other things, the dry or wet nature of a Graha will have an influence on the environment in which a person lives. If dry Grahas, for example, are influencing the factors that indicate a person’s residence, the individual will live in a dry clime. If wet Grahas are influencing, a person will live in a humid clime. If Mercury or Jupiter are influencing the clime will be moderate – neither significantly dry nor humid.

Dry Grahas influencing the 2nd Bhava or 2nd lord will indicate an appetite for dry food, crunchy foods, toasted foods, etc. Wet Grahas influencing will indicate an appetite for moist foods and juicy foods.

Dry Grahas influencing an individual’s body will make the individual lean with a harder and more rugged looking body. Mars especially causes leanness. Wet Grahas create a softer, more resilient and, in respect to woman’s bodies, a more voluptuous body. Even in men’s bodies, wet Grahas add an extra layer of softness. This can be seen in the bodies of the best swimmers, who, though very muscular, do not have the dry leanness of many other athletes but a healthy layer of tissue covering their muscles. This layer actually

increases the swimmer's aqua-dynamics, allowing them to outperform those with dry bodies. In cases of ill health, wet Grahas most easily turn to obesity. The average Grahas: Mercury and Jupiter, build the average body that is not particularly hard and dry, nor particularly soft and voluptuous.

Classical texts also state that if the watery Grahas influence the 7th Bhava sexual intercourse will be comfortable. If dry Grahas influence the 7th Bhava, intercourse will be uncomfortable. This is a valid concept for all other Bhavas as well. Dry Grahas influencing the 2nd Bhava of speech will make the speech dry and less comforting to others. Wet Grahas influencing the 2nd Bhava will make the speech more comforting. Dry Grahas influencing the 3rd Bhava will indicate an individual who enjoys doing hard things, wet Grahas influencing will indicate an individual who enjoys more comfortable things. Dry Grahas influencing the 4th Bhava will indicate a more rudimentary living environment, wet Grahas influencing will indicate a house filled with comforts. This concept can be applied to all the Bhavas.

Behavior of the Grahas

रविः स्थिरः शीतकरश्चरः स्यादुग्रः कुजश्चन्द्रसुतस्तु मिश्रः ।

मृदुः सुरेज्यो भृगुजो लघुश्च शनिः सुतीक्ष्णः कथितो मुनीन्द्रैः ॥ ४७ ॥

raviḥ sthiraḥ śītakaraścaraḥ syādugraḥ kujaścandrasutastu miśraḥ,
mṛduḥ surejyo bhṛgujo laghuśca śaniḥ sutikṣṇaḥ kathito munīndrauh

“The Sun is firm, the Moon changes, fierce is Mars, Mercury is mixed, delicate is Jupiter, Venus is light/quick/easy and Saturn is very harsh, say the sages.”

Jataka Parijata: 2.47

The descriptions of the Grahas as given in *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* and covered in a previous chapter gives a quite accurate idea of each Graha's behavior. *Jataka Parijata* gives similar descriptions while also emphasizing certain aspects of the Graha's behavior in the above Sutra.

The Sun is firm. When the Sun proceeds about his business he is steady and committed. When he says no or draws the line, it is a firm refusal or boundary that cannot be crossed. Additionally, the Sun makes all things firm. Furniture influenced by the Sun, for example, will be firm furniture, rather than soft, plush furniture.

The Moon changes, which is to say that he adapts and changes. He will continue as long as what he is doing feels good. When something else feels better, he will do that. When saying no, he only says no to that approach and will easily change his mind if another approach feels good to him. When things become impossible, he will adapt so that they become possible. For this reason the Moon rules evolution, the ability to adapt over time to one's environment so as to live in harmony with that environment. On account of its adaptable and changeable nature, if the Moon influences something, that object will more readily allow for change.

Mars digs into things and tackles them; he is fierce and passionate about what he is doing. When he says no, it is a fierce no that if challenged will be met with aggression. On account of his fierce nature, Mars makes all things sharper and more intense. Mars also rules all those fierce things such as knives, weapons and crampons.

Mercury is mixed in nature and can act in the fashion of any of the other Grahas. Mercury will first behave in the fashion of any Grahas with which he is joined. If not joined by any Grahas, Mercury's behavior will lean towards that of the lord of the Rasi in which he is placed, though being capable of behaving in whatever means necessary in order to manifest his agenda. Mercury's mixed nature makes him very versatile.

Jupiter is delicate, kind, benevolent and never pushy or forceful. When he says no it is his kindness that prevents others from crossing the line, as most people are not inclined to hurt or abuse those that are truly good. Jupiter is the great protector whose gentle nature causes him to abstain from harm. Jupiter rules all those things that make other things safe, like the safety switch on a rifle, the safety device on a food processor, or simply smoothed edges on furniture, especially as found on baby furniture.

The word used to describe Venus is Laghu, which cannot be easily translated into English. Laghu has connotations of light, quick and easy, thus Venus behaves in a manner that brings things about quickly, easily and efficiently. When Venus says no, he does so gracefully and does not leave anyone's feelings hurt by his refusal. Venus rules all things that make something lighter, easier, in short, more comfortable, such as padding in a chair and the saddle blanket under a horse's saddle. By making things easier and lighter, Venus helps us to bear our burdens.

Saturn does things the hard way. His manner is harsh, rugged or even cold. When saying no he is hard or cold. Saturn makes all those things he influences harder and rules all hardened things, such as ice, as well as all hardening process such as those used to harden steel.

Grains of the Grahās

गोधूमं तण्डुलं वै तिलचणककुलुत्थाढकश्याममुद्रा

निष्पावा माष अर्केन्द्रसितगुरुशिखिकूरविद्ग्वहीनाम् ।

godhūmaṁ taṇḍulaṁ vai tilacaṇakakulutthāḍhakaśyāmamudgā,
niṣpāvā māṣa arkendvasitagurusikhikūravidbhrgvahīnaṁ.

“Wheat, rice, sesame, chick-pea, horse gram/kulthi (Dolichos Uniflorus), pigeon pea (red-dhal), mung bean, hyacinth bean (Dolichos Lablab) and black gram/urad from the Sun, Moon, Saturn, Jupiter, Ketu, Mars, Mercury, Venus and Rahu.”

Phaladeepika: 2.28

The different grains, pulses, seeds, etc. are ruled by the Grahās. The knowledge of which grain is ruled by which Graha has many uses, but is perhaps of primary importance for maintaining health, for strengthening the health promoting aspects of the Grahās and for strengthening weak Grahās that are allowing the body to succumb to disease.

Whole grains have a lot of vitality, or Virya, which provides them with the ability to grow into a plant. Loss of health is merely the result of a lack of Virya, thus by consuming grains, Virya can be increased. The increase of vital energy that the grain increases is relevant to the Graha which rules the grain. The vital systems and functions ruled by the different Grahās, therefore, can be strengthened through consuming the proper grain. It must be mentioned, however, that for this to be effective the grains must be eaten raw after soaking in water until they soften or until they begin to sprout. At this point they are a storehouse of Virya. Softened by soaking the grains are in a similar state as when they are ripe on the plant before they dry out into hardened and barely edible seeds.

Upon cooking, grains do become soft, but also weak in Virya and thus ineffective in promoting health. The student will remember that the Water element is responsible for maintaining Prana and life and for satiating and increasing; thus the water soaked grains are very beneficial for the health. The Fire element on the other hand is drying, which promotes aging, and causing hunger and thirst; thus cooking the grains ruins their health-promoting benefit. Another important benefit of soaking and sprouting the grains is that many grains have toxins in their husks which are washed out during the rinsing process.

Sun – Wheat

Wheat increases steadfastness to principles and strengthens the core parts of the personality and the foundation of the health. It is beneficial for those who are weak-willed and inconsistent in their pursuits. Wheat requires more digestive strength to consume than other grains and, being a grain ruled by a Krura Graha, it should not be over consumed as it may promote rigidity and inflexibility.

Moon – Rice

Rice is the most nourishing grain in the context of providing ready food for the body. It is useful for those who have weak digestion as it provides easy nourishment. It is beneficial for treating growth disorders that are the result of the body being unable to acquire sufficient nourishment. Rice is beneficial for balancing the weight of the body, whether the body is in need of weight reduction or weight increase. Rice is also a soothing and calming and a balanced grain – one of the healthiest grains for regular consumption.

Mars – Pigeon Pea / Red Dhal

Pigeon Pea, the widely consumed Red Dhal of India, is beneficial for those suffering from cold disorders and for those who do not have sufficient vitality to throw out the poisons of the body

through fever, acne, and other such fiery means. Red Dhal is helpful in cases of timidity, frigidity and lack of aggression in the pursuit of one's physical, mental or spiritual development. It is also beneficial for promoting appetite in those who have no desire to eat. Being a grain ruled by a Krura Graha, Pigeon Pea should not be consumed to excess, as it may cause the personality to become excessively fiery and promote anger.

Mercury – Mung Bean

Mung Bean is the most nourishing grain in the context of providing nutrients. It is therefore beneficial for all malnutrition disorders, weak digestion and weak absorption of nutrients. Being a grain ruled by a Saumya Graha, it is very favorable for regular consumption in which case it will prevent any nutritional deficiencies.

Jupiter – Chick Pea

Chick Pea, also known as Garbanzo Bean, is beneficial for sugar related imbalances such as hypoglycemia. It promotes endurance and fulfillment. Being a grain ruled by a Saumya Graha it is favorable for regular consumption, in which cases it promotes consistent energy levels, happiness and contentment.

Venus – Hyacinth

Hyacinth Bean, *Dolichos Lablab*, is beneficial for increasing physical strength and vitality. Hyacinth increases the strength of all the vital organs, particularly the kidneys and increases body mass where the body mass is low. It is also health promoting to the endocrine system and thus of benefit in all hormonal-related disorders. Being a grain ruled by a Saumya Graha, it is favorable for regular consumption in which case it maintains strength, vitality, health and luster.

Saturn – Sesame Seeds

Sesame is beneficial for reducing the bacterial load upon the body. It is, therefore, of benefit any time disease invades the body in any form, whether cancer or chronic colds, and it is particularly helpful for immune disorders and Vata disorders. Saturn rules the Thymus which is responsible for producing the T-cells which clean up the bacteria that constantly pollute the body. If Saturn cannot maintain the cleanliness of the body in this way, the body succumbs to illness and eventual death. Sesame helps Saturn by destroying the bacteria in the body. Being a seed ruled by a Krura Graha, Sesame is not ideal as a regular and primary food for the body in which event it begins to act as a minor toxin.

Ketu – Horse Gram / Kulthi

Horse Gram, or Kulthi as it is known in India, is effective in all types of crystallization diseases, such as kidney stones, bone spurs, stiff and worn joints, etc. Emotionally it assists in releasing ill feelings and rigidity. Kulthi, along with Sesame finds much traditional use in India as an herbal remedy. Being a pulse ruled by a Krura Graha, Horse Gram should not be consumed to excess and is best used when necessary or for those with tendencies towards the aforementioned complaints.

Rahu – Black Gram / Urd

Black Gram is a commonly used pulse in India that has the black husk removed after which it is cooked in Dhal type dishes. Black Gram is beneficial for unstable or overactive behavior as well as for diseases that threaten death or which are of unknown origin, in which case it helps the individual “go with the flow” and develop a sense of surrender and in doing so removes stress that would otherwise only help the body to decay. It is even favorable to consume during periods of ill and unexpected fortune for this very same reason. Being a pulse ruled by a Krura Graha, Black Gram

should not be over consumed, in which case it can contribute to flaccid living, laziness or inertia.

Note on the Grains of the Krura Grahās: As mentioned, the grains of the Krura Grahās should not be eaten to excess as they may imbalance the personality and health. This is especially true in the context of eating the grains cooked. In a raw state, it is very difficult to eat an excess amount of any grain. Cooked wheat products are eaten to excess in most cultures, for which reason many individuals are finding themselves becoming allergic to wheat. Cooked Red Dhal and Urd are eaten to excess in India.

GRAINS AND ELEMENTS

Grains can be advised for consumption based on the five elements. When the Ether element is weak, Chickpea can be taken to increase the healthy mass of the body. When the Air element is weak, Sesame can be taken for its antibacterial properties and thus the body can remain pure instead of building up a high bacteria load, which is a common problem with weak Air. When the Fire element is weak, Red Dhal can be eaten to help energize the body and strengthen its ability to combat difficulties and purge toxins that may otherwise cause disease. When the Water element is weak, Hyacinth can be taken to regenerate and revitalize the body. When the Earth element is weak, Mung bean can be taken to promote nutrient absorption and thereby strengthen a weak and devitalized system. One of the problems of having the Earth element weak is that the body is unable to properly digest the food and so the nutrients are not taken out of the food and though one may eat a lot, their cells are always starving. Mung beans are most easily processed by the body, allowing the body to absorb the badly needed nutrients.

GRAINS AND DASAS

When ill health threatens it is often an effective remedy to eat the soaked grain of the Dasa or Antardasa lord which is causing or allowing the disease. In this event, be cautious that the Graha that is causing the disease is not causing the disease due to excess, thus if Mars is causing a fiery or heat disorder, Red Dhal would not be recommended, rather Hyacinth of Venus would be recommended to cool the body. Generally, the grain of the Dasa lord is the one to consume. The grain of the Antardasa lord is occasionally contraindicated.

Gemstones

Perhaps the most confusing and certainly the most controversial indications of the Grahas is that of gems. *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* has only little to say in regards to this matter.

सीसं राहोर्नीलमणिः केतोर्ज्ञेयो द्विजोत्तम ॥ ४२ ॥

sīsaṁ rāhornīlamaniḥ ketorjñeyo dvijottama.

“Grey from Rahu, black gem from Ketu, O’ Best Twice Born.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 42

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra only gives gems for Rahu and Ketu; grey gems are from Rahu and black gems from Ketu. The word used in the Sutra for grey is Sisa meaning “lead.” In Sanskrit, most colors are given by referring to something of the color intended, thus lead means grey, due to lead being grey in color. The word used for black is Nīla, literally meaning “dark,” and used to describe any very dark color that is difficult to distinguish from black or black itself.

The question naturally arises as to why no colored gems are given for the remaining Grahas. The reason is that color is a property of the Rasis, as mentioned previously, and not Grahas. Rahu and Ketu, however, are associated with grey and black gems due to their being the dark Grahas and due to black not being a color. Black is, rather, absence of color and grey is simply a lighter variation of black. Grey is simply absence of less color than black.

This is not to say that the other Grahas are not influenced by gems, but that they are influenced in accordance with the color of the gem in respect to which Rasi rules that color. A Graha is most notably influenced by the color gem represented by its Rasi, exaltation Rasi and Mulatrikona Rasi. The Moon, for example, is

significantly influenced by white and pink gems, white being the color of Taurus, which is the Moon's exaltation and Mulatrikona Rasi, and pink being the color of Cancer, the Moon's own Rasi. Each Graha is thus actually influenced by two or three different colored gems – one the color of its own Rasi, one the color of its exaltation Rasi and one the color of its Mulatrikona Rasi. While any white gem will influence the Moon, each type of white gem will influence the Moon differently in accordance with its crystal structure, and so it is no simple matter to recommend gems. The exact use and influence of gems to benefit the Grahas is a vast science that requires a separate text to explore, so it will not be discussed further here.

The first mention of gems in any available astrological text is in Varaha Mihira's *Brihat Sambita*, circa 500 AD. *Brihat Sambita* mentions twenty-two gems which are stated by the author to bring luck when worn. Nowhere are any of these gems related to the Grahas. The gems mentioned by Varaha Mihira are: diamond, sapphire, emerald, Karka (white), ruby, blood, cat's-eye, Pulaka, Vimala (stainless), royal gem, quartz crystal, moon-loved (moonstone), Saugandhika (most likely some yellow gem), Gomeda, shell, dark blue (sapphire), topaz, Brahma gem, Jyotirasa (light essence), Sasyaka (perfect), pearl and coral.

There is no mention of gems being associated with the Grahas in any available astrological textbook that was written before the 12th century. Some later texts associate one of the precious gems of the time with each Graha. These are the commonly known associations used by many modern astrologers: Sun – ruby; Moon – pearl; Mars – coral; Mercury – Emerald; Jupiter – Topaz; Venus – Diamond; Saturn – Sapphire; Rahu – Gomeda and Ketu – cat's eye. Associating each of the precious gems with a Graha allowed the astrologer to predict about gemstones. Thus if a noble man at the time was going to gain or lose a gem, the astrologer would be able to predict what type of gem was lost or gained. That is the only

purpose of these associations. In the modern world these associations are not very relevant due to changes in precious gems. These days, pearls and coral have lost their value and are no longer considered precious. Tanzanite, on the other hand, is rapidly gaining favor and has broken into the precious category.

These medieval associations have, unfortunately, been misunderstood with the result that astrologers are recommending these gems to strengthen particular Grahas. The method, however, is unscientific and only works at all because, as Varaha Mihira has stated, “gems bring luck when worn,” which means that many random gems will be seen to benefit an individual.

These associations are not scientific due to several reasons: The full color spectrum of gems is not covered. The unique crystal structure of each gem is not considered. The unique optical properties of each gem are ignored. Color, crystal structure and optical properties are the differentiating characteristics of gems. These properties result in their being over 7,000 minerals in the earth, many of which are practical to be worn and are thus termed gems. Each of these gems will have a different effect upon the individual, so you can see it is not such a simple matter as “one gem for one Graha,” just as there is not “one herb for one Graha.” If only life were that simple there would be no need for any of us to suffer. Just as many herbs are required to treat all physical afflictions, many gems are required to heal Man’s afflictions. Healing with gemstones is an involved science, no less a science than is the study of herbs.

To recommend gems effectively, a serious study is required, a textbook for which is in the works. However, most gems will do something for most people, though the effects may be subtle, so it never hurts to try a gem that an astrologer may recommend out of his intuition or towards which you feel drawn. Simply put the gem on and see how you feel. If you feel lethargic or sluggish, it is not for you. If you are energized, think more clearly, deal with stress better, wake up earlier or find pain disappearing, then the gem is

certainly for you. If you don't feel anything, forget it – you could certainly be wearing a better gem.

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Ages of the Grahas

स्तन्योपभोगं शशिनो वयः स्वं भौमास्य विद्यादशनानुजन्म ।

बौधं तु शिक्षाविधिकालमाहुरा मैथुनेच्छाकुलितप्रवृत्तिम् ॥ ४ ॥

stanyopabhogaṁ śaśino vayaḥ svaṁ bhaumasya vidyādaśanānujanma,
baudhaṁ tu śikṣāvidhikālamāhuraḥ maithuneccākulitapravṛttim.

शौक्रं युवत्वं विधिपूर्वदृष्टमा मध्यमाद्देवगुरोर्वदन्ति ।

रवेर्वयोर्धत् परमान्यदस्मात् सौरेर्जरादुर्भगकालमाहुः ॥ ५ ॥

saukraṁ yuvatvaṁ vidhipūrvadṛṣṭamā madhyamāddevagurorvadanti
ravervayo'rdhāt paramānyadasmāt saurerjarādurbhagakālamāhuḥ

“The Moon’s age is that of consuming milk, one should know that of Mars as the following of teeth arising, and Mercury the time of learning lessons up to the beginning of sexual agitation. Venus is youth which is known as that described previously, Jupiter is spoken as that of the middle, the Sun runs from the half, and from the last great accomplishment is Saturn’s unfortunate time.”

Yavana Jataka of Sphujidhvaja: 39, 4-5

Life has its natural periods during which specific developments occur. Each of these periods is ruled by one of the Grahas. There are different views in regards to just which age each Graha rules. Amongst Sanskrit texts, the oldest available text that actually describes the ages of the Grahas is Sphujidhvaja’s *Yavana Jataka*, the Sutras of which have been given above. The descriptions given by *Yavana Jataka* correlate with the specific ages given in *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*.

अथ विप्र निसर्गायुः खेटानां कथयाम्यहम् ।

चन्द्रारज्ञसितेज्यार्कशनीनां क्रमशोब्दका ॥ १६ ॥

atha vipra nisargāyuh khetānām kathayāmyaham,
candrārājñasitejyārkaśanīnām kramaśobdakā.

एकद्वयंकनखा धृत्यः कृतिः पंचाशदेव हि ।

जन्मकालात् क्रमाज्ज्ञेया दशाश्चैता निसर्गजाः ॥ १७ ॥

ekadvayamkanakhā dhṛtyaḥ kṛtiḥ pañcāśadeva hi,
janmakālāt kramāj jñeyā daśāścaitā nisargajāḥ.

“Now, O’ Wise, I shall tell the natural life (Nisargayu) of the planets the Moon, Mars, Mercury, Venus, Jupiter, the Sun and Saturn in serialtim; one, two, nine, twenty, eighteen, twenty and also fifty from the time of birth; from that order is also known the Nisargaja (natural) Dasa.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Longevity, 16-17

Moon – Infancy, Age 0 to 1

The Moon rules the period of infancy during which the child’s nourishment is dependent upon milk and the period during which the child rapidly grows. This is the first year of life. During this period the child is completely dependent and can do nothing by itself to resist the influence of its environment. At this time the child is as yet unable to walk. Also during this first year the consciousness gets more and more anchored in the body. During this important year the self-consciousness of the child is thus developed in accordance with its environment and in accordance with its physical well-being.

If the Moon is well situated in the horoscope, the first year is comfortable, the child is healthy, the body grows to proper proportions and the environment is conducive to the child’s well-being and happiness. All these things provide for a healthy self-consciousness and a good self-image that will carry the person through the many difficulties of life that lie ahead.

If the Moon is poorly situated in the horoscope, the child will either suffer physically, suffer a poor environment in which its needs will not be met, not grow and develop sufficiently or suffer some other ill fate. Whichever the case may be, the self-consciousness will be developed surrounding pain and suffering and thus the person will develop a pained self-image and an uncomfortable mindset. As a result of this, fear, worry and anxiety will more easily invade the mind throughout the remainder of their lives.

Mars – Teething, Age 1 to 3

Mars rules the period of teething, from the age of one to three, as well as the period of during which the child learns to walk and run. With the gain of teeth and the ability to walk and run the child can begin to fend for him or herself – they can at least walk or run away from danger and live from regular food that needs to be chewed.

Following the development of the child's consciousness through the Moon during the previous two years, the child begins to assert that which is in its consciousness through Mars. This is the difficult period for most parents when the child begins to become a handful; the “terrible twos.” This can likewise be a frustrating period for a child during which they not only suffer the pain of teething, but during which they often feel frustrated with their inabilities. Their consciousness having been developed by the Moon becomes frustrated by their poor coordination, inability to communicate and their inability to be understood. Also during this period the child begins to become able and must therefore learn that which is acceptable behavior and that which is unacceptable.

If Mars is well situated in the horoscope, the child shows patience and logically works through that which it is attempting to do. This is the first step in it developing its abilities. Those responsible for guiding the child will show patience and understanding while at the same time firmly disallowing any unacceptable behaviour. This has the affect of the child learning his

limits, what is fair for it to do and what is not, without it being given cause to feel as a “good” or “bad” individual.

If Mars is poorly situated in the horoscope, the child is impatient and easily frustrated. Instead of trying to work things out, the child gets angry or whines. Those responsible for guiding the child will be impatient, be perturbed by the child’s anger and whining and get angry and scold the child in an ill and frustrated tone. The child will rebel, not learn its limits, feel bad and show little desire to do what is acceptable.

Mercury – Learning, 3 to 12

Mercury rules the period of learning, skill development and rapidly developing coordination, which correlates to the ages of three to twelve. This is the period during which education should be commenced. It is not considered favorable to begin any structured or formal education before this time, not even the learning of the alphabet. Until the age of Mercury, the child should learn only what it picks up from observing its environment and that which it is able to logically understand through its own motivation. Muhurta texts, in fact, state that education should not begin until the fourth year, allowing the child one year to adjust to the new age.

The age of Mercury provides for the development of the child’s skills and interests. Games, athletic sports and education are all important for the child during this period. During this period the child also learns to communicate effectively, not only through speech but also through reading and writing. Since Mercury is the manager, this is also the period of the child learning how to take proper care of themselves and that which they own and to solve problems through the application of their intelligence. The words used in the Sutra to describe Mercury’s age mean, “learning rules/precepts,” and so the age of Mercury is also the age of learning to live by the rules and laws of society.

If Mercury is well situated in the horoscope, the child pursues their interests, finds enjoyment in learning, becomes coordinated and confident in using his or her body, develops friendships based

on mutual interests, communicates effectively and takes care of and improves him or herself. They also take good care of and improve those things that they own or are responsible for. They will show skill and intelligence and take interest in following the norms and conducts of society.

If Mercury is poorly situated in the horoscope, the child will have lackluster interests, not participate in those things that would hone their coordination, refuse to communicate, have no desire to do anything productive and not develop healthy friendships. They may not show any marked skills or intelligence, and if they do, they will not find happiness in pursuing them, though they may pursue them for various ill or unhealthy reasons. There will be the tendency to break the conducts and laws of society and problems such as petty thievery, vandalism and various types of dishonesty may be apparent.

Venus – Passionate Youth, 12 to 32

Venus rules the passionate age of youth that begins with the onset of puberty and lasts until the following age of recognizing and coming to terms with one's purpose. During this period, the fulfillment of simple physical and emotional needs is replaced by the need for intimacy and the experience of passion. Most importantly, this is the period during which a person will begin to make decisions that will have life-long ramifications. Decisions such as who they will be with sexually and what type of career for which they will prepare. Physically, upon the onset of puberty, the body begins to rapidly grow stronger until the full physical form of adulthood is reached. This is also the period during which the body is at its strongest. After the age of 32, the strength of the body begins to decline.

If Venus is well situated in the horoscope, the individual makes sound decisions that provide for their betterment and a productive future. They will make decisions to do what really is important and worthwhile for them. The body will be healthy, strong and vital. If Venus is poorly situated in the horoscope, the person may make

decisions to involve themselves in ill relationships, addictive substances and other such things which cause mental, emotional and physical harm and which reduce their chances of having a productive and happy future. Oftentimes these unfortunate decision have life-long repercussions such as children before one is ready, drug destroyed minds and nervous systems, weakened and malnourished bodies, etc. The simple weakness of Venus may cause the individual to pursue things that are not the most fulfilling and thus they will have regrets later in life over having not pursued what they really needed in order to feel fulfilled.

Jupiter – Middle of Productive Life, 32 to 50

Jupiter rules the period of joyfully fulfilling one's duties, the primary child rearing years and the age of mental maturity during which the individual begins to more realistically see their purpose in the world. The challenges of child rearing and the mental maturity that grows during this period helps one to realize and follow one's ideals and goals and to walk the path in which one believes. During this period the physical vigor of the body begins to decline and contentment is preferred over excitement, though the mind becomes more active and able. If Jupiter is well situated in the horoscope, the individual will pursue their life's ambition with purpose, consistency, and contentment. While doing so, they will enjoy the fulfillment of their other responsibilities, enjoy their children and find happiness in the little things in life. If Jupiter is poorly situated, the individual will feel first excited and then depressed about their life's ambitions, or he will have such a great need to fulfill their life's ambitions that there is discontent or frustration with not having reached their goals and the inability to enjoy the many good things that may be in their life. Children, in this case, will also be experienced with great stress. Additionally, the decline of one's physical vigor and charms will leave them depressed and unhappy on account of their not finding happiness in any of their mental gifts.

Sun – Middle Age, 50 to 70

The Sun rules the beginning of the second half of life – the middle-aged period during which a person realizes their true greatness and the success of their abilities. This period follows the primary child rearing years and so is a period of greater personal freedom. If the Sun is well situated in the horoscope, this will be a period during which the person finds that what they have done supports who they are and that they can do what they do with honesty and integrity. What they do is, in fact, nothing more than the duty which is born of their innate nature. Alternately, if their earlier years were very difficult or confined, this may be the period during which the individual will pursue their inspirations with great vigor and very rapidly find success with them. In either case, this can then be a period of true prestige during which one's actions speak for themselves.

If the Sun is poorly situated in the horoscope, this will be a period during which the individual finds their life lacking. Though they may have the time to do great things, they have not lived a healthy life of individuality that would have prepared them to do their best with those things that they have been inspired towards. Instead, they can only squander their time with trivialities, such as gambling.

Saturn – Old Age, 70 to 120

Saturn rules the period of old age which begins upon the completion of a person's last great accomplishment. This is the age of retirement and the age during which the physical body begins to rapidly decay and during which death has its approach. This is the period of retreating from the endless activities of the world to instead concentrate on spiritual affairs in preparation for death. Occasionally, however, this is also a period when true greatness can shine in the person who has lived his life in accordance with his innate nature and who has not lived a life of continual compensation for their own inner lacks.

If Saturn is well situated in the horoscope, the person will be able to healthfully accept the fact of a decaying body and eventual death. Though they may be at death's door, they will keep on living a life of inspiration and find happiness and contentment with the good things in their life. In this case, they may well be the most productive and successful that they have been as they take advantage of their long life of wisdom-granting experiences.

If Saturn is poorly situated in the horoscope, the person will be pained by fear and distracted by their physical ailments. In desperation, they will hope for the happinesses that have avoided them, while ignoring the good things in their life. They may become indifferent to life and learn nothing or do nothing and only decay without growing personally or spiritually.

AGES AND DASAS

शशाङ्कभौमैन्दवशुक्रजीवसूर्यार्कपुत्रा वयसः क्रमेण ।

आ जन्मनः प्राणभृतां दशासु ज्ञेया विभागेषु जरापमान्त्याः ॥ ३ ॥

śaśāṅkabhaumaindavaśukrajīvasūryārkaputrā vayasah krameṇa,
ā janmanah prāṇabhṛtāṁ daśāsu jñeyā vibhāgeṣu jarāpamāntyāḥ.

“The ages in the order of the Moon, Mars, Mercury, Venus, Jupiter, the Sun, and Saturn are to be understood as supporting life in share with the Dasas from birth until the end of old age.”

Yavana Jataka of Sphujidhvaja: 39, 3

In Vedic Astrology, there are special planetary periods as well as Rasi periods that bring about the events indicated in the horoscope. These periods are known as Dasas. In conjunction with the various Dasas, there are the natural periods of the ages of the Grahas as mentioned. *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* has, in fact, stated that these ages are a Dasa, a Dasa called Nisargaja “natural” Dasa. These natural periods have a strong influence within the events indicated by the other Dasas. Even if a Dasa is indicating favorable events,

but the Graha ruling the age is afflicted, then life will not be happy. If a Dasa is indicating unfavorable events, but the Graha ruling the age is well disposed, then the individual will experience their life more positively than events would incline one to believe.

In the beginning of each age, noticeable changes occur. At the beginning of the Moon's age, the child is , or course, born. At the beginning of Mars' age, the child begins to walk and consume chewable food and changes in the personality are also marked. At the beginning of Mercury's age, communication and curiosity increase. At the beginning of Venus' age, the body rapidly changes and grows due to the onset of puberty and the behavior and personality also change dramatically on account of increased hormone secretions. At the beginning of Jupiter's age the individual gears down to what is important in order to fully appreciate and find happiness with life. At the beginning of the Sun's age the individual will come to realize that their life has prepared them for a greater task than they have as yet performed, or that they have squandered many of their talents and abilities, but that they now have the chance and freedom to develop the parts of themselves that they are most inspired towards. At the beginning of Saturn's age the bodies vigor begins to noticeably decline and having less physical energy to pursue the things of the world, the individual must naturally learn to find the happiness that is available within themselves.

The middle of each age is the high point of the age. At six months, during the middle of the Moon's age, the child's most rapid period of growth has occurred. At two years, the middle of Mars' age, is the time of greatest teething pain and the highest blind willfulness of the child. At seven and a half years of age, the middle of Mercury's age, communication reaches a high level and the most commonly used intellectual skills such as reading, writing and basic arithmetics are fully useable. At the age of twenty-two, the middle of Venus' age, the body becomes fully grown and developed while physical strength also becomes mature. Twenty-two is also the age where many individuals are ready to get married or have a long term

significant relationship. At the age of forty-one, the middle of Jupiter's age, the individual's understanding of their life comes to a focus. If Jupiter is afflicted, their life will be felt as quite meaningless and there will be a great effort to do something to change the meaningless face of their life. At the age of sixty, the middle of the Sun's age, a person often reaches the height of their inspirations. This is a crucial year during which an individual will proceed to do the greatest things yet or, if the Sun is afflicted, begin to retreat from their activities. At the age of ninety-five, the middle of Saturn's age, old age firmly sets in.

श्रेष्ठा दशा स्वे वयसि ग्रहस्य

śreṣṭhā daśā sve vayasī grahasya...

"The best Dasa of a Graha is in its own age..."

Yavana Jataka of Sphujidhvaja: 39, 8

If the Dasa is indicating events that are in line with the natural developments of the Graha ruling the age that the native is in, then the native will be able to most enjoy the Dasa and feel at ease. This may happen when the Dasa lord is also the ruler of the age that the person is in. However, any time the Dasa is indicating events of like nature as that of the Graha ruling the age, it indicates an opportune period of life. If the Dasa indicates events that are contrary to the natural development of the age that the native is in, then the period will be particularly unhappy or stressful and the native will feel depressed or ill at ease. For example, if an individual in the age of Venus is running a Dasa of isolation, then many of their personal needs and desires will not be met and during the time when they should be looking at their options in life they will likely be retreating from life.

EVALUATING GRAHAS IN THEIR AGES

By far the most effective tool for evaluating the Grahas in their

ages is Shad Bala. Each of the six individual Balas that form Shad Bala has something important to say about a Graha. If any of the Graha's individual Balas is weak, then the individual will experience difficulty in respect to the weak Bala. Shad Bala is a vast subject, an extensive book of which is in the works.

The influence of other Grahas will also have a say on the well-being or otherwise of a particular age. Krura Grahas in the 4th, 6th or 8th from the Graha that rules the age or Krura Grahas joining, planetary aspecting or hemming the Graha will all make the age more difficult and unpleasant. Saumya Grahas in these places will have the opposite effect and make the age happy, enjoyable, easy and pleasant.

Lastly, if the lord of the age is in a Dusthana (the 6th, 8th or 12th) there will be difficulties towards having the best age, though the age can be enjoyable if the Graha's Shad Balas are favorable and if the Graha has some strong influences from Saumya Grahas. If the lord of the age is in an angle or trine, then there will be consistency and a smooth start towards having a great age, as long as the Graha's Shad Balas are favorable and the Graha is not excessively afflicted by Krura Grahas.

AGES IN PRASHNA AND PREDICTIONS

Occasionally it will be necessary to divine the age of someone in a client's life from a Prashna, in which case these ages should be made use of. The strongest and most significant Graha representing the person the question is about will indicate the age of the person in question.

Ketu



“Smoky, two armed, armed with a mace, deformed limbs, and seated on a vulture are fixed Ketus granting blessings.”

Myths and Families of the Grahas

Vedic astrology is rich in myth and symbolism. Many of the stories revolving around the Grahas and their families are quite interesting. Often, a Graha's family explains very important indications of the Graha's qualities, so the astrologer will do well to learn a bit about the myth and other family members of the Grahas.

Sun

There are several different version of the parentage of the Sun, the most common version holds that the Sun is an Aditya, a child of the goddess of unbounded space, Aditi, and her husband the great Rishi Kashyapa. This would make the Sun the brother of Indra, with who he is held in equal esteem.

Surya, the Sun, had several wives, the most important of who is Samjna, "Consciousness," the daughter of Tvastri, the Divine Architect. The fact that the Sun is wedded to Consciousness reveals that the Sun is the indicator of the consciousness that helps us be true and noble. When we misbehave, the Sun, through his wife Consciousness, lets us know.

Samjna gave three children to the Sun: Manu Vaivasvata, Yama and his twin sister Yami. The Sun was so bright, however, that Samjna could not withstand his brilliance and so she had her serving maid, Chaya, "Shadow" take her guise and placed her with the Sun while she herself took the form of a mare and retired to the forests to devote herself to spiritual practices. The Sun thus had three children with Chaya: Manu Suvarni, Saturn and Tapati. Eventually the Sun found out about the deceit and went to Samjna's father, the Divine Architect who explained to him why his daughter had left him. Being a helpful father-in-law, he then shaved off the Sun's rays so that he would not be so bright as to repulse his wife. (For this reason it is said that it is inauspicious to portray the Sun

with strong rays.) The Sun then went and found Samjna, who had taken the form of a mare, in the forest. Upon finding her, the Sun himself took upon the form of a horse and they copulated as horses, from which the two great horsemen, the twin Asvins, were born as well as Revanta.

Of the Sun's children, Manu Vaivasvata is the ancestor and law-giver of the human race, Yami attempted to seduce her twin brother Yama and then became a deity of the night while Yama became the God of Death and the Lord of Dharma. Manu Suvarni will be the next ancestor and law-giver in the next Manvantara (secondary cycle of creation of which there are fourteen). Tapati married King Samvarana and bore Kuru, the ancestor of the Kauravas, the Solar dynasty of whom Lord Rama was to be born. The two Asvins (Dasra "giving marvelous help" and Nasatya "not untrue") became the Divine Physicians. Revanta "wealthy" came in charge of the Guhyakas who guard Kubera's (the God of Wealth) treasury.

Moon

There are different stories about the birth of the Moon. One story has it that the Moon is the child of the Sapta Rishi Atri "The Eater" and his wife Anasuya "Free from Envy." The fact that the Moon's mother is "Free from Envy" is important as this quality is a quality that marks the Moon. If the Moon is afflicted a person needs to work on this quality and will often find that they are jealous and envious. If the Moon is well situated a person is inclined to mind their own business and enjoy their own lives while allowing others to enjoy theirs without interfering.

Another story has it that the Moon was born out of the eye of Atri. This story certainly has some symbolic value for the Moon is the sense mind – the strongest senses which are sight and taste. Taste is the most difficult sense to control; if an individual can control their desire for taste, they can manage all the other desires that stem from the other senses easily, even the sexual desire. The importance of sight is demonstrated in the English language where

we “see how this feels,” “see how this sounds,” “see how this tastes,” rather than “feel how this feels,” or “listen how this sounds” or “taste how this tastes.” Thus sight is the sense that Man most relies upon.

The Moon is the Casanova of the Grahas, possessing twenty-seven consorts. These twenty-seven consorts are the twenty-seven Nakshatras. The Nakshatras are the daughters of Daksha “The Skillful” and his wife Asikni “Black,” who are also the parents of Sati, Siva’s wife, thus the Moon is the brother-in-law of Siva.

It is on account of his many wives that the Moon is said to wax and wane. The Moon favored Rohini above his other wives and so his father-in-law cursed him that he would be childless and die of consumption. The Moon’s wives were saddened by this and so pleaded with their father to free the Moon from his curse. The curse was thus modified to be periodical instead of permanent and thus the Moon wanes with consumption each month.

The Moon has had no children with any of his twenty-seven wives. He did, however, have an illegitimate child with Jupiter’s wife, Tara “Star.” It seems that the Moon was not satisfied with his twenty-seven Nakshatra stars and thus had also to forcibly carry off Jupiter’s Tara.

The illegitimate child that was born from the union of the Moon and Tara was none other than the Graha Mercury. Mercury went on to father one of India’s two great dynasties, the Lunar Dynasty, of which Krishna and Arjuna, Yudhishtira and the other Pandus of *Mahabharata* and *Bhagavad Gita* fame were born. Mercury is a friend of the Moon and tries his best to help his father, though the Moon is an enemy of Mercury and only tries to break Mercury down. It seems that the Moon is no better a father than he is a husband. If the Moon is overly prominent while the Sun is underdeveloped in a man’s horoscope, the individual will similarly put his own feelings before that of his wife and children and thus fail in his duties as a husband and father.

Mars

Mars is unique in that he has no father, only a mother, for he was born out of the Earth herself. The fact that Mars has no father reveals that Mars does things his way. Not having a father, he does not have the guiding influence and role model that a father normally serves. Rather, he follows his sense of logic and arrives at conclusions that are his own. Additionally, the lack of a father makes him hungry to define who he is and thus he is desirous to develop his character. Only having a mother, however, reveals that the foundation of Mars logic and desire to develop character is based on an individual's emotional security. Insecure emotions will hamper the proper use of logic and also cause an individual to illogically develop their character – by changing others and other things rather than themselves.

Being the son of the Earth, Mars is ideally equipped to handle the many challenges, difficulties, dangers and threats that are a normal part of life on Earth. All creatures struggle to survive, to eat and to thrive; those with a solid Mars in their horoscopes are not only best equipped to do so, but most enjoy the daily fight.

Mars not only has no father, he also remains unmarried and has no consort. He is the Bhramachari, the celibate student who focuses on moving forward and becoming better rather than on pleasures and conveniences. With no father and no consort, Mars is his own person, follows his own mind, and enjoys independence, though he freely gives his allegiance to the king or path that he finds noble and honorable.

Mercury

Mercury, as mentioned, is the illegitimate child of the Moon and Tara due to a forced union. For this reason, illegitimate children are indicated in an individual's horoscope when the Moon and Mercury are appropriately influencing.

Mercury married Ida, one of the most interesting figures of Vedic Mythology. Ida is the personification of the drinks and milk offered at sacrifices and symbolizes all forms of refreshments

offered to the deities, including the refreshment of praise. Ida is the granddaughter of the Sun and the daughter of Manu. Ida's birth is also interesting. Ida's father wanted a boy and thus performed a ritual in order to have a son, but made a mistake in the ritual and thus ended up producing a daughter. Upon growing up, Ida became a man due to the favor of two powerful divinities, Mitra and Varuna. Ida's stint as a man did not last long, however, for he trespassed on Parvati's sacred grove upon which no man may tread and thus Ida once again became female. It is in this second female form that Ida was married to Mercury. Mercury and Ida had a son, Pururavas, who fathered the Lunar Dynasty. After giving Mercury a son, Ida once again became male through the beneficence of Vishnu and went on to father three of his own children. For this reason, Mercury is the Graha that indicates a propensity for homosexuality.

Mercury's son, Pururavas, was a great king who ruled all the seven continents. Pururavas fell in love with the celestial nymph Urvashi, who was not only a celestial nymph, but the most beautiful and talented celestial nymph and the favorite of Indra. It is with this nymph that Pururavas fathered the Lunar Dynasty.

Jupiter

Jupiter is the child of Angiras, a sage born from the mouth of Brahma, who was an esteemed writer of astronomy. Angiras had four wives: Smriti "memory," Sraddha "faith," Svadha "oblation," and Sati "truth." Jupiter embodies all of these qualities and habits due to being raised by these four divine mothers.

Jupiter's consort is Tara, who is the mother of the Graha Mercury as discussed above. Jupiter and Tara had a son, Kaca, "hair," who once upon a time seduced the beautiful daughter of Venus.

Jupiter and Venus have always warred against each other, with Venus generally being the cheated loser. It would be a happily-ending fairy tale to say that Jupiter's and Venus's children could fall in love and live happily ever after, but such was not the case.

Jupiter's son only seduced Venus's daughter for his and his father's own purpose. Once their purpose was fulfilled, Jupiter's son immediately disposed of Venus's daughter, though Venus's daughter loved him dearly. There are similar stories of how Jupiter lied in order to overcome Venus and his disciples the Asuras. Jupiter and his son often so resort to base means in order to bring about the destiny that is meant to be brought about. Venus and his daughter always live righteously, always do the best possible thing, which is all anyone can do, but destiny often overrules and in the end we must accept what the gods dictate. Jupiter gives the wisdom and insight to recognize this greater destiny and thus have peace and happiness whatever befalls one, whether what befalls one is fair or not. Venus, on the other hand, chooses the best and most honorable path possible, never lying, never cheating and never seeking to further his desires at the expense of others. Unfortunately, this does not always mean that things work out as fate is ever in the background. When it does not work out, Venus gives the ability to heal and regenerate from the pain of disappointment.

Venus

Venus is the son of Bhrigu who was one of the greatest astrologers. Bhrigu also possessed the gift of prophecy to a high degree and had a very insightful mind. For this reason, Venus also has prophetic ability.

Venus had a daughter, Devayani, "The Way to the Gods," who fell in love with Jupiter's son as discussed previously. Upon the end of her short-lived romance, Jupiter's son cursed her so that she would marry beneath her status and thus she married a king instead of a Brahmin. Her eventual husband was very libidinous and so cheated on her, due to no fault of her own. Devayani did thus not have great luck with men; however, she is the ancestor of Lord Krishna for her son, Yadu, is the progenitor of Krishna's clan. Devayani symbolizes the ability to bear burdens without become ill-mannered or hateful, but to continue onward as best as one is able.

This is “The Path to the Gods” and a quality given by the Graha Venus.

Saturn

Saturn is, as mentioned previously, the son of the Sun and his wife’s duplicate, Chaya “Shadow.” The Sun’s wife is Samjna “Consciousness” but Saturn is the son of Shadow. These two consorts of the Sun indicate the two parts of the self, the conscious and subconscious or shadow. Saturn is born out of the subconscious. For this reason Saturn indicates all the subconscious fears and habits which cause us pain, suffering, setbacks, delays and trouble. Saturn is, however, still the son of the great king, the Sun, so he is no lesser of a being. In fact, the Sun and Saturn always operate together; they are “opposite ends of the same stick.” Where the Sun is the ambition and confidence that uplifts us, Saturn is the ability to overcome the weaknesses which may hold us back, between the two of them we become able make a success of our lives.

Saturn has no consort, and like Mars remains alone. His reasons for being alone are very different than are those of Mars. Mars prefers to remain unmarried because he cherishes independence for action. Saturn prefers to remain unmarried because he is a brooding loner who finds no happiness in company. These two cruel Grahas serve to get us through the difficulties and hardships of life and are not suited to a life of comfort and security that a married man enjoys.

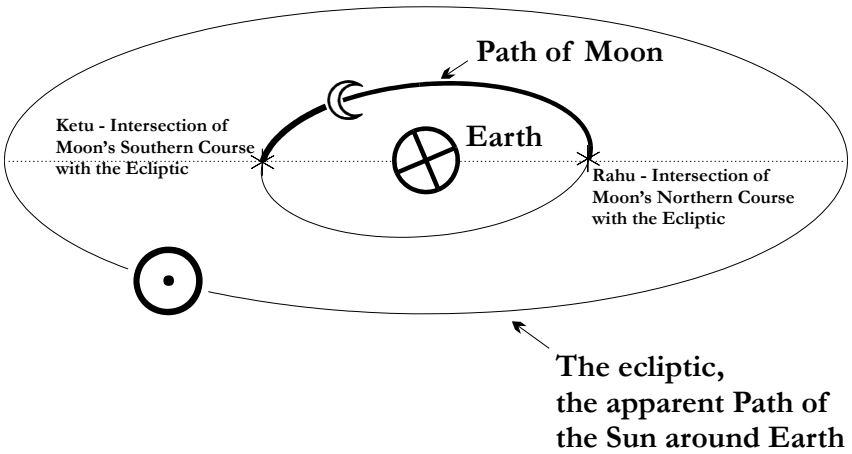
Rahu and Ketu

The birth of Rahu and Ketu during the churning of the ocean has been explained already under the myth of Kurma Avatara. The Asura who became Rahu and Ketu was Svarbhanu, who was the child of Vipracitta “Sagacious” and Simhika, a daughter of Daksha and thus a sister to the Moon’s wives, the Nakshatras. Rahu and Ketu are, therefore, cousins of Mercury, not in blood but through

Marriage. Rahu, Ketu and Mercury get along well, as cousins should, while all sharing enmity from the Moon.

The very birth of Svarbhanu from such illustrious parents indicates that amongst Asuras, he was one of the great ones, for which reason only he was able to maintain his senses in the face of Mohini's charms and thereby partake of the Amrita.

On a symbolic level, Svarbhanu probably represents the lighted (Bhanu) space (Svar) surrounding the earth. The lighted space is the space through which the light of the two heavenly lights, the Sun and Moon, pass through as the light travels to Earth. The intersection of these two lighted paths is Rahu and Ketu. These intersection points, which are Rahu and Ketu, of the Sun's path with the path of the Moon are illustrated below.



Grahas and the Alphabet

Different types of sounds are ruled by the different Grahas. This is shown by the Sanskrit letter ruled by each of the Grahas:

SUN – VOWELS

अ a, आ ā, इ i, ई ī, उ u, ऊ ū, ऋ ṛ, ॠ ṝ, लृ ḷ, ए e, ऐ ai, ओ o, औ au.

All the vowel sounds are ruled by the Sun. Different languages have different vowels and even vary in vowel number; regardless, all vowels are ruled by the Sun.

The ṛ, ṝ and ḷ vowel sounds are not common to the English tongue and are not the r and l consonant sounds that we are familiar with, but rather vowel sounds.

MOON – SEMI-VOWELS, SIBILANTS & ASPIRATES

य y, र r, ल l, व v, श ś, ष ṣ, स s, ह h.

Any sounds that do not fit into the distinctive categories mentioned below or which are not vowels are ruled by the Moon. These sounds consist of semi-vowels, such as the “y” sound, sibilants such as the “s” sounds and aspirates such as the “h” sound.

The ś and ṣ sounds have a “sh” sound. The ś is a palatal “sh” that is formed by the top of the tongue pressing the palate with the sides of the tongue pressing the teeth. This is the “sh” sound found in the English language. The “sh” in Dasa is a ś sound. The ṣ is a

retroflex “sh” sound that is formed by the tongue turning back towards the palate.

MARS – VELARS

क k, ख kh, ग g, घ gh, ङ ñ.

Velars are those sounds that originate in the throat. These are also known as gutturals. The ñ sound is the “ng” sound at the end of sing and king.

MERCURY – RETROFLEXES

ट ṭ, ठ ṭh, ड ḍ, ढ ḍh, ण ñ.

Retroflex sounds are those sounds that come forth when the tongue is turned back towards the palate. These sounds are not very common to the English tongue.

JUPITER – DENTALS

त t, थ th, द d, ध dh, न n.

Dentals are those sounds that come forth when the tongue is pressed towards the teeth. Most of the English “t”, “d” and “n” sounds are retroflex sounds.

VENUS – PALATALS

च c, छ ch, ज j, झ jh, ञ ñ.

Palatal sounds come from the tongue being pressed towards the sides. The ñ sound, for example, is the “n” as in Pancha.

SATURN – LABIALS

प p, फ ph, ब b, भ bh, म m.

Labial sounds are those sounds that come forth from the lips being pressed together.

The arrangement of the different types of sounds to the Grahās is quite interesting. One will note that the sounds ruled by the Sun are those sounds that are formed with the most wide open mouth and that the sounds ruled by Saturn are those sounds formed with the most closed mouth. The more the mouth is open the more power the sound has. Between the Sun and Saturn the Grahās in their natural order rule sounds that are formed with the mouth becoming more and more closed until at Saturn the mouth is entirely closed. While it may at first appear that the mouth is opened when pronouncing Saturn sounds, the mouth is actually kept closed until the pronunciation of the Sun-ruled vowel sound following the Saturn sound. For instance, when saying “boo,” the mouth is not opened until the beginning of the Sun ruled “oo” sound.

Different languages have different vowel sounds, semi-vowel, sibilant and aspirate sounds, velar sounds, retroflex sounds, dental sounds, palatal sounds, and labial sounds, yet all vowel sounds are ruled by the Sun; all semi-vowel, sibilant and aspirate sounds by the Moon; all guttural sounds by Mars; all retroflex sounds by Mercury; all dental sounds by Jupiter; all palatal sounds by Venus and all labial sounds are ruled by Saturn.

USING THE SOUNDS OF THE GRAHAS

The letters and sounds of the Grahās have many uses. *Yavana Jataka* details a very involved method of determining the names of things from a Prashna chart. More simply, the sound of the first

letter of the first name of an individual will reveal a strong and primary Graha in the makeup of the person. Upon meeting someone, their name is the astrologer's first clue regarding their personality.

Grahas and Numbers

Vedic Astrology is very rich in symbolism; however, the root of astrology is mathematical, as it is for all occult sciences. Mathematics is the universal language, so it is very worthwhile to make a numerical study of the Grahas as well.

NUMBERS OF THE GRAHAS

Each Graha represents a particular number, which indicates the fundamental nature of the Graha:

Sun	1
Moon	2
Mars	3
Mercury	4
Jupiter	5
Venus	6
Saturn	7
Rahu	8
Ketu	9

This is the order in which the Grahas are normally listed.

GEOMETRY

In order to understand the meaning of the numbers, each number can be described with the aid of geometric forms. Understanding the numbers in this manner will assist in understanding the Grahas.

One – Sun

The One is geometrically symbolized simply by a single point. It is the essential component part of all other forms and numbers and

so of greatest importance. As the essential component part it represents the root element from which all has its source. One represents the *beginning* and *initiation* of all forms. As the integral part of all other forms, the One also represents *completion* and *fulfillment* on any level.

Beginnings, and *initiations*, are primary keywords for One, while *completion* and *fulfillment* may be taken as secondary due to the One being integral to all other numbers. All these are qualities of the Sun.

Two – Moon

Two is geometrically symbolized by a straight line, which is the form derived from two points. Between the two ends of the line there is always a center point, a point of *balance*.

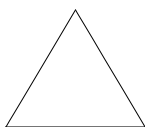
One end of the line is on the left, the other on the right; or one is above and the other is below. Two therefore represents duality; yin and yang, male and female, positive and negative, etc. The energy of the two is one of *contrasting, but interactive* forces, as the two points, though opposite, are joined. Any influence to *one affects the other*.

If we extend one end of the line, then the middle point shifts as well, the line has *changed but balance is maintained*. This is also shown by the yin/yang symbol of duality, where the forces are in constant flux and change, but always balanced.

Balance is a primary keyword for the Two. *Contrasting though interactive, one affecting the other, and change that is based upon maintaining balance*, are also keys to the Two. All these are qualities of the Moon.

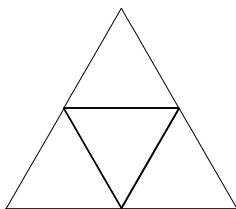
Three – Mars

The Three is symbolized geometrically by an equal lateral triangle; fig. 3-1. For the first time we have a figure that encloses a space; tangibility and form now manifest. This is not a form of stability or stagnation, but rather, as the triangle symbolizes, a form of *energy*.



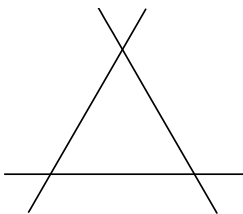
3-1

Attaching a similar triangle to each edge of the original triangle creates a similar, but larger, triangle; fig. 3-2. *Growth* has occurred.



3.2

Extending the edges of the original triangle we arrive at six lines that extend in such a manner as to never cross each other; fig. 3-3. The whole figure is one of *expansion*.

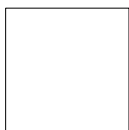


3.3

Growth, *expansion*, and *energy* are keywords of the Three, keeping in mind that growth and expansion are both due to energy. Growth and expansion that are the result of applied energy are qualities of Mars.

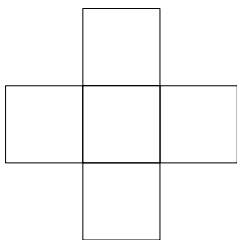
Four – Mercury

Four is symbolized by a square; fig. 4-1. The very form of a square is one of *stability*.



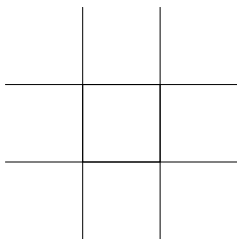
4.1

Attaching similar squares to each edge of the original square creates the figure of a cross; fig. 4-2. A cross is a symbol of the integration and unification of two contrasting forces. The Four represents some *attainment* of the Two. This attainment creates stability.



4.2

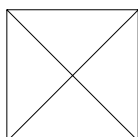
Extending the edges of the original square; once again a cross is formed. This cross is somewhat different than the proceeding cross as its four arms extend infinitely; fig. 4-3.



4.3

This form also gives a sense of growth, like the Three, but in a slower, more stable and consistent manner. The growth of the Three is due to energy and gives expansion, while the growth of the Four is for reasons of *security*, the desire to maintain stability.

A final geometric exercise, which was not possible with the triangle of the Three, is to connect the angles within the form as fig. 4-4. Again a cross is formed symbolizing *attainment* and *stability*, but in the inside of the square and thus the Four also represents *inner security*, which is the result of experiencing concrete security.

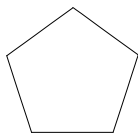


4.4

Stability and *attainment* are primary keywords for the Four and, therefore, Mercury, while *security*, both inner and outer, can be taken as a secondary keyword.

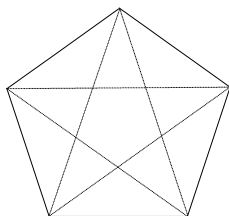
Five – Jupiter

Five is symbolized by a pentacle; fig. 5-1. The interior angles of the pentacle measure 108 degrees, a number symbolizing *fulfillment*.



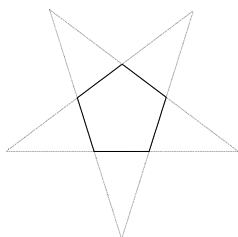
5.1

Connecting the inner angles of the Pentacle creates a five-pointed star; a pentagram; fig. 5-2, inner star. The pentagram has long been a symbol of *grace*, and *luck*.



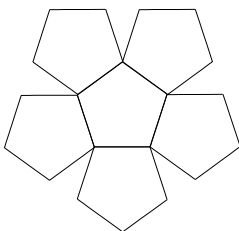
5.2

Extending the edges of the original pentacle creates again a pentagram; fig. 5-3, outside star. The symbol of the pentagram holds its sway in full on the Five.



5.3

Attaching similar pentacles to each edge of the original pentacle yields the drawing of a “flower” in fig. 5-4. It is noticed, however, that there is an element of open space between each “petal” which can never be filled by a pentacle. There is therefore a noticeable lack in the sense that it is no longer possible to build upon the structure of the Five; there is a *lack of constructive potential*. This lack at some point in time causes one to turn away from the fulfillment of the Five in order to grow, but this turning away is often not one of choice. *Changes*, therefore, may come that force this; or stated another way, grace is not always easy.

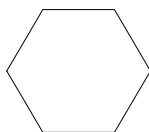


5.4

Fulfillment, *luck* and *grace*, are primary keywords of the Five and, therefore, Jupiter, while *lack of constructive potential* leading to needed *change* may be taken as secondary keys.

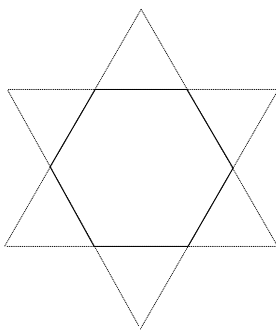
Six – Venus

Six is geometrically symbolized by a hexagon; fig 6-1. A hexagon is a form of *efficiency*. “Honeycomb” is an engineering term relating to hexagonal cross sections that make efficient use of materials.



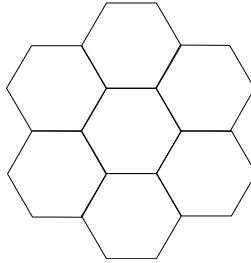
6.1

Extending the edges of the original hexagon we arrive at a six-pointed star; fig. 6-2. The six-pointed star is formed by two triangles, one pointing upward and the other downward. The upward pointing star is energy moving upward, while the downwards pointing star is energy moving downwards. There is a *harmony* of forces; spirit and matter, which is what gives the capacity for balanced enjoyment.



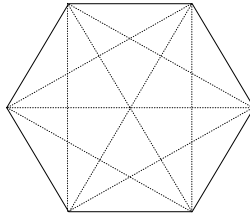
6.2

Attaching similar hexagons to the original hexagon creates the pattern; fig. 6-3. In this figure there are once again no gaps between the hexagons. Recall that in the Five there were gaps, being representative of a lack of potential growth. In the 6th this growth is again possible which gives an *improvement* over the Five.



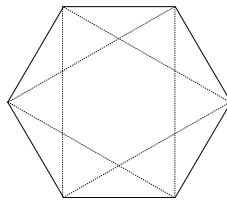
6.3

Connecting the inner angles of the hexagon yields fig. 6-4.



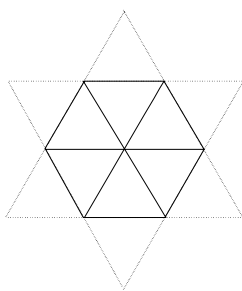
6.4

Amongst this two noticeable patterns emerge: An inner six-pointed star; fig. 6-5, stressing the point of harmony, now we see it inwardly as well.



6.5

And Six inner triangles; fig. 6-6. Notice that the six inner triangles are of the exact size of the six external triangles. Only in the Six do we have such an example of balanced harmony. The outer fully reflects the inner. *Outer circumstances, achievements and success reflect what one experiences inwardly; to say another way, what one experiences inwardly makes the events of the Six and Venus happen.*



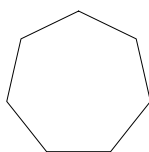
6.6

Looking closely at the six inner triangles reveals that they are exactly the same as the triangles symbolic of the Three; only now they are arranged in such a manner as to form a hexagon. This is an important point, indicating that some of the energy initially expended through the Three now returns in a favorable manner. *Past energies assist in formulating the events of the Six.* The strong connection between the Three and the Six, which will be demonstrated numerically soon, is shown.

Harmony, efficiency, and improvement are keywords for the Six and Venus. *Past experiences and events influencing the present events*, and also *events generally reflecting one's inner state* are all indicated by Six and Venus.

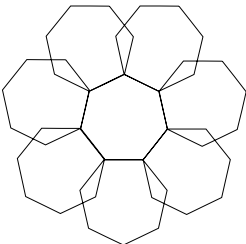
Seven – Saturn

Seven is represented by a heptagon; fig. 7-1.



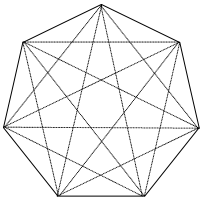
7.1

Attaching similar forms to each edge of the original heptagon creates the form in Fig. 7-2. The overlapping of the outer heptagons is symbolic of *the outer unable to match or satisfy the inner*. That which is within doesn't find its match externally.



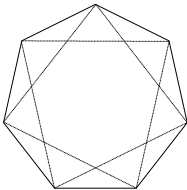
7.2

Connecting the inner angles as in fig. 7-3,



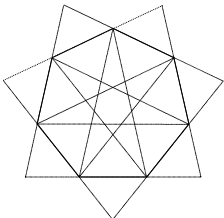
7.3

Two noticeable forms emerge: A seven-pointed star; fig. 7-4.



7.4

Another, though different, seven-pointed star; fig. 7-5, inner star.



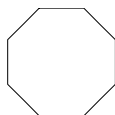
7.5

Taking this further: Extending the edges of the heptagon yields the outer star in fig. 7-5. Notice that the outer star is formed by the same sized and shaped triangles as are surrounding the inner star; the inner desires that are lacking external fulfillment are represented by the points of the outer seven-pointed star. This discontent is the natural result of the consciousness being separated from Spirit. The seven-pointed star is a symbol of the discontent that motivates the *search* and *striving* that is one's only hope when one finds that their world is unable to satisfy, ideally this is a spiritual search. This search results in *change* of some sort.

Change, searching, striving, all the result of *the inner not being matched by the outer* are qualities of the Seven and Saturn.

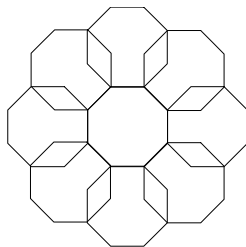
Eight – Rahu

Eight is geometrically symbolized by an octagon; fig. 8-1.



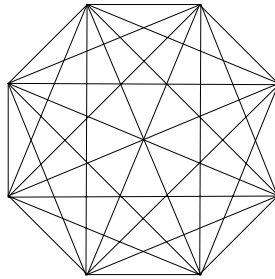
8.1

Attaching similar octagons to each edge of a center octagon creates fig. 8-2. Once again there is an overlap; the inner is still unsatisfied by the outer. Notice however that the trapezoidal overlaps are balanced forms, in fact the whole form is one of balance. In the Eight, *external balance is created*, though fulfillment is not given.



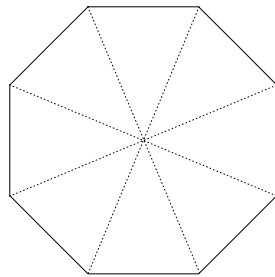
8.2

Connecting the inner angles as in fig. 8-3, three noticeable patterns emerge:



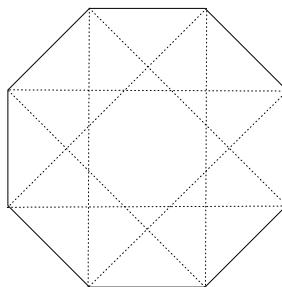
8.3

Eight triangles; fig. 8-4; these are non-equilateral triangles, symbolizing directed force which provides focused energy, or *power*.



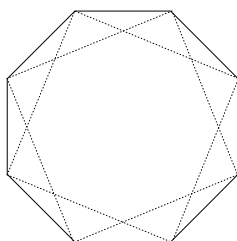
8.4

An eight-pointed star; fig. 8-5, that is actually two crosses interlaced.



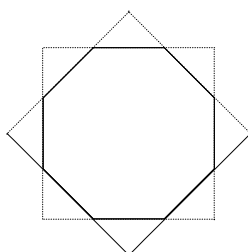
8.5

An eight-pointed star created from two interlaced squares; fig. 8-6.



8.6

Extending the edges of the octagon also yields the same star of two interlaced squares; fig. 8-7.



8.7

We have a star formed by two interlaced, separately complete forms; we also had this with the two triangles in the Six. The triangles represented energy; the squares represent stability, attainment and security. There is, therefore, a harmony concentrating on these. One of these squares or crosses, however, is not stabilized as it is on edge. The Eight is, therefore, indicative of creating stability, attainment and security, where there is none, but through the use of what one has that is stable, attained and secure. A harmony, or balance, needs to be created between what is stable, attained and secure, and that which is not. Also, stability needs to be created where there is none by utilizing that which stable attained and secure. The Eight is thus able to bring balance and stability, where there is none, utilizing that which is stable.

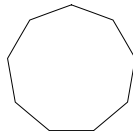
Looking at the form more closely reveals that the square that is solidly secure is in actuality preventing the other square from becoming stable. What is stable, attained and secure has become so through the expense of that which is not. The Eight is where this expense is paid by requiring one to create stability, security and attainment where there is none.

It will be noticed that the Eight is the most difficult of all numbers to explain, the most confusing as it were. This is the nature of the Eight, the area of imbalance is always one of *confusion* as focus has not been put there until now; the focus has instead been on what has been attained.

Power, confusion, unbalance and creating balance are keywords for the Eight and Rahu.

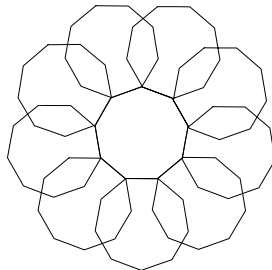
Nine – Ketu

Nine is geometrically symbolized by a nonagon; fig. 9-1.



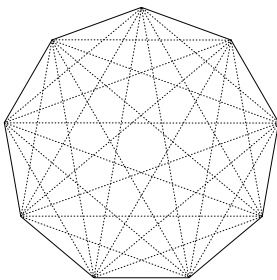
9.1

Attaching similar nonagons to each edge of the original nonagon yields fig. 9-2. Again there is an overlap; the outer does not fulfill the inner, as we have seen in all numbers from Seven onwards.



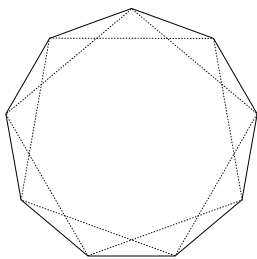
9.2

Connecting the inner angles of the nonagon as in fig. 9-3.

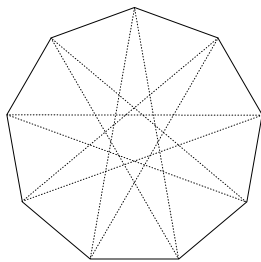


9.3

Three prominent stars emerge, two as in fig. 9-4 and 9.5.



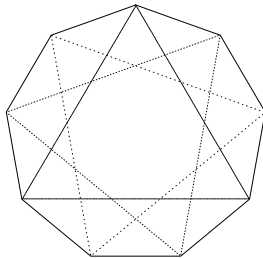
9.4



9.5

These two stars have reference to the collective energies of the nine numbers and nine Grahams in both their constructive and energetic qualities and reveal the *completeness* of the number Nine.

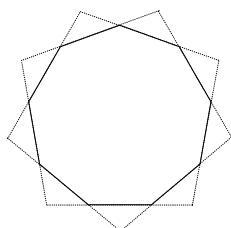
Most importantly, there is a nine-pointed star consisting of three interlaced triangles; fig. 9-6.



9.6

The three triangles are representative of the Divine or Christ Consciousness, the number 333. The inside is *complete* and *harmonious* within itself. It is this inner completion, harmony and high state of *consciousness* that allows for *happiness* and *bliss* regardless of the external circumstances.

Extending the outer edges of the nonagon yields an outer star, fig 9.7 of the same type as the inner star of fig. 9.4.



9.7

Notice that in the Seven, Eight and Nine, there is always an outer star that is the same type as one of the inner stars. In the Nine, however, there is also one inner star that is not found outside the geometric form of the Nine – there is always something inside that is not to be found outside. There is always something hidden within.

Completion, happiness, inner harmony (though not necessarily outer), *higher consciousness* and *bliss* are keywords of the Nine and the potentials of Ketu.

THE FOUR THINGS

Occult sciences hold that there are only four things; this is most simply stated in the *Tao Te Ching*:

“The one became the two, the two became the three and the three became all things.”

Tao te Ching: 2.28

The One is the Creative Spirit, the Two is the reflection of the Creative Spirit and the Three is the interaction of the Creative Spirit with His reflection. The Fourth thing is all created things, the many individualized things in creation, which are nothing but the first three things manifesting on another level. These four things are represented astrologically by the Sun, Moon, Mars and Mercury. This is shown in the diagram below:

1 Sun Creative Spirit	2 Moon Reflection	3 Mars Interaction
4 Mercury Materialization		

The Sun, representing the Creative Spirit is the creative center of our solar system. The Sun is reflected by the Moon which gives rise to the many individualized consciousness, which interact by exerting what is in their consciousness through Mars. All that we interact with is actually the Creative Spirit. Interactions vary and differ as a result of the Three Gunas, the three qualities that motivate all actions. These three numbers and their Grahas manifest on a new level, the concrete realm of physical materialization, ruled by Mercury, the Graha associated with the Earth element. The Three is able to manifest all the innumerable forms of the Four on account of the differentiating qualities of the Three Gunas.

Now that these Four have been explained, we can proceed to explain the remaining numbers and Grahas with the help of the diagram below showing all nine Grahas.

1 Sun Creative Spirit	2 Moon Reflection	3 Mars Interaction
4 Mercury Materialization	5 Jupiter Knowledge	6 Venus Evaluation Choosing
7 Saturn Payment/Lack	8 Rahu Balance	9 Ketu Completion

Mercury, on the level of Materialization, has its reflection, just as the Sun has the Moon as its reflection on the level of Consciousness. The 5th Graha, Jupiter, is the reflection of the 4th Graha, Mercury. All that is manifested is the Four, which has its reflection in the world as good and evil, right and wrong, the qualities differentiated through the knowledge given by Jupiter, the Five. Having the knowledge of good and evil, right and wrong given by Jupiter, one must interact with the concrete world indicated by Mercury. This is done through the agency of the Six, the Graha Venus. Venus evaluates and makes the choices. Venus is

a friend of Mercury and a neutral of Jupiter, thus Venus understands that all of the concrete world is a manifestation (Mercury) of Spirit/consciousness, and is not circumscribed by the right and wrong of Jupiter. Venus chooses to do not what is right or good, knowing that both are an aspect of Spirit/consciousness, but to choose what it finds most worthwhile. Venus does this with the knowledge that everything has a price and that the price must be considered when making the choice. (For this reason Venus is a friend with Saturn, the Graha that exerts the payment, and the Graha that follows Venus.) Since the knowledge of “good” and “evil” represented by Jupiter reflects the price that one has to pay for any choice, Venus does not go against the grain of Jupiter, nor though does he care for Jupiter’s dictates. Venus follows his own dictates of healthy evaluation which provide for the same path as Jupiter’s dictates of right and wrong.

Being part of the material creation, making choices to do what one finds worthwhile while being constrained by the dictates of good and evil, results in lack, which is indicated by the Seven, Saturn. The three things, Mercury/Four, Jupiter/Five and Venus/Six manifest as the fourth thing, Saturn/Seven. Lack, the quality of Saturn, results from making choices in the world due to two reasons: Each choice requires that something else is left behind, the left behind thus becomes a source of lack. Ill choices result in paying more for something than it is worth and this payment may take the form of debts or the undesirable fruits of past ill Karma.

On the level of lack and experiencing the effects of ill choices, Saturn has his reflection as Rahu, and thus it is said, “Rahu gives the effects of Saturn.” The lacks, debts and fruits of ill Karmas represented by Saturn are reflected in the individual’s life through Rahu. All that can be done with these things is bear them until their timely completion. This completion is represented by the final Graha Ketu.

NUMERICAL INTERACTIONS BETWEEN THE GRAHAS

So far we have studied each Graha as a singular number, each Graha, however, has many facets, which are revealed by manipulating the numbers.

Addition

One manner in which numbers may be manipulated is to add up all the numbers containing a number. Two, for instance, contains both 1 and 2. Adding up $1+2$ results in 3, thus the number Two, and thus the Moon, also embody the quality of Three. In the event that addition results in a two or larger digit number, the individual digits are to be added together to reduce the number to a single digit. This is known as numerical reduction.

Performing the exercise for all the numbers yields the following:

1/Sun	$1 = 1$
2/Moon	$1+2 = 3$
3/Mars	$1+2+3 = 6$
4/Mercury	$1+2+3+4 = 10 = 1$
5/Jupiter	$1+2+3+4+5 = 15 = 6$
6/Venus	$1+2+3+4+5+6 = 21 = 3$
7/Saturn	$1+2+3+4+5+6+7 = 28 = 10 = 1$
8/Rahu	$1+2+3+4+5+6+7+8 = 36 = 9$
9/Ketu	$1+2+3+4+5+6+7+8+9 = 45 = 9$

Square Root

The square root of a number reveals its foundation. Only a few numbers have a square root:

1/Sun:	Square Root is 1
4/Mercury:	Square Root is 2
9/Ketu:	Square Root is 3

Square

The square of a number reveals the number's result. Each number has a square, which in most cases must be reduced:

1/Sun	1 Squared = 1
2/Moon	2 Squared = 4
3/Mars	3 Squared = 9
4/Mercury	4 Squared = 16 = 7
5/Jupiter	5 Squared = 25 = 7
6/Venus	6 Squared = 36 = 9
7/Saturn	7 Squared = 49 = 13 = 4
8/Rahu	8 Squared = 64 = 10 = 1
9/Ketu	9 Squared = 81 = 9

The additions, square roots and squares of all the numbers are shown in the diagram below. The study of the numerical diagram has much to offer. First notice that the addition of all the numbers One, Four and Seven yield One, the number of beginnings and initiations. These three, the One, Four and Seven, each initiate the beginning in their respective levels: The One initiates the level of Consciousness, The Four initiates the level of Materialization and the Seven initiates the third level, which is the result of Consciousness manifesting itself as Creation – the level of lack and growth of consciousness.

1 Sun Addition = 1 Square Root = 1 Squared = 1	2 Moon Addition = 3 Squared = 4	3 Mars Addition = 6 Squared = 9
4 Mercury Addition = 1 Square Root = 2 Squared = 7	5 Jupiter Addition = 6 Squared = 7	6 Venus Addition = 3 Squared = 9
7 Saturn Addition = 1 Squared = 4	8 Rahu Addition = 9 Squared = 1	9 Ketu Addition = 9 Square Root = 3 Squared = 9

The only other number that has a One influence is Eight/Rahu, whose square yields One. This indicates that the need for the individual to experience the effects of their past Karmas initiates new events into their lives.

On the first level, the level of Consciousness, the addition of all the numbers in the Two/Moon yields the following number Three. This reveals that the moment that the One Creative Spirit symbolized by the Sun is reflected as the many individual consciousnesses symbolized by the Moon, these two begin to interact, the number Three. A similar thing happens in the other two levels. In the level of Materialization, the addition of Five/Jupiter yields Six/Venus, thus the minute a difference of quality and goodness is understood through Jupiter, one begins to

make choices through Venus. On the third level of Lack, the addition of Eight/Rahu yields Nine/Ketu - the moment that the individual begins to experience the effects of past Karmas, they begin to move towards greater consciousness.

Mathematically, the One/Sun is unique in that it not only is the One, but its addition, square root and square are also One, thus the Sun is changeless and symbolizes the soul.

Ketu is similar to the Sun, but a bit different. Ketu is Nine, its addition yields Nine and its Square yields Nine, so it is also changeless and thus represents the liberated consciousness. The important difference is that Nine's/Ketu's source is Three, which is shown by its square root. Thus the foundation of the changeless liberated consciousness indicated by Ketu is in the individual character indicated by Mars.

The square of Two/Moon is Four/Mercury, revealing that the birth of the individual consciousness, the Moon, yields concrete manifestation, Mercury. Due to the square of Two being Four, Mercury is considered the son of the Moon.

The square of Three/Mars is Nine/Ketu, revealing that the character indicated by Mars will generate a liberated consciousness. It also supports the astrological dictum that Ketu gives the effects of Mars. The square of Six/Venus also yields Nine/Ketu, revealing that the devotion and good decision making of Venus results in completion and liberation. Both Mars and Venus are thus mathematically seen to be important for the spiritual life.

The square of Four/Mercury is Seven/Saturn, revealing that the result of material manifestation is invariably lack and disappointment. Further, the square of Seven/Saturn is Four/Mercury, revealing that the result of lack and disappointment is either further efforts towards material manifestation or acceptance that comes from realizing that all that is manifest is an aspect of Vishnu. For this reason Saturn and Mercury, according to Jaimini's *Upadesah Sutras*, make one a Vishnu devotee. The fact that Mercury squared equals Saturn

and that Saturn squared equals Mercury has another important revelation. Mercury is the lungs and Saturn the movement of Prana from the brain through the nerve endings into the senses. As long as the breath is flowing, Prana moves towards the senses and the illusion of creation is maintained. The squares of these two Grahas' numbers being each other's numbers reveals a vicious cycle of bondage which can only be broken by the scientific Yogic methods of stopping the breath.

The square of Five/Jupiter yields Seven/Saturn, revealing that the knowledge of good and evil understood through Jupiter produces the capacity for Saturnine duty and though the performance of duty always has an element of lack, the happiness and idealism of Jupiter allows one to enjoy their duties since they realize it is the best choice. The best choice being shown by the fact that the addition of Five/Jupiter is Six/Venus.

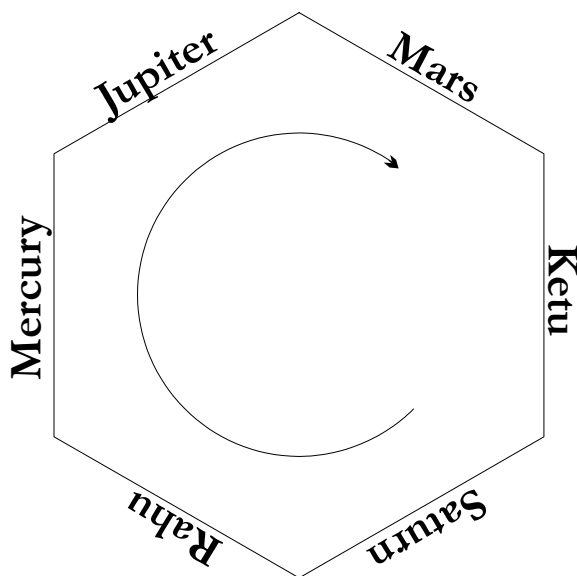
In this way the mathematical relationships of the Grahas should be studied. This table has much to reveal, the more it is studied the more you will understand the Grahas. What I have written is only a small bit of what can be gleaned from its study.

GRAHAS AND NUMBERS RULED

In addition to each Graha being a particular number, each Graha also rules a number:

Sun	1
Moon	2
Mars	9
Mercury	5
Jupiter	3
Venus	6
Saturn	8
Rahu	4
Ketu	7

The Sun, Moon and Venus each rule the number that each symbolizes. These three Grahas, therefore, essentially rule themselves. The remaining Grahas rule each other as shown in the diagram below.



Jupiter rules Mars, who rules Ketu, who rules Saturn, who rules Rahu, who rules Mercury who rules Jupiter and all of these operate in a cycle. While they are operating, the Sun, Moon and Venus provide for the healthy foundation of the individual.

Jupiter provides the idealism, knowledge and sense of purpose with which to inspire all activity, Mars. Mars represents the character that acts upon its knowledge. The actions of Mars have one purpose – deep, indestructible security – Ketu, which ultimately is liberation. Ketu means flag, a flag being a symbol placed upon secured territory. The security gained by Ketu is used to overcome any other fears and lacks indicated by Saturn. Once the fears and lacks are recognized by Saturn, one can put their consciousness and attention towards what needs to be done through Rahu. Upon focusing one's attention and consciousness, there is concrete

success, Mercury. The concrete success and the resources gained through success provide the foundation for great purposes, Jupiter. The concrete success of Mercury is not necessarily concrete in the sense of worldly articles, it can be a concrete spiritual experience that was gained through focusing one's consciousness and upon gaining that concrete experience the spiritual aspirant has a greater spiritual foundation with which to impel their spiritual life.

What I have written is just one example of how these six Grahas interact. They interact in this way in all matters. Looking for and studying these interactions will deepen your understanding of the Grahas.

While these six Grahas are operating in a cyclic manner, the Sun, Moon and Venus provide for the stable foundation of the individual. The Sun provides self-esteem and the capacity to perform with confidence. Without self-esteem, all actions are lackluster. The Moon provides for a healthy self-image. Without a healthy self-image, an individual will not be able to accept him or herself. An individual who cannot accept him or herself can also not accept the world and the good things that are offered, even the good spiritual things that are offered. Venus provides for self-worth. Self-worth is the measure used to evaluate the opportunities presented by life. If one's self-worth is low, then one cannot evaluate their opportunities healthfully and will thus make poor and even debilitating choices in life. Thus these three Grahas maintain the health of the individual.

If a Graha is weak, but its ruling Graha strong, then the ruling Graha can compensate for the other Graha's weakness. Similarly, if a Graha is strong, but its ruling Graha weak, then the ruling Graha will disrupt the naturally favorable qualities of the Graha that it rules. If Mars, for example, is afflicted, there will be a tendency towards quarrelling. A well-disposed Jupiter, however, will provide for a more contented spirit and forgiving nature, which will reduce the tendency towards quarrelling.

Relationships of the Grahas

Grahas may have an affinity, disregard or no regard for each other and as thus treat each other with friendship, enmity or neutrality. First, Grahas will treat each other with friendship, enmity or neutrality on account of their innate qualities and this is known as the *Natural Relationships* of the Grahas. *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* gives the rule for determining the natural relationships of the Grahas.

त्रिकोणात् स्वात्सुखस्वाऽन्त्यधीधर्मायुः स्वतुङ्गपाः ।

सुहृदो रिपवश्चान्ये समाश्चोभयलक्षणाः ॥ ५५ ॥

trikoṇāt svātsukhasvā'ntyadhīdharmāyuh svatuṅgapāh,
suhṛdo ripavaśvānye samāścobhayalakṣaṇāḥ.

“From Mulatrikona, the owner of the 4th, 2nd, 12th, 5th, 9th, and 8th as well as the lord of its exaltation Rasi are friendly. Inimical are the others. Neutral are those that indicate both (friendly on one count and inimical on another count, which may happen for those Grahas that rule two Rasīs).”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 55

Example: The Mulatrikona Rasi of Venus is Libra. The Sun rules the 11th from Libra and since the 11th, Leo, is not one of the 2nd, 12th, 4th, 8th, 5th or 9th or the lord of Venus's exaltation Rasi, the Sun is inimical towards Venus. Jupiter is the lord of the 3rd and 6th from Venus's Mulatrikona Rasi, which is Libra. Neither the 3rd or 6th is a friendly position, but the 6th, which is Pisces, is the exaltation Rasi of Venus and thus Jupiter becomes friendly on account of ruling Pisces, but inimical on account of ruling the 3rd, and so Jupiter is neutral towards Venus.

The relationships of the Grahas are tabulated below. Make special note of the fact that Grahas do not always treat each other

equally. Just as in human relationships, one Graha may be friendly towards another without having its sentiments returned.

	Friendly	Neutral	Inimical
Sun:	Moon, Mars, Jupiter	Mercury	Venus, Saturn
Moon:	Sun, Mercury	Mars, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn	None
Mars:	Sun, Moon, Jupiter	Venus, Saturn	Mercury
Mercury:	Sun, Venus	Mars, Jupiter, Saturn	Moon
Jupiter:	Sun, Moon, Mars	Saturn	Mercury, Venus
Venus:	Mercury, Saturn	Mars, Jupiter	Sun, Moon
Saturn:	Mercury, Venus	Jupiter	Sun, Moon, Mars

In the table it is shown that the Moon, Mars and Jupiter are friendly towards the Sun; Mercury is neutral; Venus and Saturn are inimical. Further, it is seen that the Sun is friendly towards Mercury, though Mercury itself is neutral towards the Sun.

The question naturally arises as to why the 2nd, 12th, 4th, 8th, 5th and 9th from the Graha's Mulatrikona are significant for establishing friendship. The importance of the Mulatrikona Rasi as the foundation of a Graha's qualities will be discussed in the next chapter. For now, just keep in mind that a Graha is energized by its Mulatrikona Rasi. Just like the Grahas, the Rasis interact in many ways; they are not independent. The capacity of a Rasi is dependent not only upon itself, but also upon certain other Rasis, particularly those next to it (the 2nd and 12th), those in trine to it (the 5th and 9th) and the 4th and 8th, which have a special capacity to secure and stabilize a Rasi. Rasis support the Rasi that they are the 2nd, 12th, 4th, 8th, 5th and 9th from, and, by extension, support the Graha that has its Mulatrikona there.

TEMPORARY RELATIONSHIPS

The natural relationships between the Grahas are not everything; they are subject to the planetary arrangement at the time of birth, which provide for a Graha's *Temporary Relationships*.

दशबन्ध्वायसहजस्वान्त्यस्थास्ते परस्परम् ।

तत्काले मित्रतां यान्ति रिपवोऽन्यत्र संस्थिताः ॥ ५६ ॥

daśabandhvāyasahajastvāntyasthāste parasparam,
tatkāle mitratāṁ yānti ripavo'nyatra samsthitāḥ.

“Those standing in the 10th, 4th, 11th, 3rd, 2nd and 12th from each other are at that time friendly, those standing elsewhere are enemies.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 56

The simple way to remember this is “three in front, three behind.” The Grahas in the three Rasis in front of a Graha as well as any Grahas in the three Rasis behind it are its friends. The Grahas joined with another Graha or in the 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th or 9th from it become inimical. This is illustrated in the following charts:

Friend	Graha	Friend
Friend	Enemy	Friend
Friend	Friend	Friend
Enemy	Enemy	Enemy
Enemy	Enemy	Enemy

Friend	Graha Enemy	Friend	Friend
Friend			Friend
Friend			Enemy
Enemy	Enemy	Enemy	Enemy

Temporary relationships are not very important by themselves. They are important only for determining the combined relationships of the Grahas.

COMBINED RELATIONSHIPS

The natural and temporal relationships between any two Grahas are combined to determine yet another relationship – the *Combined Relationship* between the Grahas.

तत्काले च निसर्गे च मित्रं चेदधिमित्रकम् ।

मित्रं मित्रसमत्वे तु शत्रुः शत्रुसमत्वके ॥ ५७ ॥

tatkāle ca nisarge ca mitraṁ cedadhimitrakam,
mitraṁ mitrasamatve tu śatruḥ śatrusamatvake.

समो मित्ररिपुत्वे तु शत्रुत्वे त्वधिशत्रुता ।

एवं विविच्य दैवज्ञो जातकस्य फलं वदेत् ॥ ५८ ॥

sāme mitrariputve tu śatrutve tvadhiśatrutā,
evam vivicya daivajña jātakasya phalaṁ vadet.

“Friendly at the time as well as naturally so – great friendship. Friendship if friendly and neutral. Enemies if inimical and neutral. Neutral if friendly and inimical. Both inimical – great enmity. Thus should the astrologer examine the nativity when pronouncing effects.”

Bṛihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 57-58

Example: Consider a horoscope in which Mercury is in the 12th from Mars. Mercury is a natural enemy of Mars. At the moment of the horoscope Mercury is a temporary friend of Mars on account of being in the 12th from Mars. Enmity on one count and friendliness on another count cause Mercury to be neutral towards Mars.

As hinted at in the Sutra, compound relationships are very important. Amongst other things, compound relationships are used to determine the dignity of a Graha and dignity has much to say regarding a Graha’s auspiciousness. Planetary relationships are also very important and heavily used in predictive astrology, so learn your relationships well.

Dignity

The relationship of a Graha to the Rasi it is placed in is known as a Graha's dignity. There are nine dignities in which a Graha may fall: exaltation, Mulatrikona, own Rasi, great friend's Rasi, friend's Rasi, neutral's Rasi, enemy's Rasi, great enemy's Rasi, and debilitation.

Exaltation and Debilitation

मेषो वृषो मृगः कन्या कर्को मीनस्तथा तुला ।

सूर्यादीनां क्रमादेते कथिता उच्चराशयः ॥ ४९ ॥

meṣe vṛṣo mrgaḥ kanyā karko mīnastathā tulā,
sūryādinām kramādete kathitā uccarāśayaḥ.

भागा दश त्रयोऽष्टादश्वस्तिथ्योऽक्षा भमिता नखाः ।

उच्चात् सप्तमभं नीचं तैरेवांशैः प्रकीर्तितम् ॥ ५० ॥

bhāgā daśa trāyo'ṣṭāsvastithyo'kṣā bhamitā nakhāḥ,
uccāt sapṭamabhaṁ nīcaṁ tairevāṁśaiḥ prakīrtitam.

“Aries, Taurus, Capricorn, Virgo, Cancer, Pisces and Libra are reckoned the exaltation Rasis of the Sun and others in their regular order. The degrees: ten, three, twenty-eight, fifteen, five, twenty-seven and twenty. The seventh Rasi from exaltation is known as debilitation, with the same degrees. ”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 49-50

Exaltation is the highest dignity, the Sanskrit name for which is Ucca, “high.” The lowest dignity is debilitation, the very opposite of exaltation, the Sanskrit name for which is Nīca, “low.” In its exaltation Rasi, a Graha has its degree of exaltation, the degree at

which it is the highest, which are the degrees referred to in the Sutra. Similarly, in its debilitation Rasi, a Graha has its degree of debilitation, which is the degree exactly opposite its exaltation degree.

The name of these two dignities gives the idea of the effects of a Graha in these dignities. A Graha in Ucca, “high” dignity has the highest capacity to fulfill its responsibilities. A Graha in Niica, “low” has a very low capacity to fulfill its responsibilities. The student, however, must be careful not to jump to simple conclusions and assume that exalted Grahas are always favorable to the native and debilitated Grahas always unfavorable. An exalted Graha in the horoscope will certainly be favorable for that which the Graha Rules, but it may harm other indications in the chart. Similarly, a debilitated Graha will be unfavorable for that which it rules, but due to less attention being focused on what the Graha rules, the individual may develop other things to greater fulfillment. Life is a give and take, and nothing in the horoscope makes a Graha great for every single thing. The determination of these things is a matter of precise predictive astrology which can be learned after grasping the fundamentals.

Mulatrikona

रवेः सिंहे नखांशाश्च त्रिकोणमपरे स्वभम् ।

उच्चमिन्दोवृषे त्र्यंशास्त्रिकोणमपरेंऽशकाः ॥ ५१ ॥

raveḥ simhe nakhāṁśāśca trikoṇamapare svabham,
uccamindorvṛṣe trayāṁśāstrikoṇamapare 'mśakāḥ.

मेघेऽर्कांशास्तु भौमस्य त्रिकोणमपरे स्वभम् ।

उच्चं बुधस्य कन्यायामुक्तं पञ्चदशांशकाः ॥ ५२ ॥

meṣe 'rkāṁśāstu bhaumasya trikoṇamapare svabham,
uccaṁ budhasya kanyāyāmuktaṁ pañcadaśāṁśakāḥ.

ततः पञ्चांशकाः प्रोक्तं त्रिकोणमपरे स्वभम् ।

चापे दशांशा जीवस्य त्रिकोणमपरे स्वभम् ॥ ५३ ॥

tataḥ pañcāṁśakāḥ proktaṁ trikoṇamapare svabham,
cāpe daśāṁśā jīvasya trikoṇamapare svabham.

तुले शक्रस्य तिथ्यंशास्त्रिकोणमपरे स्वभम् ।

शनेः कुम्भे नखांशाश्च त्रिकोणमपरे स्वभम् ॥ ५४ ॥

tule śakrasya tithyamstrikoṇamapare svabham,
śaneḥ kumbhe nakhāṁśāśca trikoṇamapare svabham.

“The Sun’s Trikona is twenty degrees in Leo, the latter (degrees) are own Rasi. The Moon’s exaltation in Taurus is three degrees, the latter degrees are its Trikona. In Aries twelve degrees are the Trikona of Mars, the latter own Rasi. The exaltation of Mercury is fifteen degrees laid aside of Virgo then five degrees are said to be Trikona, the latter own Rasi. In Sagittarius for ten degrees is the Trikona of Jupiter, the latter own Rasi. In Libra for fifteen degrees is the Trikona of Venus, the latter own Rasi. In Aquarius Saturn’s Trikona is twenty degrees, the latter own Rasi.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Nature and Form of the Grahas, 51-54

Trikona is a very powerful dignity for a Graha, almost as powerful as exaltation. Trikona dignity is commonly referred to as Mulatrikona, though *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* consistently refers to this dignity as Trikona. Each Graha’s Mulatrikona is a portion of one of the Rasis its rules, except for the Moon, whose Mulatrikona is the last twenty seven degrees of its exaltation Rasi Taurus.

Trikona means, “triangle,” while Mulatrikona means, “root triangle.” The Mulatrikona of a Graha is the part of the ecliptic from which a Graha gets its strength and energy from and is thus the foundation of a Graha’s qualities. The Sun gets its energy and strength from the first twenty degrees of Leo, while Saturn gets its strength at the opposite side of the ecliptic – from the first twenty degrees of Aquarius. The Moon gets its strength from three to

thirty degrees of Taurus while the first three degrees of Taurus are its exaltation. Mars gets its strength from the first twelve degrees of Aries. Mercury gets its strength from the first fifteen degrees of Virgo and has its exaltation from fifteen to twenty degrees of Virgo. Jupiter gets its strength from the first ten degrees of Sagittarius while Venus gets its strength from the first fifteen degrees of Libra. The unique qualities of each Graha stem from the Graha's Mulatrikona Rasi. As you learn about the Rasis you will see that many qualities of a Graha are directly related to its Mulatrikona Rasi.

A Graha placed in Mulatrikona is very strong, in fact most strong, in its innate nature. Exaltation is a higher dignity, which means that the Graha operates in a higher manner in exaltation, but a Graha's inherent qualities are most powerful when it is in its Mulatrikona.

On account of their Mulatrikona being in the same Rasi as their exaltation, the Moon and Mercury are unique in respect to their exaltations and debilitations in that they do not have a full Rasi of exaltation and debilitation. The Moon is exalted only in the first three degrees of Taurus and has its debilitation for only the first three degrees of Scorpio. Mercury is exalted in the first fifteen degrees of Virgo and debilitated for only the first fifteen degrees of Pisces.

Own Rasi

The Sun rules Leo, the Moon Cancer, Mars Aries and Scorpio, Mercury Gemini and Virgo, Jupiter Sagittarius and Pisces, Venus Taurus and Libra, and Saturn rules Capricorn and Aquarius. A Graha also gains dignity on account of being placed in the Rasi that it rules. The dignity of a Graha placed in the portion of its Rasi that is not its Mulatrikona portion is own Rasi. The dignity of a Graha being in any other Rasi that it rules is also own Rasi.

A Graha in own Rasi is strong in its inherent nature, but placated and thus somewhat toned down as compared to being in its Mulatrikona nature.

The following table provides the exaltation, debilitation, exaltation and debilitation degree, Mulatrikona and own Rasi for each of the Grahas.

	Exaltation	Deep Deg.	Debilitation	Mulatrikona	Own Rasi
Sun	Aries	10°	Libra	0 – 20° Leo	20 – 30° Leo
Moon	0 – 3° Taurus	3°	0 – 3° Scorpio	3 – 30° Taurus	Cancer
Mars	Capricorn	28°	Cancer	0 – 12° Aries	12 – 30° Aries & Scorpio
Mercury	0 – 15° Virgo	15°	0 – 15° Pisces	15 – 20° Virgo	20 – 30° Virgo & Gemini
Jupiter	Cancer	5°	Capricorn	0 – 10° Sagittarius	10 – 30° Sagittarius & Pisces
Venus	Pisces	27°	Virgo	0 – 15° Libra	15 – 30° Libra & Taurus
Saturn	Libra	20°	Aries	0 – 20° Aquarius	20 – 30° Aquarius & Capricorn

OTHER DIGNITIES

In the advent that a Graha is not in exaltation, debilitation, Mulatrikona or own Rasi, then its dignity is dependent upon how its lord feels about it, whether greatly friend, friendly, neutral, inimical or greatly inimical. Based on how its lord feels towards it, a Graha is in a great friend's Rasi, friend's Rasi, neutral's Rasi, enemy's Rasi or great enemy's Rasi.

Example. Consider a horoscope in which Mars is in Virgo and Mercury in Aquarius. Mars's dignity will be dependent upon how Mercury feels towards Mars. Mercury is first a natural enemy of Mars. Secondly, Mercury is in the 6th from Mars and therefore a temporary enemy. Enmity on two counts makes Mercury a great enemy of Mars and so Mars is in a great enemy's Rasi.

The highest dignity for a Graha is exaltation, followed by Mulatrikona, own Rasi, great friend's Rasi, friend's Rasi, neutral's Rasi, enemy's Rasi, great enemy's Rasi, and debilitation.

A Graha in exaltation, Mulatrikona, own Rasi, Great Friend's Rasi or friend's Rasi is auspicious. A Graha in a neutral's Rasi is neither auspicious nor inauspicious. A Graha in enemy's Rasi, great enemy's Rasi or debilitation is inauspicious. In all the auspicious cases a Graha will support the Bhava it is in, unless the Graha is hampered otherwise. In all the inauspicious cases a Graha will disrupt the Bhava it is in, unless the Graha is otherwise benefited.

It will be noted that a Graha is auspicious in five places, neutral in one, and inauspicious in only three places. The fact that a Graha will be auspicious in more cases than inauspicious reveals that life is productive. The fact that there are more Krura Grahas than Saumya Grahas, however, reveals that life is very hard and filled with lessons.

AUSPICIOUS AND INAUSPICIOUS VALUE

If a Graha is in one of the five mentioned auspicious dignities, then its degree of auspiciousness is determined by its Subha Phala. If a Graha is in one of the three mentioned inauspicious dignities, then its degree of inauspiciousness is determined by its Asubha Phala. If a Graha is in a neutral's Rasi, then it has no value for auspiciousness or inauspiciousness. The table below shows the auspicious and inauspicious values for a Graha in the Rasi chart.

Rasi	Auspiciousness	Inauspiciousness
Exaltation:	60	—
Mulatrikona:	45	—
Own Rasi:	30	—
Great Friend's Rasi:	22	—
Friend's Rasi:	15	—
Neutral's Rasi:	—	—
Enemy's Rasi:	—	56
Great Enemy's Rasi:	—	58
Debilitation:	—	60

In other Vargas the auspicious and inauspicious values are half that of the Rasi:

Rasi	Auspiciousness	Inauspiciousness
Exaltation:	30	—
Mulatrikona:	22.5	—
Own Rasi:	15	—
Great Friend's Rasi:	11	—
Friend's Rasi:	7.5	—
Neutral's Rasi:	—	—
Enemy's Rasi:	—	28
Great Enemy's Rasi:	—	29
Debilitation:	—	30

It will be noted that when a Graha is in an inauspicious dignity, its inauspicious value is relatively high as compared to the auspicious value of a Graha in an auspicious dignity. A Graha is, however, in auspicious dignity more often than in inauspicious dignity. This means that one inauspicious Graha can ruin the effects of several auspicious Grahas. Life is seen to be that way – many people have several good qualities, only to have one bad quality ruin all that is good in their life.

If the auspicious points are totaled for all the auspicious dignities in the Rasi one arrives at 172 (60+45+30+22+15 = 172). If the inauspicious points are totaled for all the inauspicious dignities in the Rasi one arrives at 174 (56+58+60). Thus, the auspicious and inauspicious values are relatively equal and there is roughly a 50/50 spread in auspicious and inauspicious values in the average horoscope.

RAHU AND KETU AND DIGNITY

Classical texts on Vedic Astrology are not in agreement as to the dignities of Rahu and Ketu. Some texts grant them exaltation, debilitation and Mulatrikona Rasis, others do not. The texts that do

provide their exaltation, debilitation and Mulatrikona differ as to their opinions. In the chapter on the Grahas in *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*, nothing is said in respect to Rahu's and Ketu's dignities. In one of the Dasa chapters in the second volume, however, Rahu and Ketu are given exaltation, Mulatrikona and own Rasis. There are several signs of corruption in these later chapters and I am of the opinion that the Sutras giving Rahu and Ketu's dignities are not original statements of Parashara but rather additions. During the recompilation of *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*, several Sutras were unfortunately added to the work that have no place therein. This is due to the difficulty of ascertaining authorship when compiling fragmented manuscripts. My experience inclines me to believe that attempting to use dignities for Rahu and Ketu only leads to error and that it is better to follow the dictum that Rahu and Ketu give the effects of their lords. Thus Rahu and Ketu will behave with the dignity in which their lord is placed.

If Rahu and Ketu did indeed have dignities, we would expect the different texts to at least agree on the dignities as they agree upon the dignities of all the other Grahas. The very fact that they disagree points to Rahu and Ketu's dignities being manufactured by different astrological authors in their attempts to deduce the dignities of Rahu and Ketu from their experience and that these dignities are in fact not part of the unalterable laws of astrology. The simple fact is that Rahu and Ketu are not like the embodied Grahas, as has been discussed in the chapter *Luminous, Starry and Dark Grahas*.

Rasi Drishti

चरेषु संस्थिताः खेटाः पश्यन्ति स्थिरसङ्गतान् ।

स्थिरेषु संस्थिता एवं पश्यन्ति चरसंस्थितान् ॥ ४ ॥

careṣu saṁsthitāḥ kṣetāḥ paśyanti sthiraśaṅgatān,
sthireṣu saṁsthitā evaṁ paśyanti carasaṁsthitān.

उभयस्थास्तु सूर्याद्याः पश्यन्त्युभयसंस्थितान् ।

निकटस्थं विना खेटाः पश्यन्तीत्ययमागमः ॥ ५ ॥

ubhayasthāstu sūryādyāḥ paśyantyubhayaśaṁsthitān,
nikaṣasthaṁ vinā kṣetāḥ paśyantītyayamāgamah.

“Planets standing in the moveable (Rasis) aspect those in contact with the fixed (Rasis), also, those standing in the fixed aspect those standing in moveable. The Sun and others standing in the dual (Rasis) aspect those standing in dual. That standing on the side is excluded. The planet’s aspects are going both ways.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of Rasi Aspects, 4-5

Aspects in Vedic astrology are known as Drishti, “glance” as the Grahas are thought to cast their influence upon those things that they look upon. Vedic astrology recognizes two types of aspects: one based on the Rasi that the Graha occupies and another based on the inherent nature of the Graha.

The above Sutra gives the aspects that are based upon the Rasi that the Graha occupies. These aspects are clarified below.

A Graha in a moveable Rasi aspects the fixed Rasis, except the fixed Rasi right next to it, thus a Graha in:

Aries aspects Leo, Scorpio, and Aquarius.

Cancer aspects Scorpio, Aquarius, and Taurus.

Libra aspects Aquarius, Taurus, and Leo.

Capricorn aspects Taurus, Leo, and Scorpio.

A Graha in a fixed Rasi aspects the movable Rasis except the movable Rasi right next to it, thus a Graha in:

Taurus aspects Capricorn, Libra, and Cancer.

Leo aspects Aries, Capricorn, and Libra.

Scorpio aspects Cancer, Aries, and Capricorn.

Aquarius aspects Libra, Cancer and Aries.

A Graha in a dual Rasi aspects the other dual Rasis, thus a Graha in:

Gemini aspects Virgo, Sagittarius, and Pisces.

Virgo aspects Gemini, Pisces and Sagittarius.

Sagittarius aspects Pisces, Gemini, and Virgo.

Pisces aspects Sagittarius, Virgo and Gemini.

Rasi aspects go both ways, thus a Graha aspecting a Graha via Rasi aspect is always aspected by the aspected Graha in return.

The texts from the Siddhanta period before the age of Christ such as *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*, *Upadesa Sutras* and the ancient *Vridhha Karikas* that were written by the ancient masters and of which only fragments remain all teach Rasi Drishtis. Rasi Drishtis, however, have been ignored in the astrological texts written during the past 2,000 years, the dark age of astrology and all other sciences. We fortunately live during the time of astrology's renaissance and now the two ancient texts *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* and *Upadesa Sutras* are again widely available and being studied. The result is the reintroduction of Rasi Drishtis. There are two types of aspects in Vedic Astrology: Rasi Drishti and Graha Drishti. In order to practice astrology fully, both types of aspects are necessary. Practicing astrology with only one type of aspect will not reveal the entirety of the horoscope's effects.

WHEN TO USE RASI DRISHTI

Rasi Drishtis are definitive, they are either fully operational or they are not in effect. (Graha Drishtis in comparison, as will be discussed in the next chapter, are almost always in effect, but to different degrees.) Since Rasi Drishtis are either “on” or “off,” they are to be used in all cases where a definitive, concrete aspect is required. The basic rule as to when to use Rasi Drishti is that whenever a Graha is being considered to make something concrete happen or to tie something together through its aspect, then it is its Rasi Drishti that is to be used. For instance, the Lagna lord in or aspecting the 7th Bhava will involve the native in relationships – for this the Rasi aspect of the Lagna lord is the aspect to consider. Additionally, Rasi Drishti is to be used when using Rasi type Dasas.

Example: In the Rasi Drishti chart, the Lagna is Virgo, a dual Rasi. Grahas in the other dual Rasis, namely the Moon, Mercury and the Sun, will Rasi aspect the Lagna. Similarly, the Moon Rasi aspects the Sun and Mercury, which Rasi aspect is returned by the Sun and Mercury. Mars, in the moveable Rasi

MeR Su ♄	Ma ♈	Ju ♃	Mo ♏
Ke ♁	Rasi Drishti		☾
Ve ♊			Ra ♈
♈	Sa ♏	♎	♏

Aries will aspect the fixed Rasis other than fixed Rasi next to it, which is Taurus. Mars, therefore, aspects Rahu in Leo, Saturn in Scorpio and Ketu in Aquarius. Rahu, Saturn and Ketu return the Rasi aspect to Mars, since a fixed Rasi aspects the moveable Rasis, except for the moveable Rasi next to it. Jupiter in Taurus, a fixed Rasi, aspects the moveable Rasis, except for the moveable Rasi next to it. Jupiter thus aspects Venus in Capricorn, Libra and Cancer. Jupiter does not Rasi

aspect Mars in Aries since Aries is right next to Taurus. Rahu in Leo, a fixed Rasi, aspects the moveable Rasis Libra, Venus in Capricorn and, as mentioned, Mars in Aries. Saturn in Scorpio, a fixed Rasi, aspects Venus in the moveable Rasi Capricorn, Mars in Aries and Cancer. Venus in the moveable Rasi Capricorn aspects Jupiter in Taurus, Rahu in Leo and Saturn in Scorpio, leaving out Ketu in the fixed Rasi Aquarius since Aquarius is next to Capricorn. Ketu in the fixed Rasi Aquarius aspects Mars in the moveable Rasi Aries, Cancer and Libra.

Graha Drishti

भगवन् कतिधा दृष्टिर्बलं कतिविधं तथा ।

इति मे संशयो जातस्तं भवान् छेत्तुमर्हति ॥ १ ॥

bhagavan, katidhā dṛṣṭīrbalaṁ katividhaṁ tathā,
iti me saṁśayo jātastaṁ bhavān chettumarhati.

एका राशिवशाद् दृष्टिः पूर्वमुक्ता च या द्विज ।

अन्या खेटस्वभावोत्था स्फुटा तां कथयाम्यहम् ॥ २ ॥

ekā rāśivaśād dṛṣṭaḥ pūrvamuktā ca yā dvija,
anyā khetasvabhāvotthā sphuṭā tāṁ kathayāmyaham.

“Bhagavan, how many are the valid aspects, also, how many kinds are there? This doubt has arisen, Your Lordship, destroy my doubts.”

“One aspect, that of the Rasis, I uttered earlier, and now, O’ Twice Born, the other that are derived from the longitude of the Grabas in accordance with their inherent disposition, I shall tell.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of Graha Sphuta Drishti, 1-2

After giving the Rasi Drishtis, *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* provides the aspects of the Grahas, which are correctly called Graha Sphuta Drishti. The word Sphuta, means “correct,” and refers to the exact placement of a Graha. In other words, the Graha’s exact ecliptic longitude down to its degree, minute and second. *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* states that these aspects are based on the longitude of the Grahas, in contrast to the Rasi-dependent aspects explained earlier. Graha Drishtis, therefore, should be based on longitude as the Sage explains, and not on Rasi position which has been the medieval and modern convention, a convention that is in

disagreement with *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*. Very few medieval texts have maintained this correct longitude-based method of determining the Graha aspects, the most notable of which is *Sri Pati Paddhati*.

त्रिदशे च त्रिकोणे च चतुरस्रे च सप्तमे ।

पादवृद्ध्या प्रपश्यन्ति प्रयच्छन्ति फलं तथा ॥ ३ ॥

tridaśe ca trikoṇe ca caturasre ca saptame,
pādavṛddhyā prapaśyanti prayacchanti phalaṁ tathā.

“On the third and tenth, on the trines, on the fourth and eighth and on the seventh a quarter increase on the aspect, so also increase the effects.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of Graha Sphuta Drishti, 3

In this Sutra *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* gives the basic idea of the Graha Drishtis. To the third and tenth from the aspecting Graha the aspect is one quarter, to the fifth and ninth the aspect is one half, to the fourth and eighth the aspect is three quarters and to the seventh the aspect is full strength.

पूर्णं च सप्तमं सर्वे शनिजीवकुजाः पुनः ।

विशेषतश्च त्रिदशत्रिकोणचतुरष्टमान् ॥ ४ ॥

pūrṇa ca saptamaṁ sarve śanijīvakujāḥ punaḥ,
viśeṣataśca tridaśa trikoṇa caturaṣṭamān.

“All full with the seventh. Saturn, Jupiter and Mars, however, are special with the third and tenth, the trines and the fourth and eighth respectively.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of Graha Sphuta Drishti, 4

In this Sutra *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* clarifies the aspects of Saturn, Jupiter and Mars, the three Grahas outside the Earth's orbit. While all Grahas aspect the seventh with full strength, Saturn additionally aspects the third and the tenth with full strength. Jupiter additionally aspects the fifth and the ninth with full strength. Mars additionally aspects the fourth and the eighth with full strength.

All Grahas aspect the seventh from themselves with full strength. This is the obvious sight of a Graha as it looks directly in front of itself and sees the point exactly opposite. Saturn, the Graha of hardship and work also fully aspects the third which corresponds to the 3rd Bhava which goes under the name of Dushcikya “difficult” Bhava, and the tenth which corresponds to the 10th Bhava which goes under the name of Karma “work” Bhava. Jupiter, the Graha of luck and fortune also fully aspects the fifth which corresponds to the 5th Bhava of luck, and the ninth which corresponds to the 9th Bhava of fortune. Mars, the Graha of fighting for one's security, also fully aspects the fourth and eighth which correspond to the 4th and 8th Bhavas which have the special name of Chaturastras, “four-cornered” to symbolize their role in providing stability and security. These Chaturastras are what Mars is most inclined to fight for – home and land (4th Bhava) and life (8th Bhava).

इति सामान्यतः पूर्वैराचार्यैः प्रतिपादिता ।

स्फुटान्तरवशाद्या च दृष्टिः साऽतिस्फुटा तथा ॥ ५ ॥

iti sāmānyataḥ pūrvairācāryaiḥ pratipādītā,
sphuṭāntaravazādyā ca dr̥ṣṭiḥ sā'tisphuṭā tathā.

“This was generally taught by the earlier teachers; on account of being related to the longitude this aspect is very precise.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of Graha Sphuta Drishti, 5

Here *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* states that the aspects based on longitudes are very ancient and very precise. *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* then goes on to provide the precise calculations necessary to use these aspects. Before continuing with the actual calculations of the aspects, it is necessary to understand that the full strength of a Graha aspect is measured as one Rupa and that one Rupa is equal to 60 Virupas. The Grahas, therefore, aspect other Grahas and points in the horoscope to the strength of 0 – 60 Virupas. Also, these aspects are not mutual, one Graha may aspect another without being aspected in return.

Additionally, in order to understand the meaning of the Sutras giving the calculations, one must understand a bit about ancient mathematics. In the ancient system of Vedic mathematics arc measurements were always given in Rasis and degrees of Rasis. In fact the term Rasi is used to signify thirty degrees of a circle and has in fact nothing to do with stars or any other celestial phenomenon, it only has to do with a circle. In ancient times an arc of sixty-six degrees would be called two Rasis and six degrees. This is the convention followed in all astronomical texts and used in all astrological calculations. The ancient Greeks followed this very same convention. In these Sutras, therefore, one Rasi means thirty degrees, two Rasis sixty degrees, three Rasis ninety degrees, etc.

ASPECTS OF THE SUN, MOON, MERCURY AND VENUS

This first group of Sutras gives the calculations for the aspects of the Sun, Moon, Mercury and Venus. Mars, Jupiter and Saturn, on account of their special full strength aspects, have special considerations that are given next. Calculating these aspects can be painful for those that do not cherish mathematics, however, tables are provided at the end of the chapter to simplify the process, besides which, if you look at horoscopes regularly, you will surely have an astrological program that will do the job of calculating aspects for you.

दृश्याद् विशोध्य द्रष्टारं षड्राशिभ्योऽधिकान्तरम् ।

दिग्भ्यः संशोध्य तद्भागा द्विभक्ता दृक् स्फुटा भवेत् ॥ ६ ॥

drśyād viśodhya draṣṭāraṁ ṣaḍrāśibhyo adhikāntaram,
digbhyaḥ saṁśodhya tadbhāgā dvibhaktā ḍṛk sphuṭā bhavet.

पञ्चाधिके विना राशिं भागाद्विघ्नाश्च दृक् स्फुटा ।

वेदाधिके त्यजेद् भूताद् भागा दृष्टिः त्रिभाधिके ॥ ७ ॥

pañcādhike vinā rāśim bhāgā dvidhnaśca ḍṛk sphuṭā,
vedādhike tyajed bhūtād bhāgā dṛṣṭiḥ tribhādhike.

विशोध्यार्णवतो द्वाभ्यां लब्धं त्रिंशदयुतं च दृक् ।

द्वयाधिके तु विना राशिं भागास्तिथियुतास्तथा ॥ ८ ॥

viśodhyārṇavato dvābhyāṁ labdhaṁ trimśadyutaṁ ca ḍṛk,
dvayadhike tu vinā rāśaṁ bhāgāstithiyutāstathā.

रूपाधिके विना राशिं भागा द्वयाप्ताश्च दृग् भवेत् ।

rupādhike vinā rāśim bhāgā dvayāptāśca ḍṛg bhavet,

“From the aspected subtract the aspecting, if the result exceeds six Rasis (180 degrees) subtract from ten (300 degrees); divide those degrees by two to obtain the exact aspect.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of Graha Sphuta Drishti, 6

Example: In order to calculate the aspect of the Sun upon the Moon in a horoscope with the Sun at 10 degrees of Aries and the Moon at 25 degrees of Sagittarius, the difference of the Sun to the Moon is seen to be 255 degrees. 255 degrees is greater than six Rasis (180 degrees), therefore, subtracting 255 from ten Rasis (300 degrees) yields 45 degrees. Dividing 45 by 2 yields the aspectual value of 22.5 Virupas.

“In excess of five (150 degrees), the degrees without the Rasis doubled is the exact aspect.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of Graha Sphuta Drishti, 7

Example: In order to calculate the aspect of the Sun upon Mars in a horoscope with the Sun at 10 degrees of Aries and Mars at 5 degrees of Libra, the difference of the Sun to Mars is seen to be 175 degrees. 175 degrees is in excess of five Rasis (150 degrees) but less than six Rasis (180 degrees), therefore, the degrees without the five Rasis is 25 degrees. These degrees are doubled to yield the aspectual value of 50 Virupas.

“In excess of four (120 degrees), reduce from five (150 degrees), the degrees are the aspect.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of Graha Sphuta Drishti, 7

Example: In order to calculate the aspect of the Sun upon Saturn in a horoscope with the Sun at 10 degrees of Aries and Saturn at 28 degrees of Leo, the difference of the Sun to Saturn is seen to be 138 degrees. 138 degrees is greater than four Rasis (120 degrees) but less than five Rasis (150 degrees), therefore, 138 is subtracted from five Rasis (150 degrees) to yield 12 degrees and thus the aspectual value is 12 Virupas.

“In excess of three Rasis (90 degrees), subtract from four (120 degrees), the quotient arrived at by dividing by 2 is added to 30 which is the aspect.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of Graha Sphuta Drishti, 7-8

Example: In order to calculate the aspect of the Sun upon Rahu in a horoscope with the Sun at 10 degrees of Aries and Rahu at 3 degrees of Leo, the difference from the Sun to Rahu is 113 degrees. 113 degrees is greater than three Rasis (90 degrees) but less than four Rasis (120 degrees), therefore, 113 is subtracted from four Rasis (120 degrees) yielding 7 degrees. 7 divided by two yields 3.5, which added to 30 shows the aspectual value as 33.5 Virupas.

“In excess of two (60 degrees), the degrees without the Rasis added to fifteen.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of Graha Sphuta Drishti, 8

Example: In order to calculate the aspect of the Sun upon the ascendant in a horoscope with the Sun at 10 degrees of Aries and the ascendant at 15 degrees of Gemini, the difference from the Sun to the ascendant is 65 degrees. 65 degrees is greater than two Rasis (60 degrees) and less than three

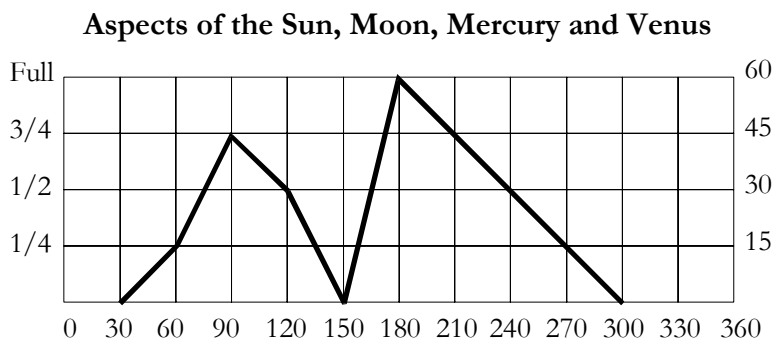
Rasis (90 degrees). Therefore, the degrees without the Rasis, which are 5 degrees after reducing 65 by 30 once and then twice, are added to 15 showing the aspectual value of 20 Virupas.

“In excess of one (30 degrees) the degrees without the Rasi divided by 2 indicates the aspect.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of Graha Sphuta Drishti, 9

Example: In order to calculate the aspect of the Sun upon Venus in a horoscope with the Sun at 10 degrees of Aries and Venus at 16 degrees of Taurus, the difference from the Sun to Venus is 36 degrees. 36 is greater than one Rasi (30 degrees) and less than two Rasis (60 degrees), therefore, the degrees without the Rasis, which are 6 degrees after reducing 36 by 30, are divided by 2 to reveal an aspectual value of 3 Virupas.

Diagramming the results of the above Sutras yields the following view of the aspects of the Sun, Moon, Mercury and Venus:



ASPECTS OF SATURN

Saturn has a special full aspect to the 3rd and 10th, therefore, in a few cases different calculations are to be followed. For cases that are not given below, the calculations given above for the Sun, Moon, Mercury and Venus are to be followed.

एवं राश्यादिके शेषे शनौ द्रष्टरि भो द्विज ॥ ९ ॥

evam rāśyādikē śeṣe śanau draṣṭari bho dvija.

एकमे नवमे भागा भुक्ता भोग्या द्विसंगुणाः ।

द्विर्भेऽशाधोनिताः षष्टिरष्टमे खाग्नियुग् लवाः ॥ १० ॥

ekabhe navabhe bhāgā buktā bhogyā dvisanṅuṇāḥ,
dvirbhe'sārdhonitāḥ ṣaṣṭiraṣṭabhe khāgnyiyug lavāḥ

“Just so, the Rasis, etc. remaining from Saturn’s location to the aspected, O’ Twice Born. The degrees greater than one Rasi (30 degrees) are multiplied by 2.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of Graha Sphuta Drishti, 10

Example: In order to calculate the aspect of Saturn upon the Moon in a horoscope with Saturn at 20 degrees of Libra and the Moon at 26 degrees of Scorpio, the difference from Saturn to the Moon is 36 degrees. 36 degrees is greater than one Rasi (30 degrees) but less than two Rasis (60 degrees), therefore, the degrees greater than the one Rasi, namely six degrees are multiplied by 2 to reveal an aspectual value of 12 Virupas.

“Greater than nine Rasis (270 degrees) the degrees yet to pass are multiplied by 2.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of Graha Sphuta Drishti, 10

Example: In order to calculate the aspect of Saturn upon the Sun in a horoscope with Saturn at 20 degrees of Libra and the Sun at 1 degree of Leo, the difference from Saturn to the Sun is 281 degrees. 281 degrees is greater than nine Rasis (270 degrees) but less than ten Rasis (300 degrees), therefore, the degrees yet to pass to arrive at the tenth Rasi (300 degrees) are 19 degrees, which multiplied by 2 yields an aspectual value of 38 Virupas.

“The excess of two (60 degrees) is halved and subtracted from 60.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of Graha Sphuta Drishti, 10

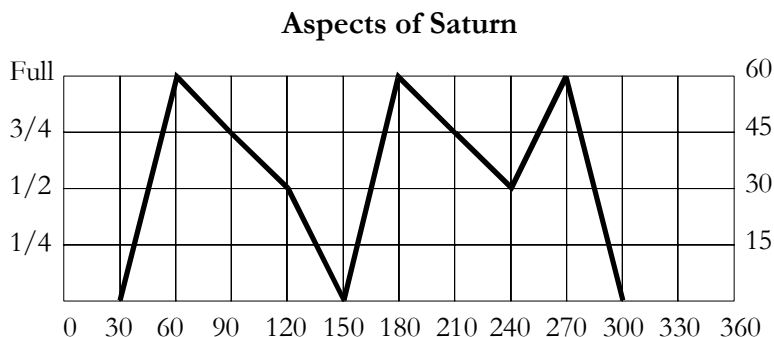
Example: In order to calculate the aspect of Saturn upon Mars in a horoscope with Saturn at 20 degrees of Libra and Mars at 16 degrees of Capricorn, the difference from Saturn to Mars is 86 degrees. 86 degrees is greater than two Rasis (60 degrees) but less than three Rasis (90 degrees), therefore, the excess degrees above two Rasi, namely 26 degrees are halved to arrive at 13, which is deducted from 60 to arrive at an aspectual value of 47 Virupas.

“The degrees in eight Rasis (240 degrees) are added to thirty.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of Graha Sphuta Drishti, 10

Example: In order to calculate the aspect of Saturn upon the Moon in a horoscope with Saturn at 20 degrees of Libra and Jupiter at 12 degrees of Cancer, the difference from Saturn to Jupiter is 262 degrees. 262 degrees is the 22nd degree of the eighth Rasi, which 22 degrees are added to thirty to arrive at an aspectual value of 52 Virupas.

Diagramming the results of the above Sutras yields the following view of the aspects of Saturn:



ASPECTS OF MARS

Mars has a special full aspect to the 4th and 8th, therefore, in a few cases different calculations are to be followed. For cases that are not given below, the calculations given above for the Sun, Moon, Mercury and Venus are to be followed.

त्रिसप्तभे तु भौमस्य षष्टिरत्र लवोनिता ।

सार्धाशास्तिथिसंयुक्ता द्विभे रूपं सदाऽङ्गभे ॥ ११ ॥

trisaptabhe tu bhaumasya ṣaṣṭiratra lavonitā,
sārdhāśāstithisamyuktā dvibhe rūpaṁ sadā'ṅgabhe.

“Of Mars, the excess degrees in the third (90 degrees) and seventh Rasi (210 degrees) subtracted from 60.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of Graha Sphuta Drishti, 11

Example: In order to calculate the aspect of Mars upon the Moon in a horoscope with Mars at 28 degrees of Capricorn and the Moon at 3 degrees of Taurus, the difference from Mars to the Moon is 95 degrees. 95 degrees is greater than three Rasis (90 degrees) and less than four Rasis (120 degrees), therefore, the degrees in excess of three Rasis, namely 5 degrees is subtracted from 60 to yield an aspectual value of 55 Virupas. Similarly, if the Moon were at 3 degrees of Virgo, the difference from Mars to the Moon would be 215 degrees, which is greater than seven Rasis (210 degrees) but less than eight Rasis (240 degrees), therefore, the degrees in excess of seven Rasis, namely 5 degrees subtracted from 60 reveals an aspectual value of 55 Virupas.

“The degrees at the second Rasi (60 degrees) are added to half the degrees and 15.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of Graha Sphuta Drishti, 11

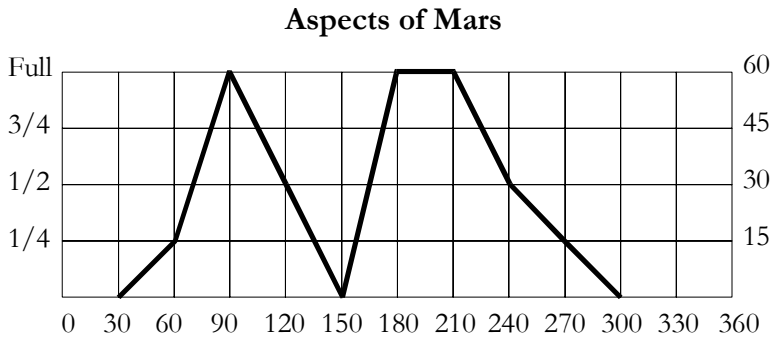
Example: In order to calculate the aspect of Mars upon the Sun in a horoscope with Mars at 28 degrees of Capricorn and the Sun at 10 degrees of Aries, the difference from Mars to the Sun is 72 degrees. 72 degrees is greater than two Rasis (60 degrees) and less than three Rasis (90 degrees), therefore, the degrees of the second Rasi, namely 12 degrees, which is arrived at by subtracting 60 degrees from 72 degrees, are added to half the degrees. Half of 12 degrees being 6 degrees, which yields 18 degrees, which added to 15 reveals an aspectual value of 33 Virupas.

“Throughout the 6th Rasi (180 – 210 degrees) one Rupa (60 Virupas).”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of Graha Sphuta Drishti, 11

Example: In order to calculate the aspect of Mars upon Jupiter in a horoscope with Mars at 28 degrees of Capricorn and Jupiter at 10 degrees of Leo, the difference from Mars to Jupiter is 192 degrees. 192 degrees is part of the sixth Rasi, which runs from 180 – 210 degrees and thus the aspect is one full Rupa, or 60 Virupas.

Diagramming the results of the above Sutra yields the following view of the aspects of Mars:



ASPECTS OF JUPITER

Jupiter has a special full aspect to the 5th and 9th, therefore, in a few cases different calculations are to be followed. For cases that are not given below, the calculations given above for the Sun, Moon, Mercury and Venus are to be followed.

त्रिसप्तभे तु जीवस्य भागार्धं शरवेदयुक् ।

द्विगुणैस्तु लवैश्चोनाः खरसाश्चतुरष्टभे ॥ १२ ॥

trisaptabhe tu jīvasya bhāgārdha śaravedayuk,
dviguṇaistu lavaiścōṇaḥ kharasāścaturasṭbhe.

“Of Jupiter, half the degrees in the third (90 degrees) and seventh Rasi (210 degrees) added to 45.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of Graha Sphuta Drishti, 12

Example: In order to calculate the aspect of Jupiter upon Mars in a horoscope with Jupiter at 5 degrees of Cancer and Mars at 10 degrees of Libra, the difference from Jupiter to Mars is 95 degrees. 95 degrees is 5 degrees of the third Rasi and thus 5 degrees are halved and added to 45 to reveal an aspectual value of 47.5 degrees. Similarly, when Mars is at 10 degrees of Aquarius, the distance from Jupiter to Mars is 215 degrees which is 5 degrees of the seventh Rasi, thus 5 degrees are halved and added to 45 to reveal an aspectual value of 47.5 degrees.

“In the fourth (120 degrees) and eighth (240 degrees), double the degrees and subtract from 60.”

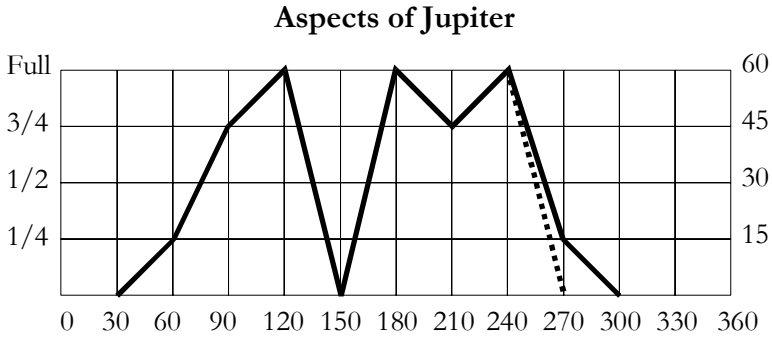
Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of Graha Sphuta Drishti, 12

This Sutra appears to be corrupt. The calculation for the fourth Rasi is correct, but the calculation for the eighth Rasi would end Jupiter’s aspect at 270 degrees instead of 300 degrees, which is abnormal as all Grahas end their aspect at 300 degrees. I recommend the following corrected calculation instead:

In the eighth (240 degrees), 30 minus the excess degrees is multiplied by 1.5 and added to 15.

Example: For Jupiter’s fourth aspect, to calculate the aspect of Jupiter upon Venus in a horoscope with Jupiter at 5 degrees of Cancer and Venus at 10 degrees of Scorpio, the difference from Jupiter to Venus is 125 degrees. 125 degrees is 5 degrees more than the fourth Rasi, the 5 degrees are doubled and subtracted from 60 to reveal an aspectual value of 50 Virupas. For Jupiter’s eighth aspect, following the calculation as given by myself, in a horoscope with Jupiter at 5 degrees of Cancer and Venus at 10 degrees of Pisces, the difference from Jupiter to Venus is 245 degrees. 245 degrees is 5 degrees in excess of Rasis, the 5 degrees are subtracted from 30 yielding 25 degrees which are multiplied by 1.5 to yield 37.5, which added to 15 reveals an aspectual value of 52.5 Virupas.

Diagramming the results of the above Sutra yields the following view of the aspects of Jupiter (note: the dotted line would be the result of the corrupt calculation as given in the Sutra):



एवं रव्यादिखेटानां स्फुटा दृष्टिः प्रजायते ।

तद्वशादेव भावानां जातकस्य फलं बदेत् ॥ १३ ॥

evam ravyādikhetānām sphuṭā dr̥ṣṭiḥ prajāyate,
tadvaśādeva bhāvānām jātakasya phalaṁ vadet.

“So the Sun’s and other planets’ exact aspect is determined, according to which the effects of the Bhavas of the horoscope are told.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Narration of Graha Sphuta Drishti, 13

In conclusion *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* makes it quite clear that it is these exact aspects that are to be used for judging the horoscope. These aspects can be a bit tedious to perform so the common practice is to consider only the full aspects and that based only on Rasis, not on degrees as specified by *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*. For example, if a Graha were in Aries it would be considered to aspect any Graha in the 7th Rasi, Libra, no matter the degree. In actual practice it is possible for a Graha to be in the last degree of Aries aspecting a Graha in the first degree of Libra. The difference from the aspecting Graha to the aspected Graha would then be 152 degrees. At 150 degrees an aspect has zero strength, so to consider this 152 degree aspect as full is not accurate. In fact, the strength of the aspect would be only 4 Virupas out of a possible 60,

very negligible. Perhaps in medieval and dark times when man lived a shorter life and did not have the benefit of computers to calculate their aspects, it was acceptable to use this rude and crude method of Graha Drishtis, but with computers here to help us, there is no excuse in this day and age to not calculate Graha Drishtis and use them properly.

WHEN TO USE GRAHA DRISHTI

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra has stated that the longitude based aspects of the Grahas are due to their inherent dispositions, thus these aspects are those that are to be used when determining the influence of each Graha's innate nature. For instance, Saturn is considered to be a dry Graha and will cast a drying influence throughout the horoscope. This drying influence will be indicated by Saturn's longitude-based planetary aspect and not upon its Rasi Drishti. Similarly, Saturn is Vata and will produce wind throughout the horoscope in accordance with his longitude-based planetary aspect. Saturn also has a dark complexion and will thus darken areas of the horoscope in accordance with its longitude-based planetary aspect. The basic rule is that any time the influence of a Graha's innate qualities are to be examined, it is these longitude based aspects that are to be considered. Graha Drishtis are also to be used for evaluating a Graha in respect to the favorable and unfavorable influences it receives from the other Grahas as well as when using Nakshatra Dasas.

RAHU AND KETU AND ASPECTS

There are different views regarding the aspects of Rahu and Ketu. Some do not consider them to have any aspect at all. Those who do consider Rahu and Ketu to have aspects generally consider them to aspect the 5th (120 degrees), 7th (180 degrees) and 9th (240 degrees) with full strength, similar to Jupiter's aspect. However, none of the astrological treatises ascribed to any of the Rishis give these special aspects to Rahu and Ketu and *Brihat Parashara Hora*

Shastra does not give make mention of them in the Sutras on calculating aspects. My experience has brought me to the conclusion that considering Rahu and Ketu to form planetary-based aspects will only mislead one's predictions. They do, however, have an effect due to the Rasi they are placed in through Rasi Drishti.

I believe that due to a factor called Argala, which exerts a type of influence to the 5th and 9th, some astrologers have mistakenly concluded that Rahu and Ketu aspect the 5th and 9th with full strength. Argala, however, is a completely different thing than an aspect and though it yields an influence, it does not yield a planetary aspectual influence. Also, there is the rule that cruel Grahas in the 5th or 9th create difficulties for that which they are 5th and 9th from, but again, this is not an aspectual influence. The influence of a planetary aspect is to cast its natural qualities throughout the horoscope, which Rahu and Ketu do not do. Their natural qualities are all focused in the Rasi and Bhava in which they are placed.

GRAHA DRISHTI IN THE VARGAS

Astrologers differ in their opinions about whether to consider Graha Drishti in the Vargas. Many of the old-school astrologers do not, while most modern astrologers do. *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* does give a Raja Yoga that is specifically dependent upon Graha Drishti in the Vargas and thus it can be safely concluded that Graha Drishti is to be used in the Varga Charts. Graha Drishti in the Varga charts should be done just as it is for the Rasi chart – the degrees of the Grahas should be determined and their exact aspectual value determined as explained in this chapter.

CONCLUSION

There are thus two types of aspects: Rasi Drishti and Graha Drishti. The first is dependent upon the Rasi in which a Graha is placed. This aspect is very definitive – a Graha either aspects through Rasi Drishti or it does not. The second aspect, Graha Drishti, is dependent upon the longitude of a Graha. This aspect

has a wide influence throughout the chart but influences different points within the chart to greater or lesser degree.

ASPECT TABLES

In order to simplify calculating the exact aspectual values, tables are provided below. To use the tables, find the distance in degrees from the aspecting Graha to the aspected. Look the degrees up on the appropriate table, whether the table for the Sun, Moon, Mercury and Venus; the table for Mars; the table for Jupiter; or the table for Saturn, and find the aspect in Virupas.

Aspects of Sun, Moon, Mercury and Venus

Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR
30	00	60	15	90	45	120	30	150	00	180	60	210	45	240	30	270	15		
31	0.5	61	16	91	44.5	121	29	151	2	181	59.5	211	44.5	241	29.5	271	14.5		
32	1	62	17	92	44	122	28	152	4	182	59	212	44	242	29	272	14		
33	1.5	63	18	93	43.5	123	27	153	6	183	58.5	213	43.5	243	28.5	273	13.5		
34	2	64	19	94	43	124	26	154	8	184	58	214	43	244	28	274	13		
35	2.5	65	20	95	42.5	125	25	155	10	185	57.5	215	42.5	245	27.5	275	12.5		
36	3	66	21	96	42	126	24	156	12	186	57	216	42	246	27	276	12		
37	3.5	67	22	97	41.5	127	23	157	14	187	56.5	217	41.5	247	26.5	277	11.5		
38	4	68	23	98	41	128	22	158	16	188	56	218	41	248	26	278	11		
39	4.5	69	24	99	40.5	129	21	159	18	189	55.5	219	40.5	249	25.5	279	10.5		
40	5	70	25	100	40	130	20	160	20	190	55	220	40	250	25	280	10		
41	5.5	71	26	101	39.5	131	19	161	22	191	54.5	221	39.5	251	24.5	281	9.5		
42	6	72	27	102	39	132	18	162	24	192	54	222	39	252	24	282	9		
43	6.5	73	28	103	38.5	133	17	163	26	193	53.5	223	38.5	253	23.5	283	8.5		
44	7	74	29	104	38	134	16	164	28	194	53	224	38	254	23	284	8		
45	7.5	75	30	105	37.5	135	15	165	30	195	52.5	225	37.5	255	22.5	285	7.5		
46	8	76	31	106	37	136	14	166	32	196	52	226	37	256	22	286	7		
47	8.5	77	32	107	36.5	137	13	167	34	197	51.5	227	36.5	257	21.5	287	6.5		
48	9	78	33	108	36	138	12	168	36	198	51	228	36	258	21	288	6		
49	9.5	79	34	109	35.5	139	11	169	38	199	50.5	229	35.5	259	20.5	289	5.5		
50	10	80	35	110	35	140	10	170	40	200	50	230	35	260	20	290	5		
51	10.5	81	36	111	34.5	141	9	171	42	201	49.5	231	34.5	261	19.5	291	4.5		
52	11	82	37	112	34	142	8	172	44	202	49	232	34	262	19	292	4		
53	11.5	83	38	113	33.5	143	7	173	46	203	48.5	233	33.5	263	18.5	293	3.5		
54	12	84	39	114	33	144	6	174	48	204	48	234	33	264	18	294	3		
55	12.5	85	40	115	32.5	145	5	175	50	205	47.5	235	32.5	265	17.5	295	2.5		
56	13	86	41	116	32	146	4	176	52	206	47	236	32	266	17	296	2		
57	13.5	87	42	117	31.5	147	3	177	54	207	46.5	237	31.5	267	16.5	297	1.5		
58	14	88	43	118	31	148	2	178	56	208	46	238	31	268	16	298	1		
59	14.5	89	44	119	30.5	149	1	179	58	209	45.5	239	30.5	269	15.5	299	0.5		

Degrees are from the Sun, Moon, Mercury or Venus to the aspected.

Aspects of Mars

Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR
30	00	60	15	90	60	120	30	150	00	180	60	210	60	240	30	270	15
31	0.5	61	16.5	91	59	121	29	151	2	181	60	211	59	241	29.5	271	14.5
32	1	62	18	92	58	122	28	152	4	182	60	212	58	242	29	272	14
33	1.5	63	19.5	93	57	123	27	153	6	183	60	213	56	243	28.5	273	13.5
34	2	64	21	94	56	124	26	154	8	184	60	214	56	244	28	274	13
35	2.5	65	22.5	95	55	125	25	155	10	185	60	215	55	245	27.5	275	12.5
36	3	66	24	96	54	126	24	156	12	186	60	216	54	246	27	276	12
37	3.5	67	25.5	97	53	127	23	157	14	187	60	217	53	247	26.5	277	11.5
38	4	68	27	98	52	128	22	158	16	188	60	218	52	248	26	278	11
39	4.5	69	28.5	99	51	129	21	159	18	189	60	219	51	249	25.5	279	10.5
40	5	70	30	100	50	130	20	160	20	190	60	220	50	250	25	280	10
41	5.5	71	31.5	101	49	131	19	161	22	191	60	221	49	251	24.5	281	9.5
42	6	72	33	102	48	132	18	162	24	192	60	222	48	252	24	282	9
43	6.5	73	34.5	103	47	133	17	163	26	193	60	223	47	253	23.5	283	8.5
44	7	74	36	104	46	134	16	164	28	194	60	224	46	254	23	284	8
45	7.5	75	37.5	105	45	135	15	165	30	195	60	225	45	255	22.5	285	7.5
46	8	76	39	106	44	136	14	166	32	196	60	226	44	256	22	286	7
47	8.5	77	40.5	107	43	137	13	167	34	197	60	227	43	257	21.5	287	6.5
48	9	78	42	108	42	138	12	168	36	198	60	228	42	258	21	288	6
49	9.5	79	43.5	109	41	139	11	169	38	199	60	229	41	259	20.5	289	5.5
50	10	80	45	110	40	140	10	170	40	200	60	230	40	260	20	290	5
51	10.5	81	46.5	111	39	141	9	171	42	201	60	231	39	261	19.5	291	4.5
52	11	82	48	112	38	142	8	172	44	202	60	232	38	262	19	292	4
53	11.5	83	49.5	113	37	143	7	173	46	203	60	233	37	263	18.5	293	3.5
54	12	84	51	114	36	144	6	174	48	204	60	234	36	264	18	294	3
55	12.5	85	52.5	115	35	145	5	175	50	205	60	235	35	265	17.5	295	2.5
56	13	86	54	116	34	146	4	176	52	206	60	236	34	266	17	296	2
57	13.5	87	55.5	117	33	147	3	177	54	207	60	237	33	267	16.5	297	1.5
58	14	88	57	118	32	148	2	178	56	208	60	238	32	268	16	298	1
59	14.5	89	58.5	119	31	149	1	179	58	209	60	239	31	269	15.5	299	0.5

Degrees are from Mars to the aspected.

Aspects of Jupiter

Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR
30	00	60	15	90	45	120	60	150	00	180	60	210	45	240	60	270	15		
31	0.5	61	16	91	45.5	121	58	151	2	181	59.5	211	45.5	241	58.5	271	14.5		
32	1	62	17	92	46	122	56	152	4	182	59	212	46	242	57	272	14		
33	1.5	63	18	93	46.5	123	54	153	6	183	58.5	213	46.5	243	55.5	273	13.5		
34	2	64	19	94	47	124	52	154	8	184	58	214	47	244	54	274	13		
35	2.5	65	20	95	47.5	125	50	155	10	185	57.5	215	47.5	245	52.5	275	12.5		
36	3	66	21	96	48	126	48	156	12	186	57	216	48	246	51	276	12		
37	3.5	67	22	97	48.5	127	46	157	14	187	56.5	217	48.5	247	49.5	277	11.5		
38	4	68	23	98	49	128	44	158	16	188	56	218	49	248	48	278	11		
39	4.5	69	24	99	49.5	129	42	159	18	189	55.5	219	49.5	249	46.5	279	10.5		
40	5	70	25	100	50	130	40	160	20	190	55	220	50	250	45	280	10		
41	5.5	71	26	101	50.5	131	38	161	22	191	54.5	221	50.5	251	43.5	281	9.5		
42	6	72	27	102	51	132	36	162	24	192	54	222	51	252	42	282	9		
43	6.5	73	28	103	51.5	133	34	163	26	193	53.5	223	51.5	253	40.5	283	8.5		
44	7	74	29	104	52	134	32	164	28	194	53	224	52	254	39	284	8		
45	7.5	75	30	105	52.5	135	30	165	30	195	52.5	225	52.5	255	37.5	285	7.5		
46	8	76	31	106	53	136	28	166	32	196	52	226	53	256	36	286	7		
47	8.5	77	32	107	53.5	137	26	167	34	197	51.5	227	53.5	257	34.5	287	6.5		
48	9	78	33	108	54	138	24	168	36	198	51	228	54	258	33	288	6		
49	9.5	79	34	109	54.5	139	22	169	38	199	50.5	229	54.5	259	31.5	289	5.5		
50	10	80	35	110	55	140	20	170	40	200	50	230	55	260	30	290	5		
51	10.5	81	36	111	55.5	141	18	171	42	201	49.5	231	55.5	261	28.5	291	4.5		
52	11	82	37	112	56	142	16	172	44	202	49	232	56	262	27	292	4		
53	11.5	83	38	113	56.5	143	14	173	46	203	48.5	233	56.5	263	25.5	293	3.5		
54	12	84	39	114	57	144	12	174	48	204	48	234	57	264	24	294	3		
55	12.5	85	40	115	57.5	145	10	175	50	205	47.5	235	57.5	265	22.5	295	2.5		
56	13	86	41	116	58	146	8	176	52	206	47	236	58	266	21	296	2		
57	13.5	87	42	117	58.5	147	6	177	54	207	46.5	237	58.5	267	19.5	297	1.5		
58	14	88	43	118	59	148	4	178	56	208	46	238	59	268	18	298	1		
59	14.5	89	44	119	59.5	149	2	179	58	209	45.5	239	59.5	269	16.5	299	0.5		

Degrees are from Jupiter to the aspected.

Aspects of Saturn

Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR	Deg	VR
30	00	60	60	90	45	120	30	150	00	180	60	210	45	240	30	270	60
31	2	61	59.5	91	44.5	121	29	151	2	181	59.5	211	44.5	241	31	271	58
32	4	62	59	92	44	122	28	152	4	182	59	212	44	242	32	272	56
33	6	63	58.5	93	43.5	123	27	153	6	183	58.5	213	43.5	243	33	273	54
34	8	64	58	94	43	124	26	154	8	184	58	214	43	244	34	274	52
35	10	65	57.5	95	42.5	125	25	155	10	185	57.5	215	42.5	245	35	275	50
36	12	66	57	96	42	126	24	156	12	186	57	216	42	246	36	276	48
37	14	67	56.5	97	41.5	127	23	157	14	187	56.5	217	41.5	247	37	277	46
38	16	68	56	98	41	128	22	158	16	188	56	218	41	248	38	278	44
39	18	69	55.5	99	40.5	129	21	159	18	189	55.5	219	40.5	249	39	279	42
40	20	70	55	100	40	130	20	160	20	190	55	220	40	250	40	280	40
41	22	71	54.5	101	39.5	131	19	161	22	191	54.5	221	39.5	251	41	281	38
42	24	72	54	102	39	132	18	162	24	192	54	222	39	252	42	282	36
43	26	73	53.5	103	38.5	133	17	163	26	193	53.5	223	38.5	253	43	283	34
44	28	74	53	104	38	134	16	164	28	194	53	224	38	254	44	284	32
45	30	75	52.5	105	37.5	135	15	165	30	195	52.5	225	37.5	255	45	285	30
46	32	76	52	106	37	136	14	166	32	196	52	226	37	256	46	286	28
47	34	77	51.5	107	36.5	137	13	167	34	197	51.5	227	36.5	257	47	287	26
48	36	78	51	108	36	138	12	168	36	198	51	228	36	258	48	288	24
49	38	79	50.5	109	35.5	139	11	169	38	199	50.5	229	35.5	259	49	289	22
50	40	80	50	110	35	140	10	170	40	200	50	230	35	260	50	290	20
51	42	81	49.5	111	34.5	141	9	171	42	201	49.5	231	34.5	261	51	291	18
52	44	82	49	112	34	142	8	172	44	202	49	232	34	262	52	292	16
53	46	83	48.5	113	33.5	143	7	173	46	203	48.5	233	33.5	263	53	293	14
54	48	84	48	114	33	144	6	174	48	204	48	234	33	264	54	294	12
55	50	85	47.5	115	32.5	145	5	175	50	205	47.5	235	32.5	265	55	295	10
56	52	86	47	116	32	146	4	176	52	206	47	236	32	266	56	296	8
57	54	87	46.5	117	31.5	147	3	177	54	207	46.5	237	31.5	267	57	297	6
58	56	88	46	118	31	148	2	178	56	208	46	238	31	268	58	298	4
59	58	89	45.5	119	30.5	149	1	179	58	209	45.5	239	30.5	269	59	299	2

Degrees are from Saturn to the aspected.

Example: In the Graha Drishti chart we will calculate some, but not all of the aspects between the Grahas. The Moon at 18 degrees of Gemini will aspect every Graha that is at least 30 degrees away from it and no more than 300 degrees away from it, this includes

Me ⁵ Su ⁸ ♊	Ma ¹² ♈	Ju ²⁷ ♎	Mo ¹⁸ ♊
Ke ¹⁷ ♋	Graha Drishti		☾
Ve ²² ♊			Ra ¹⁷ ♈
♈	Sa ¹ ♏	♎	♏

every Graha other than Jupiter. The Moon at 18 degrees of Gemini is 59 degrees behind Rahu. To determine the aspect value of the Moon's aspect upon Rahu, simply look up the value given for 59 degrees in the above Moon's aspect table – the value being 14.5 Virupas out of a possible 60. Rahu does not form any Graha aspects and so does not aspect the Moon in return.

The Moon is 133 degrees behind Saturn, thus to determine the aspect value of the Moon's aspect upon Saturn, we simply need to look up the aspect value for 133 degrees in the Moon's aspect table, namely 17 Virupas. Saturn is himself 227 degrees behind the Moon. Saturn's aspect value upon the Moon can thus be determined by looking up the aspect value for 227 degrees in Saturn's aspect table, namely 36.5 Virupas. Saturn, therefore, aspects the Moon much more strongly than the Moon aspects Saturn.

Saturn is 206 degrees behind Jupiter, the aspect value being 47 Virupas as provided by Saturn's aspect table. Jupiter himself is 154 degrees behind Saturn. The aspect value for Jupiter at 154 degree is a mere 8 Virupas, as provided in Jupiter's aspect table. While Saturn aspects Jupiter quite strongly, Jupiter only aspects Saturn feebly, even though they are in the 7th from each other.

Mercury at 5 degrees of Pisces is 37 degrees behind Mars. This yields an aspect value of 3.5 Virupas as indicated by Mercury's aspect

table. Mars himself is 323 degrees behind Mercury and thus does not aspect Mercury at all, since all aspects end at 300 degrees.

Jupiter at 27 degrees of Taurus is 235 degrees behind Venus. The aspect value for Jupiter at 235 degrees as shown by Jupiter's aspect table is 57.5 Virupas. Venus in return is 95 degrees behind Jupiter, the aspect value for which is 42.5 Virupas as shown by Venus' aspect table.

Mars at 12 degrees of Aries is 199 degrees behind Saturn, the aspect value of which is a full 60 Virupas as shown by Mars' aspect table. Saturn himself is 161 degrees behind Mars, the aspect value of which is 22 Virupas as shown by Saturn's aspect table.

Graha Shanti

ग्रहाणां दोषशान्त्यर्थं तेषां पूजाविधिं वद ।

मानवानां हितार्थाय संक्षेपात् कृपया मुने ॥ १ ॥

grahāṇāṁ doṣaśāntyartham teṣāṁ pūjāvidhiṁ vada,
mānavānāṁ hitārthāya saṁkṣepāt kṛpayā mune.

ग्रहा सूर्यादयः पूर्वं मया प्रोक्ता द्विजोत्तम ।

जगत्यां सर्वजन्तूनां तदधीनं सुखाऽसुखम् ॥ २ ॥

grahā sūryādayaḥ pūrvaṁ mathā proktā dvijottama,
jagatyāṁ sarvajantūnāṁ tadadhīnaṁ sukhā'sukham.

तस्मात् सुशान्तिकामो वा श्रीकामो वा सुचेतसा ।

वृष्टयायुः पुष्टिकामो वा तेषां यज्ञं समाचरेत् ॥ ३ ॥

tasmāt suśāntikāmo vā śrīkāmo vā sucetasā,
vṛṣṭāyayuh puṣṭikāmo vā teṣāṁ yajñaṁ samācaret.

“For the goal of pacifying the afflictions of the Grabas, tell the injunctions of worship to those for the sake of the welfare of Man – I briefly implore you Sage.”

“The Grabas, the Sun and others I spoke of earlier, O’ Best Twice Born, from that and the others is the happiness and unhappiness of all creatures of the Earth. Those that aspire to goodness or prosperity or wisdom, rain, longevity or nourishment should perform worship.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Graha Shanti, 1-3

A Chapter towards the end of *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* concentrates on the pacification of the Grahās, for after receiving

the great body of astrological knowledge from Parashara, Maitreya requests that Parashara concisely explain how the Grahas are to be worshipped so that man can escape their afflictions. Maitreya is no different than any modern student of astrology in his desire to know how to pacify the Grahas – the desire naturally arises upon learning the many ways in which the Grahas influence our life.

Pacifying the Grahas is known as Graha Shanti, Shanti meaning, “Peace.” The goal, therefore, is to be at peace with the divinities that are the Grahas rather than being engaged in a war that can never be won. Only by being at peace with the Grahas can a person have a comfortable and productive life. This peace is broken when a person transgresses divine laws. Graha Shanti allows us to create peace for transgresses that are producing ill in our lives and which are indicated by the ill-situated Grahas.

The act of pacifying the Grahas is known as Puja, meaning, worship, honor and reverence. Proper Puja consists of imagery, Japa (recitation of hymns), offerings, feeding others and charity. Honoring the Grahas in these five ways is sure to bring about peace. Even if a person is only able or willing to honor the Grahas through one of these five actions, significant improvements will be noticed.

IMAGERY

Imagery is an important aspect of Puja as it serves to focus the mind. During the performance of Puja, mental focus and concentration is everything. The mind has the ability to draw to us that which is concentrated upon. The mind is capable of creating a magnetic force much greater than that of the most powerful electromagnetic magnet that unerringly attracts that which is in the mind. For the mind to exercise this power, it must be concentrated. Images of the Grahas help us to concretely attract the Grahas and thus those things they rule into our lives. One of the primary ways in which a Graha afflicts our life is through denial of the desirable things that it rules. Thus Jupiter, which rules wealth, may deny

wealth if it is afflicted. Concentrating on the image of Jupiter will attract Jupiter into our lives and with Jupiter comes wealth.

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra provides detailed descriptions of the images of the Grahas that are to be used to honor the Grahas in order to attract them into our lives.

ताम्राच्च स्फटिकाद्रक्तचन्दनात् स्वर्णकादुभौ ।

रजतादयसः सीसात् कांस्यात् कार्याः क्रमाद् ग्रहाः ॥ ४ ॥

tāmrācca sphatikādraktacandanāt svarṇakādubhau,
rajatādayasaḥ sīsāt kāmśyāt kāryāḥ kramād grahāḥ.

“From copper, from quartz, from red sandalwood, both from gold, from silver, iron, from lead, from brass are made the Grabas in their regular order.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Graha Shanti, 4

Images of the Grahas are preferably done three dimensionally as sculptures or carvings. The Sun’s image should be made of copper, the Moon’s of quartz crystal, Mars’s of red sandalwood, both Mercury and Jupiter’s of gold, Venus’s from silver, Saturn’s from iron, Rahu’s from lead and Ketu’s image should be made of brass.

If the Grahas cannot be made or obtained as idols, then they can be drawn on cloth or paper:

पूर्वोक्तैः स्वस्ववर्णैर्वा पटे लेख्या द्विजोत्तमैः ।

स्वस्वोक्तदिग्विभागेषु गन्धाद्यैर्मण्डनेषु वा ॥ ५ ॥

pūrvoktaiḥ svasvavarṇairvā paṭe lekhyā dvijottamaiḥ,
svasvoktadigvibhāgeṣu gandhādyairmaṇḍaneṣu vā.

“Or drawn on cloth of their previous stated complexions by Brahmins. Contemplated upon in their own directions with their fragrances or in their adornments.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Graha Shanti, 5

Most people will find it difficult if not impossible to procure the proper idols, in which case the images should be drawn on cloth or paper the color of the Graha's complexion, as mentioned in the *Complexions of the Grabas* chapter.

The image, whether drawn on cloth or three dimensional, should be put in the direction of the Graha as provided in the chapter, *Slopes of the Grabas*. Three-dimensional images should be adorned with gems appropriate to pacifying the Graha or embellished with the fragrance of the Graha and then meditated upon.

In choosing a fragrance, those fragrances that smell of the taste of the Graha should be chosen as provided in the *Rasa – Tastes* chapter. Fragrances of Mars are appropriate for Ketu and fragrances of Saturn are appropriate for Rahu.

In respect to choosing proper gems with which to adorn the image, if the Graha is being pacified in order to improve upon a Graha with low Shad Bala then the color gem of the Graha's Mulatrikona should be chosen. If the Graha is being pacified due to its Ishta being low or due to it having excessive influences from Krura Grahās, then the color gem of the Graha's exaltation Rasi should be chosen. If the Graha is being pacified due to it being in a bad Lajjitadi Avastha or, simply speaking, in bad dignity, under the influence of inimical Grahās or joined with the Sun or Saturn, then the color gem of the Graha's own Rasi should be chosen to adorn the image. Rahu should be adorned with grey gems or gems the same as that for Saturn and Ketu with black gems or gems the same as that for Mars. (Note: The colors of the Rasis are a somewhat controversial as different texts give some different colors. This matter will be addressed fully in a subsequent book, *Rasi Sutras*, which is in progress.)

As can be seen, much can be done to embellish the images of the Grahas, but if all of this is not possible, the simple image itself will do. Holding the image of the Graha in mind and concentrating upon it is the important thing, the level of concentration determines more than any physical image the degree with which a Graha will be favorably brought into one's life.

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra continues to give the actual image of each Graha:

Sun

पद्मासनः पद्महस्तः पद्मपत्रसमद्युतिः ।

सप्ताश्वरथसंस्थश्च द्विभुजश्च दिवाकरः ॥ ६ ॥

padmāsanah padmahastah padmapatrasamadyutih,
saptāśvarathasamsthāśca dvibhujaśca divākaraḥ.

“Lotus seated, lotus in hand, brilliant as a lotus flower and sitting in a seven horse drawn chariot with two arms is the Sun.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Graha Shanti, 6

The dominant imagery of the Sun is the lotus. Lotuses represent the spiritual quality of living in the world but being above it, just as the beautiful lotus blossom sits upon the muddy waters. This is a very important quality of the Sun, which allows for the spirit of self-surrender and sacrifice, which the Sun so often demands. Just as a king must be above all petty concerns in order to rule his kingdom successfully, we need this quality of the lotus to rule the kingdom of the self.

The Sun rides a chariot and so does not touch the ground, which indicates his divine nature and that he is untouched by the world. He has power in the world, however, through his seven horses. The seven horses represent his seven powers, one for each of the Grahas that revolve around the Sun: Mercury - the power to manifest; Venus – the power of devotion; Earth – the power of

birth; Mars – the power of will; Jupiter – the power of knowledge; Saturn – the power of death.

The Sun is portrayed with two arms, which reveals that the Sun is primary a Graha of consciousness – the consciousness of the soul.

Moon

श्वेतः श्वेताम्बरो देवो दशाश्वः श्वेतभूषणः ।

गदाहस्तो द्विबाहुश्च विधातव्यो विधुर्द्विज ॥ ७ ॥

śvetaḥ śvetāmbaro devo daśāśvaḥ śvetabhūṣaṇaḥ,
gadāhasto dvibāhuśca vidhātavyo vidhurdvija.

*“White, dressed in white, divine, ten horses, white adornments,
mace in hand and two armed is fixed the Moon, O’ Twice Born.”*

Bṛihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Graha Shanti, 7

The Moon is two armed, just as is the Sun, and is thus also a Graha of consciousness. The Moon is the consciousness of the individual self. The Moon’s primary symbolism is white, the color of purity and the color of reflection. This reveals the reflective nature of the Moon as well as the fact that the individual consciousness is a reflection of the soul consciousness. The individual consciousness is an aspect of the soul consciousness, but indeed not the soul consciousness.

The Moon controls ten horses. These are the five senses (the Jnanendriyas) and their related five organs of action (the Karmendriyas) mentioned in the *Five Elements* chapter. The individual self must have control of these ten forces if it wishes a happy and productive life. An afflicted Moon indicates these “ten horses” running amuck with all kinds of resulting compulsions, needs, desires, etc.

Mars

रक्तमाल्याम्बरधरो शक्तिशूलगदाधरः ।

वरदस्तु चतुर्बाहुर्मङ्गलो मेषवाहनः ॥ ८ ॥

raktamālyāambaradharo śaktiśūlagadādharaḥ,
varadastu caturbāhurmaṅgalo meṣavāhanaḥ.

“Wearing red garlands and clothes, a spear, trident and mace and blessing, four armed is Mars riding a ram.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Graha Shanti, 8

Mars is dressed in red, revealing his hot and active nature. His red garland indicates that he is worthy of honor for his many great and courageous deeds. He is four armed, revealing that he is a Graha that is active in the doings of the world and that he is not a ruling force of consciousness, as are the Sun and the Moon. His spear represents his focused and pointed pursuit, the trident his ability to transform and change through the strength of his will and his mace the ability to destroy when necessary. With his fourth hand he blesses one's exertions so that they may be productive. Mars rides a ram, revealing that he is a master of challenges who is always willing to scale new heights and reach new grounds.

Mercury

पीतमाल्याम्बरधरः कर्णिकारसमद्युतिः ।

खड्गचर्मगदापाणिः सिंहस्थो वरदो बुधः ॥ ९ ॥

pītamālyāambaradharāḥ karṇikārasamadyutiḥ,
khaḍgacarmagadāpāṇiḥ siṃhastho varado budhaḥ.

“Wearing yellow garlands and clothes, brilliant like a Karnika flower (a brilliant white flower), handling a sword, shield and mace, on a lion and blessing is Mercury.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Graha Shanti, 9

Yellow is the color of nobility, thus Mercury's yellow garlands and clothes reveal that he behaves in a noble manner. You will remember that Mercury is the "Young Sovereign." His garland represents that he is worthy to be honored for his many abilities. His brilliance is the result of his vibrant pursuit and enthusiastic personality.

Mercury's sword reveals his honor, especially in times of conflict. His shield represents his ability to protect himself from dangers, which Mercury does through the effective management of problems and through avoiding potential problems. His mace represents his ability to destroy when necessary. His forth hand blesses with productivity and the successful realization of one's projects.

Mercury rides a lion, which symbolizes his mastery of the material realm and his ability to be a successful mover and shaker in the world. Mercury's mastery is revealed by Mercury's Mahapurusha Yoga: Bhadra Yoga (formed by Mercury being in an angle in own or exaltation Rasi), which is said to create a great leader and an individual of accomplishment.

Jupiter and Venus

गुरुशुक्रौ क्रमात् पीतश्वेतवर्णौ चतर्भुजौ ।

दण्डिनौ वरदौ कार्यौ साक्षसूत्रकमण्डलू ॥ १० ॥

guruśukrau kramāt pītaśvetavarṇau caturbhujau,
daṇḍīnau varadau kāryau sākṣasūtrakamaṇḍalū.

"Jupiter and Venus are yellow and white respectively, four armed, staffs, blessing, offerings, rosary threads and Kamandalus (water-gourds used by ascetics)."

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Graha Shanti, 10

Jupiter is dressed in yellow and is, like Mercury, a very noble Graha. Jupiter, in fact, represents the moral fiber from which nobility is born. His rosary thread indicates that he is venerable in

knowledge and thus worthy of honor. Jupiter's four arms indicate that he is a Graha of acting in the world, where he acts with gentleness and kindness in the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge and happiness. In one hand he carries a staff, which helps him negotiate the many dangers and pitfalls of life – indicative of Jupiter's ability to save us with his blessings. In another hand he holds offerings, which represent the good works and knowledge that he has to offer. His third hand holds a Kamandalus, a water gourd used by ascetics, which represents that he seeks nourishment in those things that are healthy and truly nourishing and that, having this, he need not partake of unhealthy things. This symbolizes Jupiter's grace that prompts us to choose the good and healthy over the many available ills. His fourth hand blesses with divine protection and graces with "luck." Jupiter has no animal to ride upon, but walks, which indicates that he is the master of himself – the master who understands himself in the proper context of creation.

Venus is described similarly to Jupiter, perhaps due to the fact that these are the two Gurus. The marked difference is that Venus is dressed in white while Jupiter is dressed in yellow. White is the color of purity, the color that Venus shares with the Moon. These two feminine Grahas wear white because feminine energy is always pure. White is reflective and thus feminine energy may reflect evil and darkness though it always remains pure just as a mirror reflecting an ugly scene is itself untouched by the ugliness. The purity of Venus comes from its capacity to love, from devotion. Following what it loves, Venus makes its choices in life and is free from any sin resulting from its choices since it chooses out of love and no evil can come to the person who chooses out of love and devotion. When Venus is afflicted, however, one cannot choose out of the spirit of true love and instead chooses out of pride, lust or desire, in which case there is the need to propitiate Venus.

Venus's rosary thread indicates that he is worthy of respect for all his mundane knowledge and the guidance he can give in creating

a solid foundation for physical, mental and spiritual successes. Venus's four arms indicate that he is a Graha of worldly activity, where he acts with devotion and care in the pursuit of fulfilling his heartfelt needs while also teaching others to do the same. With the staff that he carries he negotiates past the many seemingly enjoyable but truly harmful pitfalls in life that come disguised as tasty but unhealthy food, sexy but uncaring members of the opposite sex, relaxing but damaging substances, etc. He negotiates through these things by giving the realization that one is more worthy than these ill-serving things and deserving of better. Venus's offering symbolizes the practical knowledge he has to give of how to live healthfully in the world. His water gourd represents that he seeks nourishment in those things that nourish and build his health and that he has the power to abstain from those things that are damaging. Venus's fourth hand blesses so that one may be devoted towards what is good and thus make good choices in life. Venus, like Jupiter, has no animal to ride upon; again indicating that he is the master of himself – the master whose desires and pride succumb to his devotions.

Saturn

इन्द्रनीलद्युतिः शूली वरदो गृध्रवाहनः ।

बाणबाणासनधरो विज्ञेयोऽर्कसुतो द्विज ॥ ११ ॥

indraniladhyutiḥ śūlī varado grdhravāhanah,
bāṇabāṇāsanadharo vijñeyo'rkarasuto dvija.

“Brilliant like blue sapphire, trident, blessing, riding a vulture, holding arrow and bow is known Saturn, O' Twice Born.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Graha Shanti, 11

Saturn has the cool radiance of blue sapphire which portrays mystery and power. (Saturn, though lame, indolent and ragged, is the son of the Sun and thus “noble born” and powerful.) This quality symbolizes the idea in Hindu mythology that everyone is

born from the same few great souls, which means that everyone is of royal lineage. The lowest person in life, a Saturn person, is still of royal lineage and whatever his faults, should be respected as such. The common man, which Saturn rules, is yet of “royal” blood.

Saturn’s four arms reveal that he is a Graha of worldly activity where he provides the ability to survive and even to progress in times of difficulty. Saturn carries a trident in one hand, which symbolizes his power to transform, over time, all things. Two of his arms wield the bow and arrow, revealing his nature to deal with difficulties not through sheer courage or recklessness, but from a safe vantage and with patience. Esoterically, the bow symbolizes the spine and the arrow the life force coursing through the spine. Time and the art of restraining (Saturn) the life force in the spine raises the common man into the spiritual man. Saturn’s fourth hand blesses so that one has the strength to endure.

Saturn rides a vulture, which reveals that he is no stranger to the fated ill of each man, death; and that he has mastered the fears of man, the paramount one being the fear of death.

Rahu

करालवदनः खड्गचर्मशूली वरप्रदः ।

सिंहस्थो नीलवर्णश्च राहुरेवं प्रकल्प्यते ॥ १२ ॥

karālavadanah khadgacarmaśūlī varapradah,
siṁhastho nīlavarṇaśca rāhurevaṁ prakalpyate.

“Gaping mouthed, sword, shield, trident, granting wishes, on a lion and dark colored is fixed Rahu.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Graha Shanti, 12

Rahu is four armed revealing that he is a Graha of worldly activity where Rahu forces us to develop where we have been lax so that we become balanced in our strengths. Rahu’s sword reveals his noble behavior, especially in times of conflict, a behavior we are in need of learning in respect to the Bhava in which Rahu is placed.

Honoring Rahu helps to develop the needed behavior. With his shield Rahu protects himself from the many dangers in which he finds himself. How often do we find ourselves in crazy situations, only to have our worst fears not materialize, or not be as dreaded as we had imagined? This is Rahu's shield buffering us. Rahu's trident reveals the transformations that he brings upon us as we engage, with great inexperience, in those things that he directs us towards. With his fourth hand Rahu blesses us to engage materially so that we can become immortal spiritually.

Rahu rides a lion, revealing his mastery of the physical realm. Where Rahu is, we need to become king and master. Honoring Rahu helps us to become this king.

Rahu is dark; he thus obscures things, makes our future unforeseeable, and gives us cause for wonder and fear. Embracing this darkness of the unknown is to embrace life, which is all we need to do to manage Rahu. Rahu's gaping mouth makes his a fierce appearance, which symbolizes Rahu's tendency to pull us into the most intense experiences.

Ketu

धूम्रा द्विबाहवः सर्वे गदिनो विकृताननाः ।

गृध्रासना नित्यं केतवः स्युर्वरप्रदा ॥ १३ ॥

dhumrā dvibāhavaḥ sarve gadino vikṛtānāḥ,
gṛdhrāsanā nityaṁ ketavaḥ syurvarapradā.

“Smoky, two armed, armed with a mace, deformed limbs, and seated on a vulture are fixed Ketu's granting blessings.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Graha Shanti, 13

The image of Ketu is possessed of only two arms, revealing that he, like the Sun and Moon, is a Graha of consciousness more than he is a Graha of worldly activity. Ketu takes the consciousness, symbolized by the Moon, which has developed through the worldly activity of the other six Grahas, and brings it to a more spiritual

realization. Thus he acts upon the consciousness. Anything that he may affect he affects not for the sake of that thing, but for the sake of spiritualizing the consciousness. Ketu's limbs are also deformed, revealing that he is sickened by his activities and that only by overcoming the ego consciousness, the body consciousness, will he be happy.

Ketu's mace, his only weapon, is a weapon without finesse, a weapon of sheer destruction, revealing the nature of Ketu to destroy, more specifically, to destroy vessels and by destroying, allow the consciousness the opportunity to soar. Ketu does this both by destroying the individual consciousness so that it may merge with the divine consciousness and by destroying some physical vessel of a person's hope, desire or achievement so that their consciousness can rise above that hope, desire or achievement.

Like Saturn, Ketu rides a vulture; likewise Ketu is no stranger to death. In fact, it is through death that Ketu grants his greatest blessings of transcending the limited individual consciousness. Ketu's non-mace holding hand blesses with personal transformation and spiritual enlightenment.

In this Sutra Ketu is given as plural – Ketus, as there are many Ketu's, not just one. When Svarbhanu was cut in half his head became Rahu and his tail the Graha Ketu and all the comets, which are likewise known as Ketus. The mundane effects of all these numerous Ketus has been described by Varaha Mihira in his *Brihat Samhita*.

Size of the Image and Decorations

सर्वे किरीटिनः कार्या ग्रहा लोकहितप्रदाः ।

स्वांगुलेनोच्छ्रिता विज्ञैः शतमष्टोत्तरं सदा ॥ १४ ॥

sarve kirīṭinaḥ kāryā grahā lokahitapradāḥ,
svāṅgulenocchritā vijñaiḥ śatamaṣṭottaraṁ sadā.

“A crown on all, the Grabas work to cause benefit to the world and should always be fixed by the wise at 108 own Angulas.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Graha Shanti, 14

The images of all the Grahas should be adorned with a crown, the crown being a symbol of an enlightened consciousness. The size of the images should be 108 Angulas. An Angula is the width of the middle of the middle segment of the middle finger. The standard Angula measurement is 17.7 millimeters, thus 108 Angulas is 1.912 meters, quite large. The Angula to be used, however, is that of the owner's middle digit – the image is to be customized for the user. These are very large images, but fitting as it does not seem appropriate to belittle the Grahas with images greatly smaller than the worshipper. Due to the immense size of these images, it will not be practical for most people to possess a three dimensional image built to these specifications, though anyone can possess a drawn image with these dimensions.

यथावर्णं प्रदेयानि पुष्पाणि वसनानि च ।

गन्धो दीपो बलिश्चैव धूपो देयश्च गुग्गुलुः ॥ १५ ॥

yathāvarṇaṁ pradeyāni puṣpāṇi vasanāni ca,
gandho dīpo baliścaiva dhūpo deyaśca guggulāḥ.

“According to the appropriate color – flower and garment offerings; and especially fragrances, lamps/candles and oblations, as well as gifts of incense and Guggula.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Graha Shanti, 15

Flowers of the appropriate colors should be offered to the Graha in the form of the image and the image should be dressed in garments of the appropriate color or have garments offered to them that are latter given away as charity. The flowers should be the color of the Graha's Mulatrikona Rasi, exaltation Rasi or own Rasi as mentioned above in respect to adorning the Grahas with gems. The

garments should be the color mentioned in the *Garments* chapter. Flowers are a very important part of Puja and are not a mere decoration. Flowers have a very high essence, higher, in fact, than any other thing and are thus more important decorations than are gems. Their presence in Puja uplifts the ceremony and attracts the highest qualities of the Grahas.

Fragrances appropriate to the Graha should be offered along with lamps or candles and oblations. Fragrances themselves are healing and help attune one to the Graha. Lamps and candles help focus upon the image. Oblations of food are very important and foods made of the grains of the Grahas are particularly useful as provided in the *Grains of the Grahas* chapter. These are to be eaten after honoring the Graha and are commonly known as Prasada.

Incense appropriate to the Rasa/taste of the Graha should be lit and offered along with Guggula, an aromatic gum resin known as *Bdellium* which is used in Ayurvedic medicine and is also mentioned in the Bible, Gen. 2:12 where it appears to have been considered of great value.

यस्य ग्रहस्य यद्द्रव्यमन्नं यस्य च यत् प्रियम् ।

तच्च तस्मै प्रदातव्यं भक्तियुक्तेन चेतसा ॥ १६ ॥

yasya grahasya yaddravyamannaṁ yasya ca yat priyam,
tacca tasmai pradātavyaṁ bhaktiyuktena cetasā.

“To that Graha the material and food dear to it are offered joined with devotion and offered with concentration.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Graha Shanti, 16

All these offerings should be presented with devotion and concentration. The degree of devotion and concentration determines the degree of success. Devotion and concentration focus the mind, which creates the magnetism that attracts the Graha.

JAPA

Japa, recitation of hymns, is a very important part of Graha Shanti. Japa is affirmation and concentrated verbal communion with the divine energies that work to change one's consciousness and one's life. Japa has the distinct advantage over other methods of propitiating the Grahas in that it can be done by anyone, anytime and has no cost attached to it. Japa only requires concentration and devotion; absentminded and heartless Japa will not bring the desired results.

The goal of Japa is to become absorbed in the words of the hymn. This can happen in two ways: through Jnana Japa and Bhakti Japa. Jnana Japa is done with the goal of understanding the true import of the words, in which case one merges with the words as they come to understand the deep meaning of the words. Bhakti Japa is done with the goal of melting into the love of the hymn.

आकृष्णेन इमं देवा अग्निर्मूर्धा दिवः ककुत् ।

उद्बुध्यस्वेति मन्त्रांश्च जपेदथ बृहस्पते ॥ १७ ॥

ākṛṣṇena imam devā agnirmūrdhā divaḥ kakut,
udbudhyasveti mantrāṁśca japedatha bṛhaspate.

अन्नात् परिश्रुतश्चेति शन्नो देवीरभीष्टये ।

कया नश्चित्र इत्येवं केतु कृण्वन्निमांस्तथा ॥ १८ ॥

annāt pariśrutaśceti śanno devīrabhīṣṭaye,
kayā naścitra ityevaṁ ketu kṛṇvannimāṁstathā.

सप्त रुद्रा दिशो नन्दा नवचन्द्रा नृपास्तथा ।

त्रिपक्षा अष्टचन्द्राश्च सप्तचन्द्रास्तथैव च ॥ १९ ॥

sapta rudrā diśo nandā navacandrā nṛpāstathā,
tripakṣā aṣṭacandrāśca saptacandrāstathaiva ca.

इमाः संख्याः सहस्रघ्ना जपसंख्याः प्रकीर्तिताः ।

क्रमादर्कादिखेटानां प्रीत्यर्थं द्विजपुङ्गव ॥ २० ॥

imāḥ saṁkhyāḥ sahasradhā japasaṁkhyāḥ prakīrtitāḥ,
kramādarkādikhētānāṁ prītyartham dvijapuṅgava.

“Akrisbnena, Imam Deva, Agnirmurdha Diva Kakut, Udbudhyasva, these hymns are to be recited as well as Brihaspate, Annat Parisbruta, Sanna Devirabbisbtaye, Kalba Nasbcitra, and also Ketu Krimyanna. Seven, eleven, ten, nine, nineteen, sixteen, twenty-three, eighteen and seventeen – these numbers 1,000 times are the number of Japa to be said for the planets in their regular order beginning with the Sun for the goal of joy, O’ Eminent Twice Born.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Graha Shanti, 17-20

The hymns recommended by *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* come from the *Rig Veda* and the *Shukla Yajur Veda*. *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* gives only the first few syllables of the appropriate hymn. The full hymns are reproduced below.

It will be noticed that many of the hymns have nothing immediately apparent to do with the *Grahas*. The hymns of the *Vedas* are largely directed to the cosmic forces responsible for the creation and maintenance of Earth, life and ourselves. These cosmic forces are not only present in nature, but also within each of us. Attunement with these cosmic forces brings about peace, harmony, strength, success and happiness.

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra also gives the amount of times that each hymn should be recited: 7,000 times for the Sun, 11,000 for the Moon, 10,000 for Mars, 9,000 for Mercury, 19,000 for Jupiter, 16,000 for Venus, 23,000 for Saturn, 18,000 for Rahu and 17,000 times for Ketu.

Sun

आकृष्णेन रजसा वर्तमानो निवेशयन्नमृतं मर्त्यं च ।

हिरण्ययेन सविता रथेना देवो याति भुवनानि पश्यन् ॥ २ ॥

ākṛṣṇena rajasā vartamāno niveśayannamṛtam martyaṁ ca,
hiraṇyayena savitā rathenā devo yāti bhuvanāni paśyan.

“Revolving through the darkened firmament, arousing mortal and immortal, the divine Savita travels in his golden chariot, beholding the beings.”

Rigveda: 1.35.2

Savita, “the Vivifier,” is one of the common names of the Sun. This Sutra alludes to the Sun, as the vivifier, bringing life and consciousness to the world. As he revolves through the darkened heavens, the light of his golden chariot arouses life and consciousness.

Moon

इमं देवा असपत्नं सुवध्वं महते क्षत्राय महते ज्यैष्ठ्याय महते जानराज्यायेन्द्रस्येन्द्रियाय ।

इमममुष्य पुत्रममुष्यै पुत्रमस्यै विंश एष वोऽमी राजा सोमोऽस्माकं ब्राह्मणानां राजा ॥ ४० ॥

imaṁ devā asapatnaṁ sudadhvaṁ mahate kṣatrāya mahate
jyaiṣṭhyāya mahate jānarājyāyendrasyeṇdriyāya,
imamamuṣya putramamuṣyai putramasyai viṁśa eṣa vo'mī rājā
somo'smākaṁ brāhmaṇānām rājā.

“Gods, quicken him so without any rival, for great dominion, for the greatest seniority, for sovereignty and the for the power of Indra, him, son of such a man and such a woman of such a tribe, Soma, lord and king of us the Brabmans.”

Shukla Yajur Veda: 9.40 & 10.18

This hymn praises the deity Soma, who is related to the Moon. Soma means, “Juice” and refers to an exhilarating “draught” given

by the deity Soma. This hymn recognizes Soma as the exhilarator and energizer which makes one be their best. When the Moon is afflicted there is a tendency towards depression. Depression is the result of not being able to see oneself doing the great things that one may hope. The cure is Soma who enlivens the mind and vision and exhilarates the life.

Mars

अग्निर्मूर्ध्या दिवः ककुत्पतिः पृथिव्या अयम् ।

अपां रेतांसि जिन्वति ॥ १६ ॥

agnirmūrdhā divaḥ kakut patiḥ pṛthivyā ayam,
apām retānsi jinvasi.

“Agni, the head, the summit of heaven, the lord of Earth, he gladdens watery seeds.”

Rigveda: 8.44.16

The Sutra alludes to Agni being the operative force behind Mars. Agni, the all-pervading divine fire is the lord of the Earth, which itself was born out of fire. Mars is himself Kuja, “born of the Earth,” thus Agni is also the lord of Mars. Agni, through Mars, “gladdens watery seeds,” which is to enliven that which is formed in the waters, waters being consciousness. This Sutra, therefore, requests that Mars express and begin the manifestation of what is in the consciousness, but under the guidance of the spiritual force that is Agni.

Mercury

उद्बुध्यस्वाग्ने प्रति जागृहि त्वमिष्टापूर्ते सं सृजेथामयं च ।

अस्मिन्त्सधस्थे अद्युत्तरस्मिन् विश्वे देवा यजमानश्च सीदत ॥ ५४ ॥

udbudhyasvāgna prati jāgr̥hi tvamiṣṭāpūrte saṁ sṛjethāmayam ca,
asmintsadhasṭhe adhyuttarasmin viśve devā yajamānaśca sīdata.

“Wake O’Agni, be watchful towards and pour forth the stored merit, in this place and in all higher above, the deities and the worshipper be seated.”

Shukla Yajur Veda: 15.54 & 18.61

This hymn refers to Agni storing the merit of one’s worship so that upon an appropriate time he may pour it upon the needing individual. It is the worshipper in this hymn who creates the merit, which Agni then stores. The actual practices of those things which may induce greater merit are ruled by Mercury and thus this hymn benefits Mercury.

Jupiter

बृहस्पते अति यदर्यो अर्हाद्द्युमद्विभाति क्रतुमज्जनेषु ।

यदीदयच्छवस ऋतप्रजात तदस्मसु द्रविणं धेहि चित्रम् ॥ १५ ॥

br̥haspate ati yadaryo arhāddyumadvibhāti kratumajjaneṣu,
yaddīdayacchavasa ṛtaprajāta tadasmasu draviṇaṁ dhehi citram.

“Bṛhaspati, who is very favorable, on account of meriting, manifest the splendid, to the wise people, that beautiful shining, the proper, that which is beneficent, the goods that bestow excellence.”

Rigveda: 2.23.15

This hymn is to Brihaspati, Jupiter in his role as the “lord of prayer,” on account of which he is very favorable, as well as kind to hear our prayers. With this hymn one asks for that to manifest which is beneficial and fit for one’s highest needs. The Sutra has the stipulation, “on account of meriting,” for it is important for the person praying to realize that they must do what they can so that they may deserve their prayers to be answered. This Sutra also requests that which is good, beautifully shining and proper be granted to the “wise people,” for only the wise can see the answers to their prayers. The ignorant can only hope to see that which they

pray for, which is often very different from the answers that may be given.

Venus

अन्नात्परिस्तुतो रसं ब्रह्मणा व्यपिबत् क्षत्रं पयः सोमं प्रजापतिः ।

ऋतेन सत्यमिन्द्रियं विपानं शुक्रमन्धस इन्द्रस्येन्द्रियमिदं पयोऽमृतं मधु ॥ ७४ ॥

annātparisruto rasaṁ brahmaṇā vyapabit kṣtraṁ payaḥ prajāpatiḥ,
ṛtena satyamindriyaṁ vipānaṁ sukramandhasa
indrasyendriyamidaṁ payo'sṛtaṁ madhu.

"The essence from the flowing food given by Brahma, Prajapati drank, drinking up law, truth, power, the pure Soma juice, the power of Indra, milk, nectar, honey."

Shukla Yajur Veda: 19.75

This hymn alludes to Prajapati, the lord of all creatures, the progenitor of Man, drinking the Soma, the juice of power and vitality necessary for the creation of all living beings. Soma provides growth, not only physical, but of law and truth. This juice is the power of Indra and is found in such nourishing substances as milk, nectar and honey. This vital essence that provides growth and which nourishes the body, mind and soul is ruled by Venus.

Previously it has been discussed how the presiding deity of Venus is Sachi, the consort of Indra. The consort of a deity is its power and so in this hymn the naming of Indra's power is a calling to Sachi and, therefore, Venus. In this hymn Jupiter/Indra, Venus/Sachi and the Moon/Soma are all being called forth as one cannot act without the other, as has been illustrated by the interchanging exaltation places of the Moon, Venus and Jupiter. Venus, however, is the Graha primarily praised, as the essence that holds the power that nourishes and satiates is Venus.

Saturn

शं नो देवीरभिष्टय आपो भवन्तु पीतये ।

शं योरभि स्रवन्तु नः ॥ ४ ॥

śaṁ no devīrabhiṣṭaya āpo bhavantu pītaye,

śaṁ yorabhi sravantu naḥ.

“May Water produce auspicious worship for our drinking, auspiciously flowing around us.”

Rigveda: 10.9.4

This hymn requests that Water help us to worship, quench our thirst and lack and help us recognize the “flow” of spirit around us. It is Saturn who indicates lack and it is Saturn who indicates where we are in most need of learning to go with the flow and seeing spirit, thus this hymn benefits Saturn.

Rahu

कया नश्चित्र आ भुवदूती सदावृधः सखा ।

कया शचिष्ठया वृता ॥ १ ॥

kayā naścitra ā bhuvadūti sadāvṛdhaḥ sakhā,

kayā śaciṣṭhayā vṛtā.

“In what manner may the wonderful be present near us, the friend, who always prospers, what most powerful method to choose?”

Rigveda: 4.31.1

This hymn requests that one be shown the method, the path, the way, etc. towards fulfillment and prosperity, specifically the fulfillment and prosperity that comes from being close to God. For Rahu, this is exactly what is required – the appropriate method. Where Rahu is concerned we must do, there is no escaping the required task. Help can only come from realizing the method that is best to achieve the task.

Rahu is always a source of discontent; requesting the “Wonderful” to be present and near with this hymn is a sure remedy for the discontent of Rahu.

Ketu

केतुं कृण्वन्नकेतवे पेशो मर्या अपेशसे ।

समुषद्भिरजायथाः ॥ ३ ॥

**ketuṁ kṛṇvannaketave peśo maryā apeśase,
samuṣadbhirajāyathāḥ.**

“Mortals, in order to display the mystical brightly appearing shape the architect, to the shapeless, gives brightness with morning’s prosperous mist.”

Rigveda: 1.6.3

This hymn alludes to the fact that without brilliance, or light, everything is shapeless. God, referred to as the “Architect,” with the lightening of the misty morning, reveals the shape of that which was shapeless in the darkness of night. That which is revealed is the mystical and brightly appearing, the All that is the created God. Further, as mortals, we should appreciate this vision of God which we are being offered. This hymn thus points us towards the realization that all that is shaped is a manifestation of God.

Ketu has several meanings, one of which is “a form or shape,” as well as meaning “brightness,” thus this hymn is an apt one for Ketu. This hymn also has an esoteric meaning. Ketu is the brilliance of interior illumination which removes the mist of the Jiva consciousness, thus revealing the “brightly appearing shape” of Spirit.

FIRE OFFERINGS

Fire Offerings are important to Puja in that they symbolize the exchange of energy that is always required to bring about change.

Energy never dissipates, it only changes form. Here offerings are made that change form through the help of the sacred Fire.

अर्कः पलाशः खदिरस्त्वपामार्गस्तु पिप्पलः ।

उदुम्बरः शमी दुर्वा कुशाश्च समिधः क्रमात् ॥ २१ ॥

arkaḥ palāśaḥ khadirastvapāmārgastu pippalaḥ
udumbaraḥ śamī durvā kuśāśca samidhaḥ kramāt.

“Arka (Calotropis Gigantea), Palasha (Butea Frondosa), Khadira (Acacia Catechu), Apamarga (Achyranthes Aspera), Pippala (Ficus Religiosa), Udumbara (Ficus Glomerata), Shami (Mimosa Suma), Durva (Cynodon Dactylon), and Kusba (Poa Cynosuroides) are the fuels in order.”

Bṛihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Gṛaha Shanti, 21

The Fire in which the offerings are to be placed should ideally be of the woods, shrubs and grasses mentioned in the Sutra. These have many common names:

Sun

Arka – *Calotropis Gigantea*, Crown Flower, Swallow-wort, Milkweed

Moon

Palasha – *Butea Frondosa*, Flame of the Forest

Mars

Khadira - *Acacia Catechu*, Cutch, Black Catechu, Katha, Khair

Mercury

Apamarga – *Achyranthes Aspera*, Rough Chaff Tree, Prickly Chaff Flower

Jupiter

Pippala - *Ficus Religiosa*, Sacred Fig, Bo Tree, Bodhi Tree

Venus

Udumbara - *Ficus Glomerata*, Cluster Fig, Gular, Doomar

Saturn

Shami - *Mimosa Suma*, though some consider it to be the *Prosopis Spicigera*

Rahu

Durva - *Cynodon Dactylon*, Bermuda grass, Doob

Ketu

Kusha – *Poa Cynosuroides*

Procuring these materials to fuel the fire is not always a simple task; however, those trained in the proper ceremonies will have access to them. If the obtainment of the exact materials is not possible, one can always resort to a similar and related species. To find a related species, simply research the Latin name and you are sure to find something close to the native Indian species.

होतव्या मधुसर्पिभ्यां दध्ना क्षीरेण वा युताः ।

एकैकस्य त्वष्ट शतमष्टाविंशतिरेव वा ॥ २२ ॥

hotavyā madhusarpibhyāṁ dadhnā kṣīreṇa vā yutāḥ
ekaikasya tvaṣṭa śatamaṣṭāvīṁśatireva vā.

“To be offered are curd or milk mixed with honey and ghee 108 or 28 times.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Graha Shanti, 22

Curd, yogurt or milk are to be mixed with honey and ghee and offered either 108 times or 28 times, according to one's means.

Those very poor and in times of no refrigeration may have had difficulty procuring even enough milk, honey and ghee for 28 offerings. These days, procuring enough for 108 offerings is quite simple. The offerings are ladled into the fire with a long wooden spoon.

FEEDING

Feeding is important in Puja as it symbolizes one's desire to provide and to nourish the world. Whatever we may gain will also affect others, by feeding we demonstrate the desire that that which we have will benefit others as well and not just ourselves.

गुडौदनं पायसं च हविष्यं क्षीरषाष्टिकम् ।

दध्योदनं हविश्चूर्णं मांसं चित्रान्नमेव च ॥ २३ ॥

guḍaudanaṁ pāyasaṁ ca haviṣyaṁ kṣīraṣāṣṭikam,
dadhyodanaṁ haviścūrṇaṁ māṁsaṁ citrāṇnameva ca.

दद्याद् ग्रहक्रमादेवं विप्रेभ्यो भोजनं द्विज ।

शक्तितो वा यथालाभं देयं सत्कारपूर्वकम् ॥ २४ ॥

dadyād grahakramādevaṁ viprebhyo bhojanaṁ dvija,
śaktito vā yathālābhaṁ deyaṁ satkārapūrvakam.

“Natural sugar porridge, made of milk both, of ghee, rice with milk, thick and sour milk porridge, powdered grain, meat and also variegated from the Grabas in their order are given the food for the Wise, O’ Twice Born, according to one’s ability so that gain is granted through favor.”

Bṛihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Gṛaha Shanti, 23-24

The Grahas should be symbolically fed by placing the appropriate food at the feet of the image. Traditionally, the appropriate food was offered to Brahmins, as stated in the Sutra,

“given the food for the Wise.” This is no longer feasible in modern societies, so one usually has to modify their attempt to feed others. The appropriate food can be purchased and donated to charitable food-needing organization, or a financial donation can be made to some such organization.

Porridges should generally be made of unground rice, wheat or other suitable grain and water or off the grain of the Graha in question if such is practical. The porridges should have the above mentioned ingredients as well. The Sun’s porridge should have natural, unrefined sugar added to it, such as jaggery or brown sugar. The porridges for the Moon and Mars should be made with milk instead of water. Mercury’s porridge should be laced with ghee. Jupiter’s should be made of rice and milk. Venus’s should be made with yogurt or some other soured milk added to the water. The grain to make Saturn’s porridge should be ground first and then made into porridge with water. Rahu’s porridge should be made of meat. Ketu’s porridge should be made with a mix of the above ingredients.

DONATION

Donation is a very powerful method for alleviating the Grahas, every bit as effective as Japa. Donation creates the room for new and beneficial things to enter a person’s life while the good-will displayed during donating goes a long way toward alleviating ill deeds done in the past.

धेनुः शङ्खस्तथाऽनङ्गवान् हेम वासो हयः क्रमात् ।

कृष्णा गौरायसं छाग एता रव्यादिदक्षिणाः ॥ २५ ॥

dhenuh śaṅkhastathā’naṅvān hema vāso hayaḥ kramāt,
kṛṣṇā gaurāyasaṁ chāga etā ravyādidakṣiṇāḥ

“Milk-cow, conch-shell, bull, gold, clothes, horse, black cow, shining/beautiful metal and goat in that order are the Sun’s, etc. donations.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Graha Shanti, 25

To propitiate the Sun a milk cow should be given; valuable shells, mother of pearl, pearls, etc. should be donated to propitiate the Moon; a bull should be given to propitiate Mars; gold to propitiate Mercury; clothes to propitiate Jupiter; a horse to propitiate Venus; a black cow to propitiate Saturn; beautiful metal work to propitiate Rahu; and a goat to propitiate Ketu.

At first glance donating most of these things seems impractical if not impossible, however, there are a surprising amount of charitable institutions and all of these can be relatively easily donated. Simply search the World Wide Web. The more that is donated the more effective is the propitiation. The gratitude of those that receive the donation returns as blessings to the donator.

CONCLUSION

यस्य यश्च यदा दुःस्थः स तं यत्नेन पूजयेत् ।

एवां धात्रा वरो दत्तः पूजिताः पूजयिष्यथ ॥ २६ ॥

yasya yaśca yadā dūṣṭhaḥ sa taṁ yatnena pūjayet,
evāṁ dhātrā varo dattah pūjitāḥ pūjayiṣyatha.

“Whenever difficulties enjoin one should endeavor to perform Puja as Dhatra has given the boon that honored is likewise the worshipper.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Graha Shanti, 26

Dhatra, who is Brahma, the Creator, has given the boon that anyone who honors and worships is honored in return, thus Puja is a sure remedy for all ills.

There are five elements of Puja: Imagery, Japa, Fire Offerings, Feeding and Donation. Each of the five aspects of Puja relates to

one of the Five Elements. Imagery, which allows for a tangible experience of the Graha, relates to the Earth Element. Japa, which is merging into the sound and meaning of the hymn, is related to the Ether Element. Offerings are related to the Fire Element, which consumes the offerings and conveys them to the “Gods.” Feeding is related to the nourishing Water Element. Donations, which move an article from one person’s possession into another’s, are related to the Air Element. Thus if one performs all five aspects of Puja the Graha is relieved from any and all constraints.

If only one aspect of Puja can be performed, then one should perform the aspect of Puja related to the afflicting Graha’s element. Thus if Puja is being done for Venus who is giving ill effects due to being afflicted by Saturn, donations, ruled by Saturn’s Air element, should be given for Venus. The Sun, Moon, Rahu and Ketu do not rule elements. If one of these is the afflicting Graha, the normal rule of the Sun and Ketu relating to the Fire element, the Moon relating to the Water element and Rahu relating to the Air element should be followed. Additionally, Japa is always effective as all elements are ultimately brought forth from Ether. In times of difficulty, since almost any great burden is the result of Saturn and Air-governed change, donations are always effective. Japa and donations are thus the most generally effective means to pacify the Grahās.

मानवानां ग्रहाधीना उच्छ्रयाः पतनानि च ।

भावाऽभावौ च जगतां तस्मात् पूज्यतमा ग्रहाः ॥ २७ ॥

mānavānām grahādhīnā uñchrāyāḥ patanāni ca,
bhāvā'bhāvau ca jagatām tasmāt pūjyatamā grahāḥ.

“Subjected to the influence of the Grabas is the gathering of wealth and the downfall of man and the creation and destruction of the world, therefore, they are worthy of worship.”

Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra: Graha Shanti, 27

Conclusion

The Grahas give us much to think about for they are part of our every experience. Life is full and varied and thus there is much to learn about the Grahas. Never in any one book or even in a library of books could be given every indication of the Grahas. The Rishis, however, wisely gave us Sutras that would convey the ideas of the Grahas so that we can apply them to all things that we may ever venture to examine in the horoscope.

The trick to learning Astrology well is to memorize the Sutras until they are at the tip of your tongue. As you memorize the Sutras two things will happen. First, you will naturally begin to see the Grahas all around you in many, many varied ways. Second, as you read and examine horoscopes, some indication of a Graha will come to the forefront of your mind – and it will be just that indication that you need to make a brilliant prognostication or prediction. If the Sutras, however, are not memorized well, then upon examining the horoscope the mind will go blank, so spend the precious time memorizing the Sutras given by the ancient masters. Being an astrologer will then be so much easier. Once the Sutras are anchored in your memory, your intuition will be able to sort through the great variety of details that astrology provides through the examination of the horoscope.

My commentary on the Sutras is of rather little importance, it is merely an example of how the Sutras may be expanded, as is their purpose. Sutra means “thread,” a thread that is meant to be pulled upon and extended and even used to sew masterful pieces. Don’t be rigid in your interpretations of the Sutras – this handful of Sutras contain all the things in the world that the Grahas have sway over – it is for you to learn to see those things. Again, memorize the Sutras, then, as you contemplate astrology and read charts your mind will expand these Sutras as necessary and you will be able to manage any astrological challenge that comes your way.

Graha Sutras are just the beginning of astrological study. Certainly the most interesting and wide in their ramifications (which I have attempted to demonstrate through my commentary). There is much more, however, to learn before reading charts. So continue learning about Rasis, Bhavas, Nakshatras, Vargas and predictive techniques and then you will be able to use your knowledge of the Grahas to be a very effective astrologer.

Throughout this text I have hinted at ways to use these Sutras, such as determining the complexion of an individual, the sex of their children, the nature of their residential environment, etc. In order to actually predict these things the appropriate predictive techniques must be used, which are beyond the scope of this text, as all techniques require an understanding of Rasis, strengths and Dasas. Thus no examples of predicting these things have been given. The actual techniques with which to predict these as well as other things will be provided in future texts on predictive astrology. Before tackling predictive astrology, however, you will want to know your Graha Sutras as well as the remaining fundamentals.

Perhaps the most rewarding aspect in studying and contemplating the Grahas is realizing their presence all around us and in everything we do. Remember, the Grahas are a manifestation of Vishnu; therefore, those things that they manifest around us and through us are also aspects of Vishnu, so astrology reminds us of the one eternal truth. I wish you well in realizing this truth as you pursue your study of astrology.

If you have enjoyed this book I am sure you will want more and while I am always years behind what my readers want, as I can only write so many books so fast, I have many, many courses available on audio or video or even live which will get you by until the next book, which, with luck will be in 2007. These courses, along with some free classes and articles, are available through my website at www.vedic-astrology.net.

About the Author



I have always had an avid interest and wonder in astrology even at the age of twelve. At sixteen, while browsing a bookstore, I came across planetary ephemeris for calculating the position of all the planets and the astrological houses. I was quite amazed at this – that all the planets were calculated to erect a horoscope, for I had only been familiar with Sun sign astrology up to that point. Very much interested, I wanted to purchase the books, but could not afford the seventy-eighty dollars as I was a jobless youth at the time completing my high school education and spending all my free time training for bicycle racing. I did not have to wait long, however, for astrological opportunity to present itself again.

Four year later I was visiting an older friend, a wonderful chiropractor, who phoned an astrologer friend of his so that I could

have my horoscope read. The astrologer, her name was Nancy, read my horoscope for a good ninety minutes, and being an exceptional astrologer, had much more to say even after ninety minutes. However, my friend was urging me to get off the phone to avoid the high phone rates at the time and so the reading came to an end. The next day, however, I would be driving through the very city in which this astrologer lived and so she invited me to visit her. Needless to say, I was very excited the next day to hear more about my horoscope and so I woke up early and drove the 600 miles to her house way above and beyond the speed limit. (I must have had the fortune of leaving during a favorable Muhurta as I did not get a speeding ticket.) Upon arriving, the astrologer fed a proper lunch to me and then proceeded to teach me how to calculate a horoscope. I was following along, but thinking, “what about reading my horoscope some more, why are we doing this?” but said nothing and learned the calculations that the astrologer wished to teach me. After teaching me the calculations, she once again fed me, as a proper host should, packed me off to bed and woke me early in the morning to send me on my way – without one word about my horoscope. Honest to say, I was quite disappointed in not having more of my horoscope read, but satisfied myself on the trip home by perusing the lessons she had given me. (Again, I must have left during a favorable Muhurta as I was able to peruse the astrology lessons without driving off the road.)

Her teaching me how to calculate the horoscope, however, was to prove much more valuable to me than any reading could have at that time. For it was not more than a year later that I was in dire need for answers to a crumbling life. In desperation I called my mother and had her dig up and ship those astrology texts and ephemeris to me. Two weeks of hard study, including a couple of trips to the bookstore, and life was making prefect sense through the astrological looking glass and at that point I began to devote all my time to studying the powerful science of astrology.

Since then my studies have been varied. I started out studying Western astrology and in a short while felt very confident and

began reading horoscopes – until one day I was asked specific questions by a client that I could just not answer. This sent me into a new frenzy of study that only served to cause me physical nausea every time I looked at a horoscope. (This is not to be derogatory to the Western tradition of astrology which I believe has much to offer.) After three years of study with the hope of becoming an astrologer, now I could not even look at charts without becoming ill – so what to do? I could not think of anything and so I checked into an ashram with the idea of staying there for eight months. After a month of being in the Ashram, the idea of Vedic Astrology began to appeal to me, so on my birthday that March I ordered a copy of *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* and began a serious study of it. (I began at that time to write down my thoughts about the Sutras so as to keep everything organized and those writings have, over the years, evolved into this current text.)

Just weeks after getting my hands on *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*, I met a young gentleman by name of Gaetano who gifted a library of all the current Vedic Astrology books that were available in English to me. His goal was to become a renunciate and so he was giving up all his texts. He had lived India for several years and studied astrology while there. He only examined my horoscope a few times, but all the things he said came unerringly true, even things that I had thought could never happen. In any case, he was very happy to support my initial efforts in astrology, providing me with not only the books, but a software to calculate the horoscope and money for my first months rent when I left the Ashram.

I was very happy to have these books, for in my life teachers had largely come in the form of books. While others may say that they can not study because they do not have a living teacher, or use some other such excuse, I have simply studied and contemplated that which was available to me, whether that was books, people or nature. If we really want to learn, we will have devotion, and devotion turns the heart into a powerful receptor that allows us to learn or possess anything in addition to attracting that which we need in order to learn or progress towards the desired. All one

needs, therefore, to learn astrology is the desire to learn it for the sake of the beautiful science that it is.

Having a library of astrological texts, both by modern astrologers and translations of the ancient masters, I wasted no time in their study. Over the years I have peeled my library into just the few texts that are not redundant and which really have something useful to say. Of these remaining texts I believe that by far the most valuable are *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* and *Upadesa Sutras*, followed by *Kalaprakasika* and *Muhurta Chintamani* for Muhurta and compatibility work, *Jataka Tattva* and *Sarvartha Chintamani* for Yoga work, and *Yavana Jataka* and *Jataka Parijatha* for some extra tidbits not found in *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*. Each of these texts is a lifetime of a masterful astrologer's work and so each of these texts deserves a lifetime of study, though none more so than *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* and *Upadesa Sutras*.

Over the past two millennia, astrologers have largely used techniques that are not all that scientific or replicable. Sri Yuktesvar complained about this over a hundred years ago – that no text and no astrologer used truly scientific or mathematical techniques. Over the past one hundred years, however, astrology is moving more and more towards becoming a true science, with such teachers as Krishnamurthi, Iyer, Hart de Fouw and KN Rao bringing a scientific approach to astrology. Astrology, however, is greater than any one man, and so it is my great joy to be part of developing scientific astrology.

Over the last eight years my studies have revolved around the pursuit and understanding of such scientific techniques – and it has been quite a journey. More a “solving the mystery of the Sphinx” than gathering available information. In order to pursue such techniques, software that calculates the scientific aspects of astrology was necessary, for which reason I began to develop Kala Vedic Astrology Software. At this point I am very happy with my software as it calculates all the scientific techniques from *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* and so now for the first time astrologers can begin to practice one hundred percent scientific and methodical

techniques. This brings me to the point of my wife – Srishti, the programmer of Kala.

I met Srishti while in India. She was one of several programmers working on various astrological software. It was not long after meeting her that I knew that she was my wife (actually, I had predicted the day I would meet her, my wife, four months earlier, but it was not long after I met her that I knew I would be *better off* and *happier* married to her). Srishti has made many things in my astrological life possible. From programming countless theories that failed to programming a great software package to most importantly never holding me back or nagging me over my studies and pursuit of astrology. I remember a time shortly after the birth of our son. We were sorry for money, downright poor. Not making enough to make ends meet and using credit cards to buy diapers and gas. As a provider I was feeling like a failure. So I tell my wife, “I can promote my readings more and then we will have more money.” Here reply was, “You just do your *Jaimini Sutras*,” (which I was spending all my time studying, in truth, to her neglect.) Whereas any other woman I can think of would have been righteously nagging me about the diapers months ago, she had endless patience with me and believed that I was not wasting my time where I should have been earning money to take care of the family. Thanks to my students, my readers and the users of Kala software her patience with my affair with astrology is finally paying off and now I can finally buy her what she needs. In short, I don’t think I would be where I am today without her.

While most of my studies have revolved around *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* and *Upadesa Sutras*, I have also quite intensely studied relationship compatibility, Yogas, Muhurta and Gem Therapy. My Muhurta studies are available in *Classical Muhurta*, which is considered by those who have read it as the most complete and far reaching book available on the subject. I have also authored a few other texts: *Vault of the Heavens*, *Core Yogas* and *Tarot – Bringing Us Closer to the Truth*. It is however, with greatest pleasure that I present

this text, *Graha Sutras*, which I believe will be the most enjoyable study yet.

After many years of studying astrology, I have come to believe that, for those of intellectual bent, the best use of astrology is the study of astrology. Astrology is one of the Vedangas, or limbs of the Veda, whose purposes is to facilitate the understanding and use of the Vedas. Astrology's purpose is thus to assist in understanding the Veda – in understanding the inherent Truth. Amongst the limbs of the Vedas, astrology is considered as the *eyes* of the Veda, and is thus given preeminence over other sciences. The study of astrology can assist a person in learning to *see* that everything is an aspect of God, and to live a life of true happiness. So while I do allow some time for the reading of horoscopes, most of my time is spent in researching, teaching and writing. I believe that what an individual can get from having his horoscope read pales besides what an individual gains from the study of astrology, so I prefer to focus on the study and teaching of astrology. (I reckon that my first astrologer, Nancy, must have felt that same way so she just showed me how to calculate the chart instead of reading my chart.) However, I still do readings to keep me “sharp” in the practice of astrology and to serve those others who wish to benefit, if only slightly, from the grand science of astrology.

Appendix: Table – Indications of Grahas

☉	☾	♂	♀	♃	♄	♅	♄	♄
Sun	Moon	Mars	Mercury	Jupiter	Venus	Saturn	Rahu	Ketu
Surya	Chandra	Kuja	Budha	Guru	Shukra	Shani		
Rama	Krishna	Nrisimha	Buddha	Vamana	Parashurama	Kurma	Vamana	Miina
Krura	Saumya Krura	Krura	Saumya	Saumya	Saumya	Krura	Krura	Krura
Atma	Manas	Sattvam	Consciousness Spoken & Speech	Joy Giving Knowing	Virya	Sorrow		
Sovereign	Sovereign	Overseer	Young Sovereign	Counselor	Counselor	Menial	Army	Army
Red-brown	Fair	Red	Brown Grass	Fair	Brown	Dark		
Agni	Ambu	Kartikeya	Vishnu	Indra	Sachi	Brahma	Adishesha	Brahman
Male	Female	Male	Eunuch	Male	Female	Eunuch		
		Fire	Earth	Ether	Water	Air		
Kshatriya	Vaishya	Kshatriya	Vaishya	Brahmin	Brahmin	Sudra	Chandala	Different Caste
Sattva	Sattva	Tamas	Rajas	Sattva	Rajas	Tamas		
Pitta	Kapha & Vata	Pitta	Mixed	Kapha	Kapha & Vata	Vata	Vata	Vata
Ashti (Bone)	Rakta (Blood)	Majja (Nerve)	Tvag (Skin)	Vasa (Fat)	Virya (Semen)	Snayu (Sinew)		
Residence of Devas	Places of Water	Places of Fire	Places of Play & Sport	Places of Treasure	Places of Beds	Places of Rubbish	Corner of House	
						Standing on Anthills		
Forested Mountains	Lying in Water	Forested Mountains	Villages of the Wise	Villages of the Wise	Lying in Water	Forested Mountains	Forested Mountains	Forested Mountains
Ayana	Muhurta	Vara	Ritu	Masa	Paksha	Sama	8 Months	3 Months
Pungent	Salty	Bitter	Misra (Umami)	Sweet	Sour	Astringent		
Stout Plants	Milky Plants	Bitter Plants	Plants w/o Fruit	Fruit Bearing	Blossom Bearing	Withered & Bad Portioned		
Red Linen	White Linen	Red Garments	Dark Linen	Yellow Garments	Linen (Natural)	Conspicuous Garments	Conspicuously Patched Garments	Torn and Joined
Grishma	Varsha	Grishma	Sharad	Hemanta	Vasanta	Shishira		
Mula	Dhatu	Dhatu	Jiva	Jiva	Mula	Dhatu	Dhatu	Jiva

☉	☾	♂	♀	♃	♀	♄	♅	♆
Sun Surya	Moon Chandra	Mars Kuja	Mercury Budha	Jupiter Guru	Venus Shukra	Saturn Shani	Rahu	Ketu
Father	Mother	Mother, Sisters, Brother-in-Law, Youngers,	Relatives, Maternal Uncles, Like the Mother	Guru, Paternal Grandparents, Husband, Children	Father, Student, Wife, Maternal Grandparents, Mother and Father-in-Law	Elders		
Luminous	Luminous	Starry	Starry	Starry	Starry	Starry	Dark	Dark
Bird Form	Creeping Form	Four-Footed	Bird Form	Two Footed	Two-Footed	Four-Footed		
		Sama Veda	Artharva Veda	Rig Veda	Yajur Veda			
East	Northwest	South	North	Northeast	Southeast	West	Southwest	
Upward Looking	Looking Everywhere Equally	Upward Looking	Side Looking	Looking Everywhere Equally	Side Looking	Downward Looking	Downward Looking	
Dry	With Water	Dry	Barely Going in Water	Barely Going in Water	With Water	Dry		
Firm	Changes	Fierce	Mixed	Delicate	Light/Quick /Easy	Harsh		
Wheat	Rice	Red Dhal	Mung Bean	Chick-pea	Hyacinth	Sesame	Urd	Horse Gram
							Grey Gem	Black Gem
From the Half	Milk Consuming Age	Teething Age	Time of Learning Lessons	Middle Age	Sexually Agitated Youth	Old Age		
Vowels	Semi-Vowels Sibilants Aspirants	Velars	Retroflexes	Dentals	Palatals	Labials		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Rules 1	Rules 2	Rules 9	Rules 5	Rules 3	Rules 6	Rules 8	Rules 4	Rules 7
Exalted in Aries	Exalted in Taurus	Exalted in Capricorn	Exalted in Virgo	Exalted in Cancer	Exalted in Pisces	Exalted in Libra		
Leo Mulatrikona	Taurus Mulatrikona	Aries Mulatrikona	Virgo Mulatrikona	Sagittarius Mulatrikona	Libra Mulatrikona	Aquarius Mulatrikona		
Owens Leo	Owens Cancer	Owens Aries & Scorpio	Owens Gemini & Virgo	Owens Sagittarius & Pisces	Owens Taurus & Libra	Owens Capricorn & Aquarius		

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