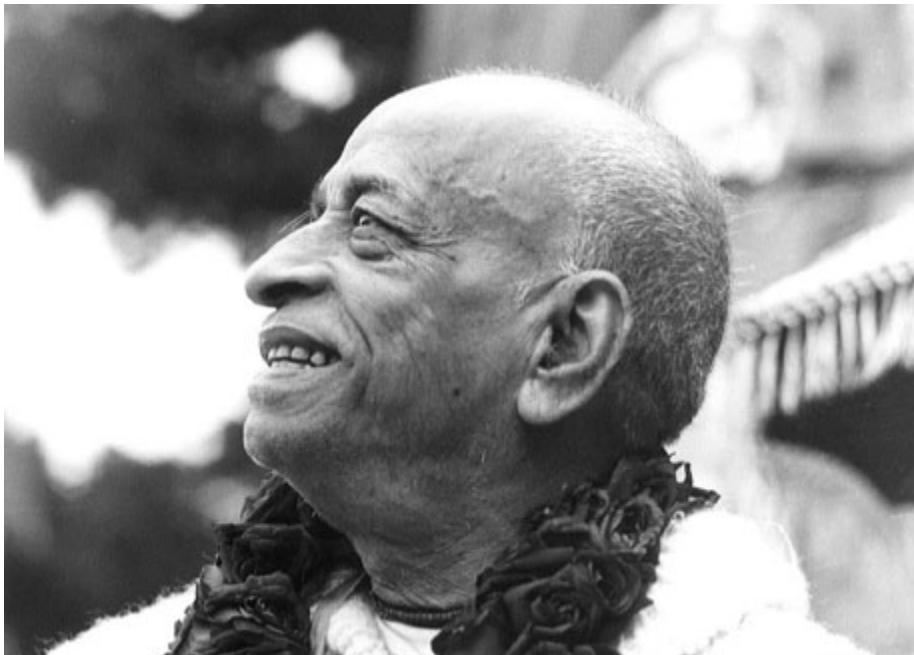


ALL GLORY TO SRI GURU AND SRI GAURANGA



World Prophet of the Golden Age -- SF Rathayatra, 1974

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada
Founder Acharya: International Society for Krishna Consciousness

Mithuna Twinns Astrological Services
“Home of the Bhrigu Project”

THE ASTROLOGICAL NEWSLETTER

**In this issue: “Eclipses and the
Fall of Governments”**

Chant this mantra:

**Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare**

...and your life will be sublime

28 Feb. 2011 (#19) Phalguni (Govinda) Krishna Vijai Ekadashi, 524 Gaurabda Era.

The Astrological Newsletter (Please e-share it with your friends).

Patita Pavana das Adhikary, Ed.

Abhaya Mudra Dasi

Jyotish Shastris, etc.

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issues: <http://ebooks.iskcondesiretree.info/index.php?q=f&f=%2Fpdf%2FAstrological%20Newsletter>

Dear Prabhus: Welcome to the issue, one that features articles on the result of recent eclipses as well as gem therapy.

We are also pleased to announce the 2nd edition of your Editor's book *Motorcycle Yoga*. We have included an excerpt from the book about one encounter with a deadly tantric yogi. On this same subject of pseudo-yogis, the edition also carries an account written by Srila Suhotra Maharaja about a Indian devotee who, by the Lord's grace, was saved from becoming the human sacrifice for a murderous Kali worshipper.

This month Smt. Abhaya Mudra Dasi offers her practical insight into the remedial measures of astrological gemstones. We welcome your inquiries. And, thanks for reading **The Astrological Newsletter**. We hope you will share it with your friends.

Always wishing you the very best,

Patita Pavana das Adhikary, Ed.

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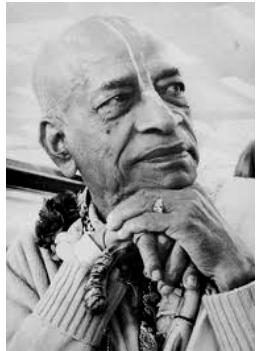
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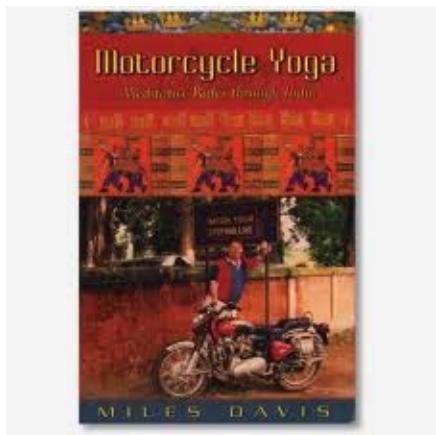
From the Srimad Bhagavatam:

Srila Prabhupada on Astrology



“**Although this body is temporary**, as long as we have to live in this body we must suffer. Whether one has a short life or a long life, one must suffer the threefold miseries of material life. **Therefore any gentleman, dhira, must be interested in jyotish, astrology.** Nanda Maharaja was trying to take advantage of the opportunity afforded by Gargamuni’s presence, for Gargamuni was a great authority in this knowledge of astrology, by which one can see the unseen events of past, present and future. **It is the duty of a father to understand the astrological position of his children and do what is needed for their happiness.** Now, taking advantage of the opportunity afforded by the presence of Gargamuni, Nanda Maharaja suggested that Gargamuni prepare a horoscope for Nanda’s two sons, Krishna and Balarama.” **SB 10.8.5 □**

Motorcycle Yoga: Now in Second Edition



*We are pleased to announce that *Motorcycle Yoga* by Miles Davis (Patita Pavana das Adhikary), our Krishna conscious tour guide through Central India on two wheels, is once again in print.*

From the Ed: For number of years, your Editor worked as a motorcycle journalist in America, cruising San Francisco on a Triumph Speed Triple Streetfighter. Time

off in India was often spent in the saddle of a more docile Royal Enfield Bullet exploring Madhya Pradesh’s remote central areas, and searching for ancient holy spots. These adventures have been captured in my book, *Motorcycle Yoga*, which I am eager to share with you. Despite the public’s image of motorcycles, the fact is that there are some riders who are among the most intelligent and articulate persons you will ever meet. They are

stauch self-reliant individualists searching for the truth that is just around the corner.

As we know, those truths they seek are found in the teachings of Srila Prabhupada, laid down in *Bhagavad Gita As It Is*. And that is why I wrote this book. *Motorcycle Yoga* proved for me a means of introducing those truths to moto-historians, Hell's Angels, bike designers, and week-end warriors. The book received high marks from the biker press. Hundreds of devotees have also appreciated its friendly, yet uncompromising, approach to preaching Krishna consciousness, and we hope that you will, too. **For your copy, please send \$20 USD (covers air fare to Europe, the Americas and Asia) to yaminidasi@yahoo.com.** □

* * *

We present an excerpt from Motorcycle Yoga, from the chapter entitled “The Devi Road: The Eightfold Path on Highway Seven”

Grave Danger of Tantrics

“I muse to myself that I have never met such a crooning buffoon and wonder if he is just some harmless fraud. But he is a clown with a very dark sense of humor...”

As I approach the outskirts of Maihar, I slow the Enfield down to the effortless crawl of a country bicycle to absorb the sudden shift in scenery. This is the sometimes-tedious gait at which this giant country moves, and a wanderer, unlike a tourist, must move with the pace. I am in no hurry. Tonight I shall attend the evening *aratik*.

From the roadside I am accosted by a *yogi* whose body appears as coarse and black as a water buffalo's. With my weakness for visiting holy places and temples, I am seized by curiosity whenever I meet sages of any and all schools. Though I take an instant dislike to this overbearing *yogi*, I keep my feelings hidden, and remain outwardly respectful. India's vast majority of *yogis* are genuine, while around 20% may be classed as posers



to varying degrees. Yet here as elsewhere it is always the antics of the few buffoons that sully the good name of sincere ascetics.

There is a genuine flaw in us mortals who are wont to reason: "I have survived thus far, therefore I shall survive in the future." We ignore the fact that mishap and disaster happen all about us, and continue believing that we shall live forever in the fool's paradise under which we have cloaked ourselves. We stand smug and proud behind our phalanx of fallible soldiers. It is with this fatal fascination veiled by the self-assurance of a fool that I park the bike. Strutting over to meet the black *yogi*, I greet him with folded hands. He grins back, probably a bit too much, and invites

me into his straw hut. I notice that I am being escorted a bit aggressively. Once inside, I am horrified: all around the walls hang grinning human skulls. My Lord! I have entered the secret, sinful world of a tantric. It is not merely a cliché that curiosity killed the cat. Feigning invulnerability like one who believes his time on earth has not yet been spent, I foolishly accept the invitation to sit before him. At least I



can choose one of two reasons for not bolting, either fear or stupidity. He motions to a burlap bag before him, and I sit down upon it cross-legged. To allay any misgivings, the black *yogi* begins with a little casual conversation in English, which few genuine *yogis* know or care to speak. He says that he is a Tamil from Malaysia, boasting that he is a close relative of Shivananda of Rishikesh. Nothing he says has the ring of truth.

Deftly and on cue, the black *yogi* whips out a filthy pipe--a *chillam*-- and indicates that I too should smoke *ganja*, Indian marijuana, with him. He is surprised when I politely refuse. Perhaps any white men who strayed into his clutches were hippies. Undaunted, he puffs away lustily. Soon the tiny hut is filled with a dark cloud of thick smoke. He has forced me to unwittingly breathe intoxicating fumes. Escaping the doping effect becomes impossible. Observing that I am gradually being overcome, the black *yogi* puts the pipe aside and begins to sing like a smitten opera tenor. He chants, casually at first, then rapidly; "I love you, I love you, I l-o-o-o-o-ve you." Now disarmed, I muse to myself that I have never met such a crooning buffoon and wonder if he is just some harmless fraud. But he is a clown with a very dark sense of humor. Still, I have not yet realized the danger in which I have I placed myself.

Suddenly, the black *yogi* changes his mood and starts chanting one of the Sanskrit *bija* or "seed" *mantras* intensely. No longer singing in the clouds, and with the intensity of a laser beam, he has knitted his brows and is focusing his black, angry and evil eyes right at me. "*Ang, ang, ang, a-n-n-n-g*" he vibrates hypnotically as I suddenly drop into a deep and induced sleep, eyes rolling and chin resting upon my chest. I am now overpowered by the force of the black mystic's sound vibration and am helplessly afloat like one drugged. Suddenly a tiny voice arises from somewhere inside me, screaming with my last bit of consciousness, "Get up now, you fool! Can't you see that this evil *yogi* would like to hang the skull of a white man as a perverse trophy upon his wall?"

Somehow I manage to abruptly jump to my feet and struggle to find the words thanking him for his "hospitality." In India genteel manners are all important, whether someone is in the process of ripping you off or even trying to kill you. Obviously crestfallen and disappointed at the failure of his hypnotic power, the wretched tantric adopts a suave, devil-may-care attitude and insists that I return again after my *darshan* of the Mother Goddess.

Such evil *yogis*, though a tiny minority among India's many spiritual stalwarts, are not unlike the *thuggees*. Predatorial *tantrics* lure unsuspecting and innocent victims, often young girls or children, to solitary places. There the intended sacrificial victim is offered "sacred food of the goddess" or *prasad*, which usually turns out to be *dhatura* poison, as lethal as arsenic. Or the victim is tied up and ritualistically beheaded. Such events are regularly reported in the Indians press.

Unfortunately, some of these *yogis* actually seem to have developed minor mystic or hypnotic powers, and as a result enjoy a free reign over villagers who fear them. The *Bhagavat Purana* narrates the story of the great devotee Jad Bharat of Kalinjar who was kidnapped by *tantrics*. When the *tantrics* tried to sacrifice Jad Bharat before the deity of Kali, *Srimad Bhagavatam* says in 5.9.17, "She could immediately understand that these sinful dacoits were about to kill a great devotee of the Lord. Suddenly the



deity's body burst asunder, and the goddess Kali personally emerged from it in a body burning with intense and intolerable effulgence." With her four arms she seized the knives that they were about to use in their human sacrifice, and slew the thugs with their own weapons.

True *yogis* can be recognized through their simple and clean appearance, cultivated through temperance, sense control and austerity. They do not take intoxicants or eat meat, nor do they associate freely with loose women. Elevated *sadhus* who follow the rules of *sadhana* or *yoga*, are known for their humility. They live by the old adage "the tree loaded with ripe fruit and the cloud heavy with rain both hang low." They are always respectful to women and girls, bowing before them calling them "Mother." They are very careful to follow each of the injunctions of the religious *shastras*, like daily prayerful recitations of the holy names of God. Therefore at religious gatherings or *melas* the imitators are easily spotted like crows among swans. The poser *yogis* do not observe any of the prescribed restrictions, nor do they practice the gentle tolerance of the followers of *ashtanga yoga*, the eight-fold path.

Defeated, the black *yogi* accompanies me outside. I now find him truly despicable, the opposite of everything that has ever attracted me to India. Yet I hide my disgust and still remain polite. Somehow I have barely outsmarted him yet survived. With a vile snort that nurses his anger, he withdraws like the setting Sun covered by storm clouds. Firing the bike to freedom I reflect that without the salvation of my Enfield I could have fallen into the clutches of the black *yogi*. It could have been my grinning skull hanging in his evil den to greet the next unwary visitor.



In this strange and wonderful land I have stayed with *yogis* in Himalayan caves, in desert huts, and in forest shrines. They have cared for me and nourished me and by so doing they have each respected my *guru maharaj*. I have been fed by their hands, instructed by them and have the deepest regard for the genuine ones. The

black *yogi* of Maihar is an aberration upon the spiritual path. Rascals like him are an affront to all that is decent in India and the world. True *yogis* must not be judged by the misdeeds of the predators. This plea is perhaps echoed by all religious teachers.

India is a land of extremes in every way, and the heart of India can be attained only after great endeavor. When I first came here, I thought of India as a poor country. Today I consider India to be a very rich country that carries a huge burdened of poverty. Accustomed to a television-dominated society in which virtually everyone, including the pampered household pet, belongs to varying degrees of the middle classes, the first-time Western visitor becomes astounded by the extremes he witnesses. Everything is out in the open in India.

We gape with pity mixed with a sense of superiority at India's poor, yet cannot fathom the vast wealth and authority owned by others at the opposite end of the spectrum. We throw a rupee or two at the diseased beggar, yet miss the opportunity to sit before the 100-year old *yogi* whose spiritual qualities are fully awakened and whose mind is as clear as a bell. We hear of sins that are performed in the name of worship, yet refuse to acknowledge the piety and sacrifice of India's devoted masses. We have suffered the legendary rudeness of India's government officials or dishonesty of a Delhi travel agent, yet may never cross through the doorway of an Indian family to sample their hospitality. India is a land of extremes unlike any other place on Earth. More often than not it will be the extremes in disease, poverty, filth and moral degradation that we notice, giving scant credit for whatever goodness and devotion abounds. Indeed India's virtues often remain hidden, like the charity of an anonymous donor. This may not be the first time visitor's fault, for this land is a difficult and daunting experience. There is too much here to take in all at once. Although India can only be approached with an open mind,

still one's guard must not be let down. He who masters this simple two-pronged technique alone can succeed. However, it may take many years.

Just as India throws up a wall through which only determined souls may peer, so are the ways of the Mother Goddess are formidable. Sri Ranamukhadevaji, who used to teach me Vedic astrology, once mentioned that according to my horoscope I would always be very devoted to the Devi. This has turned out to be true. The goddess, or female energy personified, who predominates this material world has many



beautiful forms. In her eight-armed form she is called Durga, which means "citadel", because her material energies delude the mind and are as insurmountable as an impregnable fort. She is called Maya, the predominating goddess of illusion. He who has not been bewildered by Maya's external energies and the false promise of fleeting pleasures is the rarest of souls. Her materialistic worshippers make plans to stay here in this world searching for the reflection of unrealized enjoyment forever. She is also Shakti, the "power, prowess and energy" behind all that happens in this material world. In this world, this *devi-dham* or "abode of the goddess", she is supreme. Like moths to flame all men are drawn to her magnetism, which manifests in the fleeting, sidelong glances of beautiful ladies. The lithe and youthful body we so adore is little more than a hazardous chemical dump stretched over with skin. Yet due to the goddess' power of Maya, or material attraction, we deluded souls try to unlimitedly enjoy our five senses--sight, touch, smell, taste and hearing.

According to the Vedic *shastras*, when Lord Vishnu expands Himself into Lord Shiva, His spouse Goddess Lakshmi expands into Parvati. Parvati's husband, Lord Shiva, is an ascetic, busy with his meditation. Just as a householder is content to let his wife run his daily affairs, so Shiva lets his wife--or rather her expansion Durga--control this Universe. Durga or Sharada, the Mother of the Universe, is active in all aspects of life on this material plane. Even atheists and great thinkers are unwittingly tied by Durga's intertwining bonds. Narrow minded empiricists contradict the *bhakta*'s view of a personal Godhead Who supervises demigods through their assumption that creation happened of its own accord. The best science can come up with to counter the theist's understanding in intelligent design is the incredible claim that planets and life forms crawled from a "primordial soup" after some cosmic "big bang."

Equally deluded by Maya are the dogmatic religionists who, though they recognize the supremacy of a single supreme controller, argue that He cannot have a chain of command under Him. Like these religionists, the way of the true *yogi* is monotheistic. Yet he knows that even in oneness there is differentiation, and this is the point of diversion. The philosophy of *yoga* argues that if even factory owners have managers and supervisors beneath them, then why can't God have deputized demi-gods? The Supreme Lord is the Supreme Enjoyer. But until the disciple is ready to give up his own spirit of enjoyment, he will not be able to understand this principle of supreme enjoyment that is found exclusively in Krishna.

Lord Krishna expands into the all-pervasive Vishnu in order to predominate creation of this material world. In this world Lord Shiva is

the agent of Lord Vishnu, whose all-encompassing energy pervades each atom. It is Lord Shiva's union with Parvati, the predominating deity of the female principle that injects each of thousands of billions of souls into the beginning of their life cycles over and over again. The repeated placing of each soul life after life into appropriate bodies and circumstances is the work of other demi-gods. These demi-gods oversee the affairs of the world, and worship Shiva and Parvati as the greatest amongst them. Lord Indra controls the weather, Lord Vayu causes the wind to blow, Varuna is the demi-god of waters, Saraswati is the goddess of learning, Agni rules fire and Yama is the controller of death.

It is the thankless task of the goddess called Durga or Sharada to test each soul by controlling the deluding material energy birth after birth. He who awakens the dawning of *yoga* alone achieves the transcendence that lifts the *jiva* soul back into his original position in spirit. When transcendental realization culminates in selfless devotion to Vishnu or Yogeshwar, the Lord of all *yogis*, then the level of *bhakti-yoga* has been realized. The ascent to the exalted platform of love of Krishna, or devotional service, is the final key to liberation from matter. He alone whose love for God is unalloyed gains freedom from the prison of Maya. This is the final lesson of *yoga*.

Eventually this Universe of Maya must face destruction, too, for as it has been rightly sung, "all things must pass." Then, when the rays of the Sun god increase twelve-fold, Lord Shiva arises from his meditation and dances the *tandava-nritya*, "the dance of destruction." When the fate of the world is sealed, universal destruction, or *pralaya*, strikes. Creation and dissolution all take place in one breath of Vishnu. That which has been born has an inevitable date with destruction at last, and even this great Universe which maintains us, has a predestined meeting with fate. At this time all the temporary demigods, like outgoing political officials, find that their terms of office have come to a close.

Ultimately, cosmic devastation yields to creation once again as Lord Vishnu exhales. In other words, the life of this Universe equals one breath of Lord Vishnu, the blissful Chief of the gods. With Vishnu's outgoing breath, *jiva* souls that have yet to be liberated are injected through the energies of Parvati and Shiva into the newly formed Universe, as once again the cosmic wheel circles round again. As souls continue to struggle with the modes of Nature for millions lifetimes and Universal cycles on their way to liberation, Lord Vishnu appoints demi-gods anew. Again, these *devatas* control the affairs in each one of the upcoming countless created Universes. As a clue to how even today we are influenced by

ancient wisdom, consider that words like ignition or ignite come from the lord of fire Agni.

Within this material world Shiva, who is Vishnu in contact with material Nature, is the supreme male; and Goddess Parvati, the expansion of Sri Vishnu's spouse Lakshmi, is the supreme female. The balanced interaction of the energies of Shiva and Shakti, the push and pull, the embrace of the ebb and flow, insures that this Universe will continue until its time of destiny draws nigh. The elements of this Universe--earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence and false ego--merge back with the body of Lord Vishnu with each inhalation. When He exhales, these elements are used once again in the construction cycle as the uncountable bubble-like Universes emanate from His body and float upon the Garbhodaka Ocean. The billions of years that each of these floating Universes last, a period of time that we of earthly vision miscalculate as infinity, is but a single divine breath of Vishnu. When Vishnu inhales, the cycle of destruction is inaugurated once again. Indeed, the microcosm with its interaction of male and female energies reflects the macrocosm, or else from where has it originated?

Lord Vishnu in all His majesty is an expansion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Sri Krishna, who lives eternally in the anti-material abode called Goloka Vrindavana. Wherever and whenever the Supreme Lord Krishna appears in His many inconceivable forms, His beloved consort Sri Radha follows Him. She becomes Vishnu's wife Lakshmi; indeed Radharani Herself is the ultimate origin of each of the worshipful forms of Devi. Just as this temporary world is a reflection of the eternal spiritual domain, so the Devi, who rules this world, is the Chhaya or shadow of Radha, the original Goddess.

Sometimes, Radha and Krishna visit this world in Their original forms. When the Divine Couple comes into view for our benefit, They share Their eternal pastimes here on Earth to the delight of Their devotees

who only wish to serve Them eternally. Radha sports in the fields of Vraja as a young *gopi* cowherd girl. Consequently, it becomes very difficult to understand that She alone is the source of all *shaktis*. Bewildered materialists who worship the many forms of Devi for sense gratification and riches generally have no clue as to her spiritual origin. In the eternal



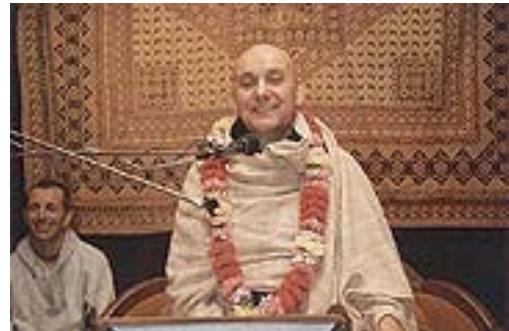
abode of Vrindavana, the Vrajavasis understand the secrets of Radha. Convinced that none can approach Krishna without Her mercy, they take shelter of Her Name. She is called Haraa, the Hare of Hare Krishna, and She is the sustenance of this motorcycle yogi.

It is with this multi-tiered frame of mind that I am on this rolling pilgrimage, riding upon the rocky road to Devi. I shall not approach the goddess to ask for wealth, fame or enjoyment. These are but entanglements that bring only the promise of future delusion in this *mrityu-loka*, the world of birth and death. I see the Mother of this Universe as the very shadow of She who rules the Spiritual Sky. My prayer will be that I am joined to Her lotus feet--and ultimately to Krishna--through loving devotional service to the Divine Pair life after life, in this world or the next. □

From the In2Me-C Diaries of Suhotra Swami:

The ISKCON Devotee Who Was Saved ...from Becoming a Human Sacrifice

A sketch of a Devotee's Pre-Krishna Conscious Life in India: *In the late 1980's, Srila Suhotra Maharaja tape-recorded a series of interesting stories told to him by an Indian devotee, whom the Maharaja did not name to protect his privacy. Suhotra Maharaja writes, "These stories relate to his life as a young man from a South Indian smarta brahmana family, and trace how he gradually turned away from material life to Krishna consciousness." What you will read below begins at a Durga temple in the city of Kalka." Kalka is a foothill town in Himachal Pradesh, in an area that is adored by evil tantric pseudo-yogis who worship ghastly forms of Durga. Visit Suhotra Maharaja Archives at <http://www.suhotraswami.net/>*



While at the temple I asked the *pujari* if I could do *prashna*, a way of putting questions to the *murti*. He handed me a red and yellow flower. I touched them, and gave them back. He put them on the deity and told me to stand before the altar and think of my question. If the red flower fell,

the answer was no. I gazed at Durga's form with my palms pressed together, fingertips touching my chin. 'Should I stay with the *shakta baba*?' After two or three minutes, the red flower dropped.

I was disappointed. But as I left the temple, I cheered myself up. 'I can check the worth of the *prashna* by staying with the *baba*, I thought. "Let's see if there's any truth in it. Besides, I don't have a reason to go anywhere else. It's not that the *prashna* gave me an alternative course of action." I returned to the *ashram* and told Babaji I would remain with him.

The first three days of my stay were uneventful. In the morning I chanted *Vishnu-sahashra-nama* and did my *trotak* meditation and *pranayama*. I sang prayers when he did his *homas* to Kali, and also did simple chores like fetching firewood. Although Babaji gave me no particular instructions as I expected a *guru* should, I could see that he had a clear plan in mind for me. I waited to see what would unfold.

Thrice daily he left the *ashram* with a plate of *puja* articles-- incense, flowers and a bowl of *sindhur*--and returned after about half an hour. On the morning of the second day he took me with him. We walked along the railway tracks in the direction of Kalka, crossed the Simla road and continued for a few minutes until we came to a sand and rock hill a short hike from the rail bed. Babaji led me up a trail to the top. There he showed me a *sindhur*-covered rock which he said was a drop of Devi's blood. In the *Puranas* it is said that the goddess, in her incarnation as Sati, gave up her life when her father Daksha insulted her husband Shiva. Maddened with grief, Shiva danced across the sky with her dead body which disintegrated and fell in pieces upon the earth. There are one hundred and eight important Devi temples (*devi-pitham*) in India that are said to be built on sites where a part of Sati's body landed. "Most people do not know that this site is also a *pitha*," Babaji confided to me. "The goddess has revealed this place to me alone. It is full of power." He said this with such conviction that I believed him at once and offered my respects to the blood-red stone. He did a short *puja* to it and we returned.

The fourth day was *amavasya* (the dark moon day). That morning, as he left to worship at the *pitha*, Babaji told me he would go into town from the hill to get ingredients for a special festival we were to observe this evening. He also said I should not eat anything today. While he was gone,

I cleaned the *ashram*. He returned after several hours, his cloth shoulder bag full.

After bathing, Babaji did a *homa*, this one a little different from the others I'd seen him do. From a metal trunk he took a *khadga* (a large knife, a type of weapon held by Kali) and placed it in the *kunda* before lighting the fire. At the completion of the fire sacrifice, he prepared eighteen kinds of offerings from various mixtures of the raw ingredients he'd brought--puffed rice, fruit, sugar candy, flat rice, and so on.



He told me we'd be doing an all-night ceremony at the *pitha* at which I would have to chant from dusk to dawn. I was excited. Sure that he would judge my worth as a disciple by what he saw tonight, I resolved to play my role in the ceremony with unflagging enthusiasm. A hour before sunset he set out a plate with eighteen bowls, filling each with a preparation. He gave me the plate and told me to bring it up to the *pitha*. "I'll come shortly," he said. "I must prepare the *khadga* (knife). We'll be doing a special worship to this at the *pitha* also."

Carrying the plate in my hands, I walked down the tracks and up the hill. There was a light drizzle in the air. I hoped it would not get worse and spoil Babaji's ceremony. After setting the plate down near the sacred stone, I felt the need to urinate. Considering the hill a sanctified spot, I reversed my steps and descended to the rail bed to relieve myself there. A freight train had stopped on the tracks next to the hill. I had just finished when a man with a lantern came walking alongside the train. It was a signalman.



"*Khon hai tum?*" (Who are you?) he asked in Hindi.

"I am with that trackside *babaji*," I answered smilingly. "Tonight is *amavasya*, so we're having a special *puja* up on the hill. I need to wash my hands--do you have water?"

Astonished, he stared hard at me.

All at once he barked, "Escape-- right now! Quickly--go!"

Not understanding what he meant, I repeated my question about water. “Never mind water,” he yelled, seizing me by the shoulder. “That man is going to kill you tonight if you don’t leave here. Go down the track to the Kalka station. You’ll find water there. Report to the stationmaster.” He gave me a push.

Propelled by the urgency of his voice, I trotted the whole way to the station. Who was the killer the signalman warned me about? I wondered if a madman was on the loose. At last, panting and weary, I clambered from the rail bed to the station platform. I saw a spigot and washed my hands and face. After a long refreshing drink, I looked for the stationmaster.

In an office I found a man in a blue uniform. “Excuse me,” I said to him, “but I’ve come here sent by the signalman down the track who said someone wants to kill me.”

“What are you talking about?” he asked, perplexed.

“You see, I’m staying with the *babaji* down the track. . .”



No sooner than these words had escaped my lips, the man ran out and shouted for a khaki-uniformed guard with an Enfield rifle on his shoulder. “Stay here with him,” he ordered the guard. “I’ll get the police. Don’t let him go anywhere, and don’t let anyone enter this room. “Oh no,” I thought to myself as the stationmaster rushed out. “What have I got myself into?”

After fifteen minutes the stationmaster returned with a police inspector and his uniformed driver. The inspector ordered me to identify myself and explain my connection to the *baba*. I did, but I insisted he tell me what was happening.

“Yes, I’m coming to that. We have reason to believe that man was going to kill you tonight. If you make a complaint against him, we’ll take action.”

“You see,” the stationmaster added, “for a long time our rail workers have noticed very peculiar things about that *baba*. He’s had assistants like you before, all strangers to these parts, and they just seem to disappear one after the other.”

The police inspector continued, "We've questioned him several times, and he always says his men just suddenly leave to go elsewhere. But bloodstained clothes have been found on the tracks near that hill. He of course denies knowing anything, and we would need more evidence to take further steps against him. But we suspect he's made human sacrifices on that hilltop. There's a rumor going around that he's killed twelve or thirteen people in this way, and that he wants to perform one thousand such sacrifices to gain total control over the elements of nature."

As I remembered the *khadga* knife, an eerie feeling crept over me. But I didn't want to get involved in the entanglement of a police investigation. Clearly it was time I moved on. "I should have done what the *prashna* said," I moaned inwardly.

"Look," I told the inspector. "I stayed with him for four days, and I have no reason to suspect he meant me any harm. But I can see that your concern must be well-taken. I'll not return to that *baba*. Tomorrow I'm leaving for Simla. "

The stationmaster said earnestly, "People are gossiping about that man. They criticize us--the rail service and the police--for not doing anything about him. If you would testify, we could be rid of this scandal."



I refused. It was likely that the suspicions against the *baba* were the result of nothing more than vicious rumors. In any case, he'd done nothing to me. But I wondered what would have happened had I not met the signalman. The stationmaster, genuinely worried for my safety, gave me a room at his house that night.

The next day he put me on a bus to Simla, gratis. □

rakhe krishna mare ke mare krishna rakhe ke

"He whom Krishna protects, no one can kill. But if Krishna wants to kill someone, no one can give him protection." -Srila Prabhupada

The Power of Gems in Vedic Astrology

Abhaya Mudra Dasi

“Gems are only transmitters and not transformational tools. They reflect the power of the planet to which they are assigned. Gems are not intelligent entities that know what to do if something is wrong in a horoscope.”



Gems are known to possess tremendous remedial powers in Vedic astrology. Owning gemstones has been very popular through the ages. The wealthier one is the more gems he adorns himself with and keeps in his treasury. But only a king could dare to wear the regal *navratna* formation of all nine gems assigned in Vedic astrology because the horoscope of the ruler is supposed to be flawless. For someone to have achieved the position of a king he should have donated crores of flawless rubies to the Deity of Sri Krishna in his previous embodiment. In other words, a righteous king is a person who has accumulated a large amount of positive *karma* while worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead in some of His forms. We know that today the rules have changed and no longer do the royal families adore themselves with precious gems as in times past. Royals wear precious gems mostly on special occasions and with great reserve. The almost forgotten use of precious gems in the courts of kings reveals the diminished power of royalty in the world.

Gems have the special power to transmit frequencies and may be compared to a radio interpreting signals. When a person is exposed to radio waves for a prolonged period, his mood will be affected according to the quality of the frequency. An *alpha* frequency causes the person to feel relaxed; *delta* signals induce sleep; while the high intensity *beta* wave may even cause madness. Gems offer a similar effect. Gems used in Vedic astrology should be of topmost quality, of excellent color and transparency. They must have excellent luster and be without flaws like scratches or black spots.

Has Kali Yuga diminished the quality of gems? Frequently we hear that nowadays gems do not have the potency in they carried in previous *yugas*. This is not surprising because nothing really works in Kali Yuga except the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra*. Today it is the greed within the jewelry market that makes the rules: and this greed is all-pervasive whether in mining, polishing, distributing or retailing the gems. Artificial processes like heating and treating with oil makes it almost impossible to buy a jewel of suitable quality. And even if a high quality gem is found in nature, it is usually not handled properly. In seeking to maximize their profits, the owners of the mines may cut dozens of pieces from the same gem.

In the past if a proper gem was found it might even be worshiped as seen in the episode regarding the Shyamantaka jewel described in the 10th canto of *Srimad Bhagavatam*. Such gems were even able to produce profuse amounts of gold. Even today, if a person acquires the right gem as recommended by a skilled astrologer, he can make a good turn in his life.

In the realm of astral gem therapy, there are two main schools for prescribing planetary jewels. One prescribes the gems of the weak and afflicted planets in hopes of strengthening their influence. The other group recommends the gems that strengthen the good planets in the horoscope. The latter is most logical as confirmed by practice because gems are only transmitters and not transformational tools. A *jyotish* quality gemstone only reflects the power of the planet to which it is assigned. Gems are not intelligent entities that know how to fix a horoscope. Rather they simply enhance the power of what is already there. Thus a weak or debilitated Saturn cannot arbitrarily be made to give positive influence simply by wearing the jewel of Shanideva.

When we are confronted with a weak planet in our *janma chakra*, instead of wearing the *ratna* for that *graha*, we should donate the same to someone who has a good resonance with the gem, or--even better--offer it to a *pujari* of Sri Krishna's Deity form. In this way even our bad *karma* is dissolved while nourishing devotional advancement. Moreover, decorating the deity of the Supreme Lord with precious gems brings great jubilation to the heart of a sincere devotee.

There are nine precious gems assigned to the nine *grahas*. The ruby (*manikya*) is for the Sun; pearl (*moti*) is for the Moon; coral (*moonga*) is

for Mars; emerald (*panna*) is for Mercury; yellow sapphire (*pushkaraja*) is for Jupiter; diamond (*hira*) is for Venus; blue sapphire (*neelam*) is for Saturn, hessonite garnet (*gomed*) is for Rahu and chrysoberyl cat's eye (*lasuniya*) is for Ketu. These nine gems cover all colors in the spectrum including the rays they emit. They are also classified as hot and cold in constitution. For example, the pearl is cold and the coral is a hot gem. The seven gems (excluding the ones pertaining to Rahu and Ketu) also correspond to the seven *chakras*: the first *chakra* is ruled by blue sapphire, the second by the coral, the third by yellow sapphire, the fourth (heart *chakra*) is ruled by the ruby, the fifth *chakra* is controlled by the diamond, the sixth *chakra* is assigned to the emerald and the 7th *chakra* is controlled by the pearl.

Apart from the precious gems, we have experiences that the even semi-precious gems also work in one way or another. Some astrologers recommend substitutes from the array of semi precious gems, but the substitutes--despite a similar appearance--often have very different influence. Ruby and spinel promote two different things in life, despite the fact that both are red gems. Ruby expands love and spinel attracts money. Another substitute for ruby is garnet which is a stone of assertion and passion which some equate to love.

The many varieties of semi-precious gemstones are controlled by different demigods and they can help a person in a variety of ways. Nonetheless, the nine gems specifically assigned to the nine *grahas* have the power to oversee greater areas of our lives ruled by one or all of the nine planets. And because the nine planets are ultimately under the control of the Supreme Lord and His main nine incarnations, their gems even have the power to help develop devotion. Sri Krishna Himself has appeared in the dynasty of the Moon god on the day of the Moon's favorable wife, Rohini. Born under such an exalted Moon Lord Sri Krishna has the quality of nurturing for all living entities. To further stress this quality He is wearing the Kaustubha gem which is a moonstone the color of the cow milk, and which appeared from the churning of he ocean. The gem even has an engraving of a cow on it. *Srimad Bhagavatam* (10.3.11) describes the beautiful Form of Lord Narayana as He appeared in Mathura:

Vasudeva then saw the newborn child, who had very wonderful lotus like eyes and who bore in His four hands the four weapons *shankha*, *chakra*, *gada* and *padma*. On His chest was the mark of Srivatsa and on His neck

the brilliant Kaustubha gem. Dressed in yellow, His body blackish like a dense cloud, His scattered hair fully grown, and His helmet and earrings sparkling uncommonly with the valuable gem Vaidurya, the child, decorated with a brilliant belt, armlets, bangles and other ornaments, appeared very wonderful.”

Gems should be worn not just like a fashion for an hour or two. Gems can become a part of our existence that speak to others about who we are. After we have worn them for a long time their power comes to us and we blend with their beautifying appearance. In this way gems have the ability to bring good things in our lives and we have to be wise to offer all bestowed to us back to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krishna. Only then, we can experience the joy of wearing precious gems. □

Eclipses and the Fall of Governments

Patita Pavana das Adhikary

*O insupportable! O heavy hour!
Methinks it should be now a huge eclipse
Of sun and moon, and that th' affrighted globe
Should yawn at alteration.”*

-Wm. Shakespeare



4th Jan: Inauspicious sunrise eclipse in Sagittarius over the Middle East and Europe

Noting that a pair of eclipses was the horizon, we discussed the possibility of the fall of governments in our early December edition of **The Astrological Newsletter**. Yet who could have prepared for the astounding domino effect in North Africa that followed in the wake? The first eclipse, a lunar event in Gemini, would occur on 21 Dec. 2010. The next one was more ominous as it was to darken the Sun in the fiery, warring sign of Sagittarius on 4 Jan. 2011. As we noted, eclipses in Dhanush *rashi*, the weapon-wielding centaur, historically tend to affect France. As we pointed out, the eclipse was to first touch down in Algeria, a former French colony as is its neighbor Tunisia. As the eclipse cycle has gained momentum following the event, one government after another has either been seriously affected or has fallen since the event. As the Dec. issue pointed out, "If the eclipse turns dark reddish it could indicate war." Hereunder are some photos of the Sun on the 4 Jan eclipse taken in Tel Aviv in which the angry red color is apparent.



Partial solar eclipse in Sagittarius on 4 Jan. 2011 over Tel Aviv

In the days since the eclipses, the events in North Africa beginning with Tunisia are all too well known. Interestingly, Tunisia is a former protectorate of Sagittarius-ruled France. Tunisia was the first to fall to civil unrest in early Feb. Next to go down--and following the west-to-east line of the eclipse--was the long-standing, America-allied government of

Egypt. Within days of the social boil over in Cairo, the octogenarian ironman Hosni Mubarak packed up his billions and made a swift exit leaving his former army to sort out the mess. Next in rapid fire came Libya with the uncertain fate of Muammar Gaddafi's 40-year reign still in question as of this writing. Further East, riots are still affecting--chronologically in order of west to east movement--Bahrain, Yemen, Oman and Iraq. And the influence keeps moving eastward towards Afghanistan, Pakistan and India.

Fires raging out of control have a nasty habit of spreading. The difference between many little skirmishes and a world war is, in the case of the latter, the several little fires meet one another and merge into one big conflagration. When the nations that are responsible for the world's supply of oil, like Libya--and to a lesser extent Oman and Bahrain--become unstable, the superpowers (and the superdemons who control them) become edgy. Saudi Arabia with 25% of the world's oil supply is now surrounded on four sides by the dark clouds of serious civil turmoil. Oil is both the sustenance and the Achille's Heel of the times.

Northern Africa and the Middle East



Ruled by Sagittarius: The path of the 4 Jan eclipse in fiery, bow-wielding Dhanush left behind ominous trails of Arab unrest.

There are many more eclipses to come in 2011, and we will deal with these in future issues of **The Astrological Newsletter**. □

Massive Solar Explosion Caught on Film

It was as though the Sun himself was announcing his own revulsion when, on the day before Lord Surya Narayana entered Sagittarius on Dec. 14th 2010, he emitted an epic flare foreshadowing what have now proven to be historical events. Be a witness to that solar explosion/ prophecy here: http://news.yahoo.com/s/yblog_thelookout/20101215/ts_yblog_thelookout/watch-the-suns-great-eruption □



Letters to the Editor (edited for brevity)

“Prabhupada Must Be Very Pleased”

Thank you very much for forwarding your most recent Astrological Newsletter. What a gold mine of relevant and interesting information. While I could not understand some of the information presented in the astro-cartography articles, I could grasp some of it. At least the importance of going to the right source for sound information. The questions and answers were especially enlivening. How Srila Prabhupada must be pleased with you both.

Your servant,
Yamuna devi

Dear Mother, we consider your kind words a direct blessing from Srila Prabhupada and the entire Gaudiya Vaishnava sampradaya by His Divine Grace.-Ed.

“Deja Vu Astrology”

Hare Krsna, AGTSP, Dandavats Prabhus,

Reading about the current events that have /are occurring over this quarter after reading your FORECAST (String of Seven / Rahu /Oil / Fall of Govts / Natural disasters etc) makes me Exclaim "Deja Vu!!"

All Glories and Thanks to Krishna, Srila Prabhupada and your good selves for such insightful, bold, honest and accurate forecasts. Request if you could please add me to your mailing list or indicate on which site I may refer to read your regular updates / newsletters etc.

Thanks,

Kashyap Mehta

(India)

This year of great change has only just begun! -Ed.

“Dynamic KC Astro-Newsletter”

Patit!

Am I on your mailing list? If not, please add me so I can keep receiving your dynamic KC astro newsletter...

Ys, Sureshwara das

(Middle East)

Prabhu, it wouldn't mean a thing unless you were included! -Ed.

“Earth and Moon Inter-connected”

Patita Pavan Prabhu,

Interesting how Earth is so interconnected with Moon, I have always been intrigued by the interactions also of Rahu and Ketu. And ever since witnessing a total Lunar eclipse many years ago in Ethiopia, I stay away from them.

Best wishes to you and the devotees there,

Cyavana Swami

Camp Garuda

campgaruda.tripod.com

Maharaja, it is only by the blessings of Srila Prabhupada faithfuls like you that we can progress and move forward. -Ed.

“Escape from the Cell of Kamsa”

Dear Patita Pavana das and Srimati Abhaya Mudra Dasi,

Thank you for your priceless advice, I really needed it, all of it. You really got straight to the point with "*Kamsa's cell.*" It rang in my ears like crazy! That is very true, you are very insightful, this is a real Kamsa's cell I put

myself into somehow. Krishna personally will have to unlock it, but my job is to start my remedial activities as soon as possible. Thank you for serving me. May Krishna bless you for all your work.

With love,

N.K. (Europe)

By Krishna's grace the guards of Kamsa's cell have fallen asleep and the shackles have fallen to the floor by the grace of the holy names! -Ed.

“Astrology’s Dirty Little Secret”

Prabhuji,

Can I ask you one question? Do we really need the exact timing for calculation? What timing I gave you is what I know. My mother told that the timing is in morning 10 am to 10.30 am. Does half or one hour really make difference? Does the chart change altogether?

Once again thank you for the inspirational letter. Bless me that I can dedicate my life in the service of Srila Prabhupad and remain sincere, serious, and without ulterior motives in my spiritual life.

If you feel also let me know if there are immediate dangers you foresee and that I should take care of any certain things in my life to be well prepared for a better Krishna conscious life. Once again thank you for that hope giving reply. Hope I would be able to serve you in some form some day. Please bless me that I serve in best of my capacity in service to Sri Guru and Gauranga and make this life my last life in this material world.

Your servant,

SG (India)

Of course the difference of half an hour changes everything. That would be another person altogether. The astrologers of old were able to discern the difference in karma of germs that are born 1/18th of a second apart! Astrology’s dirty little secret, at least in Kali Yuga, that the Shastris are not even agreed upon the longitudinal measurement of the planets, technically known as the ayanamsha deduction. Neither are birth records entirely trustworthy. Then there are the issues of shortened life span, fading memory and mental capacity due to the rigors of this iron age. Therefore, for these reasons, astrology is a rough reflection of what it used to be. However, this does not negate its value even now. A weak flashlight is better than no flashlight. In the final analysis, the light of jyotish is only as bright as the person in whose hands it is used. -Ed.

“Newsletter is Connected to Srila Prabhupada”

Prabhuji, great information and very devotionally connected to teachings of Srila Prabhupada. Thank you so much, Prabhu.

Your servant,

Jagannath Priya das

Anything that is not connected to Prabhupada is useless. -Ed.

