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Chapter 1

A SHORT INTRODUCTION

What are the *Puranas*? They are texts that cover five major areas of Hindu thought. If a text does not cover all five of these subjects, it is not classified as a *Purana*. There are 18 major *Puranas*, referred to as Mahapuranas. There are 18 minor *Puranas* referred to as *Upapuranas* (1). These texts are the collected effort of many sages. They are not the work of one person.

The *Mahapuranas* have three main divisions:

The *Mahapuranas* that relate to Lord Brahma are called *Rajasa Puranas* (2).

The *Mahapuranas* that relate to Lord Vishnu are called *Sattivika Puranas* (3).

The *Mahapuranas* that relate to Lord Shiva are called *Tamasa Puranas* (4).

The word "*Purana*" in Sanskrit means ancient and has the supposition of ancient records. Some people feel that these major *Puranas* are the remembrance of an oral tradition of akashic records. Others feel that these texts are just very old records and legends.

Western scholars date the *Mahapuranas* from 400 to 1200 A.D. Eastern scholars date them much earlier. However, the mystics point out that these texts were originally oral in composition and go back thousands of years in that oral tradition. Hindu culture has displayed a deep skepticism of written texts, and thus has favored enlargement of the concept "book" to include words that have been transmitted and interpreted by an oral tradition.

The function of the *Puranas* was to convey the deeper Vedic teaching to the uneducated, and thus most of the knowledge conveyed is in the form of dialogues.

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What are the five subjects a *Purana* must discuss? They are:

1. *Sarga*. A *Purana* must discuss the original creation, or projection, of the universe, called *Sarga*. These records admit that there was an original *Sarga*, a first projection. Hindu philosophers have always been engrossed in the origin of the cosmos. They understood that any insights gained would reveal vital data regarding our own personal origins since the macrocosm and the microcosm are mirrored reflections of each other. Therefore, any insights gained regarding the origins and structure of the microcosm will give clues regarding the origin and structure of the macrocosm. The macrocosm is called the *brahma-anda* or the brahmic egg. The microcosm is called the *pinda-anda*, or the lump-egg, and refers to the body. There are six *pindas*, and the physical body is the coarsest of these six manifestations. It is called the embryonic body.

2. *Prati-Sarga*. Furthermore, the text must discuss the *Prati-sarga*, which is the periodic process of projection and redissolvement. These are sometimes referred to as the secondary creations and secondary redissolvements. They are, in truth, subcycles of the original projection and its withdrawal from that projection back into itself.

3. *Manu Avatara*, or *Manvantara*. The *Puranas* must discuss the life of one of the *Manus*, which comes from the name "Manu" and from "antara," meaning period or cycle. Thus, *Manu Avatara* is a given cycle of *Manu*, which lasts 4,320,000 earth years. These cycles are numberless; however, symbolically 14 are the key cycle of repetition. It is 1/14th of a day-cycle. Fourteen cycles of *Manus* constitute an age, called a *kalpa*. Each of these *manvantaras* has a *Manu* with a specific name. Each cycle also has its own specific gods, which, however, always take the same name. For example, Lord *Indra* is always the king of the gods and is always called Lord *Indra*. However, he is a different Lord *Indra* than the one in the previous cycle. The *Puranas* must talk about the different intervals between one projection and another projection, and talk about the *Manu* who is often referred to as the progenitor of mankind, as well as the lawgiver of that cycle. Mystically, each *Manu*, each lawgiver, tells us

what Pole Star rules that cycle of that kalpa. Thus, each Manu tells us about that eon and the new laws to which we must be attuned, so as to be in harmony with that cycle.

4. Solar and Lunar Dynasty. Somewhat arcane, these akashic records must give the history of the solar dynasty, as well as the history of the lunar dynasty.

5. Royal Dynasty. These texts must also give the genealogy of the royal dynasty.

Of these five topics, the three most important are:

The prime projection.

Prati-Sarga: The secondary projections and withdrawal.

Manu Avatara: The nature of the cycles, the name of the Manu, and thus the laws to be attuned to in that cycle.

Each *Purana*, each akashic record, talks about the three major forces of nature: creation, sustainment, and dissolvment. Or as we say in yoga: the lord of creation, the lord of sustainment, and the lord of dissolution. The reason for personifying the natural forces is twofold: 1) to help us realize that they are organic forces, not dead or inanimate forces; and 2) to help us realize that these forces are within us, not just external to us.

What are the *Puranas* about? They are about studying divine knowledge, which is the knowledge of the absolute reality, life itself. It is about you. It is about you, your body. It is about you, your mind. It is about you, your life cycles.

It is about you and your ever-changing, ever-unfolding personality. It is also about you after you take off your animal skins! It is about you and your responsibility to life, life of which you are a part, and not apart from.

The first thing that you are responsible for is to put your life in order.

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We will deal with this in the last chapter of this short text. To put your life in order, you need to create what needs to be created, before it is needed. You need to create it in the proper order. You need to do that which must be done to bring order (rita) into your life.

After taking about the original projection (Sarga), the *Puranas* then talk about the cyclical processes of projection and redissolvment (Prati-Sarga). Then they talk about the 14 different Manus who exist in each of the 14 ages of the kalpa cycle. We should pay a great deal of attention to the secondary projections because they tell you what the lay of the land is for this cycle. Thus, the new rules for the game of life can be more easily and accurately ascertained for that new age.

Thus, we have Manu one, Manu two, Manu three, Manu four, all the way up to Manu fourteen. The major rules of life will change with each cycle of a Manu. The rules will then hold for that total cycle in which that given Manu lives. Why does the course of conduct change? It is because the Pole Star changes. As different stars become the Pole Star, the nature of this section of the macrocosm changes, because a different star group is closer and also moves around that Pole Star, that hole to the heavens. It is often easier to see the external changes than to see the inner changes.

Chapter 2

CHURNING OF THE OCEAN

One of the key concepts discussed in the *Puranas* is the churning of the ocean (Samudra Nathana). It is vital, even though it is a secondary creation (or projection), because it points out that all essential things exist potentially in the primordial ocean of existence. It was only with super-divine effort that the ocean of existence could be churned and made to emanate or project its treasures and blessings for the benefits of all beings. The primordial ocean has two treasures, which we can benefit from and we ought to have.

Lord Vishnu projected the devas and the devis (gods and goddesses) aware of the ocean of existence. However, the devis did not get involved. Devas are celestial beings, often referred to as gods. Some Westerners refer to them as angels. However, the devas are higher in nature than the angels.

Lord Vishnu said, "In the primordial ocean of existence there are treasures and blessings." Thus, the question arose among the devas, "How do we get these resources, these assets out of the ocean?" How do you get butter from milk? You churn the milk. Thus they realized that if they churned this ocean, the treasures and the blessings would come to the surface of the ocean, like butter from milk.

They then needed to obtain a paddle. For this they used the spinal column of Vishnu. They rested this on a tortoise's back (which is another form of Lord Vishnu). They then took the serpent of eternity (Ananta), and wrapped it around the spinal axis. The gods divided themselves into two groups: one group at the head of the serpent, and the other group at its tail. They then began to pull upon the serpent in order to turn the paddle to churn the ocean. However, because the paddle and the serpent were so huge, the gods could not move them. They did not have enough strength.

Thus, according to the *Puranas*, Lord Vishnu said to the gods, "Go get the asuras. Tell them they should help you. Tell them that if they

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help you, you will give them part of the elixir of immortality, which is the second great treasure lying at the bottom of this ocean.” Because of this promise, the demons agreed to help. Both the devas and the asuras are higher beings that possess creative potency (5).

The gods took the tail of the serpent of eternity, and gave the mouth of the serpent with its fangs to the asuras. They started churning and things began to float to the top of the ocean, just as butter is churned from milk.

Soon it became clear to the asuras that the gods had no intention of giving them any of the elixir. Unfortunately this was true. This is an interesting symbolism of inequality. Furthermore, why would gods not keep their promise? That is a problem that we earthlings need to work our way through to understand the meaning of the symbolism.

In another story regarding the churning of the ocean, Mount Mandara was used as the churning-rod, rather than the spinal axis of Lord Vishnu. Mount Mandara is the mythical mountain, which is supported by Lord Vishnu in his tortoise incarnation. It was used as the paddle by which the joint powers of nature (the devas and the asuras) churned out the fundamental objects that are essential for the survival of the gods—and also for the survival of mankind. In this new symbolic story, they still used the serpent Ananta as the churning rope. It also had the names Vasuke and Vasudeva. This seeming inconsistency of the story bothers most Westerners. However, the Hindus say that it was a different churning of the ocean, in a different cycle, thus showing the small, but most meaningful, changes that take place from eon to eon.

In all the stories Lord Vishnu became a tortoise (a very ancient symbol). He went to the bottom of the primordial ocean as a tortoise. The mountain was placed on his back so that it had a place on which to turn. Thus they started to churn. What happened when they started churning? According to the story, the first thing to emerge was the cow of abundance. This cow is also known as the wish-cow, Surabi (6). It is said that if you touch the wish-cow, anything you wish or hope for, you will obtain. It gives abundance.

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What was the second thing to come out of the ocean? It was the Goddess Varuni, the goddess of wine. This I find very fascinating because Hindu culture is not a wine-drinking culture. However, it makes sense if you understand that Varuni is the goddess of intoxication, of mystical trance.

The third thing to come out was the celestial tree, also known as the wish-tree (parijata). Any person who touches this tree will obtain the universe (7).

The fourth thing that came out of the ocean when it was churned was a group of celestial nymphs called apsarasas (8).

The fifth thing that came out was the Moon. It was at this point that the poison from the primordial waters of existence began to appear. Immediately the snake gods (the Nagas) drank the poison right out of the ocean so that the poison would not hurt the devas or any other creature. What do you think was the nature of the poison? Once the poison was removed, other things began to float to the top of the ocean.

The sixth thing to appear was the physician of the gods, Dhanvantari (9). The physician of the gods, Mercury, appeared holding a vessel. Inside the vessel was amrita—the elixir of immortality (10). The amrita is the long lost and sought-after treasure.

The seventh thing that up came from the ocean was another goddess, the Goddess Sri who was seated on a lotus and holding in her hands a lotus flower. It was at this point that the asuras really began to become suspicious. They began to seriously doubt the probability that the gods would give them anything, much less the elixir. Thus, they were the first to seize the vessel of amrita out of the hands of the physician of the gods. However, before the demons could drink it, Lord Vishnu, who was at the bottom of the ocean in the form of a tortoise, suddenly reappeared on the earth in the form of the most beautiful maiden in the universe. The maiden was so breathtaking, alluring, and exotic that all the asuras were spell-bound. Before the asuras could recover, Lord Vishnu grabbed the vessel of amrita and threw it like a football over the heads of the asuras to the gods.

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As the vessel flew spinning through the air, it spilled seven drops of elixir on the earth where it landed in seven places in India. In modern terms we would say, where the elixir landed, there were created geodesic points, points of high spiritual energy. Thus, it is said if you sit motionless in any one of these places, you will become immortal. I repeat one must just sit there motionless, as opposed to sitting there and milking a cow.

The gods, upon receiving the vessel, immediately drank the elixir and became immortal. They were also renewed and invigorated. They immediately attacked the asuras rather than giving them what was promised. According to the *Puranic* stories, the gods totally defeated the asuras—at least for that cycle.

The first thing that the asuras did was pull on the tail of the serpent of eternity. Then the devas pulled on the head of the serpent. With this, the mountain turned, rotating 180 degrees. Rotation implies expansion. Take an object, tie it to a string, and slowly begin to rotate it, and you will see that object will expand until it is at 90 degrees from the point of that spin. Rotation implies expansion. Thus we rotate our Kriya currents in order to expand our consciousness. We rotate our Kriya currents to expand our life. In expanding our life, we unfold. Do you understand the difference? If we expanded our consciousness, that wouldn't be much. However, if we expand our life, then that expanded life allows us to mature. Rotation conveys an extremely dynamic imagery of the potential cosmic life force moving into actual life—potentiality to actuality. In short, the concentrated center of existence moves to an expanded circle of existence.

As you might know, there was a great deal of cultural crossover from India to Greece, and from Greece to India because of Alexander the Lesser. (Well, if you must: Alexander the Great [356-323 B.C.E.] Some of the pre-Socratic philosophers stated that all came from water, from the ocean of life. They talked about water as the origin of all things. This is right back to where the scientists are today. They believe that everything came from the ocean, more specifically man. Why? The scientists say that if you take a drop of

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blood from a man and a drop of ocean water and analyze them, you will find a consistency between the blood components and the components of that drop of ocean water. But what is even more remarkable is that the proportion of one element to another is exactly the same. That is pretty impressive.

When the amrita came to the surface of the ocean, poison also came up. In another *Purana* it was Vasuki who drank the poison to save the gods and asuras from being poisoned. Vasuki was one of the serpent kings. The world is supported on one of Vasuki's many heads. Vasuki, like all the serpent beings, like all the nagas, is a symbol of unevolved nature called prakriti. Prakriti is the stuff out of which matter is made. Prakriti is pre-unformed stuff.

Some of the *Puranas* state that 14 objects were churned out of the ocean of milk. Some say they have to do with the 14 cycles of Manu Avatara and that each object symbolizes the nature of that cycle of Manu. The *Padma Purana* specifies nine items. Other *Puranas* indicate 10, still others 12.

People often say to me that these texts are just myths and therefore unimportant. In my opinion this is not true. They are more than myths. They are the unfoldment of a deep, mystical, symbolic psychology. Different teachers teach in different ways. Thus, different teachers may teach a different Kriya.

It's important to understand that Kriya four, Kriya seven and Kriya eleven have a common mathematical relationship. All Kriyas have a relationship. So if one guru is teaching Kriya eleven, and if you have been taught Kriya five, there is no reason for confusion. Why? There is a mathematical way of converting Kriya five to Kriya eleven. It's just a straight mathematical conversion of proportional parts.

These are just different ways of expressing the various facets of life that are of the one life factor: consciousness. The different Kriyas are just different ways of emphasizing what the teacher feels is important for his disciples to learn. Each guru emphasizes what his/her disciples need to master. In symbolic terms one teaches love, another teaches knowledge, another teaches wisdom, another teaches

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breath control, and still another teaches dream control. These can be mathematically converted into the master system of Kriya.

For example, one of the other *Puranas* talks about a white horse, which is thrown out of the ocean. An another text tells about a white elephant, which was thrown out during the churning. The white horse is a very important symbol. In Hindu tradition, there are an infinite number of avatars, incarnations of the Reality who are trying to re-purify the priesthood, and thus the general public. Nonetheless, there are only ten that are traditionally and symbolically the historical incarnations of God, or Maha-Avataras.

The tenth avatara will be Kalki. When he arrives, you will know him because he will come from the west and will be riding on a white horse. I assume that the direction west is west from the astral world. The texts say that we will know him because he will be “wearing” a white horse. That is correct, he will be wearing a white horse. How does someone wear a white horse? Ah! More wonderful data to meditate upon.

In the previous story, the nagas, the serpent gods, sucked the poison from the churning ocean. However, in the *Shiva Purana*, it was Shiva himself who realized that the vessel held by the physician of the gods contained the amrita, the elixir of immortality mixed with cosmic poison. Thus, it was Lord Shiva himself who took the vessel of amrita, put it to his lips and swallowed the fluid in the vessel. However, he only swallowed the poison, and left the elixir pure and without any poisons whatsoever. The poison was so powerful that as it entered into his throat chakra, it burned his throat blue. Unto this day, all pictures of Lord Shiva are shown with a blue throat.

After swallowing the poison, Shiva threw the amrita to the gods. I should point out that the poison is a mental poison, not a physical poison. Why do we know this? We know this because the poison went to the Mercury chakra. Had the poison been a physical poison, it would have gone to the Mars or the Saturn chakras.

Again, this variation in the story disturbs some people. They say, “See, they can’t even keep the story straight. One says it was a ser-

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pent who drank the poison. The other says that it was Lord Shiva." There are two answers. The historical answer is it depends on which Manu Avatara cycle you are referring to. In each new cycle there are minor changes in the story, showing the subtle changes that occur in the different cycles. Otherwise, the cycle would not be a cycle, but a wheel. Secondly, the esoteric answer is that the nagas and Lord Shiva are the same forcefield. If you ever see a picture of Lord Shiva, his throat is blue because he drank the poison, and always around his neck are many nagas.

The poison that was mixed with the elixir would have poisoned our minds had we drunk it. People say, "I just don't understand why God would put poison in the immortality elixir." The poison in the elixir has to do with the mind being immortal. Lord Shiva removed that poison. Remember that Lord Shiva is that which dissolves negativity from our lives. He dissolves that which is no longer meaningful or that which has become destructive to us. To me, the symbolism is quite clear: Immortality can have some really serious problems. Why? Because on the very simplest level, we would have had to be with ourselves.

Is this immortality just for this one cycle? With qualifications the answer is no. The dissolving of the cycle from unconsciousness would be exactly the same as going to sleep. The person wakes up. That person has symbolically returned from the dead. Yet the mystics and most people would say that person is still alive in his sleep. Having drunk the elixir, they are immortal. What does this really mean? It simply means that those souls will never again become unconscious.

However, the patterns of life still change. With every new Manu Avatara cycle, all the gods change places. Lesser gods become greater gods. Greater gods become lesser gods. The gods like Lord Indra work very hard to keep their status. However, with the changing of an eon, they lose their position and another Indra takes that position. It is just like one Manu following another Manu in each new eon. It is impossible for Lord Indra, the king of the gods, to remain lord beyond one cycle. They say that after the lordship of Indra, the Lords Indra become ants and work their way up to king

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of the gods again. However, they are still immortal. At some particular point into a maha-kalpa, Lord Indra finds himself back up on top again as king of the gods. Thus, everyone experiences all the various experiences that exist in life, just as humans move through their innumerable incarnations.

Chapter 3

SPACE AND NEW SPACE

I want to point out the apparent rotation of the Sun from 0 degrees Aries back to 0 degrees Aries in a symbolic cycle. We can have 100 of these cycles or 1,000, and many people think that they are exactly the same. They believe the relationship of the planets to each other as well as the earth to the sun is the same. They believe the relationship of the planets around our Sun to the fixed stars is the same. However, they are not.

Furthermore, at one point the universe was at a fixed point, let's say 0 degrees Aries. Six months later, our solar system is at 0 degrees Libra. Yet, during these six months, the whole of our galaxy has been whirling through space at thousands of miles per hour. It is in new space, and what is in that new space has brought in new factors.

More simply put, the cosmic forces that are here are not there. If we take one cosmic forcefield and put it here, it will act in one way. However, when put in a new space, it will have very subtle differences. Now take another forcefield and put it here. Have one of them move in a circle. The Sun may be in zero degrees Aries here, and ten cycles later (or a hundred thousand cycles later) the Sun will be in back in Aries. Thus, we have a cycle, but it is not the same cycle, because the forcefields existing over in this section of the universe are subtly different in this new space section. That is where superficial astrology has its limitations, as important as it is. In short, we are not moving around in simple wheels. Rather we are moving in ever expanding spirals.

In reference to the churning of the ocean, some people would ask, "If there is a physician of the gods, then that must mean that the gods become sick. Thus, what is the nature of their sickness?" The answer is, even though they are immortal, they have the sickness of imbalanced consciousness. Men get upset stomachs. Gods get upset minds. There is another sickness called forgetfulness. One can be

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immortal and yet forget. Remember that the gods are immortal and so is man. However, there is a difference. The gods are eternally alive and conscious. Mankind in any given incarnation is unconscious for part of the day cycle and unconscious between incarnations. Nonetheless, four sicknesses affect both gods and mankind. Greed is the first and greatest sickness. Forgetfulness, unbalanced consciousness is the second and the third sickness. The fourth is living in time.

With all the discussions of wheels, cycles and eons, one could ask, "Is time real?" Yes, it is. When people talk about time, they often talk about different categories of time: sidereal time, angular time, causal time, astral time, external time, internal time, etc. There are so many different categories of time, even time as a dimension. Thus, we tend to think of time as illusory. However, it is not. It is one of the great qualities of the great god Time (Kala). It is quite real. All things are born and re-absorbed within time.

However, when we talk about time, not as men understand it, but as it exists in the universe, it becomes necessary to meditate on astrological cycles and Saturn (as Father Time), even though he was born of Uranus in Greek thought. Furthermore, it might be wise to remember that Saturn (Sani) is the elder brother of the Sun (Surya) itself. Saturn is sometimes referred to as the dark sun (as opposed to the dark moon). But Saturn is really manifested time. We see him every New Year's Eve as Father Time with his Saturn sickle which removes the past. Time is an attribute of God's manifest creation. It is one of the seven attributes of creation.

Answering the question metaphysically, yes, time is real. It is probably the most real thing we have. But the way people and modern scientists talk about causation and the uncertainty principle makes time seem illusory. They missed the boat, unlike the mystics. It is real whether you recognize it or not. You go to sleep and when you wake up, you will be older. It is working even though you are unconscious.

As a short review, the *Puranas* deal with five basic topics, three of which are vital for the average earthling. The other two are vital to advanced mystics.

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The first is Sarga, meaning the original projection, or the original creation. I think they mean the creation of the original seed, or bindu.

The second topic discusses what is called the Prati-Sarga, commonly known as the secondary creations. Some people think of them as sub-cycles, in the cyclical projection. It also deals with their dissolving or collapsing into the ocean of non-existence.

And the third area is that of the Manu Avatara, the different Manus and their cycles (11). A Manu Avatara is the life or period of a Manu. Each Manu Avatara consists of 4,320,000 earth years, or an equivalent of 12,000 divine years. This would be 1/14 of a day and night of Lord Brahma. Thus, there are 14 such cycles or periods, which constitute a kalpa. And these kalpa cycles are repeated endlessly.

There are 18 major *Puranas*. The first of these is generally considered the *Brahma Purana*, which deals with creation stories. Unfortunately it has been lost. It was restructured out of the *Mahabharata* and out of five *Puranas*, including the *Vishnu* and the *Markandeya Puranas* (12).

For your general information, the *Markandeya Upanishad* is the shortest *Purana* of approximately 9,000 verses. The *Padma Upanishad* is the longest, having around 55,000 verses.

Chapter 4

THE BRAHMA PURANA

In the *Brahma Purana*, the sages had arranged for a colossal fire ritual, which would take 12 years. It is hard to keep a fire going for that period of time. This 12-year cycle indicates the ritual is a Jupiter ceremony linked to the entrance of Jupiter into Aquarius (during a vital period of time) and its return into that sign 12 years later. In short, it is the start of the Maha Kumbha Mela. This Mela is the Hindu ablution ritual occurring once every 12 years at Prayag, one of the spots in which the amrita is said to have fallen from the pot, or vessel, which was churned from the ocean. Kumbha Mela means pot festival, referring to the pot of amrita. Esoterically it refers to the pot or bulb in the Jupiter chakra from which flows the kundalini.

On a larger level, it means that the future Jupiter, in entering into Aquarius, will be filled with high spiritual energies. Thus, the ceremony must be uninterruptedly performed for 12 years. If you do that, that 12-year cycle will primarily tend to produce enlightenment. It will bring about the fruits of that ceremony. What is that ceremony esoterically? It is breathing 12 major Kriya each day for 12 years.

Or, I could say exoterically that you should be happy for 12 minutes each day for 12 years. Thus, for 12 incarnations you will be happy (from the force of this exoteric ritual). However, after 12 incarnations of happiness, you will be eternally happy. Don't play down the exoteric! I know that in Western mysticism the exoteric is negated. But that is just like saying that karma yoga is not important. People are so ambitious to get to the esoteric that they forget to live! That is a grave error. Be happy every day. Do karma yoga every day. Breathe Kriya every day.

So what are the *Puranas* saying? They are saying that it is consistency for 12 units of time that is important. In the fire ritual, it is 12 full years—from Jupiter entering Aquarius, until its return into Aquarius. Anything that is done for a cycle of 12 is vital in improving our lives earthwise and also spiritually (if you conceive that

they are different). Thus, it can be 12 incarnations, 12 years, 12 months, 12 days, 12 muhurtas (48 minutes), or 12 breaths, etc. There is a subtler factor here about what they mean by a ceremony, and what they mean by a sacrifice. Usually when we think of sacrifice, we think of giving up something to get something. If you are a Scorpio, you might be able to appreciate throwing a maiden into the volcano to appease a volcano God, or to placate the subconscious forces, or the forces of fire, and thus bringing abundance.

The key concept here is that it must always be a virgin. The symbolism here is you can't throw a sick cow, an old dying cow, nor the 99-year-old man or woman into the fire. The sacrifice has to be a forcefield, which has the power to conceive anew. In short, it has to be a power that can keep a race alive, someone who can bring forth daughters and sons that will strengthen the race and give energy to accomplish the goals of that culture.

In the *Brahma Purana*, everything in the forest was wonderful. There was no shortage of food. The animals, the birds and the sages lived harmoniously. Because of this 12-year ritual, many sages came from different places. When they got together, they talked to each other, and also to the head sage Romaharshana. These sages asked him to tell them about the secrets of the *Puranas*. They asked,

"Who created the universe?

Who is its preserver?

Who will dissolve it in the end-time?

Please instruct us. Please tell us about these three mysteries."

In esoteric terms, they want to know about Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva. On an exoteric level, they are asking about the principle of creation that exists in the macrocosmic universe, and also within the microcosmic universe which contains your physical and your astral bodies.

His answer revealed that whatever is happening in any one of the macrocosms is also happening in the microcosm at the same time. The understanding and the control of the law of creation physically, reveals the law of creation astrally, but simply on a higher octave.

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And the law of the creation of the astral reveals the law of the creation on the causal plane, but at a higher octave. That is everything. That is important.

To their questions, the chief sage replied, "Ah! Many, many kalpas ago, far into the distant past, the great sage Dak Sha (or Da Ksha) and other sages had asked Lord Brahma these very same three questions. I have learned what Lord Brahma answered, from the lips of my very own guru, Veda Vyasa. What I know is what he has taught me. This I will now relate to you."

Once upon a yogi time, in the beginning of all beginnings, there was water everywhere. The divine quintessence of existence slept upon this primordial water in the form of Lord Vishnu, the lord of preservation. The primordial waters of non-existence are a matrix without form, fluid that contains potential things.

Vishnu was lying on top of these waters and was doing two things. He was keeping the waters smooth and still. What does that mean? Remember Yoganandaji used to say we are the reality; we are the ocean of existence. But we should never confuse the wave with the ocean. I am a wave; I am not the ocean. The wave is part of the ocean, but does not confuse the one for the other. Vishnu was keeping the ocean calm. It was peaceful, and it was called the Night of Brahma, the night of non-existence. Everything was sleeping. There was no manifestation. It, nonetheless, was having levels of unconsciousness. Everything potentiality existed in this ocean. But this ocean was a glob and in mysticism we conceive this ocean as the matrix of everything. It is sometimes called the egg. The concept that is so important here is the concept of the bindu or the egg of creation. The secret here is that a drop of water contains the ocean, and the ocean contains that drop of water. But do not confuse the one for the other. Saying it in more familiar terms, the oak tree is in the acorn, and in the oak are the acorns.

Whatever symbolism you use, you need to grasp that it is a bindu, the point of crystallization of creation. Everything is there in that point, in that bindu. (13)

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The waters of non-existence are formless, and yet in some symbolic sense, on top of the water there is a skin holding the water smooth, separating that which is above from that which is below the ocean. It separates that which is subconscious from that which is conscious, in psychological terms. In scientific terms, it separates that which is potential from that which is actual. But it is the skin that has a form, and that form is the quintessence of Lord Vishnu. The form is the form of preservation. Its first function is to preserve the ocean, to preserve the potentiality, so it does not die. When the time is ripe, the seed (bindu) can come to fruition producing seeds, which produce everything else, including the seeds of the seeds. It is like feeding the seed. Each seed is like a peach seed. Potentially an infinite number of trees exist within that peach seed, and therefore an infinite number of peaches. Why did I pick the peach? Well, because it is a circle, a dot, a bindu, a point, which has, contained within itself the whole universe—all the universes.

Water in Sanskrit is called nara. The ancient word for bed in Sanskrit is ayana. If you put these two words together, you get the word Narayana, meaning Lord Vishnu, he who is the water-bed-one. In the waters of non-existence there emerged the first form. But you see Vishnu is already the skin (a Saturn symbol), and coming through the skin is already a second creation. From the waters of non-existence emerged a golden egg. Lord Brahma was born inside this egg. Since he created this egg, he obviously created himself and therefore he is called Svayambhu, bhu meaning to be born, and svayam meaning by oneself. Thus, Lord Brahma is known as “the self-born one.” For one whole year Brahma lived inside the egg. Here is a clue as to why yogis say that when a human egg is fertilized, it has a 12-month cycle, not a nine-month cycle. Three months before fertilization, very subtle forces are manifesting to bring the egg and the sperm together.

After a year, Lord Brahman hit the egg, like hitting a gong, and it broke into two parts. From those two parts were created heaven (Svarga) and Earth. The skies, the directions, time (Kala), language, and the senses were created in both the heavens and the earth. ‘Skies’ is the key word here. It means that there is not just one blue sky. There were (and are) many skies. Again, we are already seeing levels of creation within creation.

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From the divine powers of his mind, Lord Brahma gave birth to the seven great sages. Lord Brahma at the same time (or right after) created the god called Rudra, Lord Shiva. The process of creation continued when Lord Brahma gave birth to a man and to a woman from out of his own body. The man's name was Svayambruva-manu. Thus, we say that mankind is the descendant of Manu. In other words, from Manu descended all the other earth-like creators like the self-born Manu. Even though he was projected from Lord Brahma's body, he was self-created. The woman's name was Shatrarupa. But she was not given the name self-born. She was given the name form. Thus, in this context, human beings are neither body-beings, nor self-born. Because mankind is descended from Manu, they are known as Manava. (14)

The first woman and the first man had three sons. One of the son's names was Uttana-pada. (Pada means a foot or a foundation.) He had a son named Dhruva who performed many demanding spiritual exercises and rituals for 3,000 divine years. Lord Brahman was so impressed and pleased with him that he granted Dhruva an eternal place in the sky near the constellation known as the Seven Sages. If you look at an ancient Hindu text on astronomy you will find that it is the constellation of Ursa Major, the Giant Bear. And if you look in that area of the constellation, you will find Dhruva, the Pole Star!

In the Vedas, they say that the seven rishis form a circle around the throne of God and never leave it. Therefore the throne of God has to be the Pole Star around which the Great Bear and the Seven Sages constantly rotate and guard. It is interesting to note that the Pole Star changes every few thousand years!

Now, Dhruva, the Pole Star, had ten children who were supposed to look after and rule the world. However, they really were not interested in worldly, mundane matters. Thus, they went off to the forest to meditate and perform yoga practices. The upshot of all this is that the earth had no rulers, and thus the earth began to suffer, and people started to die. (Aha! That means up to that time they didn't die?) People started to die and thick forests sprouted everywhere. These forests became so thick that even the winds could not blow through them. The winds could not blow across the face of the earth.

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Therefore, the primordial Lord Vishnu, lying on the primordial sea of potential existence, brought forth a golden egg. Lord Brahma was born inside that egg. He was self-born. He caused the egg to split in two. The heavens and the earth came from these parts. (15)

Because the egg split in half into the heavens and the earth, it is quite obvious that one of the functions of heaven is to feed the earth. The goodness, the function of heaven is to feed the earth plane of which we are a part. The whole purpose of yoga is to remember how to be fed, and to want to be fed. This goes back to the Creator and the creation. The whole idea is that one must feel worthy to be fed. The function of heaven is to feed our needs, not our greed. However, look what people are getting.

Thus, we need wisdom to be able to tell the difference between needs and greed. In a yogic sense, the key thing to be fed is energy to create more consciousness, to create more awareness. We need to gain the wisdom to see what should be created. Heaven and earth were created out of the body of Lord Brahma. Then came Manu. Manu had three sons; the third son had a son who was called Dhruva, the Pole Star. Now, these gave produced human descendants. Dhruva, Manu's son, did a lot of special spiritual exercises, and so he was placed near the constellation of the Big Bear. The Pole Star had a lineage several generations. Finally a king was born and he had ten sons who were primarily responsible for looking after and ruling the world.

Who ruled the world before the ten sons were given the task? Why was there a need now for the world to be ruled? What was happening here? Perhaps, after generations and generations of people, something started to become degraded.

However, remember the *Puranas* stated that the people began to suffer, and the earth began to suffer. Then people began to die. Up to that point they didn't die. They were not immortal. They just lived so long it looked as if they were immortal. Then thick forests sprouted up everywhere. So thick were these forests that even the winds could not blow through them. When the news of this catastrophe arrived at the palace of heaven, the kings were furious with the

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trees. Thus, they created a special kind of wind called Vayu (air, life force, or prana). They also created Lord Agni, the god of fire. These are tertiary creations. This fire and air were created from the mouths of the kings. It doesn't take much imagination to understand that we are talking about a major Kriya procedure: warm fire and cool air from our mouths.

The wind dried up the trees and the fire consumed them. Suddenly, there were very few trees left on earth. Thus, the winds could now circulate across the face of the earth. What does this all mean? It's talking about the life currents, the prana flowing over or through the channels of the body.

If we look at this from a deeper level, it indicates that trees are like the chakric trees. Perchance, the spines are getting too close together, and they are psychically getting stuck together, and thus there can be no individualized life force in the circulation. The rulers became angry and they created from their mouths a tertiary creation: air and fire. These dried up the trees, and then destroyed them so there could be circulation of the prana again.

Everyone who existed on the earth was alarmed by all the trees being destroyed. Thus, the Moon God Chandra, who in earlier days was called Soma (another name for the elixir of immortality), went to the rulers of the earth. He came with an extremely beautiful woman. He said to the rulers, "Please control your anger. You need someone to rule over the world so that you can return to your meditation. This beautiful woman, whose name is Marici, is the daughter of the trees. Marry her and you will have a son who will be named Daksha, and he will rule over the world. Then you can go back to your meditation without being concerned or disturbed." They agreed. Marici (16) married and Daksha was born. (17)

The word praja means subject, and the word pati means master. Because Daksha was master over the world and over the subjects of the world, his name was changed and he became known as Prajapati. At this the sages became restless and they interrupted the chief sage, saying, "O' ancient sage, respectfully we are totally and completely confused. We have heard that Prajapati was born from

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Lord Brahma's toe. Now you tell us that Prajapati was the son of Dasha. How is this possible?"

The sage simply replied, "There is no reason for bewilderment. Many have been born to rule over the world. One was born from Brahma's toe. Another Prajapati was born from the sons of the daughter of the trees; one was born from the seed of Daksha, etc. In each Manu Avatara, Prajapati is born, but with different origins. Each Prajapati has been born to rule over the world, each in his own cycle."

Prajapati's wife gave birth to 5,000 sons. They were also destined to rule over the world. But the sage Narada went to them and said, "How can you rule over the world if you don't even know what the world looks like? Are you familiar with its geography? Are you familiar with its limits? You should first find out about these things before you even begin to contemplate ruling over this world." So all the sons went off to explore the world and they never returned.

Thus, Prajapati and his wife had another 1,000 sons. They were destined to rule over the world. Narada told them the same thing that he had told the other 5,000 sons. Thus these sons also went off to explore the world. They also never returned. Prajapati and his wife were very distressed about this. Prajapati blamed Narada for causing his sons to be driven off. Therefore Prajapati thought he should kill him. However, Lord Brahma intervened and said, "No, no. Control your temper!" Prajapati agreed, provided that Lord Brahma marries his daughter. (Prajapati and his wife had sixty daughters according to the *Brahma Purana*, which you will remember was re-constructed).

Now, Daito's sons were twelve in number, and were known as the Adityas, the twelve gods ruling over the twelve sectors of the universe, i.e., the twelve tribes, the twelve disciples, etc.) In Kriya yoga they are known as the rulers of the twelve zodiac signs.

Daito's limited children were the demons, and Daito's not-limited children were gods. (Remember: DTI, Daito; Yammer, Ayah; Whims, Animas; Vide, Avidly, etc.). These two groups were continuously fighting among themselves. On one occasion the Adityas succeeded

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in killing off most of the demons. Thus DTI, thirsting for revenge, began to pray to her husband that she might give birth to a son who would kill Lord Indra. The husband found it extremely difficult to refuse his wife. Finally he gave in to her and he said, "All right, but you must bear a son in your womb. And you must to carry him in your womb for 100 years. Furthermore, throughout those 100 years you have to observe all the various rules of purity. If you do that, you can successfully give birth to a son who will indeed kill Lord Indra. However, if you do not observe these rules of cleanliness to the very letter of the law, your desire will not be fulfilled. Your son will not be born and will not kill the king of the gods." DTI resolved to do this and became pregnant. Lord Indra, knowing about Ditto's intention, was waiting for an opportunity to save himself from his future karma.

One day when DTI was extremely tired, she went to sleep without first washing her feet. In ancient times this was an unclean act and it gave Lord Indra the opportunity. He became a chakra and entered into Ditto's womb where he began to cut up the embryo. It began to cry. Thus, Lord Indra kept saying, "Ma Rudra, Ma Rudra", which means, "Don't cry, don't cry." However, the baby, or more accurately the seven parts of the baby, did not listen and continued to cry, whereupon Lord Indra sliced up each of the seven parts into seven more parts, until there were 49 segments. These 49 parts, when they were born, came out as the 49 levels of the worlds or the 49 days. That which was originally meant to kill the king of the gods came out of the womb, and because of the crying they made, were known as Marts (ma-rut). (18)

Since DTI was not able to adhere to her conditions, the Marts did not kill Lord Indra; instead they became his followers. DTI asked him to make them an army of gods, which he did. They are known as Marut-gana. As Lord India's companions they were treated as gods.

The original purpose was to kill the kings of the gods. What happened? They become the followers of the king and companions of the king. However, the key symbol is the cry, "Ma Rudra, don't cry." Nonetheless, it did cry. I leave you to figure it out.

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Returning again back to Dhruva and the Pole Star's lineage, there was a king named Ana who was very righteous, religious and spiritual. He had a son whose name was Venn, and he had all the opposite qualities of his father. Venn gave up religion. He stopped performing his rituals. As a matter of fact, he instructed all of his subjects that he alone should be worshipped, thus all the sages gathered and came to King Venn. They tried to persuade him to change his ways; however, he was in no mood to listen. He insisted that there was no one equal to him in the whole universe. Thus, he should be worshipped.

The sages realized the king was truly a lost cause. They physically grabbed hold of him, and began to knead his right thigh. Out of this kneading of his right thigh came forth a horrible looking dwarf who was extremely dark with a bad complexion. When the chief sage saw the dwarf, he was so aghast at its appearance that he blurted out, "Sit down. Sit." Thus, the dwarf became known as Nichido and a whole race of dwarfs came forth, which were symbolically called hunters and fishermen. It is said that from these descended all the barbaric races. I'm not quite sure what a barbaric race is. However, all the negativity in the mind and the body of King Venn came out with the emergence of this dwarf.

The sages continued to knead. However, this time they began to knead the king's right arm. Out of his right arm emerged Pith, who shone like a flaming sun. His energies lit up the four directions. He held a bow in his hand and he was clad in beautiful armor. As soon as Pith was born, King Venn died. From this story, which I have condensed, we can see a number of things. First, there are worlds below the Saturn chakra. Remember that the thigh area is the realm of the atlas, the negative forcefields that live below the chakric area of the microcosmic universe.

I believe that all of this symbolism has nothing to do with physical earth beings. This is one of the problems with using symbolism. People will distort symbols for their own use. Thus, they will think, or even say, "I am superior. They are inferior." However, this is not what the story is communicating.

Pith came out of the right arm—the extension of the Mercury chakra. Pith emerged as a beautiful armor-clad, shining light. And

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as soon as he of the chakras was born, the father of the talc dwarf died (became inactive).

The *Puranas* continue saying that all the oceans and all the rivers arrived with their waters and their jewels to anoint Pith as the new king. The gods and the sages also came to the coronation. Lord Brahman himself crowned Pith, king of the earth. Ah! The earth finally got a king. Lord Brahma also took that opportunity to appoint lordships to other parts of the universe.

Lord Soma was appointed lord over the creepers, the herbs and the stars, particularly the Nakshatras. He was also appointed lordship over the planets, over sacrifices and over the divine fire.

Varian was given lordship over the oceans.

Cobra was given lordship over the kings.

Lord Vishnu was given lordship over the Adieus, the twelve gods that rule the zodiac signs.

Lord Agni was given lordship over the Vets, the vital breaths.

The Pole Star was given lordship over all the Prajapati, over Lord Indra, and many of the others forces of nature.

Lord Yama was given lordship over the ancestors and over the departed spirits.

Lord Shiva was given lordship over the Yakshas, the Rakshasas, the ghosts, and also over the Himalayas.

Lord Samudra, the ocean, was given lordship over all the rivers, serpents, birds, tigers, elephants, horses, cows, the banyan trees, and over all other trees.

Lord Brahma also appointed a lord of each direction.

King Pith ruled the earth well, and therefore his reign over the earth was laden with foods and grains. The cows were filled with milk

and the subjects were happy. Therefore, to glorify the king, the sages performed a ritual ceremony from which emerged two races known as Sutas and Magadhas.

The sages said that the function of these two races was simply to sing praises in honor of the great king and of other holy personages. But first they should sing praises to the king. The question arose, what praise-song should they sing? The king was still young. He had not done much that could be praised. Thus, the sages praised the wondrous things that he would do in the future. And so this they did and they began to sing his praises.

However, the people were a bit confused by this. They went to the king and they said, "We have heard of your great deeds. I don't know how you could have done them because you are so young. However, be that as it may, the earth is not giving as much food as it did in former times. Could you please help us make a livelihood?"

The king was angry at the earth for not giving enough food to the people. Thus, he decided to kill it.

The earth was afraid. It took the form of a cow and ran. The king followed it. Wherever the cow went, the king went. The king followed the cow across the earth, through the heavens, and even through the underworlds. Thus, the cow became desperate. It began to pray to the king, "Please control your anger." Does that sound familiar? The cow prayed, "Please control your anger. I'm a woman. Killing me will only mean disaster for you. What is the purpose of killing me? What will it serve you? Your subjects will then be without a place to live! There must be some other way of solving this problem."

Then the earth offered a solution. The king with his bow leveled out the earth. The plains now could be used for villages and cities and for agriculture. The mountains were gathered in select places instead of being littered all over the whole earth. Now, the king could milk the earth and attain the seeds and the food by which his people could live. Because of Prithu's deeds, the earth came to be known as Prithivi. (20)

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I have talked a little about Sarga and Prati-sarga, the original projection and the secondary creation cycles, as well as the third area, that of the Manu Avatara—the Manu eons with its time dimensions and Manu rulers. These eons have vital mathematical data in terms of duration of key cycles. I will cover these in the next chapter, thus finishing the *Brahma Purana*, and then move on to the *Vishnu Purana*.

Chapter 5

MANU CYCLES AND THE YUGAS

I would like now to talk about the duration of the Manu cycle, and then return to talk a bit more about Sarga, the original projection. After the original creation, there are secondary creations, and also the re-dissolution back into the ocean of non-existence. This creation and re-dissolution after the original creation is called Manu Avatara, or a manu interval. In each of these intervals, there are four cycles called Yugas. They are known as:

Krita Yuga
Tetra Yuga
Dvapara Yuga
Kali Yuga

We now exist in the Kali Yuga. It is also called the Dark Age, Iron Age, or the short age.

If you take these four Yugas and you put them together, you get a larger cycle called a maha-Yuga. A maha-Yuga is 12,000 divine years. But its duration is 4,320,000 in earth years. This is easy to remember: 4-3-2 followed by four zeros. It is an important figure. Every 4,320,000-earth years there is a re-beginning of a maha-Yuga. Regarding the maha-Yuga cycle, there is still a larger cycle which is composed of 71 maha-Yugas. If you take 4,320,000 earth years and multiply it by 71, you get that important period called a manu cycle, or a Manu Avatara. Now, each of these Manu Avatara cycles is ruled over by a different manu. He dies when his Manu Avatara cycle is over. Thus, a new Manu Avatara cycle begins with a new manu.

However, there is an even a larger cycle than the Manu Avatara cycle. If you take the Manu Avatara cycle and multiply that by 14, it gives a kalpa. It is the kalpa that is important because it is here that the universe collapses back into the waters of non-existence, which is called the Night of Brahman. The projected universe, which has existed for an enormous period of time, now reaches a state of re-

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dissolvement. Philosophically speaking, it returns to Nirguna Brahman: Reality without form. Let's go over the figures again.

The Kali Yuga has 432,000 earth years.
Dvapara Yuga has 864,000 earth years.
Treta Yuga has 1,296,000 earth years.
Krita Yuga has 1,728,000 earth years.

These four Yugas together comprise a maha-Yuga, or a Great Age, and total 4,320,000 earth years.

Now, 71 maha-Yugas comprise a Manu Avatara cycle. It contains 306,720,000 earth years.

Fourteen Manu Avatara cycles make a kalpa, which is also known as a pralaya. The kalpa, or pralaya, contains 4,294,080,000 earth years.

A kalpa is considered a day in the life of Lord Brahma, the creator. It is important to recognize that a kalpa is just a day cycle. It does not include the night cycle. Thus, a full day cycle and a full night cycle are two kalpas: one of existence, and one non-existence. Thus, a full day is a Day of Brahman, and a full night is a Night of Brahman. This night-cycle is of equal length to the day-cycle. Thus, a full day in the life of Lord Brahma is 4,294,080,000 times two, which equals 8,588,160,000 earth years.

Now, 360 days in the life of Lord Brahma give a year in the life of Brahma, which is 3,091,737,600,000 earth years. Lord Brahma's life is 120 years. That is 371,008,510,000,000 earth years.

I am back to a kalpa. What is a kalpa? It is 14 cycles of Manu composed of 71 maha-Yugas. How long is a maha-Yuga? It is 4,320,000 earth years. Of what is a maha-Yuga composed? It is composed of four cycles called Yugas. The four Yugas include:

Krita, a good cycle,
Treta, not as good a cycle,
Dvapara, a negative cycle, and
Kali, a very negative cycle.

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By “good” the mystics mean that the life forms (trees, animals, the astral beings, and man) have integrity and virtue. It should be noted that the more negative the cycle, the shorter is that cycle. This is an important mystical concept. The Kali Yuga is the shortest cycle.

So far in this kalpa there have been six different Manus. Six Manu rulers have already manifested and passed. We are now in the seventh Manu cycle of this kalpa. The Manu master, who is the ruler of the seventh part of this kalpa, is called Manu Vaivasvata. Sri Vaivasvata is the name of the present Manu.

Allow me to back up and start all over again. The universe is like a solar year. You know what a solar year is Aries, Taurus, Gemini, etc., all the way around to Pisces, and back to Aries again. Thus, we keep saying this is a cycle. We think the cycle is the same. But the cycle of last year was over there in a different part of the spatial universe. Next year it will be in a different part of the spatial universe. Why? Because although it is a cycle, it is speeding forward to Alpha Centarii. Thus, next year that same Aries cycle will be in quite a different space of the universe. Only the relationship of the cycle will remain the same. However, the larger cycle will have caused different changes in the smaller cycles. So although the cycle looks like it is the same, it is not. Why? Because in the larger movement of the universe, it is in different segments of space and time.

We have seen this effect in the lives of the U.S. presidents. Every 20 years, the U.S. president who was in office died. However, before Mr. Reagan became president, I predicted that despite the twenty-year cycle, he would not die in office because the larger cycle had changed.

People keep thinking about the little cycle of twelve months. But where in the Yuga are we? Where in the maha-Yuga are we? Where in the Manu Avatara cycle are we? Where in the kalpa are we? It is in a wholly different space and time. Thus, the rules are not exactly the same. However, these small changes are often the difference between the life and death of a president. They are major factors as far as a man is concerned. It is this key that I am trying to teach you.

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In exoteric symbolism, we could say that what is proper for a child may not be proper for a married person. In esoteric terms we say that time and space have many, many levels. What the *Puranas* infer, is that when the Manu changes, the key esoteric rules change. Everything seems the same to the unenlightened. However, it is not. On the exoteric level everything changes, but seems the same. For example, Lord Indra dies, and a new Lord Indra is born and takes his place as king of the gods. But to the unenlightened, everything seems the same. The duties of Lord Indra seem somewhat the same. In the Manu cycle of a kalpa, the Seven Sages change. These are the Seven Sages that always surround the throne of God. When the Manu cycle changes, the name of Manu changes, and also the Seven Sages change. These are the seven stars of Ursa Major, the Big Bear, incorrectly called the Big Dipper.

The *Puranas* give the names of the gods that exist. They give a number of god-groups. If the word “god-groups” scares you, how about the words “high astral beings.” Their forcefields change. The adityas are one of the god-groups of devas that are important. The adityas are the twelve gods. You know them immediately upon hearing that they are twelve gods. They are the forcefields that control the zodiacal signs. Where are the two missing gods? There are still two gods missing. We are unaware of the two gods who rule over Taurus and Virgo. The adityas are the twelve sons of a goddess. They rule the subdivisions of consciousness. They rule the twelve states of consciousness. They are, at this time, the rulers and therefore become very important. They, the adityas, are always fighting demons.

There are seven more manus yet to come in this kalpa. Svarni will be the name of the next five manus.

Now let's return to the concept of time. You might be familiar with the nanosecond, the smallest scientific measurement of time, and the light-year, the longest scientific measurement of time.

Let's return to the four Yugas. The first and the longest in duration is the Krita Yuga. It lasts 4,000 divine years.

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The Krita Yuga lasts 4,000 divine years.
Treyta Yuga lasts 3,000, divine years.
Dvapara Yuga lasts 2,000 divine years.
Kali Yuga lasts 1,000 divine years.

The pattern is 4-3-2-1, a very mystical pattern. This equals 10,000 divine years. There is a period that exists after each Yuga which is called sandhya. It is a period of latency. For example, for the Krita Yuga, which is 4000 divine years, you take 20% of it, i.e., 800 divine years. The sandhya of the Treyta Yuga lasts 3000 years. If we take 20% of that, we get 600 divine years. The Dvapara Yuga lasts 2000 years, and 20% of that is 400 divine years. The Kali Yuga lasts 1000 years, and 20% of that is 200 divine years. These sub-stages, these sandhya, are like miniature waters of non-existence. It is a matrix of dissolving one sub-stage and then turning around and re-formulating the new Yuga. Thus: $800 + 600 + 400 + 200 = 2000$ divine years. This added to the maha-Yuga of 10,000 divine years, gives 12,000 divine years.

If you take Treyta Yuga which has a total of $4,000 + 800$ for a total of 4800 divine years, and then you multiply this figure by 360, you will wind up with 1,728,000 earth years. If you take the Treyta Yuga of 3600 divine years and multiply it by 360, you get 1,296,000 earth years. If you take the Dvapara Yuga of 2,400 divine years and multiply it by 360, you get 864,000 earth years. If you take the Kali Yuga of 1,200 divine years and multiply it by 360, you get 432,000 earth years. Add all those together, and you get the number of earth years in a maha-Yuga which neatly comes out to 4,320,000 earth years.

It looks like such a strange number, but it is divisible by the most amazing numbers. This is the great secret. At one time the cycle of the sun was not $365 \frac{1}{4}$ days. It was literally 360 days, which is why there are that many degrees in a circle. This change of the earth's cycle of 360 to $365 \frac{1}{4}$ was due to a planet that exploded, which did exist in what is called today the asteroid belt. This belt exists between Mars and Jupiter. The planet's name was Lucifer. When it exploded, it literally broke the gravitational forcefield. Thus, everything expanded outwards. When that happened, we moved from 360 days per year, to $365 \frac{1}{4}$ days per year.

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The ancients talked about Lucifer being the shining light and Venus being the morning star. Lucifer was a good guy, even in the Bible. He was on friendly terms with God. As he often walked through heaven, God, upon meeting him, said, "Hi, how are you?" Lucifer answered, "I'm doing pretty good boss. How are you doing today? Is everything going well?" God answered saying that it was going fine and according to the plan.

People ask, "Why is God even talking to Lucifer?" My question is, "What is Lucifer doing in heaven?"

We have finished the *Brahma Purana*, and will go on to the *Vishnu Purana* in the next chapter.

Chapter 6

THE VISHNU PURANA & LORD NARAYANA

In discussing the *Vishnu Purana*, I will blend a few other *Puranas* with it. Let's return to the waters of non-existence, which is the potential creative force of the universe. Lying upon this ocean is Lord Vishnu. Lord Vishnu, when he is lying on the ocean of non-existence, is known as Nirayana, which means the one sleeping on a bed of water. This symbolizes two things.

The massive non-existence of existence (which is hard for some people to grasp).

Floating upon this ocean is primarily the non-formed form of Lord Vishnu as Nirayana.

I will try to explain this by means of Jungian psychology and the collective unconscious, as well as by the symbolism of dreams. Both Jung and Freud had Hindu teachers. In Europe at the time of Freud, it was very fashionable to invite Hindus into your home for the summer. Freud did this, and these Hindus shared their philosophy with him.

I believe that Jung did not have Hindus at his home as guests for the summer. However, he did have a guru in Bombay, if I remember correctly. Jung and the guru spent a great deal of time talking about what we are now discussing: consciousness with form, or the conscious mind, and consciousness without form (i.e., the subconscious mind according to Freud, and the unconscious mind, according to Jung). In Hindu philosophy these concepts are known as Reality with form (Saguna Brahman), and Reality without form (Nirguna Brahman).

When Jung first began to crystallize his idea of the collective unconscious, he was in a dream state. In that dream he was walking through a house, down into the basement, and then into a sub-basement. On the floor of the sub-basement was a little grave. The mound was not very high. Jung realized that it was a grave of the earliest

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being, like a prehistoric man. He could see the bones within the grave because it was so shallow. In his literature he wrote that he knew that below that grave were also artifacts. He took the basement and that primordial man to be the symbol of the unconscious (the subconscious in Freudian terms) where the archetypal symbols were hidden. This is very clear in his writings, although he never developed the theme. It is, and was, very clear that there was something even below this sub-basement, below the unconscious level of the mind.

It is this, which he never wanted to touch. Why? He said in some of his later writings that his interest was in psychology, not in religion. He was interested in the ego. He was not interested in that which preceded the ego. During his last meeting with his guru in Bombay, they had an argument in which Jung said there was nothing beyond the ego. The guru said that there was. It was an ego-without-form. This concept scared the heavens out of Jung. He said, "I am not interested in that concept. I am only interested in what I can see (that which has form). If we go beyond form, I will no longer be in the realm of psychology." It was the last time he went back to India.

However, let's return to the unformed, pure potentiality of the waters of non-existence.

Lying on the waters is a formed, masculine entity of Lord Vishnu, the lord of preservation, as Narayana. Out of the stomach of Vishnu came a lotus root. At the other end of the lotus root sprang a lotus. The lotus opened up and out of this lotus sprang Lord Brahma. Out of Brahma's stomach also came a little lotus. (Can you see the multiple levels of creation?) We usually pay more attention to Lord Brahma sitting on a lotus, for he is the god of creation, the principle of creation. The primordial purpose of Lord Vishnu, the principle of preservation, is basically to preserve everything, to make sure that nothing is lost. Thus, even when Lord Brahma dies at the end of a kalpa, his potentiality to reappear as Lord Brahma is safeguarded by Lord Vishnu. But even in the total collapsing of the universe at the end of a kalpa, everything dissolves back into the ocean of non-existence. It is not destroyed. It is simply drawn back into the navel of Lord Brahma, which is then drawn back into the navel of Lord Vishnu, which is drawn back into the waters of non-existence.

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The navel of Brahma is dissolved the lotus closes, the lotus is projected back inwards, and all we have now is Lord Vishnu, who is passive, but in some sense can and does hold the seed of Lord Brahma. Then the seed of Lord Vishnu is drawn back into the ocean of non-existence. So, although we have preserved the seed of Lord Vishnu, we have the third principle, Lord Shiva, the lord of dissolution. His function is to redissolve all that is useless, and all that stands in the way of cosmic and/or spiritual evolution. Thus, it is Lord Shiva who dissolves the various seeds back into those waters of non-existence.

Yet, when a new kalpa begins afresh, from these waters of non-existence, springs the lotus. From this lotus, Lord Brahma is reborn. From his navel comes the second lotus, the lotus of creation of all the universes. And it moves again through its cycle, through its spiral.

The function of Lord Shiva, the lord of dissolution, the principle of dissolving, is to make room for new space. It is like when your brain is growing, and if your skull doesn't give you more space, you are in serious trouble. Or in psychological terms, you are walking through this world and your head is filled with things and thoughts. Thus, there is no space. If this happens, your mind begins to malfunction. It begins to forget things in order to make more room for new thoughts and new things.

The world is like this. Lord Brahma has so much enthusiasm for his creations that there is no more space. I assume you all know this principle. You have to make room by getting rid of the outworn and useless. It is called meditation. Independent of meditation, someone has to draw him back and gain some control over the creation. It is just like going to sleep after having a terrible day. The mind is so full that it cannot go to sleep. It cannot think. It can only emote. However, when one wakes up the next morning, it is not quite so bad as it was yesterday. Sleep gives you a chance to regenerate. Thus, it is also with Lord Brahma and his creations.

You cannot separate one god from the other two gods. You cannot separate one principle from the other two principles. Life is a wheel.

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It is a cycle. It cannot be broken down into thirds. Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu, and Lord Shiva are interlocked into one creative life process.

Here is the story that I want to share. Markandeya was a holy man, a sacred sage. Once upon a yogi time, Markandeya was wandering inside the world of God. He was walking over the plains. He was wandering like a tirtha, observing everything, but not being attached to anything or anyplace. He never stayed longer than overnight in any one place. He was filled with bliss, for everyone he saw was meditating. Everything was beautiful. Everybody was doing just as they were supposed to do. Everything was excellent and harmonious.

This great sage, this holy man, like all true rishis, was endowed with life unending. Markandeya was walking through a subjective Lord Vishnu, or an objective Lord Vishnu. Was he walking through realms of potentiality, or realms of actuality? In either event, Markandeya was happy and peaceful.

Suddenly something happened. Vishnu was sleeping and his lips were slightly parted. He was breathing heavily, and as he exhaled, Markandeya fell right out of the mouth of God.

Where did he fall? He fell into the ocean of non-existence. Now, Markandeya started treading water. However, being a sage, this did not seem to bother him. This experience is a little different from what he had been experiencing for the last 12,000 divine years. Then he turned around and beheld a sleeping giant, glowing upon the top of the waters. This giant was glowing and sleeping in utter darkness of non-existence. Suddenly Markandeya saw in the absolute starless night a serpentine, masculine figure lying on his side and glowing with a pulsating rhythm. Markandeya became apprehensive and afraid. He started swimming away from it. Splashing around, he became pensive. (Is that a good word for a sage?) He began to ponder; he began to doubt. Ah, there's the rub! He began to doubt, "Is this a dream? Am I under a spell of illusion? What is this utterly strange universe that I now find myself? I am sure it is a product of my vivid imagination. Here there is no Sun. Here there is no Moon. There are no mountains. All has vanished.

The earth has disappeared. What manner of universe is this in which I now find myself?"

The sage, splashing around in the vast expanse of the waters of non-existence, was on the very point of paralysis because of fear. All he saw is the utter darkness of the waters of non-existence. Finally, he again became aware of the form of the sleeping God. He was amazed because of this sleeping giant. He became so amazed at what he was seeing, that fear and despair left him. [Get caught up in the wonderment of the universe and there are no negative emotions.]

Partially submerged, this God resembled more of a mountain breaking out of the waters. But it glowed. It flickered with a deep, wondrous, strange light from deep within itself. Because the sage was amazed, because the amazement and wonderment brought the sage joy, he now started swimming towards it, whereas earlier he was swimming away from it. [Again an important symbol.] He swam closer and closer. Markandeya was about to come up to the face of the God. He was about to ask a question of it. At that moment Lord Vishnu inhaled again. Guess what! The sage was suddenly sucked back into the interior landscape of God. The next thing, he found himself walking along the paths and roads of the inner landscape of God.

This brought Markandeya some confusion. You could say that this brought *extreme* confusion to the sage. Was that experience an intuition? Was it his imagination? What was it? What was his interpretation? He tried to understand what had happened so that he could explain it to himself. However, the more he wandered in the interior of Lord Vishnu, the more he forgot that experience. The more he got caught up in the beauty, peace and bliss of the world of God, the sooner he forgot that experience. He was again peaceful and happy in the joy of his life. Why? Because the meditators were meditating, the chanters were chanting, the women were "womening" and the fishermen were fishing. Everybody was doing what he was supposed to do. Everything was orderly.

However, somewhere in the back part of his brain, the brain stem (though he forgot), he could still vaguely remember that something unusual had happened to him. He thought that maybe this was a

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blessing from long ago. Maybe it was simply a vision that he had had. Perchance he fabricated something. Anyway, Markandeya was walking and resuming his former life. The yogis were practicing everywhere. The kings were wise and kind. Everything was wonderful. Everyone was following the four stages of life.

But then, *deja vu*. Once again he slipped out of the sleeping giant's mouth and tumbled back into the ocean of non-existence. It was even darker and colder than before. It was absolutely silent. However, this time he didn't see any sleeping giant. Instead, he beheld a baby boy who was sitting beneath a fig tree, both floating on the waters of non-existence. The little child was glowing and sleeping. Markandeya saw the little child, who woke up and started to joyfully play. Markandeya was a little curious, as sages oftentimes are. However, whereas the glow from the giant was soft, the light from the child was brilliant. Markandeya's eyes could not stand its brilliant splendor. Thus, he remained at a comfortable distance from the baby.

Markandeya began to think. [Sages think. Sages keep asking questions.] Markandeya thought, it seems to me that something like this seemed to have happened some 12,000 divine years ago. It seems that this had happened to me before. Suddenly Markandeya's mind became aware of the bottomless depth of the shoreless ocean. He became fearful and began to drown. The little child, seeing him drowning, said, "Hi! Welcome, Markandeya." The voice was deep, but very melodious and soft. What Markandeya heard was, "Welcome, Markandeya. Do not be afraid, my child. Come hither." It had been a couple of kalpas since anyone had the audacity to call Markandeya a child! His masculine ego went into full gear. [I hope that you understand that symbolism.] He was not happy. But he thought, "Well, this water is deep. I'd better get the heck out of this water. There is a fig tree there. The ground must be a bit more solid." So he moved towards the fig tree.

Then Markandeya started his reprimand. He said, "It has been many thousands of years since anyone dared to address me in such terms. Even the highest gods regard me with exceptional respect. Not even Lord Brahma would dare to approach me in such an irreverent manner. Lord Brahma addresses me as, 'O, thou long-lived

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one!' How dare you call me, 'my child'. Who merits death from Markandeya the sage?" [And all sorts of garbage, like that. It is important, if you understand the symbolism of dealing with the psychological pattern.]

After the sage got rid of his wrath, the baby started to talk again to Markandeya. "Child, I am thy parent, thy father. I am thy elder. I am the primordial being which bestows all life. Why do you not come to me? Why do you stand there in the cold, dark waters? Child, I knew your father well. I remember him well. He practiced austerities in ancient times to beget a son, to beget you. He gained my grace. Pleased with his perfect sadhana, I granted him a request. He asked for a son. He asked for you, a son who would be endowed with inexhaustible life-strength, who would never grow old, who would never die who would hold forever the secret core of existence. You stem from that core." [There it is: You stem from that core. He didn't say you are the core, but rather that you stem from that core. I have a feeling something a little deeper is intended in this statement.]

The baby continued, "Child, why don't you come up and sit beside me under this fig tree. [There's that fig tree again. Fig trees and lemon trees were very big in ancient symbolism. By the way, it was not an apple tree. But, I assume you know that.]

With this, Markandeya's ego was satisfied. He was going to sit under the fig tree with the cosmic child. Then Markandeya said, "Ah, Ancient One. Let me know the secret of your maya, the secret of your apparition, now as a child lying and playing in the infinite ocean." Again, you see a switch here. Before he was under the fig tree. Now he is in the middle of the ocean again. It's implying a new stage of consciousness.

Markandeya continued, "Let me know the secret of your maya, the secret of your apparition, now lying and playing in the infinite ocean. O, Lord of the Universe, what is Your name? I believe you to be the great being of all beings, for who else could exist as you now exist? Who art thou?"

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And the child replied, "I am the primeval cosmic man. I am Narayana."

Like the Seven Sages, the seven stars move around the throne of God at the Pole Star zone. However, this really doesn't convey very much because we don't have all the other cultural background training. Surely, one of the cultural factors missing in most people's consciousness is most important. It has to do with the cycles. We are in the Kali Yuga. But when did this cycle start? That is vital. It started with the death of Lord Krishna, who is one of the forms of Lord Vishnu. Lord Krishna died in the year 5249 B.C.E. So at the time of this text (1998), we are 7,247 earth years into the Kali Yuga. This means that we have only 424,753 earth years left until the beginning of the Golden Age.

In exactly the same pattern, you can break down Aries, Taurus, Gemini, etc. into sub-cycles. They just keep repeating themselves. That is how you basically break down the 30-degree sign. You divide 30 by 12, which gives you divisions of 2 1/2 degree each. Thus, Aries rules the first 2 1/2 degrees of Aries. The next 2 1/2 degrees are ruled by Taurus, etc. Or you can divide 360 degrees by 108, which gives you a division of 3 1/3 degrees. There are only two things in the universe: addition and subtraction. There is nothing else. Multiplication is just multiplying addition, and division is just multiplying subtraction.

So you can break down the Kali Yuga by dividing it by 49 (7 x 7), and then by dividing it again by 12. And then dividing it by 3.333 again. And then dividing by 2.5 again. Thus:

$$432,000 / 49 = 8816.32$$

$$8816.32 / 12 = 734.7$$

$$734.7 / 3.333 = 220.4$$

$$220.4 / 2.5 = 88.2 \text{ years}$$

This means that the new upa-cycle, the upa-golden age within this Kali Yuga, will begin in 88.2 years, or at the summer solstice of the

year 2086. This is not the end of a kalpa. It's Sri Yuketeswarji's individual, smaller kalpa, an upa-kalpa, if you will. It's going from passive to active, which means it is an ending cycle.

The trouble is most earthlings are emotionally conditioned to think life is form. When Clarence left his body, they said, "Clarence is dead." He is not dead. People could say that he does not have a physical body any more. That is correct. He doesn't have a physical body; however, he is still walking around with a very active astral body. At some time, far into the future, he will find himself in a less subtle body. He is still alive, but he will not be very active (at this time) on the physical plane. Nonetheless, he is still living.

Even at the end of a kalpa, when everything is drawn back into the ocean, into the Night of Brahma, life is there. It is simply passive. It is in a state like sleeping. It is just a matter of time, and the child will wake up. People find it hard to conceive that there is a life beyond the physical body activity or life beyond form. There is life in the waters of non-existence. Now, in an earthling's life, it is called sleep. It is called unconsciousness. We have our cycles of awake and asleep, of consciousness and of unconsciousness.

Thus, the mystical goal is simply to become conscious in the unconscious state! This means becoming aware in the sleep state, in the dream state, and also in the everyday, awakened state. People are very unaware. The goal is to become more aware, to become more aware of the self and the creation that exists within. In mystical terms, this means that death (unconsciousness) is to be overcome.

Thus, the goal is to become immortal (ever conscious)! This means being forever aware of oneself, and of the creation that one creates and dissolves, as well as the creation one might find himself in: the dream of God.

This brings us back to the idea of talking about our creation and The Creation, the secondary projection and the primary projection. Remember the churning of the ocean of milk?

I always call it the churning of the ocean of milk. Remember we talked about various things, which manifested as the ocean was

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churned. Now, one of the questions asked about the symbolism of the poison, which was mixed in with the elixir of immortality. Swami Kripananda looked into this. He asked Swami Surresh about it. He answered, "Well, you know it's a symbol. It's sort of like life. You have to take the good with the bad." Most people would say, "OK." However, Swami Kripanandaji did not accept this answer. (I was very pleased with him.) He asked again, "Yes. But what does it really mean, mystically?"

With that Surresh smiled with great approval and said, "Well, the elixir of immortality is at the bottom of the ocean, at the bottom of the mind. (Remember, everything is alive). Now, when one starts doing spiritual discipline, he churns the ocean of consciousness. This means he churns the mind. When he does that, a lot of other things come up to the surface of the mind. You churn up emotions, fears, angers, and many other things from the past. These things have to be dealt with. Churning of the ocean has to do with dealing with things that are poisonous in our own mind and nature.

The poison is the things from the past that have been poisoning you, that are also poisoning you now. We have to get into the depths of the mind and still the waters. Most of us just drink the poison karma of the past. The gods and the mystics consciously and unconsciously called upon our ishta devata to drink the poisonous karma for us. We in turn help to remove the poisonous karma from other people. (Again, levels of creations.)

Saying it in more unified mystical terms: The greater part of our being must drink the poison and neutralize it, so that the lesser part of our being will not die, and thus can obtain the benefits of the elixir of immortality. However, in the meantime, there are a lot of things with which we have to deal.

Chapter 7

THE FORMS OF THE COSMIC SELF

In the last chapter we were talking about the great sage Markandeya and how in the Night of Brahma, the period between dissolution and re-creation, he had a few miraculous, mystical experiences. Markandeya had a vision of Lord Vishnu in a series of three archetypal transformations.

The first revelation was of Lord Vishnu as an elemental force: the cosmic waters.

The second revelation was of Lord Vishnu as the reclining giant on the waters of non-existence.

Third revelation was of Lord Vishnu as the divine child playing on the infinite ocean beneath the cosmic fig tree, which sprang straight out of the cosmic ocean.

There is a fourth revelation, which I have not yet talked about. In this fourth revelation Markandeya perceived the cosmic hamsa, the holy, cosmic gander. In this revelation there was clairauidiencea. He first heard the flapping of the wings of a wild gander. This sound produced a unique category of creation. Secondly, he heard another sound made by that hamsa. It was the sound of its breathing. With each inbreath there was a mystical creation. With each outbreath there was a mystical redissolving of that creation.

One of the essentials in the *Puranas* is that the primary Lord (depending upon the *Purana* we are reading) takes on all three forms: Lord Brahman, the god of creation; Lord Vishnu, the lord of preservation; and Lord Shiva, the lord of redissolvment. This points out that these are the three forces of the universal life. They are the expressions, the three aspects of life.

Obviously, the Shivites would emphasize Lord Shiva. The Vishnuites would emphasize Lord Vishnu, and a very small sect would emphasize Lord Brahma.

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On the microcosmic level, these three are the three phases of the life-breath: The inbreath, the hold, and the outbreath (IHO). This cycle is like that of the macrocosm; these three phases cannot be separated.

The second vital factor is the realization that we are in the waters of non-existence where there are forms:

The form of the elemental concept of the cosmic waters,

The glowing giant reclining on a bed of water,

The divine child playing,

The cosmic fig tree, the cosmic wish tree,

And the flying, breathing cosmic hamsa.

Thus, there is form and there is formlessness. In between these two forces (potential and actual) are seeds by which transformation of the formlessness manifest into a form. These are connected. Both of these states of existence spring from the bindu, the seed of being. Without these seeds, there could be no formed life, nor any life with form. Thus, Markandeya's revelations reveal the potential seeds, and these seeds are revealed as various archetypal patterns.

I would like to return to the concept of the Yuga. Remember, at one point the creation is new, fresh and vibrant. This new life had four major qualities. Within each of the major four Yugas or phases, there is a deterioration of the life's vitality. In short, there is a degradation of the new universe into four sections: the first Yuga, the second Yuga, the third Yuga, and the fourth Yuga. These four Yugas make up a maha-Yuga.

When we get down into the fourth Yuga, the Kali Yuga, the world is in pretty bad shape. In this Yuga, the dharma has really disappeared. The holy duty has evaporated. All souls seem to be filled only with greed. No souls seem to be in a state of enlightenment. There don't seem to be any wise souls. No one utters truth. They do not stand by their sacred word. This Kali Yuga has a short duration

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(as compared with the other Yugas.) The more balanced a Yuga, the longer it can sustain itself. The more imbalanced a Yuga, the shorter its duration. In Kali Yuga old people are destitute of wisdom that should occur from old age. The old try to behave like the young and the young do not know how to behave. The distinguishing factor between teacher and disciple is lost. The distinguishing feature between the ruler and the ruled is lost. It's like my guru said many decades ago, "Chaos reigns supreme!"

The key factor missing in this Kali Yuga is what Yoganandaji called the 'will'. This has nothing to do with being willful. It has nothing to do with the drive for power. It has nothing to do with desire. What is missing is the will to rise to the supreme heights. Lacking this, we seem to have failed mystically, for wisdom does not exist. Love does not exist. Sympathy does not exist. However, egoistic greed and passion do exist and rule.

In this last stage, the world has deteriorated to a point beyond salvaging, thus the universe is drawn back into the primordial ocean of non-existence, and that cycle is complete. Thus, a new, fresh cycle begins again.

Within the formless waters of non-existence we have seen a number of primary symbols. Thus, the third factor arises. What is real? What is reality? For most psychologists and even some students of the occult, it seems that reality is simply a function of individual consciousness. The goal, the aim of yoga is to transcend the limits of individualized consciousness, so that we might see the reality beyond that individualized consciousness.

All this mythological symbolism, all this symbolic psychology has one key meaning. It is meant to convey the wisdom of these ancient sages in pictorial form, as visions, as mystical experiences that the yogis go through in their daily lives. Well, almost all yogis.

The difficulty is that many people think these visions are psychic experiences. But mystically speaking, they are not psychic experiences. They are mystical experiences, which is quite a different thing. Knowable reality being a function of consciousness, we have to tran-

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scend the limits of individualized consciousness in order to see that reality. Seeing that reality does not mean that we have to go “up there.” We can go deep within. Why? Because the ancients have said, “As above, so below. As with yesterday, so with today and tomorrow.”

That which is true of our individual experiences is true of the cosmic universe. That which is true of the cosmic universe is also true of our individual experience. Most importantly, what you find out about the cosmos, in some deep symbolic sense is true of the psycho-physiological experiences of your own being. Although these things seem so common, we fail to accept the miracle that is everyday life!

Although Patanjali talks about eight stages of yoga, there are really only three key stages:

1. Concentration, often referred to as fixed attention;
2. Contemplation, sometimes referred to as meditation; and
3. Samadhi sometimes referred to as total absorption, or conscious trance.

The fixed attention is directed exclusively, and for long periods of time, upon a single object. Yoganandaji and my guru taught that it doesn't matter what object you fix your mind upon, just fix your mind upon something. Nonetheless, and respectfully, I feel that because things are symbols, and because things do have form, and that form gives energy, the object upon which you fix your mind is most vital. It is true that any object will work, but the outcome will depend, very importantly, upon the form to which you fix your mind. Consequently the ishta as the ultimate form of exclusive long-term concentration and contemplation is extremely vital as to the outcome. These principles, or primary stages, are vital and interlocked. I need to emphasize again that it all comes down to meditation, which will, in time, lead to samadhi. Meditation is an adjunct to lifestyle, and lifestyle is an adjunct to meditation. Without a sane lifestyle, there can be no meditation.

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Allow me to repeat that: Without a sane, sensible, responsible, wise, enlightened, judicious, rational, and lucid lifestyle, there can be no deep meditation. Without daily self-awareness, there can be no meaningful meditation.

Unless we have a sane lifestyle as a springboard to meditation, we cannot attain the deeper mystical stages. We cannot rant, rave and run and expect to close our eyes and attain meditation. Everything needs to be established from a quiet, peaceful, unrushed, sane lifestyle. From this, and only from this, can we take another step towards cosmic revelation.

Many Western writers feel that the mythology (which I prefer to call symbolic psychology) cannot be explicitly commented upon. They feel that it cannot be elucidated. This is not true. If you understand the nature of symbolism, you definitely come to the understanding that symbolism has a multifarious and multilevel existence. Nonetheless, it is possible for each seeker to take a symbol and say what it explicitly means regarding him or another. Yet we should never lose the awareness or the understanding that there are still new and deeper levels by which the symbol can be interpreted. Many of us in the Western tradition and even many of us in the Eastern tradition are being drawn into Western theology and Western models subliminally. Western symbolism is really the creation of only a few minds, whereas the symbolic psychology of Asia springs from the minds of thousands of mystics and sages.

The difference between the symbolism of the West and the East is that the West seems to have insisted upon freezing their symbols into one and only one possible meaning. They fail to realize that this is not the function of a symbol. By their freezing it into one meaning, the symbol is no longer a symbol. Furthermore, it should be clear that this is not possible with a word, much less with a symbol. Nonetheless, having frozen the symbols for a very long time, it is very hard (if not impossible) to unfreeze them so as to re-reveal their original deeper, and more fluid meaning(s). As a whole, the symbolism of the East thrives on giving a symbol ever new meaning, so much so that often it looks like knowledge gone amuck.

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Nonetheless, they are simply indicating another facet of the infinite divine, and also another facet of the infinite life in which we live, move, and have our being. With imagination, with intuition, we can move forward and upwards to extract from the Eastern symbolic psychology deeper understandings of the structure of consciousness, as well as the interplay between things and that consciousness between the creator(s) and the creations. It helps us to understand how things affect our moods and attitudes and how our moods and attitudes affect things, and thus events. Symbolic psychology helps us to understand the mystery of the creation and the re-creation of our lives with each breath we breathe.

It is here that the mystics are trying to direct their consciousness. Often they are looking more at memories of their lives than of their life itself. They do this even when they look at something or respond to something for the first time, as when they see for the first time their beloved, when they see the ocean for the first time, when they see the mountains for the first time. Thus they are really living more in their memories of their subconscious patterns than those in the pre-conscious level. They seek out memories in the sense of the archetypal experiences that exist in the lower levels of their unconscious mind, rather than the object itself. It is hard to get outside that level of consciousness because it is very hard to transcend individualized consciousness and all of its *samskaras* with all the emotions and thus meanings that we assign to them, rather than the cosmic meaning that it has, in and of itself.

Realize that the individualized and differentiated forms of the universe and of our own individualized consciousness (from the very lowest underworlds up to the very highest heavens) are all supported by that formless fluid, from the depths of our individualized being, symbolized by water, the waters of non-existence. I should point out that the word “underworlds” means the lowest *tala* states of consciousness, and that the word “heaven” means the higher states of *Karuna* consciousness.

Everything that exists, everything that will exist, simply has flown forth, has been churned out of the primordial waters of non-existence; and that which has flown and evolved or espoused out of this

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primary fluid is maintained by the waters of life. It is maintained by the circulation of this fluid. This, I hope, will give you deeper insight and meaning to your Major Kriya, as well as your Hong-Sau Kriya.

If we move on, penetrating deeper into this symbolic psychology, it becomes obvious that our individual conscious personality is supported by the fluid element of our pre-conscious. And the pre-consciousness is supported by the fluid element of our subconscious. And the subconsciousness is supported by the fluid element of our unconscious.

However, let us return to the fourth experience, which we did not discuss. It was Markandeya's experience with the cosmic gander, the hamsa. Some people would say that it is an experience of the divine self in the body of the universe, which manifests itself through two songs:

1. The first is the melody of its breathing.
2. The second is the song of the beating of its wings.

Anyone who has practiced meditation knows that in quietness there is a rhythm to one's breath, and that in that rhythm there is creation of moods, feelings, revelations, etc.

Creation often means a dissolving of less perfect states of consciousness. It is said historically that with the inhalation the hamsa makes is the sound "ham" (with a nasalized "m"). It is said the exhalation that the hamsa makes is "sa" (with a special nasalized sound). Thus, the word "sa" sounds more like the "sa" in the word "saw." Thus, the "ham" and the "sa" are part of the hamsa. "Ham" and "sa" are the hamsa, the cosmic gander. The gander needs to understand that there is a correct way in which to breathe. It must breathe according to nature, and not according to its own personal liking. Thus the 'ham' comes with the inhalation, and the 'sa' manifests with the exhalation.

By constantly humming its own name, the hamsa reveals to itself a special state of consciousness. The embodied conscious reveals to

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itself its own true nature as unembodied consciousness. In short, it moves from microcosmic awareness to macrocosmic consciousness.

In becoming absorbed with his own hamsa, he becomes enthralled by the melody. He becomes enraptured by the melody. Thus, he no longer wanders through the wonderful universe, watching all the wonderful people meditating, doing yoga, and doing their dharma. At that moment, he simply wishes to be alone and to remain in a solitary place, liberated from the compulsion to migrate through the spiritual realms. He has found his samadhi!

If I can be personal for a moment, over 50 years ago, my guru used to say, "Ah, yes. God is ever new, ever wondrous bliss." I used to think that was pretty wonderful. However, over the last decade, I have become more and more aware of people who have Alzheimer's disease. For the last five years, a beautiful person has stayed with us. She also has Alzheimer's. Our small rented apartment is on the edge of a bluff with the ocean spread out before you for some 3000 miles. There is nothing but ocean. It is really quite beautiful. She will look out of the window and say, "My God, have you seen this? How beautiful." She will then walk to the other end of the room, and look out, saying, "My God, have you seen this?" Then she will come back to the other side of the room, and say, "Oh my God. Did you see this?" Then she will pick up a newspaper, look up, seeing the ocean, and say, "Oh my God. Have you seen this?" Then she will walk to the other side of the room, look out, saying, "Oh my God, look at this!" And we answer for the 100th time, "Yes, we have. It is beautiful." She is in a state of ever new, ever wondrous bliss. However, those around her are not in ever new, ever wondrous bliss. This has caused me to re-think the concept. I hope it causes you to re-think.

The classical hamsa mantra has been changed to Soham, which means, "This am I." The danger is we filter things as they move from the pre-conscious to the conscious. The profound truth is this: We must try to understand the universe, not try to change it. We need to understand it, not change it. As we keep changing it, we fail to understand it. As we try to change it, we fail to understand.

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In some sense we are right back to the individualized human consciousness. Or, if you prefer, we are back to our limited personalized consciousness steeped in unbelievable delusion and confabulation. What is truth? The truth is that you are, you exist! But it works only if you can say it and understand it: I am truth.

At least four of Markandeya's experiences put him to the test as to what is real. They tested his doubts about what is real. His doubts were put to rest when Lord Vishnu said, "Many forms do I assume." We all assume many forms in our consciousness, millisecond to millisecond. Our divine being, our divine essence, transmutes itself again and again into infinite, yet perishable thoughts, only to return to the cosmic waters of non-existence.

The hamsa sings, "Many forms do I assume, and when the Sun and the Moon have disappeared, I float upon the boundless expanse of the waters of non-existence." Thus we end where we started with Markandeya's first experience of falling out of the mouth of God. This experience was a blessing for him, because he now had two opposing views of reality, which so baffled and disturbed him at first. But then he realized that the formed and the unformed are only two aspects of the real reality. With the cosmic hamsa, all is unified and harmonized in the melody of the cosmic breath. The cosmic hamsa says, "I am the Lord, the all-containing cosmic giant, the imperishable, divine life-center. I bring forth from my essence innumerable forms, and I dissolve them back into my formless being at the end of each cycle of time. I even dissolve that cycle." Thus, we end where we began, with the waters of non-existence.

The *Puranas* open with a description of the dissolving of a kalpa cycle. It might be helpful to recount it.

The Highest One in the form of primordial waters gradually gathered and stored within himself the glowing energy. Then with this boundless strength, he determined to produce again the universe. He, who is himself the universal, visualized the form of the universe with its five elements: ether, air, fire, water, and earth. Then the infinite ocean of non-existence, fathomless, subtle, calm and undisturbed, found Lord Vishnu entering the waters of non-existence.

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As he entered these waters, he gently stirred it, and ripples formed upon the waters. This is great symbolism. Lord Vishnu, upon entering the waters, caused the waters to gently ripple. Water in motion is creation (especially in psychological terms). This is quite different from the churning of the ocean, yet in some sense, it is a very subtle churning. As the ripples moved, tiny ringlets of energy formed. This produced space (ether space), invisible, intangible, and most, most subtle.

This ether carried with it an intangible quality of sound. Thus space resounds! From that sound arose the second element, air. In much of the literature, air is referred to as wind. The wind had space at its disposal. Thus it grew, relentlessly expanding far and wide. Some say "violently rushing." Others say "fiercely blowing." From this arose water. From the resistance and the friction arose the fourth element, fire. When the fire manifested, it increasingly devoured great quantities of the cosmic water. When the water had disappeared, there remained a mighty void, within which came into existence the upper spheres of heaven. The universal being, upon seeing that void which came from his own essence, rejoiced in beholding the formation of the heavenly space. Thus, to bring it totally forth, the universal being centered his mind.

The cosmic being put forth a single lotus from his own cosmic body. He put forth a single lotus with a thousand petals of pure gold, stainless and radiant as a thousand suns. At the same time, together with that single lotus of a thousand petals, he brought forth again the god of creation, the creator god of the universe, Lord Brahma, who was seated in the very center of that golden lotus.

Here a number of thoughts occur. First, it is a thousand-petaled lotus. It is not a thousand-petaled chakra. You might remember that it has 1000 petals because there are 50 chakra petals on the astral spine of the chakric tree of life which are stacked 20 stories high. $50 \times 20 = 1000$. So there is something about the stacking of the 50 petals 20 times that has deep significance. You can see that it is not a six system, because if it were, it would be 3×6 , which would be 18. Or it would be 4×6 which would be 24. Thus, it apparently is a five system (i.e., five lower chakras). This means that it is a five system within each of the four worlds. $5 \times 4 = 20$.

When the universe again began to project out, when it began to re-evolve, this whole process of creation was committed into the charge of a perfected yogi. The role of Lord Brahma was entrusted to a perfect yogi, a soul who was in complete control of himself and in control of the power of his universe.

All of this simply points out one of the key factors: your mind-body complex, your psycho physical universe, moves from unconsciousness, to subconsciousness, to preconsciousness, to consciousness, and then re-dissolves back into the lower limits of being. There are other levels of meaning. However, it primarily has to do with you and your bindu—your center of control. You might remember that Lord Brahma is sometimes referred to as the “four-faced one” because he has four faces, one facing each of the cardinal points.

Again a minor note: More often, more attention is given to the golden lotus than to Lord Brahma himself. The golden lotus of Lord Brahma is called the highest aspect of the earth. I wonder whether that is just an aspect of the earth, or an astrological aspect from the earth. Perhaps a better way of saying it is that the golden lotus of Lord Brahma is the highest form of the earth element. What do we mean by form and element? When one thinks of the symbol earth, one might think of the earth goddess, in yoga called moisture, which has many symbolic meanings. Secondly, out of this earth element arises the holy towering mountain with the very life sap of the lotus, not just the Himalayas, the place of permanent snows, but Mount Meru, the central peak of the world, of your world. (21)

Mount Meru is the mainpin, the central axis of our universe, of our earth, and of our own existence. It is sometimes referred to as Mount Kailasa, which is one of the most vital and important homes of Lord Shiva.

Mount Kailasa in the Himalayas is the place of permanent snow. This brings to mind a thought. Here in Hawaii houses are built without air conditioners and without furnaces. The weather is perfect year-round. Yet one of the great gods of the Hawaiian people is the snow goddess, Hum. That's fascinating. How could they ever

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come up with a concept of a snow goddess unless at one time the mountain volcanoes were very tall and had permanent snow upon them? Perhaps the volcanoes blew up in the past and they are not as tall. Or perhaps there is a cross culture that entered into this culture.

What is the importance of a mountain? The importance of a mountain is really that the waters of existence flow down from the mountain. As the clouds hit a mountain, the clouds turn into water and the water flows down as an elixir for earth life. The waters run into rivers that are often the holy goals of pilgrimage. The filament of the lotus, as it were, is the immovable mountain of the world, filled with precious metals, gold and silver (Sun and Moon). The outer petals of the thousand petalled lotuses contain inexpressible contents (in which foreign people lived).

On the underside of the petals are the demons and the nagas. But in the very center of the pericarp of the golden lotus arise the four oceans that extend to the four quarters of that continent called Mother India, which is not a physical, geographical location.

Thus with this continent, which in part is Mother India, the whole vast dream of the universe resumes and majestically moves through its four Yugas, completing a maha-Yuga, and going through its cycles again, until all that has gone before comes yet again. What was, is and shall be. And yet, in some remarkable, mystical sense, evolution has occurred! Thus, things seem the same, but they really are not exactly the same. Why? Because the beholder of the dream is not the same as he was in ancient days when he first beheld what he beheld!

Thus, things past need not come tomorrow. Things dreamt need not be dreamt again, because the awakened soul is a wiser and fuller soul. He moves from the dream of man to the dream of God. He dreams a dream beyond the dream of yesteryear.

Chapter 8

THE VISHNU PURANAS

Let's return to the *Vishnu Purana*. There are two more areas that should be discussed. One is the occult anatomy of the universe as it is described in this *Purana*.

And the second major point is the study of the lokas. The occult anatomy of the universe points out that many miles above the earth are:

The world of the Sun,

The world of the Moon,

The world of the Stars,

The world of Mercury,

The world of Venus,

The world of Mars,

The world of Jupiter,

The world of Saturn,

The world of the Seven Sages (the Big Bear),

And finally, the world of Pole Star (Dhruva).

It is the Seven Sages who constantly circulate and sustain themselves around the throne of God. They constantly move around Dhruva, the North Pole star, which is the center of all the stars in our solar system. Even though the North Pole star changes, it is always the center of our star system. (22)

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Above the North Pole star exists the various lokas. Jnana loka is where the sons of Brahma live. Then comes Tapo loka. The gods live here. Next is Satya loka. It is here that truth lives. This loka is divided into two parts. The lower sphere, or lower part, is referred to as Brahma loka, the residence of the Lord Brahma. The upper sphere, or upper part, is known as Vishnu loka and is the residence of Lord Vishnu.

If one looks at the various worlds, from the faster moving ones to the slower moving ones—the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Sun Jupiter, Saturn—one will notice that this occult anatomy places the world of the stars between the Moon and Mercury. You should not ignore this placement. Those of you who are more occult minded, would be wise to reflect upon this.

According to the *Vishnu Purana*, the three highest lokas are not dissolved at the end of each kalpa of creation. However, the lower three lokas are dissolved along with all their inhabitants at the end of each kalpa. (23)

The lowest dissolving loka is the Earth loka, which you might remember as Bhu loka. The second loka is Bhuvavar loka, and the last loka is Swahar loka. You should know these because of the introductory line of the sacred Gayatri mantra: Om, bhuvar swahar.

The Svar loka is all the regions from the Sun to the North Pole star. Above that is the Bhuvavar loka where all the sages live. The Bhu loka is the earth region with all the earth creatures.

This gives us seven lokas, or worlds, which are sometimes called regions (bhuvana). There are seven regions above and seven regions below. However, these seven lower regions are not referred to as lokas, but are called patalas. Thus, there are 14 regions, or bhuvanas, in this section of the cosmos: seven lokas and seven patalas.

The third key factor in the *Vishnu Purana* is that all the 14 worlds are surrounded by darkness. Beyond this darkness is water, which is surrounded by fire. Surrounding the fire is the air. Beyond this is the sky. One can see here the standard elemental pattern as it exists in the chakric tree of life. Darkness is often symbolized by earth, or the

earth element. And the sky is often indicated as the ether. Thus, the pattern is earth, water, fire, air and ether, the same as in the chakric tree. As above, so below; as external, so within.

This is the encapsulated blueprint that is vital in terms of the occult anatomy of the universe. What would be helpful to you is to make a total diagram of the occult anatomy of the universe. An 8 1/2" x 11" sheet of paper should do nicely, but, of course, you can use a larger sheet of paper if you so wish.

The next thing that *Vishnu Purana* talks about is the occult geography. Here again they talk about regions, and the word they use is "dvipa." The difference between a dvipa region and a bhuvana region is the bhuvanas are astronomical (i.e., above the earth), whereas dvipas relate to places on the earth's sphere.

The world is divided into seven geographical regions. Seven oceans surround these seven geographical regions. Jambu dvipa is right in the center of the seven oceans. In the very center of this is the golden-hued Mount Meru, the sacred mountain. On the four sides of Mount Meru are the four principal mountains, which contain an abundance of Jambu trees. Thus the region is called Jambu dvipa. There are four magnificent lakes surrounding Mount Meru. Mount Meru holds Brahma's golden city.

The sacred Ganges or, if you prefer, the river Ganges, flows out of the feet of Lord Vishnu according to some people. The Ganges flows around and then descends to the sacred city of Brahma. Here it divides itself into four other rivers. The river that flows southward is called Alakananda. In its flowing southward, it divides itself into seven other rivers.

The region around Mount Meru is known as a svarga (heaven) on earth. The gods, goddesses, and many other divine forces live there. It is said that only virtuous earthlings go there. As stated, the River Alakananda flows southward and flows into Bharatavarsha. The sons of Varata live in this region. Also in this region are seven major mountains.

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The ocean surrounds Jamu Dvipa. People here worship Lord Vishnu. In other regions, other gods are worshipped.

You might remember that there are seven netherworlds or underworlds called patala, which is also the name of one of the regions. These netherworlds are:

A-tala
Vi-tala
Su-tala
Ni-tala
Gabhistimat-tala
Maha-tala
Pa-tala

You can see six of these seven patalas, six have simple prefixes: A, Vi, Su, Ni, Maha and Pa. Thus, I think there is a mystery in the patala called Gabhitimat-tala because it is so different from the other prefixes. Thus, it contains a secret. In these underworlds live the various types of beings. (24)

According to the *Vishnu Purana*, the sage Narada once visited these underworlds. Actually he took a trip to the lowest tala, the patala. He discovered that patala was even more beautiful than heaven! Patala was a place filled with jewels, and the rays of the Sun provided light, but no oppressive heat. During the night the moonbeams provided light, but no cold. Patala was also full of rivers, forests and lakes. Even more fascinating, the inhabitants of patala wore extremely beautiful clothes, and they had their bodies rubbed with scented pastes. They also loved music. At the bottom of Patala was Lord Vishnu in the form of the thousand-headed serpent known as Shesha.

Furthermore, under the patalas were several hells. These are different from the patalas, the underworlds, or the netherworlds, or purgatory. These hells are called naraka. Naraka forms the kingdom in which Lord Yama, the lord of death rules. There are different narakas, according to the different types of actions that the person performed in his previous embodied life. The *Vishnu Purana* points

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out that the heaven, the earth, the lokas, the atlas and the narakas are all different. It is vital to understand that in all Asian thought, all realms, including all the hell regions are only temporary, purgatories. That is to say they are all temporal places of existence. They are not places of permanent confinement. (25)

Finally, the *Vishnu Puranas* brings up the concept of transmigration. A great deal of the world believes in reincarnation. However, they believe that humans stay humans and fish stay fish, etc. This *Purana* points out that people can be born as various types of animals or even as gods. However, people are stuck in thinking they can only be humans.

This *Purana* points out that many of the people who have spent a great deal of time in the hells neutralizing their own self-confinement are born again. Where, when, and how they are born depends upon how they handle themselves in the hells, or netherworlds, and in the Earth life. In short, how we handle our earth life determines the patterning in the astral life. And how we handle the astral life (whatever region we might be in) determines our next physically embodied life. Why? Because all these realms are basically one and the same. It is like the ocean. At the shore it is shallow. However, as you go out, it gets deeper and deeper. The depths of the ocean determine the type of fish that live there. It is true of the ocean; thus it is true of this Earth life. So, also, it is true of the astral heavens, the astral netherworlds, the astral underworlds and the astral hells. Thus, attitude is all!

Another salient concept in the *Vishnu Purana* is that of the creation of heaven. A sage comes to Parashara wanting to know about heaven. Parashara answers:

In the beginning, the universe was filled with water. From that water there emerged a huge egg (Anda). That egg was round, not oval and the egg continued to grow bigger. Inside the egg was Lord Vishnu in the form of Lord Brahma. Therefore the egg was called Brahma-anda (Brahmanada).

Inside this egg were mountains, land, seas and oceans, as well as stars, gods, demons and humans. The egg was surrounded by

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water, fire, air and ether. Inside the egg was Lord Vishnu as Lord Brahma, the lord of creation, who proceeded to create the universe. Later in the cycle, when this universe was about to be dissolved, Lord Vishnu turned around and utilized the form of Lord Shiva, the god of re-dissolution. (Remember it's called the *Vishnu Purana*). Now, the sage Parashara continued by explaining how Lord Brahma performed the feat of creation. He said that Lord Brahma is Narayana and that Narayana is Lord Vishnu.

Then the projection was redissolved, and the world again was returned into the cosmic ocean. It was then that Lord Vishnu lay down and slept upon those waters. Lord Vishnu as Narayana saw that there was water all around him, and he desired to re-create the world.

He therefore assumed the form of a boar and went down into the underworlds. Here the world saluted him and asked that he rescue her, the Earth, from the underworlds. Upon hearing the Earth's request, Lord Vishnu in the form of a boar began to roar, and with his tusks ripped open the underworld. He then pulled the Earth up from the underworld. He carefully placed the Earth on the waters that floated on the ocean like an immense bubble. Lord Vishnu leveled the Earth and placed the mountains in their proper places. Thus, the Earth was divided into seven regions.

The sage Parashara then answered questions regarding the creation of beings. He pointed out that there were four types of beings that Lord Brahma created through the powers of his mind. The first beings to be created were the asuras. One must remember that although today the asuras are called demons, in the ancient days they were celestial beings, more positive than negative (from the human viewpoint). The asuras were the first created. I prefer to utilize the word asuras. If I use the word demon, you could easily get lost in the symbolism. The asuras came out of Brahma's thigh. You might remember that is the area in which the atlas exists.

Secondly, through the powers of his mind, Lord Brahma created the devas, which today are generally called gods. These devas issued forth from the mouth of Lord Brahma.

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Thirdly, from the sides of Lord Brahma were created the ancestors, which are often referred to as pitris.(26) This term is sometimes translated as spirits, or disembodied beings. Thus, the word ancestors does not necessarily imply our ancestors, nor that these ancestors were ever in a human form. But, perhaps, they were our ancestors before they, or we, took bodily human form.

Finally the fourth created beings were the humans.

The *Vishnu Purana* says something rather remarkable. It says that after Lord Brahma projected the Krita Yuga, he was both hungry and angry. I find that fascinating. The earthlings were the last to be created. Perhaps this exhausted him. Or, rather was it that the last creation, the human beings—not as masculine and feminine, but as man (Manu) and the descendants of the sons of Manu—were created when Lord Vishnu was angry, i.e., meaning that he created them while in an angular state of consciousness?

As soon as the asuras took form, they wanted to consume Lord Brahma, their creator. Can you see the symbolism of this? That which we create can easily consume us. Our creations often try to consume us. Our creations often do consume us. This has levels of symbolic meaning as well as a literal meaning.

There were some asuras that did not want to consume their creator. Rather they wanted to protect him. Those wanting to protect their creator became known as rakshasas (from the word “raksha,” to protect). Those asuras who wanted to consume their creator became known as yaksha. These are the two groups of asuras. When Lord Brahma became aware of the intentions of these undesirable creatures, the hairs fell off his head and glided to the ground. When these hairs hit the ground, they transformed themselves into serpents (nagas). These nagas are called the gandharvas because they were singing serpents.

Over and above these four groups of beings that were created, many other objects were created. It is said that birds, sheep, goats, cattle, horses, elephants, deer and camels were created. Plants were created. They were all created in the sense of being projected. Sheep were

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created from Brahma's chest. From his mouth, goats were created. From his stomach and his sides came cattle. From his feet came horses, elephants, deer and camels. The plants came from the hair of Brahma's body, but not from his facial hair.

Lord Vishnu, in the form of Lord Brahma, wanted to create a son who would be exactly like him. When he thought of this concept, his son immediately appeared on his lap. The child was crying because he did not have a name. Thus, Lord Brahma gave him the name Rudra, the crying one. You know Rudra by a much more famous name, Lord Shiva. What is fascinating about Lord Rudra is that after he received his name, he was given many other names. Lord Rudra is also known as Lord Shiva, Bharva, Sarva, Mahashra, Paschipotti, Bimi and Mahadev, to name a few.

Once upon a yogi time there was a sage named Dhurvasa. He was a descendant from Mahadev, Lord Shiva. While he was traveling through the world, he saw a very beautiful woman. In her hand she held an even more beautiful and highly fragrant garland. Dhurvasa wanted the woman to give him the garland, and she gladly agreed. He placed it on his head and continued to roam through the world. While he was roaming through the world, he ran into Lord Indra, king of the gods. At the time, Lord Indra was seated on his elephant, so Dhurvasa took the garland and threw it to Lord Indra. Indra caught the garland and placed it on the head of his elephant. The elephant was amazed at the unbelievable celestial scent coming from his head, so he lifted up his trunk to obtain more of the fragrance. In the process, the garland fell off the elephant's head and onto the ground.

As the story goes, Dhurvasa became very angry. He thought that Lord Indra had insulted him. He had not even bothered to thank him for the garland, much less wear it himself. Thus, Dhurvasa was about to curse Lord Indra, but at this moment Lord Indra realized his mistake. He got off the elephant, fell at Dhurvasa's feet and begged that he might be forgiven. However, Dhurvasa was not like the other sages in that he was not so easily placated. He was not satisfied at all. He cursed the Lord Indra. (The curse is the historical mechanism of the *Puranas* by which many of the problems of the

world are explained.) What was the curse? It was that Sri Lakshmi should disappear from Lord Indra's abode.

The Goddess Lakshmi is the goddess of wealth, wisdom and of prosperity. This would, indeed, be a great loss. When Lord Indra returned to his home, he found the place to be dreary and dilapidated. Even the plants were dying. Why? Because the Goddess Lakshmi had left. Also, the sages were not performing the sacrifices. People had become selfish and had lost their wisdom. Because Lord Indra ruled over the three worlds, it was not just his home, not just his region that had become dreary and dilapidated. It was all three worlds that had become dreary and dilapidated.

The asuras, realizing that the devas were now in a weakened state, attacked them, and the asuras won a great battle. The devas did not know what to do. They tried a number of things. They elected Lord Agni, the god of fire, as their military leader. Then they all fled to Lord Brahma for refuge and to ask for help. However, Lord Brahma told them he was unable to help them. He told them that they should speak to Lord Vishnu. (Obviously, the story is from the *Vishnu Purana*). They went to Lord Vishnu who could be found on the northern shores of the great ocean. Thus, all of the gods assembled there and began to mediate and pray.

It is said those after the gods had meditated and prayed for a great length of time, Lord Vishnu could no longer ignore them. Thus, he manifested himself before the devas and gave them the following advice:

First, the gods should meet the asuras and have a temporary truce.

Second, both sides should prepare to churn the great ocean.

Third, before churning, herbs were to be thrown into the ocean.

Fourth, Mount Mandara was to be used as the churner.

Fifth, the great serpent Vasuki was to be used as the rope for turning the churner.

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From this churning would manifest the elixir which would make any being immortal and dominant. Therefore, if the devas drank it, they would easily overcome the asuras.

The question arose, "What was Mount Mandara to be balanced or held upon?" The solution was provided by Lord Vishnu himself, who transformed himself into a gigantic tortoise and went to the bottom of the ocean. The mountain was placed upon its back.

According to the *Vishnu Purana*, the first thing to come out was the wish cow, worshiped by all the gods.

Second, came the goddess of wine.

Third, came the fragrant wish tree.

Fourth, came the celestial dancers.

Fifth, came the Moon, which Lord Shiva accepted as an ornament for his own head.

When the physician of the gods ascended out of the ocean with the vessel of amrita in his hands, the gods, demons and sages were all delighted.

However, there were many other things that came forth from the ocean. There emerged a lotus flower, within which was the shining goddess Sri Lakshimi holding another lotus in her hand. The sages began to chant various songs to her. The gandharas sang. The asuras danced. The rivers like the Ganga arose so that Sri Lakshimi could have a bath. There were great elephants that protected the eight directions. The elephants took clear water in their trunks from golden vessel and bathed Sri Lakshimi. The ocean gave her a garland of lotus flowers that would never fade. Vishva-karma, celestial architect, provided her with jewels. After she had bathed, dressed and jeweled herself, she put on garlands and faced the gods. All this meant that Sri Lakshimi had forsaken the demons and smiled upon the gods.

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The demons did manage to get hold of the vessel of amrita. However, Lord Vishnu immediately adopted a female form to trick the demons and got the amrita away from them.

The gods immediately drank the amrita and attacked the demons with swords. The amrita had made the devas strong and thus the demons were no match for them. The demons' army scattered and fled into the underworld. The devas were delighted. They bowed to Lord Vishnu, and ever since, the devas have ruled over heaven. Until this day, the asuras have lived in the underworlds, below heaven. (The earth plane is below heaven.)

The *Vishnu Purana* states that the Sun then went back to its old path across the sky, as did the stars. Lord Indra again ascended his throne and ruled over the three fruitful worlds. Because he ascended his throne only after praying to the Goddess Lakshmi, the Goddess Lakshmi was pleased to such a degree that she granted him various boons. The first boon that Lord Indra, king of the gods, requested was that she, Sri Lakshmi, should never leave the three worlds. His second boon was that Sri Lakshmi should never turn away from anyone who prayed to her.

We began with the macrocosmic egg of Lord Brahma, and we end with the microcosmic egg of the female. As above so below.

So ends the Pralaya. (27) So begins again another Manu Avatara. (28)

Om...

Chapter 9

LINGA PURANA

I'd like to talk about time and some other concepts that are found in the *Linga Purana*. Shelliji, my beloved guru, gave us a wonderful formula. It is this: The Intensity of any event multiplied by the Duration of that event, equals the Force of that event. Or,

$$ID = F.$$

This formula is eternal in the causal plane and can be applied to anything: the force of karma, the force of merit, or the force of enlightenment. I have modified this formula to include the repetitious cycle of any event. This formula is:

$$[ID]^2 = F.$$

This means that the Intensity of an event multiplied by its Duration, and the total squared, gives the true Force of that event over time. With these thoughts in mind, let us turn to the *Linga Purana*.

In the beginning, it is said, there was nothingness, only essence. This essence did, does, and will pervade all of life. This essence has been given the name Brahman, or Reality, of which there are two aspects: saguna Brahman which is formed, or manifested Reality, and nirguna Brahman, which is unformed, or unmanifested reality.

The first thing Brahman did was to divide himself into three parts: Sri Brahma, Sri Vishnu and Sri Shiva. This division is to be understood as a projection, not a creation. The symbol of this primary projection, this dividing of oneself into three parts, is Neptune with the three prongs of the trident. The secret of Neptune, symbolically, is the crossbar that exists below the trident and on the handle of the middle branch.

Within the division of these three parts, he became aware that there was nothing but water, the water of non-existence. Was the water

always there? Was it the afterbirth water of the “birth” of the division? Was it a second projection? Or, after he divided himself, did he project the water? The literature really doesn’t say. However, it does clearly point out that in these waters of non-existence there appeared an egg, a cosmic egg which contained all the universes. When this egg hatched, out sprang the lord of creation, Lord Brahma, who manifested inside the half-shell.

Within the cosmic egg there was (as in all eggs) that which feeds that which was fed. If you take a chicken egg, there is the chicken, but also inside the egg is the food for that potential chicken. In exactly the same pattern, it was so with the Brahmnic egg. Thus, when it broke open, the lord of creation appeared, along with all the 14 worlds that would ever be projected or created. There is a mystical link between the unfoldment of the lord of creation and the creation. One feeds the other. Or do they feed each other?

So we now have a primary level of existence: Sri Brahman.

Then we have a secondary level, which contains the Lords Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. Lord Vishnu has incarnations. Lord Shiva does not have incarnations; he has manifestations.

Then we have a third level, in which the lord of creation projected all else.

Thus, we have three levels of existence, and each is a projection from the other. That’s the key point. There is no creation, per se. There is only projection: the primary projection in which Sri Brahman projects itself from the unmanifest to the manifest, or from the formless state to the formed state, and the secondary projection, the division of Sri Brahman into the three lords.

The projection in the first universe by Lord Brahma was divided into two parts. The first part is called the Day of Brahma. It is here that the powers of creation are strong, and the forceful projections of the universe, sub-universes and super universes manifest and project out like a flowering garden. Then something happens. The projection has projected out as far as it can; and like a wave that

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goes out, the wave must return. That returning wave is known as the Night of Brahma. Here, all things are pulled back and reabsorbed into the Projector.

There was one essence. You can call it life. It divided itself into three parts, or cosmic forces. Lord Brahma is the cosmic force of projection or creation. Lord Vishnu is the cosmic force of preserving and sustaining that which has been created. Lord Shiva is the cosmic force which redissolves the great force of the universe, returning it back to the bindu, the starting point, and the resting point so that, like the energy curled back into an acorn, it can re-project out again in a more perfect projection.

This first hatching of the cosmic egg, the initial projection after the division, is called Sarga. It projects out and the cosmic force of preservation sustains it as best it can. But sooner or later the force of Lord Shiva overcomes and the initial projection (Sarga) begins to be redissolved back into itself. After the energy is brought back into itself, like into the acorn, it is projected out again into a secondary projection called a Prati-Sarga. This time it is no longer a process of creation, and it takes on a totally different meaning. However, the cosmic egg of the Sarga exists also in the Prati-Sarga. The key difference is the vitality that is in the original Sarga does not exist as vibrantly, and thus not as long as in the first Sarga.

In Hindu thought, this whole cycle of creation, sustainment and redissolvment is referred to as a Yuga, or Age: the Golden Age, the Silver Age, the Copper Age, and the Iron Age. Historically they have been called Krita, Treta, Dvapara and Kali Yugas. We are in the fourth cycle called the Kali Yuga, the Iron Age. Some people call it the Dark Age.

These ages have been measured by the ancient sages metaphysically, meditatively and by other means. The Krita Yuga lasts 4,000 divine years, or 4,000 years of the gods. The second cycle, Treta, has a duration of 3,000 divine years. Dvapara Yuga has duration of 2,000 years and the Kali Yuga has a duration of 1,000 divine years. You will notice that mystically, in dealing with time and the metaphysical processes, these are "simple" numbers: four, three, two, and one.

If we add up these Yugas, we get a duration of 10,000 divine years. This period of time is called a Maha-Yuga.

Between each Yuga is an interval of nonexistence:

Between the Krita and the Treta Yugas, the golden interval lasts 700 divine years.

Between Treta and Dvapara, the silver interval is 500 divine years.

The copper interval between Dvapara and Kali Yugas lasts 300 divine years.

And again, between the Kali Yuga and the re-creation are 500 divine years.

Adding these durations together, you get 2,000 divine years. If we add these to the Maha Yuga, we come up with a duration of exactly 12,000 divine years.

But how long is a divine year in relationship to an earth year? We are talking about time, and time is relative to each species. One species is called gods. Another species is called demons, and humans are yet another species. Different species have different life-durations within the same Yuga or the same Maha Yuga.

The smallest measurable length of time in modern science is a nanosecond. However, in ancient days it was the blink of an eye. It was called a nimesa.

Fifteen blinks gave you a kashta.

Fifteen kashtas are called a kala.

Thirty kalas make up one muhurta, which you might know as 48 minutes of Western clock time.

Fifteen muhurtas make up a day (12 hours), and another 15 muhurtas make up an evening (12 hours). Thus, 30 muhurtas make up a

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cycle of a full day (24 hours). A day is a mathematical unit of time that is often used in measuring karma, good or bad.

What it boils down to is that there are 360 earth years to one divine year. That's interesting. They did not say 365 years but 360 years. As you know, a circle has 360 degrees. Today, a cycle of an earthling year is composed of 365 and 1/4 days. Does that mean that time is speeding up or slowing down? It is possible. Does it mean that some cosmic event occurred that caused a planet to explode (in what is now the planetoid belt) and changed the duration of the cycle of the Sun around the earth? The ancients said that a divine year was composed of 360 earth years. It is well known that the ancients were excellent mathematicians and excellent astronomers. Thus, it clear that the 360-day cycle was the correct, visible cycle (at that time).

The difference between what they saw then and thus calculated then, and what we see now and thus calculate now, indicates that some massive cosmological change had occurred to our solar system since those ancient days.

So how long is a Maha Yuga of 12,000 divine years in terms of earth years? It is $12,000 \times 360$, or 4,320,000 earth years. And remember, a Yuga is the fundamental building block of time of this universe. Thus, a mere 2,000 earth years, should not concern us as far as the end time is concerned. We are 7,000 years into the Kali Yuga which lasts 432,000 earth years. Thus, we have 425,000 earth years before the beginning of the end of a minor cycle and the beginning of a very major positive cycle.

In human years, the Maha Yuga can be broken down as follows:

A Krita Yuga lasts 1,440,000 human years,
A Treta Yuga lasts 1,080,000 years,
A Dvapara Yuga lasts 720,000 years, and
A Kali Yuga lasts 360,000 human years.

These Yugas add up to 3,600,000 years, not including the four intervals. The intervals, called sandhyamshas, total 720,000 earth years. Thus, the total of the two sums equals 4,320,000 years.

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Now if we take the duration of 71 Maha Yugas, it gives us what is called a Manvantara, which comes from Manu Avatara. When we're dealing with Sanskrit words, vowels that come together change. This means that when the "u" of Manu meets the "a" of Avatara, they produce a "v" sound, and so they say Manvantara. However, it is quite common in English to say Manu Avatara. The duration of a Manvantara is 303,720,000 earth years.

Or, if we take 1,000 Maha Yugas, we get one kalpa, which has duration of 432,000,000 earth years. And if we take 1,000 kalpas, a duration of 4,320,000,000,000, we have a period of time called a Day in the Life of Lord Brahma. This does not include the night. Thus, a full day and night in his life is 8,640,000,000,000 earth years. Lord Brahma lives for 100 full days and nights. Then a new Brahma is born. This is a cycle of 864,000,000,000,000 earth years. Thus, again I say, why so much fuss over a minuscule 2,000 years?

Put into this perspective, the human life of 75-85 earth years is really minuscule, to put it politely. Very little can be accomplished in this short period of time, except to trim our sails or set our spiritual trimmer into the search of that Infinite Time Realm and the Reality existing therein.

We were talking about the initial Sarga, the initial projection, and the sustaining and redissolving of the creation. The Sarga re-emitted itself, not as a Sarga but as a Prati-Sarga or secondary projection. Shortly thereafter, Lord Brahma projected his three sons. These were projected by his mind-power, according to the *Puranas*. These three sons grew up and became sages. They sustained their father's creation by means of their deep and intense meditation. Later, Lord Brahma created nine more sons, again through his mental powers. Their function was a bit different from that of his first three sons.

The third thing that Lord Brahma did to ensure that his creation would progress further was to divide his body into two parts. In other words, the process of creation (the creative principle) is contained within the creation, and the creation reduplicates the principle of the creator. This is a vital mystical concept for each of us to understand, not only cosmically, but also mircocosmically.

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In short, he did not want a wheel that went out and came back in a circle. Projection is not a not a circle. It is a spiral that keeps spiraling higher and higher, as well as wider and wider. There is a progression within each projection.

As I have said, Lord Brahma wanted to be sure that this creation was continuous and progressive, so he divided himself into two parts: a male part, and a female part. These two parts married and produced two sons and two daughters. Again, there are projections with projections, and also sub-projections with projections. One of these daughters was named Sati and she married Lord Shiva. It is interesting that when Sati died, she was reborn as Parvati; and in the form of Parvati (daughter of the Himalayas), she married again Lord Shiva. Here is a repetition of cycles but on a higher and wider and more galactic level.

In the process of creation, Lord Brahma came to Lord Shiva and asked, "Please help me. Please create some beings, as I cannot cope with all this that I have created on my own."

Lord Shiva replied, "Gladly," and started creating beings. Suddenly everywhere Lord Brahma went, he saw Lord Shiva. He thought, "This fellow gets around!" Then Lord Brahma realized that this was not the case. Lord Shiva was projecting entities and beings as he had been asked to do. However, in projecting these beings, they looked just like Lord Shiva.

Lord Brahma came running and cried, "Stop! Stop! What are you doing? Don't create immortal beings like us. Create beings who are mortal."

When Lord Shiva refused, Lord Brahma told him, "Then please stop your creation. Stop helping me." Lord Shiva agreed.

The problem, the symbolism, the beauty, is that all of those beings that Lord Shiva created were and are immortal. They are known as the rudras, like rudraksha bead. Here again, we find symbolism that you can find in most mystical religions, the second creation or

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double creation. There are some of us walking around down here who are mortal and others who are immortal.

It is a dangerous thought. If it helps you, Shelly was quite convinced that most of the people he met were the creations of Adam and Eve and, therefore, were mortal. (I'm sure he thought that he and a lot of other people were the immortal ones.) If the symbolism of time contains itself, then those who were projected by Lord Brahma were mortal beings, contained within the essence and the limitations of the ID = F with its cyclical repetition. Brahma asked Shiva for help; however, Shiva could not create anything that was less perfect than his own nature. Shiva produced who knows how many thousands or millions or trillions or two or three or seven or twelve Shivaite, or rudras, beings that were immortal but not possibly having all the qualities of Lord Brahma.

There is tremendous implication here. According to the symbolism, there are a lot of immortal beings running around. As Shelly once said in a serious discussion, "I guess that's not what's important. The vital questions are these: Who are the immortal ones? Of those who are immortal, which ones realize that they are immortal? That's what's vital." And so I leave you to reflect on the meaning and the mystery of that particular concept from the *Linga Purana*.

The second question the *Linga Purana* answers is, "What is yoga?" The guru answered, saying, "It is a technique of meditation that enables you to realize the union of the individual soul with the Divine Soul, the Atma with the Param-Atman. I don't think this is necessarily the case. It is not a joining, but a realization that there is just one life, one form, one pattern, but that the consciousness is divided into two parts: the cosmic and the micro-cosmic. Our mind is focused upon the microcosmic. Yoga is a method for un-attaching the fixed state of consciousness, and re-attaching it to the macro-cosmos.

We have progressed in this chapter from Sri Brahman, to Lord Brahma, Lord Shiva, and Lord Vishnu.

From there we went to the cosmic egg, and then to the sons and daughters of Lord Brahma, to the gods, to the cosmic forces, to

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mankind, and to all the worlds. And all this projection takes place in the mere span of 864,000,000,000,000 earth years. And then the cycle spirals outwards once again for the same period of time.

The mystery of these *Puranas* is that you contain within yourself these forces of time, space and causation. But they are less extent for we are in our withdrawing cycle. We can utilize these forces by remembering and thus utilizing them. All the study and all the theory are meaningless unless in some sense we participate with Lord Shiva and insist that what we project (create) will be no less than that which we are. We must help to remove the doubts and the fears. We need to inspire, yet understand that the way to lead is to be the bearer of the light unselfishly and wisely, and most of all, *quietly*. For you are here, as I am here, to be the bearer of that light.

Some will say that we are to be the bearer of the light for humanoids. Others say to bear the light for the divine ones. But, know you this, we are to be the bearer of that light.

Once upon a yogi time off the coast of India, there was a large monastery and every morning just before sunrise the monks would come out and chant. As the sun rose just above the horizon, the monks would bow in silence, and after thousands of cycles, the Sun thought, "What are these strange creatures doing? So one day the Sun stopped for a moment just at sunrise and called out to the monks, "What are you doing?"

And they answered, "We are bowing to you, O' Dispeller of Darkness!"

The Sun asked, "What is this darkness of which you speak?" Then, the Sun continued on in its path.

It is said that to this day, on that piece of ground, if you are fortunate enough to be there at sunrise, you will see the Sun come up, dip and continue onwards. Some say it is the Sun returning the bow to those earthlings who reminded him of a thought he had not thought. There is, in the universe, darkness. Others say it is just the karmic projection of having stopped for a moment to ask a question.

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I know where that darkness exists. I know what darkness is. It is within me, yet I know that as I carry the torch, there is no darkness within me or around me. As with me, so with you. However, within in the universe, there is darkness. May we lift that torch, each in our own way, according to our wisdom and our strength. May we as torchbearers, bless others by sharing that light.

Chapter 10

THE MAP FOR YOUR LIFE'S SUCCESS

This chapter might seem somewhat incongruous. As I had mentioned in the first chapter, the goal of knowledge is to improve your life. It has two main levels: the physical and the spiritual. However, the wise seeker rapidly learns that they are one and the same path, linked together with self-discipline.

In this last chapter, we will discuss the map to siddhi. The word has two meanings: 1) spiritual powers; and 2) success.

Let's draw a map for your life's success. What would be the starting point on any map? It is where you are. This map will point out the steps from where you are to where you are going: to success, to the successful life. It really does not matter whether it is a map for romantic success, financial success, intellectual success, or spiritual success. It always begins with point one: that place where you are on the map. You are the starting point of any journey towards attainment. Thus, you need to reflect and meditate upon yourself with total detachment. You need to reflect with detachment, not with harshness or judgmentalness, but with clear seeing. You need to reflect with a high degree of sensitivity in order to see yourself, and to see that which you function through. It's called your personality.

You, no matter where you are on that journey towards success, need to examine your personality. You need to question what it is within your personality that is hindering you from that success. What is it within your personality that is, or can be, an adjunct, a blessing to attain that success? What is it within your personality that is, or can be, a hindrance to attaining that success? Indeed, you need to reflect very deeply to see why you are seeking what you are seeking.

This returns you to the study of yama-niyama. In simple terms, this reflection allows you to do something with your personality in order to reinforce those qualities that will be an asset on the journey to success and to neutralize those qualities of the personality that

are, or will be, a deterrent. First of all, you ought to neutralize any and all extreme emotions.

I can still remember the day that I left the ashram after having spent some time there. It was surrounded by forests containing only bears and insects. I was walking the ten miles to the bus station on that June day. Walking and enjoying nature—the flowers, the trees, the fragrances, the peace, the cleanliness—I wondered what it would be like to re-enter a major city.

Entering the big city after the bus ride, I had a realization of how peaceful my mind was, how peaceful compared to the activity of a modern city. Each of us needs to reflect and ask ourselves, “What are emotions? What is causing my emotions? Why are they here? How can I soften these emotions? How can I dissolve these emotions? And what am I doing here?”

Point two on the map is where almost all of us make a mistake because of cultural habits. What is it? It is to think that other people are the cause of your problems. People are not the cause of your problems! The problem is your attitude, as well as your ignorance. Or if you prefer, it is your ignorance, and thus your attitude. As soon as you look outside and say, “There’s the problem,” you miss the solution to that problem!

You, yourself, have not only created that problem, but you keep yourself from resolving it. As soon as you think the problem is outside of you, you have lost your way on the map.

You cannot find success without a map. The starting point is your personality, and the second point on that map is the need to understand that the problem is within your own self, as is the solution. You need to get out of your own way if you are going to succeed. If you don’t want to succeed (consciously or unconsciously), then you are in serious trouble. You ought to want to succeed. But not everybody wants to succeed in the same areas of their lives. There ought to be an awareness of the beauty of nature. You ought to be able to look at the stars and see their wonderment and beauty. In the same way, you ought to see the wonderment and beauty that is in mankind.

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You need a dream. It has to be your dream, not something that someone else put into your computer. It needs to be your own dream. The next point is for you to ask yourself a key question: "How do I conceive success?" For me, most of my life I have used a general term for success. I have called it happiness. It is a subtle word. It's far subtler than most people think. It does not mean pleasure. It does not mean doing what you want to do, when you want to do it. Happiness does not occur in a vacuum. The Indian philosophers and the ancient Greek philosophers 2,500 years ago talked about happiness. They said it was a by-product of a sane lifestyle! Success is a by-product of a sane life-style, a lifestyle towards that which is meaningful to *you*, a lifestyle of seeking wisdom and thus, good will.

You need to deal with your emotions. You need to understand what symbols make you emotional. This is point three on your map. These symbols are also people-symbols, not just objects and events. What symbols make you feel bad? What symbols make you feel good? What symbols upset you?

The fourth point on the map is to realize the people-symbols are simply shadow-people. People symbols are simply shadows from your id. They are shadows that are only within your own mind. Take a stone and a piece of paper and throw them into the fire. What happens? The paper burns, the stone doesn't. The fire does not affect the stone. It is the intrinsic nature of the stone not to be consumed by the bonfire. It is the intrinsic nature of paper to burn. In short, it is the dharma of these objects that reveal how they will react to the fire of life.

In the same way, the fire of emotionality consumes some of us because we are made of straw. The fire does not affect other personalities because they are not made of straw. Other personalities are only slightly affected by the fire of emotionality. Which are you? That is the fifth point on the map.

At this fifth point, you need to reflect and see of what you are made, and not forget this thought. You need to remember of what you are made. Then you need to reach into yourself and become stronger. You need to recognize that you must become stronger than the world around you.

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If you come from a family that is not quite balanced, that is emotional, you should become stronger so as not to allow their detrimental personalities and their emotionality to negatively affect you. This is very important. This is vital! That is the sixth point on the map. (Almost of us do come from such families.) Now, on the other hand, you must be careful not to become so strong that you try to tell them how they ought to live and what they ought to do. Rather you must be stronger than the world in the sense that their word-symbols do not negatively affect and increase your emotionality.

Once you have some awareness of what upsets you, you need to reflect on why it does upset you. Think about it, reflect upon it, meditate upon it, and do something about bringing your emotions under control. This is the seventh point of your map.

One simple way is to say to yourself as you are falling asleep each night, "Every day in every way, I am becoming more and more stable." Or more precisely, "Every day in every way *I am becoming* more and more peaceful." As you say it, feel it. Most likely the mind will answer back by saying, "Oh yeah. But you are very emotional." You can and should answer, "Yes, this might be so. But every day in every way I am becoming less and less emotional." Don't fight it. Admit that you are emotional (if you are). However, remind the mind that, nonetheless, every day in every way you are becoming more and more peaceful.

Begin to polish your personality. Begin to develop your personality by learning to enjoy silence. After you have learned to just enjoy sitting in silence for a few minutes a day, learn to meditate. This is the eighth point on the map. Simply sit in stillness for five seconds. Just sit, and deeply and peacefully inhale and exhale once. Just learn to be mentally and physically quiet. They do go together, or have you not noticed children (and many adults)? Learn to enjoy being in silence. Don't be allergic to yourself. Just enjoy yourself. Stop judging yourself. Stop judging the world. Why? Because the world you know is the only world you know and it is only in your head. It's a shadow-world. Be at peace. Be at peace with yourself, and you will be at peace with the world. Be at peace with the world, and you will be at peace with yourself.

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From here you go to the next step on the map, the ninth step. This point has to do with things you have. One of the qualities of being an earthling is that you have a special yoga siddhi, a special energy that allows you to collect things, which your mind fixes upon. People collect baseball cards, movie star memorabilia, jewelry, shoes, and houses. Some people collect string, or bottles, or paper bags. Others collect books. We all have this special power. Some people even collect negative thoughts.

With this special power, there are two things you should focus on collecting. One is money. Yes, I did say that! I did say collect money. I did not say get greedy. I did not say make it your whole life's goal. However, I am saying learn to hold onto money without becoming a miser. Why? They're a few reasons. First of all, did you know that the average American earns from one million to three million dollars in his/her lifetime? Yet, more than 90% of them, at retirement, need assistance from other members of the family in order just to live? The money flowed into their lives; however, it just flowed right back out again. You need to learn how to save some money for a rainy day, for retirement, and for helping you attain your success, your dream.

Secondly, you need to understand that money is the prana of this earth-life. Money is the energy of and for this earth plane. I didn't say money was the most important thing in the world. However, mystically speaking, money is the life-blood of this world. Money is the energy by which things are accomplished in this world. Thus, you need to develop skill in drawing money to you.

However, the much harder part is holding onto it after it has arrived. This is hard because the state gets some, the city gets some, the federal government gets some, the foreign countries are given some, the bill collector gets most and your relatives will get some. What is the key secret in holding onto your money? The secret is to be determined that you will pay one bill before you pay any other bills. *You must pay yourself first!* Whether you decide it will be 1% of your check, or 20% of your check. It really does not matter (at first). What does matter is that you remain determined to pay something

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to you, yourself, first! Whatever the amount, it should go into a CD, earning interest. This money is for a real emergency. People have the tendency to say, "Oh my God. I got \$2.39 in the CD. I need...and Johnny needs..." The answer is, don't touch it. That is not what it is for. It is for your dream. Some day that door to your dream will open. When it does, you will be ready.

In this stage of the map, we are talking on a deeper level about wealth, your true treasure chest. It does not manifest out there; it can only manifest inside your head. What is this wealth? It is your thoughts. It is your memory. They go together. The Greek philosophers and the ancient mystics said that thoughts are immortal. You don't create them; however, you can look for them. You can gather them. You can keep what you find. Think about this for a while: This thought, that thought, they are not your thoughts. You just bumped into them. You magnetized your mind so that you could find them. You do not have the power to create thoughts; they are self-created. They are eternal. The secret is that thought and memory are the same. So your greatest wealth, because that is what I'm talking about, is the wealth of remembering. To remember the snows of yesteryear is to remember the pristine values of your youth before the world got hold of your mind, before the pressures got to you.

The secret of life is to learn. The only way you learn is to learn to do something you wish to do, and to do it correctly. How do you do this? By remembering your mistakes. How do you learn to walk? You learn to walk by standing up one more time than you fall down. That's the secret of success. The secret is simply to brush yourself off and stand up one more time than you fall down. If you do that, you have learned to walk and you have attained success.

In the same way, you must conceive of yourself as a student, never as a master. He who thinks he is a master thinks that he knows everything. If you have had any experience in this world with experts, you know they are not too bright. You might not have the data they have. However, something is missing. What is the problem? It is that because they think they are experts, they think they know everything. Thus, they can't ask a question that would enlarge their knowledge. However, a student can ask anybody, at

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any time. Thus, knowledge keeps flowing in until at some moment the memory of that which you have lived before and that which you have seen before becomes apparent to you. It's called intuition. It's called common sense. It is within you. The treasure chest is within you. You need only to remember not to make the same mistakes twice. Most people walk through life and keep tripping over their own feet again and again and again. They are so busy that they do not have time to remember.

There is an old saying in mysticism, "Keep looking up!" I used to live by that rule. It worked for me for a very long time. I used to live by that rule until I moved to Paris. When in Paris, I realized that I had to keep looking down because there are many dogs in Paris. What am I saying? *We have to change the rules according to where we live.* And yet as we grow up, we use children's rules to try to solve our adult problems. We forget; we don't remember that we are not children any longer.

As many of us grow up, we become irritated because things do not work for us as they did when we were kids. You have to change the rules according to where you live. This is point ten on the map.

In all your remembering, you might hear the words, "Oh, this came from God." The answer is, it may be from God, but it came *through* a human being! Please think about this. Please reflect upon this. Please meditate upon this concept.

And so you are back to point one on the map. How important it is that your personality be non-abrasive and thus bring more people into your life to help you fulfill your dream, and so that you can be the bringer of good karma to them. It gives merit, and merit feeds your dream in the higher places of consciousness. Thus, it is vital that your personality be gentle, loving, patient, understanding, and have the power to remember. All this is vital, for it gives you the incentive to remember what you have forgotten.

From here you can move on to the eleventh point on the map towards success in your life. This point is to learn to communicate. If there is any one thing we all need, it is to learn to communicate.

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We all have failed at our communications. The key reason for this is our failure to realize that *effective communications is a two-way street*. Good communication requires good listening powers. It is here that most, if not all, of us fail. An example might be helpful. A few years back, a mother had a cigarette in one hand and a martini in the other hand. She was asking her husband where her sleeping pills were. Then she turned to her son and said, "How dare you smoke pot! Don't you know you shouldn't be smoking pot!"

She is communicating to him with the cigarette, the drink, and the sleeping pills. He looks at her as though she is crazy. However, she does not hear him. She has not heard what he said in his nonverbal communications. Thus, she has failed to communicate. Life is difficult, and communication even more so. Therefore, I must say that she is wrong and that he is in even greater error. His life is before him. Her life might be behind her. He needs to learn not only from what she says, but also from what she does. He needs to also learn from what she is not saying, and also from what she is not doing.

Often this is exactly what people do to their spouse, to their boss and to everybody else. You are not communicating what you think you are communicating. You are not listening. You are not hearing others. Perhaps you are not hearing yourself. Learn to communicate. Before you open your mouth, you need to put the brain in gear and ask one question: How would I like to hear this that I am about to say?" In short, put yourself into the other person's shoes.

The key factors here are threefold:

1. What are you trying to communicate?
2. Just say it. But, say it wisely, clearly and politely.
3. Realize that we are all wounded, and thus word-shy. Or is it gun-shy?

We are all wounded emotionally. You are all wounded. He is wounded. She is wounded. They are wounded. The weapon is and has been harsh, cruel, bitter words! Thus, you have to be gentle and

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kind in your speaking. You know that you cannot take your television or your computer and pound them on the desk in order to get them to work. You can't hit them with your fist or a baseball bat and get them to work. However, most people seem to feel that these are the methods for getting people to function. Most of us know how gentle we must be with computers and other scientific equipment. The computer in people's heads is a thousand times more sensitive! Yet most of us are slugging at them with a mental baseball bat. Thus, you have to find a way to say what needs to be said in a non-offensive, non-threatening manner.

This is vital, so let's go over it again.

First, truly know what needs to be said.

Secondly, ask yourself, "Why am I going to say this?"

Next, ask, "How should I say it? What is the best way to say it?"

Fourthly, ask *when* you should say it?

You need to learn how to communicate. Success in communication means getting rid of all the ands, ifs, buts, and however, yet wisely and gently say it. Say it clearly, say it warmly, but most of all know why you are saying it. Most often it should not be said. Sometimes saying something only makes the problem worse. So I could add a fifth point: Is it wise to say it?

If there is anything you need to attain success, it is clarity of thinking, sharpness of thinking, and clarity of vision. Good things come from communicating with other people. It is really important. Why? Because you can now clearly communicate with yourself. By so doing you will get rid of your own over-sensitivity (your wound). I will say it again. This is the trouble with the world. Everybody has been wounded, and thus everybody is over-sensitive. If and only if you get rid of your own over-sensitive nature, will you be able to understand others and thus be able to truly communicate.

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We have a saying in India: "Even saints have dust on their feet." There is no way you can walk through India, no matter how holy you are, without getting your feet dusty. This is a symbol that they are part of this world. You are all part of this world. However, back to the point. How secure do you feel about yourself? How insecure do you feel about yourself? Realize there are people who will try to manipulate you if they sense that you are insecure. And the answer? There is no such thing as being manipulated. There is only self-manipulation, and/or unawareness. There is no way of being deceived. There is only self-deception.

You need to communicate with yourself so that you know where you are going, what your problems are, and what you are trying to accomplish. What is your dream? What is the wise way of accomplishing it? Once you have done that, you have moved to the twelfth point on the map.

Next, we come to your home environment, your castle as we used to say. It is sacred, your castle. If you are a man, it needs a beautiful woman. If you are a woman, it needs a beautiful man. Now I'm going to change the symbols. *What every home needs, is a point of beauty.* It does not matter what the point of beauty is. It may be a simple picture or icon. It doesn't matter what it is. But somewhere you need in your home a center of beauty that you can see.

Holding to this concept will bring you to the thirteenth point on the map: Clean out a vast amount of stuff from your house so as to make it a home. It is, most likely, too cluttered. The mystics and the Chinese philosophers say your house is a symbolic horoscope. If your house is a symbol of your horoscope, what part of your horoscope is your bedroom, symbolically? If your bedroom is cluttered, it means that your Neptune is afflicted. If your kitchen is cluttered, it means that your Moon is afflicted. But most important is that if your house is cluttered, your mind is cluttered and a cluttered mind cannot communicate. Thus, you need to do everything you can to make your home a place of beauty, serenity, and regeneration.

When you have uncluttered your home, you have created a sacred place where you can go to find peace, serenity and wisdom. When

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you go into the house, you will feel secure. When you close your eyes, you won't just go into yourself. You will go to a higher and better place inside yourself. There is a direct relationship between the quiet, uncluttered home and the attainment of deep stages of meditation. Many people fail to recognize this relationship. Yes, it is a lot of work, but it is needed. Please do not do it without the approval of others in the home.

The fourteenth point in your map is this: Do not go to sleep for one day each month. It's called a sleep-fast. The best time to do this sleep-fast is on each and every new moon. Many people ask, "How can I stay up all night? What can I do all night long?" One thing, whether you're a man or a woman, is to begin to clear the house of all the excessive things.

If you do that once a month, you will be amazed within a very short time how clean the house will be physically and aura-wise. If you feel that this action is unwise, you can read and study all those things that you said you wanted to study. How about this one: you can answer all those letters that are past due. Or you can simply organize your life. You can think. But, most importantly, you can just be by yourself! It is a wonderful tonic. It will have a wonderful effect upon your mind and personality. It truly is magical.

Now, you come to the exciting part of the map. You now move to the fifteenth point on the map. This area is what most people have forgotten. Remember that I was talking about the attainment of your success, that ultimate goal. The methodology of this point is moving towards your dream. This point on the map is for you to find joy in this very world. In yoga we say it all boils down to cellular memory. Do you know what that means? It means that your puritanical ancestors have locked into the cellular memory of your physical body very negative forces because of their values and their thoughts. Yes, the ghosts of the past try to live again.

As I have told many of you before, our family had a photograph book which contained pictures from the turn of the century to the 1920s. We used to go through it. Everybody looked like they were smiling upside down, or like they had swallowed sour grapes.

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There was one young man who was grinning from ear to ear. The children would ask, "Who is he?" The parents simply answered, "That is the black sheep of the family." He was the only happy one in the whole group. He must have been doing something right. In American traditions, they have this idea that God is long-suffering, that God went through a great deal of pain. Therefore, people have an erroneous notion. They feel they should be like God: long suffering. They think that if they want to be holy, they should suffer. The answer is GARBAGE! In classical Indian philosophy, in all ancient mysticism, it is said, "If the saint is not smiling, he is not a saint. And if he is laughing and smiling, he is a saint. Mysticism says that you ought to be happy!

A Catholic priest said at a funeral, "If you see a saint, you know he is in a state of anguish and suffering." That is *his* religious tradition. However, it is not the view of any mystical tradition. All mysticism says the same thing: If you see a sage, you can tell he is a sage because he will be laughing, joking, smiling, loving, compassionate and happy. It is as simple as that. It does not mean that there are no problems. That is something else. However, we need to understand that it is okay to be happy, to have fun, and to play. It is one of life's great healing forces. You should play more. You should find joy. You should seek joy. It is God's medicine!

Don't take yourself so darned seriously. Don't take life so seriously. Don't take your job and your career so seriously. However, do take your spouse seriously. (Only joking.)

In yoga we have a saying, "Food is God." Surely it does sustain life. You don't want to dip God in a lot of grease. Food should be fresh. Food should be enjoyable. It should be eaten with joy and with harmony in a place that is beautiful. Get the connection? The house is a symbol of you; the table is the first altar. This is most important. The food, when it is purchased, should be purchased with an attitude of joy. It should be purchased from someone who is joy-filled.

That brings us to the sixteenth point, which is most challenging. It is called work. There are two types of work: The first is one you might not be doing at all. It's called hatha yoga. This is just as

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important as play. It is important that you cause your body to sweat from physical activity. The second type of work is your job—not your career, but your job. This job must have three factors that lead you toward success.

First, you must find the job constructive.

Second, you should find the job enjoyable.

Third, you must find the job meaningful.

All spiritual teachers talk about the importance of your job, your livelihood. Your job should be constructive. But over and above that, you must find it meaningful. If it is meaningful to you, it will be enjoyable. And if it is not meaningful? Don't despair. Find joy in it, and then think now you can start working toward a new job that you will find meaningful. That may take some time, even years. However, knowing that you are moving toward that meaningful job will bring you joy. You can and should prepare yourself and find the right livelihood. The key words are 'Prepare yourself'!

Build merit by having a job that is merit-filled. Build merit by helping people. Perhaps you should become a teacher. There is no better way to help mankind than by teaching. Help them to heal their minds and their bodies. Help them to think. Help them to communicate. Help them to solve their problems. Help them to soften their karma. Help them too more rapidly and more successfully dream their own dream. That soul who teaches others to dream their own dream will find their own dream.

Thus, you come to the seventeenth point on the map of success, and it is sharing your life. This is interplay between you and the world. For most human beings it is a question of taking the mass of mankind and drawing to you a single soul. Call that person a spouse, a mate, a lover, a companion, a friend, or a guru. For some it is drawing to you a disciple. In any event, this stage is a preparation for your learning to give, and to give with the right attitude and the right motive, or it is not true giving.

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In your interplay with another person, in your communication with another person, it doesn't matter whether the other person is right or wrong. It does not matter whether that person is like you or different from you. What does matter is that this person thinks his/her own thoughts and does his/her own activity, and that you use that person's thoughts and actions as food for thought. It gives you the opportunity to reflect and thus unfold in your spiritual awareness. You come together to love, to share and to help. That is what it is all about. *You do not come together to control the other person.*

I assume that you know that your weakness in your personality will express itself in this relationship. In this stage, if you have not prepared for success in a relationship, it will be most disastrous. The disaster comes when you try to control, rather than help, the other person. The lesson to be learned is simple: By helping that person, you truly help yourself. And by truly helping yourself, you help that person. This last sentence makes me very nervous. Why? Because too often people confuse selfishness with being helpful.

From here on, you move into the more subtle realms of the map. You are moving up to the mountaintop towards success. Thus, you come to the eighteenth point in your journey. At this point there is the necessity for delving into occult studies. At this stage there is the need to understand the mysticism of life, the need to understand life. You are now in a stage of trying to see the light, to understand the basic laws of self-consciousness awareness. This is necessary if you wish:

To understand the will of God,
To understand the karma of your life,
To understand the karma of the universe,
To understand time and space,
To understand the dimensions of your life.

If you wish to reach this stage in which nothing will become too much of a shock, in which nothing will surprise you, then you need to study the occult sciences.

In short, the proper study of the occult will make you wise. Thus, you will not go swimming in the ocean when you know there are sharks

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under the water, yet unseen. There are simple laws of nature that you must learn. You turn on the cold water before you turn on the hot water in the shower, right? I hope that you have learned this simple law of nature. You hold your breath before diving into the water.

At this stage, you need to really understand the esoteric symbolism of life. You understand these symbols through the study of the occult. You need to understand the nature of meditation, not just to meditate. You need to understand the nature of samadhi, not just to enter samadhi. It is a training program of the basic laws of inner awareness, the laws of self-conscious awareness—far more important than the laws of the shower, but not necessarily more important than the laws of diving.

From here you move to the nineteenth point on the map which is to take everything that you have learned from all the books and all the people, and begin to think and reflect. Here you digest, rather than get indigestion. In this process of digesting, you are taking all the thoughts, feelings and experiences that people have shared with you, and you make them your own. You make them into your own philosophy. This is essential. You cannot walk through this world with Kriyananda's philosophy. You cannot walk through this world with Yogananda's philosophy. You cannot walk through this world with another person's philosophy. That is dangerous. You must walk through your life with *your* philosophy. With this one final step, you reach the summit of the mountain of success.

Before you take this step, be sure that you can take it in such a way that not only you will benefit, but that others will also benefit. Take your selfish success and open it up in such a way that you can and do make it benefit others. That is all. This is quite simple if you have followed your map. It's not hard. It just takes total dedication of knowing what you really want. All this comes back to the very first point: What can you do to make yourself feel better about yourself? What can you do to improve your personality? What can you do to take the rough edges off your personality? How can you soften your personality? Don't be threatened by people. Stop feeling inferior. We are all inferior. There is nothing wrong with that. We are just human beings, and we as a group are not very high on the tree of life. We move from wherever we exist.

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However, according to all the mythology and theology, we are supposed to be (become) supermen. But we are not supermen. We are not superwomen. We are only earthlings—earthlings living in an imperfect world that, however, is very beautiful. We are only earthlings living in an imperfect world among imperfect creatures who are often weak, confused, and thus selfish.

Nonetheless, these earthlings are also very beautiful. Perhaps the twentieth point is to just enjoy the world and its creatures. The other day, I was watching a nature program on television with some children. The program was showing owls, tigers, lions and gazelles. The little children were saying, "Oh, look at the beautiful lion. Oh, look at the beautiful tiger. Oh look at the beautiful gazelle." Then the film showed a human, and a six-year-old child turned to me and said, "I'm not so sure I like that animal." The violence mankind does to mankind is unbelievable, and it reaches us at a very, young age. It does mold our minds. Meditation is a way of reshaping the mind into more positive forms.

You are part of mankind. However, you must always be careful that the group karma does not become your karma. You must draw away from the negative group karma. You need to sustain your own positive karma and feed it back into the world with all the potency that you can muster. It doesn't matter whether I win or lose, or whether you win or lose. It does not matter whether 50,000 people hear me, or one person hears me, or no one hears me. I have heard. That's what is important. With that I have succeeded.

Dare to reach up and grasp your star of success. Dare to bring it to your bosom. Find out that it is possible to dream your dream in joy, with joy. As you climb that mountain with the help of your map, as you stand upon that mountaintop, you will see the lay of the land. You will see what needs to be done. But first, wisely dream your dream.

Be thou self disciplined. Be thou self disciplined. Be thou self disciplined...

om...

APPENDIX

(1) The eighteen *Upa-Puranas* are:

Santkumara
Narasimha
Naradiya (Vrihannaradiya)
shiva
Durvasasa
Kapila
Manava
Aushanasa
Varian
Kalika
Samba
Nandi
Saura
Parasara
Aditya
Maheshvara
Bhagavata (Bhargava)
Vasistha

It should be noted that there are different lists with different names.

(2) The *Mahapuranas* that relate to Lord Brahma are called *Rajasa Puranas*. These are:

Brahma
Brahmanda
Brahma-vaivarta
Markandeya,
Bhavisya
Vamana

(3) The *Mahapuranas* that relate to Lord Vishnu are called *Sattivika Puranas*. These are:

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Vishnu
Bhagvata
Narada
Garuda
Padma
Varaha

(4) The *Mahapuranas* that relate to Lord Shiva are called *Tamasa Puranas*. These are:

Shiva
Linga
Skanda
Agni
Matsya
Kurma

(5) The word “asura” means lord. These lords from the later Vedic period onwards became known as demons. These asuras were lesser gods who were charged with expounding the teaching of the higher gods themselves. Another source states that the sacrifice of gods was thrown into confusion by the asuras. (*Ait. Br Upanishad* [VI-4])

Both the devas and the asuras were of equal power. However, the devas ruled during the day, and the asuras ruled during the night. They are higher beings that possess creative vitality. Both of these sets of beings sprang from the creator Prajapati. Both inherited speech from their creator. They both inherited true speech and also false speech. The devas were able to throw off, or reject untruth. However, it is said that the asuras spurned truth. This led to their downfall.

An important symbolism exists in this duality. The *SH Br* point out that those who are godly make their burial places with four sides. Those who are of the nature of asuras make their burial places round.

(6) Surabhi is also known the cow of plenty as well as Kamadhenu (wish-fulfilling cow). He is also known as Shavala and

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Aditi. She is the symbol of many allegories where she symbolizes the endless proliferation of nature and primarily the symbol of generation and regeneration. The white cow has deep symbolism in many different cultures because symbolically she has the power to heal, to make people happy, and to make fools wise.

(7) The wish tree is known as Parijata, the Indian Coral tree. It has trifoliate leaves that symbolize the trimurti. The center leaflet symbolizes Lord Vishnu, the right leaflet symbolizes Lord Brahma, and the left leaflet symbolizes Lord Shiva. The wish tree grows in Indra's paradise. Lord Krishna's wife wanted it; thus he stole it for her and brought it to Dvaraka. Dvar means "door" or "gate." Dvaraka means "many gated," and was the capital of Lord Krishna's kingdom. After his death, the ocean rose and submerged the whole city. Only the temple escaped and the wish tree returned to Indra's paradise.

(8) The word "apsarasas" refers to the essence of the water, or moving between the waters. These nymphs are closely links with fertility and the waters of creation. They most often take the form of birds and sometimes as clouds. As birds, they favor the wish tree.

(9) Dhanvantari was a great rishi who first propounded medical science. In a former incarnation he was told by Sri Narayana that he would be reborn in a royal family and would write an eightfold medical system. Because he brought the amrita to the gods, he was also entitled to share it with them.

(10) Amrita is the elixir of immortality and should not be confused with soma. Amrita is a celestial elixir, whereas soma by ritualistic definition is a sacrificial libation offered to the gods, although drunk by the officiating priests. Furthermore, amrita is described in mythic nomenclature, whereas soma is described as being derived from a plant. In later Vedic literature, soma became the Moon-god and is regarded as the receptacle of soma juice. Furthermore, it is the waxing of the Moon that has the property to replenish the supply of amrita by sunbeams. It has been said that amrita existed in the cosmic sea and was derived from the sap of the trees that were originally grown on Mount Mandara. The sap of these trees mixed with the waters during the process of the churning of the ocean.

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(11) Manu Antara is written "Manu Avatara." Now because of first Sanskrit word ends in "u" and the second word begins with "a," these two vowels merge together via a process called sandhi to produce a "v." Thus, you can say Manu Avatara (or Manu-antara).

(12) However, most scholars say that the re-constructive work of the *Brahma Purana* is very poorly done because there are many apparent errors in it. For example, it was supposed to be written around 300 AD. Yet, it mentions the famous Sun temple of Konaraka which was constructed in the year 1241 AD. Thus, the present *Brahman Purana* could not have been composed before the 13th century.

(13) Bindu means dot, point, or drop, and it has several different meaning in mysticism. First of all, the bindu symbolizes the inaudible and transcendental sound of the Reality contained in the sacred mantra "aummm." When this mantric vibration is produced, it is produced with the lips closed and thus it does not make a regular "m" sound. This special sound is called "nada." This is indicated in Sanskrit by the small crescent and a dot within this crescent. This indicates the final stage of that nada. Secondly, it means source or, more accurately, source point. Finally, the word "bindu" relates to the two kinds of semen: male and female. The male bindu is called shukla, which means white and exists in the Moon chakra. The female bindu is called rajas, meaning brilliant, and relates to the color red. It exists in the lower part of the Jupiterian chakra.

(14) And even to this day you get the word "man," which comes from Manava as does the word "Manas," meaning mind. There is a linkage between Sanskrit and English because Sanskrit is part of the Indo-European language group, as are the Germanic languages. And almost half of English is from German. The other half is from French because of William of France conquering England in 1066. In German the word for man is "mann," and in English it became "man."

(15) An egg has two parts. One part is called the animal sphere, and the other part is called the vegetable sphere. The yellow part is the animal part. The white part is the vegetable part. The function of the vegetable part is to feed the animal part.

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(16) "Marici" means a particle of light, or a ray of light from the Sun or Moon. In post-Vedic literature it is the name of one of the prajapati, and is regarded as the son of Lord Brahma. He was one of the seven great rishis, and as a prajapati was a secondary creator.

(17) The meaning of the term "Daksa" is that of universal creative energy. In the *Puranas* Daksha is introduced as having various functions, the primary one being that of a secondary creator, i.e., a rishi who is present in each new age of re-creation, each Manu Avatara. Daksha became convinced of the futility of mind-born progeny, and thus, as an alternative, he decided to create a new set of beings, established by sexual intercourse. In order to achieve this, he married Asikni. From this marriage he had 50 daughters. He gave these in marriage: ten to duty (Dharma), another 27 to the Moon (Soma). They became the 27 lunar asterisms associated with the two-week waxing and waning of the Moon. The last 13 he gave to Kashyapa. The eldest daughter of Daksha, married to Kashyapa, had a son named Manu who is the progenitor of the human race. This fulfilled Daksha's great aspiration.

(18) The Maruts are the storm-gods and the friends and the allies of Lord Indra, king of the gods. The Maruts are closely associated with Lord Agni, the fire god, and also with Lord Vaya, the air god. *They are said to roar like lions*, and are armed with golden thunderbolts. The Maruts hold apart the sphere of heaven from the sphere of the earth. They also control the rain, a symbol of fruitfulness.

(19) The function of the sutas was to be charioteers, whose key role was to relieve the boredom of the king during long journeys. The function of the magadhas was to show excessive admiration or devotion to the king, even to the point of excessive flattery. I leave you to work out the symbolism here.

(20) Prithivi means the extended one. It is the earth and its personification as a goddess. This word specifically means one of the two parts that constitute the physical world: the earth and the heavens or sky. Prithivi is appropriately termed "Lord Agni's womb." Therefore, she is called the mother.

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(21) Mount Meru, also known as Mount Sumeru, is the name of the golden mountain which is the subject of numerous *Puranic* symbols. It symbolizes the central point and/or axis of the universe. Mountains are generally regarded as the meeting places and/or the abode of the gods, as in Mount Olympus in Greek symbolism. Mountains are also regarded as protectors as in the Hindu prayer, "May the mountains be auspicious to us," Or as in the Psalm, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the mountains, from whence cometh my help."

The *Markandeya Purana* gives symbolic measurements. Its height is 84,000 yojanas. Its depth below the earth is 16,000 yojanas. The diameter at the summit is 32,000 yojanas, and at its base it is 16,000 yojanas. A yojana is approximately nine miles. At the very top of the summit, in the very center of the summit, is Lord Brahma's golden city. It is laid out in a square. On the outskirts of this city are eight other spheres called loka-palas. These are the heavens, or the sphere of the guardians of the various regions, one at each cardinal point and the four intermediate points.

Lord Agni rules the East and is protected by a black serpent.

Lord Indra rules the South, and is protected by a cross-lined serpent.

Lord Varian rules the West, and is protected by an adder.

Lord Soma rules the North and is protected by a boa constrictor.

The heavens of Lord Krishna and of Lord Vishnu are also located on Mount Meru.

(22) Dhruva, the North Pole star. It is a vital mystical fact that the origin of the River Ganga is through the hole at the top of the shell of the Brahmic egg. The Holy Ganga flows down upon the highest division of heaven.

(23) According to Vyasa the macrocosm is egg-shaped. It contains seven lokas, and seven atlas. The lokas in descending order are:

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1. Satya-loka
2. Tapo-loka
3. Jana-loka
4. Maha-prajapatya-loka
5. Maha-indra-loka
6. Antariksha-loka
7. Bhu-loka

1. Satya-loka is the realm of truth in which live four groups of gods who live only as long as there is a created world.

2. Tapo-loka is the realm of asceticism in which live three groups of gods who live twice as long as the gods in the next loka.

3. Jana-loka is the realm of people in which live four groups of gods who have mastered the five elements and the five senses.

4. Mahar-prajapatya-loka is the realm of the Great Prajapati, in which live five groups of gods who have mastered the five elements. They live for a kalpa.

5. Maha-indra-loka is the realm of the Great Indra, in which live six groups of gods who have mastered the psychic powers (siddhis).

6. Antariksha-loka is the realm of the mid-region, in which live the planets and the stars. It extends from the summit of Mount Meru to the North Pole star.

7. Bhu-loka is the realm of the Earth-world. It includes three sub-realms:

- a. The Earth along with its seven continents. With Mount Meru at the center, it is encircled by the seven seas and the Loka-aloka mountain range. This area is approximately 4,500,000,000 miles wide. The Loka-aloka encircles the seven seas and divides the visible world from the region of darkness. Not a single being lives there.
- b. The nether-worlds which are composed of the seven patalas. They are also known as the underworlds.

c. The hells, which are composed of the seven naraka.

In the ancient days, it was said that each group soul, or each soul of a given group, went to one of these lokas, according to the type and frequency of the rituals and ritual sacrifices they performed. Later, as the concept of karma evolved, it moved to a new concept. Each individual soul attained to a given loka according to his own efforts and actions. In short, the external, formal ritual was replaced in this concept with daily external actions and internal thoughts (i.e., attitudes behind those actions, the reason behind those actions). Each man, each woman makes his own loka. He/she makes it a heaven or a hell.

(24) Patala is the last of the seven realms that are under the earth. They are inhabited by the Nagas (the serpent gods). The word "patala" is also the collected name for these seven worlds. Different *Puranas* give different names, and order to these realms. One such order is:

A-tala
Vi-tala
Su-tala
Tala-tala
Rasa-tala
Maha-tala, and
Pa-tala

Much to the surprise of most people, patala is a region of beautiful cities. The dityas, the danavas and the nagas live there.

The soil of these various regions is of different colors and is filled with black granite, gold, and rubies.

(25) "Naraka" is an interesting word. It is nara-ka which means of or pertaining to humans. It is also the word for hell. Very interesting. There are seven hell-worlds, or narakas. These narakas are:

Avichi (the waveless)
Maha-kaala (The great blackness)

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Ambarisha (the frying pan)! Does that sound familiar?
 Raurava (the demon)
 Maha raurava (the great demon)
 Kaala-sutra (the thread of darkness)
 Andhatamisra (the thick darkness)

These are the seven classical hells. Different texts give varying numbers.

The *Markandeya Purana* lists six hells.
 The *Manu* lists 21 hells.
 The *Brahmanda Purana* lists 27.
 The *Agni Purana* lists 28.

What is more important is that each Naraka has 144 subdivisions. It should be emphasized that these hells are not abodes of eternal misery. Also, one other force, other than that which exists in each individual soul, judges which place he will go, and how long he will stay. After a period of time, the soul will be reborn as a more evolved being or as a lesser-evolved being, and thus move to its appropriate realm.

(26) Pitri-loka is the sphere of the pitris, or ancestors. This realm is sometimes identified with heaven. However, much more often it is conceived as a nether world beyond the realm of the living.

The relationship of the devas and the asuras (the joint forces of nature) to the various classes of living beings was clearly defined. In the *Brahmanas* Prajapati, the secondary creator, declared to the devas, "The sacrifice shall be your food, immortality your sap, the Sun your light." To the pitris he assigned the swiftness of thought, the Moon as their light. To mankind he assigned death.

The *Mahabharata*, which was written a few 100 years later, says, "Two paths are known. One leads to the gods, and the other leads to the fathers. And the Sun is the entrance way to the path of the gods, whereas the Moon is the entranceway to the fathers."

The pitris, the spirits of the dead are likened to birds, as in the case in ancient Egypt and other ancient cultures.

(27) "Pralaya" means dissolvment or destruction that happens at the end of a major projection cycle. It is the person in which there is the disappearance of the formed universes. It is the ending of a cycle whose duration is approximately 2.2 billion earth years. As you now know, it is also called a kalpa and is just a single day in the life of Lord Brahma, known as a Day of Brahma. The night cycle which follows, is of equal duration and is known as the Night of Brahma. The term "pralaya" (or kalpa) means total re-dissolution.

However there are four categories of pralayas:

The first is called Nitya-pralaya.

The second is called Brahma-pralaya.

The third is called Prakrita-pralaya.

The fourth is called Atyantika-pralaya.

1. In the first pralaya, called Nitya (the eternal ones), the dissolution is going on daily for all animate and so-called inanimate objects that were born on the earth.

2. In the second pralaya, called Brahma, the dissolution happens only at the end of a kalpa.

3. In the third pralaya, called prakrita, the dissolution manifests at the end of the four Yugas, which is at the end of the maha-Yuga.

4. The fourth pralaya is called Atyantika. This manifests as the union of the soul with the Supreme Oversoul. It is the union of self with the higher self. It is the union of individual spirit with the Supreme Being, which manifests because of knowledge.

The key pralaya is that of the Brahma-pralaya. The pattern is:

At the end of 1000 Yugas, the world will have excessive drought for 100 years. Thus, everything in the world will be destroyed.

Then Maha-Vishnu will appear in the form of the seven rays of the Sun and drink up all the waters of the three worlds: earth, ocean and patala.

For Your Notes

Then the seven rays of the Sun, having grown fat by drinking all this water, will become seven separate suns. These seven suns will then consume all three worlds. Then the earth will look like a black, charred rock.

Then Lord Shiva will burn from beneath the patala realms. Then the earth and the heavens will burn again. Thus, all will look like spheres of fire. As the heat began, the inhabitants of these three lower worlds will go to maha-loka because of the extreme heat. When they find that the heat is still too strong, even in maha-loka, they will go to Jana-loka. Then Lord Shiva will dissolve everything.

Then from the face of Lord Vishnu will come clouds and lighting. Thus, rain will fall incessantly for 100 years. It will put out the fires that are everywhere.

When this happens Lord Vayu will encroach upon the seats of the seven sages in the ocean (!) and by his breath will remove all the clouds.

At that time Lord Vishnu will lie on the back of Adishesa in the giant ocean and will drink air. Lord Vishnu will lie thus for a whole kalpa in a state of yogic trance, meditating upon Vasu-deva. After this, he will take the form of Lord Brahma and begin the creation all over again.

(28) The Manu Avatara is very complicated. The universe (prapancha) is cyclical and perishable. At one moment it takes its origin, and at another time it re-dissolves, it perishes. Lord Brahma, the creator, also has his own birth and death, as does every being, and every thing. The period between the birth and the death of Lord Brahma is known as a maha-kalpa. A kalpa is a period of 1000 Yugas, or 14 Manu Avatars. A kalpa is a day in the life of Lord Brahma who lives 36,000 kalpas. Each kalpa has a day and a night phase. During the night phase, the universe is temporally dissolved. This dissolution is called a pralaya. A kalpa is approximately 2.15 billion-earth years that, not surprisingly, approximates modern scientific calculations for our star system.

For Your Notes

A kalpa, or one day of Lord Brahma, is divided into 14 parts. The ruler over each of these parts is a Manu. There are 14 Manus. The life span of each Manu is called a Manu Avatara.

The end of 71 maha-Yugas completes the life span of each Manu. Each maha-Yuga (which is also called a chatur-Yuga) has four Yugas. Thus, $71 \times 4 = 284$ Yugas. At the end of 284 Yugas, a Manu reaches the end of his life span. Furthermore, the devas who were born at the beginning of this cycle (with the birth of Manu) also conclude their life span. Fourteen such Manu Avataras complete a day of Lord Brahma, and it is at the end of that day that the original universe re-dissolves.

The life span of Lord Brahma is 120 divine years. At the end of that period, even Lord Brahma re-dissolves, i.e., at the end of 42,200 divine years, the life span of Lord Brahma is ended and a deluge takes place. (In one life span of a Brahma, 42,200 kalpas have taken place. This life span of Lord Brahma is known as a Maha-kalpa. Thus, the close of Brahma's life is called a maha-pralaya.

Each Manu has a different name. They are: Svaayambhuva, Svarochisa, Uttama (Auttami), Tamasa, Raivata, Chaksusha, Vaivasvata, Savarni, Dakshasavarni, Brahmasavarni, Dharmasavarni, Rudrasavarni, Rauchyadevasavarni, and Indrasavarni.

As you might remember, the present Manu is Vaivasvata Manu. This Manu rules the universe today. He was born from Surya or Savitar: the Sun who gives light to the universes. His mother was Aditi, who is the mother of the 12 rulers of the zodiacal signs. All living beings, all living things that are here today, were born from him.

Vaivasvata Manu is the one who escaped from the last deluge. Lord Vishnu who took the incarnation of the fish Matsya and saved him saved him. Vaivasvata is also the first of the kings of the solar dynasty who ruled over Ayodhya.

Vaivasvata Manu worshipped Devi and thus received her blessing.

For Your Notes

Vaivasvata Manu has also another name, Shraddha-deva. The devas of the cycle are Adityas, Vasus and Rudras.

The name of the Indra of this cycle is Purandara.

The Seven Sages are Vasishtha, Kashyapa, Atri, Jamadagni, Gautama, Vishvamitra, and Bharadvaja.

In his previous life, Vaivasvata Manu was a devotee of Devi. While worshipping Devi, she blessed him so that in his next life he would become Savarni and revered as the eighth Manu.

“Davi” means goddess, and is often refer to as the feminine aspect of the divine. In earlier times, “divi” was used to refer to the wives of the gods. In the post-Vedic period the term “devi” became Devi, the goddess, and then “maha-devi,” the Great or Supreme Goddess. She is identified with the cosmic energy, the Shakti who is the dynamic aspect of Lord Shiva. Finally, Devi became associated with the trimurti, and thus homage paid to her was considered as homage paid to all the other gods because they have been born from her qualities.

Saying this in another way, when the powers of Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva are combined in the form of Lord Ishvara, Ishvara becomes the Supreme Goddess (Bhagavati).

OM TAT SAT OM