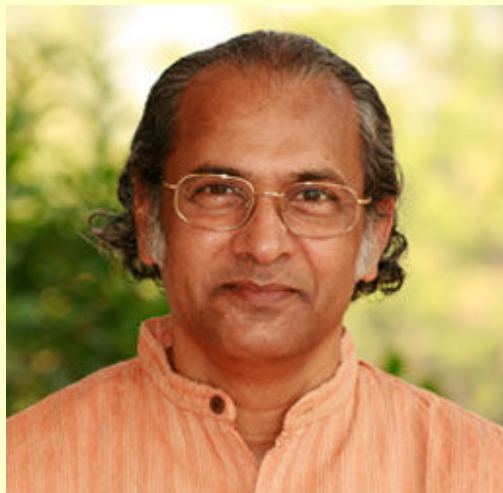


Dr Sankara Bhagavadpada:



An Indian spiritual teacher & *Vedic* astrologer [birth details: 1st May, 1948, Chennai. Birth name: Shanker Ramachandran].

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During the impressionable boyhood years, he came under the benevolent spiritual & philosophical influence of his mother, the Master Sri J Krishnamurti and his philosopher-friend (who later came to be known as the Master Sri Bhagavan). In 1971, he secured the Masters (physics) from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Chennai. As a doctoral researcher (in the early 1970s) at The Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Mumbai; while attempting to fit into a highly competitive modern world, *in which no one pays any attention to the spiritual well-being of individuals, he underwent a radical change of heart, whereby his spiritual life and the aspirations of his deeper-self, took precedence over all other survival concerns.* He was able to tide over this crisis - which was one of conflict between the spiritual-aspirations of the deeper-self on the one hand and bread & butter concerns of a mundane world on the other - *by taking to heart, the teachings of the Master Sri J.Krishnamurti, for this is what he was asked to do, in that perilous hour by his concerned philosopher friend.*

His research work during *this period of a decade (1972 - 1982) {which was also simultaneously introspective and meditative}*, was published in the form of ten papers in the best international research journals in that field. As an inevitable consequence of these *introspective and meditative years*, there was for him at this stage in his spiritual development, *the palpable blessing of slipping into the Sthitha Prajna's state of Atma Prasannata, which was the result of his spontaneous withdrawal (for the first time), from his worldly obsessions, which were*

all centered on the ‘outer world’ of the *Panchabhutas* (five elements). At this turning point, he sought the guidance of his philosopher-friend, who had earlier spiritually initiated him in his boyhood.

In 1980 he secured the doctorate degree from TIFR, in the field of theoretical nuclear Physics. After completing the doctoral work, he worked at the Wolfgang Goethe University of Frankfurt in W Germany as an Alexander Von Humboldt post-doctoral research fellow (1980-1982) - till late 1982, collaborating here with his erudite mentors and well-wishers Prof C S Warke and Prof Walter Greiner. Thus, till the 34th year, Sankara was a researcher, with *profound enquiry* as a general approach to all spheres of life.

In an attempt to express his deeply-felt devotion & gratitude to the Master Sri J Krishnamurti, *because of the profound impact of his teachings in his life* - soon after he returned to India (late 1982) - he offered his services to the Krishnamurti Foundation India (KFI), which resulted in his being appointed as the principal of one of their schools. However, as his authorities were not happy with his highly independent style of functioning, he was relieved of his responsibilities within a matter of 6 months.

From such humble beginnings, along with his philosopher friend, he established an *Ashram* school (in Chittoor Dist of Andhra Pradesh), which was to serve as a ‘seed’ for their envisioned spiritual mission (1984). As a token of his abiding gratitude towards him, he felt morally bounden to serve this Master, for that *blessing of the Sthitha Prajna’s Atma Prasannata, which he secured as a result of turning inwards and watching the ‘self’ at work and as a result of taking to heart the upadesa of this beloved Master*. Thus he served this Master Sri Bhagavan, as a completely self-less *karma yogi* for seventeen long years. In Oct 1991, the Master Sri Bhagavan, touched by his beloved friend’s devotion and utter sincerity, had blessed him with the name, Sankara Bhagavadpada. Between 1989 & 1998, when he was in the forefront of that spiritual mission (as the *paramacharya*), he came to be known for his highly instructive *satsangs, yajnas* and talks on the spiritual life.

Thereafter, watching his Master's growing spiritual mission steadying itself firmly on its own feet; in 1999, *he withdrew fully from an involvement in that mission work and has been, since then responding to a new inner calling – Atmajnana and Jyotisha [Vedic astrology]*, for which he has also had his Master's blessings in full measure. *It may be noted that this is the second time in his life, when he gracefully yielded to that inner call for 'withdrawal from the world'.*

Among the *Jyotish Acharyas*, who had inspired him in his pursuit of astrological knowledge and wisdom are foremost Prof. V.K. Choudhry, followed by ancient & contemporary *Vedic* astrologers, for example, Pandit Vamadeva Shastri. In the last twelve years of *withdrawal, solitude and contemplative study*, his labours of learning have been in the spheres of *Advaita-Atmajnana, Jyotisha & the Systems Approach in the spheres of Dharma & Moksha*. In February 2007, 'The Systems Institute of Hindu Astrology' under the chairmanship of Prof. V. K. Choudhry conferred on him the honorary title of '*Jyotish Ratan*', in appreciation of his meritorious services, towards the cause of Hindu Astrology. Since March 2006, every year, *he has been presenting his astrological work in the spheres of Dharma and Moksha, at the Annual International Astrological Conferences in Gurgaon, India; under the chairmanship of Prof. V. K. Choudhry, and organized by the International Institute of Predictive Astrology [IIPA], Fairfield, USA.*

Quite recently, he has come to be better known for his interdisciplinary work: *Sri Ramana Maharshi's Moksha- A Hindu Astrological Pilgrimage into the Life and Moksha of Sri Ramana Maharshi* {published by Yogi Impressions, Mumbai (Dec 2008)}. In this work, he has certainly broken new ground, by presenting in a systematic manner for the first time, many fundamental principles of *Jyotisha* in the spiritual spheres of *Dharma & Moksha*. The *Moksha* of Sri Ramana Maharshi is also presented in a well-researched manner, relying on the comprehensive 'Systems Approach', renowned for its analytical clarity and predictive accuracy. Presently he teaches Hindu spiritual disciplines of knowledge such as *Jyotisha [Vedic astrology]*, especially through the

research-based ‘Systems Approach’], *Atmajnana* [self-knowing & Self-realization based on the *Bhagavad Gita*, other *Advaitic* texts, *Jyotisha*, as well as on the teachings of departed *Advaitic* Masters] & *Daivajnana* [knowledge & realization of Divinity from the *Bhagavad Gita*].

Eager to bring to fruition the below-mentioned, new aspiration of Sankara Bhagavadpada, one of his warm-hearted well-wishers in North America - who has been a witness to his long years of selfless dedication in the spiritual field and *Jyotisha* - had suggested the creation of this present profile.

In 2011, Sankara yielding to a new *Atmic* inspiration, moved away from his erstwhile long period of twelve years of *withdrawal, solitude and contemplative study* [*Antarmukha*]. This spiritual phenomena of *withdrawal from the world followed by a subsequent return to it* is well known in both Eastern as well as in the Christian religious traditions, for without such a protracted withdrawal from an active outer life, earnest seekers may not be able to come upon any enduring spiritual illumination in the spheres of *Dharma & Moksha*. Yielding then to these new rays of *Atmic* inspiration, he took the first step of making his intention known - of aspiring to make available the ancient *Vedic* spiritual systems of knowledge: *Atmajnana*, and *Jyotisha* (and more generally other *Vedic* systems of learning), to the English-speaking Western world, thereby sharing the same with seekers in those lands, for the purpose of their individual and collective inner wellbeing & fulfillment [*Lokakalyana*].

And as though to set in motion this new chapter with some *élan vital*; in July 2011, he conducted along with the renowned *Ayurvedacharya*, Dr Sunil Joshi [*Ayurvedic Panchakarma* Physician from Nagpur, India, & Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA], in Chennai, an ‘*Atmajnana-Ayurvedajnana Yajna*’ as a full two-day retreat. This decisive shift and return to the world, *after 12 years of withdrawal, solitude & contemplative study*, is all the more noteworthy, because in the previous active phase of his spiritual life, he had served his Master

and philosopher friend, Sri Bhagavan [founder of the Oneness spiritual movement] for 17 long years (1983-1999).

In Sept 2012, he is embarking on a new ‘learning pilgrimage’ (after having spent many years in *Antarmukha* or ‘withdrawal from the world’) *for seeing and knowing the Western world, for understanding the nature of their spiritual seeking, and for learning from their great spiritual traditions, Masters and the institutions, they founded.* In this process of learning from the West, he would also be sharing his own spiritual realizations and understanding with kindred spiritual seekers, wherever such an opportunity would present itself to him. We have an example of this sharing-in the invitation that has been extended to him to conduct *Atmajnana Yajnas* [self-knowledge and self-realization retreats] in the South America countries of Uruguay & Mexico; and likewise, he has also been offered the opportunity to hold *satsangs*, and provide Vedic Astrological consultations & spiritual counselling sessions in Canada.

In 2013, Sankara was again in Toronto, Brazilia and Santiago, talking in all these cities to seekers and also conducting *Atmajnana Yajnas* and offering *Jyotish* Consultations.

At the present time, Dr Sankara, continues to offer astrological and spiritual consultations to serious seekers from his home in Chennai [since 2003], and, since a year, is also involved in teaching an interactive ‘Modern Course in *Vedic* Astrology’ [largely based on the ‘Systems Approach’], through e-mail lessons. He is a house-holder, living with his wife and daughter in the outskirts of Chennai. His website, www.hinduworldastrology.net
