

Vedic Astrological Consultation: FAQs

Q1: What is Vedic Astrology?

Vedic Astrology [hereafter, VA for short] is an ancient Indian Divine-centric, analytical system of profound understanding of the totality of events and circumstances in human life-beginning with birth & karma and ending with death.

It is a limb of the 'Vedas' [the ancient scriptures of the Hindus] and therefore implies a 'Vedic' world-view which is Divine-centric and consequently vastly different from the modern world-view that has come to us from the Western sciences and philosophies, and which forms our outlook in our day to day life.

Thus it is a mathematical-philosophical-spiritual system of understanding the mystery of human life and destiny. Though of ancient origin, it has never ceased to be a living system of guidance for Indians in every bygone century and millennium-for dealing with all of life's baffling enigmas. Like the proverbial self-rejuvenating liver, there have been significant self-rejuvenating spurts of growth and research in Vedic astrology even in this century and such spurts invariably serve to offset the inevitable 'corruption' of the *shastras* ('*shastra slatha*', *shastras being authoritative texts*), which always happens because of the ravages of time.

We may remember at this juncture that like this ancient Indian system of VA, most ancient civilizations have also had their characteristic systems of astrology- the Chinese, the Babylonian, the Egyptian, the European, etc.

Q2: What can you say about the Chronology of Vedic Astrology?

VA is considered to have taken birth in another Yuga ('Age'), very far back in time, going back at least to anything from ten to twelve thousand years. *We moderns hesitate to conceive of history, beyond a few thousand years, but the ancient Hindus felt very comfortable with astronomical time spans, where the cycle of the Yugas (Ages) itself was of the order of 24,000 years, the Precessional period of the earth's axis.* In those ancient times all learning was preserved by oral traditions and palm leaf scrolls.

Though borrowing from ancient astronomy, in its scope and quest, VA is entirely different from Vedic Astronomy.

Q3: What is the function and use of Vedic Astrology?

It deciphers the mysteries of our human life and provides astounding insights into both the tragic as well as the fortunate happenings in our life. (i) Most importantly it brings into spectacular relief the imperceptible presence of the Divine in our day to day life. (ii) It also forewarns us with reliable predictions, as to what is in store for us in the womb of time, next month, next year, next decade, etc. (iii) Apart from revealing the pattern of unfoldment of our destiny, like a road map, it also encourages us to deepen our awareness and existing connection with the Divine and intelligently use this for building a more fulfilling life, through the creation of the 'Second Line of Grace' through the wide variety of Remedial Measures which it prescribes for us.

Q4: Is VA useful for all spheres of life or only for the spiritual spheres?

The ancient Hindus understood the totality of life, as having broadly four-stages with their concomitant goals. They called them, *Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha*. (i) *Artha* was the seeking and attainment of wealth and professional prowess; (ii) *Kama* was the aesthetic enjoyment of life through sensory delights; (iii) *Dharma* was

the understanding of virtue, morality, ethics and karma and most importantly, the imperceptible Divine and living according to the universal laws for the greater happiness of oneself and happiness of society and (iv) *Moksha* was the final release from the cycle of births and deaths, which happens through the perfection of the understanding of the Divine and devotion to It and merging into it.

The function of VA was to enable man to have perfect clarity and fulfillment in each of these four stages of life, Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. From this point of view a life without astrological guidance (from time to time) would tantamount to navigation on terra incognito-without any kind of maps and proper directions.

Q5: Can we have an intuitive grasp of VA in very simple terms?

Contrary to our customary assumption that we are the masters of our life, VA teaches us that it is the imperceptible Divine which orchestrates the drama of our life. *The Divine does this, from 'behind the scenes'. Because of this unobtrusive and mysterious position that the Divine has taken in man's life, man is totally at a loss, when it comes to the discovery of the Divine, and the understanding of his relationship with It. VA uses a mathematical model, based on astronomy, but with the dynamically moving Planets only representing the benevolent and malevolent cosmic life energies, sourced in the Divine.*

According to this *Devas-Asuras* model of VA, there is going on a *drama of destiny* in the outer theatre of our body and in the inner theatre of our consciousness. *All our family members, the people who impact on our life significantly and we ourselves, are participating characters in this drama of destiny. As participants we do enjoy a central 'controlling' position of which we too are well aware. However this should not blind us to the truth that our life is never entirely in our hands-for it is the*

imperceptible Divine which is orchestrating it. Using this model, we will have astonishing clarity into all the happenings in our life, and will therefore be much better placed, in both facing up to as well as coping with the adversities and misfortunes-which are part of the Divine plan for us. Pl also read the Mythic Model of Vedic Astrology, as this will throw additional light.

Q6: How will Vedic Astrology be useful in our day to day life?

Just as we go to a physician, only when we are suffer a health setback, we need to go to a Vedic astrologer, only when something painful and unbearable is happening in our life in some sphere and the future looks bleak. At such times when a crisis is brewing in one of the spheres: marital, professional, spiritual, social, family, physical well-being, relationship with the Police or Govt authorities, Litigations, Enmity in relationship, *we would naturally like to know, how long this 'Divine conspiracy' is going to last, and what we may we do as effective remedial measures, for the alleviation of these maladies. It is under such circumstances that we should seek out a competent Vedic astrologer, for the intelligent understanding and resolution of such crises.*

Q7: What are the Fruits of Vedic Astrology?

Firstly, clarity into life, as to who we are and who the Divine is? Secondly, understanding the structure of our destiny, the highs and lows, etc, and the timing of the misfortunes, and the good fortunes. Thirdly, what may we do as intelligent people to soften the blows of fate, to improve fate and make it more productive and fruitful, through the preventive remedial measures? Fourthly, seek knowledge of predictions, so that we may better prepare ourselves for what is in store for us. Fifthly, on the basis of these predictions and patterns, do a more intelligent planning of new ventures in life-like knowing the propitious

time for selecting a life partner, for raising a family, for begetting children, for building a house, for going to distant lands, for seeking and selecting a profession, for making business alliances, for going to a university, for earning a better income, etc.

Q8: When should we consult a Vedic Astrologer?

Just as we go to a physician, only when we suffer a health setback, we need to go to a Vedic astrologer likewise, only when something is happening in our life which is very painful and unbearable and the future looks bleak and we feel stuck. At such times when a crisis is brewing in one of the spheres: marital life, professional life, spiritual life, social life, family life, physical well-being, relationship with the police or govt authorities, litigations, enmity in relationship, we would like to know, how long this 'Divine conspiracy' is going to last, and what we may do as effective remedial measures, for the alleviation of these maladies. It is under such circumstances that we should seek out a competent Vedic astrologer for the intelligent understanding and resolution of such crises.

However, if we are very perceptive people, and have already understood that VA is a vast storehouse of treasures, we can also go to a Vedic astrologer, to gain self-knowledge (to know ourselves better, even the shadow part of our personality, with which we may not have come to terms as yet) or to select a correct spiritual path that is suitable for our temperament. *Such a visit is valuable, especially when learning about the Divine plan in our life becomes important for us, and when even self-knowing and Self-Realization may have become important for us.*

Q9: What is the Usual Procedure for a VA Consultation?

As a first step, just as a patient will make it clear to a physician, as to why he is seeking a consultation with him; here too, you will have to clearly spell out the area of life where you are bogged down, the timing

of the crisis, and whether you are already familiar with the basics of VA- whether you have consulted Vedic astrologers before, etc. Importantly, you will also have to furnish the following birth details: year, month, date of birth, time of birth, city of birth, place of birth. These will be used for making your Vedic Chart.

In the second step, we will e-mail a number of easily understandable introductory docs to you. *To benefit from the consultation, one must read all of these introductory docs and then seek clarifications, where doubts plague you. It is our experience that a more casual approach to a consultation, without taking the pains to understand and digest all these introductory docs, invariably reduces the efficacy and fruitfulness of the consultation.* In this regard, the mythic model of Vedic Astrology is of fundamental importance, as it presents the underlying world-view of VA.

In the third step, there are a number of simple new concepts, which must also be assimilated. These are, ‘Remedial Measures as the Second Line of Grace’; then ‘Samkalpa’ [Intention], ‘What forms of Remedial Measures?’, and some others.

You will also be required to know what your Ascendant [Asdt] is- whether it is Aries, Taurus, Gemini,....Pisces? What is the MEP [Most Effective Point], what are the FBs [Functional Benefic Planets] and FMs[Functional Malefic Planets] for your Rasi Chart[main mother Chart]. Which Planets are strong, which are weak, which are the afflictions in the RC. *If you can take the pains to know these basic details of your destiny, then the consultation will in all probability be very effective.*

With this preparation and familiarity with all these astrological variables, you will follow the Chart Analysis and the recommended

remedial measures. This will be a document with all sections systematically laid out. From this understanding of your life, your ups and downs, you will get the necessary conviction, to undertake the performance of the prescribed remedial measures.

Q10: Would the fruits of VA be also equally useful to people from Non-Hindu Cultures?

Where the Hindu form of the remedial measures is hard to accept for reasons of the culture being different, the astrologers and consulting seekers must work together to find the equivalents of these Hindu remedial measures in the culture of the consulting seeker. In our experience, we have found that the Hindu culture of Mantras, Charities and worship of Deities has gained so much of understanding worldwide that even people from non-Hindu cultures are seen to be open to adopting them, just for the reason that there is enough conviction in their thinking that these methods are very potent. Where no such conviction has been forthcoming, we must certainly strive to jointly discover the equivalents of these remedial measures in the Christian, Buddhist and Shinto faiths. In our experience, people of Islamic faith, as a rule do not consult Vedic astrologers. Nevertheless there have been broad-minded Muslims who have consulted Sankara.

Q11: What Basic Vedic Astrological Variables should the seeker know about in his/her own Chart- to Fully Benefit from the Consultation?

He/she should know his/her Ascendant [Asdt], the MEP [Most Effective Point] of the Asdt House, the FBs [Functional Benefic Planets] and FMs [Functional Malefic Planets] for his/her Asdt, the strong Planets, the weak Planets and the afflicted Houses and afflicted Planets. *If one has taken the pains to learn these basic variables, then the consultation is expected to be much more fruitful.*

Importantly everyone who consults must be a participant in the consultation process, rather than being a passive onlooker, fearfully waiting for the Vedic astrologer to make some doomsday prognostications!

Q12: Does one have to accept the Hindu Religion, or have the Hindu Faith, in order to benefit from Vedic Astrology?

Acceptance of the Hindu/Vedic faith is not necessary at all, for benefitting from a Vedic Astrological consultation. What is necessary and will prove to be beneficial is an openness of mind and a willingness to learn the fundamental principles, for once the system has been understood, a whole store house of treasures becomes available to you. In Sankara's experience, he has been consulted by (apart from Indians), Americans, Canadians, Sinhalese, Malaysians, Japanese, Brazilians, Chileans, Mexicans, Uruguayans, Germans, English, French, Australians, and though in each case, the culture of the consulting seeker has been a non-Hindu one, the consultations have been nevertheless fruitful and did bring clarity and relief to the consulting seeker.

Q13: Are these Vedic Astrological Consultations, like other systems of Divination, so *sacrosanct* that one cannot bring a reasonable approach of an intelligent enquiry, for understanding what has been put before the Seeker?

As we have mentioned elsewhere, the ideal situation would be one in which the consulting seeker takes an active interest in the consultation and participates in it by asking questions and seeking various kinds of clarifications. From our point of view, the more the questions, the merrier we are, and more fruitful will be the consultation. *Vedic Astrology does not demand that you believe in this ancient system, it does not even demand that you have faith in this system and faith in the*

religious matrix from which it has emerged as a limb of the Vedas. It however encourages you to be open and ask questions, for without a spirit of enquiry, usually no learning ever occurs.

Q14: Does Vedic Astrology presuppose the existence of a pre-ordained fate or destiny, so that the System of Vedic Astrology, implies that man is a puny and helpless creature, entirely at the mercy of the Divine?

This is an often asked question, which must be truthfully answered. While in the view of VA, there is definitely a pre-ordained destiny, what has to be understood clearly is that for different people, the proportion of: ‘bondage to that destiny’ and the ‘freedom to get round that pre-existing pattern and build ‘the Second Line of Grace’ through intelligent human effort, varies from one individual to another. For some individuals the ‘bondage to a pre-ordained destiny’ may be the stronger of the two factors, while for others, ‘the freedom to surmount that bondage and rebuild a new life, etc’ may be the stronger of the two factors. Those who have a greater measure of ‘bondage to a pre-ordained destiny’ will be complaining of their limiting fate, whereas, those who have ‘the freedom to get away from the bondage’ in greater measure, will speak of their ‘free-will’ and how they are the architects of their own destiny. Both kinds of people are off the mark because their verdicts are only half-truths. In fact, each human being has a measure of ‘bondage to a pre-fixed destiny’, as well as also a measure of ‘freedom to surmount and rebuild something new’. It is the relative proportion which matters. And even where the ‘freedom factor’ is more, the free-will of which all of us are so proud of, does not belong to us, rather it is sourced in the Divine only, which is orchestrating our life.

Q15: As you are emphasizing the Divine-Centric nature of VA, I would like to ask if free-will has a place at all in this System of Vedic Astrology?

Rather than merely affirm that VA has room in it for free-will, we should probe into the very genesis of this free-will, to which man is so attached. It is first of all important to perceive that man's idea of his free-will somehow goes with his underlying feeling that he is undeniably the master of his own life and that no other higher power has any say in his choices in life-in what he chooses and what he discards.

VA sees this unshakable supreme self-confidence in man as being sourced in his *Atmic* nature, since the *Atma* is after all the imperceptible Inner Self of man and is the Divine itself, at the very core of man's consciousness. *So at the bottom of this free-will is indeed the Divine, at the very core of man's consciousness. As man is generally unaware of this Divine core, the source of his free-will, he is given to speaking about this free-will as though it is an independent power and independent faculty, belonging to him alone rather than being sourced in the Divine.*

Human nature is very varied, there are very creative and spiritual men who are born connected to their *Atmic* nature-they are however only in the minority. Whether they are fully aware of this or not is not really the question here. When they are deeply spiritual they may be aware of this *Atmic* nature, but when they are only creative, extroverted and engrossed in the sensory world, it may be harder for them to figure out this *Atmic* nature. Barring these few exceptional cases then, the majority of humans are not likely to have this unshakable supreme self-confidence constantly, though they may intermittently meet life from this *Atmic* nature, in moments of crises. In fact, instead of this leonine courage and conviction the majority may only have fear or even confusion, so that they will never be able to assert their self-mastery over life, as the exceptionally gifted ones do. *For this vast majority, the whole question of having to accommodate this free-will in VA will not even arise.*

VA maintains that the so-called free-will of man is but a reflection of the Divine Will, in the restricted domain of this human body and the restricted domain of this human consciousness. *This Will is always there, irrespective of whether it will manifest in life like the resplendent Sun or be feeble and wavering like the Moon. In which form it will manifest in a human life, whether strongly or weakly will be a matter of the individual's destiny.* The point to be noted here is that even granting that a few fortunate people have this conviction of being masters of their lives - even they will find that often life does not flow according to their aspirations, and this one single fact is enough to show that another higher imperceptible agency has a hand in our destiny.

Q16: Do we have to be affiliated to some School of Hindu Philosophy or some Hindu Guru, in order to qualify to consult a Vedic Astrologer?

Vedic Astrology, properly speaking is an independent *darsana* [world-view or Philosophy of the Hindus], though this is not always emphasized due to its somewhat esoteric nature. You need no such affiliation to a Hindu Guru, Hindu Philosophy or Hindu scripture as a prerequisite for a Vedic Astrology consultation. By reading all the introductory docs, you will be quite well prepared for the consultation.

Q17: What particular Systems of Vedic Astrology are used by you in offering these Consultations?

We have identified four distinct kinds of sources or ingredients upon which our work rests, so that to get a clear understanding, we may view our work as the fifth and topmost layer.

Classical Vedic Astrology has many different systems, like those created by Sage Parasara, Sage Brighu, Sage Jaimini, etc. We have been inspired by the classical system of Sage Parasara and have adopted this as our overall framework. This is the first of our sources.

Then there is also the evolution of these ancient classical texts, in the form of commentaries, noteworthy new methods and contributions from one century to another. Such works from the last few centuries which have also been of inspirational value to us are: ‘Brihat Samhita’, ‘Sarvartha Chintamani’, ‘Phaladeepika’, ‘Kaalaprakasika’. This is the second of our layer of our inspirational sources.

Modern Indian Vedic Astrologers like, Bepin Behari, Ramakrishna Bhat, and Krishnamurti (i.e.; ‘Krishnamurti Paddhati’) and modern American Vedic Astrologers like Pandit Vamadeva Shastri, James Braha, Robert Svoboda (and Hart De Feuw) had also contributed to our deep appreciation of Vedic Astrology, its spiritual ethos, it’s all encompassing nature and the relevance of Vedic Astrology also in modern Western societies. These modern works constitute the third layer of our sources.

While all these three layered sources were important in our development and understanding of Vedic Astrology, none of them, ancient and modern were able to give us a working knowledge of Vedic Astrology. With all of this deep learning for many years, chart analysis was still mysterious, perplexing and unapproachable!

It was the research-based, all pervasive Systems Approach to Vedic Astrology [SA], developed by Prof V K Choudhry, which was able to throw open all the hidden doors of Vedic Astrology fully and completely demystify this ancient discipline. *The SA did all of this because of the systematic and logical structuring of all of its principles. By contrast, the classical sources, all the commentaries of the last few centuries, as well as the modern authors mentioned in the earlier paragraphs, suffered from a conspicuous lack of analytical clarity, predictive accuracy and systematic logical structure. It was only in the SA that a systematic framework was laid out and its analytical clarity*

and predictive accuracy, made chart analysis, such a simple & straight forward matter. *In one sense, it was the SA that blessed us with all the fruits of the earlier three sources as well.*

Thus based on these four sources, we have developed a comprehensive view of Vedic Astrology, one in which, both the *Vedic* spiritual ethos [from the first three sources] as well as the analytical clarity and predictive accuracy [from the SA] are blended together, thereby making Vedic Astrology, once again transparent and capable of giving fulfillment in the four goals of life: *Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha.*

Q18: Who is the Hindu Spiritual Master/Vedic Astrologer who is offering these Consultations and what are his Credentials?

Sankara started out as a researcher physicist, completing doctoral research (1980) in theoretical nuclear physics, from the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Mumbai, India. Thereafter, he was an Alexander Von Humboldt post-doctoral research fellow at the Wolfgang Goethe University in Frankfurt, Germany for another two and a half years.

On account of a radical calming and silencing of his consciousness in 1972-1973 (triggered by his relentless *choiceless awareness of what is*), he lost the fascination for research in the sciences, and instead, was now looking for ways to communicate the significance of the human consciousness after it has been silenced and calmed. It was his firsthand discovery that in a silenced consciousness, a new kind of intelligence, called *Prajna* is awakened. Two Masters were instrumental in this spiritual re-birth of Sankara. One was the illustrious Master J. Krishnamurti, another his philosopher-friend who later emerged as the founder of the Oneness spiritual movement, Sri Bhagavan.

As a token of gratitude to these two Masters and his mother, Sankara had the inner calling to devote his life to serving the Master J. Krishnamurti, but destiny decided otherwise. Next, Sankara shifted to serving the other Master Sri Bhagavan, by beginning his mission work from scratch, and building it up, for as many as 16 years. Between 1994-1999 he was very active in this mission as the *Paramacharya*. The Movement of Sri Bhagavan took the name 'Oneness', sometime in 2000, or a year or two later.

In 1999, Sankara, felt his work in 'Oneness' was over and withdrew into *antarmukha* (introspective solitude). Starting from 1999, he was drawn to Vedic Astrology and Ayurveda, but the calling from Vedic astrology was the stronger of the two pulls. From then on, commenced an entirely new chapter in his life-devoted to Vedic astrology till date-*but from the spiritual point of Dharma and Moksha*. He has been also offering Vedic astrology consultations in India from 2006 onwards to sincere seekers who sought him out. In 2007, his contributions to Vedic astrology were recognized by Prof. V. K. Choudhry, a renowned Vedic Astrologer and founder of the Systems Approach to Vedic Astrology [SA], when the latter conferred on him the title *Jyotish Ratan*. In 2009, Sankara published his original research in the inter-disciplinary field of *Dharma & Moksha Astrology*: 'Sri Ramana Maharshi's Moksha-A Hindu Astrological Pilgrimage into the life and moksha of Sri Ramana Maharshi' [Yogi Impressions, Mumbai, 2009].

In 2011, breaking the twelve year long introspective solitude (*antarmukha*), Sankara started teaching 'Atmajnana' [self-knowing and Self-Realization] in the form of two day spiritual retreats, as the essence of his life-long spiritual realization-as he was unable to do this within the 'Oneness' movement.

In 2012, 2013 and 2014, he was invited by well wishers and friends to give Vedic astrology consultations and conduct seminars and spiritual retreats in self-knowing and Self-Realization (*Atmajnana*) in Canada, the US, Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay. In Latin America, Ricardo Bravo and Natalia Isekzon (husband and wife) were his principal hosts in Chile, and Uruguay, and they organized and planned all of his Latin American programmes for these three years. In the US, S.M. Kumar organized his retreat and consultations and likewise invited him in 2014. In 2012 and 2013, Ms. Vasugi Paramasivam and Sri Lakshmi Kumar did the same thing for him in Toronto, Canada. Sankara's co-operative alliance with Ricardo Bravoji emerged as a fruitful model for his overseas work, and the present emerging alliance with Madhu Saiji is patterned after this earlier example.

Sankara Bhagavadpada is also offering an on-line self-paced course in Vedic astrology since 2011, and he has 12 scholars studying with him, from many different countries.

Q19: Are there also 'personal face to face' consultations, apart from e-mail consultations and skype conversations?

Yes in India, Canada, the US, and all the Latin American countries, all consultations were face to face. Each of these consultations goes on for 2 hrs, at a minimum.

Q20: May we know the full spectrum of Vedic Astrological Services which are being offered?

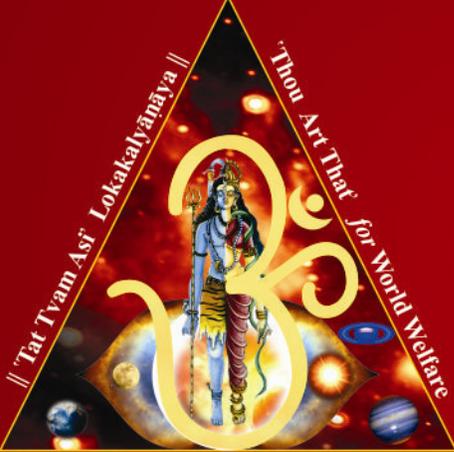
These are displayed under the head, 'services' in Sankara's websites:

www.Hinduworldastrology.net and www.tat-tvam-asi.org

The second of these deals with spiritual dimension of Sankara's work.

Q21: What are the Tariffs for these Vedic Astrological Consultations?

Pl see, www.Hinduworldastrology.net



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|| Jyotiṣāmayanam Cakṣuḥ ||
(Vedic Astrology is the Eye of Wisdom)