

Glossary

This glossary contains many Sanskrit words, people, places, and literature that Sathya Sai Baba uses in His discourses, especially discourses appearing in this volume. The glossary attempts to provide comprehensive meanings and detailed explanations of the more important Sanskrit words, for the benefit of lay readers who are interested in Hindu religion and philosophy.

In an electronic version of this volume (e.g. an e-book for the Ipad, Kindle, or Nook), you can click on most names, places, people, and Sanskrit words within the text in order to immediately access the word in this glossary. Your device will also have an arrow or other link to press to get back to the text.

Some names, e.g. Krishna and Arjuna, occur so often in the text that many of the occurrences have not been linked to the glossary.

a-bhaya. Fearlessness.

Abhimanyu. Arjuna's son and Parikshith's father; slain in battle.

acharya. Spiritual teacher, preceptor.

adi-Atma. Pertaining to the individual soul, spirit, or manifestation of supreme Brahman.

adi-bhauthika. Pertaining to the physical or material world; the fine spiritual aspect of material objects.

adi-daivika. Pertaining to divinity or fate, e.g. natural disasters.

Adishesha. Also Sessa. Divine serpent with a thousand heads upon which the earth rests; used by demigods and demons together to churn the ocean of milk. Also, the reposing bed of Vishnu.

a-dwaita. Nondualism, monism, the doctrine that everything is God, the philosophy of absolute oneness of God, soul, and universe.

agni. Fire element.

Agni. God of Fire; the fire element; name for fire when it is out of sight range.

agni-astra. Fire missile.

Ahuka. King of the Yadu dynasty, father of Ugrasena, who in turn was the father of Kamsa.

a-jnana. Ignorance, stupidity.

akasa. Space, ether, the subtlest form of matter.

akshauhini. A fighting unit consisting of 109350 foot-soldiers, 65610 horses and horsemen, 21870 elephants and elephant warriors, and 21870 chariots and their human equipment.

a-kshaya. Undecaying, never-ending.

a-kshaya-pathra. Never ending plate; vessel given by Lord Sun to the Pandavas.

Alarka. King in the state of Kasi (Benares), who gave his eyes upon a brahmin's request.

Ambarisha. Pious king of the Ikshvaku dynasty. Son of Prasusruka and father of Nahusha.

amritha. Divine nectar (literally, no death or immortal).

ananda. Divine bliss. The Self is unalloyed, eternal bliss. Pleasures are but its faint and impermanent shadows.

Anasuya. Wife of sage Athri and mother of Dattatreya; an incarnation of the Trinity.

Andhaka. A king in the Yadu dynasty.

Aniruddha. Son of Pradyumna and grandson of Krishna.

anna-purna. Bestower of food; goddess; a form of Durga (goddess of destruction of evil obstacles).

Arishta. Demon in form of an ox sent by Kamsa to kill Krishna, but Krishna destroyed him.

Arjuna. Krishna's disciple, in the *Bhagavad Gita*; third of five Pandava brothers. See *Mahabharatha*

asraya. That on which anything depends, a support, a refuge.

a-sura. Demon; term arose when Diti's sons refused to drink the divine liquor (*sura*) offered by Varuni, the daughter of Varuna.

Aswamanja. King of solar dynasty; wicked son of Sagara and Kesini; driven away by his father because of his cruelty.

aswamedha yaga. Horse sacrifice to absolve a king of all sins. A horse is marked with a victory card and allowed to roam about freely. If anyone stops it, the king should go and defeat him in battle and bring it back.

Aswathama. Son of Drona.

Athri. A sage; father of Dattatreya. Also, one of 10 mental sons of Hiranyagarbha.

Atma. Self; Soul. Self, with limitations, is the individual soul. Self, with no limitations, is Brahman, the Supreme Reality.

Atma-jnana. Knowledge of Self-realization; awareness of *Atma*.

Atmic. Of or relating to the *Atma*.

Aum. *Om*; Designation of the Universal Brahman; sacred, primordial sound of the universe.

Avatar. Incarnation of God. Whenever there is a decline of *dharma*, God comes down to the world assuming bodily form to protect the good, punish the wicked and re-establish *dharma*. An *Avatar* is born and lives free and is ever conscious of His mission. By His precept and example, He opens up new paths in spirituality, shedding His grace on all.

Ayodhya. City where Rama was born and ruled.

ayur-veda. Classical Indian medical knowledge; science of health and long life.

Badraswa. An island near the mountain of Meru.

Bakasura. Demon sent by Kamsa in form of a crane, which the child Krishna killed. Bakasura's brother then came as a python to kill Krishna but was destroyed.

Balagopala. Name for Krishna; ruler of cowherds.

Balarama. Elder brother of Krishna, noted for his strength.

Bali. Emperor of demons; grandson of Prahlada and son of the demon Virochana. Humiliated by dwarf Vamana, who was an incarnation of Vishnu.

Banasura. Powerful demon king of Shonithapura, descended from Vishnu. Destroyed by Krishna.

Bhagavad Gita. Literally, Song of God. Portion of the *Mahabharatha* that is a dialogue between Arjuna, one of the Pandava brothers, and Krishna.

Bhagavan. Divinity; term of reverential address; Sathya Sai Baba is called *Bhagavan* by his devotees.

Bhagavatha. A sacred book composed by Sage Vyasa dealing with Vishnu and His incarnations, especially

Krishna. It also means those with attachment to God, or the Godly.

Bhagavatha-thathwa. Wisdom of the divine.

Bhagiratha. King of Solar Dynasty, son of Amsuman. Gave up his kingdom for enlightenment, but eventually returned as king.

Bhagirati. Name for the Ganga river, because Bhagiratha brought the river to earth.

bhaktha. Devotee of the Lord.

bhakti. Devotion to God.

bhakti-yoga. Path of love and devotion. A conjunction (in astrological terms) of devotion.

Bharath. India; Indian; descendent of King Bharath, first emperor of India.

Bharatha. Son of Dasaratha and Kaika; brother of Rama. “Bharatha” means “he who rules”.

Bharathiya. Indian, dweller in the country of Bharath (India)..

Bhils. A mountain race who live in the Vindhya hills.

Bhima. Second of five Pandava brothers; named for his size and strength. See *Mahabharatha*.

Bhishma. The guardian and patriarch of the Kauravas and Pandavas. Son of King Shantanu. Remarkable for his wisdom and unflinching devotion to God. Trapped by his fate to fight on side of evil Kauravas; bled to death on a bed of arrows while thinking of God. See *Mahabharatha*. He also vowed life-long celibacy to ensure that his offspring would not claim the throne.

Bhoja. King of the Yadu tribe. Also, a territory in Sauvira, near the Sindhu (or Indus) river, overrun by Kamsa.

Brahma. The Creator, the First of the Hindu Trinity of Brahma (the Creator), Vishnu (the Preserver), and Siva (the Destroyer).

Brahma-muhurtha. Sacred period during early morning, when spiritual practices such as meditation are recommended. Approximately 96 minutes hours before sunrise for 48 minutes, but one can also find it defined as 04:08–04:56. A *muhurtha* is approximately 48 minutes.

Brahman. The Supreme Being, the Absolute Reality, Impersonal God with no form or attributes. The uncaused cause of the Universe, Existence, Consciousness-Bliss Absolute (*Sat-Chit-Ananda*); The Eternal Changeless Reality — not conditioned by time, space, and causation.

Brahma-priya. Beloved of Brahma.

brahmarshi. Highest sage; one absorbed in divine consciousness.

Brahma Sutra. Spiritual text of *Vedantic* teachings in short maxims, attributed to Badharayana or Vyasa.

brahmin. First of four castes of social order, the priestly or teacher caste; a person belonging to this caste.

Brindavan. Forest and pastoral lands where Krishna played in his childhood.

Brindavana-vihara. Name for Krishna, roamer of Brindavan.

Buddha. Prince Gautama, circa 556–480 BC. Founder of Buddhism after attaining enlightenment.

caste. The four castes of social order are: *brahmin* (priestly or teacher), *kshatriya* (warrior, protector), *vaisya* (trader, merchant, agriculturist), and *sudra* (worker, helper). See *varna dharma*.

chandala. Outcast.

chandra. Moon.

chittha. Mind stuff, memory, subconscious mind.

Daiva. Divinity, God.

danava. Class of demons, *daityas*, or *asuras*; enemies of the Gods (*devas*). Children of Dhanu and Kasyapa.

Dantavakra. The rebirth of Vijaya, doorkeeper of Vishnu, as a demonic king; was killed in battle by Krishna and returned to Vishnu's abode.

darshan. Sight of a holy person.

Dasaratha. Son of Aja and father of Rama; King of Ayodhya; the name means "ten chariot hero".

Dattatreya. Sage son of Athri and Anasuya.

dayya. Devil.

dehi. One who has a body; conscious embodied Self.

deva. Deity, celestial being, God.

Devahuthi. Daughter of Swayambhuva Manu and wife of Kardhama Prajapathi; mother of sage Kapila.

Devaka. Son of Ahuka and father of Devaki.

Devaki. Mother of Krishna.

Devi. Personification of the feminine principle; Goddess of the universe.

dhana. Wealth, possessions.

Dhanvantari. Preceptor in *ayur-veda*. Classical Indian medical knowledge is called *ayur-veda* (science of health and long life). Its two chief traditions are those of Atreya and Dhanvantari.

dharmā. Righteousness, religion, code of conduct, duty, essential nature of a being or thing. It holds together the entire Universe. Man is exhorted to practise *dharmā* to achieve material and spiritual welfare. The *Vedas* contain the roots of *dharmā*. God is naturally interested in the reign of *dharmā*.

Dharmaraja. Name for Yudhistira, eldest of the five Pandava brothers. Born to Kunthi by the grace of Yama Dharmaraaja, Lord of Death. Named for adherence to *dharmā*. See *Mahabharatha*.

Dharma Sastras. Codes of law and ethics concerning virtuous living.

Dhenuka. Fierce giant with the body of a donkey; beaten to death by Krishna and Balarama.

dhothi. Cloth worn around the waist; skirt.

Dhritharashtra. Father of Kauravas; holder of ruling power.

dhyana. Meditation.

Dilipa. Son of Amsumanta; became king of the solar dynasty; offered his life to a lion who was about to kill the sacred cow Nandini.

Dronacharya. Drona, the teacher of archery and war tactics for the Pandavas and Kauravas.

Droupadi. Wife of Pandavas. See *Mahabharatha*.

Drupada. King of Panchala (Punjab) and father of Droupadi.

Druva. Grandson of Brahma and son of Uttanapadha; as a child, he performed severe penance and attained self-renunciation.

Durga. Goddess of the universe; mother earth; daughter of Himaval and wife of Siva.

Durvasa. Son of Athri and Anasuya; known for quick temper and severe curses with an eventually constructive effect of driving home hard lessons of discipline and virtuousness. He granted boons to Kunthi, which resulted in the births of Karna and the Pandavas.

Duryodhana. Chief (and eldest) of the evil-minded sons of Dhritharashtra.

Dussasana. Infamous second son of Dhritharashtra and younger brother of Duryodhana.

***dwaita*.** Dualism, the doctrine that the individual and the Supreme Soul are two different principles or entities.

***Dwapara-yuga*.** Third in the cycle of four ages. See *yuga*.

Dwaraka. Capital of Krishna. After Krishna's death the city was swept over by the sea; researchers believe it was situated in the sea just west of Gujarat.

Dwaraka-vasa. Name for Krishna, resident of the city of Dwaraka.

Gandhamadana mountains. Holy mountains east of the Himalayas.

Gandhari. Virtuous wife of Dhritharashtra, mother of Kauravas.

Gandharvas. Celestial musicians, a class of demigods; born to the sage Kashyapa and wife Arishta.

Gandiva. Arjuna's bow.

Ganga. The 1560-mile-long Ganges river; starts in the Himalayas and flows generally east into the Bay of Bengal; the most sacred river of India.

Garga. Family priest of the family of Nanda (the foster-father of Krishna).

Garuda. Celestial bird, white-crested eagle, king of the feathered race, vehicle for Lord Vishnu.

Gauri. Siva's consort Parvathi.

***Gayatri mantra*.** A very sacred *Vedic* prayer for self-enlightenment; it is repeated piously at dawn, noon, and twilight devotions.

Gokula. Village of cowherds on the banks of Yamuna wherein Nanda and Krishna resided.

***gopa*.** Herdsman.

Gopala. Cowherd boy. A name for Lord Krishna.

***gopi*.** Cowherd maiden.

Govardhana Hill. Mountain lifted by Krishna.

***grihastha*.** Householder, one of the four stages of life.

***guna*.** Quality, property, trait; one of the three constituents of nature (*sathwa*, *rajas*, and *thamas*). They bind the soul to the body. Man's supreme goal in life is to transcend the *gunas* and attain liberation from the cycle of birth and death.

guru. Spiritual guide; a knower of Brahman, who is calm, desireless, merciful, and ever ready to help and guide spiritual aspirants who approach him.

***hamsa*.** Swan.

Hamsa. Supreme Spirit typified by the pure white colour of the swan; celestial swan.

Hanuman. Son of the Wind God and a great "devotee servant" of Rama. He was part man, part monkey.

Hara. God; name for Siva.

Hari. God; destroyer of sins; name for Vishnu.

Hasthinapura. Capital city of the Pandavas (and earlier of the Kauravas).

Hayagriva. An incarnation of Vishnu, who had the form of a horse above the neck. *Haya-griva* means "horse-headed".

Hindu. Person who adheres to Hinduism —the religion based on the *Vedas*. Name originally applied by foreign invaders to inhabitants of Indus (Sindhu) river valley.

Hiranyagarbha. Cosmic divine mind; cosmic womb; golden egg first created by Brahman from which all creation issued.

Hiranyakasipu. A demonic person who forbade mention of Vishnu’s name, wicked father of Prahlada, who was a great devotee of the Lord; killed by the man-lion Narashimha, an *Avatar* of Vishnu.

Hiranyaksha. Wicked brother of Hiranyakasipu; killed by the wild boar *Avatar* of Vishnu.

Ikshvaku. Son of Manu and father of Kukshi; first king of Ayodhya and ancestor of Rama’s dynasty.

Indra. Lord of the *devas* (celestials). Indra is one of the chief deities in the *Rig veda*.

Indraprastha. City of residence of the Pandava brothers.

Iravathi. Daughter of Uttara, wife of Parikshith.

Isa. Supreme, Lord.

Isanukatha. Glories of God (Isa).

Iswara. Easwara. The Supreme Ruler, the Personal God. He is Brahman associated with illusion (*maya*) but has it under His control, unlike the individual soul, who is illusion’s slave. He has a lovely form, auspicious attributes, and infinite power to create, sustain, and destroy. He dwells in the heart of every being, controlling it from within. He responds positively to true devotion and sincere prayer.

ithihasa. Historical legend, traditional account of former events.

jai. Hurrah, victory.

Janaka. A self-realized king; Sita’s father and Rama’s father-in-law. His ancestor was Nimi, a great emperor.

Janamejaya. Son of Parikshith and Iravathi.

japa. Soft prayer or repetition of the name of God.

Jarasandha. King of Magadha and father-in-law of Kamsa; enemy of Krishna.

Jatayu. A famous eagle, whose wings were scorched when he flew too close to the sun. He tried to rescue Sita, and he played a role in Rama’s fight against the demons.

jiva. Individual or soul, in a state of non-realisation of its identity with Brahman. It is unaware of its own nature and is subjected to sensations of pain and pleasure, birth and death, etc.

jivi. Individual or soul.

jnana. Sacred knowledge; knowledge of the spirit, pursued as a means to Self-realisation. It is direct experience of God, as the Soul of the souls. *Jnana* makes a man omniscient, free, fearless, and immortal.

Jnana-kanda. Portion of the *Vedas* that deals with knowledge of Brahman through the path of spiritual wisdom or discriminative knowledge.

Kachchapa. Son of Viswamitra.

Kaikeyi. Also **Kaika.** A princess of Kekaya (Kashmir), third wife of Dasaratha, and mother of Bharatha.

kaivalya. Absolute oneness, final beatitude.

kala. Time, death (*yama*).

Kalanemi. Demon minister of Ravana who advised him to take refuge in Rama.

Kalayavana. Wicked king, who secured boon from Siva that no Yadava could kill him. In combat with Krishna,

was tricked into challenging Muchukunda, who destroyed him.

kali. Wickedness, black, iron.

Kali. Mother goddess associated with death.

Kalinga. A pool of poisoned waters of the Yamuna where the hydraheaded serpent King Kaliya resided.

Kaliya. Wicked serpent killed by Krishna.

Kali-yuga. Fourth in a cycle of four ages; the evil age; the one we are now in. See *yuga*.

Kalki. Tenth Avatar of Vishnu during the *Kali* age.

kalpa. Age; a day of Brahma, a period of 4,320,000,000 years.

Kalpataru. Heavenly wish-fulfilling tree in Indra's paradise.

Kambhoja. King who fought for Duryodhana; killed by Krishna.

Kamsa. Brother of Krishna's mother, Devaki, and killer of her first six sons.

Kapila. Also Kapilamaharshi. Ancient sage-philosopher; prime exponent of the one of the six systems of philosophy known as *Sankhya*, which emphasizes duality of spirit and nature.

Kardama Prajapathi. Grandson of Brahma and husband of Devahuthi.

karma. Action, deed, work, religious rite, the totality of innate tendencies formed as a consequence of acts done in previous lives. Every *karma* produces a lasting impression on the mind of the doer, apart from affecting others. Repetition of a particular *karma* produces a tendency (*vasanas*) in the mind. *Karma* is of three kinds: (i) *prarabdha*, which is being exhausted in the present life; (ii) *aagami*, which is being accumulated in the present life, and (iii) *samchitha*, which is being accumulated or stored to be experienced in future lives. *Akarma* is action that is done without any intention to gain the consequences; *vikarma* is action that is intentionally done.

Karna. Half-brother of the Pandavas. Valiant but unfortunate eldest son of Kunthi by the Sun deity. Ally of the Kauravas in the war with Pandavas.

Karthaviryarjuna. Renowned king of the Hehaya dynasty; brought down by Parasurama because of his pride.

Kauravas. Family that fought Pandavas. See *Mahabharatha*.

Kausalya. Daughter of the King of Kosala, first wife of Dasaratha, and mother of Rama.

Kausiki. Now the modern river of Kosi in Bihar. Viswamitra's hermitage stood on its bank.

kaya. Body, feeling, temperament.

Kesi. Demon follower of Kamsa. Krishna got the name Kesava for killing him.

Kesini. Daughter of the king of Vidarbha and wife of Sagara.

Kethumala. Holy place in Jambudwipa.

Khali. A great sage.

Khandava. Forest. Forest inhabited by many demons, which was consumed by Agni, the fire god.

Khatvanga. King in the Solar Dynasty; ancestor of Rama.

Koran. Holy text of the Muslims accepted as revelations from the prophet Mohammed; divinely authorized basis for the regulations of the Islamic world.

Kripa or **Kripacharya.** Earlier fought against Pandavas; later appointed as advisor to King Parikshith.

Krishna. The *Avatar* of Vishnu in the *Dwapara yuga*, prior to the present *Kali yuga*.

Krishna-chandra. Krishna-moon; name for Krishna.

kritha-yuga. First age of man, Golden age of truth. See *yuga*.

kshatriya. Protector, warrior; see caste.

kshira-sagara. Ocean of milk.

Kubera. God of riches; father was Vishravas and younger half-brother was Ravana.

Kunthi. Also **Kunthi Devi.** Mother of Pandavas, wife of King Pandu (the younger brother of emperor Dhritharashtra), and sister of Krishna's father (Vasudeva).

Kurma. Second incarnation of Vishnu, as a Tortoise.

Kuru. Famous King born in the Puru dynasty. *Kurukshetra* became holy and sanctified because of Kuru's penances.

Kurukshetra. Battlefield where the Pandavas and Kauravas fought.

Kuvalayapida. Fierce elephant of Kamsa, killed by Krishna.

Lakshmana. Brother of Rama and son of Sumitra; represents intellect.

Lakshmi. Consort of Vishnu, goddess of wealth.

leela. Divine sport or play.

loka-pala. World protector.

Madhava. God (name for Krishna); Master of illusion (*maya*), Lord of Lakshmi.

Madhusudana. "Killer of the Madhu demon". Name for Krishna.

Mahabharatha. The Hindu epic composed by Sage Vyasa, which deals with the deeds and fortunes of the cousins (the Kauravas and Pandavas) of the Lunar race, with Lord Krishna playing a significant and decisive role in shaping the events. The *Bhagavad Gita* and *Vishnu Sahasranama* occur in this great epic. It is considered to be the Fifth *Veda* by devout Hindus. Of this great epic, it is claimed that "what is not in it is nowhere.

maha-raja. Great king.

maha-purusha. Outstanding sage.

Maha-yuga. Great age, period of 12,000 *yugas*.

Maheswara. Name for Siva; the great Lord.

manas. Mind, the inner organ, which has four aspects: (i) mind (*manas*), which deliberates, desires, and feels; (ii) intellect (*buddhi*), which understands, reasons, and decides; (iii) the 'I' sense, and (iv) memory (*chitha*). The mind, with all its desires and their broods, conceals the Divinity within man. Purification of the mind is essential for realisation of the Self.

manasa-sarovar. Pellucid waters of the mind

Mandhara Mountain. Holy mountain that served as churning stick at the churning of the ocean for divine nectar (*amritha*).

Mandhata. Eminent king in the Ikshvaku dynasty. Son of Yuvanaswa and father of Susandhi.

Manigriva. Twin son of Kubera, turned into tree by the curse of sage Narada.

mantra. A sacred formula, mystic syllable or word symbol uttered during the performance of the rituals or meditation. They represent the spiritual truths directly revealed to the *rishis* (seers). The section of the *Veda*

that contains these hymns (*mantras*) is called the *Samhitha*.

Manu. The first father of mankind; author of the codes of righteous conduct (*Dharma Sastras*); son of Surya (the sun) and father of Vaivaswatha Manu, the present progenitor of mankind.

Manvanthara. An age of Manu.

Maruth. Wealthy king, who lived in the *Kritha-yuga*.

Mathura. Krishna's birthplace.

Matsya. The first incarnation of Vishnu, as a Fish.

Matsyasura. Fish demon killed by Krishna.

maya. Delusion. The mysterious, creative, and delusive power of Brahman through which God projects the appearance of the Universe. *Maya* is the material cause and Brahman is the efficient cause of the Universe. Brahman and *maya* are inextricably associated with each other like fire and its power to heat. *Maya* deludes the individual souls in egoism, making them forget their true spiritual nature.

Maya. A Danava king, who served the gods and demons as their architect and builder.

moha. Delusion caused by false identification, infatuation.

moksha. Liberation from all kinds of bondage, especially the one to the cycle of birth and death. It is a state of absolute freedom, peace, and bliss, attained through Self-realisation. This is the supreme goal of human endeavour, the other three being, righteousness (*dharma*), wealth and power (*artha*), and sense-pleasure (*kama*).

Muchukunda. A celebrated king of the Solar dynasty.

muhurtha. Period of forty-eight minutes.

mukthi. Freedom. See *moksha*.

mula. Primordial matter; root cause, basis, foundation.

Murthidevi. Wife of Dharma and mother of the twins Nara and Narayana.

Mushtika. Fierce demon follower of Kamsa; fought Krishna and Balarama and was slain.

Nabhaga. Brother of Ikshvaku; father of Ambarisha. In *Ramakatha I*, Sathya Sai Baba says that Prasusruka was Ambarisha's father.

Nakula. One of the Pandava brothers. See *Mahabharatha*.

Nalakubera. Twin son of Kubera; turned into tree by the curse of sage Narada.

Nanda. King who adopted Krishna as infant.

Nandananda. Name for Krishna.

nara. Man; divine man; primeval man, human being.

Nara. One of Dharma's twin sons Nara and Narayana, two incarnations of Vishnu.

Narada. Sage-bard; traveled the world chanting Narayana. Famous for creating disputes, resulting in solutions for the spiritual advancement or victory of the virtuous. Expert in law and author of texts on *dharma*.

naraka. Hell.

Naraka. Immensely powerful demon son of Earth and Hiranyaksha; killed by Krishna. Naraka stole Indra's mother's earrings and Indra's umbrella..

Narasimha. Man-lion. One of the ten *Avatars* of Vishnu.

Bhagavatha Vahini.

Narayana. The Primal Person, the Lord, Vishnu. Also, one of Dharma's twin sons Nara and Narayana, two incarnations of Vishnu.

nir-guna. Without qualities, attributeless.

nirodha. Absorption.

Om. Designation of the Universal Brahman; sacred, primordial sound of the Universe.

Omkara. The form of *AUM*, or *Om*.

Panchajana. Ogre who swallowed Sandipani's son.

pancha-prana. Five vital airs of the human body.

Pandavas. Sons of Pandu; family of 5 brothers that fought the Kauravas: Dharmaraja, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula, and Sahadeva. See *Mahabharatha*.

Pandu. Father of the Pandavas and brother of Dhritharashtra and Vidura.

papa. Evil deeds, demerit, sin.

Para-brahman. Universal Absolute Brahman.

Param-atma. Supreme Self, Supreme *Atma*.

Parasurama. An incarnation of Vishnu as man, born to destroy the arrogance of the wicked *Kshatriya* kings.

pariksha. Search, quest; test.

Parikshith. Emperor of Kuru dynasty; grandson of Arjuna and son of Abhimanyu.

Parvathi. Siva's consort. Also known as Gauri (fair complexioned) and by other names.

Pasupatha-astra. Siva's missile.

Patanjali. Author of the *Yoga Sutras*, which form the foundation of the *yoga* system of Indian philosophy. See *raja-yoga*.

Paundraka. Demonic king of ancient Karusha; challenged Krishna and was destroyed.

Pippalada. Ancient sage and preceptor of spiritual knowledge.

poshana. Protection, nourishment, support, growth.

Prabhasa-kshetra. Celebrated place of pilgrimage on the west coast near Dwaraka.

Prachinabarhi. Grandson of Emperor Prithu. He carpeted the world with *darbha* grass with its head turned toward the east and thus got his name.

Prahlada. Son of the demon king Hiranyakasipu. As a boy, he was beaten, trampled, and cast into fire and water. But he saw only God everywhere, and repetition of the Name of God saved him. Once, Prahlada asserted that God was everywhere, and Narayana appeared in his man-lion form from within a pillar to destroy the king.

Prajapathi. Creator of this world; God presiding over creation. Also called Manu, Surya's son.

prakriti. Nature, the Divine Power of Becoming. Also known as *maya*, *avidya*, and *sakthi*; the world of matter and mind as opposed to the spirit. *Prakriti* has three dispositions or *gunas* (*sathwa*, *rajas*, and *thamas*), which go into the make-up of all living and non-living beings in the Universe, in varying proportions leading to the appearance of infinite multiplicity in form, nature, and behaviour.

Pralamba. Demon who attacked Krishna and was destroyed.

prana. Life-breath, life force, vital energy, the five vital airs of the body. English doesn't seem to have names

for these vital airs, so we list them with their Sanskrit names: *prana* (located in lungs), *apana* (flatus, which moves downward through the rectum), *vyana* (diffused throughout the whole body), *samana* (navel; essential to digestion), and *udana* (rises through throat to head).

prema. Ecstatic love of God; divine love of the most intense kind.

Prithu. King of great virtue, born in the line of Druva.

prithvi. Earth, world.

puja. Worship.

pundit. Learned scholar, wise man.

punya. Virtuous deeds, good works, meritorious actions.

Puranas. Any of a number of collections of ancient legends and lore embodying the principles of the universal, eternal religion and ethics. There are 18 *Puranas*, the most famous being the *Mahabhagavatham* and the *Devi Bhagavatham*.

Purushothama. The supreme Lord of all.

Puthana. Ogress killed by Krishna.

Radha. Cowherd maid, a chief devotee of Krishna; one of Lakshmi's forms.

Raghu. Dilipa's son; famous king of the Solar dynasty.

rajarshi. Royal sage.

rajas. One of the three *gunas* (qualities or dispositions) of *maya* or *prakriti*. Passion, restlessness, aggressiveness, emotions such as anger, greed, grief. Associated with colour red. See *guna*.

rajasic. Adjective form of *rajas*, passionate, emotional.

raja-yoga. Royal *yoga* of meditation, detachment, and desirelessness. Eight-fold path of *yoga* developed by Patanjali, which includes control of the mind and withdrawal of the senses from the external world.

rakshasa. Demon, ogre.

Rama. *Avatar* of the *Thretha yuga*. Hero of the *Ramayana*; killed the wicked Ravana to rescue his wife Sita, who had been kidnapped. "Rama" means "he who pleases".

Ramayana. This sacred epic, composed by Sage Valmiki, deals with the incarnation of Vishnu as Sri Rama, who strove all his life to reestablish the reign of *dharma* in the world. The *Ramayana* has played an important role in influencing and shaping the Hindu ethos over the centuries.

Rasa-kreeda. Divine dance of Krishna.

Ravana. Lord of demons and king of Lanka, who abducted Sita (Rama's wife).

Rig-veda. First *Veda* composed by the sages, consisting of 1028 hymns. Oldest religious text in world.

Rig-vedic. Of or relating to the *Rig-veda*.

Rishabha. A sage, the son of King Nabhi and the grandson of King Agnidra. He did *tapas* for many years in the forest.

rishi. Sage, wise man.

Rubhu. A son of Brahma, a sage and an extraordinary scholar.

Rudra. Vedic God of dissolution of the cosmos; named Siva in his auspicious or benevolent form; one of the Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu, and Rudra/Siva.

Rukmini. Chief queen of Krishna. Krishna eloped with her to prevent an unwanted marriage at her request (described in the *Bhagavata Purana*).

Sabari. A woman ascetic living in the hermitage of her teacher, Sage Mathanga; Rama gave her salvation.

sadhaka. Spiritual aspirant.

sadhana. Spiritual discipline or exercise; self effort.

sadhu. Virtuous, wise aspirant; pious or righteous person.

Sagara. Ancient emperor of Ayodhya; son of Asitha and father of Aswamanja.

Sahadeva. One of the Pandava brothers. See *Mahabharatha*.

sahasra-nama. 1000 names of Siva or Vishnu.

Sakatasura. Demon sent by Kamsa in the form of a cart to kill Krishna; Krishna kicked the cart to pieces.

sakthi. Great universal power, divine energy, strength. *Maha* means *Great*, so *Mahasakthi* is great *sakthi*.

Sakthi. Female consort of Siva.

Salya. Kaurava king of Madhra.

Sama, Sama-veda. Collection of certain verses of the *Rig-veda* arranged for liturgical purposes.

samadhi. Literally, total absorption. The state of super consciousness resulting in union with or absorption in the ultimate reality, the *Atma*; perfect equanimity. The state that transcends the body, mind, and intellect. In that state of consciousness, the objective world and the ego vanish and Reality is perceived or communed with, in utter peace and bliss. When people realise in this state their oneness with God, it is called *nirvikalpa samadhi*.

Sambara. Demon son of Hiranyaksha who was a great adept in magic; killed by Krishna.

sambhasana. Speech, conversation, dialogue.

Samika. Sage around whose neck Parikshith wrapped a dead snake.

samsara. Worldly life; life of the individual soul through repeated births and deaths. Liberation means getting freed from this cycle.

Sanaka. One of the four mental sons of the Creator, Brahma.

Sananda. A *rishi*, one of four mental sons of the Creator, Brahma, (the others are Sanathana, Sanatkumara, and Sanaka).

Sanathana. One of the four mental sons of the Creator Brahma.

Sanatkumara. One of the four mental sons of the Creator, Brahma.

Sanatsujatha. Another name for Sanatkumara.

sandhya. Early morning, noon, evening; conjunction of time periods.

Sandipani. Krishna's preceptor.

Sanjaya. An advisor to the blind King Dhritharashtra. Sanjaya had the gift granted by sage Vyasa of seeing events at a distance, and he tells Dhritharashtra what is happening in the battle. See *Mahabharatha*.

Sankara. Another name for Siva (means beneficent, conferring happiness).

Sankara. Also **Sankaracharya**. Celebrated philosopher, preceptor of non-dualistic *Vedanta*. Defeated all religious opponents in debates throughout India.

sarga. Creation.

Sastras. The Hindu scriptures containing the teachings of the sages. The *Vedas*, the *Upanishads*, the *ithihasas* (epics), the *Puranas*, the *Smrithis* (codes of conduct), etc., form the *Sastras* of the Hindus. They teach us how to live wisely and well with all the tenderness and concern of the Mother.

sat-chit-ananda. Existence-knowledge-bliss, or being-awareness-bliss.

Sathadhanva. Yadava king. He stole a famous gem, killing its owner, and Krishna and Balarama then killed him.

Satha-rupa. Feminine counterpart of Svayambhuva Manu. Means hundred faceted or most beautiful.

sathwa. One of the three *gunas* (qualities and dispositions) of *maya* or *prakriti*. It is the quality of purity, brightness, peace, and harmony. It leads to knowledge. Man is exhorted to overcome *thamas* by *rajas* and *rajas* by *sathwa* and finally to go beyond *sathwa* itself to attain liberation.

sathwic. Adjective form of *sathwa*; serene, pure, good, balanced.

sathya. Truth.

Sathyabama. The third wife of Krishna.

Satrughna. Sumitra's son, twin of Lakshmana and brother of Rama. The name means "slayer of enemies".

saumya. Gentle, soft.

Shantanu. A Kuru king, descendant of the Bharata race, of the lunar dynasty and the ancestor of the Pandavas and the Kauravas. Bhishma was his son.

Shyamasundar. Name for Krishna.

Sibi. Emperor of India, noted for generosity; offered pound of own flesh to save Agni in the form of a dove from Indra in the form of a hawk.

Sisupala. Demon who merged with the Lord when slain by Krishna.

Sita. Wife of Rama; brought up by King Janaka who found her in a box in the earth. Also, a tributary of the Ganga, flowing westward.

Siva. The Destroyer, the Third of the Hindu Trinity of Brahma (the Creator), Vishnu (the Preserver), and Siva (the Destroyer).

Somaka. Demon who forbade the mention of God's name.

sparsha. Also *sparshana*. Touch, contact.

Sringi. Son of sage Samika.

srishhti. Creation.

sruthi. Sacred revelations orally transmitted by brahmins from generation to generation, differing from traditional law codes (*smrithi*). Divinely sourced scripture; *Veda*; divine words known by revelation; that which was heard or listened to.

sthana. State, setting of boundaries.

Subhadra. Younger sister of Krishna and wife of Arjuna.

Sudeva. King Kasi's daughter and Nabhaga's wife.

sudra. Labourer, the fourth caste of workers. See Caste.

Suka. Divine son of author of the *Mahabharatha*, Vyasa. Visited King Janaka, who instructed him in the path to liberation. Also, a messenger of Ravana was named Suka.

Sumitra. Second wife of Dasaratha and mother of Lakshmana and Satrugna.

Surasena. The father of Vasudeva and Krishna's grandfather. Also, the state over which they ruled.

surya. The sun.

Surya. The sun god, the father of time. A name for the sun. Also, son of Kasyapa and father of Manu.

sutradhari. Director of the play.

swa-rajya. Self-rule.

swa-rupa. Form, essential nature, true nature of Being, embodiment.

Takshaka. Fierce demon-serpent, who bit Parikshith and killed him.

tapas. Concentrated spiritual exercises to attain God, penance, severe austerities.

thamas. One of the *gunas* (qualities and dispositions) of *maya* or *prakriti*. It is the quality of dullness, inertia, darkness and tendency to evil. It results in ignorance.

thamasic. Adjective form of *thamas*, dull, ignorant, passive.

thamoguna. Quality of dullness, ignorance, delusion, inactivity, inertia, sloth. Associated with colour black. See *guna*.

Thath. That, the Godhead.

Thretha-yuga. The second in the cycle of four eras. See *yuga*.

Thrinavartha. A demon sent by Kamsa to kill infant Krishna; in form of whirlwind, he bore the infant high, but Krishna destroyed him.

thwam. Thou, You, This, the individual.

thyaga. Sacrifice, renunciation.

Uddhava. Friend and messenger of Krishna.

Ugrasena. Son of Ahuka and father of Kamsa.

upadhi. Container, disguise, encasement, limitation.

upanayana. Sacred thread ceremony in which a boy is initiated with a sacred thread and is then qualified to learn *Vedas*.

Upanishadic. Relating to the *Upanishads*.

Upanishads. The very sacred portions of the *Vedas* that deal with God, humanity, and universe, their nature and interrelationships. Spiritual knowledge (*jnana*) is their content, so they form the *Jnana-kanda* of the *Vedas*.

upapandavas. Children of Droupadi; descendents of the Pandavas.

Upa-puranas. Supplements to the *Puranas*.

upavasa. Fast (as in not eat).

Upaveda. Appendix to the *Vedas*.

Urmila. Wife of Lakshmana and daughter of King Janaka.

uthi. Arising from one's activity, consequence of one's activity.

Uttarakuru. Heavenly part of the island of Jambu. At its northern end lies Mount Meru.

Uttara. Daughter of Virata, mother of Parikshith, wife of Abhimanyu.

vaak. Vocal organs, word, word of mouth.

Bhagavatha Vahini.

Vaasudeva. Son of Vasudeva. Name for Krishna.

Vaikunta. Vishnu's heaven.

Vajra. A grandson of Krishna.

vajra-yoga. A conjunction (in atrological terms) of Indra.

Valmiki. The saint-poet who wrote the *Ramayana*.

Vamana. Dwarf incarnation of Vishnu, who asked for three feet of land from Emperor Bali and humbled Bali's pride.

vanara. Monkey.

Varaha. A boar, one of the 10 incarnations of Vishnu.

varna dharma. The Hindu community is divided into four social groups, or castes (*varnas*), based on qualities (*gunas*) and vocations: (1) *Brahmana* (the *brahmins*), the custodian of spiritual and moral role), (2) *kshatriya*, the warrior group, which rules and defends the land), (3) *vaisya*, the group dealing with commerce, business, and trade, and (4) *sudra*, the group devoted to labour and service to the community. Each *varna* has its own *dharmic* restrictions and regulations that strive to canalise impulses and instinct into fields that are special to their place in society, controls pertaining to the duties of the caste.

Varuna. Chief *Rig-vedic* god associated with Mitra; god of rain, water, the ocean, night; a great sage.

vasana. Inclination, impression of anything remaining in the subconscious mind from past action.

Vasishtha. One of the greatest *rishis* (sages) of ancient times; priest of the solar race of kings; revealer of several *Vedic* hymns. Had sacred, wishfulfilling cow called Nandini.

vasu. Wealth.

Vasudeva. Father of Krishna.

Veda. Knowledge, wisdom. This knowledge is generally viewed as being given in the *Vedas*.

Vedanta. Means "the end of the *Vedas*". It is the essence of the *Vedas* enshrined in the *Upanishads*. The philosophy of non-dualism, or qualified non-dualism, or dualism based on the *Upanishadic* teachings, is denoted by this term.

Vedantic. Of or pertaining to *Vedanta*.

Vedas. The oldest and the holiest of the Hindu scriptures, the primary source of authority in Hindu religion and philosophy. They are four in number: the *Rig-Veda*, *Sama-Veda*, *Yajur-Veda*, and *Atharva-Veda*.

Vedic. Of your relating to the *Vedas*.

Vena. Infamous king whose hand was churned by the hermits, producing Prithu, ruler of the world.

Vibhishana. Brother of Ravana; Demon chief who represented pure mindedness and sided with Rama.

Vidarbha. An ancient country in India.

Vidura. Brother and chief minister of King Dhritrashtra, the father of the Kauravas. See *Mahabharatha*.

Virata. King of Matsya and father-in-law of Abhimanyu (son of Arjuna). The Pandavas lived incognito in the service of Virata for a year.

visarga. Proliferation.

Vishnu. The Preserver, the Second of the Hindu Trinity of Brahma (the Creator), Vishnu (the Preserver), and

- Siva** (the Destroyer).
- visishtha-adwaitha**. Qualified nondualism. The doctrine that men's spirits of have a qualified or partial identity with God.
- Viswamitra**. Sage; known for his efforts to equal Vasishta. Born as warrior Kausika who by the power of the *Gayatri* transformed himself spiritually. Early counselor of the young Rama.
- Vividha**. Demon follower of Kamsa; destroyed by Krishna.
- Vraja**. District of Nanda, who was Krishna's step-father.
- Vrishni**. Famous king of the Yadu dynasty into whose line Krishna was born.
- Vyasa**. Compiler of *Vedas* and author of the *Mahabharatha*, *Mahabhagavatham*, and *Brahma Sutra*.
- Yadava**. Krishna's clan, which was founded by Yadu.
- Yadu**. Founder of Yadava clan into which Krishna was born; son of Yayathi.
- yaga**. Oblation, sacrifice, ceremony in which oblations are presented.
- yajna**. Holy ritual, sacrifice, or rite. Also, personification of rite (when capitalized).
- Yama**. God of Death; death personified.
- Yamuna**. Holy river rising in the Himalaya mountains at an elevation of 10,849 feet and flowing for 860 miles before joining the Ganga.
- Yasoda**. Adoptive mother of Krishna.
- Yayathi**. Eminent king of Lunar dynasty.
- yoga**. (a) Union of individual self or *Atma* with Supreme Being or Universal Self; act of yoking. (b) Spiritual discipline or exercise aimed at control of the senses. (c) Science of divine communion. (d) self control. Patanjali's *Yoga-sutras* define *yoga* as a series of 8 steps leading to union with God.
- Yoga-sastra**. Scripture or science that deals with *yoga*, esp. by Patanjali.
- Yoga Sutras**. An aphoristic treatise on *yoga* by Patanjali
- yogi**. One who practices *yoga*.
- Yudhistira**. Eldest Pandava brother; also called Dharmaraja.
- yuga**. Era or age. There is a cycle of four *yugas*: the *Kritha yuga*, *Thretha yuga*, *Dwapara yuga*, and *Kali yuga*. Present age is the *Kali yuga*.
- Yuga-avatar**. An incarnation of God come to close one era and inaugurate another.
- yukthi**. Faculty of reason, inference, deduction.
- zenana**. Part of a dwelling in which the women of the family are secluded.