

# 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.

**Aagama.** That which has come or originated. The primeval source of knowledge. A name for *Vedas*.

**aahithaya.** Deposited, placed, as offerings in a sacrificial fire.

**aahuthi.** Oblations offered in the sacrificial fire.

**aahvaana.** Invitation, invocation, welcoming.

**Aamnaya.** Sacred tradition handed down by repetition. A name for the *Vedas*.

**Aarsha.** Related to the sages (*rishis*). A name for *Veda*.

**adhvara.** Sacrifice.

**Adhwara Veda.** Another name for *Yajur-veda*.

**aditya.** Sun.

**Aditya.** Son of Aditi; there were twelve of them, one of them being Surya, the sun, so Surya is sometimes called Aditya.

**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.

**Agri.** First; a name for Agni when within the range of sight.

**Aithareya Upanishad.** One of the ten important *Upanishads*. It deals with the world and the human as the creation of *Atma*, the three-fold birth of *Atma*, and the nature of the *Atma*.

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

**an-antha.** Endless, eternal, unending; infinity.

**Angiras.** A sage-hermit born from the mind of Brahma. Indra gave him the name Atharvangiras when Angiras paid him homage by reciting the hymns of *Atharva-veda*.

**Angiro Veda.** A name for *Atharva-veda* —see Angiras.

**anna.** Food.

**Anusrava.** That which was heard serially. One of the names for the *Vedas*.

**arani.** Stick of hardwood used in ritual.

**aranya.** Forest, relating to forest.

**Aranyakas.** Religious or philosophical texts closely connected with the *brahmins*, either composed in the forest or studied there.

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

**artha.** Wealth, prosperity, material object, thing, aim, purpose, desire.

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

**Atharvan.** Son of Vasishta and author of *Atharva-Veda*.

**Atharvangiro Veda.** A name for *Atharva-Veda*. See Angiras.

**Atharva-samhitha.** *Atharva-veda*. *Samhitha* means "collection".

**Atharva-veda.** The fourth *Veda*. *Atharva* means "fourth". Steady, unmoved person, of stable nature.

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

**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 *dharmā*, God comes down to the world assuming bodily form to protect the good, punish the wicked and re-establish *dharmā*. 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.

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

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

**Bhaishajya Veda.** A name for *Atharva-veda*.

**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).

**bhogyā.** Object that provides joy.

**bhoktha.** Person who enjoys.

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

**brahma-charya.** Path to knowledge of Brahman; state of an unmarried religious student; first stage of life of a *brahmin*; spiritual studentship.

**Brahma-kanda.** Spiritual stage (of life). Also, some texts that are concerned with special features of ceremonial rituals and elaborations of moral codes.

**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.

**Brahmana.** A section of each of the four *Vedas* dwelling on the meaning and use of mantras and hymns at vari-

ous sacrifices.

**Brahma Veda.** A name for *Atharva-veda*.

**Brahma-vidya.** Spiritual attainment, knowledge of Brahman.

**Brahma-yajna.** Intense study and observance of the *Veda*; special daily worship-ritual dedicated to the Supreme.

**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*.

**Chandas.** Poetic metre, which can be set to music; *Vedic* hymns; guide, shield. Also means pleasant, joyous. Also, a name for *Vedas*.

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

**deva.** Deity, celestial being, God.

**Deva-vaak.** Word of God.

**Deva-vaani.** Voice of God.

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

**Devi Bhagavatham.** The story of the glory of Universal Divine Mother. One of the *Puranas*.

**dhana.** Wealth, possessions.

**dharana.** Concentration, fixed attention, support. One of 8 steps in Patanjali’s *yoga* discipline.

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

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

**dhuma.** Smoke.

**Dhuma Kethu.** A name for Agni, the God of Fire (with the ‘flag’ of smoke).

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

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

**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.

**garbha.** Womb.

**Gayatri Devi.** Presiding deity of the *Gayatri mantra*.

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

**Gita.** See *Bhagavad Gita*.

**Gopatha Brahmana.** One of the *Brahmana* texts of the *Vedas*.

**grihapathi.** Master of the home.

**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.

**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.

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

**jagath.** Cosmos, world of change, creation.

**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.

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

**kaivalya.** Absolute oneness, final beatitude.

**Kalidasa.** Sanskrit dramatist and poet ca 5th century A.D.

**kama.** Desire, lust, worldly fulfillment; one of four goals of humans.

**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) *praarabdha*, 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.

**Karma-kanda.** The section of the *Vedas* dwelling mainly on rituals; the *samhithas* and the *Brahmana* of the *Vedas*.

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

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

**Krishna Yajur-veda.** "Black" *Yajur-veda* —a recension of the *Yajur-veda*, promoted by Veda Vyasa.

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

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

**Lalitha.** Supreme female Deity in its beneficent form; a form of goddess Durga.

**Lalitha Sahasranama.** The 1008 names of Lalitha, the Supreme Deity.

**leela.** Divine sport or play.

**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.

**manana.** Reflection, meditation, understanding.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**Mimamsa.** Exegetical-expository school of Indian metaphysics, the earlier (*purva*) concerning itself chiefly with interpretation of *Vedic* ritual and the later (*uttara*) with the nature of Brahman.

**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*).

**Namamnaya.** Tradition learned continuously and steadfastly; a name for *Veda*; the primal source of all knowledge.

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

**Narayana.** The Primal Person, the Lord, Vishnu.

**Nigamaagama.** That which has come or originated; a name for *Veda*.

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

**Oordhwa.** Above, higher; a name for Lord Sun in the *Rig-veda*.

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

**Paraasara.** Grandson of Vasishtha. Husband of Sathyavathi and father of Vyasa.

**Param-aiswarya.** Highest potency, felicity, wealth.

**Parameswara.** Supreme Lord, highest Godhead, Siva.

**paroksha.** Unseen, invisible.

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

**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.

**prana-agni.** Fire of breath.

**prana-atma.** Superconsciousness that activates the vital airs.

**Prana-pati.** Ruler of the vital airs.

**Pranava.** *Om*; the sacred seed-sound and symbol of Brahman. “The most exalted syllable in *Vedas*”. It is used in meditation on God. It is uttered first before a *Vedic mantra* is chanted.

**prathama.** First or primordial.

**Prathama-ja.** Primal-born; a name for *Veda* and for *Hiranyagarbha*.

**prusni.** Purity, clarity, sanctity; a name for *Veda*.

**Prusni-garbha.** “He who contains all clarity and wisdom”; name for *Veda*.

**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*.

**purusha-arthas.** Goals of human life.

**purvaja.** Primeval, born before.

**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.

**rajoguna.** Quality of passion, restlessness, aggressiveness. Associated with colour red. See *guna*.

**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 *dharm*a in the world. The *Ramayana* has played an important role in influencing and shaping the Hindu ethos over the centuries.

**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*.

**Rik.** See *Rig-veda*.

**Rik-samhitha.** *Rig-veda*. *Samhitha* means “collection”.

**rishi.** Sage, wise man.

**saakha.** Limb, branch.

**saama, saamana.** Particular kind of sacred hymn; song from *Sama-veda*; chanting.

**sadhana.** Spiritual discipline or exercise; self effort.

**sama.** Control of the senses, peace, equanimity, tranquility.

Sama. A name for Sun (Aditya), especially in *Sama-veda*.

**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*.

**Samamithra.** Equal Friend —a name for Agni, the God of Fire.

**Sama-samhitha.** *Sama-veda*. *Samhitha* means “collection”.

**samhitha.** Collection of methodically arranged verses or text; continuous text of the *Vedas* as formed out of the separate words by proper phonetic changes.

**Saraswathi.** Goddess of learning and eloquence, a daughter of Brahma. Also, an underground river, originating in the upper Indus river basin and joining the Ganga and Yamuna rivers at Prayag or Allahabad.

**Sathapatha Brahmana.** One of the *Brahmana* texts of the *Veda*.

**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.

**Satrughna.** Sumitra’s son, twin of Lakshmana and brother of Rama. The name means “slayer of enemies”.

**siddha.** Accomplished, achieved, fulfilled, successful.

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

**smrithi.** Code of law; traditional law delivered by human authors.

**srimantha.** Prosperous person.

**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.

**Sruthyam.** Wealth of intuitive wisdom by which the Lord is obtained in accordance with the *Vedas*.

**Sukla Yajur-Veda.** One part of the *Yajur-veda*, promoted by Yajnavalkya.

**surya.** The sun.

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

**swaaha.** Expression used for auspiciousness while making oblations to gods.

**Swaaha Devi.** The deity who is invoked by the word *swaaha*, the wife of Agni, the God of Fire. She is the power of digestion.

**swaahutham.** Well digested, well sacrificed.

**swadha.** Benediction used when presenting oblations to forefathers.

**swadhyaya.** Study of religious scriptures, especially the *Vedas*.

**Swadhyaya.** A name for *Veda*; self study; study of self.

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

**Taithiriya Brahmana.** One of the *Brahmana* texts of the *Yajur-veda*.

**Taithiriya Upanishad.** One of the ten most important *Upanishads*; it is the philosophical portion of the *Black Yajur-veda*; the other part is called the *White Yajur-veda*.

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

**tapoja.** Born of asceticism (*tapas*).

**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*.

**Thrayee.** Three. A name for *Veda*, because the *Vedas* were originally in three parts.

**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*.

**vaak.** Vocal organs, word, word of mouth.

**vahini.** Stream or flow.

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

**vanaprastha.** Forest-dweller, hermit; third of the four stages of life.

**vashatkaara.** A ritual exclamation uttered at the end of a sacrificial hymn for offering of fire oblations.

**Vasishta.** 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.

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

**Veda-matha.** The mother that is the *Veda*.

**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.

**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*.

**Veda Vyasa.** Another name for Vyasa.

**Vedic.** Of your relating to the *Vedas*.

**vidya.** Spiritual education, spiritual knowledge, learning, that which illumines, that which gives light, supreme teaching.

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

**visishta-adwaitha.** Qualified nondualism. The doctrine that men’s spirits of have a qualified or partial identity with God.

**viveka.** Discrimination.

**Vyasa.** Compiler of *Vedas* and author of the *Mahabharatha*, *Mahabhagavatham*, and others.

**yaga.** Oblation, sacrifice, ceremony in which oblations are presented.

**yajna.** Holy ritual, sacrifice, or rite. Also, personification of rite (when capitalized).

**Yajna-Sarathi.** The charioteer for the sacrifice, name for Agni, the God of Fire.

**Yaju.** Name for Lord Sun in the *Yajur-veda*.

**Yajur-veda.** Second *Veda*, consisting of a collection of sacred texts in prose relating to sacrifices.

**Yajus-samhitha.** *Yajur-veda*. *Samhitha* means “collection”.

**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.

**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.

**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*.