

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 texts.

We have not made links to the glossary for *all* the occurrences of the names Rama, Sita, Lakshmana, and Dasaratha. They occur so often and are so central to the whole volume that it should not be necessary.

abhijith. Victory; eighth period of the day (about midday); an auspicious constellation of time.

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

a-dharma. Evil, injustice.

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

Aditi. Daughter of Dhaksha and wife of Kasyapa; sister of Diti.

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

a-dwaithic. Of or pertaining to nondualism (*a-dwaitha*)..

Agastya. Sage and author of several *Vedic* hymns. Also the Indian astronomical name of the star of Canopus, since its rising coincides with the calming of the waters of the Indian Ocean.

agni. Fire element.

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

agni-astra. Fire missile..

agnihotra. Ritual of offering oblations in the holy fireplace. Three kinds are: daily obligation, occasional obligation, and optional fire.

Agnivarna. Son of Sudarsana and father of Sigraga.

Ahalya. Princess of the Puru dynasty, who was turned into a stone by the curse of her husband, Gautama, for suspected adultery. She regained her form when Rama touched the stone with his divine feet.

aikshika-astra. Siva weapon, the unfailing weapon of the third-eye opening of Siva.

Aja. King of the Solar Dynasty; Rahu's son and Dasaratha's father.

Alamba Devi. Celestial goddess, mother of Visala by Ikshvaku.

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

Amaravathi. Residence of Indra. Also, a city through which Rama passed on the way to exile in the forest.

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

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

Amsumanta. King of the solar dynasty; virtuous son of Aswamanja and grandson of Sagara.

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

an-anga. Limbless.

Anaranya. Son of Bana and father of Trisanku.

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

anga. Limb, part, fact, feature, “earth bit”.

Anga. The kingdom of Anga in eastern Bihar, adjoining Bengal.

a-para-vidya. Secular science, western knowledge.

apsaras. Wives of the Gandharvas, celestial nymphs.

Arishtanemi. Son of Vinatha and sage Kasyapa.

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

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

Arundathi. Wife of sage Vasistha; regarded as the highest model of wifely devotion and chastity.

ashoka. Tree of moderate size belonging to the leguminous class, with magnificent red flowers.

Asitha. Son of King Bharatha; father of Sagara.

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

Asurtharajasa. One of the four sons of King Kusa; also, son of Rama.

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.

athibala. Super strength

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.

Atmarama. Eternal bliss; Rama in the heart.

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.

bala. Strength, vigour, power.

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

Bana. Son of Vikukshi and father of Anaranya.

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.

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

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

bhakti. Devotion to God.

Bharadwaja. Celebrated sage who taught the science of medicine; seer of *Vedic* hymns.

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”.

Bharatha-kupa. Holy well, by the side of the Chitrakuta mountain, that Bharatha cleaned.

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

Bhargavarama. Name for Parasurama.

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

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

Brahma-astra. Brahma’s weapon of infallible destruction.

brahma-chari. Student, celibate, first stage of life of a *brahmin* in the *brahmin* caste; one who dwells in God consciousness.

Brahmadatta. Ruler of Kampilya.

Brahma-jnana. Knowledge of Brahman.

Brahma-jnani. Knower of Brahman.

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-sira-astra. Particular missile of Brahma.

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

Bhrigu. Great sage son of Brahma.

Bhrigu-prasravana. Region of the Himalayas where Asitha fled.

Brihadratha. Son of Devaratha and father of Mahavira.

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

Cauvery. Holy river in south India in Rama’s time.

Chaithra. Second spring month.

Chitra. A bright constellation, the brightest star in the constellation Virgo, also called Spica.

Chitrakuta Mountain. Renowned in the *Puranas* on the banks of the Mandakini river as a place where Rama and Sita lived for some time. Banda district of Uttar Pradesh State in modern India.

Chyavana. Sage at whose hermitage the queens of Asitha took refuge.

daiva-samaana. Equal to a God.

Daivasandhi. Son of Susandhi and father of the famous Bharatha.

danda-chakra. Discus-like weapon.

Dandaka Forest. Country between the mountains Himalaya and Vindhya. When King Danda violated a maiden, the country was destroyed by her sage father and was known as Dandaka forest thereafter.

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.

deva. Deity, celestial being, God.

Devamedha. Kirthiratha’s son, father of Vibudha.

Devaratha. Emperor in the Ikshvaku dynasty of ancient Mithila. Son of Sukethu and father of Brihadratha.

dhanda. Stick, rod of punishment.

Dhanvantari. God who was a preceptor in *ayurveda*. Classical Indian medical knowledge is called *ayurveda* (science of health and long life). Its two chief traditions are those of Atreya and Dhanvantari.

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-chakra. Weapon of justice.

dharma-rakshana. Protection of *dharma*.

Dharmaranya. City built by Brahma’s grandson Asurtharajasa.

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

dharma-vratha. Strict adherence to the vow to be righteous in word, thought, and deed.

dharmic. According to *dharma*, righteous.

Dhrishtakethu. Son of Sudrithi and father of Haryashva.

Dhundhumara. Son of Trisanku and father of Yuvanaswa.

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.

dhoti. Cloth worn around the waist; skirt.

Diti. Daughter of Dhaksha; wife of Kasyapa.

Dumraswa. King of Ikshvaku dynasty; father of Sanjaya.

Gaadhi. Son of Kusanabha and father of Viswamitra.

gandha. Smell, fragrance.

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. Elderly sage son of Bharadwaja.

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

Gauri. Siva's consort Parvathi.

Gautama. Father of Nachiketas; also known as Yajnasravas.

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

gandha. Smell, fragrance.

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

ghat. Steps leading to river's edge on hilly terrain.

Girivraja. City prominent in the *Puranas*; built by Brahma's grandson Vasu. *Girivraja* means "collection of hills".

Gogra. River in ancient India; the Thamasa is its tributary.

Gokarna. Sacred place extolled in the *Puranas*; situated on the extreme north of Kerala.

Gomathi. Celebrated river of *Puranic* times; tributary of the Ganga (Ganges) river.

Guha. King Nishadas, on the banks of the river Ganga (Ganges).

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.

Haihayas. Race said to have been descendents of Yadhu.

hamsa. Swan.

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

Harini. Heavenly nymph who was incited by Indra to tempt sage Thrinabindu.

Haryasva. Son of Dhrishtakethu and father of Maru.

Hemachandra. Son of Ikshvaku; father of Suchandra.

Himalayas. Sacred mountains of India.

Himavaan. The demigod of the Himalayas

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.

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.

Hladini. Tributary of the Ganga (Ganges) flowing eastward.

Hrishika. A great sage who kept Vishnu's bow.

Hriswarupa. Noble father of King Janaka.

Ikshumathi. River that flows near Kurukshetra, site of famous battle in the *Mahabharatha*; Mithila lies on its banks.

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*.

Indra-astra. Indra's missile.

Indumathi. Wife of King Aja; sister of Bhojaraja of Magadha.

Jahnavi. The river Ganga (Ganges).

Jamadagni. Hrishika's hermit son and Parasurama's father.

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

Janaki. Janaka's daughter Sita.

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.

Jyeshtha. Third month of the Hindu calendar, corresponding to May-June in the Gregorian calendar.

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

Kailas. Siva's mountain abode; Bhagiratha performed penance here to bring down the river Ganga.

Kakuthstha. King of the Ikshvaku dynasty; son of Somadatta; father of Anenas.

kala-chakra. Divine weapon of time.

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

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

Kama-dhenu. Divine cow granting all wishes.

Kampilya. A city, ruled by Brahmadata.

kanda. Section, chapter, canto, expanse of water, sugar cane, stalk.

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.

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.

Karosa. Region in central India.

karuna. Compassion for the distressed.

Kasyapa-prajapathi. Chief of the progenitors; son of Marichi and grandson of Brahma. All living beings took their origin from Kasyapa.

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

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

Kausambi. City built by Brahma's grandson Kusamba.

Kausika. Name for Viswamitra, since he was Kusa's son.

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

Kautsu. Student-hermit disciple of Varathanthu.

Kekaya. Kingdom in ancient India, now Kashmir; birthplace of Kaika, wife of Dasaratha.

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

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

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

Kinnara. Sect of gods all of whom hold lutes in their hands.

Kirathas. Mountain tribesmen.

Kirthiratha. Son of Pratheendhaka and father of Devamedha.

Kirthiratha. Son of Vibhuda and father of Maharoma.

Kosala. Wealthy country on the banks of the river Sarayu and the people inhabiting it; Dasaratha's wife, Kausalya, came from Kosala.

krauncha. Poison.

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

kshatriya. Protector, warrior; see caste.

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

Kukshi. Son of Ikshvaku and father of Vikukshi.

Kumbhakarna. Younger brother of Ravana, who slept for six months at a time.

kumkum. Auspicious mark of vermilion placed on forehead.

Kusa. Son of Brahma and father of Kusamba, Kusanabha, Asurtharajasa, and Vasu. Also, twin son of Rama and Sita.

Kusamba. Son of Kasu and grandson of Brahma.

Kusanabha. Son of Kasu and grandson of Brahma. Father of 100 daughters given in marriage to Brahmadata.

Kusaplava. A holy place. One who bathes and spends 3 nights there will derive the benefits of a horse sacrifice.

Kushadwaja. Brother of King Janaka; King of Sankasya.

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

Lakshmi. Consort of Vishnu, goddess of wealth.

leela. Divine sport or play.

Magadha. One of the 16 kingdoms in ancient India. It included at one point most of Bihar and the area south of the Ganges, Bengal, and much of eastern Uttar Pradesh and Orissa.

Magadhi. A river that flows through five mountains in Magadha.

Magha. January-February —month associated with constellation Magha.

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.

maharshi. Great sage.

maha-raja. Great king.

Maharoma. Son of Kirthiratha and father of Hriswarupa.

mahatma. Great soul.

Mahavira. Son of Brihadratha and father of Sudrithi.

Mahendra Peak. A holy mountain situated in Gajapati district, Orissa.

Mahodaya. City built by Brahma’s grandson Kusanabha.

Mahoraga. Great serpent.

mala. Contamination, dirt.

Malada. A kingdom mentioned in *Ramakatha I*.

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.

manasa-putra. Mental son.

Manasa-Sarovar. Lake of the mind. Lake created by Brahma; source of the Sarayu river in northern Himalayas, now in Tibet.

Mandakini. A river in Uttar Pradesh that flows near the Chitrakuta Mountain.

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

Mandavi. Wife of Bharatha, daughter of Kushadwaja, and niece of Janaka.

Mandhata. Son of Yuvanasha and father of Susandhi.

Manmatha. God of love.

mantap. Hall.

Manthara. Hunchbacked maid of Queen Kaika.

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).

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.

Maricha. Demon son of Thataki.

Marichi. Mental son of Hiranyagarbha; one of the ten sages. Dasaratha’s ancestral line goes back to Marichi.

Maru. Son of Sigaraga and father of Prasusruka.

Maru. Son of Haryasva and father of Prateendhaka.

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.

Mithi. Son of Nimi and founder of the kingdom of Mithila. Also known as Janaka, as were all kings of this dynasty.

Mithila. Country of ancient Bharatha, ruled by King Janaka, on the northeastern side of India; Sita's childhood home.

mithya. Mixture of truth and falsehood; neither true nor untrue, but something in between. The world is not untrue (*asat*) but *mithya*.

Modaki. Powerful mace given to Rama by Viswamitra.

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*).

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

Nagas. Class of serpents.

Nahusha. Son of Ambarisha and father of Yayathi.

Nalini. Tributary of the Ganga (Ganges), flowing eastward.

Nandhivardana. Son of Sudhavas and father of Sukethu.

Nandi. A rite for prosperity.

Nandigrama. Bharatha's residence during Rama's exile, about 14 miles from Ayodhya.

Nandini. Fabulous cow of sage Vasishta bestowing all desires.

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

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*.

Narayana. The Primal Person, the Lord, Vishnu.

Narmada. Famous holy river of central India.

nidi-dhyasana. Inner concentration, profound meditation.

Nimi. Son of Ikshvaku and father of Mithi, who founded Mithila on the banks of the Ganga (Ganges).

Nishada. Country near the Himalayas, governed by Nala.

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

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

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

para-vidya. Knowledge of the transcendent supreme Principle.

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

parnasala. Leaf-hut, arbor.

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

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

payasam. Food, made with sweetened milk.

Pavani. Tributary of the Ganga (Ganges) , flowing eastward.

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.

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.

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.

Prasenajit. Son of Susandhi.

Prasusruka. Son of Maru and father of Ambarisha.

Pratheendhaka. Son of Maru and father of Kirthiratha.

Pravardha. Son of Raghu and father of Sudarsana.

Prayag. Holy place at the meeting point of Ganga (Ganges), Yamuna, and the underground Saraswathi rivers. Modern Allahabad in the State of Uttar Pradesh. Bathing here would give great spiritual blessing.

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

Punarvasu. In Hindu astrology, refers to the part of the sky with the two brightest stars in the constellation of Gemini: Castor and Pollux.

pundit. Learned scholar, wise man.

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*.

Puranic. Relating to *Purana*.

purusha-arthas. Goals of human life.

Pushya. Sixth lunar mansion; an auspicious constellation.

raga. Sense of attachment, passion, affection; tune.

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

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.

Rajyalakshmi. Goddess of the kingdom; good fortune of the kingdom.

rakhasa. 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”.

Ramachandra. Another name for Rama.

Ramakatha. Story of Rama.

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. Taste, sweetness, essence of enjoyment.

Rathi Devi. Goddess of love.

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*.

Rishyasringa. Hermit of family of Kasyapa; born from his father Vibhandaka’s semen spilled upon viewing Urvasi.

rishi. Sage, wise man.

rithwik. Sacrificial priest.

Romapada. King of the state of Anga; friend of Dasaratha.

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.

sadhaka. Spiritual aspirant.

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

Sahadeva. King of Ikshvaku dynasty; son of Srinjaya and father of Somadatta.

Sakthi. Female consort of Siva.

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*.

samavarthana. Ceremony for completion of studenthood.

Sambara. Leader of the demons who possessed great magical powers; killed by Dasaratha.

sambhasana. Speech, conversation, dialogue.

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

sanathana. Ancient and also eternal.

Sanathana Dharma. Eternal religion. A descriptive term for what has come to be called Hinduism. It has no single founder or text of its own. It is more a commonwealth of religious faiths and a way of life.

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

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.

Sankasya. Kingdom of ancient India; capital city of Kushadwaja, who was Sita's uncle.

Santha. Daughter of King Romapada who wed the sage Rishyasringa.

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.

Sarayu. Stream flowing by Ayodhya, Rama's city of birth.

sarovar. Lake.

Sasibindus. Descendents of King Sasabindu, son of Chithraratha.

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.

Sathananda. Son of Gautama and Ahalya; high priest of Janaka who officiated at Rama and Sita's wedding.

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.

Sathyavathi. Sister of Viswamitra.

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

Satrunjaya. Dhasaratha's elephant.

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.

Siddhasram. A hermitage shown to Rama and Lakshmana by Viswamitra.

Sigaraga. Son of Agnivarna and father of Maru.

Sikhari. Mace given to Rama by Viswamitra.

Simhalagna. Zodiacal sign of the lion.

Sindhu. Indus river; one of two main Indian river systems. Persians called the whole country Hindu from this river name. Originates in Kasmir and joins Arabian Sea in Karachi.

sita. Furrow.

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).

Skanda. Siva's son Subrahmanya.

Somadatta. King of Ikshvaku dynasty; son of Sahadeva and father of Kakuthstha.

Sona. Famous holy river in the *Puranas*; known as Sumagadhi. Identified with the Sone river in Bihar State of modern India.

sparsha. Also *sparshana*. Touch, contact.

sraddha. Faith.

sravana. Listening to discourses on the scriptures.

Sravana. Son of hermits; was killed accidentally by Dasaratha, who was cursed by Sravana's parents to die from loss of children.

Srinjaya. King of Ikshvaku dynasty; son of Dumraswa and father of Sahadeva.

Sringivera. Capital city, near the Ganga (Ganges), of kingdom ruled by Guha.

Srutha-keerthi. Wife of Satrugna, daughter of Kushadwaja, and niece of Janaka.

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.

Subahu. A demon (*rakshasa*). One of two sons of the demoness Thataki, the other being Maricha.

Subhikshu. Tributary of the Ganga (Ganges), flowing west.

Suchandra. King of Ikshvaku dynasty; Hemachandra's son and father of Dumraswa.

Sudakshina. Magadhan wife of King Dilipa.

Sudhanva. Evil king of Sankasya.

Sudarsana. Son of Pravardha and father of Agnivarna.

Sudhavasu. Son of Mithi, who founded Mithila.

Sudhama. A respected minister of Janaka.

Sudrithi. Son of Mahavira and father of Dhrishtakethu.

Sugriva. Monkey-king, brother of Vali; with his army of monkeys headed by Hanuman, assisted Rama in defeating Ravana.

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.

Sukethu. *Yaksha* father of Thataki. Son of the Gandharva King Surakshaka.

Sukethu. Son of Nandivardhana and father of Devaratha.

Sumanthra. Court priest and prime minister of Dasaratha.

Sumathi. King of Ikshvaku dynasty and son of Kakuthstha. Also, wife of Sagara and daughter of Arishtanemi.

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

Sunayana. Wife of King Janaka.

Sunda. Very cruel *asura* or demon; brother of Upasunda and husband of Thataki.

sura. Liquor.

Sura. God.

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

Susandhi. Son of Yuvanaswa and father of Daivasandhi and Prasenajit.

Thalajanghas. Sons of the valiant Thalajangha, who is one of the five sons of the famed emperor Karthvirya.

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.

Thamasa. River that flows into the Ganga (Ganges); Valmiki's ashram was on it.

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

Thataki. Fierce demoness mother of Maricha and Subahu; wife of Sunda.

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

Thrinabindu. Ancient sage and prince.

Thripura. A phantom city built by Maya (illusion) in the sky, earth, and ether for the demons; it was destroyed by Siva.

thyaga. Sacrifice, renunciation.

Trisanku. Anaranya's son and father of Dhundhumara. Also, King for whom Sage Viswamitra created another heaven.

trisula. Trident of Siva.

Triveni. Confluence of the three rivers Ganga, Yamuna, and the subterranean Saraswathi at Prayag.

Uma. Daughter of Himavaan; sister of Ganga.

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*..

Upasunda. Wicked demon; brother of Sunda.

Urmila. Wife of Lakshmana, daughter of Kushadwaja, and brother of Janaka.

Uttaraphalguna. Name of a star.

uttarayana. Northward path of the sun.

Vaivaswatha Manu. Head (Indra) of the present age of Manu (*Manvanthara*); Prajaaprathi. Son of Manu and father of Ikshvaku.

vajra-asthra. Thunderbolt, esp. of Indra, shaped like a circular discus.

Vali. A great monkey-king; brother and enemy of Sugriva.

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

Vamadeva. Ancient hermit. Friend of Vasishtha and a priest of Dasaratha; he composed *Rig-vedic* hymns

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

Varathanthu. Teacher of the hermit Kautsu.

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.

Varuni. Daughter of Varuna, who was married by gods (*devas*).

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.

Vasu. Son of Kusa and grandson of Brahma.

Vasuki. One of the famous serpents (*nagas*).

vayu. Wind, air..

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*.

Veeradasa. A member of the Ganga clan; his daughter married Sumanthra.

Vibhandaka. Hermit of family of Kasyapa; his son Rishyasringa was born from his semen spilled upon viewing Urvasi, the celestial damsel.

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

Vibudha. Son of Devamedha and father of Kirthiratha.

Vidarbha. An ancient country in India.

Videha. Royal dynasty of Janaka; the kingdom of Mithila, native country of Sita.

Vikukshi. Son of Kukshi and father of Bana.

Vindhya mountain range. One of seven chief holy mountain ranges. Separates South India from North India and faces the Himalayas.

Visakha. One of three divine brothers of Skanda.

Visala. Son of Ikshvaku, who built the city named Visala.

Visala. City built by Visala, son of Ikshvaku.

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

Viswa-karma. Architect of the Gods.

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.

viveka. Discrimination.

vridhhi. Growth, prosperity.

Vritra. Powerful and fierce asura or demon killed by Indra.

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

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

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

Yajnavalkya. Great Upanishadic person. Priest and guru of King Janaka. Taught monistic *adwaitic* doctrine of identity of *Atma* and *Brahman* in *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*..

Yaksha. Class of semi-celestials; brothers of the demons (*rakshasas*).

Yakshini. Women folk of the *Yakshas*, a class of semi-gods. Goddess.

Yamuna. Holy river rising in the Himalaya mountains at an elevation of 10,849 feet and flowing for 860 miles before joining the Ganga (Ganges).

Yayathi. Eminent king of Lunar dynasty. Son of Nahusha and father of Nabhaga.

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-vasishta. Sacred work in the form of dialogue between Vasishta and his pupil Rama, teaching the way to eternal bliss.

yogi. One who practices *yoga*.

Yudajit. Kekaya king; brother of Kaika, Dasaratha's wife, and uncle of Bharatha.

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*.

Yuvanaswa. Son of Dhundumara and father of Mandhata.

yuvaraja. Heir apparent; crown-prince.