

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.

aagaami. Action (*karma*) in which one is now engaged that is bound to affect the future; impending; future.

aahuthi. Oblations offered in the sacrificial fire.

abhimatha. Dearest and most pleasurable.

acharya. Spiritual teacher, preceptor..

a-dharma. Evil, injustice.

adya. Person receiving an offering, the offeree.

adhyasa. Superimposition.

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

a-dwaithin. One who propounds nondualism (*a-dwaitha*).

agni. Fire element.

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

Aham Brahmasmi. "I am Brahman." One of the great *Vedic* aphorisms (*maha-vakyas*).

ahamkara. Ego, self-love, selfish individuality.

a-jnana. Ignorance, stupidity.

a-karma. Non-action; detached action whose consequences do not leave a binding impression.

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

Allah. God, in the Islam religion.

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

anga. Limb, part, fact, feature, "earth bit".

anga-vathi. Manifestation based.

anya-vathi. Symbolized divinity.

a-pourusheya. Non-personal, superhuman.

a-purna. Not full.

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

archana. Worship, adoration.

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

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

Aryan. (a) Literally noble. (b) Follower of *Vedic* or spiritual path. (c) Ancient dwellers of India who composed the *Rig-veda*; the chief tribe was that of the Bharathas.

a-sat. Falsehood, unreal, non-existent, bad.

ashtanga-yoga. Eight-fold discipline of *yoga* to destroy ignorance and reach the state of communion with Self, as taught by Sage Patanjali.

asrama. A stage of life, one of: student, householder, hermit, and renunciate.

a-sura. Demon; term arose when Diti's sons refused to drink the divine liquor (*suraa*) 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.

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

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-dharma. *Atmic* duty, divine duty.

Atmic. Of or relating to the *Atma*.

Atreya. Relating to the great sage Athri. Classical Indian medical knowledge is called *Ayurveda* (science of health and long life), the two chief traditions being those of Athri and Dhanvantari. Later presented by Charaka in the *Charaka samhitha* (text stressing diagnosis and prognosis).

attha. Offering, boiled rice.

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.

a-vidya. Ignorance.

a-vyaktha. Unmanifest, imperceptible.

Ayodhya. City where Rama was born and ruled.

ayurveda. Classical Indian medical knowledge; science of health and long life.

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

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

bhajans. Congregational chant group worship by devotees with devotional music in which repetition of holy names predominates.

bhaktha. Devotee of the Lord.

bhakthi. Devotion to God

bhakthi-yoga. Path of love and devotion.

bhakthi-yogi. *Yogi* on the path of devotion.

bandha-vicchedana. Liberation from bonds.

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”.

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

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.

bhoga. Catering to the senses, eating, enjoyment.

bhoga-bhumi. Pathways of the senses.

Bhudevi. The goddess of Earth; wife of Vishnu.

bhumi. Earth.

bhuvarkala. Atmosphere; second of upper worlds.

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

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

Brahma-loka. Region of Brahma.

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 various sacrifices.

Brahmanda. Collection of inner forces of the five elements; macrocosm; the universe; literally, Brahma’s egg

Brahma-nishta. Steady contemplation of Brahman.

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

Brahma-thathwa. Formless God, Brahman principle.

Brahma-vartha. Region of Brahma.

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

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. The *Upanishad* that sets forth teachings maintained by Yajnavalkya regarding Brahman.

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

buddhi. Intellect, intelligence, faculty of discrimination.

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*.

chadana. Fostering, shielding, promoting welfare of.

Chaithanya. Fifteenth century Vaishnava mendicant reformer; taught the path of love and devotion to the *Avatar* of Sri Krishna.

chakshu. Eye.

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

Chandra. Moon God in charge of crops and medicinal plants.

chandra-loka. Region of the moon principle.

Charaka. Author of earliest written compendium of *ayurvedic* medicine (diagnostic and prognostic); forms basis of Sanskrit medical literature along with *Sushruta samhitha*. See Dhanvantari. As Sesha, king of divine serpents, is said to have visited earth, noted much sickness, and resolved to incarnate (as Charaka) to alleviate disease.

charma. Shield, skin; happiness, bliss.

chittha-suddhi. Cleansing of the mind, purity of conscience.

Dadhichi. Great hero, who gave up his bones to Indra to form a thunderbolt for killing a demon leader.

dama. Control of the outer senses.

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

deva. Deity, celestial being, God.

Devendra. Name given to Lord of the gods (*devas*); Indra or Siva.

Dhanvantari. 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-kshetra. Battlefield where the *Mahabharatha* war was fought between Pandavas and Kauravas. See *Mahabharatha*.

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

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

dharmic. According to *dharma*, righteous.

Dhritharashtra. Father of Kauravas; holder of ruling power.

dhyana. Meditation.

drashta. See-er; visionary.

drashtum. Visualizing.

Droupadi. Wife of Pandavas. See *Mahabharatha*.

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

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

dwaithin. Dualist, one who believe in dualism or *dwaitha*.

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

Easwara. Iswara The Supreme Lord. Easwara is the Lord of every creature in the universe. Hence, the entire cosmos is reflected as an image in the Lord. Siva is often called Easwara.

Ganapathi. See Ganesha.

Ganesha. Also Ganapathi, Vighneswara, Vinayaka. The elephant-headed Deity who is known as the remover of obstacles. Also, the god of wisdom and lord of learning. Son of Siva and Parvati, Ganesha is honoured at the beginning of rituals and ceremonies; for example, the first *bhajan* in a devotional song session may be a Ganesh *bhajan*.

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.

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

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.

ghana. Bell, gong.

Gita. See *Bhagavad Gita*.

Gowdeyopasana. *Gowdha* form of worship, worshipping Radha-Krishna.

grantha. Scriptural text or book.

Granth Saheb. Sacred scriptural text of the Sikhs.

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.

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

havis. Sacred offering into the ritual fire place.

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.

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

indriyas. Senses.

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 at-

tributes, 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.

jada. Inert matter.

jagath. Cosmos, world of change, creation.

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

Jesus Christ. Founder of Christian religion; death on cross symbolized death of the ego.

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.

jivatma. Soul or true Self, at the individual level.

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.

jnana-siddhi. Perfection in spiritual wisdom.

jnani. Wise person, realized soul.

jnatha. Knower.

jnatum. Knowing.

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

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

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

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

karana. Causal or cause.

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-bhumi. Land of *karma*, Godward-directed activity; India.

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

karma-kshetra. Field of activity.

karma-yogi. *Yogi* who dedicates his actions to God.

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.

Kathopanishad. Also *Katha Upanishad*. One of most popular *Upanishads* because of its clarity and brevity in expressing mystic truths; contains famous dialogue between Nachikethas and Yama, God of death.

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

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

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

kirtana. Recital of the name of God; singing devotional songs.

Koham. Who am I.

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

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.

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

kshatriya. Protector, warrior; see caste.

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

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

Lakshmi. Consort of Vishnu, goddess of wealth.

lingam. Also *Sivalingam*. Egg-shaped stone; symbol of Siva; the form of the formless; symbolizes merger of the form with the formless.

loka. Region, world. Usually refers to the three worlds of earth, atmosphere, and sky, but it can mean 7 or even 14 worlds (7 above and 7 lower).

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

Madhwacharya. 13th cent. exponent of dualist philosophy; lived in the South Indian court of Vijayanagar; author of *Vedantic* works; founder of a sect of *Vaishnavas*; refuted monism of Sankaracharya.

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. Also, *maha-rishi*. Great sage.

Maheswara. Name for Siva; the great Lord.

Maitreyi. Female consort of Yajnavalkya; one of greatest sage-philosophers in the *Upanishads*. Maitreyi was known for her wisdom. See the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*.

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.

Manu Dharma Sastra. Codes of righteous conduct written by Manu.

maruth. Wind.

Maruth. God of wind.

matha. Conclusion.

matha. Mother.

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.

mithra. Friend.

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

Mitra. God always mentioned together with Varuna as rain god(s).

Mohammed. Seventh century Arabic prophet and founder of religion of Islam.

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*).

mukthi. See *moksha*.

Nachiketas. Son of sage Vajasravas; given to Yama, the Lord of death, for questioning his father's mean gift of old and useless cows to pious people.

Nagarjuna. Classical Indian medical knowledge is called *ayurveda* (science of long life); the two chief traditions are those of Atreya and Dhanvathari. Nagarjuna (2nd cent. B.C.) presented Dhanvathari's in *Sushrutha samhitha*.

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

Nanak. 15th century founder of Sikh religion.

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.

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

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

nidaana. Slow and sure.

nidaana-vathi. Step by step.

nidra. Sleep.

nir-guna. Without qualities, attributeless.

nithya. Eternal, permanent.

Nyaya Sastra. System of logical philosophy delivered by Gautama, which uses syllogistic inference.

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

paasa. Bond.

pada. Verse, word, speech, sign, position, step, cause.

pada-sevanam. Rendering service to the lotus feet of the Lord.

padartha. Word-meaning; thing, object.

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

Para-brahman. Universal Absolute Brahman.

Param-aartha-dristhi. Supra-vision; highest vision of truth.

Param-ananda. Highest bliss.

Paramam-vyoma. Great Protector.

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

Parameswara. Supreme Lord, highest Godhead, Siva.

paripurna. Full, complete, entire.

parisuddha. Purity.

Parjanya. God of rain.

Partha. “Son of Earth (Prithvi)”. Name for Arjuna.

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

pasu. Animal, bull.

Pasupathi. Lord of animals or individualized souls; another name for Siva.

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

pindanda. Inner principle of all the duality; microcosmos.

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.

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).

prapatthi. Surrender to the Lord, unflinching devotion.

prarabdha-karma. *Karma* from previous births that determines the present life.

prasanthi. Supreme peace, equanimity.

Prasthan Thraya. Three Supreme texts: the *Upanishads*, *Gita*, and *Brahma Sutra*.

pratyagatma. The inner 'I'.

praveshtum. Entering.

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

puja. Worship.

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*.

purna. Complete, full.

Puruhutha. Name for Indra, meaning "often invited" or "the god who is most called upon".

Purusha. Primeval Person, Supreme Spirit, Lord, God.

purusha-arthas. Goals of human life.

Purusha Sukta. A hymn in the *Rigveda*.

Purushothama. The supreme Lord of all.

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

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.

raja-yogi. *Yogi* on the path of royal *yoga* (*raja-yoga*).

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".

Ramachandra. Another name for Rama.

Ramakrishna Paramahansa. (1836–1886) Celebrated mystic; mastered all types of *yoga* and also Christian and Islamic practices. Swami Vivekananda took his message of universal religion to the West. Married to Saradadevi.

Ramanuja. Eleventh century teacher and interpreter of the *Brahma-sutra*; proponent of the ultimate oneness of the differentiated (*visishta-adwaita*). Believed in a personal God reached by devotion and faith and the everlasting self-identity of the individual soul in communion with God as the goal of life.

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 (*riks*). Oldest religious text in world.

Rik. GRIES. hymn. See *Rig-veda*.

rishi. Sage, wise man.

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.

sadguru. True teacher to be followed.

sadhaka. Spiritual aspirant.

sadhana. Spiritual discipline or exercise; self effort.

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

sa-guna. With qualities, with form, materialized.

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

sahaja. Innate, inborn, natural.

sahasam. Adventurous, courageous quality.

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

Sakthi. Female consort of Siva.

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

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

samashiti. Collective aggregate of individual parts; an integrated whole.

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

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.

Sanathana Sarathi. Started in 1958, *Sanathana Sarathi* [www.sanathanasarathi.org] is a monthly magazine devoted to Truth (*Sathya*), Righteousness (*Dharma*), Peace (*Santhi*) and Love (*Prema*) —the four cardinal principles of Sathya Sai Baba's philosophy. Published from *Prasanthi Nilayam* (the Abode of Highest Peace), it acts as a mouthpiece of Sathya Sai Baba's Ashram as it speaks of the important events that take place there, besides carrying divine messages conveyed through His Divine Discourses.

Sanatkumara. One of four sons of Brahma.

sanchitha. Stored *karma*, which is being worked out over several lifetimes.

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

santhi. Peace, equanimity, serenity, tranquility.

Santhi Parva. (Book of Peace) Book 12 of the *Mahabharatha*, in which Bhishma gives instructions to Yudhistira.

sanyasa. Renunciation-detachment, mendicancy.

saranagathi. Absolute self-surrender.

Sarveswara. The Lord of all.

Sastras. The Hindu scriptures containing the teachings of the sages. The *Vedas*, the *Upanishads*, the *itihisas* (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. Existence, being, good, real.

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

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.

sathya-vathi. Truth-based, truthful.

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

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.

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.

siddhi. Perfection; *yogic* power.

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.

Singh, Govind. (1666–1708) Tenth and last guru of Sikh religion.

sishya. Pupil, student, disciple.

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. Also *sivam*. Temple, the divine; refers to Siva. Also, grace, auspiciousness, goodness.

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.

sravana. Listening to discourses on the scriptures.

srishti. Creation.

srotriyas. Those versed in the *Vedas*; strict followers of *Vedic* culture.

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.

sthithi. Preservation, staying, abiding.; a state, position, condition.

sthula. Gross, material, superficial.

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

su-jnana. Good knowledge, ability to distinguish right from wrong.

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

sukshma. Subtle.

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

surya. The sun.

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

surya-loka. Region of the solar principle.

Sushrutha. Author of the science of surgery; held in great esteem in *ayurvedic* medicine.

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

swarga. Heaven.

swarloka. Celestial plane, heaven.

tantra. Means and methods of utilizing the mantras for one's own good.

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.

Thathwa. Principle, truth, essence. That-this entity. *Thathwa* is regarded as made up of That (*Thath*) and you (*twam*).

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

thyaga. Sacrifice, renunciation.

thyagi. Renunciant.

upadana. Proximate or material basis.

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*.

upasana. Worship, devotion, meditation practice, acquisition of the presence of the Lord, a method for approaching or getting close to a deity or God, the act of being near or at hand.

uttara. Later.

Vaishnavite. A person belonging to *Vaishnavism*, one of the major branches of Hinduism. It focuses on worshipping Vishnu and his ten incarnations.

vaisy. Business person, trader, merchant. See caste.

vajra. Thunderbolt, esp. that of Indra formed from the bones of sage Dadhichi.

Vallabhacharya. Fifteenth century *Vaishnava* teacher; advocated non-mortification of the body. Wrote many spiritual texts including commentaries on the *Vedanta-sutras*.

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.

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

vandana. Praise, worship, veneration, salutation.

varna. Caste.

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. Water, rain.

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.

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.

vayu. Wind, air.

Vayu. God of wind.

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

Vedangas. Subsidiary treatises of the *Vedas*: Six sciences of proper pronunciation, grammar, metre, etymology, astronomy, ritual.

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.

vedanthin. Knower of *Vedanta*.

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*.

Vidarbha. An ancient country in India.

Vidyaranya Madhwacharya. Fourteenth century Hindu statesman and philosopher, who lived at the South Indian court of Vijayanagar. Author of Vedantic works. Refuted monism of Sankara.

Vigneswara. Overcomer of obstacles, Ganesha, son of Siva.

vi-jnana. Highest wisdom; discriminating faculty of the intellect; spiritual wisdom beyond the material plane.

vi-jnani. Scientist; wise person; one who has developed and correctly applied spiritual power.

vimana. Vehicle capable of flying into space.

Vishnoh-smarana. Remembrance of Vishnu, God.

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

Vrisharatha. He whose chariot is the bull.

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

viswa. Waking state, gross body.

Viswamitra. Sage; known for his efforts to equal Vasishtha. Born as warrior Kausika who by the power of the *Gayatri* transformed himself spiritually. Early counselor of the young Rama.

viveka. Discrimination.

Vivekananda. Disciple of Ramakrishna; one of the founders of the Ramakrishna order. He taught *Vedantic* philosophy in Europe, America, and India.

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 *adwaithic* doctrine of identity of *Atma* and *Brahman* in *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*.

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

Yama. God of Death; death personified.

yantra. Mechanics; instrument.

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 Sutras. An aphoristic treatise on *yoga* by Patanjali.

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

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*.

yukthi. Faculty of reason, inference, deduction.

Zoroaster. Founder of the ancient Persian religion Zoroastrianism. The sacred text called the *Gathas* were revealed to him while in deep meditation. *Ahur Mazda* is the name for the Supreme.