

# Glossary

This glossary contains many Sanskrit words, people, places, and literature that Sathya Sai Baba use in *Sutra Vahini*. It 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.

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

**a-chetana.** Non-intelligent, unconscious, inert, senseless.

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

**a-dwaitha-jyothi.** The light without a second.

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

**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.** The knower, the "I".

**Aham Brahmasmi.** "I am *Brahman*." One of the great *Vedic* aphorisms.

**ahamkara.** Ego, self-love, selfish individuality.

**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*.

**a-jnana.** Ignorance, stupidity.

**a-jnana-avrithi.** Obscuring or deluding power.

**a-jnani.** Ignorant person.

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

**Akhanda-jyothi.** The eternal, unbroken light.

**a-kshara.** Imperishable, indestructible.

**a-kshaya.** Undecaying, never-ending.

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

**ananda-maya kosa.** The sheath of bliss, the innermost sheath of the body.

**ananda-swarupa.** The embodiment of supreme bliss.

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

**anna.** Food.

**anna-maya kosa.** Food sheath, the material or gross outer layer of a person.

**antar-yamin.** Inner ruler or Being that guides all creatures.

**anthah-karana.** Inner psycho-somatic fourfold instruments of mind, intellect, memory, and ego.

**anumaana.** Inferential perception.

**apana.** The downward air, which goes out through the anus.

**a-pourusheya.** Non-personal, superhuman.

**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.

**asanthi.** Lack of peace; agitated mind; restlessness. Opposite of *santhi*.

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

**a-sathya.** Falsehood.

**asthi.** Being, existence; is-ness; synonym for *sat*.

**Asthi-Bhathi-Priya.** Being, existence –that which shines, illumines, awareness – love, dearness.

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

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

**Atma-ananda.** *Atmic* bliss, bliss of Self-realization.

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

**Atmic.** Of or relating to the *Atma*.

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

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

**a-vidya.** Ignorance.

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

**Bhagavatha.** A sacred book composed by Sage Vyasa dealing with Vishnu and His incarnations, especially Krishna. It also means those with attachment to God, or the Godly.

**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.

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

**bhathi.** That which shines, illumines; *chit*.

**bhava-sagara.** Ocean of worldly existence.

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

**Bhishma.** The guardian and patriarch of the Kauravas and Pandavas. 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*.

**bhuma.** Vast, limitless, the eternal, the changeless.

**bhutha.** Any of the five elementary constituents of the universe; spirit; monster..

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

**Brahma-jnana.** Knowledge 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.

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

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

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

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

**Brighu.** A son of Brahma and a great sage. He had two incarnations. The second was when he was reborn from fire at Varuna’s sacrificial rite and was brought up by Varuna as his son. Also, One of 10 great sages created by the first Manu.

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

**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*.

**chaitanya.** Consciousness, intelligence, spirit.

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

**chara.** Moving.

**chetana.** Super-consciousness, consciousness.

**Chidambaram.** Town 122 miles SSW of Chennai, noted for its temple dedicated to Siva in his aspect of “cosmic dancer”, Nataraja.

**chit.** Consciousness, knowledge, awareness.

**chittha.** Mind stuff, memory, subconscious mind.

**dama.** Control of the outer senses.

**darsana.** Any of the six principal systems of ancient Indian philosophy; insight or vision of truth.

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

**deha.** Body.

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

**deva loka.** World of the gods.

**Devaki.** Mother of Krishna.

**dhana.** Wealth, possessions.

**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*.

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

**divi.** Heaven; divine light.

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

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

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

**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.

**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.

**Gautama.** Father of Nachiketas; also known as Yajnasravas.

**Gautama.** Author of *Nyaya* system of philosophy and logical system.

**gayas.** Vital airs.

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

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

**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.

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

**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 attributes, and infinite power to create, sustain, and destroy. He dwells in the heart of every being, controlling it from within. He responds positively to true devotion and sincere prayer.

**ithihasa.** Historical legend, traditional account of former events.

**jaagrath.** Waking state.

**jada.** Inert matter.

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

**Jaimini.** Author of *Purva Mimamsa*, or the portion relating to ritual action.

**jala.** Water.

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

**jijnaasa.** Yearning to know.

**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.

**jivan-muktha.** One who is liberated in this life.

**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.

**jnanen-driyas.** Five organs of perception: eye, ear, tongue, nose, and skin.

**jnani.** Wise man, realized soul.

**jyothi.** Divine light.

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

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

**Kaivalya Upanishad.** A *Upanishad*; it portrays the state of consciousness of one's absolute identity with God.

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

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

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

**kamya-karma.** Acts done to gain fruits thereof.

**Kanada.** Founder of the *Vaiseshika* school of philosophy.

**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.

**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) that which is being exhausted in the present life (*praarabdha*): (ii) that which is being accumulated in the present life (*aagami*), and (iii) that which is being accumulated or stored to be experienced in future lives (*samchitha*). *Akarma* is action that is done without any intention to gain the consequences; *vikarma* is action that is intentionally done..

**karmen-driyas.** Organs of action: larynx, hands, feet, anus, sex organs.

**karmic.** Of or pertaining to *karma*.

**Katha Saakha.** A branch of the *Black Yajur-veda*.

**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*.

**Kenopanishad.** One of the ten most important *Upanishads*; it is divided into two parts: the first expounds the unknowability of the *Brahman* without attributes, the second the relation of *Brahman* to the *Vedic* gods.

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

**Kethu.** A demon. Along with Rahu, an inauspicious planet.

**kosa.** Sheath.

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

**Krishna.** A holy river.

**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.

**kshaya.** Decline, loss, inertia; destruction.

**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.

**leela.** Divine sport or play.

**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.

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

**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.

**Mandukya Upanishad.** One of the ten most important *Upanishads*; it sets forth the doctrine that the whole world is present in the syllable *Om*.

**manomaya kosa.** Mental sheath of the body.

**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.** Code of virtuous conduct presented in the *Dharma Sastras* by Manu.

**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*.

**Mimamsaka.** Adherent of philosophical system concerning itself chiefly with correct interpretation of the *Vedic* rituals.

**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*.

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

**mula-prakriti.** Causal substance; basic nature.

**Mundaka Upanishad.** One of the ten most important *Upanishads*, of *Artharva-veda*; it presents the *Vedantic* doctrine of knowledge of *Brahman*.

**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*.

**Narada-parivrajaka Upanishad.** The sage-mendicant Narada's *Upanishad*.

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

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

**nimitta-karana.** Instrumental cause.

**nithya.** Eternal, permanent.

**nivritti.** Withdrawal, detachment, renunciation.

**niyathi.** Fixed order of things; destiny; fate.

**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.

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

**Om Tat Sat.** A mantra; it expresses the identity of the individual and the Universal *Brahman*.

**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.** Highest good; highest goal beyond and above this material world.

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

**Param-jyothi.** Highest revelation, supreme light, divine intelligence.

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

**Parivrajaka Upanishad.** See *Narada-parivrajaka Upanishad*.

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

**Pippalada.** Ancient sage and preceptor of spiritual knowledge.

**praani.** Living unit.

**pradhana.** Primordial matter; source of material world according to *sankhya*.

**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.

**pralaya.** Dissolution of the world.

**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).

**prana-maya kosa.** The second, subtle sheath of man, consisting of the vital airs and the nervous system.

**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.

**prapancha.** Cosmos; created world composed of the five elements.

**Prasna Upanishad.** One of the ten most important Upanishads; it deals with six questions concerning *Brahman* by spiritual seekers to the sage Pippalada.



**Prasthanas Thraya.** The three supreme spiritual texts: the *Upanishads*, *Bhagavad Gita*, and *Brahma Sutra*.

**pratyaksha.** Direct knowledge, perceptible, before one's eyes.

**pravritti.** Worldly activity, attachment.

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

**prithvi.** Earth, world.

**priya.** Also *priyam*. Love, dearness.

**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*.

**purna.** Complete, full.

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

**Purushothama.** The supreme Lord of all.

**Purva Mimamsa.** A text by Jaimini on the early school of *Mimamsa* philosophy.

Rahu. A demon (*a-sura*), step-brother of Kethu. Both are also inauspicious planets; An eclipse is the phenomenon of Rahu 'swallowing the moon'.

**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".

**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.

**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.

**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*.

**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.

**rupa.** Form, figure, appearance.

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

**sabda.** Sound.

**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*.

**sahasra-nama.** 1000 names of Siva or Vishnu.

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

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

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

**sama-dhana.** Mind control by equanimity.

**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*.

**samana.** Digestive air; even breath.

**Sama-veda.** Collection of *Vedic* hymns appropriate for singing as liturgies.

**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 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.

**sandhya-vandana.** Morning, noon, or evening prayers.

**sankalpa.** Will, resolve.

**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.

**Sankhya.** One of six leading systems of spiritual *Vedic* philosophy, attributed to sage Kapila. Its chief object is the emancipation of the soul from the bonds of worldly existence.

**santhi.** Peace, equanimity, serenity, tranquility.

**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.

**sarira.** Body.

**saririka.** All the components of the embodied *Atma*.

**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.

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

**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).

**soham.** I am God.

**sraddha.** Faith.

**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.

**sthula.** Gross, material, superficial.

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

**Sugriva.** Monkey-king, brother of Vali; with his army of monkeys headed by Hanuman, assisted Rama in defeating Ravana. **Sukla Yajur Veda.** One part of the *Yajur-veda*, promoted by Yajnavalkya.

**sukshma.** Subtle.

**Sumitra.** Second wife of Dasaratha and mother of Lakshmana and Satrughna.

**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-deva.** Sun-god; same as Surya.

**sushupti.** Deep sleep state.

**sutra.** Concise rule or aphorism; that which, through a few words only, reveals vast meanings; text consisting of aphorisms or maxims; a thread; something, like a thread, that runs through and holds everything together.

**swa-dharma.** One's own *dharma* or duty.

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

**swa-tantra.** Freedom.

**taijasa.** Entity associated with dream state composed of mind, intellect, five vital airs, five senses of perception, and the five elements; the experiencer of the dream or subconscious state, "light" of the subconscious.

**Taittiriya 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*.

**tejas**. Spiritual power, splendour.

**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*.

**thatastha**. Derivative.

**Thath**. That, the Godhead.

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

**Thath twam asi**. You are That. One of four great *Vedantic* statements expressing the non-difference of individual soul and *Brahman*, the supreme absolute Self.

**thithiksha**. Fortitude, forbearance.

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

**thuriya**. “Beyond” stage in *samadhi*; fourth stage beyond waking, dream, and deep sleep. Superconscious state.

**thwam**. Thou, You, This, the individual.

**udana**. Breath that moves upward from the throat.

**upadana**. Proximate or material basis.

**upadhi**. Container, disguise, encasement, limitation.

**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*.

**uparathi**. Control of mind by withdrawal from senses.

**uttara**. Later.

**Uttara Mimamsa**. Later *Mimamsa Vedantic* philosophy, as distinguished from earlier *Mimamsa*, which concerned itself with rituals. By Veda Vyasa.

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

**vahini**. Stream or flow.

**vairagya**. Detachment, renunciation.

**Vaiseshika**. Later school of *Nyaya* philosophy founded by Kanada.

**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*.

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

**valli**. Section, chapter; literally, creeper.

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

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

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

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

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

**Vasudeva.** Father of Krishna.

**vayu.** Wind, air.

**Vayu.** God of wind.

**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.

**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*.

**Veda-vidya.** Knowledge of the *Vedas*.

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

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

**Vidarbha.** An ancient country in India.

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

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

**vi-jnana-maya kosa.** Body sheath of intellect, intuition.

**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.

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

**vyana.** One of five vital airs; that which is diffused throughout the whole body.

**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*.

**Yajnavalkya Kanda.** Third and fourth sections of the *Brihadaranyakopanishad*, which deals with the spiritual teaching of Yajnavalkya to Janaka.

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

**Yama.** God of Death; death personified.

**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.

**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*.