

## Glossary

***achara-dharma*** Good behaviour.

***acharya*** Spiritual teacher, preceptor.

***a-dharma*** Evil, injustice.

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

***adi-atmic*** Pertaining to *adi-Atma*.

***Agni*** God of fire.

***Aham Brahmasmi*** I am Brahman, or I am divine.

***aham-kara*** Ego, self-love, selfish individuality.

***ahimsa*** Nonviolence.

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

***a-jnani*** Ignorant person.

***akasa*** Sky, space, ether.

***alaya*** House, dwelling.

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

- a-mritha-dharma** Immortal *dharmā*.
- a-mritha-putra (puthra)** Son of eternal Divinity.
- ananda** Supreme bliss, unending joy.
- Anasuya** Wife of sage Athri and mother of Dattatreya, an incarnation of the Trinity.
- an-atma** Not *Atma*, or not-Self.
- anritha-putra (puthra)** Son of falsehood; child of futility.
- anthah-karana** Inner psycho-somatic fourfold instruments of mind, intellect, memory, and ego.
- a-nyaya** Injustice.
- Aranyakas** Religious or philosophical texts closely connected with the *brahmins*, either composed in the forest or studied there.
- Aranyaparva** First section of the third book of the *Mahadhundhumara*; contains predictions of the *Kali yuga*.
- archaka** Worshipper.
- arishadvarga** Six inner enemies of man, viz. lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride, and hate. 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*.
- asrama** A stage of life, one of: student, householder, hermit, and renunciate.
- asthika** Believer; theist; God-revering person.
- a-sura** Demon; term arose when Diti's sons refused to drink the divine liquor (*sura*) offered by Varuni, the daughter of Varuna.
- Aswapathi** Lord of horses, brother-in-law of Dasaratha, the father of Rama.

- Atharva-veda** The fourth *Veda*. *Atharva* means "fourth". Steady, unmoved person, of stable nature.
- Athri** A sage; father of Dattatreya.
- Atma** The real Self, one's divinity, God, the substance of everything, the unseen basis, the spark of God within. The *Atma* is unchanging and immortal; It does not die.
- Atma-dharma** *Atmic* duty, divine duty.
- Atma-jnana** Knowledge of Self-realization; awareness of *Atma*.
- Atma-suddhi** Self-purification.
- Atma-swarupa** Embodiment of the all-pervading divine Self.
- Atma-thathwa** True nature of *Atma*, the *Atmic* Principle.
- Atma-vidya** Knowledge of supreme reality or *Atma*.
- Atmic** Of or pertaining to the *Atma*.
- Avatar** An incarnation of God, taking a form according to the age in which the incarnation occurs. Special manifestation of God on Earth.
- a-vidya** Ignorance.
- bala** Strength, vigour, power.
- bhaarya** Housewife.
- bhaavana** Creative thought; creator.
- Bharatha-varsha** Culture of India.
- Bharathiya** Indian, dweller in the country of Bharath (India).
- Bhagavad Gita** Literally, Song of God. Portion of the *Mahabharatha* that is a dialogue between Arjuna, one of the Pandava brothers, and Krishna. See *Mahabharatha*.
- Bhagavan** Divinity; term of reverential address; Sri Sathya Sai Baba is called *Bhagavan* by his devotees.
- Bhagavatha** A textbook of divine love—the story of *Avatars*, especially Krishna, it describes all the incarnations of Vishnu. It also means those with attachment to God, or the Godly.

- bhaktha** Devotee of the Lord.
- bhakthi** Devotion to God.
- Bharatha-desa** India; region of God-loving people.
- Bhava-roga-vaidya** The Lord; the curer of worldly ills.
- bheda** Separation, division.
- Bhudevi** The goddess of Earth; wife of Vishnu.
- bhutha** Any of the five elementary constituents of the universe; spirit; monster
- Bhuthanatha** Lord of the primordial elements; Lord of beings.
- brahma-charya** Path to knowledge of Brahman; state of an unmarried religious student; first stage of life of a *brahmin*; spiritual studentship.
- Brahma-jnana** Knowledge of Brahman. Brahman (*Brahman*). Impersonal Supreme Being, primal source and ultimate goal of all beings. Thus, It is identical to the *Atma*.
- Brahmana** A section of each of the four *Vedas* dwelling on the meaning and use of mantras and hymns at various sacrifices.
- Brahma-nishta** Steady contemplation of Brahman.
- brahmarshi** Highest sage; one absorbed in divine consciousness.
- Brahma-sakshatkara** Direct perception of Brahman.
- Brahma-thathwa** Formless God, Brahman principle.
- Brahma-vadin** One who expounds the Brahman.
- 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. See *Caste*.
- Brihadaranyaka Upanishad** The *Upanishad* that sets forth teachings maintained by Yajnavalkya regarding Brahman.
- buddha** Awakened, enlightened, wise. Buddha. Prince Gautama, circa 556–480 BC. Founder of Buddhism after attaining enlightenment.

- Caste** The four castes of social order are: *brahmin* (priestly or teacher), *kshatriya* (warrior, protector), *vaisya* (trader, merchant, agriculturist), and *sudra* (worker, helper).
- Chaithanya** Fifteenth century *Vaishnava* mendicant reformer; taught path of love and devotion to the *Avatar* of Sri Krishna.
- chakra** Disk; wheel; a weapon used by Krishna.
- Chamaka** Hymn of prayer to Siva found in the *Yajur-veda*.
- chandala** Outcast.
- chaya** Shade, shadow.
- 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.
- chith-swarupa** Embodiment of consciousness.
- 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.
- chittha** Mind stuff, memory, subconscious mind.
- Chudala** Saintly wife of King Shikhidwaja. When he renounced his kingdom, she gave him instruction in *Atmic* knowledge and brought him back to the throne.
- dama** Control of the outer senses.
- Damayanthi** Wife of King Nala of Nishada, who lost his kingdom at dice.
- dana, danam** Charity, giving.
- danda** Stick, rod of punishment.
- Dattatreya** Sage son of Athri and Anasuya.
- daya** Compassion, sympathy. *dhaama*. Rope, garland.

- Dhara** Wife of the *vasu* Nandagopa (the *vasus* were a class of gods whose chief was Indra).
- dharmā** Right action, truth in action, righteousness, morality, virtue, duty, the dictates of God, code of conduct. *Dharma* defies a simple translation into English.
- Dharmaja (or Yudhishtira)** Eldest of the Pandavas. Born to Kunti by the grace of Yama Dharmaraaja, Lord of Death. Named for adherence to *dharmā*. See *Mahabharatha*.
- dharmā-karma** Act of duty, virtuous action.
- dharmā-kartha** Person in charge of a temple.
- dharmā-narayana** Personification of *dharmā*.
- dharmā-pathni** Lawful wife.
- dharmā-purusha** Moral individual.
- Dharma Sastras** Codes of law and ethics concerning virtuous living.
- dharmā-sikshana** Instruction in *dharmā*.
- dharmā-sutras** Texts consisting of rules on *dharmā*.
- dharmic** According to *dharmā*, righteous.
- dharmya-amritham** Dharmic way to immortality.
- deha** Body.
- deva** Deity, celestial being.
- deva-mandir** Temple of God.
- durbhiksha** Distress, want, dearth, famine.
- 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.
- Durvasa** Son of Athri and Anasuya; known for quick temper and severe curses.

- Duryodhana** Chief (and eldest) of the evil-minded sons of Dhritrashtra.
- Dwapara-yuga** Third in the cycle of four ages. See *yuga*.
- Ekadasi** Eleventh day of fortnight of lunar month; considered sacred for fasting.
- Gargi** Celebrated female sage, born in the family of Garga.
- gayas** Vital airs.
- Gayatri mantra** Ancient *Vedic* prayer to awaken the intelligence and lead to enlightenment.
- Gita** Literally, song. Short for *Bhagavad Gita*.
- glaani** Decline, weakening.
- Godavari** Sacred river of south India; cuts across central south India, flowing from west to east.
- Gopala** Cowherd boy. A name for Lord Krishna.
- gopura** Decorated gate to the temple.
- Gouranga** Name for Chaithanya.
- govinda** Guardian (e.g. of cows or individuals)
- Govinda** Name for Krishna.
- Grihalakshmi** Goddess of the home.
- grihasta** Householder, one of the four stages of life.
- grihini** Housewife.
- guna** Quality, characteristic. The qualities of *sathwa*, *rajas*, and *thamas* are general universal characteristics of all kinds of mental tendencies and actions/ thoughts, which are prompted by specific kinds and mixtures of these three qualities. For example, *sathwic* food is health-giving, strength-giving and delightful; *rajasic* food is spicy, sour, or salty and brings on diseases; and *thamasic* food is impure, old, stale, tasteless, or rotten. See *thamas*, *rajas*, *sathwa*.
- guru** Preceptor, teacher, guide to spiritual liberation.

**Guru-gita (-geetha)** Section of the *Skanda Purana*, the epic story of Skanda.

**hamsa** Swan.

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

**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, a great devotee of the Lord; killed by man-lion *Avatar* of Vishnu. In a previous incarnation as Varaha, Narayana killed Hiranyaksha, Hiranyakashipu brother.

**homa** Oblation to the gods performed, by throwing *ghee* (clarified butter) on the sacred fire.

**hridaya** Heart.

**Indra** Rig-vedic Lord of the *devas* (celestials).

**indriya-moha** Sublimation of the senses.

**indriyas** Senses.

**Ishta-devatha** Chosen deity.

**Iswara** Lord, God, Supreme Being; another name for Siva.

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

**jaagrath** Waking state.

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

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

**Jayadeva** Sanskrit poet; wrote the *Gita Govinda*, which describes the early life of Krishna.

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

**jiva** Individual soul with ego.

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

**jivi** Individual or soul.

**jnana** Spiritual knowledge, experiential wisdom.

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

**jnana-marga** Path of spiritual wisdom.

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

**jnani** Wise man, realized soul.

**Kabir or Kabirdas** 15th century mystic poet; preached equality before God of all creatures and the religion of love/devotion (*bhakti*), which was aimed at the union of the soul with God. Born to a Muslim weaver family of Benares.

**kali-purusha** Personification of *kali-yuga*, the evil age.

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

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

**karma** (a) Activity, action, work, duty. (b) Fate; the consequences of acts done in this life and past lives.

**karma-deha** Body acquired as a result of action.

**Karma-kanda** Portion of the *Veda* that deals with ceremonial acts and sacrificial rites.

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

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

- Kritha yuga** First age of man, Golden age of truth. See *yuga*.
- Krithya** Demoness or demon to whom sacrifices are offered for destructive purposes. Created by the black arts.
- kshatriya** Protector, warrior; see *Caste*.
- kumkum** Auspicious mark of vermilion placed on forehead.
- Lakshmi** Consort of Vishnu, goddess of wealth.
- leela** Divine sport or play.
- lingam** Egg-shaped stone; symbol of Siva; the form of the formless; symbolizes the merger of the form with the formless.
- loka-dharma** Worldly *dharma*.
- loka-siksha** Worldly punishment.
- maadhyamika**. Noontime.
- Madalasa** Wife of King Rithadwaja. Once, the demon Patalakethu carried her away to the nether world; Patala and King Rithadwaja rescued her.
- Madhava** God (another name for Krishna); Master of illusion (*maya*), Lord of Lakshmi.
- Madhava** See Madhwacharya.
- Madhavathwa** Divinity. Madhwacharya (Madhvaachaarya). 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** Ancient epic in poetic form, by sage Vyasa; describes conflict between the Pandava brothers and their cousins, the 100 Kaurava brothers. Arjuna is one of the Pandava brothers. It contains the *Bhagavad Gita*.
- maharshi** Great sage.

- Maitreyi** Female consort of Yajnavalkya; one of greatest sage-philosophers in the *Upanishads*. Maitreyi was known for her wisdom. See the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*.
- manana** Reflection, meditation, understanding.
- manavathwa** Human value.
- mandir** Temple.
- mantra** Sacred syllable or word(s) to be repeated (often silently) for attaining perfection or self-realization; a mystic formula for spiritual enlightenment.
- mantra-sastra** The science of the *Vedic* sacred formulae.
- 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.
- Manu-smrithi** Laws of Manu.
- Mathariswan** God of wind.
- maya** Wordly illusion, mistaking the transient for the real; non-awareness of actuality, appearances masquerading as reality.
- Meera** Princess of Rajasthan and queen of Chittor; devoted to Krishna; took poison from her husband without any effect; composed devotional songs of exceptional quality.
- Mimamsaka** Adherent of philosophical system concerning itself chiefly with correct interpretation of the *Vedic* rituals.
- Mohammed** Seventh century Arabic prophet and founder of religion of Islam.
- moksha** Stage of liberation, devoid of delusion, freedom from bondage.
- muktha-purusha** Liberated person.

**Mundaka Upanishad.** A Upanishad of Atharva-veda.

**Nala** King of Nishada and husband of Damayanthi; lost his kingdom at dice.

**Nalayani** Previous birth of Droupadi, who was married to the aged, leprosy-ridden, sage Maudhgalya.

**Namadev** Hindu saint-poet in 13th and 14th centuries.

**nama-rupa jagath** World of name and form.

**nama-smarana** Remembrance of God's name.

**nama-yajna** Sacrifice only in name.

**Nanak** 15th century founder of the Sikh religion.

**Nandanar** Great 13th century devotee of Siva, born in the labourer (*sudra*) caste. Through devotion, he overcame all obstacles and merged with God in the temple in Chidambaram.

**Nandi** Siva's bull.

**Nandiswara** God, Lord of all creatures; Siva.

**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.

**naraka** Hell.

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

**nasthika** Atheist.

**neem** The margosa tree, which exudes a tenacious gum, has a bitter bark used as a tonic, and whose fruit and seeds have medicinal properties.

**nethi** Not this.

**nethra** Eye.

**nir-guna** Without qualities, attributeless.

**nir-gunopasana** Contemplation on the formless Supreme.

**nishchitha-jnana** Incontrovertible wisdom.

**nithya** Eternal, permanent.

**nithya-anushtana** Rites and vows prescribed for daily adherence.

**nivritti** Withdrawal, detachment, renunciation.

**ojas** Heroism, power.

**paaramaatha** Fool's goal.

**para-sakthi** (*paraa-shakthi*) Universal cosmic energy; supreme energy.

**Parvathi** Siva's consort.

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

**parama-hamsa** Realized sage.

**parama-padha** Highest stage of spirituality; final emancipation.

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

**Parameswara** Supreme Lord, highest Godhead.

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

**pasu** Animal, bull. Pasupathi (Pashupathi). Lord of animals or individualized souls; another name for Siva.

**pathi-vratha** Chaste and loyal to the husband.

**pathi-vratha-dharma** Duty of a chaste wife to husband.

**pathni** Housewife.

**praathah-sandhya** Dawn worship of the Lord.

**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 saved him. Once, Prahlada asserted that God was everywhere, and Narayana appeared in his man-lion form from within a pillar to destroy the king.

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

**prakriti** Causal matter, creation, nature.

**prana** Life-breath, life force, vital energy, the five vital airs.

**pranayama** Breath control.

**prasanthi** Supreme peace, equanimity.

**prema.** Divine or supreme love.

**prithvi** Earth, world.

**puja** Worship.

**pundit** Learned scholar, wise man.

**Purana** 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** Perfect person, supreme lord, soul.

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

**purusha-dharma** *Dharma* for man (for the male).

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

**rajarshi** Royal sage.

**rajas** Passion, restlessness, aggressiveness, emotions such as anger, greed, grief. Associated with colour red. See *guna*.

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

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

**raksha** Saviour, protection.

**Rama** Avatar of the *Thretha* era (*yuga*). Hero of the *Ramayana*; killed the wicked Ravana to rescue his virtuous wife Sita, who had been kidnaped. "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.

**Ramdas** Maratha 17th century saint; author of work on religious duty; *guru* of the great King Sivaji.

**Rasmani, Rani** Devotee of Ramakrishna; constructed a *Kali* Temple in Calcutta.

**rathi** Attachment.

**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.

**sadguna** Good character, virtue.

**sadhaka** Spiritual aspirant.

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

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

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

**sahas** Power, victory, strength.

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

**Sakkubai** A famous Krishna devotee.

**sakthi** Great universal power, divine energy, strength.

**sama** Quiet persuasion, good counsel.

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

**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** The objective world; sea of change; cycle of birth and death; transmigration.

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

**sanathana** Ancient and also eternal.

**Sanathana Dharma** Eternal Universal Religion.

**sandhya** Early morning, noon, and evening.

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

**Sankara (Shankara)** Celebrated philosopher and preceptor of nondualistic *Vedanta*. Defeated all religious opponents in debates throughout India.

**Sankaracharya** See Sankara.

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

**santhosha** Peace, contentment, happiness.

**sanyasa** Renunciation-detachment, mendicancy.

**Saraswathi** An underground river that joins the Ganga and Yamuna rivers; in the *Rig-veda*, usu. means the Indus River. Goddess of learning and eloquence, a daughter of Brahma.

**sarira** Body.

**sarva-loka-hitha** Universal good; benefit of whole world.

**sarva-manava-sukha** Welfare of all human beings.

**sastra** Holy scripture; sacred text; that which commands, orders, directs with authority.

**sastric** Relating to the scriptures.

**sat** Existence, being, good, real.

**sathwa** Purity, calmness, serenity, joy, strength, goodness. Associated with colour white. See *guna*.

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

**sathya** Truth.

**sathya-dharma** Law of truth, practice of truth.

**Savithri** Brought husband back to life by outwitting **Yama** the Lord of Death, by her power of purity and chastity.

**sikshana** Learning.

**Sisupala** Demon slain by Krishna who then merged with the Lord.

**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** Destroyer in the trinity of Brahma (the Creator), Vishnu (the Preserver), and Siva. The embodiment of spiritual wisdom and God of Gods, *Mahadeva*.

**sloka** Verse.

**smarana** Remembering the name of the Lord.

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

**snaana** Bath.

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

**sraddha** Faith.

**sree** Success, good fortune, welfare.

**sthitha-prajna** Person of steady integral spiritual wisdom.

**stotra** Hymn of praise of God.

**stri-dharma** *Dharma* for women.

**suddha** Pure.

**suddhi** Purity.

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

**sukta** Hymn.

**Sulabha** Female mendicant in the Mahabharatha.

**Surdas** A great blind devotee of Krishna.

**Surya** The sun god, the father of time. A name for the sun.

**sushupti** Deep sleep state.

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

**swapna** Dream state.

**swarupa** Form, essential nature, true nature of Being.

**swa-swarupa** One's true nature.

**swayam-jyothi** Self-illuminating.

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

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

**tapasvi** Ascetic.

**tarka** Philosophical system based on reasoning or logic.

**tejas** Spiritual power, splendour.

**thamas** Dullness, ignorance, delusion, inactivity, inertia, sloth. Associated with colour black. See *guna*.

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

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

**thapovana** Sacred grove in which religious austerities are practised, hermitage.

**thra** Protecting.

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

**Thyagayya** See Thyagaraja.

**Thyagaraja** 18th and 19th century mystic singer- composer. Leader in Karnatak tradition of classical Indian music. Born in Thanjavur District of south India.

**Tukaram** Well-known Maratha 17th century writer. He abandoned the world and became a wandering ascetic.

**Tulsidas** Author of the greatest medieval devotional poetical work concerning the acts of Rama.

**Uddhava** Friend and messenger of Krishna.

**upanayana** Sacred thread ceremony in which a boy is initiated with a sacred thread and is endowed with a second or spiritual birth.

**Upanishad** Any of a set of most ancient treatises constituting the primary source of *Vedanta* metaphysics. Principle message is nondualism: unity of Brahman and the *Atma*.

**Upanishadic** Relating to the *Upanishads*.

**upasana** Worship, devotion, meditation practice, acquisition of the presence of the Lord.

**vaak** Word of mouth.

**vahana** *Vehicle*.

**Vaikunta** Vishnu's heaven.

**vairagya** Detachment, renunciation.

**vaisya** Business person, trader, merchant. See *Caste*.

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

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

**varchaska** Splendour, brightness, power.

**varna** Caste.

**varna-dharma** *Dharma* of any caste or tribe.

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

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

**Vedanta** Doctrine of either pure non-dualism, i.e. identity of Brahman and *Atma*, or conditioned non-dualism; the end or bottom line of the *Vedas*, which declares this doctrine.

**Vedantic** Of or pertaining to *Vedanta*.

**Vedas** Entire body of ancient sacred revelations of truth, chief among which are four books: the *Rig-veda*, the *Yajur-veda*, the *Sama-veda*, and the *Atharvana-veda*.

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

**Veda Vyasa** A name for Vyasa. See Vyasa.

**Vedic** Of or pertaining to the *Vedas*.

**vidwan** Wise person.

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

**vijnana** Highest intellect; discriminating faculty of the intellect.

**vijnana-mandir** Temple of spiritual wisdom.

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

**Vishnu-murthi** Vishnu.

**Viswakarma** Architect of the Gods.

**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

**vratha** Vow; discipline of worship.

**vritti** Occupation.

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

**yajna** Holy ritual, sacrifice, or rite. Also, personification of rite.

**Yajnavalkya** Great *Upanishadic* person. Priest and guru of King Janaka. Taught monistic *Adwaitic* 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.

**yashas** Fame.

**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. No single definition of *yoga* suffices. Patanjali's *Yoga-sutras* define *yoga* as a series of eight spiritual steps leading to union with God.

**yoga-sastra** Scripture or science that deals with *yoga*, esp. by Patanjali.

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

**yogini** Female ascetic or *yogi*.

**Yogini** Female *yogi* in *Mahabharatha*.

**yogi** One who practises *yoga*.

**yuga** Era. There is a cycle of four *yugas*: *Kritha*, *Thretha*, *Dwapara*, and *Kali*. Together, the four *yugas* comprise 4,320,000 years. The present age is the *Kali yuga*.