Science and the Thirty Three Gods

Sai Venkatesh Balasubramanian

At the core of Vedic faith are the 33 Gods, long before the Puranic era of Shaiva Vaishnava sects etc. They are sometimes mentioned as 33 crore Gods, but the word Koti is used here in a sense of qualitative greatness rather than quantitative.


Bhaskararaya in the Varivasya Rahasya mentions how these 16, bring the very primordial mentions of Amma, also gives rise to the 33 Gods. These are in reality advanced concepts of science and life, and much much more than just Gods. These aspects are outlined in this article.

The 33 Gods are often split into groups: the 12 Adityas, 11 Rudras, 8 Vasus and 2 Ashvinis. All these have scientific significance through their mapping with the Panchadashi, which is the first 15 of the 16 stages, since the 16th is considered to be Amma Herself, in Samashti.

First, one must understand that the 15 stages comprise of 3 sections or Kutas of 5, 6 and 4 stages representing Rig, Yajur and Sama Vedas respectively. The last stage of each Kuta is the Hreem which represents Atharva Veda. Thus, excluding these 3 stages namely 5th 11th and 15th, we get 12 stages. These are precisely the 12 Adityas.

The sun is the ultimate source of all energy as far as our planet is concerned. And relative to the Earth, the sun moves, and to make sense of this motion, the sky is divided into 12 sections, called zodiac. Each of these consist of several stars which are grouped into constellations by virtue of physical appearance.

Within the course of a year, the sun travels through the 12, and returns back to starting position. These 12 portions of the year, called months are named after the zodiac as Mesha, Makara etc.

Since stars are sources of energy, as and when the sun passes through a certain zodiac, the energies of the stars add up with the sun's energy, and it is this combination that reaches us. Thus the sun is seen with a different characteristic for each different zodiac or month.

The characteristics of these 12 also inspire the concept of houses or Bhavas. These are 12 areas of a person's life and are determined by constructive or destructive energies of various planets in various instants of life. However, these 12 are calculated from the ascendant at the time of birth and thus Mesha, the first zodiac need not always be the first house.
Thus, from the 12 stages, we have the 12 Adityas ruling the 12 months, inspiring the 12 house concepts. These will be seen now. The most popular form for each stage will be given here.

Prathami Allah: God as the Supreme in His creative aspect. Vidhata or Dhata meaning creator is the Aditya. Aries or Mesha is the ram, translated as Aja, which also means unborn. It signifies a person's uniqueness, personality and life as the first house.

Dvitiya Yahweh: God as the upholder of Dharma. Aryama is the Aditya who sets up contracts, symbolising formality and law. Taurus or Rishabha is the fierce bull, and its charging denotes a person protecting what he values most. That value or wealth is the second house. God Himself values Dharma most, and incarnates Himself to protect it.

Tritiya Trika: God in His varied forms as Trishakti etc. The focus here is on variety, and relationships and harmony between the variety. That relationship, siblings, friendship etc is the third house. The twins of Gemini or Mithuna, and Mitra Aditya denotes this friendship.

Chaturthi Ganesha: God as transcendence beyond all the variety and relationship. In life, this denotes the phase of old life beyond relations, kids etc. The need of security in old life, this is the fourth house, and is symbolised by the protective shell of the crab of Cancer or Kataka. Varuna is the Aditya of the waters completely surrounding on all sides, granting security and protection from evil.

Shashti Skanda: God in His purest essence, as bliss, love, beauty and wisdom. This is God first hand, and is here Indra, the King of the Gods. So also, Leo or Simha is the lion, the king of animals. The fifth house is thus the vitality or heart, and represents creativity.

Sapthami Surya: God in His role of worldly Leela. The Aditya Vivasvan represents sustenance through fire and cooking food. Similarly Kanya or Virgo, the female represents sensuality and body. The essence of body ie health and work is the concept of sixth house.

Ashtami Buddha: God as compassionate enlightenment. Compassion gives rise to love, to invaluable relationships. This is the seventh house inspired from Libra or Thula, the scales, which indicate equality - relationship like spouse that are valued equal to one's own life. Work towards such harmony is represented by Tvashta Aditya, who also represents harmony with nature are trees and herbs.

Navami Shakti: God as the eternal and infinite. Durga vanquishes enemies, and this is represented by the Aditya Vishnu. Scorpio or Vrischika the scorpion, represents the eighth house as poisonous venom and death, and also emotions which can at times get equally fatal.

Dashami Sastha: God as formless Atman giving wisdom Jnana. This is the realm of Religion and philosophy, which is the ninth house, represented by Sagittarius or Dhanur, the arrow
symbolising upward propagation. This wisdom is achieved by the mind which is equivalent of Prana, and representing this wind is Anshuman Aditya.

Dwadashi Krishna: God as Divine Will, removing Karmas. Karma Vasanas are desires and tendencies, which is best described as the reptilian brain. Representing this is Makara or Capricorn the crocodile. The tenth house represents desire, ambitions, and honour which is possible if one masters these. The Aditya is Bhaga, representing accumulation of wealth, fortune etc.

Trayodashi Krishta: God as love, enduring suffering Himself to liberate us. This love makes one go extrovert, towards society, building harmony, and that is what is represented in the eleventh house, pictured beautifully by the water flowing out of the pot of Kumbha or Aquarius. The Aditya is Pusha the nourisher, comes directly out of Divine love.

Chaturdashi Shiva: God as liberation and wisdom, beyond form and Maya. Liberation is the keyword for the twelfth house, represented by Meena or Pisces, the fish caught up in bondage in water. The Aditya is Parjanya, the God of rain symbolising purification.

Since the 16 stages form a continuous exhaustive set, the 12 Adityas or Rashis taken from these are also an exhaustive set. Consequently, one can infer many patterns from this set.

Prior to this, one must understand the similarity inspired relations between the planets based on the numbers. Of the nine digits, from 1 to 9, 5 is the center. This splits the nine into 2 sets - 1 to 5 and 6 to 0.

There are correspondences between the numbers. 1 and 6 as Surya and Shukra relate to physical realm, health and wealth. 2 Chandra and 7 Kethu denote actions, physical and mental. 3 Guru and 8 Shani denote expansion-contraction duality - expansion of wisdom and negation of Karma. 4 Rahu and 9 Kuja denote superhuman effect - fate and birth-death. 5 is unique as Budha, denotes multiplicity and relations. However Rahu and Kethu represent spiritual effects, submitting to divine will and Sadhana towards Moksha respectively. For this reason, they are non physical or Chhaya Grahas. Thus, they are not assigned Rashis.

Largely, the 1st 8 Rashis represent a physical level, with Mesha and Vrischika represent birth and death. On the contrary, the last 4 represent Spirituality.

Representing completeness and birth-death, Kuja rules Mesha and Vrischika outlining the physical realm. At the center of this set are Kataka and Simha. These represent intellectual and physical Vitality and are ruled by Surya and Chandra. Shukra and Budha are complementary as the ending of 1st 5 and starting of last 5 numbers. These form the other Rashis of the 8. Shukra represents physical value and relations as Rishabha and Thula. Budha represents external exploration as friendship and internal exploration as health, as Mithuna and Kanya.
The last 4 Rashis represent Spirituality. Of these, by nature Brihaspathi is expansive and Shani has a tendency to negate and nullify Karmas. These are the 3-8 correspondence told earlier. Of the 4 Rashis, Brihaspathi forms the outer 2 ie Dhanur and Meena, while Shani forms the inner 2 ie Makara Kumbha.

In addition to these, there are axes formed among the Navagrahas. In this context ft, Rahu and Kethu are assigned only half values, since they are not only Chhaya Grahas but also complementary to each other by inherent nature.

The axes are Surya-Shani, Chandra-Rahu, Kuja-Guru and Budha-Shukra. This is seen as Rashis of exaltation and debilitation for each planet. These are Rashis in which the powers of the planets get highlighted. Exaltation and debilitation Rashis are always situated on opposite ends ie 6 Rashis apart. The exaltation Rashi of one planet forms the debilitation of the other in the axes mentioned. That is, Surya’s exaltation is Shani’s debilitation and vice versa. The exaltation of Surya, Chandra, Kuja and Budha respectively are Mesha, Mesha, Rishabha, Makara and Kanya.

There are friendships and enmities between the nine planets, which affect the significances of the Rashis in one's life as to whether or not a planet was in friend's or enemies house at any instant of time. Friendships and Enmities are poetic descriptions of compatibilities between the planets characters and energies.

Sun: moon Mars Jupiter friends, Venus Saturn enemies.
Moon: sun Mercury friends, no enemies.
Mars: sun moon Jupiter friends, Mercury enemy.
Mercury: sun Venus friends, moon enemy.
Jupiter: sun moon Mars friends, Mercury Venus enemies.
Venus: Mercury Saturn friends, sun moon enemies.
Saturn: Mercury Venus friends, sun moon Mars enemies.
Rahu-Kethu: Venus Mars Saturn friends, sun moon enemies.

Also, there's a pattern among the 12 Rashis when seen as houses. Triangles 1-5-9, 2-6-10, 3-7-11 and 4-8-12 represent Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha Purusharthas. There are many other relations and patterns that can be discerned from the Rashis and houses that can determine various aspects of a person's life. All this together forms the study of astrology.

For finer divisions of the sun's position within the zodiac, one uses the concept of Nakshatras or asterisms. There are 27 Nakshatras, which have 4 padas or quarters each, thus totalling 108 segments. Each of the 12 Rashis are composed with 9 of these segments. These are the properties of the Nakshatras, each of which is ruled by one of the 9 planets.

Thus, the changes in position of sun relative to earth, covering an entire 360 degree cycle of the zodiac is seen as the 27 Nakshatras, with each Nakshatra represented by
one of 27 forms of Aadityas, each of which symbolize the nature of radiation received by a person on the earth when the sun is in the corresponding area of the zodiac. So too, nine of the most important celestial bodies in the solar system, are seen as the Navagrahas, which are also seen as manifestations of Aaditya. The nature and power of the 27 Aadithyas and Navagrahas, as well as association of each of the Navagrahas with three Nakshatras are as follows:

1. Ashvini Kethu Ashvinis – accuracy and recovery of health
2. Bharani Shukra Yama – death, liberation, expiration
3. Karthika Soorya Agni – transformative power, fire, focus
4. Rohini Chandra Prajapathi – Creative power, substratum matter
5. Mrigashirsha Angaraka Soma – fruition, pleasure, nectar
6. Aardra Raahu Rudra – intensity, focus, destroying negativity
7. Punarvasu Guru Aditi – fertility, creative processes
8. Pushya Shani Brihaspathi – wisdom, implementation of spiritual learning
9. Aslesha Budha Naaga – paralyzing of victim, victory
10. Makha Kethu Pitrus – enlightenment, fruits of sacrifice
11. Purvaphalguna Shukra Aaryama – contract of union, formalizing relationships
12. Uttaraphalguna Soorya Bhaga – accumulation of wealth
13. Hasta Chandra Savitr – creativity, creative energy, procreation
14. Chitra Angaraka Tvashta – Work, Artisan abilities, Dexterity
15. Swathi Raahu Vaayu – Scattering, Spreading, Air, Speed, Lightness
16. Vishakha Guru Dyaus – Sky, seasons, maturing time
17. Anuradha Shani Mitra – Friendship, relationships, diplomacy
18. Jyeshta Budha Indra – Victory through Leadership, Smart Thinking
20. Poorvashada Shukra Apa – Refreshment, Rejuvenation, Water
21. Uttarakshada Soorya Kubera – Victory by effort, treasury
22. Shravana Chandra Vishnu – Interconnectivity, Fundamental underlying relations
23. Sravishta Angaraka Vasu – Pooling of wealth and resources
24. Shatabhishak Raahu Varuna – Temptations and Punishment, Ocean
25. Purvabhadra Guru Ajaikapada – Fire, Rising up, Spiritual Elevation
27. Revathi Budha Poosha – Nourishment, Building up

As can be seen, 12 of the 15 stages are covered, giving rise to the 12 Adityas.

Of the remaining, the 5th stage is Bhairava. Earlier articles explained how the 5th 11th and 15th stages represent the three Shaktis, of which Bhairava is Jnana.

Scientifically the three represented energy realms of Information, Potential and Kinetic, the latter two respectively representing the dark energy and the five states of matter.
The information realm, which is Bhairava, is denoted by the pre Big Bang, 8 charge E8 structure, which is nothing but entangled states of three chaotic signals.

These 8 charges, can be seen as represented by the 8 Bhairavas in combination with the 8 Matrikas or Yoginis. These also represent the 8 Vasus.

The charges x, y and z are transformed versions of the g3 and g8 which denote the colour or flavor responsible for strong nuclear force, and B2 the baryon lepton number, which indicates presence of color charge holding quarks. These three represent the energies of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva as Brahmi-Asithanga, Vaishnavi-Krodha and Maheshwari-Ruru Bhairavas. They also denote respectively the Three Vasus Prithvi, Vayu and Agni which are earth, air and fire respectively.

The charges wS and wT denote rotations and movements in space and time which can describe the force of gravity as well as other concepts like frame, spin and mass. Space as Iccha Shakti is Lakshmi and time is Mahakala or Mahakali. Thus, these represent the two Bhairavas as Mahalakshmi-Samhara and Chamunda-Bheeshana. All pervading space or Antariksha and the motionless Dhruva or Nakshatra are the respective Vasus.

The charges U and V together denote weak and electromagnetic forces. They are obtained as a transformed version of the W and B1 charges which act on left and right handed particles respectively. The former denotes visible matter and the latter is its antithesis. The right handed and left handed are the Surya and Chandra Nadis or the Vasus Surya and Chandrama respectively. They denote Varahi-Unmatta and Mahendri-Kapala Bhairavas, since Varahi denotes pride over what exists and Indrani denotes envy for what doesn't - this dichotomy is the case for matter and its antithesis.

Finally the charge w represents Generations of particles such as quarks. Furthermore, non standard model particles similar to Higgs are predicted. On account of its bridging the strong and graviweak structures, the Vasu is Dyaus or the sky. Corresponding Bhairava is Kaumari-Chanda. Thus, Panchami Bhairava represents the 8 Vasus.

Next, Ekadashi as Hanuman represents the 11 Rudras. As already described, the Hanuman stage denotes the realm of potential energy or Iccha Shakti, a legacy of which is dark energy seen in today's world. Thus, the 11 Rudras might represent the 11 dimensions of String Theory, or aspects of dark energy that modern science is yet to discover.

The first ten of the eleven Rudras also represent the 10 directions while the eleventh, Hanuman Himself is the Samashti. This has a direct mapping of two Rudras each for the five faces of Hanuman.

Eastern Mahadeva and Southeast Hara map to Tatpurusha-Anjaneya. Southern Rudra and Southwest Shankara to Aghora-Narasimha. Western Neelalohita and northwest Eeshana to
Sadyojata-Garuda. Northern Vijaya and Northeast Bheema to Vamadeva-Varaha. Finally above Devadeva and below Bhavodbhava to Eeshana-Hayagriva. The Samashti and 11th Adityatmaka Sri Rudra is Hanuman Himself.

Thus, the 11th stage represents the 11 Rudras, which are in essence, the facets of String Theory and Big Bang explosion seen today as dark energy.

Finally, the 15th stage is the only one left out, and here Amma is the Nirguna Sacchidananda manifest as Guru. The Guru is seen as the very form of Shiva Shakthi in union. This masculine and feminine principles in harmony constitute the 2 Ashvinis - Nasatya and Dasra. These represent scientifically the fundamental matter and energy in the manifest world and their equivalence, as per the famous equation E=mc^2.

Thus, this article describes the 33 Gods of the Vedas. It is crystal clear that these are way more than just Gods. These denote various concepts and energies which have significance scientifically, and play various roles in human life.