



WHAT?

SANKALPAM

The word “sankalpa” means “determination/resolve”.

Sankalpam is an austere oath taking verse stating the astrological panchAng details, the place and the specific karma that is being performed. Sankalpam is a resolute statement that is uttered before samskArAs and nitya-naimittika karmas like snAnam, sandhyAvandanam, japam, hOmam, shrAddham, dAnam etc.

The importance of sankalpam can be explained with the following verse of Chandogya Upanishad.

संकल्पो वाव मनसो भूयान्यदा वै संकल्पततेऽथ मनस्यत्यथं वाचमीरयति तामु
नाम्नीरयति नाम्नि मन्त्रा एकं भवन्ति मन्त्रेषु कर्माणि ॥१॥

‘Will is greater than the Mind. For when wills, one reflects, then he utters Speech, then he utters it in Name. In the Name mantras become one; and in the mantras, the sacrifices become one (VII.iv.1).

In doing any karma, it is important that our mind and body is aligned so that the desired fruits are attained. For this stating the sankalpam is very important.

SANKALPA MUDRA

The sankalpam is stated by keeping the hands in a specific mudra called the “sankalpa mudra”. The left palm facing up is placed on the right thigh and it is covered by the right palm to represent the solemn vow.



SANKALPA MUDRA

WHY?

A verse quoted from mArkanDEya purANam in the book AchArEndu:

संकल्प्य च तथा कुर्यात् स्नान-दान-व्रतादिकम् ।

अन्यथा पुण्यकर्माणि निष्फलानि भवन्ति हि ॥

The puNyakarmas like snAnam, dAnam, and vratam will be fruitless if they are not preceded by “sankalpam”. In other words, “sankalpam” is a prerequisite for any karma.

DETAILS

Sankalpam has a fixed format specifying the locale and the panchAng details. A general format will be as follows:

harirom tatI

**shri govindal govindal govindal asya shrI bhagavata: mahApuruShasya
shrIvishnorAj~jayA pravartamAnasya adyabrahmaNa:,
dwiteeyaparArdhE, shrIshwEtavarAha kalpE, vaivasvata manvantarE,
kallI yugE, prathamE pAdE, jambUDweepE, bhAratavarShE,
bharatakhaNDE, shakAbdE, merordakShiNE pArshwE, asmin
vartamAnE, vyAvahArikE prabhavAdInAm ShaShTyA: samvatsarANAM
madhyE, _____
nAmasaMvatsarE, _____ ayanE, _____ Rutou, _____ mAsE, _____
pakShE, _____ puNyatithou, _____ vAsara, _____
nakShatrayuktAyAM, shrI vishNu yOga, shri VishNu karaNa,
shree _____ yOga, shree _____ karaNa, evangunavisheShaNa
vishiShTAyAm asyAM, _____ puNyatithou, shrI bhagavadAj~jayA
shrImannArAyaNa preetyartham prAtah sandhyAvandanam kariShyE.**

VARIABLES IN SANKALPA

Dviteeya parArdhE –

360 human years = year of God (dEva vatsara)

4800 dEva vatsara = 1 krita yuga

3600 dEva vatsara = 1 trEta yuga

2400 dEva vatsara = 1 dwApara yuga

1200 dEva vatsara = 1 kaliyuga

12000 dEva vatsara = 1 chaturyuga (4 yuga period)

71 chaturyuga = 1 manvantara

14 manvantara = 1 kalpa

2 kalpa = 1 day and night for Brahma

360 day & night for Brahma = 1 year for Brahma

50 years of Brahma = 1 ParArdha

2 parArdhAs is one life span of Brahma (after which brahma pralaya or prakrita pralaya takes place.). **The variants are prathama parArdhE and dviteeya parArdhE. So now the second 50 years of Brahma are going on hence dviteeya parArdhE.**

shwEta varAha kalpE –

A Kalpa is the day duration of Lord Brahma.

This means that we are on the first Brahma's day (kalpa) in the 51st year of Lord Brahma called ShwEta varAha kalpa in which Lord Vishnu took the incarnation of VarAha (great Boar)

The following are the names of 30 KalpAs found in the Matsya PurANa (290.3-12).

Thus the variants are

shvEtavarAha – श्वेतवराह

neelalOhita – नीललोहित

vAmadEva – वामदेव

rathantara – रथन्तर

rourava – रौरव

dEva – देव

bruhat – बृहत्

kandarpa – कन्दर्प

sadya – सद्य

eeshAna – ईशान

tamah – तमः

sArasvata – सारस्वत

udAna – उदान

gAruDa – गारुड

kaurma – कौर्म

nArasimha – नारसिंह

samAna – समान

AgnEya – आज्ञेय

sOma – सोम

mAnava – मानव

tatpumAn – तत्पुमान्

vaikuNTha – वैकुण्ठ

lakshmee – लक्ष्मी

sAvitree – सावित्री

aghOra – अघोर

varAha – वराह

vairaja – वैरज

gauree – गौरी

mAhEshwara – माहेश्वर

pitRu – पितृ

The VAyu PurANa in chapter 21 gives a different list of 28 kalpas. It also lists five more kalpas in the next chapter.

Vaivasvata manvantare –

71 chaturyugAs form = 1 manvantara

14 manvantara is = 1 kalpa

We are currently in the seventh manvantara ruled by Vaivasvata manu [current] (वैवस्वत)– the avatAra for this manvantara is VAMana (वामन)

The manus for ShwEta varAha kalpa are as follows:

The variants are

First Manvantara – the interval of **SwAyambhuva Manu (स्वायम्भुव)** – avatAra during the period was Yagya (ViShNu) (यज्ञ)

Second Manvantara – **SvArOchishA Manu (स्वारोचिशा)** स्वरोचिस् means self–shining–(son of agni) – avatAra was vibhu (विभु)

Third manvantara – **uttama [also referred to as auttami Manu] (उत्तम)**-(son

of Priyavrata) – avatAra was SatyasEna (सत्यसेन)

Fourth manvantara – **tAmasa Manu (brother of uttama) (तामस)** – avatAra was Hari (the one who freed Gajendra) (हरि)

Fifth manvantara – **Raivata Manu (रैवत)**– avatAra was VaikunTha (वैकुण्ठ)

Sixth manvantara – **ChAkshuSha manu (चाक्षुष)**– avatAra was Ajita (अजित)

Seventh manvantara – **Vaivasvata manu [current] (वैवस्वत)**– avatAra is VAmana (वामन)

Eighth manvantara – **SAvarNi manu (सावर्णि)**– avatAra will be sarvabhauma (सर्वभौम)

Ninth manvantara – **daksha -sAvarNi (दक्ष सावर्णि)**– avatAra will be riShabha (ऋषभ)

Tenth manvantara – **brahma-sAvarNi (ब्रह्म सावर्णि)** – avatAra will be viShvaksEna (विश्वक्सेन)

Eleventh manvantara – **dharmasAvarNi (धर्म सावर्णि)** – avatAra will be dharmasEtu (धर्मसेतु)

Twelfth manvantara – **rudra sAvarNi (रुद्र सावर्णि)** – avatAra will be sudAma (सुदाम)

Thirteenth manvantara – **dEva sAvarNi (देव सावर्णि)**– avatAra will be yogEshwara (योगेश्वर)

Fourteenth manvantara – **indra sAvarNi (इन्द्र सावर्णि)**– avatAra will be brihadbhAnu (बृहद्भानु)

The name of the manu is to be prefixed followed by the word ‘manvantarE’.

aShTAvimshatitamE kaliyugE –

71 chaturyugas = 1 manvantara (1 life span of Manu)

Our manu will be there for 71 chaturyugas.

AShTa is 8 and vimshati is 20. We have passed through 27 mahAyugas and are in the 28th mahA yugA. Again in the 28th mahAyugA, we are currently in the kaliyuga. So we are living in the 28th kaliyuga.

The variants are

Number of mahayuga (1 to 71) in Sanskrit.

followed by the name of the yuga (**krutha, trEta, dwApara or kaliyuga**)

prathamE pAdE –

We are in the first quarter (prathamE pAdE) of kaliyuga after passing through 5115 years.

As per scripts it is said that kali yuga commenced in the year 3102 BC.

360 human years = 1 year of God (deva vatsara)

4800 deva vatsara= 1 krita yuga

3600 deva vatsara = 1 treta yuga

2400 deva vatsara =1 dwapara yuga

1200 deva vatsara = 1 kaliyuga

1200 x 360 human years for 1 kaliyuga which is equal to 432000 human years

432000 / 4 =108000 years form a quarter of kaliyuga which is still not over as we are only in the 5115th kaliyuga year which is within the first quarter. Hence prathamE pAde.

The variants are

prathama pAde (first quarter of given yuga)

dviteeya pAde (second quarter of given yuga)

tRiteeya pAde (third quarter of given yuga)

chaturtha pAde (fourth quarter of given yuga)

jamboodveepE –

Jamboodveepa is one of the seven peninsular islands that exist.

There are 7 dvipas. The list of seven (*sapta-dvipa*) is (e.g. Mahabharatan6.604):

Jambu(“Indian Blackberry tree”)

Plaksha(“Ficus religiosa (Peepal) tree”)

Shalmali (“Bombax tree”)

Kusha (“grass”)

Kraunca (“Mountain”)

Shaka(“Pine tree”)

Pushkara (“Maple tree”)

Jamboodweepa is spread in the area of one lakh yojanAs and it consists of Jambu trees.

Thus the variants are

Jambooo dveepa

जम्बू द्वीप (jambu trees)

Shak dweepa	शक् द्वीप (pine trees)
kusha dweepa	कुश द्वीप (kusha grassland)
Krauncha dweepa	क्रौञ्च द्वीप (mountains)
ShAlmali dweepa	शाल्मलि द्वीप (bombax tree)
plaksha dweepa	प्लक्ष द्वीप (plaksha trees)
pushkara dweepa	पुष्कर द्वीप (maple trees)

bhArata varshE –

Total nine varshAs lie within the territory of jamboodweepa which is itself surrounded by oceans on all sides. The valley between two mountains is called a khanDa or varsha.

The other varshas are kuru varSha (to the north of ShrungavAn range), hiraNmaya varSha (to the south of ShrungavAn range and to the north of ShwEta range), ramyaka varSha (to the south of ShwEta range and to the north of Neela range), ketumAla varSha (to the south of Neela range and to the west of MAlyavAn mountain range), ilAvRuta varSha (with Neela range on the north, MAlyavAn to the west, GandhamAdana to the east and NiShadha range to the south), bhadrAshva varSha (to the south of Neela and to the east of GandhamAdana range), hari varSha (To the south of NiShadha range and to the north of HemakooTa range), kimpuruSha varSha (to the south of hemakoota and to the north of himAlaya), **bhArata varSha (to the south of HimAlaya range).**

The names of the ranges in Sanskrit are

शृङ्गवान्, श्वेत, नीलः, माल्यवान्, गन्धमादन, निषधः, हेमकूट, हिमालयः

Thus the names of the variants are

Kuru varSha	कुरु वर्ष
hiraNmaya varSha	हिरण्मय वर्ष
ramyaka varSha	रम्यक वर्ष
ketumAla varSha	केतुमाल वर्ष
ilAvruta varSha	इलावृत वर्ष
bhadrAshva varSha	भद्राश्व वर्ष
hari varSha	हरि वर्ष
kimpuruSha varSha	किम्पुरुष वर्ष
bhArata varSha	भारत वर्ष

bharata khaNDE – means BhArata kshEtra (the land of Bharat). It is the term used in hindu texts like the vEdAs, MahAbhArata, RAmAyaNa and other purANAs for the geography that includes boundaries of current day India, NEpal, Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

भद्राश्वोपरिगः कुर्याद् भारते तूदयम् रविः ।

रात्र्यर्धम् केतुमाले तु कुराव अस्तमयम् तदा ॥

bhadrAshvOpariga: kuryAd bhAratE toodayam ravi: ।

rAtryardham kEtumAlE tu kurAv astamayam tadA ॥

Meaning When it is noon in bhadrAshva; the sun rises in BhArat, it is midnight in kEtumAla and sunset at kuru.

merO: dakshinE pArshvE –

mEru means the golden mountain. dakshiNE pArshvE means southern side of MEru.

MerOh dakshiNE pArshvE – bhoomadhyarEkhAyAh uttaradigbhAgE

मेरो : दक्षिणे पार्श्वे भूमध्यरेखाया : उत्तरदिग्भागे.

bhArata Varsha is on the southern side of mount mEru and to the north of the equator.

AryabhaTTa (आर्यभट्ट) states that mEru is the north pole.

स्वर्मेरु स्थलमध्ये नरको बडवामुखं च जलमध्ये /

अमरमरा मन्यन्ते परस्परमधस्थितान् नियतम् //

svarmEru sthalamadhyE narakO baDavAmukham cha jalamadhyE |

amaramarA manyantE parasparamadhashtitAn niyatam ||

The mount mEru is in the north. BhAratavarSha is in the south side of mEru.

From the equator upto mEru is land. BhAratavarSha comes north of the equator. Gods (amarAs) reside at Meru. From the equator down upto the south pole is all water. The South Pole is called baDavAmukha. MarAs (Demons) reside there.

asmin varthamAnE vyAvahArike – in the current period now reigning

prabhavAdi ShaShTi SamvatsarAnAm madhyE – among the cycle of 60 years starting from prabhava nAma SamvatsarE –(the name of the first year in the 60 year Hindu calendar)

nAma samvatsarE

This is the name of the year in Sanskrit. There are 60 year names after which the names repeat themselves.

The variants are

prabhava – प्रभव

vibhava – विभव

shukla – शुक्ल

pramOdoota – प्रमोदूत

prajApati – प्रजापति

Angeerasa – आंगीरस

shreemukha – श्रीमुख

bhava – भव

yuva – युव

dhAtu – धातु

eeshvara – ईश्वर

bahudAnyā – बहुदान्य

pramAdee – प्रमादी

vikrama – विक्रम

vishu – विशु

chitrabhAnu – चित्रभानु

subhAnu – सुभानु

dhAraNa – धारणा

pArthibha – पार्थिभ

viya – विय

sarvajit – सर्वजित

sarvAdhAree – सर्वाधारी

virOdhee – विरोधी

vikruti – विकृति

kara – कर

nandana – नंदन

vijaya – विजय

jaya – जय

manmatha – मन्मथ

dur mukhee – दुर्मखी

hEvilambee – हेविलम्बी

vilambee – विलम्बी

vikAree – विकारी

sharavAree – शरवारी

plava – प्लव

shubhakrutu – शुभकृतु

shObhakrutu – शोभकृतु

krOdhee – क्रोधी

vishvAvasu – विश्वावसु

parAbhava – पराभव

plavanga – प्लवङ्ग

keelaka – कीलक

saumya – सोम्य

sAdhAraNa – साधारण

virOdhikrutu – विरोधिकृतु

paridhAbee – परिधाबी

pramAdeecha – प्रमादीच

Ananda – आनंद

rAkshasa – राक्षस

nala – नल

pingala – पिंगल

kAlayukti – कालयुक्ति

siddhArthee – सिद्धार्थी

raudree – रौद्री

durmati – दुर्मति

dundubhi – दुंदुभि

rudhirOdgAree – रुधरोद्गारी

raktAkshee – रक्ताक्षी

krOdhana – क्रोधन

akshaya – अक्षय

_____ ayanE

uttarAyaNam or uttarAyaNa PuNya KAlam is the period during which each sunrise is just a little more to the north. Traditionally we celebrate uttarAyaNam from Mid- Jan to Mid- July (Thai to Ani)

Similarly DakshiNayanam is the period during which each sunrise is just a little more to the south. Traditionally it is celebrated from Mid- July to Mid- Jan (Adi to MArgazhi)

The day on which the sun ‘changes direction’ and starts rising towards the north, is called the UttarayaNam. (*This was the day that BheeShma was waiting for, so that he could leave his mortal coil.*)

Thus the variants are

उत्तरायणे – uttarAyaNE Mid- Jan to Mid- July (Thai to Ani)

दक्षिणायने– dakshiNayanE Mid- July to Mid- Jan (Adi to MArgazhi)

_____ rutou

Rutu means season.

The following are the types of seasons.

वसन्तः -vasantha: – spring season – in the months of chittirai and vaikAsi

ग्रीष्मः -greeShma: – summer season – in the months of Ani and ADi

वर्षाः -varShA – rainy season – in the months of Avani and PurattAsi

शरद् -sharad – autumn season – in the months of Aippasi and KAthikai

हेमन्त -hEmant -winter season– in the months of MArgazhi and Thai

शिशिर -shishir -cool season – in the months of MAsi and Panguni

mAsE

The following are the names of the Sanskrit months corresponding to the tamil months. We follow the lunar calendar months for sankalpam.

Thus the variants are

मेष – mESha – (chithirai)

वृषभ –vruShabha – (vaikAsi)

मिथुन –mithuna – (Ani)

कटक – kaTaka – (ADi)

सिंह –simha – (Avani)

कन्या – kanyA – (purattAsi)

तुला – tula – (aippasi)

वृश्चिक –vrishchika – (kArthikai)

धनु –dhanur – (mArgazhi)

मकर –makara – (thai)

कुंभ –kumbha – (mAsi)

मीन –meena – (panguni)

_____ pakShE

PakSha can be either shukla pakSha or KriShNa pakSha. 'shukla' means 'bright or white' and 'kriShNa' means 'dark'. 'pakSha' means 'side'(of the month).

shukla pakSha is the period of bright or waxing moon whereas kriShNa pakSha is the time when the moon fades or wanes.

shukla pakSha is the period of 15 days which begins from the day after amAvAsya till and including pourNami.

kriShNa pakSha is the period of 15 days which begins from the day after pourNami till and including amAvAsya.

Thus the variants are

शुक्ल पक्षे – shukla pakShE

कृष्ण पक्षे – kriShNa pakShE

 shubha tithou

...shubha tithou is one of the 15 days between PourNami and AmAvAsya

Thus the variants are

पूरुणमि	pourNamAsyAm	pourNami
प्रथमि	prathamyAm	Prathama
द्वितीया	dviteeyAm	dviteeyai
तृतीया	triteeyAm	triteeyai
चतुर्थी	chaturthyAm	chaturthi
पंचमी	panchamyAm	panchami
षष्ठी	ShaShThyAm	ShaShThi
सप्तमी	saptamyAm	saptamee
अष्टमी	aShTamyAm	aShTamee
नवमी	navamyAm	navamee
दशमी	dashamyAm	dashamee
एकादशी	EkAdashyAm	EkAdashee
द्वादशी	dwAdashyAm	dwAdashee
त्रयोदशी	trayOdashyAm	trayOdashee
चतुर्दशी	chaturdashyAm	chaturdashee

□□□□□□□□□□

amAvAsyAyAm

amAvAsya

_____ vAsara yuktAyAm

vAsara refers to the day of the week.

The variants are

इन्दुवासरः	– induvAsara:	– Monday
भौमवासरः	– bhoumavAsara:	– Tuesday
सौम्यवासरः	– soumyavAsara:	– Wednesday
गुरुवासरः	– guruvAsara:	– Thursday
शुक्रवासरः	– shukravAsara:	– Friday
शनिवासरः	– shanivAsara:	– Saturday
भानुवासरः	– bhAnuvAsara:	– Sunday

Monday can also be called sOma vAsara:, Friday can also be called Bhrugu vAsara: and Saturday can also be called sthira vAsara:

_____ nakshatra yuktAyAm

This refers to the day's star or nakshatram.

The nakshatra is one of 27 divisions of the celestial ecliptic in which the moon resides at sunrise.

The variants are

अश्विनी	– ashvinee	– ashvini
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अपभरणी	– apabharaNee	– barani
कृत्तिका	– kRuttika	– krittika
रोहिणी	– rOhiNee	– rOhini
मृगशीर्षा	– mRugasheerShA	mrugasheersham
आर्द्रा	– Ardraa	– tiruvAdirai
पुनर्वसु	– punarvasu	– punarpoosam
पुष्य	– puShya	– poosam
आश्लेषा	– AshlEShA	– Ayilyam
मघा	– maghA	– magam
पूर्व फाल्गुनी	– poorva phAlgune	– pooram
उत्तर फाल्गुनी	-uttara phAlgune	– uttiram
हस्त	– hasta	– hastam
चित्रा	– chitrA	– chittirai
स्वाति	– svAti	– svAti
विशाखा	– vishAkhA	– visAkam
अनुराधा	– anurAdhA	– anusham
ज्येष्ठा	– jyEShThA	– kEttai
मूल	– moola	– moolam
पूर्वाषाढा	– poorvAShADhA	– poorADam
उत्तराषाढा	– uttarAShADhA	– uttirAdam

श्रवण – shravaNa – tiruvONam

धनिष्ठा – dhaniShThA – aviTTam

शतभिषा – shatabhiShA – sadayam

पूर्वप्रोष्टपादा – poorvaprOShTapAdA – poorattAdi

उत्तरप्रोष्टपादा – uttaraprOShTapAdA – utirattAdi

रेवती – rEvatee rEvati

_____ yoga

The Yoga is one of 27 divisions based on the ecliptic longitude of the sun and moon active at sunrise time.

Yogas are combinations and there are 27 yogas in all.

The following are the variants

विष्कुम्भ – viShkumbha

प्रीति – preeti

आयुष्मान् – AyuShmAn

सौभाग्य – soubhAgya

शोभन – shObhana

अतिगण्ड – atigaNDa

सुकर्म – sukarma

धृति – dhRuti

शूल – shoola

गण्ड - gaNDa

वृद्धि - vRuddhi

ध्रुव - dhruva

व्याघात - vyAghAta

हर्ष - harSha

वज्र - vajra

सिद्धि - siddhi

व्यतिपात - vyatipAta

वरीयान् - vareeyAn

परिघ - parigha

शिव - shiva

सिद्ध - siddha

साध्य - sAdhya

शुभ - shubha

शुक्ल - shukla

ब्रह्म - brahma

ऐन्द्र - aindra

वैधृति - vaidhRuti

_____ karaNa

The KaraNAs are divisions based on tithes active at sunrise.

Half of the part of a tithi is called a karaNa. There are two karaNAs in a tithi. There are 11 karaNAs altogether.

The first 7 are movable (chara) and it cannot be predetermined as to on which dates these are going to occur but the last 4 karaNAs are fixed (sthira) and hence can be predetermined.

बालव - bAlava

गर - gara

विष्टि - viShTi

तैतिल - taitila

वणिज - vaNiJa

बव - bava

कौलव - koulava

चतुष्पाद् - chatuShpAd

किंस्तुघ्न - kimstughna

शकुनि - shakuni

नाग - nAga

_____ gotrasya

Here the gOtra name of the person performing the sankalpa is uttered. Viz : AtrEya, vAdoola, sreevatsa, etc

