

# Kumaras

## Definitional Essay

### Theosophy Trust

*Kumaras*, literally youths, are spiritual progenitors associated in Theosophical teaching with the awakening of self-conscious mind. The sources describe them as mind-born sons of *Brahma* or as related to *Rudra-Shiva*, and distinguish their work from the agencies that provide humanity's bodily forms. Their youth signifies an unworldly spiritual character. The doctrine asks the student to consider an ancestry of intelligence and conscience extending beyond visible heredity.

In the exoteric Purānic language, the *Kumaras* are eternally youthful sons of *Brahmā* who refuse to create in the ordinary generative sense. In the esoteric teaching, that refusal does not mean sterility or disobedience in a crude sense. It signifies the refusal of spiritual intelligence to be absorbed into lower material creation. The *Kumaras* represent another order of creativity — the power to awaken mind, kindle spiritual fire and bring forth self-conscious humanity.

H.P. Blavatsky therefore distinguishes the *Kumaras* from the lower *Pitris*. The *Pitris* are connected with the model or type of the physical form; the *Kumaras* are the higher *Prajāpati*, the progenitors of the true spiritual Self in physical man. Humanity has, in this sense, a double inheritance. The body belongs to a lunar stream of form, ancestry and karmic embodiment. The awakened mind and spiritual individuality belong to a solar stream of *Manas*, *Buddhi* and hidden fire.

Professor Iyer deepens this distinction by linking the *Kumaras* with the true invisible spiritual vesture of every human being. The physical body is a garment and vehicle, but it is not the real source of the person. The deeper human inheritance is connected with the *karana sharira*, the causal vesture, and with an ancestral germ of spiritual individuality. To say that every human being is in essence a spark of Kumaric wisdom is to say that the human being is more than heredity, circumstance, personality or visible biography. There is a hidden dignity in the soul that comes from the awakening of *Manas* itself.

This dignity is also a responsibility. The *Kumaras* lit up the spark of self-consciousness, but they did not guarantee wisdom. *Manas* can turn downward into separative desire, cleverness, pride and self-justification, or it can turn upward toward *Buddhi* and become a lamp of compassion. The human task is to become self-determining and self-conscious in relation to the evolutionary process. The gift of mind must be made clean, exact and useful.

The so-called “fall” of the *Kumaras* and related hosts is therefore misunderstood when it is read through the lens of theological demonology. The *Fire-devas*, *Rudras* and *Kumaras* are not demons in the esoteric teaching. They are spiritual benefactors of intellectual humanity. Their “rebellion” is the assertion of higher *Manas* against bondage to lower material creation. Through sacrifice, they enter the human drama so that human beings may become truly human — capable of learning, choosing, repenting, creating, serving and loving consciously.

In the *Gupta Vidya* current, meditation upon the *Kumaras* is potent and benedictory, but it must never become spiritual self-indulgence. It should lead back into duty, mindfulness and service. Professor Iyer states that work and home can become sacred arenas for the elevation of life-atoms. Long before one can honour the true presence of the *Kumaras* within, one must see that meditation has no karmic meaning apart from the desire to render service to all that lives.

The right approach to the *Kumaras* is therefore silence, purity and inward courage. One must enter the sanctuary of the heart, stabilize consciousness, and learn to live less through self-display and more through spiritual attention. The Kumharic current is not approached by claims about invisible beings or by psychic curiosity. It is approached by self-forgetfulness, meditation, truthful speech, motive-testing and the willingness to confront the demons within.

The doctrine becomes useful in ordinary life because intelligence is educable. Thought can be transmuted from cleverness into discernment, from argument into inquiry, from restless opinion into luminous attention. The desire to be impressive can become the wish to be useful. The habit of self-display can become the discipline of silence. The impulse to correct others can become the effort to correct one’s own motive first.

The *Kumaras* are also connected with *Aditi*, *Akasha* and the primordial Waters. *Sanat-Sujata*, chief of the *Kumaras*, is linked with *Ambhamsi*, “Waters,” because the Waters signify the Great Deep, the primordial Waters of Space, the Mother, *Aditi* and *Akasha*. Thus the *Kumaras* are not only fiery. They belong to a deeper field where fire and water, light and space, sound and silence meet in the living ocean of divine ideation.

Drawing a Larger Circle of Conception brings this ancestry into the way we meet a learner. A person who struggles to express an idea can easily be judged by a hesitant sentence. The Kumharic teaching asks us to remember the inward dignity that speech may only imperfectly reveal. A patient question, enough time to answer and a willingness to understand can help a capacity come forward. The teacher’s own intelligence then serves awakening instead of becoming a standard by which another person is dismissed.

This attitude also changes how a gift is received. The awakening of mind leaves each person with work that no benefactor can perform on that person’s behalf. A student must test an

assumption, acknowledge a mistake and choose a course of action. Gratitude to the progenitors therefore appears through a more responsible exercise of freedom. In Professor Iyer's account, meditation and service belong together because the inwardly recognized gift is fulfilled through its generous use.

Because they awaken *Manas*, they also awaken sacred speech. Human beings can use speech to bless, invoke, clarify and heal, or to injure, confuse and scatter. The Kumaric gift makes thought and speech morally serious. Every word becomes part of the stewardship of consciousness. A word not spoken in anger, a sentence made simpler for truth, a promise kept, or a criticism purified of contempt can become a small restoration of the link between *Manas* and the spiritual fire behind it.

The doctrine of the *Kumaras* naturally opens into Human Solidarity and Universal Brotherhood. If each human being is a spark of Kumaric wisdom, then no one is merely a private or isolated unit. Each soul is linked with the one field of awakening, with humanity, with the kingdoms of Nature and with the long pilgrimage of consciousness on earth. To help another is to cooperate with the same fire that made self-consciousness possible.

The *Kumaras* therefore remind the student that intelligence is a trust. The gift of *Manas* is fulfilled only when thought becomes transparent to *Buddhi*, when will becomes sacrificial, and when creativity serves the welfare of life. Imagination too must be educated, not by fantasy or self-display, but by truth, compassion and the needs of the whole.

A living image may remain: a spark of spiritual fire in the sanctuary of the heart. It has passed through immense cycles and has been guarded by sacrifice. It waits in silence for *Manas* to turn toward *Buddhi*. When remembered, even faintly, life becomes less accidental. Work becomes practice. Speech becomes stewardship. Other beings become companions in a vast pilgrimage. The *Kumaras* are then no longer remote figures in sacred literature. They become the hidden reminder that self-consciousness is a gift, and that the true human future is to make that gift luminous for the benefit of all.

## Glossary

**Adept** — A person who has attained mastery of occult knowledge; the word alone does not establish the moral use of that mastery.

**Aditi** — The Vedic Mother of the gods; a symbol of the boundless matrix of manifestation.

**Aditi-Vach** — The cosmic Mother considered in relation to divine speech or the feminine *Logos*.

**Adityas** — Sons of *Aditi*, associated with divine and solar powers.

**Afflatus** — Inspiration or an animating spiritual impulse.

**Agni-Rudras** — A designation of spiritual fire beings within the teaching on creative hierarchies.

**Akasha** — The subtle spiritual substance or medium of manifestation, distinguished from ordinary physical space and from the lower astral light.

**Ambhamsi** — Waters; a name linked with *Sanat-Sujata* and interpreted through the primordial Waters of Space.

**Arupa** — Formless; applied in the quotation to the three higher planes of the cosmos.

**Atma-Buddhi-Manas** — The higher human triad: universal Spirit, spiritual soul and the enduring self-conscious thinker.

**Avatar** — A divine descent or incarnation; in the definition used here, an exalted being's voluntary embodiment beyond the necessity of ordinary rebirth. *Avatâra* is the Sanskrit form.

**Brahma** — The creative deity in Hindu cosmological symbolism; distinguish *Brahma* from *Brahman*, the universal spiritual Reality.

**Brahma-Rudra** — A combined name relating the creative and transformative divine powers in the cited account of the *Kumaras*.

**Buddhi** — Spiritual intuition or wisdom; Buddhist means pertaining to this higher discernment.

**Chaos** — Primordial Space or an undifferentiated condition in the cited cosmogony; not merely disorder in the ordinary sense.

**Devachan** — The subjective state of spiritual rest and ideal fulfilment between earthly lives. Devachanic means pertaining to it; a *Devachanee* is a being experiencing that state.

**Dhyanis** — Meditative spiritual intelligences in Theosophical cosmology; *Dhyani* is the singular and Dhyanic the adjective.

**Discernment** — The capacity to distinguish what is true, fitting and spiritually significant; Buddhist discernment transcends personal preference.

**Divine ideation** — The spiritual conception or archetypal thought through which manifestation is understood to unfold.

**Drawing a Larger Circle of Conception** — Widening understanding to include more relationships, consequences and the needs of others.

**Esoteric** — Inward or hidden in meaning; an esoteric history or cosmology is a claim within the spiritual tradition.

**Exoteric** — Outward, public or conventional in expression; distinguished from an esoteric interpretation.

**Fohatic** — Pertaining to *Fohat*, the dynamic connecting power in cosmic manifestation.

**Gandharvas** — Celestial beings connected with sacred sound and solar fire.

**Glyph** — A symbolic figure or sign conveying a condensed meaning.

**Gupta Vidya** — Sacred or esoteric wisdom; also the title of Professor Iyer's collected Theosophical writings.

**Hierarchy** — An ordering of functions or levels in the Theosophical account of life and consciousness.

**Human Solidarity** — The shared dignity and interdependence of human beings, expressed through responsibility for one another's welfare.

**Ideation** — The activity or formation of thought; cosmic ideation is considered as a spiritual source of manifested order.

**Individuality** — The enduring spiritual Ego in Theosophical usage, distinguished from the temporary personality of a particular life.

**Kalpa** — A great period or cycle in Hindu cosmological reckoning; its scale depends on context.

**Karana Sharira** — The causal body or causal vesture, associated here with the higher individuality and the spiritual harvest of experience; also written *Karana Sarira*.

**Kumaras** — Spiritual progenitors associated with the awakening of self-conscious mind; *Kumara* means youth, and *Kumaric* means pertaining to these beings.

**Life-atoms** — The living constituents of human and natural vestures in Theosophical teaching, considered in relation to formative and spiritual influences.

**Manas** — The principle of self-conscious mind and moral choice; *Manasic* means pertaining to it.

**Manu** — A name for a spiritual progenitor or guiding intelligence associated with humanity and cosmic cycles; its scope varies by context.

**Manvantara** — A period of manifested activity; *manvantaric* means pertaining to it.

**Mulaprakriti** — Root substance or Root Nature, the metaphysical ground of differentiated matter.

**Muni** — A sage or contemplative seer.

**Nilalohita** — Blue-red; a name or form of *Rudra-Shiva* in the cited account of spiritual progenitors.

**Ninth Creation** — A designation of the *Kumara* creation in the quoted cosmogony, which relates it to both primary and secondary creation.

**Nirmanakaya** — A spiritual vesture, and by extension a being, associated with compassionate service.

**Nirvana** — Spiritual liberation beyond the limitations of ordinary conditioned consciousness; distinguished from the temporary Devachanic state.

**Occult** — Hidden; in this context, concerning the spiritual philosophy of unseen causes and levels of existence.

**Parabrahm** — The unconditioned spiritual Reality beyond manifestation; *Parabrahman* is a related form.

**Personality** — The temporary identity, habits and instruments associated with a particular life, distinguished from enduring spiritual individuality.

**Pitris** — Ancestral or progenitor beings in Theosophical cosmology; lunar and solar classes have different functions.

**Prajapati** — Lord of beings; a title of creative or progenitor powers in Hindu and Theosophical cosmology.

**Pre-cosmic** — Prior to the emergence of a manifested cosmos, within the metaphysical account.

**Primordial** — Belonging to an original or pre-differentiated condition.

**Psychic** — Pertaining to subtle or psychological modes of experience; its level and relation to spiritual intelligence depend upon context.

**Puranas** — Traditional Hindu texts concerning cosmology, sacred history and divine figures; Puranic means pertaining to them.

**Ratri** — Night, used cosmologically for a primordial condition of manifestation.

**Rishi** — A seer or sage; *Rishis* is the plural.

**Rudra** — A Vedic divine figure associated with storm and transformative fire, related to *Shiva* in later and Theosophical interpretations.

**Rudra-Nilalohita** — A designation of the transformative divine power under whose guardianship the cited teaching places the higher progenitors.

**Sanaka** — One of the named *Kumaras*; the source treats the names as significant of degrees of intellect.

**Sananda** — One of the named *Kumaras* in the quoted glossary account.

**Sanat Kumara** — A prominent figure among the seven *Kumaras*; the cited glossary relates the names to degrees of human intellect.

**Sanat-Sujata** — A *Kumara* associated in the cited symbolism with the primordial Waters or *Ambhamsi*.

**Sanatana** — One of the named *Kumaras*; the name carries the sense of the eternal.

**Shiva** — A divine figure of transformation; also written *Siva*, and associated with *Rudra* and the *Kumaras* in the sources.

**Subjective** — Belonging to a state of consciousness or inward experience; not by itself a claim that the experience lacks spiritual significance.

**Substance** — The underlying material or field of manifestation in the metaphysical account; it is not restricted to ordinary physical matter.

**Theogony** — An account of the origin and relationships of divine beings or powers.

**Universal Brotherhood** — The spiritual kinship of beings, expressed ethically through care extending beyond personal or sectarian boundaries.

**Vaidhatra** — A designation associated with the *Kumaras* in the quoted glossary description.

**Vaivasvata Manu** — The *Manu* associated with the present human cycle in Theosophical cosmology and with the avatar in Professor Iyer's exposition.

**Vehicle** — A principle or medium through which another principle can be expressed; *Buddhi* is the spiritual vehicle of *Atman*.

**Vesture** — A sheath, vehicle or instrument through which consciousness acts; vestures is the plural.

**Vishnu** — The divine preserver in Hindu tradition; *Mahavishnu* or *Maha Vishnu* emphasizes the cosmic scope of that principle.

**Vishnu Purana** — A traditional Hindu text concerning *Vishnu*, cosmology and sacred history.

## Quotes for Meditation and Self Study

1. R.N. Iyer — “Spiritual Progenitors”, *The Gupta Vidya*, Vol. I, p. 297.

“*Aditi-Vach*, the goddess of speech, sound and wisdom, and the Dhyanic Host of the *Kumaras*, born directly from the night of non-manifestation, are closely connected. *Aditi* is primordial Chaos, equivalent to *Mulaprakriti*, pre-cosmic root substance and the mystic mother of all the manifested gods. The *Kumaras*, variously the eldest mindborn sons of *Brahmā* and the offspring of *Shiva*, are the Logoic host of the highest spiritual intelligences radiating from the darkness of *Parabrahm*. Together they are the highest cognizable foundation of the first *arupa* world, from which emanate all the successive hosts and hierarchies, all the successive circles and cycles, of manifested theogony.”

*Meditation thought:* The spiritual ancestry described here places the awakening of mind within a universal field.

2. H.P. Blavatsky — *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, pp. 456–457.

“It is the correct perception of our relations to the whole range of ‘gods’ and especially of those we bear to the *Kumâras* — the so-called ‘Ninth Creation’ — which is in reality an aspect of or reflection of the sixth in our *manvantara* (the *Vaivasvata*). ‘There is a ninth, the *Kumâra* Creation, which is both primary and secondary,’ says *Vishnu Purâna*, the oldest of such texts. ‘The *Kumâras*,’ explains an esoteric text, ‘are the *Dhyanis*, derived immediately from the supreme Principle, who reappear in the *Vaivasvata Manu* period, for the progress of mankind.’”

*Meditation thought:* Knowledge of a sacred hierarchy concerns our relationship to it and the responsibilities that follow.

3. R.N. Iyer — “Spiritual Progenitors”, *The Gupta Vidya*, Vol. I, p. 297.

“In every pilgrim-soul there is a ray of the bright essence of that divine ocean, partless and pure, unsullied by thick obscuring folds of matter. Each human being is in principle capable of seeking the inward path in consciousness because each human being is in essence a spark of Kumaric wisdom. The self-conscious realization of this sublime inheritance is the aim and object of every authentic philosophy, science and religion. It is the compassionate keynote of every system of allegory, glyph and symbol offered by Avatars and Adepts for the guidance of orphan humanity.”

*Meditation thought:* The same inward dignity is attributed to every human being, beyond differences of circumstance.

4. H.P. Blavatsky — *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 457.

“Thus, the *Kumâras* are, exoterically, ‘the creation of *Rudra* or *Nilalohita*, a form of *Siva*, by *Brahmâ*, and of certain other mind - born sons of *Brahmâ*. But, in the esoteric teaching, they are the progenitors of the true spiritual self in the physical man — the higher *Prajâpati*, while the *Pitris*, or lower *Prajâpati*, are no more than the fathers of the model, or type of his physical form, made ‘in their image.’ Four (and occasionally five) are mentioned freely in the exoteric texts, three *Kumâras* being secret.”

*Meditation thought:* Distinguish the spiritual progenitors from the agencies associated with the formation of bodily vestures.

5. R.N. Iyer — “Spiritual Progenitors”, *The Gupta Vidya*, Vol. I, p. 301.

“When human beings become true individuals and enjoyers of meditation, they become capable in contemplation of entering the sanctuary of the heart. First stabilizing consciousness at the hidden point between the eyes, they may then greet the lustrous point within the heart, connecting the two as a preparation for the ascent inwards and upwards towards that which is beyond all the centres. To do this in fact and in consciousness is to restore one's relationship to the *Kumaras* and to the realm of subtle spiritual energies which can only be experienced by becoming a person of silence.”

*Meditation thought:* The sanctuary of the heart points toward collected attention and inward quietude.

6. R.N. Iyer — “Spiritual Progenitors”, *The Gupta Vidya*, Vol. I, p. 301.

“The *Kumaras*, who are the mind-born sons of *Brahma-Rudra* or *Shiva*, are the higher *Prajapati*, the progenitors of the true spiritual Self of man. Theirs is the abstract power of intelligent self-conscious creation; the lower powers of creativity, represented by the hosts of the lunar *pitris*, are only pale shadowy reflections. One's true heredity as a human being has nothing to do with one's father or mother on the physical plane. The physical form, which we owe to our parents, is only the chariot or garment of the real man.”

*Meditation thought:* Visible ancestry forms part of embodied life; it does not exhaust the spiritual meaning of a person.

7. R.N. Iyer — “Spiritual Progenitors”, *The Gupta Vidya*, Vol. I, p. 302.

“The *Kumaras* are the source of the true invisible spiritual vesture of every human being, a vesture which proceeds from a germ, just as the physical body is gestated in the embryo out of what initially resembles a germ. So too on the higher plane, the *karana sharira* emanates out of a germ, which is referred to mystically as the ancestral germ.”

*Meditation thought:* The germ image suggests a potential whose development calls for patience and sustained care.

8. R.N. Iyer — “The Fires of Creation”, *The Gupta Vidya*, Vol. I, p. 150.

“The Sons of Fire and Wisdom are the hidden root of spiritual humanity and endow Man with the sovereign afflatus of *Atma-Buddhi-Manas*. They originate every Fohatic potency in the human principles, each of which seems to act as a living force summoned by will and desire, through which the relatively subjective continuously affects the relatively objective. *Gupta Vidya* teaches that these *Fire-devas*, engendered through the body of *Ratri* or Night, and known variously as *Agni-Rudras*, *Kumaras*, *Gandharvas* and *Adityas*, are at once the entire host of perfected *Rishis*, *Munis* and *Nirmanakayas* from previous *manvantaras*, as well as the personified sacred fires of the most occult powers of Nature.”

*Meditation thought:* The fire of intelligence is contemplated as a gift with many expressions and obligations.

9. R.N. Iyer — “Karma and Transmutation”, *The Gupta Vidya*, Vol. III, p. 373.

“As this conviction deepens and ripens, one will begin to sense the privilege of breathing on earth and will recognize the gift of the *Kumaras*, the *Dhyanis* who lit up the spark of self-consciousness in every human being. In Puranic tradition the *Kumaras* are sages who live as long as *Brahma*, being created by him in the first *kalpa*. Esoterically, they are the progenitors of the true spiritual SELF, the hierarchy of the higher *Prajapati* under the guardianship of and headed by *Rudra-Nilalohita*, and derived immediately from the supreme Principle.”

*Meditation thought:* Gratitude for self-consciousness can become responsibility for its use.

10. R.N. Iyer — “Karma and Transmutation”, *The Gupta Vidya*, Vol. III, p. 373.

“Maintaining mindfulness, one can transmute work and home into sacred arenas for the elevation of life-atoms, and can discover in every circumstance of life the golden opportunity to render true service. Long before one can honour the true presence of the *Kumaras* within, and regain the lost Word and the lost Light, one must come to see that there is no karmic meaning in meditation apart from the desire to render service to all that lives.”

*Meditation thought:* Let meditation return to the opportunities for service within an ordinary day.

11. H.P. Blavatsky — *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 281.

“There were those among them, who remained in their Kumâric condition from the beginning; and tradition whispers, what the secret teachings affirm, namely, that these Elect were the germ of a Hierarchy which never died since that period: — “The inner man of the first only changes his body from time to time; he is ever the same, knowing neither rest nor Nirvana, spurning *Devachan* and remaining constantly on Earth for the salvation of mankind.”

*Meditation thought:* The ideal of continuing service joins spiritual freedom with fidelity to humanity.

12. H.P. Blavatsky — *The Theosophical Glossary*, p. 291, “Sanat Kumara”.

“*Sanat Kumâra* (Sk.). The most prominent of the seven *Kumâras*, the *Vaidhâtra* the first of which are called *Sanaka*, *Sananda*, *Sanâtana* and *Sanat Kumâra*; which names are all significant qualifications of the degrees of human intellect.”

*Meditation thought:* The names invite study of different degrees and functions of spiritual intelligence.