

Transcript ~ The Age of Aquarius

A Podcast by Kirk Gradin
STUDIO VACH ~ OCTOBER 2024

Theosophy teaches that among the divine arts and sciences forming the first great truths handed down by divine beings to the whole of awakening humanity was that of astronomy and its symbolism. As one of the central keys to the ancient mysteries of theogony, it included an exact mathematical and geometric knowledge of the positioning of the planets and stars along with penetrating insight into their inner meaning and intimate relationship to the karma of humanity and its string of globes. What we call astrology today is, for the most part, a mere shadow of this exact spiritual science in which "the whole world's history and its future was recorded".

So sacred and guarded is this knowledge, wrote H. P. Blavatsky, that she only saw one true Zodiac in her lifetime—in an Arabic work in the possession of a Sufi. The real Zodiacs are preserved by the great Brotherhood of Adepts, and awakened spiritual faculties are needed in order to properly decipher their sevenfold symbology. Only those who are "initiated into all the mysteries of nature, as well as into astronomy and astrology, knew precisely in what way nations and mankind, whole races as well as individuals, would be affected by the so-called 'signs of the Zodiac'" (Theosophical Glossary).

Still, in *Isis Unveiled*, she gives a couple of hand-drawn diagrams and describes the overall scope of the Zodiac in this way:

"Thus, be it remembered 1, that the universe is not a spontaneous creation, but an evolution from pre-existent matter; 2, that it is only one of an endless series of universes; 3, that eternity is pointed off into grand cycles, in each of which twelve transformations of our world occur, following its partial destruction by fire and water, alternately. So that when a new minor period sets in, the earth is so changed, even geologically, as to be practically a new world; 4, that of these twelve transformations, the earth after each of the first six is grosser, and everything on it—man included—more material, than after the preceding one: while after each of the remaining six the contrary is true, both earth and man growing more and more refined and spiritual with each terrestrial change; 5, that when the apex of the cycle is reached, a gradual dissolution takes place, and every living and objective form is destroyed. But when that point is reached, humanity has become fitted to live subjectively as well as objectively. And not humanity alone, but also animals, plants, and every atom. After a time of rest, say the Buddhists, when a new world becomes self-formed . . . all beings . . . will return . . . again . . . This stupendous conception, the ancients synthesized for the instruction of the common people, into a single pictorial design—the Zodiac, or celestial belt."

H.P. Blavatsky then goes on to explain in *Isis* that this twelvefold grand cycle is also the true meaning behind the patriarchal lineage given in Chapter 5 of *Genesis*. The whole scheme of the Old Testament, she writes, all its heroes, personages, and events, once properly interpreted, will be found to be built upon the twelve zodiacal signs and the cycle of *avatars*.

The word *avatar* is akin to that of a Bodhisattva. It refers to the self-conscious and willing descent of deity, the *logos* in human form. The doctrine of *avatars*, she says, is one of the grandest mysteries in all the world religions and mythologies, and as we shall see, it is central to the meaning of Aquarius. Besides the Old Testament, the Zodiacal cycle is echoed in the 12 great Olympians of the Greek and Roman pantheons, the 12 *Aesirs* of the Norwegian Prose Edda, the 12 *Adityas* of the Hindu pantheon, and in many other world mythologies.

And as we outlined in our November presentation on The Clock, the sacred geometry of the cross, triangle, tetrad, hexagon, and decade leading to the twelve faces of the dodecahedron—sacred to Pythagoras as to Plato—is also a geometrical symbol for the Zodiacal clock. All of these ancient mythologies were once part of mankind's most ancient science and do provide many clues regarding the meaning of each sign.

In typical modern astrology, the cycle of astronomical ages is defined by the precession of the equinoxes through the sidereal year, which takes roughly 26,000 years to complete. This means that from the viewpoint of the earth, the sun's position at the vernal equinox passes counterclockwise through the zodiacal belt at the rate of one degree every 72 years. According to some astronomers, in 1902, in the northern hemisphere of the earth, the sun's position at the vernal equinox passed from Pisces into Aquarius, where it will remain for another 20.4 centuries. In the southern hemisphere on the same day, of course, the sun passed into the autumnal equinox in the constellation Leo, while the two poles of the solstices were in Taurus and Scorpio. H. P. Blavatsky notes in the *Glossary* that the same astronomical cross rotated 90 degrees occurred at the start of *Kali Yuga*, and that if we understood what this meant, we would have the key to half the religious mysteries of the world.

In *The Secret Doctrine*, as in the writings of the 1975 cycle, the 12 great orders of the Zodiac are linked with the 12 *Nidanas* of the Buddhist system and correlated with the sevenfold cycle of races in our current evolutionary Round. In addition, it should be noted that the 12 orders apply to all macrocosmic and microcosmic cycles, from that of a *Maha-Manvantara* to a Planetary one, to Rounds, Races, and Sub-Races.

If we overlay the zodiacal wheel in the order given in *Isis* with the spiraling cycle of races given on page 300 of book 2 of *The Secret Doctrine*, we can begin to see the logic. Virgo, Libra,

and Scorpio, for example, are clearly connected with the momentous turning at the midpoint of the Round, where the golden age awakening of the human mind occurred. The three Virgos shown in different locations on the Dendera Zodiac, HPB explains in the S.D., offer an astronomical record of the first three divine Dynasties who initiated and taught the Third Root-Race all the arts and sciences.

Whereas Libra, symbolized by the scales, marks the turning point between descent and ascent, the equilibrium between spirit and matter. As the balance point, it marks where the individuated human monad begins the upward arc of self-conscious evolution through the cycle of reincarnations. Scorpio, in one of its many meanings, wrote HPB, represents the fall into sin and matter associated with the 4th Root Race of Atlanteans.

Carrying the correspondences further in relation to our topic today, it becomes important to note the position of Aquarius in this overlay. Besides being the precessional epoch we are currently in, we are apparently also in a much larger Aquarian cycle. This larger epoch roughly encompasses the 2nd Sub-Race of the 5th Root Race to at least the 1st Sub-Race of the 6th Root Race. With each sub-race lasting roughly 250,000 years, it seems we are in the midst of an Aquarian cycle lasting from our current Sub-Race to over a million years hence. If this is even remotely accurate, I think you would all agree it increases the relevance of today's topic considerably!

We will now take a few minutes to examine the mythology, glyphs, and symbols associated with the sign of Aquarius.

Mythology, Glyphs, and Symbols of Aquarius

It is well known that the sign of Aquarius is the Greek Ganymede, whose abduction by Zeus is coincident with the casting down of Astraea. In Egyptian mythology, H. P. B. also commented on Aquarius as Hapi-Thoth, the synthesis of the mysteries of the Nile with the God of Wisdom, called the Keeper of the Gates of Heaven and Lord of the Horizon who "cleaves the earth". She also points to a whole range of important meanings associated with the double zigzag water glyph and the alchemical significance of Hydrogen, the Greek term for Aquarius being *Hydrokoos*.

Subba Row adds the corresponding Vedic constellation called *Kumbha Rasi*, and Helen Valborg beautifully synthesizes much of this for us in her article on Aquarius, while also adding the Ancient Semitic, Babylonian, Akkadian, and Assyrian mythological correspondences. Shri Raghavan Iyer left us seven articles on the theme—"The Aquarian Tide," "Aquarian

Civilization," "Aquarian Harmony," "Aquarian Therapy," "Aquarian Spirituality," and "The Aquarian Elixir"—all of which are highly illuminating and worthy of repeated study.

Aquarius, as the Greek Ganymede, is the water-bearer of the gods, from whose jar pours forth the soma of the gods, the akashic elixir of divine wisdom, sacrificial service, and immortality. At one level, the abduction by Zeus in the form of an eagle, HPB wrote, relates to the withdrawal of enlightened beings from direct and visible involvement in humanity's affairs. She gives us an example: This is what occurred with that portion of the Atlantean race of sorcerers whose misuse of divine faculties and deliberate violations of karmic law led to their own destruction via the biblical deluge and sinking of continents.

The Greek myth goes on to include the subsequent casting down by Zeus of Astraea. Astraea, whose name means "star-maiden" or "star-light," is at one level an obvious reference to the astral light, a cosmic and human principle composed of seven sub-planes. Linked to Virgo, as well as Isis and Vach of the Hindu tradition, Astraea in its purity is the immaculate virgin goddess of divine innocence, harmonious balance, and justice, along with the fourfold mystic powers of speech and sound.

In that sense, Astraea may also refer to the divine shakti by which great teachers sound the keynote for an epoch, while also projecting a partial aspect of themselves into incarnation to experience the limitations of a given age. "I create this whole universe with a single portion of myself," says Krishna, "and remain separate."

In the Greek allegory, Astraea is cast into "the Pit," the underworld which is earth-life, heralding the dawn of a utopian golden age of which she is the ambassador. But when the sacred wisdom is misused, inverted, or misappropriated, the liquid fire of Aquarius becomes the lower astral serpent muddled by the clay of personal or tribal identity and selfish intent. In such a case, Astraea heralds the deluge, the loss of innocence, and the destruction by nature of all that cannot participate in the higher purposes of soul evolution in service to the whole of humanity.

In the Egyptian astronomical pantheon, Aquarius is represented by the androgynous water-bearing god Hapi, associated with both the celestial and the terrestrial Nile—the waters of fecund potentiality, compassion, and creativity in the Universal Mind, and the nourishing and sustaining waters of life on the earthly plane.

In the Buddhist system of Nidanas, the Aquarian cycle corresponds to Jati, a Sanskrit word meaning "birth". HPB explains that the falcon-headed deity Horus, who was first born in the Nile of heaven, is an allegory for the logos emerging at the dawn of time from the waters of the deep. The second or lower Horus depicted in Egyptian mythology was the descent of that same

logos or Christos into human form. Such incarnations offer the possibilities of rebirth in consciousness for all humanity through the fiery waters of *tapas* or *tumo*, through purgation, meditation, and initiation, though but a few are willing to undergo the moral and mental disciplines needed.

Thoth-Hermes, the God of Wisdom, is repeatedly connected with Hapi as the Keeper and Opener of the Gates of Heaven wherein one becomes the heir of eternity. As Lord of the Horizon and "cleaver of earth," it points to Buddhi as the discriminative faculty and the moment of choice that faces humanity when the divine descends.

Hapi is often depicted with lotuses emerging from his head as well as from the bowl of water he carries. The lotus is another universal symbol found in every philosophical and religious system, symbolizing the womb of nature, the union of fire and water, the unfoldment from within without, and the blossoming of enlightenment. The Lotus and Water are among the oldest universal symbols found in every mythology. Among its many other associations, HPB states in *Isis*, water is a symbol for *The Secret Doctrine*, *Theosophia*, or the Gupta Vidya itself.

Speaking of the zigzag glyph of Aquarius, she wrote:

"Letters, as much as numbers, were all mystic, whether in combination or each taken separately. The most sacred of all is the letter M. It is both feminine and masculine, or androgyne, and is made to symbolize WATER, the great deep, in its origin. It is mystic in all the languages, Eastern and Western . . . MAITREYA is the secret name of the Fifth Buddha, and the Kalki *Avatar* of the Brahmins—the last MESSIAH who will come at the culmination of the Great Cycle. It is also the initial letter of the Greek Metis or Divine Wisdom; of Mimra, the 'word' or Logos; and of Mithras . . . the Monad, and Mystery. All these are born in, and from, the great Deep . . ."

In the *Stanzas of Dzyan*, the water of boundless Space is the Great Mother referred to in Sloka 1, which swells "from within without," to emerge from non-being into being at the dawn of time. Also called Abstract Ideal Matter or *Mulaprakriti*—from one point of view, the veil of *Parabrahm* and from another, one with it. All lower levels of differentiated substance arise like curds emerging within the ocean of immortality.

Inseparable from Divine Thought and Divine *Eros*, this boundless ocean of the One Self radiates the One unmanifested Self, unfolding the triune formless logos, which in turn emanates the seven logoic rays. Each of the wavy lines of the Aquarian glyph is composed of seven points, three above and four below. HPB quotes the *Zohar*:

"The Deity is like the Sea from which outflows a stream called WISDOM, the waters of which fall into a lake named Intelligence. From the basin, like seven channels, issue the Seven Sephiroth For ten equal seven" (Ibid., i 239)

Theosophy goes further on to teach that it is only through the Logos, a ray of one of the seven *Dhyanis* within every human being (also called the *Ishvara* or *Ishta-guru* in the heart), that one obtains knowledge of the Real. And it is the light of this Logos, wrote Bhavani Shankar, that is transmitted from Guru to disciple when the time for real initiation comes.

Though Aquarius is an air sign—an element associated with mind and thought—the double water glyph also points to the capacity of manas to function as an *antaskarana* bridge between heaven and earth, between the akashic and the astral, the spiritual and the intellectual, the intuitive and the rational. The capacity to harmonize and synthesize the deepest flashes of insight and spiritual awakening with unconditional commitments to service, and the reflection of both in the smallest circles of daily dharma, would seem to be one of the hallmarks of the Aquarian individual.

In Greek, Aquarius is *Hydrokoos*, linking the constellation to the element of Hydrogen. Alchemically and cosmically, wrote HPB, hydrogen is triune in its primary manifestation as Spirit, Soul, and Mind, or *Atma-Buddhi-Manas*. It is the timeless great Alkahest which dissolves all solidified mental and moral poisons of vice and ignorance, of fixation and grasping, and transmutes them into the golden elixir of *prajna* and *karuna*.

Rudimentary man, having been nursed by the "air" or the "wind," becomes the perfect man later on; when, with the development of "Spiritual fire," the noumenon of the "Three in One" within his Self, he acquires from his inner Self, or Instructor, the Wisdom of Self-Consciousness, which he does not possess in the beginning. Thus here again divine Spirit is symbolised by the Sun or Fire; divine Soul by Water and the Moon, both standing for the Father and Mother of Pneuma, human Soul, or Mind, symbolised by the Wind or air, for Pneuma, means "breath."

S.D., ii 113

However, HPB points out just one page later that all the elements can be understood as aspects or differentiations of the root Element of Spiritual Fire.

". . . Air, (is) fluidic fire; water, liquid fire; Earth, solid fire. All is fire ignis, in its ultimate constitution, or I, the root of which is O (nought) in our conceptions, the All in nature and its Mind. Pro-Mater (or Divine Substance) is divine fire. It is the Creator, the Destroyer, the Preserver."

As symbols of *Fohat*, the zigzag lines of the Aquarian glyph are also indicative of the polarity of Will and Desire. Cosmic Will is both divine *Eros* and cosmic electricity, in Tibetan called Fohat. The association of Uranus with cosmic or spiritual will, while obscure to present humanity, is part of the Aquarian notion of harmony to be unfolded in the current epoch.

"Fohat, latent in Taurus, stirs into activity in Leo, fully awakens in Scorpio, and is (purified and) synthesized in Aquarius." The higher Divine Serpent of cosmic electricity governed by universal compassion and empathy for all that lives overcomes the infernal astral serpent of personal desire which inverts and desecrates the energies of the divine will.

Spiritual growth is epitomized by the image of the silent, ceaseless construction of the Temple of Truth, precipitated in its crystalline splendour by meditative action out of the Akashic waters of life. True spiritual will, the conscious direction of energy by intelligent ideation and self-conscious volition, is the supreme criterion and sovereign talisman of Aquarian humanity.

R. N. Iyer

Hydrogen in its lower manifestation is *kama*, blind desire which clouds discrimination and leaves the unwary an abandoned wreck. Whenever there is a quickening of soul knowledge, there also necessarily arises terrible tests and trials, a churning up of all hidden but poisonous character defects—the subtle and diverse forms of personal ambition, lower egotism, anger, lust, and greed. "He who is close to me," said Jesus, "is close to fire."

Only when selflessly governed from above below can the higher lightning conquer and master the lower. Helen Valborg points out how in the ancient Akkadian version of the constellation Aquarius, the god Adad (also known as Ramanu) was depicted with lightning bolts in each hand by which he subdues the winged serpent which becomes his steed.

The higher and lower waters are integral to the analogies found in *The Voice of the Silence* as well. Manas is both the slayer of the Real and the Knower of the Real. As the self-conscious capacity for reflection, choice, and responsibility, when captive to the separative sense of self and its volatile desires, the mind is drawn into the "stormy sea of human life" and disappears within the first great vortex.

But by closing fast the mind from the dire heresy of separateness and baptizing itself in the pure bright essence of *Alaya*, "the law of love eternal," the aspiring mind is capable of the highest forms of learning, ceaseless self-correction, and spiritual self-regeneration. *Srotapatti* means "stream-entrant"—an irreversible commitment to aid the spiritual awakening of humanity via the Paramita Path tread by all the Bodhisattvas of ages past. Through seven guarded gates, the

aspirant crosses over the sea of Maya, leading to the other shore, to AKSHARA itself, called "the indestructible fount of Omniscience."

This is the culminating form of Buddhi Yoga and the Bodhisattva Path. The highest forms of *samadhi* and *dhyāna* then function as the creative capacity to selflessly incarnate for *Kalpas* without number in harmony with the sacrificial will of nature, through which one can aid each and every being who is trapped, lost, and suffering.

All of this suggests that both the metaphysics and ethics of the core teachings of Theosophia are keys to understanding the meaning of what will unfold for humanity in the Aquarian Age. The sevenfold path, as well as the sevenfold logic wisdom of the Dhyanis and their cosmic hierarchies, animating both macrocosm and microcosm, is the fundamental basis of the Trans-Himalayan system brought to the West, long known only in the Mystery Schools of antiquity. It points to the Unity of Nature, God, and Man, and the esoteric wisdom at the root of every great tradition.

The seven above and seven below likewise link up with the interlaced triangles of the Theosophical Seal. Though a six-pointed star, its central meaning includes the center point—the synthesis and union completed by the sacred number seven. If one includes the inner vertices, one finds seven inside and seven outside: a sacred geometrical formula relevant to countless aspects of the philosophy.

Astronomical Ages of Taurus, Aries, Pisces, and Aquarius

If the Zodiac and precessional cycle are linked to the cycle of *avatars*—the incarnation of Manus and Rishis, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, as HPB taught—then the meaning of the age of Aquarius may be better understood by a brief overview and comparison to the two ages which preceded it.

The *Kali Yuga*, an epoch of 432,000 years, began in the last 1/3 of the Age of Taurus. Both the *Bhagavad Gita* and the Zodiac, wrote W. Q. Judge, are storehouses of knowledge which can be properly construed by the same method which begins with the path of devotion. A familiarity with the longest epic poem known to humanity, the *Mahabharata*, would also begin to give us a picture of the divine ethos and graces of an advanced civilization existing in the Age of Taurus.

The Age of Aries began around 2400 BCE. Basking in the radiance of the *avataric* keynote given by Krishna, the Age of Aries witnessed what is called the Axial Age, which included the appearance of Shakyamuni Buddha, Confucius, and Lao Tse in the East, and the great flowering

of Hellenistic culture in Pythagoras and Plato in the West, among many other hierophants and teachers of the Eternal Doctrine.

The Piscean Age began around 250 BCE and also had its great philosophers, mystics, and sages. In the East, this included Nagarjuna in the 2nd century, the founder of the Madhyamika School of Northern Buddhism. In the 4th century CE, the Buddhist scholar and master of meditation Asanga, along with his brother Vasubandhu, founded the Yogacharya school, whose metaphysical presuppositions regarding consciousness (at least to the extent known to us) are very close to those of *The Secret Doctrine*.

In Tibetan Buddhism, these two elaborations and extensions of the Buddha's teaching (the Madhyamika and Yogacharya) are referred to as the 2nd and 3rd turnings of the Wheel of Dharma, with the fourth turning anticipated to arrive with the advent of Maitreya Buddha.

In the 8th century, within the Hindu tradition, the great Adept and philosopher Shankaracharya appeared, whom HPB called "an *Avatara* of Shiva . . . in the full sense of the term." While in the Buddhist tradition, the same century witnessed the mysterious Shantideva, another great Nalanda Master linked to the celestial Bodhisattva Manjushri. Shantideva's *Guide to the Bodhisattva Way of Life* still forms one of the central devotional texts of Mahayana Buddhism.

In the West, the Piscean Age was dominated by the great Initiate, Joshua Ben Pandira, known to us as Jesus of Nazareth, whose Sermon on the Mount reformulated the ethics of *Theosophia* in a new garb. Despite his emphasis on nonviolence and humility, he also boldly affirmed his unity with his "Father in Heaven," declaring, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Light."

Many lesser-known magi, philosophers, and reformers such as Apollonius of Tyana (c. 15–100 CE), Plotinus (204–270 CE), and Iamblichus (245–325 CE) arose, though their influence was obscured by institutionalized religion.

Starting in the 4th century of the CE, when the emperor Constantine declared Christianity the state religion of the Roman Empire, a night of superstition, dogma, and degradation descended on the West. In the Medieval or Dark Ages—more than a millennium past in which dogmatic forms of religion were forced upon the masses at the point of a sword, where freedom of thought was thwarted by inquisition and guillotine, and where the once universal traditions of the Perennial Philosophy were actively persecuted, destroyed, or retired in secret.

In understandable reaction to the illogic of religious dogmatism, science grew increasingly materialistic. In its arrogant refusal to acknowledge the philosophical sciences of the ancient

world wherein consciousness is understood as the primary reality transcending and pervading all of what we call the observable universe, it became one of the thought-forms of the age stifling the deeper soul intuitions of humanity.

To counter all this, in the final six centuries of the Piscean age, the Masters of Wisdom initiated a seven-century plan in preparation for the Age of Aquarius. In the century prior to the European Renaissance, this began with Tsong Kha Pa, who according to HPB was an *avatar* of Amitabha, the celestial Buddha of Boundless Time and Infinite Light, incarnating in Tibet in 1357.

To purify, preserve, and promulgate the Wisdom-Religion, he founded the Gelukpa Order, the third Dalai Lama of which was recognized as a manifestation of Chenrezig, the Buddha of Boundless Compassion. In the last 25 years of each century since, one or more emissaries of the Brotherhood of Bodhisattvas has appeared in the West to help educate humanity, to begin re-establishing the imperishable foundations of Divine Wisdom as the basis of the regenerated civilizations of the future, and to further the work of universal enlightenment.

Most importantly, this included awakening the West to the living reality of Mahatmas, to the ever-unbroken Guruparampara chain, and the reality of universal Brotherhood and Sisterhood. (For a comprehensive list of this Piscean cycle, we refer students to *Teachers of the Eternal Doctrine*, by Elton Hall).

W. Q. Judge's article on "Adepts in America in 1776" also points to the influence of Mahatmas on the founders and framers of the American Declaration of Independence and Constitution as another critical turning point taking place in the final 25 years of the 18th century. With their aid, he wrote, the powerful forces of religious dogma and bigotry were prevented from corrupting the cornerstone of a new government. "This was for the very good reason that for 1700 years religion had battled against progress, against justice, against magnanimity, against the rights of man."

On the cusp of the Aquarian Age, in the last 25 years of the 19th century, The Sixth Impulsion witnessed the incarnation of the enigmatic being we know as Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831–1891). Boldly announcing that she was an agent of the Great Lodge, in addition to outlining the fundamental teachings of Theosophy, she braved the painful, though sacred, duty of openly naming the Mahatmas behind the Movement.

In addition to her oral teaching and written works explicating the demanding spiritual science of Theosophia, she founded the Theosophical Society on American soil in 1875. No doubt, her

extensive and repeated travels from Russia to America and from India to England cast powerful magnetic links across the world, furthering the Mahatmic vibration globally.

In her article on "The Esoteric Character of the Gospels," she spoke of several remarkable cycles that were coming to a close at the end of the 19th century, linking her life's work with the transition into the Age of Aquarius and with the termination of the first 5,000 years of Kali Yuga. The calendar date associated with the death of Krishna and the start of *Kali Yuga* is that of Feb. 17th and 18th, 3102 BCE.

Feb. 18th is also the "special birthday," she writes in the S.D. (i 470), of that nameless Lord of the Mysteries who goes by many names as the incarnating *logoi* of all nations, from Shiva to Thoth-Hermes, to Vishvakarman, Kwan-Shai-Yin, and Pymander. She also refers to this Bodhisattva as the Great Dragon of Wisdom born of Fire and Water, who is the Alpha and Omega of manifested nature, and who is that singular logoi source and essence from which the divine instructors of every culture and clime have emerged.

It is significant to note that in the yearly cycle of the tropical zodiac, Aquarius begins on Feb. 13 and extends to March 14th. The central importance of the Aquarian date of Feb. 18th is without doubt why Robert Crosbie chose it to inaugurate the United Lodge of Theosophists, and why the Santa Barbara Lodge was likewise initiated on the same calendar day by Raghavan and Nandini Iyer.

***Kumbha Rasi* and Dakshinamurti**

In Vedic astrology, *Kumbha Rasi* is the Sanskrit equivalent of Aquarius. *Rasi* means constellation and *Kumbha*, among other meanings, refers to an earthen pot. When represented by numbers, wrote Subba Row, the word is equivalent to the number 14. These, he says, refer to the fourteen *Lokas* of ancient Hindu cosmology, sometimes depicted as seven levels or planes within the egg of Brahma and seven without. This is very reminiscent of the double 7 water glyph of Aquarius. In addition, in Vedic astrology, the *Kumbha Rasi* is the constellation of Lord Shiva, bringing with it the moment of choice for all humanity.

Similar to the Egyptian Hapi, the Hindu goddess of all celestial and terrestrial waters in the Hindu tradition is Ganga, the goddess of purification and forgiveness, worshipped as the mother of humanity. In some ancient sculptural depictions, she is shown holding a vase or jar, similar to the Greek Ganymede. But it was Shiva who captured the celestial waters of Ganga in his hair locks in order that the rushing waters would not harm Prithivi, a symbol for the entire sevenfold earth chain.

Through Shiva's compassionate command on behalf of all creatures, the nourishing and cleansing elixirs are released and distributed into all the kingdoms of nature. In addition to being the third personification of the Hindu Trimurtian logos, "Siva," wrote HPB, "the destroyer, is the creator and the Saviour of Spiritual man, as he is the good gardener of nature. He weeds out the plants, human and cosmic, and kills the passions of the physical, to call to life the perceptions of the spiritual, man."

S.D., ii 459 fn

Siva is also the patron saint of all yogis and adepts and one of the many names of Dakshinamurti, the Initiator of Initiates, portrayed in *The Secret Doctrine* in a remarkable hymnody to the Silent Watcher:

"The 'Being' just referred to, which has to remain nameless, is the Tree from which, in subsequent ages, all the great historically known Sages and Hierophants, such as the Rishi Kapila, Hermes, Enoch, Orpheus, etc., etc., have branched off. As objective man, he is the mysterious (to the profane the ever invisible) yet ever present Personage about whom legends are rife in the East, especially among the Occultists and the students of the Sacred Science. It is he who changes form, yet remains ever the same. And it is he again who holds spiritual sway over the initiated Adepts throughout the whole world. He is, as said, the 'Nameless One' who has so many names, and yet whose names and whose very nature are unknown. He is the 'Initiator,' called the 'great sacrifice.' For, sitting at the threshold of light, he looks into it from within the circle of Darkness, which he will not cross; nor will he quit his post till the last day of this life-cycle.

Why does the solitary Watcher remain at his self-chosen post? Why does he sit by the fountain of primeval Wisdom, of which he drinks no longer, as he has naught to learn which he does not know—aye, neither on this Earth, nor in its heaven? Because the lonely, sore-footed pilgrims on their way back to their home are never sure to the last moment of not losing their way in this limitless desert of illusion and matter called Earth-Life. Because he would fain show the way to that region of freedom and light, from which he is a voluntary exile himself, to every prisoner who has succeeded in liberating himself from the bonds of flesh and illusion. Because, in short, he has sacrificed himself for the sake of mankind, though but a few Elect may profit by the great sacrifice.

It is under the direct, silent guidance of this *Maha* (great) *Guru* that all the other less divine Teachers and instructors of mankind became, from the first awakening of human consciousness, the guides of early Humanity. It is through these 'Sons of God' that infant humanity got its first notions of all the arts and sciences, as well as of

spiritual knowledge; and it is they who have laid the first foundation-stone of those ancient civilizations that puzzle so sorely our modern generation of students and scholars."

S.D., i 207–208

Kirk Gradin