

ESSENTIALS OF

JYOTISA

A JYOTISHI'S HANDBOOK



Aswin Subramanyan

Diploma in Jyotisa

Within India, Jyotish is widely acknowledged as a beacon of hope and wisdom, as it is an ancient and potent form of astrological tradition originating from India and deeply connected to Vedic philosophy. Due to my maternal family's long-standing involvement in astrology for the past 300 years, I have been fortunate enough to be associated with the study of this exceptional heritage of Indian wisdom. Having dedicated over ten years to studying, practicing, and conducting research, my objective now is to share my knowledge rooted in the rich Indian tradition and my own family's customs, ensuring that these techniques are passed down from one individual to another. This opportunity holds great significance for me as it allows me to carry forward the techniques of my tradition and the legacy of my family, which I consider a tremendous honor.

Who can take this course?

Inquisitive Minds: For those with a curious mind and a strong desire to explore different astrological systems, Jyotish presents an intriguing opportunity to expand your perspective and delve into the cosmic realm. For individuals who have an unquenchable thirst for knowledge and a deep fascination with diverse cultural perspectives on astrology, this course is the ideal choice.

Professional Western Astrologers: For practicing astrologers seeking to enhance their skill set, Jyotish provides a valuable addition to your toolkit. Learn how to integrate Vedic principles into your consultations and gain insights that can complement and enrich your Western astrological practice.

Cultural Explorers: Immerse yourself in the cultural tapestry of ancient India through the lens of Jyotish. This course is an ideal opportunity for those who appreciate the interconnectedness of astrology and culture, offering an insight into understanding the similarities and differences between the eastern and the western tradition if you are a western astrologer.

Outcome: Become a Jyotishi!

The primary focus of teaching this course is to empower individuals to approach chart reading from a Jyotish perspective and develop the confidence to work with clients without any hesitation. From the very beginning of the class, the goal is to ensure that students leave with something tangible that they can immediately apply by referring to the charts and putting them into practice.

Length and Duration

The duration of the course is set to be one year, and each class will have a duration of two hours. Our schedule includes two monthly meetings, consisting of two classes followed by a question and answer session. By implementing assessments after every module, we aim to ensure that all participants are actively involved in the course and are able to grasp the concepts of studying charts from a Jyotish perspective holistically. This approach will allow us to successfully achieve our final goal of guiding students in their chart analysis journey.

Course Highlights

Suitability

This course is ideal for Western astrologers eager to broaden their scope, this course unveils the profound intricacies of Jyotish. One of the main focuses of this course is to tackle the issue of Sanskrit terminology, which often acts as a barrier for western astrologers who want to pursue their interest in Indian astrology. To overcome this obstacle, the course provides English alternatives for the Sanskrit terms and allows ample time for participants to comprehend and adapt to the Sanskrit terminology, ensuring that everyone feels comfortable and included. It goes without saying that any individual of Indian origin who has a keen interest in this course will be able to comprehend and successfully navigate through its entirety.

Family Heritage

As you embark on your quest for truth through the realm of astrology, it is crucial to understand that the study of Jyotish will form an indispensable foundation. Moreover, it is of utmost importance to acknowledge that Jyotirvidya, the profound science of celestial bodies, necessitates dedicated study from individuals who have been immersed in the cultural heritage. Under the guidance of my maternal grandfather, G. Gurumoorthy Iyer, I learned the art of astrology. During client sessions, my grandfather would hand me the charts and ask me to analyze them for the clients, with my grandfather always being there to offer assistance when needed. To have the opportunity to learn astrology from a veteran with over 60 years of experience in the post-modern era, especially through a lineage that can be traced back to my grandfather's grandfather who practiced astrology in the regions surrounding Thanjavur and Kumbakonam during the renaissance Tamil Nadu, India, is a truly unique and extraordinary treasure. The transmission of knowledge in Jyotish and other Vedic wisdom branches primarily occurred orally, and my initial exposure to astrology was primarily through my grandfather passing down the familial tradition in an oral manner.

Curriculum

The curriculum is designed to encompass all the necessary elements for a student to transition into a full-time practitioner of Jyotish. The course has been thoughtfully structured into seven modules, each focusing on different aspects of Jyotish. Beginning with the fundamental concepts, such as planetary conditions, aspects, and the judgements of the houses, it then explores more advanced techniques like Dashas and divisional charts. These techniques are an integral part of the Indian astrological tradition and offer a unique perspective to the study of Jyotish. In fact, this course offers a lot more than just what a person needs to study charts and the curriculum is backed by a rigorous assessment patterns which include both oral and written presentations at regular intervals ensuring the seamless progress of all the students and by the end of this course, the student will be confident enough to offer consultations from a Jyotish perspective.

Practicality and Spontaneity

We all acknowledge and feel proud of the fact that astrology is a highly practical science, however, its true potential is realised only when it is practically applied in delivering astrological information, specifically through spontaneity. In India, the practice of astrology is characterized by its spontaneity, where individuals can unexpectedly present their birth chart and ask questions without prior notice, making it challenging to prepare for a chart session. However, Jyotish naturally lends itself to the practice of spontaneous astrology, especially considering my training in oral tradition, which has always allowed me to read charts spontaneously. One of my aims of this course is to present the content in a manner that enables students to develop the ability to spontaneously read charts. Learning from a familial tradition allows us to experience the beauty of being exposed to techniques and nuances that have withstood the test of time for more than 300 years!

Mentorship

Each student will receive personal attention from me as I will meticulously evaluate the assessments, both written and oral, with the intention of offering valuable feedback that will aid their progress in becoming a Jyotishi. Throughout the duration of this year-long course, students will engage in a series of 6 oral presentations and complete 6 written assignments. These tasks will culminate in a final mini conference, where each student will have the opportunity to deliver a 30-minute talk accompanied by a 1500-word article as their final assessment. In addition to these options, I am always accessible through the dedicated learning portal and can also be reached via email for any assistance that may be needed at any time throughout the duration of the course.

Essentials

Mode of class and materials

The entire course is conducted online, and our meetings will take place via Google Meet. As the meetings will be recorded, access to the class materials will be provided. In order to facilitate communication regarding course-related matters, we will utilise Google Classroom as our primary platform. This will ensure that all course information, including meeting links, materials such as PDFs and videos, will be readily accessible in one central location.

Is it mandatory to attend live?

Although classes are live, it's important to note that all classes will be recorded. Hence, it is not obligatory to attend live, but I strongly advise participating in the live sessions to fully immerse yourself in the learning experience of Jyotish. The worth of a live session is significantly enhanced by its dynamic nature, which provides opportunities for interaction, making it far more valuable than simply watching a recording. For this reason, it is highly recommended to attend the live classes as frequently as you can.

Assessments

Assessments are scheduled to occur at the conclusion of each module. In each classroom session, every student is expected to deliver a talk that lasts for 15 minutes, focusing on a topic that is directly related to the specific module they are studying. In addition, it is mandatory for every student to deliver a 800-word article on a specific subject that is covered in the module. The topics for both the talk and the article are always open, providing the opportunity for them to be the same. There are two main reasons why we do this: firstly, it helps us gain confidence in discussing and writing about Jyotish, and secondly, it ensures that we all have a clear understanding of the concepts as we progress towards our ultimate goal of becoming full-time Jyotishis by the end of the program. The final assessment will consist of two components: a 30-minute talk and a 1500-word article, both centered around a chosen topic from the course. As part of the program, all the students will be present at the talks given by their peers, resulting in a mini online conference.

Degree/Certificate

On the successful completion of the assignments, the student will be awarded, "*Diploma in Indian Astrology*".

Course Contents

Module 1: Introduction

Philosophy

The philosophical underpinnings of an astrological tradition play a vital role in grasping the core concepts that drive the practice of astrology, specifically in relation to making predictions and forecasts. With a history dating back thousands of years, Indian philosophy boasts one of the oldest and most unbroken astrological traditions in existence. Moreover, it is important to acknowledge that astrology holds a prominent position in the daily routines of individuals in India. Consequently, to truly engage with Indian astrology, it is essential to have a comprehensive understanding of the philosophy and culture of the land.

Qualities of an astrologer

The Indian classics outline various qualities that an astrologer should possess and customs that an astrologer should follow in order to be considered a successful astrologer who can effectively serve the community.

Nakshatras

Nakshatras (fixed stars) are considered an essential component in many predictive systems and are often referred to as the indigenous tradition of astrology in India. The hidden layers of the astrological chart can only be revealed by comprehending the distinct qualities of Nakshatras, making it imperative to grasp the essence of the fixed stars.

Planets

Understanding the meanings of planets is crucial, as they hold significant importance across various forms of astrology. However, it is worth noting that Indian astrology possesses unique differences that are deeply rooted in its cultural context. Therefore, comprehending these distinctions becomes essential when delving into the study of the Indian tradition. It is worth mentioning that, in the context of Indian astrology, the lunar nodes, namely Rahu and Ketu, hold significant value. Moreover, our exploration will extend to understanding the karmic aspects of planets within individuals' nativities.

Houses

When discussing houses, it is important to note that while Indian tradition may share commonalities with other traditions, it also presents intriguing variations. Unlike the western tradition, which assigns both parents to the 4th house, the 9th house is specifically dedicated to the father in Indian astrology. In the Indian astrological system, there exist numerous intriguing differences that have the potential to change our interpretation of the charts. In addition, it is worth mentioning that Bharat Bhavam, which are derived houses, have a crucial role in Indian astrology, and our exploration will extensively focus on understanding this concept.

Module 2: Aspects, conditions & functions

Aspects

Aspects are different in Indian astrology where some planets have special aspects as opposed to other planets. Aspects largely alter the way we look at any particular placement in a chart and it will be important to understand the idea of planetary aspects fully to become a proficient Jyotishi.

Directional Strength

Planets gain strength by direction and sometimes, it becomes a reason as to why a particular planet's function is really felt hard by an individual regardless of it is good or bad.

Functional roles of planets

While the Persian and Greek systems classify Jupiter and Venus as benefic planets and Saturn and Mars as malefic planets, the Indian system, although sharing a similar general idea, assigns functional roles to planets in each individual chart, resulting in cases where Jupiter or Venus can be considered malefic while Saturn or Mars can be seen as benefic. The functional differentiation of planets is a notable aspect of Indian astrology, and it is this characteristic that elevates it to the status of one of the most powerful astrological systems globally.

Karakamsa

In our quest for Jyotish knowledge, we would discover that certain key points or planets hold immense significance. Karakamsa is the study of a specific planet in the Amsa (Navamsa), where Karaka represents the significator and Amsa represents the part. To gain a deeper understanding, we meticulously analyze the position of one particular planet called Atma Karaka (significator of the soul) in the 9th parts, also known as Navamsa, which we introduce as a valuable tool. Once we acquire this knowledge, we may find ourselves gaining a sudden understanding of the profound insights hidden within the chart, as well as the true purpose of the individual's life and the various obstacles and difficulties they may encounter along their journey. The study of the promise and results of the planet can be effectively conducted through the use of Karakamsa.

Houses, effects and judgements

The planets, depending on their condition and strength, have the ability to produce results in accordance with the houses in which they are positioned in the nativity. In order to arrive at a sequential conclusion of any specific planet in a particular house, there are several steps that we need to go through. To gain insights into different topics in the life of the native, it is important to thoroughly examine the lords or rulers of the houses. Taking into account all the various aspects of topic analysis, we will make informed judgments that will contribute to the advancement of the study of nativities.

Module 3: Advanced study of planets and their roles

Yogas

The study of charts in Indian astrology involves a deep exploration of the various yogas that are present. While yogas may not always be synonymous with positivity, they do offer valuable information about the planetary combinations. The sages of Indian astrology have identified certain aspectual relationships and have referred to them as yogas. Yogas provide a convenient and efficient way to quickly comprehend the hidden intricacies of one's birth chart, enabling astrologers to gain insights into the individual's current circumstances and overall life situation.

Conjunctions

Conjunction of planets offer various insights into a chart because they alter the flavour and condition of a planet resulting in the functioning of the planets. It becomes imperative to study the nature of such conjunction especially when we have a stellium like three or more planets in one particular house. Indian classics give insights into this part of chart reading and this will be one of the interesting areas of studies in Indian astrology.

Longevity

In our role as astrologers, there are instances when we encounter situations where we are required to assess the lifespan of an individual, but it is crucial to emphasize that we should never reveal such information to clients or anyone else. However, it is important to note that the study of longevity is actually a component of Jyotish studies, and it provides valuable insights into how we assess a person's nativity.

Maraka (killer) planets

The planets known as Maraka are specifically identified as those planets that serve the purpose of indicating challenges and hardships in the life of an individual during any given period. Merely because Maraka means killer, it should not be misconstrued that a planet can directly indicate the cessation of a native's existence. In order to fully comprehend the chart, it is crucial that we thoroughly grasp the intricate details and meticulously analyze the challenges that the native will encounter throughout a specific period in their life.

Module 4: Divisional Charts

Hora

Hora is a division of a zodiac sign into two that is associated with the Sun and the Moon and they indicate the financial prospects and the condition in a native's life. This becomes a very practical study as it is really important in client work.

Drekkana

While Drekkana (Decans - division of a sign into three) are commonly employed in the study of siblings and their happiness, they also serve as a valuable tool for examining an individual's bravery, resilience, and motivation for personal and professional development.

Saptamsa

Saptamsa is the division of a sign into seven parts that indicates the nature and quality of children in a native's life. In general, it has to deal with progeny and matters related to progeny.

Navamsa

Indian astrologers regard Navamsa as the most crucial divisional chart as it offers valuable information about a person's fortune and destiny by dividing a sign into nine parts. The Navamsa chart is an invaluable resource for uncovering the fruits and rewards that life has in store, as it takes into account the planetary placements and also offers insights into the nature and quality of married life.

Dwadasamsa

Dwadasamsa is a division of a sign into twelve and it indicates the well-being of parents and it also indicates the general well-being of a native and other hidden layers of a chart. The scope of dwadasamsa is not limited to parents and we can use it as an additional layer of chart reading.

Module 5: Time Lords - Predictive Analysis

Vimsottari Dasa

The time-lord system known as Vimsottari Dasa has proven to be infallible in practice when it comes to accurately reflecting the quality and nature of an individual's life throughout specific periods. Typically in India, astrologers present their clients with a handwritten chart in a notebook. This chart not only includes detailed information about the individual's birth chart, but also highlights the Vimsottari dasa balance during their birth. No computer is required for an astrologer who has seen the chart. With just mental calculations, they can determine the Dasa periods and communicate the results in a matter of minutes. This enables astrologers to answer their clients in a spontaneous manner.

Chakra Dasa

The time-lord system known as Chakra Dasa is quite similar to Annual Profecions of Hellenistic astrology, with some minor adjustments in its technique. Nevertheless, it offers great assistance in gaining a comprehensive understanding of the overall nature and quality of life, which is divided into various chapters.

Module 6: Annual Predictive Methods

Tajika - Solar Returns & annual time lords (dasa)

Tajika is the Indian version of Solar Returns which offers insights into a particular year of a native's life.

Tithi Pravesa - Soli-lunar Returns & annual time lords (Dasa)

Unlike regular solar returns, Indian astrologers employ a soli-lunar annual return method which ensures that the relationship between the sun and moon in the birth chart remains intact. This specific chart is calculated at the occurrence of a similar angle every year in the individual's life, known as Tithi Pravesa. The practical effectiveness of this chart is widely recognised, and it is utilised as an annual predictive tool by a diverse group of astrologers in India.

Module 7: Software introduction and Chart Readings

Software

Although we would be familiar with the software at this point, it becomes important for us to learn the navigation through the recommended software in order to facilitate smooth practice of astrology.

Chart Reading Sessions/Spontaneous chart reading exercises

Once the entire course content is covered, session/s will be dedicated to chart reading exercises with spontaneity to enhance the ability of astrologers to become full-time Jyotishis which is the primary objective of this course.

Instructor: Aswin Subramanyan

Aswin Subramanyan, an astrologer from India, comes from a family of astrologers and began his journey into the study of astrology in 2011. In addition to his Jyotish studies, he has been studying Hellenistic and medieval Persian astrology since 2017. At present, his astrology is an amalgamation of the three ancient astrological traditions. "*Firdaria-Periods of Life*" is a book that he authored, and he also co-authored "*Astrology by Moonlight*". To know more about Aswin's work, please visit: www.theabverdict.com.