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Practical Pañcāṅga – Tithis in-depth Part 2 (Significance)

Last month we re-familiarized ourselves with the fundamentals of Tithis and sorted through the nebulous realm of 15 versus 16 Tithis. It's now time for us to delve into why we should bother learning about Tithis, let alone putting them to use in our practice of Jyotiṣa.

Significance

Tithis are all about the Moon and the water element. These two fundamental constituents of Jyotiṣa have a lot in common with regards to their significations in our lives. The Moon, among other things, is all about fertility, motherhood, caring, emotions, tastes and desires. The water element follows suit, figuratively and literally.

Our birth Tithi is therefore like a permanent emotional lens whereas the transiting Tithis are temporary filters. These two along with the other Pañcāṅga elements, both natal and transiting, result in a colorful kaleidoscope that is unique to us. Making the kaleidoscope even more colorful is the interplay of these Pañcāṅga elements with the Bhāvas in the natal chart. Over time, those that care to observe and experience the effect of Tithis on the ebb and flow of emotions in their lives are bound to be left spellbound with the amazing patterns that this magical emotional kaleidoscope can generate.

Understanding our Jamna Tithi through its characteristics such as Guna, Tattva, planetary ruler and deity can give us unparalleled insights into fundamental self-discovery questions such as who we really are as an individual, what makes us tick, and the mission that our soul has set out to accomplish in its current incarnation.

To sum it up, Tithis are all about emotions and feelings. They reflect how we relate to the world, our outlook towards the people in our lives and the way we're likely to treat them. In

turn, Tithis offer a way for us to examine our relationship karma, i.e., our strengths and shortcomings when it comes to germinating and fostering healthy relationships.

The spiritual backdrop

One of the fundamental principles of Muhūrta is that that a Shukla-Paksha Moon (waxing Moon) is better suited for material success and related activities whereas a Krishna-Paksha Moon (waning Moon) is more amenable to spiritual progress and related activities. Extended to natal astrology this principle, when other factors corroborate, does indicate that someone born under a waxing and bright Moon ($>72^\circ$ from the Sun) will likely find it easier to achieve material success than spiritual progress, whereas the opposite can be true of a waning and dark Moon ($<72^\circ$ from the Sun).

Allegorically, the Moon's monthly sojourn away from and back to the Sun helps us understand the rationale behind this theory. In that vein, the New Moon can be seen as the Divine Unity splitting itself into Masculine (Sun) and Feminine (Moon) form to experience itself, with the Sun being the stable observer and the Moon the movable experiencer.

As the Moon waxes it progressively separates from its True North and gets increasingly absorbed in a narrative that is intrinsically Ego-centric and thrives on materialistic achievements and external validation. When it reaches fullness, it realizes it has achieved everything it had dreamed of and yet there's an undeniable void and lack of happiness because it's all by itself and at maximum separation from its True North. That's when it begins its journey back towards the Sun and in the process sheds the need for outward possessions as it gradually realizes what really matters and where its true happiness lies.

The Tithis, therefore, are like the parts of wonderfully crafted Swiss watch that tracks the progression of a soul over several lifetimes, wherein each lifetime comprises innumerable experiences that get etched forever in the soul's celestial journal.

For those that might be wondering, this doesn't mean that a person born in Krishna Paksha won't be materially successful and vice-versa. It just means material pursuits seem more natural to a Shukla Paksha Moon than spiritual ones, while the opposite is true for a Krishna Paksha Moon.

A corollary is that, because of this innate nature, Krishna Paksha natives are innately better equipped to deal with materialistically challenging Grahas, i.e., those that are Krura (stern), commonly misconstrued as malefic. Conversely, effective handling of materialistically supportive Grahas, i.e., those that Saumya (genial), comes more naturally to Shukla Paksha natives.



Rulership

There is a three-fold rulership structure to Tithis that we can leverage to further our understanding of the nature and characteristics of each Tithi. We do so by getting to know the rulers and their influence over their respective Tithis.

The first one is the Tithi Lord who is simply the Graha ruling the Tithi. The Graha rulership of Tithis is in the order of the weekdays with Rahu tagging along at the end. The innate nature, natal Avasthā and Bhāva placement of the Tithi lord are the primary determinants of our ability to effectively leverage the Water element (ability to process and express emotions) in this lifetime.

It thus follows that the ideal placement of the Tithi Lord would be in a Water Rāśī. The next best is an Earth Rāśī. Placed in an Air Rāśī, the Tithi lord has the potential to cause a tropical storm. Since we all know what happens when you pour water over fire, the placement of the Tithi lord in a Fire Rāśī would be the most challenging.

Each Tithi also has an associated Devatā as outlined in the Sanskrit sloka from Muhurta Cintāmaṇi (see table above). The sloka simply lists the Devatās ruling each Tithi in the order of the Tithis.

Last, but probably more significant than the other two, is the association between Tithis and Nitya Devis (constant or eternal forms of the feminine Divine).

The table below lists the three-fold rulership for each Tithi.

Tithi No.	Tithi Name	Samṣkṛta Name	Graha	Devatā	Nitya Devi
1	Pratipad	प्रतिपद्	Sūrya	Agnī	Kāmeśvarī
2	Dvitiyā	द्वितिया	Candra	Brahmā	Bhagamālinī
3	Tritiyā	त्रितिया	Maṅgala	Gaurī	Nityaklinnā
4	Caturthī	चतुर्थी	Budha	Gaṇeśa	Bheruṇḍā
5	Pañcamī	पंचमी	Guru	Sarpa	Vahnivāsini
6	Ṣaṣṭhī	षष्ठी	Śukra	Skanda	Mahāvajreśvarī
7	Saptamī	सप्तमी	Śani	Ravi	Śivadūtī
8	Aṣṭamī	अष्टमी	Rāhu	Śiva	Tvaritā
9	Navamī	नवमी	Sūrya	Durgā	Kulasundarī
10	Daśamī	दशमी	Candra	Yama	Nityā

11	Ekādaśī	एकादशी	Maṅgala	Viśvadeva	Nīlapatākā
12	Dvādaśī	द्वादशी	Budha	Hari	Vijayā
13	Trayodaśī	त्रयोदशी	Guru	Kāma	Sarvamaṅgalā
14	Caturdaśī	चतुर्दशी	Śukra	Śiva	Jvālāmālīnī
15	Purṇimā	पुर्णिमा	Śani	Śaśi	Citrā
15	Amāvasyā	अमावस्या	Rāhu	Pitṛ	Citrā

That's all for this instalment. Next time, we 'll start getting a bit more practical and tangible.

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Pratik is an IT professional by day but a *Jyotiṣi* at heart. Drawn to *Jyotiṣa* since his teenage years, he has always relied on it for divine guidance and grace. He never considered studying *Jyotiṣa* until he became immersed in learning it by sheer happenstance at age 41, when he had his *Lagneśa* (Jupiter) and Saturn transiting his ascendant, which he believes brought about this destined transformation. Since then, he has been ardently pursuing the magical science with the sole intent of using it to better his life, the lives of his loved ones and anyone else that the Universe sends his way. To him, *Jyotiṣa* is a *sadhana* that brings him mental peace and emotional bliss. He can be reached at vyotishforgood2020@gmail.com.