

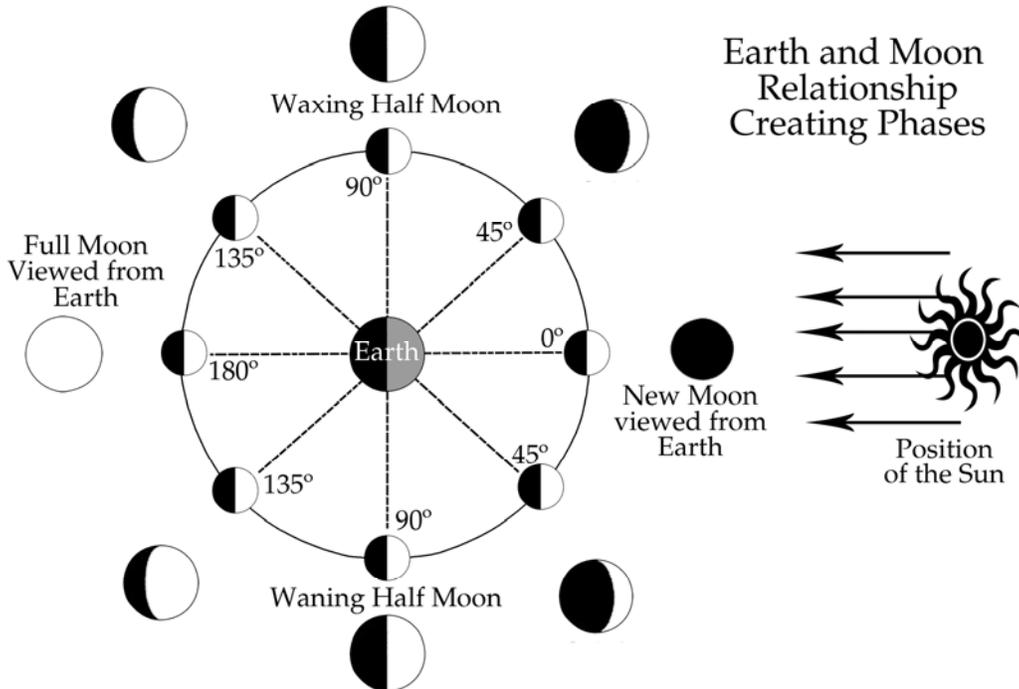
New Moon (Amāvāsyā) Pacification

The following is a translation and commentary of one of the oldest astrological texts in Vedic Astrology called Bṛhat Paraśara Horā Śāstra. The Sage Paraśara describes the results of births on a New Moon as well as the ritual for a remedy.

दर्शजन्मशान्त्यध्यायः ॥

Darśa janma śāntyadhyaḥ || 86 (88)||
Shānti Pūja for Birth on the New Moon

Commentary: Amāvāsyā is the New Moon where the illuminated portion of the Moon is facing the Sun while the unilluminated portion faces the Earth- therefore the Earth is lacking the nourishment of the Moon. The Moon is the planetary Mother, nourisher and sustainer of all activities in our lives. During the Full Moon the Sun and Moon are 180 degrees apart (as shown in the diagram below) and when the Sun sets the Moon rises- meaning the Moon is in the sky the entire night and sets when the Sun rises. Its light is strongest on the Earth. During the New Moon the Sun and the Moon are together which does not allow the Moon to share its blessings. Sage Paraśara says that the New Moon will cause financial problems to the parents and the child. In this way, the individual born on New Moon will lack the full support of the lunar energies in their life.



The Sage Paraśara says,

मैत्रेय दर्शजातानां मातापित्रोर्दरिद्रता ।

तद्दोषपरिहाराय शान्तिं कुर्याद् विचक्षणः ॥ १ ॥

maitreya darśajātānām mātāpitrordaridrātā ।

taddoṣaparihārāya śāntim kuryād vicakṣaṇaḥ ॥ 1॥

Maitreya, births on a New Moon shall bring poverty to the mother and father, The clear-sighted remove that problem (*doṣa*) with a pacification (*śānti*) ritual.

Commentary: In this verse, Paraśara calls this a *darśa doṣa*; *darśa* means to see or be visible, but on the New Moon the lunar disk is not visible so there is a problem (*doṣa*) that we cannot see the Moon. *Vicakṣana* means to see, to be visible as well as a wise person (one who 'sees'). In this way, it is those who see or those who understand, that perform the remedy to allow the Moon to *show* itself in a person's life.

The New Moon is ruled by the Pitṛs (ancestors) and shows some ancestral debt which gives lack of support to the individual in their life. One must understand shared karma, when people come together they share each others karma. If a couple have a child who has karma to be in poverty then the family will fall into poverty, yet in the same way if the child has the karma to be prosperous the whole family will become more prosperous. This shared karma also happens with a spouse, if a person marries an individual with karma to be poor they lower their own position, while marrying an individual with the karma to be wealthy lifts one up financially. How much it will lift one or lower one will depend on the karmic strength of the individuals involved. Some vernacular texts mention that birth in the first half of the tithi (lunar phase of twelve degrees) will cause problems to the mother while birth in the second half of the tithi will cause problems to the father. This works most of the time but not always, combinations in the chart will modify these more specific results.

A debate that often arises is if the parents are well off whether they need to do the ritual, or after the native is grown whether it is beneficial to do this ritual. The placement of the tithi lord (Rahu) will modify the *doṣa* as well as change when and how it will affect the parents and the person. Poverty has many connotations and can effect many levels of life like marriage, career and health. The New Moon literally is showing that there is some scarcity or feeling of lack in the individual's life. Individuals born during this time will carry some insufficiency that will lead to either financial poverty, mental problems, or a lack

of fulfillment that can lead to infidelity. The remedy for New Moon aims to harmonize the Sun (soul) and Moon (mind). In this way, it is always beneficial to gain the blessings of the Sun and Moon to achieve one's highest potential in life.

Amāvāsyā (New Moon) is ruled by Rahu which makes the north node very strong in the natal chart. When this happens Jupiter becomes very weak. There is a story about Jupiter losing his wife once and was unable to get her back during the New Moon phase. This represents the inability of Jupiter to be affective in the chart when an individual is born at this time. As a consequence, great combinations with Jupiter, like Haṁsa Mahāpuruṣa or Gajakesarī, will not give results until after a New Moon Pūja is completed.

Jupiter represents divinity and a person sense of divinity. In general, people with New Moon often do not see god in the temple (through Jupiter) but will see god more in nature. Therefore, one colloquial remedy is to worship nature; the individual is recommended to worship at a sacred tree facing the southwest direction (of Rahu).

On the positive side, it is said that a woman who has Amāvāsyā doṣa will have three children (sons) after this pūja is complete. In this way, there is a joke that the Brahmins will tell people not to marry a girl born on Amāvāsyā, so that they can marry them to their sons after the pūja, and have the blessing of three sons.

कलशस्थापनं कृत्वा प्रथमं विधिपूर्वकम् ।

उदुम्बरटाश्वत्थचूतानां पल्लवांस्तथा ॥ २ ॥

सनिम्बानां च मूलानि त्वचस्तत्र विनिक्षिपेत् ।

पंचरत्नानि निक्षिप्य वस्त्रयुग्मेन चेष्टयेत् ॥ ३ ॥

kalaśasthāpanam kṛtvā prathamam vidhipūrvakam ।

udumbaraṭāśvatthacūtānām pallavāṁstathā ॥ 2 ॥

sanimbānām ca mūlani tvacastatra vinikṣipet ।

pañcaratnāni nikṣipy vastrayugmena ceṣṭayet ॥ 3 ॥

Begin by establishing the kalaśa (water pot) according to standard procedures,

Add the tender leaves of udumbara, banyan, pīpal, mango,

And neem and also insert the roots and bark [of these trees],

Add the five gems (pañcaratna) and cover the kalaśa with clothe.

Commentary: A kalaśa is a specific type of water pot used in Vedic rituals. There are specific practices for installing this; such as making a heap of rice, then placing the kalaśa on top, adding certain herbs for the ritual, putting in leaves, a coconut on top, yellow clothe on top and red clothe around the base, and tilak to the kalaśa. One should either learn the proper procedure or have it down buy a pujari (Vedic priest) according to regional tradition.

The leaves, roots and bark of five trees are added to the water in the kalaśa. Udumbara (*Ficus glomerata*) is a type of fig that is sacred to the Moon. It is known as a *cluster fig* in English and *Gular* in Hindi. As a talisman it is said to give the blessings of fertility. Planting it gives the blessings of the Moon. Banyan (*Ficus benghalensis* L.) is sacred to Śiva, Pīpal (*Ficus religiosa*) is sacred to Viṣṇu, Mango is sacred to Hanuman, and neem is sacred to the Sun. Vṛkṣa Ayurveda says planting neem gives the blessings of the Sun. If it is possible to get the leaf, root and bark of these trees (such as in India) then this should be done. In other places one should try to add at least some part of each tree to the kalaśa. In some cases when this is not available, outside of India, an herbal formula of sacred trees is added.

Earth	Mango
Water	Udumbara
Fire	Neem
Air	Banyan
Space	Pīpal

Then the bhasma of the five gems are added the water. The nine gems (*navaratna*) relates to the nine planets, the 7 gems (*saptaratna*) relates to the planets ruling the seven days of the week. The five gems (*pañcaratna*) relates to the planets ruling the five elements. Though the other groups are clear there is much discrepancy about the five gems as some use the gems relating to the color of the elements and not the gems relating to the planet who rules the element. For example, some use emerald, blue sapphire, ruby, yellow sapphire, and diamond, while the Kapila Muni temple in Bengal considers the five gems to be

Earth	Emerald
Water	Pearl
Fire	Ruby
Air	Blue Sapphire
Space	Diamond

pearl, diamond, emerald, yellow topaz, and red coral, while yet other rituals consider both pearl and ruby to be part of the combination. I cannot give a definitive answer but use the five gems that my guru uses, as shown in the chart to the side. He believes that “these gemstones can hold the element (*tattva*) thereby

preventing too many modifications which are the root of disease”. With these gemstones the five subtle elements are brought into peace and balance so one can attain *their* highest level of prosperity.

In India the bhasma (gem ash) is easily available, but it may be hard to acquire in other places. In this case there are many other alternatives such as gem essence waters or if the actual gemstone is available to use this in the kalaśa and return it afterwards.

सर्वे समुद्र इति चाऽपोहिष्ठादित्र्युचेन च ।

आमन्त्र्य कलशे तच्च स्थापयेद् वह्निकोणके ॥ ४ ॥

sarve samudra iti cā'pohiṣṭhādityrcena ca ।

āmantrya kalaśe tacca sthāpayed vahnikoṇake ॥ 4॥

Sanctify the kalaśa with three verses of the Apohiṣṭā Hymn

And establish it in the Southeastern direction (*agni-koṇa*).

Commentary: The kalaśa is established in the South eastern direction of the home (or place of pūja) with the *Apohiṣṭā* prayer from the Ṛg Veda. Paraśara mentions only the recitation of the first three lines. But I have included the entire hymn here to share its beauty; the worship of the clarifying and healing aspects of the sacred Waters.

Apohiṣṭā Prayer: Ṛg Veda, Maṇḍala 10, Sūkta 9¹

आपो हि ष्ठा मयोभुवस्ता न ऊर्जे दधातन । महे रणाय चक्षसे ॥१॥

āpo hi ṣṭhā mayobhuvastā na ūrje dadhātana । mahe raṇāya cakṣase ॥1॥

Since, Waters, you are the sources of happiness,
grant to us to enjoy abundance, and great and delightful perception.

यो वः शिवतमो रसस्तस्य भाजयतेह नः । उशतीरिव मातरः ॥२॥

yo vaḥ śivatamo rasastasya bhājayateha naḥ । uśatīriva mātaraḥ ॥2॥

Give us to partake in this world of your most auspicious juice,
like affectionate mothers.

तस्मा अरं गमाम वो यस्य क्षयाय जिन्वथ । आपो जनयथा च नः ॥३॥

tasmā araṁ gamāma vo yasya kṣayāya jinvaṭha । āpo janayathā ca naḥ ॥3॥

¹ Translation by Wilson, H. H. *Ṛgveda Saṁhitā* vol. 4, Parimal Publications, Delhi

Let us quickly have recourse to you, for that your (faculty) of removing (sin) by which you gladden us: waters, bestow upon us progeny [creative potentials].

शं नो देवीरभिष्टय आपो भवन्तु पीतये । शं योरभि स्रवन्तु नः ॥४ ॥

śam no devīrabhiṣṭaya āpo bhavantu pītaye | śam yorabhi sṛvantu naḥ ||4||

May the divine water be propitious to our worship. (May they be good) for our drinking: may they flow round us, and be our health and safety.

ईशाना वार्याणां क्षयन्तीश्चर्षणीनाम् । अपोयाचामि भेषजम् ॥५ ॥

īśānā vāryāṇāṃ kṣayantīścarṣaṇīnām | apoyācāmi bheṣajam ||5||

Waters, sovereigns of precious (treasures), granters of habitations to men, I solicit of you medicine (for mine infirmities).

अप्सु मे सोमो अब्रवीदन्तर्विश्वानि भेषजा । अग्निं च विश्वशंभुवम् ॥६ ॥

apsu me somo abravīdantarviśvāni bheṣajā | agniṃ ca viśvaśambhuvam ||6||

Soma has declared to me: all medicines, as well as Agni, the benefactor of the universe, are in the waters.

आपः पृणीत भेषजं वरूथं तन्वे मम । ज्योक् च सूर्यं दृशे ॥७ ॥

āpaḥ pṛṇīta bheṣajam varūtham tanve mama | jyok ca sūryam dṛśe ||7||

Waters, bring to perfection all disease-dispelling medicines for the good of my body, that I may long behold the Sun.

इदमापः प्र वहत यत्किं च दुरितं मयि

यद् वाहमभिदुद्रोह यद्वा शेष उतानृतम् ॥८ ॥

idamāpaḥ pra vahata yatkiṃ ca duritam mayi

yad vāhamabhidudroha yadvā śeṣa utānṛtam ||8||

Waters, take away whatever sin has been (found) in me, Whether I have knowingly or unknowing done wrong, or have pronounced imprecations, or have spoken untruth.

आपो अद्यान्वचारिषं रसेन समगस्महि

पयस्वानग्न आ गहि तं मा सं सृज वर्चसा ॥९॥

āpo adyānvacāriṣaṁ rasena samagasmahi

payasvānagna ā gahi taṁ mā saṁ sṛja varcasā ॥9॥

I have this day entered into the waters: we have mingled with their essence.
Agni abiding in the waters approach, and fill me with vigour.

दर्शस्य देवयोश्चाऽथ चन्द्रभास्करयोः क्रमात् ।

प्रतिमां स्वर्णजां नित्यं राजतीं ताम्रजां तथा ॥ ५ ॥

darśasya devayoścā'tha candrabhāskarayoḥ kramāt ।

pratimāṁ svarṇajāṁ nityaṁ rājatīṁ tāmrajāṁ tathā ॥ 5॥

The 'New-Moon-Devas' are the Moon and Sun

Images of them should be made of gold, or of silver and copper.

Commentary: The deities to be worshipped for the pacification of the New Moon birth are the Moon and Sun. The verse implies the images are made in gold and if not then in silver and copper. Traditionally the the Sun is in gold and if not affordable then in copper while the Moon is in silver. In these days of gold plating it is inexpensive to have a gold image of the Sun. Worship of the golden colored Sun improves the intelligence and impells the dhī śakti. In cases where a three demensional image is unavailable then a framed picture or other type of two demensional image can be used.

आप्यायस्वेति मन्त्रेनऽ सविता पश्चात्तमेव च ।

उपचारैः समाराध्य ततो होमं समाचरेत् ॥ ६ ॥

āpyāyasveti mantrena' savitā paścāttameva ca ।

upacāraiḥ samārādhyā tato homaṁ samācaret ॥ 6॥

Worship with the Ā Pyāyasva mantra and the Savitā Paścāt mantra and propitiate (*samārādhyā*) with upacāra pūja and perform homa thoroughly.

Commentary: The Moon is worshiped with the Ā Pyāyasva mantra from Ṛg Veda, Maṇḍala 1, Sūkta 91, verse 16, while the Sun is worshipped with Savitā Paścāt mantra from Ṛg Veda, Maṇḍala 10, Sūkta 36, verse 14. Then complete pūja and homa are done.

Mantra for the Moon:

आ प्यायस्व समेतु ते विश्वतः सोम वृष्ण्यम् भवा वाजस्य संगथे ॥

ā pyāyasva sametu te viśvataḥ soma vṛṣṇyam bhavā vājasya saṅgathe || 1.91.16 ||

Grow to fullness, Soma, may you gather strength from everywhere,
Focusing on success and prosperity.

Mantra for the Sun:

सविता पश्चातात् सविता पुरस्तात् सवितोत्तरात्तात्सविताधरात्तात्

सविता नः सुवतु सर्वतातिं सविता नोरासतां दीर्घमयुः ॥१४ ॥

savitā paścātāt savitā purastāt savitottarāttātsavitādharāttāt

savitā naḥ suvatu sarvatātiṃ savitā norāsatāṃ dīrghamayuh || 10.36.14 ||

May Savitā on the West, Savitā on the east, Savitā on the north,
Savitā on the South, may Savitā send us all desired wealth,
may Savitā bestow upon us long life.

समिधश्च चरुं विद्वान् क्रमेण जुहुयात् व्रती ।

भक्त्या सवितृमन्त्रेण सोमो धेनुश्च मन्त्रतः ॥ ७ ॥

अष्टोत्तरशतं वापि अष्टविंशतिरेव वा ।

samidhaśca caruṃ vidvān krameṇa juhuyāt vratī ।

bhaktiā savitr̥mantreṇa somo dhenuśca mantrataḥ || 7 ||

aṣṭottaraśataṃ vāpi aṣṭaviṃśatireva vā ।

The learned priest offers wood, cooked food (*caru*) according to custom,
while chanting the Savitor Gāyatrī and the Somo Dhenu mantra
with devotion 108 or 28 times.

Commentary: The specifics of the homa are mentioned here. Wood and some cooked food offerings are given to the fire with mantras to the Sun and Moon. The cooked food relating to the Moon is sweetened rice- like rice pudding. For the Sun some type of cooked wheat product is offered- like cooked wheat 'berries'. This offering is done either 108 or 28 times for each the Sun and Moon according to the strength of the individual doing the pūja and the time constraints of the priest and others involved. It is stated here that this offering to

the Sun and Moon should be done with devotion (bhakti) as to the cosmic mother and father. The mantras recommended by Paraśara are traditional Ṛg Veda mantras though various regional mantras for the Sun and Moon are often substituted with devotion.

The mantra for offering to the Sun and Moon is different than the one used for worship. The mantra for the Sun is the Savitor Gāyatrī from Ṛg Veda, Maṇḍala 3, Sūkta 62, verse 10. The mantra for offering to the Moon, and is found in Ṛg Veda, Maṇḍala 1, Sūkta 92, verse 20.

Savitor Gāyatrī for the Sun:

तत् सवितुर्वरेण्यं भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात्

tat savituro vareṇyam bhargo devasya dhīmahī dhiyo yo naḥ pracodayāt ||3.62.10||

'That' which is self-evident is the highest awakener

We meditate upon the self-effulgent source which is the illuminator of all
Please direct our intelligence/intuition/understanding.

सोमो धेनुं सोमो अर्वन्तमाशुं सोमो वीरं कर्मण्यं ददाति

सादन्यं विदथ्यं सभेयं पितृश्रवणं यो ददाशदस्मै ॥

somo dhenum somo arvantamāśuṁ somo vīraṁ karmaṇyam dadāti

sādanyam vidathyam sabheyam pitṛśravaṇam yo dadāśadasmai ||1.92.20||

To the one who presents offerings, Soma gives a milk filled cow (constant prosperity), a fast horse (good vehicles), a competent son who is skillful in his work, arranges religious festivities, is fit for an assembly/council, and brings honour to the family lineage (successful and beneficial endeavors).

A third devatā, Kali, is often worshipped for the alleviation of the New Moon doṣa with the Dakṣina Kali mantra or a variation of it. As the New moon is the time of Kali and the 22 syllabled mantra is the most auspicious for Her. Often before this puja a native will do a forty day sadhana of the Dakṣina Kali mantra and end it with this puja.

In cases of mature people performing this pūja, the priest may initiate the individual into certain mantras at this time. This may be a Sun mantra, Moon mantra or Kali mantra either done according to the suggestion of the astrologer recommending the pūja or according to the priest based on nimitta (omens) at

the time of the ritual. A mantra given in this way is a great blessing and will have powerful results for the individual.

अभिषेकं तथा कुर्यात् दम्पत्योश्च सुपुत्रयोः ॥ ८ ॥

abhiṣekaṁ tathā kuryāt dāmpatyōśca suputrayoḥ ॥ 8॥

Then abhiṣeka is given to the husband, wife and the child.

Commentary: After the entire ritual is complete. The family sits and the pūjari will pour the water from the kalaśa over the head of the mother father and the child born on the New Moon. If the parents are not present then the native will either sit or kneel and all the water is poured over the native's head who is born on the New Moon. This water has been charged and has special power; the cleansing of the negative karma associated with the New Moon and the blessing of the Sun and Moon devatās.

For this reason, this is not a pūja that can be done far away with some prasād sent overseas to the individual. It is much better to have a smaller local pūja where this charged water is able to be poured over the individual.

हिरण्यं रजतं चैव कृष्णधेनुश्च दक्षिणा ।

ब्राह्मणान् भोजयेत् शक्त्या ततः क्षेममवाप्नुयात् ॥ ९ ॥

hiranyam rajatam caiva kṛṣṇadhenuśca dakṣiṇā ।

brāhmaṇān bhojayet śaktyā tataḥ kṣemamavāpnuyāt ॥ 9॥

Gold and silver and a black cow are offered in donation,

Brahmins are fed according to one's ability,

And then one will attain peace, security and prosperity.

Commentary: Some priests will often not have a set price, but expect you to give proper donation. The amount will depend on the level of the priest and place of pūja. In general all implements/supplies used in the ritual should be paid before the pūja. Then after the abhiṣeka (the pouring of the water), one offers the priest some new clothing (like a dhoti) and their donation (dakṣina). Talk about the general cost either with the priest, his helper or spouse or the person recommending the pūja. After you give the clothes and dakṣina the preist will give his own small blessing to you.

The black cow represents something that sustains the pūjari/temple in the longer term. For this one can give donation to either the charitable work of the priest/temple, or some other charitable organization that helps the suffering. This place or group for charity should be decided before hand so it can be done after the pūja as part of the ritual.

The feeding of Brahmins is done after any ritual. In Puri, Orissa, where I studied, we would invite over some local priests and friends and have food from the temple after the rituals. It is simialr to having a banquet after a wedding or other special occasion. The last verse says to do this according to one's own ability. For larger pūjas this should be a large feeding ceremony afterward. For smaller pūjas this can be simply giving a small donation to a temple/church kitchen or food shelter, as well as treating the friends and priest that joined you for a meal afterwards. For the New Moon Pūja this feeding element is very important as the Full Moon represents food while the New Moon represents lack of food. The giving of food thereby becomes important for bringing abundance into one's life.

After the ritual is complete, the images of the Sun and Moon are installed in the home and given regular attention of incense, etc. A small pūja to them is recommended once a year on the *janma tithi* (the New Moon during the month the individual was born). With this ritual and we are pacifying the negative past life karma given through the Sun and Moon and thereby bringing more light into our life.

Getting Ready for the Pūja

The following is a list of items to prepare for before the Pūja (please discuss with the priest whether he or you will be aquiring these items so they may be present for your pūja). Too often people arrive (or the priest arrives) for the pūja and the ritual procedes without the proper items. This is the limitation of the doṣa itself, and it is best to organize well so everything is done as close to to the prescribed remedy as possible. All non-mentioned ritual items are generally arranged by the priest but be sure to discuss and pay for these materials before hand so at the time of dakṣina (donation) it is for the time and energy of the priest directly. All things in this last paragraph will vary from temple to temple, but this is the general idea for you to discuss with your pūjari.

-Images of the Sun and Moon

- Herbs for the water pot
- The 'five gems' basma or essence or actual gems
- Rice pudding (kir) for offering to the Moon
- Cooked wheat for offering to the Sun
- Wood for offering to the fire
- Place for charity donation (often associated with placement of New Moon)
- Place or people for feeding (food donation)

For questions or comments please contact (or have your pūjari contact) Freedom Cole at freedomfamily@gmail.com .

॥Auṁ Namaḥ Śivāya॥