

# Yoga Explained 19

## The Astral Body: Seven Main Centers of Energy

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Going on now with our discussion of Yoga Explained; you will remember we have been discussing the Subtle Body with its 19 Elements, of which you, I'm sure by now, are quite familiar.

Just like in the Physical Body there are 16 Elements. But these Elements also are arranged in the various functions – parts of the Physical Body – and also with the various functions – like the arms and the legs; and then the nervous system – the arteries, and excretory systems, and such things. But behind these are 16 Elements. So in the Astral Body there are 19 Elements, which you know as the 10 Senses, the 5 Pranas, Mind, Intellect, Ego, and Feeling. But those also are arranged – the different parts and energies corresponding to the nervous energy in the Physical Body – Energies and Chakras and Currents. Chakras are the centers, or transformers, so to speak, whereby the Subtle Pranic Energy is spread out through the various aspects of the Subtle Body. And those things are important.

Just to review a little bit about the Ego and Higher Feeling, which we have taken up last time. The difference between the Ego is simply the Soul Consciousness with a little attachment to the body. So the Ego is not so bad, except the attachment is quite permanent. When we can remove that attachment and then the Soul comes forth. And the Soul, of course, is the ray, or the atom of Spirit. Each one of us is a ray of the Infinite Spirit of God, but when that Infinite Spirit of God, as our Soul, becomes attached to the body, then, it is known as Ego. Remember, Ego is the “false self,” that's all.

Now the Feeling, the Feeling within us, as likes and dislikes – just to be sure you do not forget that – we all have likes and dislikes, but that's simply our Soul Feeling, or the Infinite Feeling of God, attached to the body, creating likes and dislikes. And that attachment is what makes so much trouble, because the Feeling that you have for these flowers, and for one another, and such things is none other than your Soul Consciousness. But when the attachment comes, its likes and dislikes, and that dilutes the Soul, the Feeling of the Soul, and therefore,

an element of the Astral Body is the Ego plus its Feeling – none other than the Soul attached to that vehicle.

As I was saying, in the Physical Body there are not only the 16 Elements, corresponding, as there are, or rather, as there are 19 Elements in the Astral Body. But these are arranged in different functions and tissues and parts. The body parts you know. Now the Astral, the parts of the Astral Body, are made up of Energies, different Energies, and Centers of distribution of those Energies, and Currents which are flowing through us all the time. And sometimes, in our meditations, we will be cognizant of those Currents, those Energies, and sometimes the Chakras, or the Centers. But these are the parts which are made of the 19 Elements of the body of which I just spoke. Remember these important things.

Let us first take up the Energies, Currents, and Centers of Consciousness – let us take up the Centers of Energy, so to speak. These constitute the Seven Main Centers of Distribution of Spiritual Force within each and every one of us.

The first or the 7<sup>th</sup>, the top one, so to speak, is the Supreme Center, the Thousand-petalled Lotus. The 6<sup>th</sup> Center is the Medulla Center, the Mouth of God, whereby all the Cosmic Energy comes into us. As it comes into the 6<sup>th</sup> Center, located at this point in the little dent just beneath this bump on [the back of] your head – we all have one – right below, below that is the 6<sup>th</sup> Center, the Medulla Center; and that's the "mouth of God." Now, from that Center, or through that Center comes the Cosmic Energy. It comes into, and we see it manifesting at the Christ Center where we can use it. And from there it is stored in the Supreme Center of the brain, and there it goes to the different other 5 Centers below the Medulla Center. The ones which you know are the Cervical Center; the Dorsal Center, or Heart Center; the Lumbar Center; the Sacral Center; and the Coccygeal Center. These are centers of vibrating energy, and they are spoken of in many scriptures, and it's good to realize that they are in you and that God's Power is in you in those places; and through His Grace it is kept in a harmonious, or functioning in a harmonious way – if it doesn't then there's trouble. But through the Grace of His Presence we can remove the obstructions and harmony will once more rule.

And so, these, these 7 Centers are spoken of in the different scriptures as Padmas, p-a-d-m-a-s, which means "exquisiteness." And those of you, who through the Grace of God have seen them, they are very exquisite. And they are Centers of vibrating energy, and are spoken of in the scriptures, as I have said. They are called lotuses, too, for the same reason.

Just in passing, realize that these energies within us, and these centers within us of distribution, they are the distribution points of Divinity within us, of God's Cosmic Energy, which is within each and every one of us. And so, they are not to be treated lightly.

Now, first, the different Centers of Energy are spoken of in Revelation, as I'm sure most of you know. Just to review a little bit, in the 1<sup>st</sup> Chapter the 12<sup>th</sup> Verse: "...and being turned," it says, "I saw seven golden candlesticks,<sup>1</sup>" which refers to the 7 Centers of the spine. And the top one is sometimes spoken of as a "great bowl on top," which is the Supreme Center in the brain. Now, these different Centers have different Petals, or Rays of Energy, from the four in the Coccygeal up to the Thousand in the Supreme Center. And every one of those Rays of Energy has a different function to perform in the Astral Body, and likewise, in the Physical Body.

So you can see how great God is, and if we try fathom Him, it's impossible. One of the great saints said, "All I can say is, God is." So great is He. And yet Master once said – I remember distinctly – he said: "You can't command God, but He does listen to His humble devotees sometimes." Why? Because we are part of Him, and if we remove the obstructions through love and through lack of ego, then we can feel His Great Being flowing through us and carrying on the various functions of all the three bodies which hide the Soul.

Now, as I told you, the, the mouth of God is the Medulla Center. And through that, comes into the body all the energy which we are going to use. And it is stored in the Thousand-petalled Lotus and distributed through these other Centers of the spine – distribution points – and from there on, all the different functions are carried on; not only in the Astral Body, but also of this Physical Body. This Physical Body, the Astral Body, made up from this Cosmic Energy which is lodged in the Supreme Center of the brain, it is that which is distributed, and is, it makes the 19 Elements of which I spoke – 10 Senses, 5 Pranas, Mind, Intellect, Ego, and Feeling – made from that Cosmic Energy and Consciousness of God, which comes in through the Medulla, stored in the Supreme Center, and also, is found in these other Centers of distribution throughout our Spiritual Body.

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<sup>1</sup> Revelation 1:12, "And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;"

Now, through yoga you can ascertain and perceive the different parts of the Astral Body. Some of you have seen perhaps, the flashes of light and so forth, because all of these Energies give off Light. They are made of Light. Not solar light, but solar light is the gross counterpart of Astral Light. Like the sun, our sun, which is so bright, is nothing but a counterpart of the Astral Sun, or the Spiritual Sun. And so, within us we have these various Currents, Energies, and Centers – Centers of vibrating Conscious Energy within us.

Now, you will say, “Well, that’s all right, but can they be perceived, or can I know anything about them?” Yes, you can. But you cannot know anything about them with outward consciousness. You cannot know anything about them with the Senses, Mind, or Intellect, because their vibration is much higher. But those who meditate, and supersede the consciousness of sensation, and mind, and intellect, and reason, and thought; then, you will perceive these different Centers, or these different Currents and Centers of Energy. You will perceive them, but not with outward consciousness. Therefore, that’s why we meditate. That’s why we practice yoga, that we may supersede this worldly, mundane consciousness. Otherwise the truth is not known. The mind goes on, and has gone on, ever since the beginning of creation, and will go on, but it will end, because it had a beginning.

Now, unless we rise above mind through yoga and through devotion to God, we will still be a product of that mind, and we will have to suffer all its in... inefficiency, until, finally, we will realize what the saints have all said: “Get above mind; still the waves of the mind, and in the Sea of Bliss you will find what you are searching for. God alone is the only answer.”

Now, yoga will help you to supersede mental activity. There’s no satisfaction in it at all. There’s nothing, but one thing leads to another; one problem leads to another; one confusion leads to another; one controversy leads to another, until you are crazy, so to speak. Now, as Master told me one time, he said, “Unless it was for the Grace of God, God Himself, I would not have been able to preserve my sanity.” Which is true; it’s hard to preserve your sanity under mental influence, because there’s no end to it – there’s no end to the problems. But when, at will, you can supersede mental activity, and thought, and dwell in the Peace of God within, then, you’ll never lose your sanity. It’s impossible, because you’re not in the realm where in...insanity exists.

Insanity is in the realm of mind and confusion. But sanity, if we can call it that, or Peace and Bliss, is in the realm above confusion, where there’s no duality,

where God's Great Love exists. That's where we must all go. And the sooner we realize it, and do not be side-tracked by material values. Values of this world amount to nothing. You read the lives of any of the saints; they do not stop with worldly values. Master told me many times, he said, "I can turn the, the key in this door and walk out and never think of it again" – this big organization, which he, which he founded and which he brought along. That's why he was able to say, "God is with me; I can preserve my sanity."

Now that doesn't just apply to a Master; it applies to each one of us. And when you can, at will, and through practice of yoga and the highest meditation of yoga, which means concentration on God, and rise above mental activity, then you, too, will be safe from this engulfing Maya, of which the Gita says, "All men walk the earth wholly deluded."<sup>2</sup> I for one don't want to walk the earth wholly deluded, if there's a way out. And there is a way out; and that's through the Grace of God.

And I know that each and every one of you who will keep at it – there'll be times when you think, "Well, there's no use. I'll have to give up." Don't give up. If you don't give up, God can't give you up. If you don't give up, God cannot give you up. Master told me one time, he said, "He will never cast you into oblivion." And you and I know that right in our Soul. God won't cast us into oblivion. The mind says, "What have you got? Nothing! Oh, you'll be forgotten when you're through with this place. There will be nothing left for you – everything passes away. Look at the great men in the world. Where are they when they've been in the world? They're all gone and buried." But, if they realize the Presence of God within them, that is still there, and they are in it.

That's the lesson we have to learn, and that's why yoga is so important. We always should practice it. Yoga means union; union with what – mental activity and such things? No. Union with the Infinite Presence of God within us. We must know that. We are God's children. We must manifest and express Divinity, somehow or other – and we cannot be fainthearted. And it says in the Bible, it says that it will come to you, if you do not faint.<sup>3</sup> And I believe that, because it's a hard struggle. But, being made in the Image of God, we have the

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<sup>2</sup> The Bhagavad Gita or The Lord's Song, Translated by Dr. Annie Besant, 1939, 7<sup>th</sup> Discourse, 27<sup>th</sup> Line, "By the delusion of the pairs of opposites, sprung from attraction and repulsion, O Bhārata, all beings walk this universe wholly deluded, O Parantapa."

<sup>3</sup> Proverbs 24:10 and 14, "If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small." "So shall the knowledge of wisdom be unto thy soul: when thou hast found it, then there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off."

reserve power necessary to get us above this delusion where no one can touch us, no instrument of evil, or the devil, can lay any hand on us. All that evil is, is delusion, that's all – duality. But if we rise to the Unity of God's Presence through the practice of yoga, nobody can touch us. Let those who want this manifestation, this worldly consciousness, have it. Don't be side-tracked by it. There'll be nothing left for you.

As Master said, most beautifully, he said, "I came alone with God and I will take nothing from India or America when I depart. I came with Him alone. I will go alone with God, and I will go and wait for you all where there'll be no condition on our happy...happiness or our existence." Now, that's a great lesson to remember. If you follow the Master, follow him. Those are his words, and do not be side-tracked by these little trivial things of life, which are so disconcerting, yet in the end they won't be there – there'll be nothing of that – and it'll be just you and your love for God and God's Love – that's all.

So, these different sensations of the Centers are perceivable. You say, "How will I know I'm progressing?" Well, you will know one thing: sometimes, in the beginning, as you turn your attention inward, and the Current begins to be reversed and go inward, and up toward the Thousand-petalled Lotus, instead of outward, and through sensation, and out into all trouble, it goes inward and starts up to God; now, when it does that, after a little bit, perhaps, it'll arouse the Kundalini a little, and you'll feel a whirling sensation – not in imagination, but really. And so, that's why Moses, when it says – I've forgotten just the book, the Bible – "When (*sic*) Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness..."<sup>4</sup> Now, that's a sensation that will come to you as you practice your yoga and begin to perceive these different Currents within you; when Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness.

Another sensation, which many of you have perceived, is a thread-like sensation in the spine – just a little thread-like sensation – just like those of you who practice Kriya Yoga will be able to feel the cool and the warm in the spine; but then comes a little thread-like sensation – very subtle. If you're thinking of outward things, you won't perceive that. But when your attention is into meditation, you will perceive that thread-like sensation, which tells you that you are, your consciousness is mixing with the subtle consciousness of your spine. That's another thing that comes.

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<sup>4</sup> St. John 3:14, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:"

Also, the different Centers of the spine have different sounds. The Coccygeal has the bee sound; and the Sacral has the flute, or cricket sound; and the Lumbar has the stringed instrument sound; and the Heart Center, the Dorsal Center, has a bell sound. And from there up, it's usually a symphony of sounds ending in the Great Cosmic Sound of Om. Those things are perceivable, if you'll practice your yoga, and meditate with sincerity and with the Love of God in your heart.

Also, another thing that comes to my mind is that there's an awareness. At first, as you begin to get your attention inward and the Current flows inward toward your spine, you will not be aware of much. But after a bit you'll feel an awareness in each Center – just the consciousness of that. When you first start, it's very difficult to feel your spine, deep within. But, after awhile, you begin to feel an awareness in those different places, showing that you are progressing as you meditate.

And, then, another thing is that those different Currents and Chakras have the different Lights, of which I have spoken, and they can be seen as Light – not solar light, but Astral Light. And these – one thing that comes to my mind – as you begin to meditate – I told you in the first place that the Current goes outward toward sensation. We've done that, perhaps for incarnations. Now, we're turning it inward to the Region of the Soul, which is in the spine and the Supreme Center of the brain. Now, when you reverse the Current – just like, you put a resistance in any ordinary electric current, you get a light. So, as you meditate, you may see in your Spiritual Eye a flash of Light, which means, usually, you're in the Lumbar Region and the Current is being reversed, and it meets with resistance. So these, there are many things. That's just a few to arouse your interest perhaps, that you meditate a little deeper.

Now, a few references, just to substantiate what I have said; not everything, because it would take too long, but just one or two. First, from Matthew the 4<sup>th</sup> Chapter, the 4<sup>th</sup> Verse, which is a very wonderful reference, and which substantiates what I said a few minutes ago: "...Man shall not live by bread alone..." that's the food, oxygen, and the different elements which we eat, "but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."<sup>5</sup> "Every word" means vibration of the Great Cosmic Sound of Om, is the Holy Vibration, the Supreme Vibration. This refers to the vibration, or the part of that Holy Vibration, which

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<sup>5</sup> Matthew 4:4, "But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

comes in through the Medulla Center and sustains you. Unless it was for that, even though you say your digestion takes care of the food, but it's the Energy in the digestive processes that takes care of everything.

So, there we have one reference about the fact that the Cosmic Energy of God comes in through the Medulla Center like a beam and sustains us. But due to bad habit, over many incarnations perhaps, we're used to some nice food, once in a while, and some oxygen. But we, we can, by meditation, show that we do not need the oxygen even. The breath quiets down, through the practice of yoga, and you won't die. You'll become healthier, because the internal organs rest. And there's much to that, which we'll take up some other time.

Now from Isaiah, Isaiah on the 45<sup>th</sup>, the, yes, the 45<sup>th</sup> Chapter the first three Verses – just the gist of it. Here we have a reference to the Medulla Center, the 6<sup>th</sup> Center of the spine. And here it says: "Thus saith the Lord to his anointed..." that is, to those who receive the Spiritual Presence of God within, "I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut."<sup>6</sup> This refers to the two leaves – Chakra of the Medulla, the two-rayed Chakra, the outer ring of gold, which some of you have seen, and the dark center, means those two rays – "two-leaved" it's called in here. And when it speaks about, "I shall loose the loins of kings..." the kings have power. And so, when that flows into you, and you know it, then, the Supreme Power of God begins to manifest to you in different and wondrous ways, because that's the Power of all things.

"Thou shalt not live by bread alone, but every word that proceedeth..." out of this Center [Doctor indicates the Medulla]. "And also, I will go before thee..." When you see the Spiritual Eye and you know the Medulla Center is something real and tangible. "I will go before thee and make the crooked places straight; and I will break in pieces the gates of brass and cut asunder the bars of iron."<sup>7</sup> All obstructions must go when you realize the Presence of God coming in through the 6<sup>th</sup> Center. That's why when you see, perhaps at times, the Spiritual Eye, it gives you great consolation, because God's Power is there, and that's what it means.

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<sup>6</sup> Isaiah 45:1, "Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut;"

<sup>7</sup> Isaiah 45:2, "I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron:"

“And also I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places...<sup>8</sup>” – all secrets are in God’s Consciousness; all treasure is there. As I said, those who follow outward things, they’ll have nothing in the end. “Follow God,” Master said, “God alone,” “...that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by the name...” by thy name, “am the God...”<sup>9</sup> (*Sic*) Called by the Holy Vibration, which you hear – that’s the Presence of God.

So this is a wonderful reference; and, finally, just to take a little more time, in Ezekiel, Ezekiel – Ohhh, Oh, I thought I’d lost Ezekiel...there it is – Ezekiel the 3<sup>rd</sup> Chapter the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Verses. These different Chakras emanate different sounds, and those sounds can be heard. And the, the word “Chakra” in Sanskrit, or the word, Sanskrit word for this these Chakras, or the word, Sanskrit word “Chakra” means wheels of vibrating energy.

And so, in Ezekiel we have it spoken of in this way: “Then the spirit took me up and I heard behind me a voice of a great rushing, saying, Blessed be the glory of the Lord from his place.<sup>10</sup>” The “great rushing” is the Cosmic Sound of Om, and with it comes the Consciousness of God’s Presence. That’s why it is spoken of in this way. Also, it says, “I heard also the noise of the wings of living creatures that touched one another and the noise of the wheels...” or this, the different vibrations of the Centers, “over against them and a noise of a great rushing.<sup>11</sup>”

So, there you have a direct reference to these Centers of Vibrating Energy, and which many have heard, especially, the great rushing sound and the sound of the wings of creatures rubbing against one another. One of the devotee’s mother passed away, and her sister knew it, and she was just about to call this other lady and tell her, and she heard the sound of a great rushing, and the wings. Many have heard it. When the Master passed away, I know some heard it, too. That’s the Inner Spiritual Vibration of the different chakras. And the mother’s voice said, “I am so happy here.” So, sometimes God shows his children these things. But these things are real, but they’re not perceivable with outward consciousness.

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<sup>8</sup> Isaiah 45:3, “And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel.”

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ezekiel 3:12, “Then the spirit took me up, and I heard behind me a voice of a great rushing, saying, Blessed be the glory of the LORD from his place.”

<sup>11</sup> Ezekiel 3:13, “I heard also the noise of the wings of the living creatures that touched one another, and the noise of the wheels over against them, and a noise of a great rushing.”

So there, just in a few words, are a few references from our Bible about these currents of Astral Vibrating Energy, which can be perceived through the practice of yoga.

And one or two others from Hindu philosophy, and our own Bhagavad, AY,<sup>12</sup> this is what we read. On page 370<sup>13</sup> for those of you who would like to read it, it says, in the gist of all I have told you this evening is as follows: "The invisible power flows into the human body through the gate of the medulla oblongata. The sixth bodily center is located at the back of the neck at the top of the five spinal chakras (Sanskrit words for wheels...)," which I read in Ezekiel, "or centers of radiating spiritual force. The medulla is the principal entrance for the body's supply of universal life force," the AUM, the Cosmic Energy which you hear – that's the, what sustains you, what has made you. And then he goes on to say, that it is "...directly connected with man's power of will..." at this point [the Christ Center], "between the eyebrows..." And then it is stored in the Supreme Center of the brain, and it is mentioned in the Vedas as the Thousand-petalled Lotus of Light.<sup>14</sup>

So these things are universal. They're not just found in our own teachings, but they're found throughout all scriptures, from the Vedas, to the Bible, to the Koran and all such sacred books.

Now, comes the question perhaps, why, why should we look for these things and struggle so hard? Master has this to say, in one of his references: "The benefit of seeing the Astral Body or its parts is that it enables the yogi to ascend his Soul as body-identified ego from the fleshly prison." Break the attachment. Whenever you see any aspect of the Astral Body, you have broken the attachment of this body. Realize that – of the ego and this body. "Afterwards, the devotee learns how to take his attached Soul out of the Astral, and Ideational-

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<sup>12</sup> Abbreviation for Autobiography of a Yogi, by Paramhansa Yogananda, First Release 1946 (may be downloaded from several websites on the Internet.)

<sup>13</sup> AY, Revision 1951.

<sup>14</sup> Footnote from Chapter 39, "The invisible power flows into the human body through the gate of the medulla oblongata. This sixth bodily center is located at the back of the neck at the top of the five spinal *chakras* (Sanskrit for "wheels" or centers of radiating force). The medulla is the principal entrance for the body's supply of universal life force (AUM), and is directly connected with man's power of will, concentrated in the seventh or Christ Consciousness center (*Kutastha*) in the third eye between the eyebrows. Cosmic energy is then stored up in the brain as a reservoir of infinite potentialities, poetically mentioned in the *Vedas* as the "thousand-petalled lotus of light." The Bible invariably refers to AUM as the "Holy Ghost" or invisible life force which divinely upholds all creation. "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" – I *Corinthians* 6:19.

Causal bodies, and Unite his Soul with the Omnipresent Spirit.” So we should struggle on. And don’t you think you cannot know. You can know, otherwise the urge would not be there.

And finally, just a reference, for inspiration, from Guru Nanak, one of the great Hindu saints. He says such wonderful things, he says this: “The Infinity of the Infinite none shall fathom.” As Lord Shankara said, “All I can say is God is.” “The more thou speaketh the more doth it become. Great is the Lord and high His Seat and higher than the high is His Name.” Higher than the great saints of the world is the holy vibration – the Om. Realize that. That’s why you must merge in it all you can. “How great He is. He Himself knoweth by Himself. O, Nanak, He, the kind and merciful Lord bestoweth His ever-flowing bounties by His grace and kindness.<sup>15</sup> “

God is the most kind. The Master told me, “He is crying for us more than we are crying for Him,” – and we think that we have hardship. So let us realize that, that the practice of this yoga will, if we persevere and do not give up, give us the reward of conscious oneness with the Infinite Father of all.

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<sup>15</sup> Stanza 24, “...The more we describe, the more obscure He becomes. Great is the Lord and high his seat. His Name is the higher than the high. If any one be as great and high as He is then alone he would know that Lofty Being. How great He is, only He Himself knows. O Nanak! the compassionate Lord by His grace bestows gifts.”