

Tenth (Karma) Bhāva

The tenth bhāva is most commonly known as Karma bhāva in vedic astrology. It is variously called the Dashama Bhāva (10th Brava), Karma (occupation, religious acts, work), Rājya (Kingdom), Māna (honour/recognition), Ākāsha (sky or ethereal space), Āgyā (command), Yasha (success) etcetera.

Let us see what area of life of a Jātaka, besides those already indicated above, can be analyzed from this bhāva, utilizing the “Bhāvāt Bhāvam” principle. The 10th bhāva is the 9th bhāva from the 2nd bhāva and can therefore indicate the actual work or means used to acquire the wealth accumulated by a Jātaka. The 2nd bhāva being the bhāva for basic education (including learning from traditions) and the 10th bhāva being bhāva of career, it could also be indicative of how much of fundamental principles of his learning (both academic and traditional) might be used by the Jātaka in his career or honours received by him. We can also analyze the health of siblings and the legacy they might get from analyzing the 10th bhāva as it is the 8th bhāva from the 3rd bhāva. The 10th bhāva being the 7th bhāva from the 4th, it can indicate the lower abdomen of his mother and her associates/partners/travels etc., while being 6th bhāva to the 5th bhāva, the 10th bhāva indicates the diseases/enemies and job that the first progeny of the Jātaka might pursue. We can see that the 10th bhāva is the 5th bhāva from the 6th bhāva and thus can also indicate the Jātaka’s maternal cousins as well as expertise at his job. The 10th bhāva is the 4th bhāva from the 7th bhāva, and can therefore indicate if the Jātaka gets happiness from travels and partners/spouse, while being the 3rd bhāva from the 8th bhāva the 10th bhāva can indicate the valour of his ancestors (performance of last right of the ancestors). The 10th bhāva is the 2nd bhāva from the 9th and therefore indicates the wealth and speech of Jātaka’s father as 9th bhāva is indicator of Jātaka’s father. It can also indicate the manner in which he will speak about religion or duties performed by him. Obviously good influence on the 10th bhāva will indicate good results in these areas, while malefics influence could indicate something negative in the area. One must also understand that the planets involved in such influence will also indicate the manner in which the Jātaka will act and the way the influence manifests.

The tenth bhāva is said to be the strongest of the four kendras (squares). The reason is obvious. Whatever qualities one might possess, they are of not use to anyone including the Jātaka unless he works in the right direction to utilize these inherent qualities properly, and get their full results in this life. This again is why Māna or honour is attributed to this bhāva. We must also know that the two powerful malefics that is Sun and Mars attain Digbala, that is directional strength, in the 10th bhāva. Looking at attributes of these malefics we can see that Sun being the natural leader (king) of people is an administrator and Mars is the one who likes to fight any challenge and rules logic, it is natural that these qualities applied to the pursuit of career can elevate the Jātaka much, and can also earn him reputation, if they are strong. We can also understand that in this position the malefics aspect the 4th house of happiness and home. It does not take much to understand that one who wants success at career and recognition cannot afford to sit at home enjoying comforts, if he really wants to succeed.

Pārāshara has given kārakatwa (indications) of this bhāva to Budha (Mercury). It is obvious that one must have good grasp over the work he does and one must also understand that one has to negotiate the various difficulties that he might have to face in pursuit of his career. Which can be the planet who is better than Mercury whose caste is defined as Vaishya (trader community), and whose nature is to act according to those he comes in contact with, to be able to do this? It is also worth noting that other learned have given such kārakatwa to Sun,

Tenth (Karma) Bhāva

Jupiter and Saturn too, in addition to Mercury. This is not incorrect as if we look at the way work was allotted to the four castes as defined in Hindu system of administrative units, Sun represents the ruler, Jupiter those imparting knowledge, Mercury the traders and Saturn represents the labour class.

At the risk of inviting ire of both devout Hindus, and those trying to perpetuate the caste system as a system of oppression of the downtrodden, I must mention here that the caste system amongst the Hindus is one of the most misunderstood system of division of work, not only by those of other religion, and nationality, but by most Hindus themselves. This arises from the assumption of modern Hindus, and scholars, that the caste system is rigid and one has to be born in a particular caste to be recognized as belonging to that caste. I would invite the discriminating reader's attention to the following shloka (aphorism) of "Bhagvadgeeta" one of the most respected preaching of essence of Hindu religion and importance of karma, where Lord Krishna tells Arjuna about how the "ChāturvarNa" (four castes) were created, when he says:

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्म विभागशः ॥४॥१३॥१॥

cāturvarṇyaṁ mayā sṛṣṭaṁ guṇakarma vibhāgaśaḥ||4||13||1||

Meaning: The four castes are created by me on the basis of their qualities and work (jobs/career).

It is thus obvious that the castes are to be understood on the basis of the nature and career of a human being. Thus Jupiter and Venus being Brahmin grahas will indicate one engaged in karma that needs brain power, Sun and Mars being Kshatriya will indicate one who works by fighting/dominating others, Mercury and Moon being Vaishya will indicate working through the ability to negotiate and trade, whereas Saturn being Shudra graha will indicate work where hard work is essential. This again could be the reason that other sages thought it fit to allot kāraṅkatwa of the 10th bhāva to Sun, Jupiter and Saturn as indicators of the 4 primary classes of karma that a Jātaka can perform.

We have to understand that the kāraṅkatwas given being indicative of the class of work, the other planets belonging to identical class occupying or influencing the 10th can indicate similar work/career but modified by the specific nature of the relevant graha (planet). The nodes (Rāhu and Ketu) have a tendency to behave according to the bhāvas occupied or the bhāva lords they conjoin and hence they are not given specific kāraṅkatwa for the 10th bhāva. However Rāhu being described as the outcaste will indicate work involving the downtrodden, non traditional methods, or foreign element in the work being carried out by the Jātaka and Ketu occupying it could indicate the Jātaka who might give up his job (and take up own profession, perhaps in different area).

Before closing this article on the 10th bhāva, I would like to draw the attention of readers to one very important thing that must be remembered in connection of the 10th bhāva. Always remember that in the chapter on indication of life span, the venerated Pārāshara has given equal importance to the 10th bhāva lord and Saturn as is given to the lord of the 8th bhāva, in the matter of both career and lifespan in the following shloka:

Tenth (Karma) Bhāva

एवं हि शनिना चिन्ता कार्या तर्कैर्विचक्षणैः।

कर्माधिपेन च तथा चिन्तनं कार्यमायुषः ॥ १९।३ ॥

evaṃ hi śaninā cintā kāryā tarkaivicakṣaṇaiḥ।
karmādhipeṇa ca tathā cintanaṃ kāryamāyusaḥ॥19।3॥

Meaning: As one thinks of the karma of the Jātaka, from lord of the Karma (10th lord) and Saturn, lifespan of the Jātaka from Saturn and the 10th bhāva lord (in a fashion similar to analysis of the 8th lord for of the Jātaka).

As has been our practice let us close this article by looking at the opinion of the learned Vaidyanātha, who in his classic Jātaka Pārijāta says:

आज्ञामानविभूषणानि वसनव्यापारनिद्राकृषि प्रव्रज्यागमकर्मजीवनयशोविज्ञानविद्याः क्रमात्।

कर्मस्वामिदिनेशबोधनगुरुच्छायासुतैश्चिन्तयेदुक्तानि प्रविहाय पूर्वमशुभे मानी विमानो भवेत् ॥ १५।१ ॥

ājñāmānavibhūṣaṇāni vasaṇavyāpāranidrākṛṣi
pravrajyāgamakarmajīvanayaśovijñānavidyāḥ kramāt।
karmasvāmidineśabodhanagurucchāyāsutaiścintayeduktāni pravihāya
pūrvamaśubhe mānī vimāno bhavet॥15।1॥

Meaning: Giving commands, honour, splendor/ornaments, clothes/garments, trade, not sleeping, agriculture activities, renunciation, work related to sacred sciences, success in life and knowledge of sciences are to be understood from the lord of the 10th bhāva, Sun, Mercury, Jupiter and Saturn respectively. Should malefic occupy the earlier (10th bhāva) the Jātaka loses his honour/reputation.