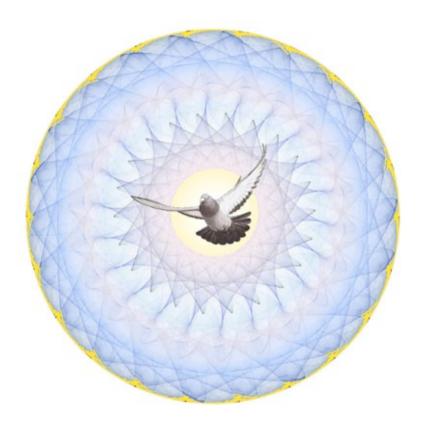
## SACRED SYMBOLS

- Keys to Unlock Their Meaning -



Selected Phrases by Paramhansa Yogananda

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## THE LOTUS FLOWER: Soul-Unfoldment

The lotus flower is an ancient divine symbol in India; its unfolding petals suggest the expansion of the soul; the growth of its pure beauty from the mud of its origin holds a benign spiritual promise.

### THE EYES: Soul

The eyes are the symbol of your soul.

## THE CHRISTMAS TREE: Spine and Chakras

The seven lighted stars or centers of the spine, which is the tree of life, are symbolized by the Christmas tree with its lights.

## TREE OF LIFE: Nervous System

The Tree of Life symbolizes the tree-like nervous system through which the sap of life flows so that the blossoms of the sense and thoughts may flourish for harvesting.

A human being is an upturned tree; the hair and the cranial nerves are the roots, the spinal cord is the trunk, and the afferent and efferent nerves ramifying from them are the branches.

### AUM: God

His symbol is Aum. Spherical expansion—that is what Aum does. Expansion of spherical sound.

## COSMIC SOUND: God in Creation

Remember that Cosmic Sound. Try to understand the symbol of that sound. That sound is the representative of God in creation.

## 12 ASTROLOGICAL SIGNS: Cosmic Man

The twelve astral signs of the zodiac [are] the symbolic Cosmic Man.

### HOROSCOPE: Karmic Pattern

On attaining ever higher, divine states of consciousness, the devotee finds that his seeds of past actions (karma), as symbolized by the planetary positions in his horoscope, become destroyed: roasted in the blazing fire of wisdom.

## BREATH: Mortal Enslavement

He knows his real nature is bound neither by physical encasement nor by breath, symbol of the mortal enslavement to air, to nature's elemental compulsions.

### SWAN: Discrimination

As the symbol of discrimination, the white *hansa* swan is thought of as able to separate the true soma nectar from a mixture of milk and water.

### SKIN: Inner Cleanliness

A truly beautiful skin is a symbol of internal cleanliness.

## BEAUTIFUL TEMPLES: Wonders of God

Many temples of worship
are masterpieces of grace and beauty,
their lines reminders in majestic stone
of the formless wonders of God.
No symbol, however, can replace the Reality it represents.
God must be experienced in the soul.

### CHURCH: God-Contact

The church is a symbol of God-contact.

## WINE AND BREAD: Cosmic Energy and Christ Consciousness

There are ceremonies in Christian churches in which people drink blessed wine as the blood of Jesus Christ and blessed bread as his flesh.

This is symbolical.

This ceremony should remind true devotees that by learning the technique of meditation from a Christ-like soul, they can learn to eat or absorb

Christ Consciousness (bread) in their consciousness and drink or recharge in their lives the blood or Cosmic Energy present in Christ Consciousness, and thus attain everlasting life.

#### **INDIAN DEITIES**

All the images of gods in India are symbolic. We must look beyond their shapes to the hidden meanings they represent.

### KALI: Nature

Kali is a symbol of God
in the aspect of eternal Mother Nature....
Kali represents the eternal principle in nature.
She is traditionally pictured as a four-armed woman, standing on the form of the God Shiva or the Infinite, because nature or the phenomenal world is rooted in the Noumenon.
The four arms symbolize cardinal attributes, two beneficent, two destructive, indicating the essential duality of matter or creation.

### SARASWATI: Wisdom

Saraswati, goddess of wisdom, is symbolized as performing on the vina, mother of all stringed instruments.

## ELEMENTS IN CEREMONIES: Bodily Elements

A group of my American students, garbed in Hindu ceremonial clothes, chanted the ancient hymns as an offering was made of flowers, water, and fire: symbols of the bodily elements and their release in the Infinite Source.

## RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES: Wisdom

Religious ceremonies are symbols of wisdom.

To idolize the symbol

by the mechanical performance of ceremonies

without understanding their significance

is of little use.

DOVE: Holy Spirit; Aum Vibration

The dove as a Christian symbol represents the Holy Spirit or Sacred Vibration.

### MICROCOSM: God

God is definitely symbolized in the micro-cosmic thought, astral and physical vibrations.

## SATAN: Not Symbolic

There was a time when I used to believe
Satan was a symbolical force,
a metaphysical delusion,
but now I know and add my testimony
to the testimony of Jesus Christ
that Satan is responsible
for all the creation of evil on earth
and in the minds of men.

## BAPTISM: Inner Purification

The ceremony of baptism by water symbolizes the purification necessary to spirituality.

## WATER BAPTISM: Baptism by Holy Ghost

These (water baptism and cleanliness) but prepare for and symbolize the spiritual baptism, the Baptism by the Holy Ghost.

## HALO: Spiritual Advancement

The *glory* or nimbus around the head of the saints is a symbolic witness of their capacity to render divine homage.

## NORMAL DREAM: Present Mental State

Do not try to decipher the meaning of every dream just remember that it probably symbolizes your present mental or physical state; hence you must adjust your thoughts and actions if you would clarify or improve your dreams.

## OUTER POISE: High Inner Identification

If you can hold your Peace
and be calmly active, and actively calm
in all that you do,
and no matter what happens;
if your eyes and your whole attitude
always reflect restfulness and poise,
through all experiences and seeming disturbances;
if even great failure or great success
cannot ruffle you;
then these are the outward symbols
that you have identified yourself
with the Real Inner Self
which dwells always
in the Inner Chamber of Peace.

# SPIRITUAL EYE: Cosmic Energy, Christ Consciousness, Cosmic Consciousness

The Astral eye is spoken of as the spiritual eye, or the third eye seen in meditation.

This eye is opened by the Guru.

Jesus saw this eye as the starry Dove when John the Baptist baptized him.

The little star in the center is the symbolized mouth of the Dove, and its two wings are the two blue and golden lights.

The spiritual eye is made of the white star palpitating in the heart of the opal blue light surrounded by a golden ring.

The spiritual eye is the epitome of the Holy Spirit (Holy Vibration and Cosmic Energy) in the human body.

The golden ring represents Cosmic Energy, while the blue reflects Christ Consciousness.

Through this tunnel one can cross the white star, tunnels in the Christ and Cosmic Eyes, and penetrates all walls of matter.

Through the rays one can reach the absolute unmanifested kingdom of Ever-New Pure Blessedness of Spirit.