

SHATCHALANA NAVAMSAS

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Part-I

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Introduction

Many secrets in stellar Astrology remain unexplored or explored only partially even to date. Several scholars of yesteryear like S/Sri. H.R.Seshadri Iyer, V.Seetarama Sharma, C.S.Patel, R.Gopalakrishna Row (Meena), N.N.Krishna Rau, N.V.Raghavachary (Meena II), J.N.Bhasin, Bepin Behari, etc, have unravelled some of the secrets by their relentless pursuits. Despite their laudable efforts and distinctive contributions, the stellar dimension in prediction remains to be explored to its full potential. The Shatchalana of Navamsas is one such concept. This article aims to provide some clues to understand this lesser-known principle.

Grouping of nakshatra padas

The 108 padas of 27 nakshatras are grouped into 3 categories-

1. Vargottama (12 padas)
2. Parivarthana (24 padas) and
3. Shatchalana (72 padas).

The details of nakshatra padas falling in each of these groups are furnished below in Table 1:

Group-1: Vargottama Padas (12)	Group-2: Parivarthana padas (24)
Ashwini 1, Rohini 2, Punarvasu 3, 4, Pubba 1, Chitta 2, 3, Anuradha 4, Uttarahada 1,2, Satabisha 3, & Revathi 4	Ashwini 2, 3, Rohini 1, 3, Punarvasu 1, 2, Pushya 1,2, Makha 4, Pubba 2, Hastha 4, Chitta-1, 4, Swathi 1, Anuradha 3, Jyeshtha 1, Poorvashada 3, 4, Uttarahada 3,4, Satabisha 2, 4, & Revathi 3, 4

Group-3: Shatchalana padas (72)

- 1) **Barani 1**- Makha 2- Rohini 4- **Aslesha 4**- Uttarabhadra 2- Hasta1- Barani1
- 2) **Mrigasira2** -Hasta3- Mrigasira4 -**Visaka4** -Pushya3 -Visaka2 -Mrigasira2
- 3) **Mrigasira3** –Visaka1-Barani2 –**Hasta2** – Mrigasira1 –Makha3- Mrigasira3
- 4) **Pushya4**- Anuradha1-Pubba3-**Visaka3**- Aridra 1 –Moola4 - Pushya 4
- 5) **Uttara1**–Poorvashada2 –Uttara3 –**Danishtha3** –Swati2 –Danishtha1 –Uttara1
- 6) **Uttara2** -Sravana4 -Aslesha1-**Poorvashada1**-Pubba4 -Anuradha2 -Uttara2
- 7) **Swathi3**-Danishtha4-Jyeshtha2-**Danishtha2**-Uttara4 -Uttarabhadra3-Swathi3
- 8) **Jyeshtha4** -Revathi1 -Moola2 -**Krittika2** -Sravana1 -Barani4 -Jyeshtha4
- 9) **Moola1**-Barani3-Swathi4 -**Uttarabhadra4** -Jyeshtha3 -Satabisha1-Moola1
- 10) **Sravana2**-Krittika3-Poorvabhadra1-**Krittika1**-Moola3-Aridra2-Sravana2
- 11) **P.Bhadra3**-Aridra4-Uttarabhadra1-**Makha1**-Aswini4-Aslesha3-P.Bhadra3
- 12) **P.Bhadra4**- Aslesha2-Sravana3-**Aridra3**-P.Bhadra 2- Krittika4- P.Bhadra4

Out of these 3 categories, the importance of Vargottama and Parivarthana padas has been dealt with elaborately by many scholars in the past and their utilities in prediction are being discussed too frequently even today. Owing to their potential for modifying the basic results of Planets occupying these Navamsas, they invariably catch the attention of all very easily. But, in sharp contrast with these, the Shatchalana padas have not been given similar importance by both the celebrated practitioners and the acclaimed Teachers of Astrology. They are rarely discussed by any Astrological savant except by a few academics who drop hints at them occasionally. Surprisingly, there has been no full-fledged exploration of this topic so far. As an ardent student of science for more than three decades, this fact was intriguing my mind right from my student years. Therefore, a study was undertaken recently by me the fruits of which are only shared further in detail.

Shatchalana explained.

The word 'Shatchalana' comprises two root words; 'shat' meaning 'six' and 'chalana' meaning 'movement'. As such, it connotes 'the chain of successive six steps of alternate movements' between the birth chart and the Navamsa chart, commencing from the birth chart and finally returning back to it, through the links created by the 6 nakshatra padas involved in each of the 12 subgroups of Shatchalana. The order of the Shatchalana padas mentioned in Table 1 indicates the sequence of their movement in a horoscope beginning from a particular pada of a nakshatra. For example, in subgroup 1, the movement (chalana) starts from Bharani 1st pada in Mesha Rasi ruled by Mars. The 6 steps of movements involved in this chain are given below:

- i) In a birth chart, a planet occupying Bharani 1st pada in Mesha goes to Simha Navamsa. Sun being its lord, we have to move back to its sign (i.e., Simha) in the birth chart and pick up the next link from there.
- ii) The 2nd link is Makha 2nd pada falling in Simha which goes to Vrishaba Navamsa. Venus being its lord, we have to move back to Vrishaba in the birth chart.
- iii) The 3rd link in the birth chart is Rohini 4th pada falling in Vrishaba. It goes to Karkataka Navamsa ruled by Moon. This takes us back to Karkataka in the Birth chart.
- iv) The 4th link is Aslesha 4th pada in Karkataka Rasi going to Meena Navamsa ruled by Jupiter which leads us to Meena in the Birth chart.
- v) The 5th link is provided by Uttarabhadra 2nd pada in Meena Rasi. It goes to Kanya Navamsa, leading us to Kanya in the Birth chart.

- vi) Finally, the 6th link is Hasta 1st pada in Kanya in the birth chart which goes to Mesha Navamsa. Mesha is from where this Shatchalana of Navamsas began in the birth chart.

The movements in the remaining 11 subgroups of Shatchalana follow a similar path corresponding to the nakshatra padas falling in the respective chains. However, there is an alternate starting point also for each of these 12 chains which is indicated in bold letters in Table 1. For example, the above chain can also be commenced from Aslesha 4th pada in Karkataka instead of Bharani 1st pada which ensures returning back to Karkataka.

Main features of Shatchalana

The above discussion unveils the following main features of Shatchalana:

1. The Rasi to Navamsa links are activated by the planets occupying the Shatchalana Navamsas in the birth chart while the Navamsa to Rasi links are created through the Navamsa dispositors of these planets.
2. At the end of each chain we return back to the same sign in the birth chart from which we begin the concerned cycle of movements.
3. The lord of the sign from where a particular chain of Shatchalana commences and the lord of the last Navamsa in the concerned chain happens to be on one and the same Planet.
4. In order to complete any chain of Shatchalana, it is essential that all 6 nakshatras padas in it are occupied by at least one planet in each Navamsa failing which the chain gets broken without returning back to the starting sign.
5. As only 9 Planets are considered in Vedic Astrology, in any horoscope a maximum of only one complete chain of Shatchalana is possible because a minimum of 6 planets is required to complete one chain.

It is essential to note carefully these key features of Shatchalana before we proceed further as its entire scope, utility and limitations rest on them.

Importance of the 'Leading term'

The nakshatra pada from which the chain of movements commences is called the '*leading term*' in Shatchalana. It is essential that each of the 12 chains is started from a particular nakshatra pada only. As already hinted, if not commenced with the correct leading term, the chain would break in the middle not only failing to establish the intended six number of interlinks between the birth chart and Navamsa but also without returning back to the starting sign. The leading terms in Shatchalana for all the 12 subgroups of Group 3 in Table 1 have been indicated in bold letters for easy identification. As is evident, *the 5th or 9th Navamsa in Chara Rasis, the 9th or 1st Navamsa in Sthira Rasis and the 1st or 5th Navamsas in Dwiswabhava Rasis happen to be the leading terms in Shatchalana.* Thus, there are only *two leading terms for each chain.*

The *leading term* is an important factor in Shatchalana because of the fact that one and the same Planet becomes the Rasi dispositor of the planet occupying the leading term and also the Navamsa dispositor of the planet posited in the last Navamsa of the chain which loops back to the birth chart and completes the chain. This single Planet plays a key role in the utility of Shatchalana in prediction. Such a special distinction of becoming both the Rasi and Navamsa dispositors simultaneously (available only to a Vargottama planet in a chart) is made possible in Shatchalana only through the lord of the sign housing the *leading term*.

Validity of Shatchalana

The validity of Shatchalana can be established in light of *'the Theory of dispositors'* and the *'overriding effect of the dignity of Planets in the Navamsa chart.'* The fundamental fact that the Navamsa dispositors of the planets posited in the birth chart which occupies the six nakshatra padas involved in a chain of Shatchalana *only establish* the inter-links between Rasi and Navamsa charts needs to be basically remembered while examining the validity of Shatchalana. Also, as the last Navamsa dispositor in each chain and the lord of the sign in which the *leading term* falls in that chain is one and the same Planet it plays an important role in prediction. Let us examine this further in detail.

As is evident from the previous discussions, Shatchalana is directly related to the theory of dispositors in Astrology at the foundation level itself. The book titled *'Dispositors in Astrology'* by J.N.Bhasin discusses 11 general points, 15 rules and 36 textual references with a good number of example charts to substantiate Dispositors' theory. Out of these, two key principles are primarily relevant to the instant case. The first one is that *'Bhavas generally become weak when their lords are in Rasis of which the owners are badly placed in dussthanas'* (Ref: Jataka Parijata, chapter-11& sloka-35) and the second one states that *'when the planets owning the Rasi and Navamsa occupied by the lord of a Bhava be endowed with power, he will promote the effects of that Bhava'* (Ref: Uttara Kalamruta, chapter-4 & sloka-13). That means, the strength or weakness of the lord of the Sign or Navamsa in which a house lord is posited in a chart either improves or spoils (as the case may be) the results of the house owned by the planet and that bhava becomes weak when the Rasi dispositor of its lord occupies a dussthana in the chart.

In other words, together they imply that the efficacy of a Planet in conferring the results of the house(s) owned by it is to be decided based on the occupancy and dignity/strength of its Rasi/Navamsa dispositors. References are found in other classical texts as well, such as Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra, Horasara, Phaladeepika, Jatakadeshmarga, Jataka Tatwa, etc., which clearly support this contention. Readers may refer to the above-cited texts for further insight in this regard. As Shatchalana is a practical demonstration of one of the important uses of Navamsa dispositors in prediction, the above conclusion is fully applicable to it.

Also, it is often said *'grahanam amshakam balam'* meaning that the strength of planets in the navamsha indicates their actual strength in the horoscope. In support of this claim Jataka Parijata (ch-6, sl-36) states as follows:

नीचांशगास्तुङ्गगृहोपयाता जातस्य नीचं फलमाशु दद्युः ।

नीचङ्गतास्तुङ्गनवांशकस्थाः सौम्यं फलं व्योमचराः प्रकुर्युः ॥

Meaning: Planets produce depression effects if they occupy in their exaltation signs the Navamsa belonging to their depression signs; they produce exaltation effects if, in their depression signs, they occupy the Navamsa of their exaltation signs. (Translation by V.Subramanya Sastri). This contention is reiterated in Sarvartha Chinthamani (ch-9, sl-15) also. This clearly means that the dignity of a planet in Navamsa supersedes that of its placement in the Rasi chart.

Applying the above principles concurrently to Shatchalana, it is deduced that the Rasi dispositor of the Planet occupying the Navamsa falling in the leading term of Shatchalana in the birth chart

becomes influential enough to control the other planets linked within the chain because the links in the chain are established through the Navamsa dispositors of those planets which finally end with the Rasi dispositor of the Planet commencing the chain. As such, its occupancy and status/dignity in the chart supersede the individual effects of planets linked with it previously in the chain. In other words, it follows that the strength/weakness and occupational influences of the planet which simultaneously becomes the first Rasi dispositor and the last Navamsa dispositor in the chain contribute directly towards the efficacy of all other planets linked within the chain. This conclusion validates Shatchalana in prediction and confirms its usefulness.

Utilities of Shatchalana

Shatchalana can be practically used in prediction for both the judgment of Bhavas and for fine-tuning the interpretation of Dasa results of planets, as follows:

1. **Judging Bhava phala:** Many classical texts on Astrology allude to the fact that the strongest planet in a horoscope becomes capable of offering results in the key areas of one's life. For example, Brihat Parashara Hora (ch.27, sl.37/38) states that 'whatever yogas or effects have been stated (earlier in the text) with respect to bhava will come to pass through the strongest planet'. Hora Sara (ch.2, sl.32) states that 'a person acquires the nature and appearance of the strongest planet at the moment of birth'. Even other texts like Sarvartha Chinthamani, Phaladeepika, Sanket Nidhi, Saravali, Prasna Marga, etc hold a similar view that the strongest Planet among many that may influence a particular area of life in a horoscope like Childbirth, livelihood, Marriage, disease, renunciation, etc, becomes capable of offering results in the respective area of life. But, identifying this most influential planet happens to be one of the most difficult and challenging tasks in prediction because further detailed calculations such as Shadbala, Vargabala, etc are required for the same. But, by using the principles of Shatchalana this activity could be made easier which in turn helps in the better judgment of bhavas. If a single planet control is available in a chart, it can be easily identified using the principles of Shatchalana because that can happen only through a chain of Rasi, Navamsa and stellar dispositors with the leading term and the final Navamsa dispositor providing vital clues to this effect.
2. **Interpretation of Dasa:** Sometimes, while examining the horoscopes for timing events it appears as if certain results have taken place in the Dasa/Bhukti periods of the planets which are not directly related to the event. Shatchalana is one important factor the negligence of which could lead to such fallacies. The interpretation of Dasa/Bhukti results is a complex process, all types of interlinks of planets in a horoscope need to be examined properly. Unless the Rasi-Navamsa nexus through the dispositors of planets and the decisive role of the last Navamsa dispositor is also examined wherever applicable and understood clearly using the principles of Shatchalana, the final conclusions in the timing of events through Dasa interpretation may get derailed.

Let us discuss the practical application of Shatchalana in the next part.

[to be continued in Part II]