

## **The Great American Eclipse, Part Three: The Quiet Before The Storm**

The Great American Solar Eclipse has come and gone--or so it seems. The energy was building quite intensely before the eclipse. The racist riots in Charlottesville are one example of that dramatic energy--the shadows of this country coming to the surface pre-eclipse. Afterwards, President Trump's failure to unambiguously condemn racism became the most defining blunder of his Presidency. This was followed by the exit of his chief strategist, Steve Bannon, symbol of the alt-right. It seemed like the country was going through a total meltdown the week before the eclipse.

But then the eclipse happened. Americans stepped aside and stood in awe of this event. I saw quotes from people saying they had never seen something so incredible before. Others were crying in wonder. Facebook was filled with amazing photos. The next morning the major newspapers had the eclipse as front page news.

The eclipse itself was the still-point, the quiet before the storm--the transitional space between the building energy of the days that preceded it and the explosion of energy that has occurred since. The eclipse managed to serve us with majesty and magic, even if only for a day. Yet such is the energy of Rahu. It attracts us while it deceives us. It lifts us up but drops us at no warning. While we are entranced, we feel we are Kings and Queens, but only to see that our souls are impoverished.

For those who are wondering about the effects of the eclipse on Trump's Presidency, one needs only to see the picture of him looking straight into the eclipse without proper eyewear. The night of the eclipse, the President addressed the nation, announcing more troops in Afghanistan while also affirming the values of tolerance and unity. It is interesting that the President chose to address the nation on the night of the eclipse. It was an opportunity for him to clearly disavow his former remarks on the Charlottesville riots, but he only made subtle and inadequate remarks about the values of tolerance and unity. In his recent speech in Arizona, he actually doubled-down on his previous controversial remarks, showing that he does not regret what he said, but feels more confident and secure in himself than he has before. His recent pardoning of Sheriff Joe Arpaio (who was convicted of racial profiling) is a clear sign of his stance and the boldness with which he will continue to do what he wants. He will stand firm even if everything around him falls apart.

It is clear that the direction of the country is not going to change dramatically during Trump's Presidency. The eclipse has only showed us what we already know. Trump was born during an eclipse, so it is appropriate enough that he would be our President during the most significant eclipse in the past 99 years of US history. But more significantly, Trump represents the shadow of this country that we all must face. Rahu teaches us that we cannot grow without facing our shadows. In some twisted turn of destiny, Trump shows us the darker side of our nation, without which we cannot realize true progress. This is certainly a more dramatic way of going about it, but it is what is happening now. The moral is to embrace Rahu, get the lessons, and move forward into the light.

Hurricane Harvey is the first sign of the post-eclipse drama and is still causing catastrophic flooding in Texas. Eclipses in the Saros 145 series indicate extreme weather patterns, such as hurricanes, floods, fires, earthquakes, etc. The last Saros 145 total solar eclipse of August 11, 1999 was across the north Atlantic Ocean and during this time there were 5 category 4 hurricanes in the Atlantic, most notably Hurricane Floyd which formed on September 7, nearly one month after the eclipse. There was also the Great Mississippi Flood of April 1927 which preceded the Saros 145 eclipse of June 29.

Hurricane Harvey made landfall in Rockport, Texas at 10:00pm on August 26 at peak intensity and with winds of 130mph. During this time, Moon was in Scorpio in the nakshatra of Svati. The deity that rules Svati nakshatra is Vayu, the god of wind. Svati nakshatra is also ruled by Rahu, the airy planet, and the cause of this recent eclipse. Currently, Rahu and Mars are experiencing a very tight conjunction in the sign of Leo, Magha nakshatra, only 1 degree apart. Both Rahu and Mars are associated with storms. Rahu can stir up winds while Mars can cause sudden violent storms. As these two forces come together, we can see hurricanes or fires that suddenly emerge with great strength and destructive potential. Mars also rules Scorpio, the Moon's sign at this time, and Scorpio is also a water sign. Neptune is also placed in Pisces, a water sign, in the 12th house of loss and confinement. (In Roman mythology, Neptune is the god of the sea.) At the moment of Harvey's landfall, Aries is the Ascendant--the sign of passionate forward-moving energy ruled by Mars. And Uranus--the sign of sudden transformative events--is conjunct Aries Ascendant.

Thus, we can see astrologically the influences that shaped this storm. Unfortunately, storms such as these are in the pattern of eclipses that we just experienced and so there could be more. Hurricane Harvey is an example of

how eclipses can trigger events that are outside its "path of totality". Florida is another place where these types of weather patterns could emerge.

If you have Ascendant, Sun, Moon, Rahu, or Mars in Leo, then you might be feeling fatigued, feverish, or sick right now. This eclipse in particular can cause imbalances in our health. With Mars (a fiery planet) in the sign of the Sun and conjunct Rahu, we become susceptible to Pitta-type (and Vata-Pitta type) imbalances. The best thing to do in this moment is rest. This is the worst time to overexert yourself or to test your limits. Take it slower than you normally would--and rest.

My prayers are with family, friends, and everyone who has been affected by Hurricane Harvey, including those who have lost their lives. Mother Nature is a power beyond our control, and the best we can do in these moments is unite as one family and weather the storm together. Eclipses portend challenges and unfortunate events, but eclipses only exist because of light. While the light of the Sun may at times be eclipsed, the light in our hearts remains ever-radiant. Facing our shadows, we must now wear the burdens of light with faith and inspiration as we press toward the dawn of new horizons.

Love,  
Neeshee  
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