

2018: An Astrological Perspective

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The Earth completes its revolution around the Sun every 365.25 days. Tonight, we celebrate the completion of an Earth year and the beginning of a new one. As with all shifts, the New Year is a new beginning, and, as such, signifies the death of something as well. The New Year is not as strong of a shift as the solar eclipse in August was, but it is a powerful moment.

In astrology, we see time as a process of energy. We choose auspicious times for weddings, new endeavors, surgery, farming, everything you can think of. The reason is not superstition but simply that auspicious timing promotes harmony with the energy of nature, and gives a natural advantage to whatever we undertake in that moment. The more that we enter into the flow of life, the more our intentions manifest naturally. The New Year is an auspicious moment when the energy of nature is beckoning us to set our intentions for the period of time to come.

There are some interesting signs with this New Year. For one, there is a full Moon on January 1 at 6:24pm PST. This is the first full Moon and first "Supermoon" of 2018. This full Moon will be in its own sign of Cancer which is very harmonious. At the same time, Mars will be in its own sign of Scorpio. And Saturn in its own sign of Capricorn. Three planets in strong dignity at the turn of the New Year shows that 2018 will be a year full of energy and intensity (Mars), but it can manifest in a controlled (Saturn) and stable way (Moon). At the exact moment of the New Year, the Ascendant is in Libra--the sign of balance and justice. The Ascendant is in Libra in the 9th divisional chart (navāmsa) as well. When the Ascendant is in the same sign in both charts, it is considered to be a very powerful energy. Ascendant in Libra shows that the New Year will be a process of balancing energies and that a sense of justice can emerge. If 2017 was the year of purification, then 2018 will be the year of rebalancing.

With the solar eclipse, the United States (and by connection the entire world) has had to face its shadows (Rahu). What we see collectively is a reflection of what everyone is feeling internally. We are all facing our shadows in new ways since the eclipse. For many what emerged was shocking and unexpected, and for others, what they had held in for so long finally emerged and faced them. Now that everything has been stirred up with the eclipse, we

have to overcome the shock, trauma, and all forms of recoil and begin to process what is necessary for our growth by entering again into the creative spirit of life. We have to shed what we were and release the patterns that are no longer useful and healthy and instead move into the dynamism of creative living. With 2018, we will see a lot of what was shaken up begin to be processed, sorted out, and eventually balanced again (Libra). The pieces will begin to fall into place.

The full Moon of Jan 1 will be in the nakshatra of Punarvasu. "Punarvasu" means "the restoration of good". It is a nakshatra ruled by Jupiter. The deity for Punarvasu is the Goddess Aditi, the "undivided" one. This full moon is a positive omen for the New Year and continues the theme of rebalancing. We will see things begin to settle back into their appropriate place, the re-assertion of the good, and the emergence of essential justice. Mars gives us the courage to face what is difficult but necessary. Saturn gives us the ability to persevere in the face of apparent adversity. And Jupiter (who is conjunct Mars) will help us see who and what we are fighting for, and how the apparent struggle is not separate from the Divine Play. We have to breathe deeply on the New Year and receive the empowerment being given to us. Anything significant that remains confused or unresolved from the August eclipse will find some fundamental resolution on or after February 21, 2018, the 6 month mark after the solar eclipse. The resolution will happen energetically before it shows itself in outer life, so the appearance of dilemma may persist, but the shift in consciousness will happen, and clarity will begin to emerge.

The August eclipse was so significant that 2018 will largely remain an energetic echo of the eclipse. But a lot can be processed, re-balanced, and transformed in 2018. It can be a year of tremendous growth and regained stability for those who choose it. On January 31, there will be a total lunar eclipse in the sign of Leo--the same sign as the solar eclipse of August 2017. I will write about this lunar eclipse after the New Year, as it is a whole article in itself. It will be a full Moon in the sharp and harsh nakshatra of Āslesā, the King of the nāgās. This lunar eclipse will be visible from many cities in the United States and internationally. It will be followed by a partial solar eclipse on February 15 in the sign of Aquarius and the nakshatra of Shatabhishak, a nakshatra ruled by Rahu.

The Chinese New Year (ushering in the Year of the Dog) will be celebrated the next day on February 16, 2018--so we see in many ways how the first two

months of 2018 (especially February) are full of energetic shifts. Animals in astrology are strong energetic signs. To understand the Year of the Dog, we need only contemplate the dog--the steadfast, the ever-loyal, the companion, the friend. 2018 could very well be a friendlier year for many--a year in which we see the ways in which Rahu is truly a friend to us, a year in which we rediscover the love at the root of everything, a year in which we can rise from the shadows to identify and celebrate the Beloved.

As we face our fate, we have to remember that we are manifesting our destiny, individually and collectively. Rahu is our friend because he brings the unconscious and subconscious to the conscious levels of mind. There is nothing that can arise externally that is not already in us. Thus, It is only through greater consciousness that we can flow with and direct the energy of life for its highest purposes. Let us enter into the New Year grateful for all that has occurred in the past year, releasing it in the spirit of celebration, the ecstasy of worship, and the strength of conscious intentions.

I wish everyone a very Happy and auspicious New Year to come!

Neeshee