

"The Message of the Stars"

~ Jyotisha Newsletter, September 2016 ~

Meet the Navagraha: The Nine Planets of Vedic Astrology

Bṛhat Pārāśara Horā, 3.10:

अथ खेटा रविश्चन्द्रो मङ्गलश्च बुधस्तथा।
गुरुः शुक्रः शनी राहुः केतुश्चैते यथाक्रमम्॥ १०॥

Atha khetā raviścandro maṅgalaśca budhastathā
Guruḥ śukraḥ śanī rāhuḥ ketuścaite yathākramam

3.10: The names of the nine planets respectively are: the Sun, the Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, Rahu and Ketu.

In the world of Jyotiṣa (Vedic Astrology), the word we use most commonly for planet is 'graha'. In the sanskrit language, 'graha' can be translated as 'to grasp', 'to seize', or 'to take hold of'. The birth chart is considered a map of the karmas - the fruits of past actions that we may experience on our souls journey. If the chart is like a stage, the grahas are the actors, playing their role scene-by-scene in the unfolding story of life.

We would do well to get to know these actors, so that we may understand our relationship to them thus allowing us to align with their influence in such a way that encourages growth and understanding. Each graha has specific qualities, characteristics and phenomena they signify or rule over. Here, in brief, we will take a look at some important significations of the navagraha (*nava* simply means '9').

The Sun signifies the soul (the ātman in sanskrit), and the color dark red.

The Moon signifies the mind (or the manas in sanskrit), and the color white.

Mars signifies strength, and bright red.

Mercury signifies speech and language, and green.

Jupiter signifies knowledge and happiness, and yellow.

Venus signifies vigor and virility, as well as white and variegated colors.

Saturn signifies sorrows and difficulties, and dark blue or black.

Rahu signifies 'out-of-the-box' thinkers and innovation, and is said to have similar qualities as Saturn in general.

Ketu signifies spirituality, and is said to have similar qualities as Mars in general.*

*Note that Rahu and Ketu are the 'lunar nodes'. They are the "shadowy" points in space where eclipses occur, yet they are still used like planets in Jyotisha.

Note that these are only some examples, and not the whole picture of what each graha represents. Each graha, depending on the context of the chart can display positive or negative meanings - i.e.

although Saturn does signify sorrows and difficulties (duḥkha in sanskrit), he also can indicate the positive qualities of discipline and responsibility. Each of the grahas has a personality of their own, and in the journey of learning Jyotiṣa it becomes essential to get to know them well.

To be continued...

Venus in Libra

A planet is said to gain strength in terms of expressing its energy when placed in its own constellation. This is just the case at present with Venus, who has passed into her own constellation of Libra today (September 18th, 2016) around 12:30PM. Venus will remain in Libra until October 13th (around 4AM). All else being equal, this time should be generally favorable for any activities related to matters ruled by Venus, including:

- Fine dining
- Any of the arts (i.e. music, dance, drama and poetry)
- Romance
- Matters involving advising or counseling
- Decorating or beautifying - i.e. the home, or the body via fashion, jewelry, etc.
- Matters related to vehicles (cars, bikes, boats, etc.)



Ayurveda - Health in Harmony with the Seasons

Happy Autumn everyone! As many of you may know, Ayurveda is the holistic system of health and wellness that comes to us from the Vedic tradition. It is an art of balanced living, which teaches us to cultivate harmony through understanding our unique psycho-physiological makeup, or constitution.

An essential part of Ayurveda is learning to live in harmony with the seasons. Autumn is the season of 'Vata dosha' - the principle of movement. Vata is dry, light, cold, rough, subtle, and mobile. In order to support balance and well-being through this coming season, we would generally do well to balance these qualities with their opposites. Here are two simple ways to do just that:

Lemon-Ginger-Honey Tea

Ingredients:

- 1/4 tsp. grated fresh ginger (or to taste, depending on how spicy you prefer your tea!)
- Squeeze of fresh lemon, to taste
- Raw Honey

To make this lovely and Vata-balancing tea:

- 1) Put the grated ginger in a tea-ball (or you can strain it out after steeping).
- 2) Let steep about 5 minutes.
- 3) Add a squeeze of fresh lemon juice and raw honey to taste.

The ginger is excellent for digestion, and the warming and hydrating qualities of this tea help to balance the cold and dry qualities of Vata dosha! Enjoy~

Shavasana or Yoga Nidra

Allowing yourself to get sufficient rest is an excellent and important way to keep Vata dosha in balance. Lying in Shavasana for at least 15 minutes with mindful relaxation of the body and awareness of the breath is a great way to add the element of rest and relaxation to your day.*

*(Shavasana is a yoga posture that is simply lying on the back with the spine straight, the legs a comfortable distance apart, and the arms comfortably placed with the palms facing upwards).

According to Ayurveda, the afternoon - from about 2 to 6 PM - is a time of Vata Dosha. So this is a great time of day through the coming season to treat yourself to a 15 minute shavasana or Yoga Nidra practice* when you can. Be sure to keep warm during the practice, covering with a blanket if needed. Vata is balanced by this practice because of the 'steady' and 'warm' qualities it brings in - which balance the 'mobile' and 'cold' qualities of Vata!

*Yoga Nidra is a guided relaxation usually done from Shavasana. Some Yoga Nidra recordings are available for download at: cdbaby.com/Artist/AtmaCenter

As usual, Jyotisha readings are available both in person (I'm currently in Cleveland Heights, OH) or long-distance via Skype. I have also begun tutoring of both Jyotisha and Sanskrit. For more details about my current offerings, see: vedichealing108.com/jyotisha-services/ Feel free to contact me if you have any questions, or if you would like to schedule a consultation:

Email: poornamurti108@gmail.com

Phone (call or text): (440)821-1560

Very Best Wishes,

Greg Stein