

ILLUMINATION OR ILLUSION—NEPTUNE IN AQUARIUS

The duality of the Age of Pisces was based primarily on the emphasis of God being “above,” and humanity “below”. This paradigm diminished humanity’s ability to use and take responsibility for its creative potential. The essential unified interplay between Man and Divinity is becoming more and more the frame of spiritual reference for this New Era. It is now that we have the opportunity to acknowledge our inherent spiritual creativity as well as our intimate link to the Creator.

--A.O.

One of the most beautiful things about astrology is the nature of its language. The symbols of the planets and signs represent concepts, ideas, and energy patterns that when strung together yield meanings only known to astrology’s practitioners. Thus if I were to say to another astrologer: “With transiting Pluto squaring my natal Venus, the ruler of my seventh house, this just might be a good time to redefine and refine an old relationship.”, my colleague would nod her head and know exactly what I mean. In effect, I am observing that the present movement (transit) of the principle of regeneration and rebirth (Pluto) is creating an opportunity of crisis (square) to the planet/house contact indicating relationships (Venus and the seventh). Furthermore, I am also communicating that even though this might not be the easiest of times in partnership (Pluto square Venus), the regenerative properties and opportunities for refinement contained within this aspect are also present.

With this in mind, what does the astrological symbol for Neptune in Aquarius imply and what meaning does this have in terms of your horoscope? Let us examine this planet/sign combination both from the level of the soul as well as that of the personality. Esoterically, we look at Neptune as “veiling” the heart of the Sun. The Sun in soul-centered astrology reveals the equipment of the personality in the present incarnation. It speaks about the nature of the creative vitality that is available to every human being during the course of his or her lifetime. Yet, what is the inner nature of creativity and of the Sun? To unlock this mystery, we must turn to the energetic significance of the Seven Rays, the primary creative emanations from the “Mind of God”.

We know that the Sun and by extension, our entire solar system, is under the primary influence of the Second Ray of Love/Wisdom. This is the Ray of the Soul of Humanity, known by various names among the secret traditions of the ages. The two terms best known to us in this respect, are Krishna consciousness in the East and Christ consciousness in the West. Thus the awakening of the Divine Impulse contained within the Sun—and the potential for every man or woman—is the evolution of universal and unconditional love. Neptune therefore is the vehicle for the unfolding of humanity’s inner destiny. First, we must pierce Neptune’s illusionary veil that both hides and protects this, the “Jewel within the Lotus.” Lesser forms of love such as blind religious devotion, obsessive romanticism, and the passions of the

senses, must be destroyed in order that a higher form of love may take their place. This is one reason why Pluto, the destroyer and the redeemer, is the esoteric ruler of Pisces, Neptune's sign in the ordinary zodiac. It is through the often harsh outer effects of Pluto that humanity comes to know the real meaning of Neptune's promise of "love everlasting." Those of us born with Neptune sextile Pluto in our natal chart (about 85% of all people born in the 20th Century), have this opportunity as part of our karmic heritage.

In soul-centered astrology, Neptune is also viewed as the higher octave of the Moon as it is the esoteric ruler of the Moon's sign, Cancer. The Moon is the symbol of mass consciousness. It indicates our connection to our mother and by extension to our family, clan, tribe, and race. As long as our consciousness remains connected to the "psychic umbilical cord" our self-definition is entirely circumscribed and defined by the limitations of our biological karma. We remain "sublunary" creatures, responding instinctively to patterns and prejudices contained within our genes and chromosomes. Our light never rises to the abode of the Sun found in the heart chakra, but stays dimly hid within the folds of the solar plexus located at our navel point. When Neptune is activated from this point, we mistakenly call our personal or tribal religion "*the*" religion, and our way to Divinity as the "*only*" way. Herein lies the source for so much human suffering. This is not the true essence or function of the "Father of Oceans", for Neptune at the soul level, Neptune comes to us as the Initiator of the Light of Love. Its trident is symbolic of the Holy Trinity (Shiva-Vishnu-Brahma; Father-Son-Holy Spirit; Will-Love-Intelligence).

We have examined the relationship of Neptune to Cancer and Pisces, but what of Neptune to Aquarius? Aquarius is the most human of all the signs in the zodiac. It speaks about group relationships and the orientation to humanitarian efforts and activities. Through its ruling planet Uranus, Aquarius creates those networks that link all people everywhere. It is the influence of Uranus and Aquarius that has brought us the "Computer Age" and with it the ability to send and receive messages from every nation. Indeed, if everyone person living on this planet had an e-mail address, it would be possible for any person to connect with any other person regardless of physical distance. This is a reality for nearly a billion of us now! Moreover, several billion of us are linked by another Aquarius/Uranus device, television. How interesting it is that the most impersonal of communicative links—cyberspace—has become so very personal.

The message of Neptune for the Aquarian Age is a most beautiful one, one that is becoming increasingly more important now that Neptune is transiting through the abode of The Water Man. We know that Neptune veils the inner Christ but the unveiling of this focus of Universal Love in the Aquarian Age is the responsibility of humanity. In the Piscean Age there were twelve disciples surrounding Lord Jesus (twelve signs orbiting around the Son). In

the Aquarian Age, there is to be one disciple of the Heart—an enlightened humanity. How is this to be accomplished?

The sign polarity of our times is Leo/Aquarius. It is in Leo that the personality becomes a perfected creative tool. It is through the Cosmic Lion that a person may come forth and say to the world, “I am me and no one else! I have integrated my physical, emotional, and mental bodies into a creative whole. I am a unit of individualized consciousness and just watch what I can do.” Well, that is a wonderful achievement, but it is not enough! For what is the purpose of such an instrument if it is not to be a tool of the soul and a vehicle for the contribution to the collective good? The orientation to the collective is under the influence of Aquarius. The tension that exists between an individual person or nation and the Human Family is embodied in the Leo/Aquarius polarity. Aquarius is diffused in his intent and purpose unless a creatively integrated sense of wholeness is achieved. The process of individuation is absolutely necessary if one is to make a significant contribution to the Whole. It is here that the Leo stage of evolution—the perfection of the personality—is essential to Aquarius.

Neptune transits Aquarius (and thus opposes Leo) from 1998 to 2012. This position is the bridge that not only links two centuries, it also crosses the cusp of two World Ages. It brings the ruler of the previous Age of Pisces into the sign of the New Age, making this a highly symbolic transit indeed. The years 1998-2003 are especially significant in this respect, as Uranus will also be in Aquarius during this time. It is during this six-year period, that the seeds of the Aquarian Age are birthed in earnest into the collective consciousness of humanity. Birthing however, does not mean maturation. We must water these seeds with Neptune’s Sixth Ray energy of Devotion to humanity’s highest good. This is manifested through active service within groups of like-minded co-workers. I speak here of actual, physical service and not just ideological devotion to the ideals that underlie our efforts.

Neptune contributes to this process by awakening the presence of Love Incarnate into a waiting humanity. Even in the current darkness of separatist, special interest groups and continuous religious and tribal wars, there are more people now than ever before ready to serve the planet and one another. There is a growing awareness of the inner spiritual reality of life among people of all nations, and the New Group of World Servers has never been stronger. This is probably the major benefit to Neptune in Aquarius to the collective consciousness.

Those soul-centered individuals born with Neptune in Aquarius in their natal charts, our children and grandchildren, embody a strong impersonal love for humanity. This will allow them to support the urge to form their groups in order to serve the planet. These are the “spiritual scientists” who will work to resolve the problems that secular and spiritual separatism has brought

about. I refer here most notably to population control, world pollution and their devastating results on climate.

In terms of your personal horoscope, the reader would do well to examine the position of Neptune in Aquarius to your natal planetary placements. What follows is a brief summary of some of the implications of these transits. I am going to focus more on the significance of the combination of planetary energies and less on the individual aspects. Just keep in mind that trines and sextiles between planets make the particular planetary combination easier to achieve or experience. The squares and oppositions create more of a challenge, thereby giving a greater potential for the growth of consciousness—we tend to learn more from challenge than from ease. The conjunction serves to intensify the nature of the two planets when combined.

Neptune in Aquarius and the Sun: The dissolving of the sense of the separate self is strongest when Neptune combines with the Sun. Aquarius may bring the individual into contact with groups or ideas that widen one's sense of individual identity. When positive, this combination presents wonderful opportunities for the merger of the individual with the collective, the personal with the impersonal, and the personality with the soul. When difficult, a period of challenge to one's personal sense of identity can bring about seduction by group ideals and friendships that are not in one's best interest.

Neptune in Aquarius and the Moon: "I am my brother's keeper," is an apt phrase to describe this contact. When positive, this combination widens one's urge to nurture beyond the limitations of personal need. Participation in group events bring greater understanding of people and lifts compassion to a new level. When difficult, confusion is likely in terms of personal boundaries and challenges within the family may occur.

Neptune in Aquarius and Mercury: The mind expands to embrace new concepts and ideas that serve to bring about greater understanding between oneself and others. When positive, there is the urge to communicate what one is experiencing in ways that benefit one's friends and associates. The latter may also be the vehicle for this newly found comprehension. When difficult, confusion between the real and the ideal is likely. Misunderstanding between oneself and friends comes about through conflicting ideologies.

Neptune in Aquarius and Venus: Friendships and interpersonal relationships are the focus of expression for this combination. When positive, new relationships enter the life and help the individual learn to love in new ways. Romanticism and over-zealous idealism in terms of personal love may lead one away from one's true path, so objectivity should be the rule of the day. Even when positive, this combination can create the urge to

“fall in love with love”. Yet, if one responds correctly to this combination, artistic creativity is definitely stimulated and a higher altruistic sensibility comes about in terms of one’s relationships with others.

Neptune in Aquarius with Mars: “What is my true mission in life?”, may be the question one asks oneself when Neptune in Aquarius transits natal Mars. There is the urge to go beyond the boundaries of the personal ego and achieve something very special in life. When positive, this combination fosters the upside of the Sixth Ray and, through participation in group efforts, increases devotion to one’s ideals. When difficult, there is the tendency to lose oneself in negative habit patterns and/or to join with certain social groups that are definitely not to one’s advantage to know.

Neptune in Aquarius with Jupiter: This is a time in which the study of things esoteric, spiritual or metaphysical is highly likely. Consequently, one may be called to participate with groups of people who share such interests. Individuals who do not have a natural inclination towards the higher life, may suddenly find themselves eager to learn and explore. When the transiting aspect is difficult, one may be drawn into cults and sects that are definitely not to one’s benefit. In the case of all aspects between these two planets when Aquarius is also involved, one should take care that there is a careful balance between the ideal and the practical.

Neptune in Aquarius with Saturn: When positive, there is the possibility of breaking through certain boundaries and restrictions that have held one back from making progress in the houses of horoscope most affected by this contact. Advancement is made through group efforts and/or one’s own diligent approach to life. Ways are found to redefine personal limitations and fulfill one’s responsibilities in ways that bring benefit to self and others. When difficult, boundaries that are in place for a good reason are not respected. The individual may try to escape from the very real responsibilities that hold his or her life together.

Neptune in Aquarius with Uranus: Whenever these two planets meet, the question that usually arises in life is, “Where do I fit in to the bigger life picture?” The answer will come from group contacts and/or from those scientific and philosophical pursuits that connect a person to a world outside of his or her previous conceptions of life. The challenging aspects with Neptune in Aquarius occur in the other fixed signs (Taurus, Scorpio, and Leo), thus the tests involve the transformation of values. The need here is to participate in those activities that lead to the adoption of a set of new beliefs, or which widen and expand the current ones. Those with Uranus in Gemini stimulated through impersonal relationship contacts. Those with Uranus in Libra benefit when their personal relationships are centered on impersonal goals and objectives. Uranus in Sagittarius people will benefit from exploring their philosophical orientation with groups of like-minded individuals.

Neptune in Aquarius with Neptune: So much depends on Neptune's natal condition and the nature of one's natural response to Neptune's effects on one's life. When positive, this contact will bring about greater compassion, devotion, and the need to give of oneself to one's real life purpose. Thus, people with Neptune in Libra will find the need to share their higher aspirations with their partners. Should that not be possible, one would either find the relationship dissolving or that one reaches outside of the relationship to friends, co-believers, and organizations for support. In any event, the urge for a wider social world in which one can share one's inner understandings about life is very prominent. This is also true for those with Neptune in Sagittarius at this time. When Neptune is natively in Scorpio, the truth about the fiction of one's romantic and/or spiritual inclinations is likely, leading to a period of disillusionment until a greater truth is discovered. Neptune in Taurus people learn may be asked to sacrifice certain material ambitions or habit patterns in order to evolve a greater spiritual truth. Our elders with Neptune in Leo, can take yet another major step outside of the boundaries of personal glamour and into a reality that is free of such weight.

Neptune in Aquarius with Pluto: The word I would use to describe this contact is "awakening". To the generation with Pluto in Leo, it is the wonderful awakening to the reality of group consciousness. Not everyone with this placement will be able to take advantage of this opportunity for soul growth. The opposition between these two planets will therefore pass through one's life relatively unnoticed, with only a challenge to the nature of the personal ego, that in itself may not be objectified. What a loss of a great opportunity! To the Pluto in Libra generation, Neptune's trine from Aquarius is the awakening to the spiritual potential that exists within the function of interpersonal relationships. To the Pluto in Scorpio generation, this awakening can be a bit more challenging. It will motivate some young people to join groups who function to shape the individual's social values. Should this group prove to be anti-social, then definite problems will occur. Nevertheless, should one's inner nature lead one to a group that fosters humanitarian service and spiritual growth, then people of this generation will be most fortunate. The combination of Scorpio/Aquarius is not known for its gentleness but creativity also exists in chaos.