

The Starfire Messenger



A Free Weekly Newsletter

From Astrologer, Folklorist, and Pagan Philosopher

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Signs of the Times: Jupiter, Pluto, Capricorn and the Pagan Philosophy

Daily Analysis and Prediction

Jupiter, Pluto, Capricorn, and the Pagan Philosophy

“Ours is not a religion of self-abnegation,” said American West Coast Pagan spiritual leader Z. Budapest, once upon a time. That utterance strikes at the core of the difference between the naturalistic Pagan philosophy and the ascetic religions of both the East and the West. Pagan philosophy existed in Old Europe before the rise of Christianity and represents an understanding of human experience which is not suffused with the themes of sacrifice and atonement found within the Christian theology. Nor is it shaped and formed by the nihilist doctrines of

Buddhism or the anti-materialist contentions of Hinduism. Further, although the Pagan philosophy embraces the existence of gods and spirits, it does not posit self-punishment, a sense of inadequacy, or abject humility as necessary keys for entering into communication with other orders of beings. Instead, Paganism represents a completely different thrust within spirituality, leaving off the emphasis upon self-denial and the requirement for utter selflessness seen in many other spiritual approaches.

“Ours is not a religion of self-abnegation,” is a big declaration. In fact, Budapest’s statement constitutes an interesting point of entry into a discussion which must take place under the powerful grip of the present Jupiter-Pluto conjunction in Capricorn. As everyone who reads this newsletter knows, Capricorn is an earth sign. As such, it inevitably stands for and connotes the things of the tangible material realm, such as food, shelter, and financial security. The sober and demanding face of the earthen Goat teaches without cessation that the requirements of the physical realm are entirely real. Self-abnegation figures in here; as a foundational doctrine for a philosophy, it goes against the obvious requirements of the physical world and sets up a condition in which individuals find themselves in profound inner conflict over questions of provision.

Substance and the use of it are essential while in the material sojourn, a fact perfectly evident to all. Capricorn as a cardinal earth sign drives that lesson home, proclaiming the fact that the body has needs and that the fulfillment of these needs in today’s world requires the performance of some type of meaningful labor which can be remunerated as an attestation of value rendered unto the human community. When Capricorn is manifesting on the positive side, it speaks precisely to this, connoting productive application of the self to a set of skills or abilities in some type of meaningful contribution to human existence. The present Jupiter-Pluto conjunction draws attention to this theme, asking the pertinent question:

What constitutes productivity and meaningful labor? And how can the human being feel worthy and valuable in the absence of such a practice?

The answer is, of course, that the human being can not feel worthy and valuable without applying self to some type of meaningful endeavor. No one actually likes to sit idle endlessly. There is satisfaction and a sense of completion to be had in the use of one's talents and abilities, even if only for the benefit of oneself. This is a lesson taught by nature. Creatures in nature are incessantly busy collecting, nesting, interacting, mating, raising young, and more. They do not delight in inertia. Of course, all beings must obey the rhythms of night and day, sleeping or resting, and then pursuing active life as their natural behavior patterns may decree. But none are given to sleep permanently until the thread of time runs out, for then ensues the Great Sleep, which in its own way and time is just a rest before renewed activity as well.

Looking again to nature, it is apparent that creatures do not agonize over the question of whether or not they may avail themselves of substance. They guiltlessly gather twigs to make a nest, drink from the stream, lake, or ocean, nibble on wild onion grass or seaweed, seek brighter waters, search out better hunting grounds, and nab a mate. They know intuitively that it is their right to take from nature what is needed to survive and thrive. They know intuitively it is acceptable and right that they should find a mate and reproduce. They know intuitively that they are perfectly acceptable beings who deserve acceptance and inclusion, and this without question. They do not trouble themselves with whether or not the Sun thinks them pure of soul or the Moon approves of their emotional reactions. They do not seek to punish themselves into conformity with a harsh code of ideal beingness. Instead, they celebrate existence in their own ways, flying high and riding thermals like the hawk, drifting with the current like the fish, scurrying up and down trees in the wild dance of the squirrel, and chattering madly in the trees like the avians of spring.

Human beings might take a lesson. Most of the spiritual philosophies in the world operate quite oppositely, enforcing their moral codes by some form of guilt-projection or shaming. The result is often a state of mind in which the individual person feels ashamed of seeking his or her fair share of the world, be that food, money, love, or recognition. This is where the Pagan philosophy has something to offer. The Pagan philosophy holds that as soon as a being comes into existence, it has legitimacy and can rightfully claim a place to stand. A place to stand? Yes, a place to stand. In our present world, that right has been entirely eclipsed by a combination of guilt-centered religious proscriptions and a secular society which operates in the complete opposite direction, valuing predatory ownership positions which gobble up all available places to stand. As a result, there is hardly a square inch of habitable land on this planet which is not owned by someone, even if one felt justified in wanting to stand on it. Having the right to a place to stand has become not a right at all, but a tenuous privilege, extended temporarily and with harsh conditions by those who own everything.

So that's the playing field on which the people of the world now find themselves. It might be instructive to think of the present world situation as a vast chess board. The pieces are the players, one team red, the other green. The red side has been told to disregard all rules of the game board, pursue whatever is desired without any restraints, use any method, wield all weapons, go for the jugular, and winner take all. The green side has been carefully instructed by its religious leaders to seek nothing for the separated self, turn the other cheek, practice detachment, squelch all honest emotion, feel nothing, avoid any form of retaliation, and carefully eschew any action which might conceivably cause even slight inconvenience to another.

The whistle blows and the game is on. The red players rush onto the checkerboard game field, flush with the passion of battle. The green side sits down on the grass and assumes positions of prayer and meditation. In

one quick rush, the inevitable transpires: the red players sweep over the pietistic green players, who are easily devastated and wiped from the field. The few remaining green players dust themselves off and say, "That's ok, because we took the high road. We obeyed the priests and gurus. The Law of Karma will make this right some day." Meanwhile, the green players are banished by the cruel rulers of the red players to the hinterlands, where the soil is poor and the resources slim. The rest of the story is obvious.

With commanding Jupiter and coercive Pluto in sometimes ruthless Capricorn these days, it is well to realize that the rules of engagement have not been written to favor a timid approach. The players who have been instructed to sacrifice all, seek no recognition of or for the self, avoid taking any contrarian positions, and never fight back are operating at a distinct disadvantage in a very rough game driven by the Jupiter-Pluto conjunction in Capricorn. True, both Jupiter and Pluto are also gods of wealth, and as such, are more than capable of indicating the door behind which genuine treasure is to be found, bringing good and plenty to one and all. But at the moment, that door will of necessity be guarded by Capricorn, and Capricorn demands payment in tangible terms.

If today's self-abnegating spiritual people do not rise up out of their carefully constructed passivity and empower themselves to play in this game, they will be permanently overcome by those who are not in any way restrained by considerations of selflessness and submission to metaphysical ideals. Does that mean it is right for the harmless people of the world to become cold and callous like their tormentors? No, of course not, but it does mean they ought to get clearly in mind the differences between the principles of engagement driving the red team and those of the green.

Capricorn teaches hard lessons. This is one of them.

Daily Predictions and Analysis for November 16 – 22, 2020

Throughout the week, the powerful Jupiter-Pluto conjunction will continue to be palpable. Capricorn being an earth sign connected with the cold of winter (in the northern hemisphere, of course), this sign is not known as a warm fuzzy cuddly. Instead, it is foreboding and severe, withholding much for its own pecuniary ends. Politicians are particularly vulnerable to this, enjoying power for its own sake. Thus at this time there is heard talk of hard lockdowns and many other measures designed to clamp control upon the people, whether such is merited by scientific measures or not. Looking authoritative is important to political leaders now, and many in the public are all too ready and willing to submit to any leader who can make him or herself look like a safe refuge in a storm. This is much the theme for the remainder of November. Many people are looking for a strong elder or grandfather figure to whom to cling. That's Capricorn.

Yet, the Moon waxes, increasing motivation. Intense discussions evolve as Mercury opposes Uranus, bringing back and exposing irregularities which occurred while Mercury was Rx in October. A brief reprieve in tension comes as the Sun makes a sextile to Saturn, but then Venus squares Saturn, showing a lack of empathy out and about in the world. Still, there are glimmers of hope for clarity, mainly from Mercury itself. On November 20, Mercury finally gets clear of the degrees of the zodiac affected by the recent retrogradation. Thus, November 20 is the earliest point at which accurate and reliable information on important world events can be expected. Further, Venus enters Scorpio and the Sun enters Sagittarius this week, indicating changes in circumstances for many.

Monday November 16 opens the week with the Moon in Sagittarius, stimulating awareness of higher truths and multiple approaches to problem solving. We are still feeling the Venus-Jupiter square of November 15, which amplifies and indicates presence of excess. The Sagittarius Moon inclines to overdoing as well. Add to this the fact that we are already feeling the opposition of Mercury to Uranus exact tomorrow, and it is

apparent that today is likely to be filled with strong impulses and noticeable tendencies to overdo. So let's watch that and see what we can do to stay within reasonable bounds in spending, eating, and what not.

Tuesday November 17 brings the exact opposition of Mercury and Uranus, thus intensifying all mental processes. This can be good, as inventive Uranus may open a way for mental Mercury to see new territory. Yes, a way ahead may be blasted through old frames of reference to new ideas and points of view. Shocking information hits the news channels, uncloaking much that happened about a month ago. The waxing Moon enters Capricorn at 10:35 am, shifting attention to government, the economy, financial matters, and major life intentions.

Wednesday November 18 we are feeling a bit subdued, as aspects to Saturn come into play. The Sun in Scorpio makes a sextile to Saturn in late Capricorn today, thus quieting matters for a moment. Tomorrow, Venus in late Libra squares Saturn, further cooling tempers and temperatures. Matters slow down for a moment and we pull back to consider.

Thursday November 19 carries the same somber theme forward, as the Venus-Saturn square becomes exact. It's hard going to reach out to others. One thing and another seem to get in the way. Schedules do not match and persons are just not in an interactive mood. Emotional shutdowns are prevalent at this time. The Moon enters organizational Aquarius at 2:25 pm CST, showing that over the next couple of days, a trend toward matters of membership, inclusion, and shared decision-making power will emerge.

Friday November 20 brings mental fresh air as Mercury clears out of the degrees originally affected by retrogradation this fall. New information comes to light today. The Moon in Aquarius squares what remains of the Mercury-Uranus opposition from earlier in the week 3 am – 3 pm CST, making for a long 12-hour interval of sudden realizations, new discoveries, and surprising developments. Many points of view are changing now. This anticipates what will happen in early 2021 when transiting Jupiter and

Saturn square Uranus. We are not there yet, but today may give hints of what is to come at that point.

Saturday November 21 is a day of trend changes. Venus enters Scorpio at 7:22 am CST, the Sun enters Sagittarius at 2:40 pm CST, and the Moon enters Pisces at 10:06 pm CST. All three coming on one day suggests that much will shift today. Venus in Scorpio casts attention to the deeper layers of the psyche, while the Sun in Sagittarius brings much out of the depths of Scorpio and into light, and the Moon's entry into Pisces points toward issues of secrecy and privacy. It's a complex brew. With Venus and the Moon heading into water signs, though, a main trend will center around recognition of deeper feelings.

Sunday November 22 sees the impressionable Pisces Moon making the trine to Venus in Scorpio and the sextile to Uranus in Taurus 00 hours until 2 pm CST, making for a nice long interval of 14 hours in which greater interpersonal harmony and creative insights will take the center stage. This will be a welcome diversion from the unrelenting pressure of the recent Capricorn conjunctions.

Note: Talk of severe lockdowns by the presumptive president-elect in the U.S. frightens and disturbs many at present, although some are deliriously happy about the prospect of shutting down the country until Anthony Fauci says it is acceptable to come out of house detention. That there would be talk of severe restrictions with harsh penalties for violation of lockdown regulations is of course a manifestation of the current Capricornian influence, which is overwhelmingly strong right now. But the point in time in 2021 at which Biden's lockdown would come into effect is not conditioned by Capricornian severity at all. Instead, it would fall during Saturn in Aquarius square Uranus in Taurus, which is not altogether indicative of confinement. In fact, it's far more indicative of civil unrest, revolt, agitation, reaction, uproar, and instability than it is of quiet confinement at home. Further, the election results remain in contention. Thus, it is not at all certain that Biden's intentions for 2021 are a sure thing.