

The Observatory – June Solstice 2019

Compiled by Charlotte Benson

It's amazing but true – we are halfway through 2019. Tempus Fugit!

We begin this quarter by celebrating the Summer Solstice (in the Northern Hemisphere), or the Winter Solstice (in the Southern Hemisphere), on June 21, at 11:54 am Pacific time. During these few days in the third week of June, the Sun (Sol) appears to stand still (stirce), hovering over the same degrees of longitude in the sky. This annual solstice event has been celebrated by every culture on earth, for millennia. For the Northern Hemisphere, this signals the slow decline of the Sun, and therefore the length of daylight, until the Winter Solstice. The reverse is true, obviously, for countries south of the equator. Whichever hemisphere you're in – we hope that you enjoy this season.

There has been a remarkable situation recently, with many planets constellated together, simultaneously opposite another tight cluster of planets. I'm referencing Sun, Mercury, Mars and Rahu in Gemini, opposite Pluto, Saturn and Ketu in Sagittarius. We can easily imagine that this planetary polarization is a mirror in the sky, reflecting current political and philosophical polarization throughout the world. However, I must say that I am relieved that this rare oppositional graha structure has not produced as much misery as it might have. Maybe the fact that Rahu/Ketu are in their moolatrikona rasis has a positive off-setting effect. We should remain aware and alert, though – just in case...

Saturn is retrograde in Sagittarius, Purva Ashadha nakshatra, along with Ketu. The widely accepted nama nakshatra sound for the pada of this nakshatra is "Daa". Rahu is retrograding through the positive Punarvasu nakshatra, in the pada for the sound "Koh." People and places with names beginning with these sounds may be under some duress. Jupiter is retrograde in Scorpio, Jyestha nakshatra. Mercury has just entered Cancer; Mars is at the very end of Gemini. Venus is strong in Taurus for another week. Take advantage of this lovely, loving Venus placement, for another week.

Both Jupiter and Saturn are visible almost all night, for the next few months. I personally think that it is important and respectful to do darshan to these two magnificent planets while they are making themselves visible. We jyotishis, as celestial scientists, (or "cosmobiologists" as I used to call myself before it was safe to be publicly known as an astrologer) really should be able to identify where the grahas are, visibly, in the sky. You may know that the ancient traditions state that when the reflected light from a planet strikes one's retinas – that act forms a valuable spiritual connection between a human and the presiding deity of that graha. Jupiter is so bright now in the Eastern sky, in the evenings, that it reminds me of the wish-granting "Blue Fairy" of Pinocchio. So, I cracked myself up by singing "When You Wish Upon a Star", gazing with love and appreciation at our Guru/Brihaspati. I highly recommend it!

Please write me and let me know how I could make this quarterly column be more useful to you.

JUNE

21 Solstice

22 Mars enters Cancer, sign of his debilitation. Watch for tendencies of being overly territorial, and emotionally reactive. This position is good for working to make your home space more secure.

23 Venus opposite Jupiter –strive for “moderation in all things.”

27 “11th Moon” – good for both worldly and spiritual pursuits

28 Venus enters Gemini

JULY

2 Total Solar eclipse in Gemini, Punarvasu nakshatra. Visible in South America and eastern Oceania.

7 Mercury stationary retrograde in Cancer

8 Mercury conjunct debilitated Mars. Strive to separate mind from angry emotions

9 Sun opposite Saturn. Keep your word and take it easy.

11 11th Moon

14 Sun opposite Pluto

15 Guru Purnima. Partial eclipse of the full Moon. Visible in Australia, Asia, Africa and Europe.

16 Sun enters Cancer

21 Venus opposite Pluto. This can be quite passionate and territorial.

23 Venus enters Cancer

24 Mercury conjunct Venus

25 Jupiter trines (9th house aspect) to Mars

27 11th Moon

30 Mercury retrogrades back into Gemini

31 New Moon in Pushya. Mercury stationary direct in Gemini

AUGUST

2 Mercury re-enters Cancer

7 Jupiter trines Sun

8 Mars enters Leo. Jupiter trines Venus

10 11th Moon

11 Jupiter resumes direct motion in Scorpio

13 Venus conjunct Sun

14 Full Moon in Dhanishta

16 Venus enters Leo

17 Sun enters own sign of Leo

21 Jupiter trines Mercury. Great for contracts, connecting and for seeking understanding.

24 Venus conjunct Mars. This could be lots of fun – and/or conflict.

25 11th Moon

26 Mercury enters Leo

29 New Moon in Magha

SEPTEMBER

2 Sun conjunct Mars

3 Mercury conjunct Mars. Sun conjunct Mercury. This could be a tricky day for Mercury-ruled lagnas.

4 Venus opposite Neptune

7 Mercury opposite Neptune. Watch for tendencies of self-delusion

8 Sun opposite Neptune. 11th Moon

9 Venus enters Virgo, his debilitated sign

10 Mercury enters Virgo, his exalted sign

12 Mars square (4th house aspect) to Jupiter. A little goes a long way.

13 Full Moon in Purvabhadrapada

17 Sun enters Virgo

18 Saturn stationary direct in Sagittarius

22 Saturn throws 10th house aspect (square) to exalted Mercury. Eliminate non-essentials.

23 Autumnal Equinox