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ASTROLOGY

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Time to spiritually rejuvenate as Jupiter enters Aquarius

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True spiritual seekers couldn't ask for better astrological alignments in 1998. Jupiter, the planet of expansion and wisdom, is moving into Aquarius (Kumbha), the sign of spiritual rejuvenation and brotherly love, on January 8th. This brings the conscious mind into awareness of the oneness that we all share. Jupiter in Aquarius seems to find ways to bring people together, whether through loving relationships or natural disasters. The primary aspiration of 1998 is letting go of the boundaries that prevent us from seeing our unity and oneness. Jupiter in Kumbha is stronger and more transformative this year because the lunar nodes, Rahu and Ketu, share their ecliptic axis with Jupiter. Jupiter sharing his space with Ketu's energy of wisdom brings a metamorphic effect because Jupiter and Ketu are natural enemies. This means that wisdom gained will be from surrendering. Letting go, whether material, emotional or spiritual, is the ultimate intent of this conjunction.

Jupiter's moving into Kumbha also marks the big Kumbha Mela this year in Haridwar, India. Nowadays Kumbha Melas are

happening more frequently in various locations, but scholars believe the original Melas were only held at Haridwar every 12 years, when Jupiter entered Kumbha. The high point for this largest gathering of humankind on Earth is when the Sun conjuncts Jupiter on February 23/24, creating a Snayoga (bathing combination). The energy for the Kumbha Mela is far stronger this year, for Jupiter and the Sun are joined by Mercury and Ketu. This energy creates the perfect time for purification. To top it off, the whole stellium is squared by the very transformative Pluto. Pluto is a purifier and remover. His energy is ruled by the higher vibrations of Agni, the God of fire. Though this Kumbha Mela occurs every 12 years, the chances of repeating this special planetary energy are slim, so 1998 is a very good year to participate.

Another intriguing effect of Jupiter in Kumbha is the weather. Within the realm of Aquarius lies the nakshatra (star cluster) called Satabishak. This nakshatra is ruled by Varuna, the God of water. With so much emphasis on Satabishak, it is no surprise that the winter of 97/98 will be wet. Varuna will definitely bring El Niño to the West.

The ecliptic energy for 1998 is far greater than normal as well. Rahu is in the sign of his greatest enemy, Leo, and Ketu is in his enemy sign--Aquarius. The full eclipse on August 21, 1998, should be extremely intense, as a square between Mars and Saturn will also be in effect. This kind of energy is profound for the spiritual aspirant. It gives us opportunities to remove that which veils us from seeing the truth of ourselves more clearly. I call the ecliptic phase of 1998 "the Mirror," as its primary purpose is to show us the reflection of ourselves that we would rather ignore. This is Lord Siva working with us on the most

personal level. Siva will shine bright in our heart while Rahu is in Siva's abode of the Sun (Leo).

Jupiter in Aquarius marks a period of harmony in worldly relationships. The constellation of Aquarius is the sign most interested in bringing unity toward defective governmental issues. There will be bonds and truces in the Middle East this year. Foreign trade through the first four months of 1998 should improve. But, Jupiter's harmonious influence will be tested when his nemesis, Saturn, moves into his most unfavorable sign of Aries on April 17th. This brings a conflict, as Jupiter is trying to expand the natural qualities of Saturn (Aquarius is ruled by Saturn), and Saturn's positive side is being restricted by the constellation Aries. The duality of the relationship between Jupiter and Saturn will start to peak around May and June.

Normally, we seem to unconsciously find ways to distract ourselves from moving toward the only real truth (God). It seems as life goes on, we wake up every morning dealing with the illusion and the drama of life. The year of 1998 is arranged to take us back to the real part of ourselves that is unconsciously searching for Truth. It's not that 1998 is going to be difficult, it is just that the light that exists inside of us will be glowing, looking to be directed in an appropriate manner. And for spiritual aspirants already directing themselves toward pure consciousness, 1998 will be a priceless gem.

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