

*To whose temple the Arch is starlit,
In whose temple the Sun is the image of God,
To whose temple the Moon goes every month
And brings the message out every full Moon,
And whose message the Moon sings as a word of sixteen letters,
His religion I belong to, His temple I visit,
His name I utter, His glory I live in.
To Him I offer the lotus of my day,
To Him I offer the lotus of my night.*

These seed thoughts from the Spiritual Psychology meditations of Dr Ekkirala Krishnamacharya give the note for the Lunar Messenger of the Circle of Good Will. The Moon is the reflective principle and symbol of the mind. When pure and calm, it reflects impressions from higher circles. The time of the full Moon is especially conducive for higher alignment if we are poised enough. The alignment of the Sun, Moon and Earth in the sky helps us to experience the magic of the light of the soul and its manifestation down to the physical.

The Lunar Messenger is published every month in time for the full Moon. It contains thoughts from the teachings of eternal wisdom. Its purpose is to inspire us to put the teachings into practical life.

VISTAS OF WISDOM 133: THE ASCENDANT

Basic Aspects

If we want to follow the Path given by the great Masters, we should know certain basic aspects of our birth chart. It is part of the training for aspirants that we know the position of our natal ascendant and that we know in which signs the Sun and Moon - and if possible the other planets - were at our birth. In addition, we should know the current positions of the planets and observe their movement in relation to our natal planets on a daily basis. Regular work with these subtle tools gives us knowledge, awareness and strength. It helps us to neutralise the influences of the lower principles of life and anchor our consciousness in the higher principles.

From time to time we should also draw up our progressed chart, preferably on our birthday. Studying this chart enables us to recognise the secrets of our entire life span hidden in the hours and days after our birth. In this progressed horoscope calculation, for example, 1 day represents 1 year of our life. The positions of the ascendant and the fast moving planets change and form different aspects during our lifetime. Thus, it has an effect when the Moon or another planet enters a new house or forms new aspects.

A good student usually does a progressive horoscope on his birthday to better understand the plan for the coming year. Master EK did this the night before his birthday. Because there was no software at the time, he drew the horoscope by hand. By looking at the progressive horoscope, we can learn in which areas we should be vigilant and careful in the year now beginning, where our strengths and limitations lie and how we can transform our limitations into strengths. To do this, we need a basic knowledge of astrology.

We each have our own patterns in which we differ from others. Even without astrology, we can recognise through good observation that people behave according to a certain pattern at certain times and in certain situations. However, astrology helps us to better recognise how these patterns of behaviour affect us and other people. This is because the patterns arise from the energies that are represented in the horoscope in the form of the ascendant, planetary placements and houses. The position of the ascendant and the placement of the planets in the twelve sun signs at the time of birth show our basic behavioural pattern. Planetary transits then bring us corresponding experiences and transformations in life. The progression shows which situations we will encounter in which year so that we can draw up a plan for the year in question.

Steps of Development

The time impels and propels us to be progressive. The ascendant is the present in which we have to work; the Moon represents our past and the Sun represents our future. When the Moon is on the ascendant, we continue on the path of our past in the present. The quality of the soul can be recognised by the placement of the Sun in the horoscope. The personality is revealed by the ascendant and the mental quality can be recognised by the Moon. Master KPK explained that we should not focus too much on the Sun, but more on the Moon and the ascendant, because the Sun is the highest. We need to be a little intuitive in our understanding to bring the different dimensions together.

We encounter many situations in life; in new situations we are often hesitant, reserved and inhibited. Our instinctive reactions emerge from previous experiences; they are born

from our past and they give us necessary protection for as long as necessary. This is represented by the natal Moon. Unless we dare and try new things, we cannot expand into a greater light of understanding.

Through the ascendant we gain a new understanding and an impulse to experiment arises from time to time. As soon as this impulse is stronger than the old character trait, we take a risk, so to speak, and familiarise ourselves with unfamiliar situations. This expansion through life happens through the work of the rising Sun, the ascendant. The fact that we speak of the "ascendant" indicates that the ascendant offers an expansion and an ascent into a greater consciousness.

For example, if the natal Moon is in Cancer and the ascendant is in Sagittarius, the ascendant helps to overcome the innate limitation of fearfulness and provides a powerful expansion. However, as long as we are not ready to make progress and break through the shackles of our habitual life, the ascendant will not be active in the horoscope. Even the decision to work with the ascendant is an important step towards further development. It happens in tune with the time plan.

The Goal of Life

The sign in which the ascendant is placed indicates the type of activity we should turn to in order to reach the light of the soul. The light of the soul informs us right and wrong. Once we have gained and firmly gripped the light of the soul, we slowly come out of our old traits of which the Moon is the repository. It is the goal of the ascendant to bring about our ascent from the mind to *buddhi*, the light of the soul.

The *Buddhic* plane is ruled by Mercury, which is called *Budha* in Sanskrit. The ascendant connects us to *buddhi*, i.e. Mercury, which is close to the Sun, the soul. The ascendant helps us to realise that we are the soul and not just a personality. It also helps us to recognise the type of activity we need to work with in this incarnation to move towards the soul. Thus he enables us to transform from a mortal to an immortal human being.

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Lord Krishna speaks about *Swadharma*, which means 'working in accordance with the goal of life'. The ascendant sets the goal; it is the east for us, where our Sun rises. It is our beginning in this life because it is the sign that rose on the eastern horizon when we were born. From the ascendant we form all the other twelve houses. The rest of the horoscope is based on the ascendant.

Each sun sign has its own exalted nature. According to our ascendant, we should resolve to lead a life in harmony with the activity suggested by the zodiac sign in which our ascendant is placed. We should try to recognise and adopt the best aspect of a sign and use it in service. This is one of the

keys given by spiritual astrology to determine the purpose of our lives and live accordingly.

For example, if the ascendant is in Sagittarius, we live to uplift our fellow human beings. By serving them, we begin to forget ourselves through this service. The ascendant in Virgo indicates the goal of a very pure life. With this ascendant, the goal of life can be fulfilled if we dedicate our lives to serving the weak and disadvantaged and thus attain a very pure spirit. With a Cancer ascendant we develop a maternal nature. With a Leo ascendant, teaching and healing fulfil our purpose in life.

When we put ourselves and our personal joy and gain in the background, we receive co-operation from family members, friends and colleagues. Support also comes from within, for example by having fewer aches and pains and the body being quick and willing to work. If the body has been well cultivated, it helps the soul to carry out its programme. Free will starts gaining strength and over time we become deeper, silent and contemplative. In general, our life rises to a higher level by living for our fellow human beings in order to uplift them. Through inner meditative work, the best aspects of the twelve signs of the zodiac are harmonised with our consciousness.

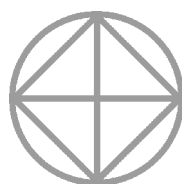
Astrological Hints

In the horoscope, the ascendant indicates the ray of our personality, the Sun regarding the soul ray and the Moon regarding the mental ray. First, however, we should know the sun signs and which ray each sun sign belongs to. We should also know which ray the planets belong to and what ray quality a particular planet has in a particular house. After one learns the basics of astrology and studies one's chart, transits and progressions, the intuition then begins to come forth. Astrology is a broad field and requires more than this brief description.

For a person living in soul consciousness, the ascendant no longer represents the personality but the soul tracing its path back to the spirit. The spirit within us is the true centre of consciousness and therefore, represents the true Spiritual Sun, which is invisible.

As soon as the soul consciousness awakens within, we begin to live in group consciousness and are in direct contact with those who are on the same level. In Spiritual Astrology, Master EK points out that at this stage we should focus our spiritual activity on the sign of our ascendant exclusively. By this time, we will receive the third initiation. We live as one in all the hearts of our co-disciples. All the experiences of the whole group of disciples will be united and then distributed equally to all.

Sources used: K.P. Kumar: *Moon - The Key*; div. seminar notes. Dhanishta Publications / E. Krishnamacharya: *Spiritual Astrology*. Kulapathi Book Trust, Visakhapatnam, India. (www.aquariusbookhouse.com).



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