

LIBRA SOLAR FESTIVAL 2006

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By Malvin Artley

Hello Everyone!

Clarity often comes to us in strange ways. I was recently invited across the back fence for a night-time barbie (BBQ) under the stars. The night was crystal-clear and the stars shone like little jewels around the waxing moon and splashed across the black vault above. The crisp air carried the smell of the barbie up to my house and beckoned me into the clearing to commune with my friends. The food was inviting, but more so the company, and the warmth of the fire created a welcome space to sit in the silence and simply be with kindred souls. The food was standard Aussie fare—simple, but good. Such tucker is always the best. There is nothing quite like snags (sausages to the uninitiated) cooked on an old harrow disc over an open fire. It was a very Australian moment. OK, so it all sounds a bit corny to some folks, but it spoke to something deep within me. Perhaps it was the fire constantly drawing my gaze that transported me into another place and time, memories of ancestors buried in the archives of the Soul's records. I thought about how complicated life can be and how mired we can all get in the details of our daily existence. When you sit in such a place as I was, however, there is something that calls from within and says to us "Is all that you put yourself through really worth the headache?" As a lone jet silently made its way across the sky above, I wondered about all that I and my friends had experienced of late and where our lives were taking us. I wanted to be on that jet, yet some of the best living was right there in front of me—simply being together and communing in spirit. Nothing else was really needed, and in that immediate moment (as in all moments) there was the utmost clarity about what is really good and important in life. It gave me something to remember in more 'civilized' times.

Librans tend to be social creatures. The sign's orthodox ruler, Venus, brings a love of beauty and a refined aesthetic sense, social skills, a love of comfort and an ability to attract money. This idea of attraction is strong with Venus types and Libra shares this in common with the sign Taurus. Libra is one of the signs that strongly concerns itself with relationships and both Libra and Taurus attract their share of admirers, for both signs are also strongly sexual and sensual in their expression. For this reason, both of these are said to be two of the main signs wherein sexual issues and force are brought to the fore and worked out—Taurus along purely sensual lines (desire) and Libra with the emphasis upon sex as it plays out in relationships. Venus has another side, however, and that is one that the Chinese attributed to it—justice. Venus brings about resolution of relationships and right relations between people, and its higher expression is more platonic and judicial rather than sensual. In that role it tends to bring about a just sense of what each relationship must be, whether it is the relation between the factors in an artistic landscape, the objects in a home, the things one gathers around them or the people in one's life. It is this latter point with which Libra is ultimately most concerned, for Libra always tends to look for the most ideal expression of a relationship. It is a strong subconscious drive within the sign. It can be a wonderful expression when it is rightly motivated, giving good diplomatic skills and an ability to smooth out relations between parties or it can drive one to the point of madness as it constantly looks for that perfect relationship—the greener grass on the other side of the fence. The latter reason is why Librans are often seen to be fickle in their relationships and why they are seen to be great 'players' in affairs of the heart. If people do not measure up to the inner sense the Libran has then they are often left in favor of someone 'better', or so the Libran thinks, albeit in the nicest manner possible.

Most people associate Libra with poise and balance, but life seldom seems to allow us to be that way. We are constantly buffeted by people, energies, nature and our own unruly bodies and we are never allowed to rest—or so it appears. We yearn for a peace that transcends this earthly realm, yet 'life' seems to keep it from us. A constant swing of the pendulum between happiness and upset, our existence here seems to harbor more change than it does constancy. When we think of what Libra represents to us, we think of justice, the scales within which everything in life is weighed and checked against the measure, whatever that measure may be. Perhaps it is a societal code. It may be a family loyalty. It might be the highest ideals that we can imagine. At some level, every Libran carries some sort of measure or standard with which all experience is weighed. When the measure is attained, then we know that justice is done or that balance has been achieved. Libra has three distinct phases of expression to it, and each one is geared toward the establishment of better conditions within affairs of the heart: friendship, romantic, social or otherwise. The Venus side of Libra is well-known, but if it is indulged too much then the next phase of Libra manifests itself as the higher Self seeks to bring about better conditions in its immediate environment. Uranus then takes on a very marked role in the life of the Libran type, and it is then 'on for young and old' when it comes to human relations as Uranus brings the new and the unexpected into the life of the Libran type and surprises and interesting experiences into the lives of those around them as a result. We all know what that might mean. "May you have a long and most interesting life" is a version of an old Chinese curse, and it seems to have an affinity with Librans many times.

Uranus eventually brings the Libran type to the realization that there is no such thing as a settled life and it does that through constantly introducing challenge into the life that forces one to live more in the moment and not be attached to the comfortable side of outcomes. Life can be messy business and one of the chief lessons anyone with strong Libra in their chart has to learn is this concept of ‘the Noble Middle Path’ which the Buddha handed down to us. In its lower expression Libra swings back and forth between extremes as it exercises its prerogative of choice—or indecision—for which it is famously (or infamously) known. In this mode, Libra can be the most extreme of all the signs and the bane of anyone’s life associated with the Libran. Thankfully, such cases are rare because Venus will not permit a strident life to any great degree. Eventually, though, the extremes of life are shown to be harmful to the Libran and a more centered course of living is decided upon. Uranus thus brings its ‘urge toward better conditions’ and life settles into a gentle routine for the Libran type. Relationships are therefore much more settled and equitable, too. Eventually the errors of wrong or licentious living are brought before the consciousness and the third phase of Libra takes over—the Saturn phase.

On the whole, the highest expression of Libra within relationships comes down to what we might term ‘integrity’. This defines the Saturn rulership of Libra. It is an expression of Libra that is quite high, indeed, and very few Libran types master it, but it is an overriding factor with the sign nonetheless. As we know, Saturn is the Lord of Karma. Karma is a much-maligned word in the West, often harboring the most negative connotations for people. If one ‘has karma’ with someone, then it is usually taken to mean that the two people have something difficult to work out between them—but that is often not the case. Perhaps a better way of thinking of Saturn is with this idea of *integrity*. What does it mean to be in integrity, either within one’s self or with someone else? Simply, it means that one fulfills the purpose, truth and path of one’s situation, relationship or life. This is a generalization, of course, but it serves to present the idea. Saturn rules choice and decisions. As a person thinks, so their life is decided and their destiny set within the parameters of society, planetary dynamics and enviroing conditions. There is only so much a person can do to act upon their decisions, in other words. That is the other side of karma—we are all restrained by the karma of the group or environment in which we find ourselves to a degree. If we can live within that integrity, then doors of opportunity are continually presented to us. If not, then we find ourselves stuck—the proverbial Saturnian dynamic—and we are forced by life to take time and have a good think about our dilemmas.

True integrity involves living to our highest standards and according to our inner Voice. That we often fail in this is true, but if we learn from the experience and make good of it then we are shown a way out of our impasse and we gain in wisdom and freedom. To put the whole matter succinctly, to be in integrity means that we live our Truth—we ‘walk our talk’. Otherwise, it is a long, bumpy ride downhill, as a friend of mine once put it. Libran types seem to be particularly tested around this sort of thing, especially when it comes to partnerships of all types. All Venus and Saturn types have this dynamic to contend with, for Venus and Saturn actually work very closely together. Those signs are Taurus, Gemini, Libra and Capricorn. These four signs are intimately connected to how we relate to one another and to our environment, but of the four Libra has the most to do with the establishment or restoration of integrity in a person’s or group’s life. So, whenever the Libra interlude comes around every year, yes, the emphasis is upon relationships, law, sex and money but—more to the point—the onus is upon us to look at where we have been in integrity or not around those things and to take steps to correct it if we have not. As it was once gently pointed out to me, we can either choose the course our higher Self has set for us, or we can let life do it for us. If we choose the latter path, then our learning/reward/experience will often come at a cost and we are likely to grumble about it a bit after the fact. It is the nature of Karma/Saturn—make the right choices in life (follow our inner, intuitive guidance) and take a step toward grace or take what comes. We are often blinded to what our inner Voice says, but we eventually get to our destination, hopefully the better for wear. The key to the resolution of it is to follow ‘The Light that Moves to Rest’, find our inner stillness and make our volition therefrom.

With that, let us have a look at what this solar festival will bring to us. On the whole, the full moon figure speaks of money and resolution around financial matters. There has been an impasse in that regard since the end of 2005 and much of a functional nature in people’s lives has felt stuck and frustrated since then. We have an opportunity with this full moon to gain some fresh insights on matters and to begin to break free of what has held us back, and we will do this by coming together in a more fulsome and appropriate manner than has been the case until now. This full moon and the weeks to follow will bring people together to effect change in a positive sense and to ‘set the record straight’ when it comes to interchange between people. The solar eclipse at the new moon just passed began this process of breaking up, but also of bringing together and it, too, was a ‘financial moon’, highlighting the resource (money) side of Libra rather than the traditional affairs of the heart most often associated with the sign.

The full moon of the Libra Solar Festival takes place on the 7th of October 2006 at 1:13 PM AEST (3:13 AM GMT). As is usual, the symbol for the degree of the Sun sets the tone for what is working out in the dynamics with this figure, and it reads thus:

“In the heat of the noon hour a man takes a siesta.” 14 Libra

There is a need for all of us to recuperate from time to time and to take time out from the vagaries of life in order to collect our thoughts and to gain insight for the steps ahead. We need time to rest and ‘digest’ experience. In this symbol we see the fulfillment of the tone set at the new moon, which was outlined for us with the story of the Red Rooster (the month of the Rooster of Solitude) from my last new moon letter. This is not a time for outgoing. It is a time for coming together and gathering our thoughts. The impulse for action will come later. Right now, what we need is to find the quiet, central point of peace and allow things to wash through. This is enabled for us through the symbol for the lunar degree, which reads thus:

“A serpent coiling near a man and a woman” 14 Aries

The occultist will immediately recognize the relationship between these two symbols. When the point of rest has been reached in consciousness (when the point of meditative focus has been achieved) then there arises an opportunity—karma allowing—for there to be a wonderful balancing, renewal and quickening within one’s system. Coiled serpents are always a symbol for the kundalini fire at the base of the spine and we may indeed see an increase in the activity of the fires within the bowels of the earth as well as some curious phenomena within ourselves if we can attain to this point of meditative focus around the period of the full moon. In any instance, this full moon will bring renewal and quickening of purpose if we can find and maintain our inner integrity. If not, then we might find ourselves in a bit of bother as things are set in motion around us. The following aspects are in evidence and serve to support the symbols for the Sun and Moon.

The Sun is still tracking a tightening conjunction with Venus and Mars, which will become exact at the new moon—The Month of the Yellow (Earth) Dog. Ordinarily, this is a pretty sexy conjunction and it can bring its share of fun, but it is opposed by the moon and Mars is sextile to Saturn, bringing a note of sobriety and focus of directions. It is this Mars sextile to Saturn that characterizes this figure as a business figure, as it is one of the premier business aspects. It builds long and purposefully toward the future. So, for the paramours among us, one will have to wait until more toward the new moon before the sexual/sensual side of Libra shows its colors.

The Sun and Mars are both trine to Neptune, giving magnetism and insight to whatever comes to us in our moments of interlude. It is a highly intuitive combination, especially since Neptune is also sextile the Moon, and aesthetic sensibilities will be highly sensitized. This is a good figure for playing those hunches that have been in the backs of our minds. Mercury is in an applying trine to Uranus—also a brilliant business aspect. Business people: take advantage of this full moon! Intuition and flashes of insight into all sorts of matters will be very strong. If you want answers to problems that have plagued you for some time, this is the time to closet yourself away and brainstorm with others. This applies to everyone, not just business people.

Lastly, there is one big note of warning with this full moon. Jupiter is at the exact midpoint of the t-square with Saturn and Neptune, therefore the meaning of the midpoint structure is amplified. This t-square makes for a tendency to be easily upset and depressed. It also makes one over-sensitive and amplifies all sorts of ego inflammation. One has to watch a tendency to be narrow-minded under this influence and toward self-deception, which is a real possibility—hence, the need for brainstorming with others and for periods of peace and solitude. Liver problems can also manifest, so stay away from drugs and alcohol over the next few weeks if there is a problem you want to solve in your life. Saturn is still in the applying phase to Pluto—yet another aspect that bodes well for big business and for psychological work as was outlined in the last full moon letter. It will be with us for a while yet, so there is plenty of time to put things in place and to reorganize the structure of our lives in a big way.

There have been times in my life when I have chosen well and other times when life has had to do things for me. It is the same for all of us. It has all brought brilliant experience with it, but I would have to say upon reflection that I would rather take the former path over the latter. Roller coasters can be fun at times, but not when the tracks are not sound and the car is out of control. That’s the thing about it: life can be like a roller coaster if we leave things too long. Then all of a sudden we find that we have no control and bemoan our fate. Still, we are never given more than we can handle and roller coasters can afford us astounding vistas of the world around us—something we would not otherwise get. Some people crave that type of excitement. I liked it a lot when I was younger, but Saturn has been a good teacher for me. I hope in the weeks to come we can all find time for a rest. I will be going into retreat myself for a while, though you will still get my letters. Maybe I will see you there on the inner planes. May you get the answers you seek and may the ride that is your life be an enjoyable, well-maintained one! These are intense times. Please be kind to yourselves and to those dear to you. All the best!

Happy St. Francis Day,
Malvin.