

# Karma and the Birthchart

From the broadest perspective, the birthchart can be viewed as a lesson from the past and its effect on the present. This lesson is called karma - that which we experienced in past lives and is being re-experienced in this life for the purpose of learning and moving on. Each aspect in our chart reflects this karma and the possibilities which exist to release it and grow.

For example, planets in the 12th house symbolize spiritual lessons from the past which tested our faith and require us to re-examine what faith means and how to "be" in it fully. Often this requires meditation and time alone. The re-experiencing of these old lessons may feel painful or illuminating but either way, we are helped in finding balance from the fear or insecurity that caused the karma in the first place. Mars in the twelfth can indicate a past life where we had difficulty expressing our passion/aggression because it didn't feel spiritual or caused us guilt. In this lifetime the same issues come up with the opportunity to merge our spirituality and passion and let go of guilt. This may take considerable time but each time we risk a new path, we feel more free in our self expression.

The moon is another prime example of karmic lessons - particularly those of our emotional habits and patterns and the influence of our mother. What kind of nurturing we got in the past is shown by the sign of the moon as well as its aspects to other planets. With the moon in Gemini, for example, the nurturing was intellectual in nature and caused us to want to blend thinking/communicating with feeling. If the intellectual was too strong, then we may tend to over analyze our feelings and not express them fully. This is a karmic pattern of this combination and now we have the opportunity to use intuition and thinking and blend them together more cohesively. If the moon was in Capricorn, we learned about emotional caution while taking a lot of responsibility which now burdens us. In this lifetime, we can experiment with loosening up emotionally and sharing what we feel with others. Also, we can let go of some responsibility while using it as an act of nurturance.

Saturn too is an example of karma where we tried to find mastery but got stuck in fear, caution and over-deliberation. Now we have the opportunity to work constructively with our fear and channel it into a constructive effort over time that enables us to build something in the physical world. If Saturn was in Aquarius, the lesson was about blending organization with freedom and independence but we may have been suppressed by the father and feared the new ideas that independence signified. As we get older, the mastery of new, progressive ideas becomes increasingly important as is the need to loosen our caution in expressing these ideas.

All areas of the chart then are reflections of our past and opportunities for new responses. Themes emerge as in relationships (Venus, 7th house), career (10th house) or family (4th house). In each theme the karmic lesson can be transformed into dharma (purpose). This transformation takes courage and work but is the hallmark of our destiny in the birthchart and in the lifetime. Beyond the karma is the integration of our personality into a spiritual perspective and in this perspective lies grace.

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