

## *Planetary Cycles*

**W**HEN TRYING to study Planetary Cycles we are entering a subject so vast and so magnificent in its scope and immensity that no earthbound mind can give it adequate expression, let alone scientifically define and explain it. Only a Master of Wisdom can give a true picture of the celestial wonders with their perfect laws of time and space, for of necessity this carries us into the very realm of the occult and on to the higher planes of consciousness.

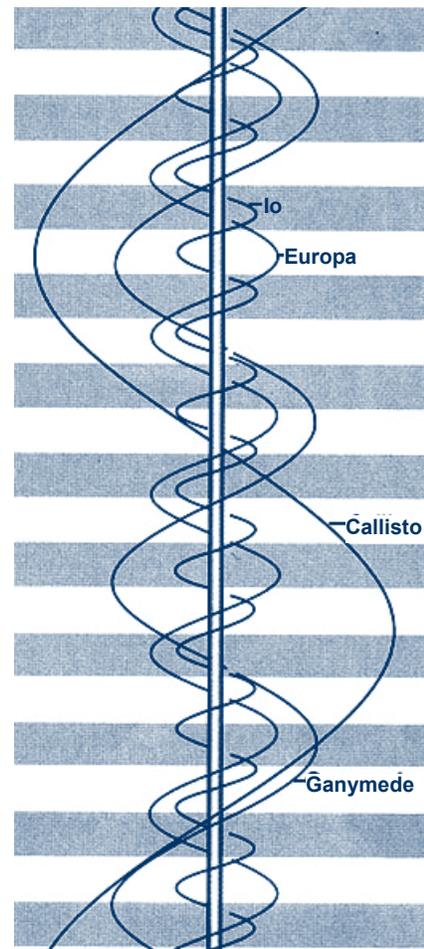
For the laws of Planetary Cycles are concerned not only with human destiny, nations, races, and religions, but also with worlds, suns, universes, lifewaves, globes, rounds, and in short, the evolution of all Creation.

The source and sustainer of all life is the Sun, which in our planetary system is the visible symbol of the Absolute—God—in Whom we live and move and have our being. The Sun, which is a fixed star, is the center around which the earth and the other planets move in a rhythmic, precise order and regularity; and such is the perfection of this motion that the position of the celestial bodies can be mathematically determined for thousands of years into the past, and for thousands of years into the future.

In time and space there are measurements of various units, all fitting into each other, wheels within wheels—from cycles of the merest fraction of a second to cycles of unthinkable milliards of years. What is a cycle? The word means a period, a revolution, a circle, a round, indicating both time and motion.

In astronomy and mathematical chronology a cycle is a period or interval of time in which certain phenomena always recur in the same order. In other words, it means repetition, as given in the expression “History repeats itself.”

The simplest cycles include day and night, summer and winter, spring and fall, and the ebb and flow of tides. There are cycles of comets and eclipses, meteoric showers, sunspots and shooting stars. There are cycles of inflation and deflation, peace and panic, prosper-



*The above diagram traces the course of four of Jupiter's moons showing how circular movement translates to spiral patterns and illustrating that repetition with a difference which is the structural basis of evolution. The straight middle bar represents the path of Jupiter. This diagram can serve as a model for lunar, planetary, and stellar movements. The similarity between this pattern and the double helix of the DNA molecule suggests that it is a foundational organizing principle for physical creation.*

ity and business depression; cycles of highest culture, of lowest barbarism and intellectual

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darkness. Always action and reaction—eternal motion. And motion is Life.

Next to the Sun the celestial body most familiar and most important to us is the Moon. Its monthly cycle in the sky with reference to the Sun is called its *synodical period*, a motion which takes a little over 29 days to complete. With reference to the Earth or a fixed star, the Moon finishes the cycle in about 28 days. This is its *sidereal period*.

An interesting cycle to study is the Lunar or Metonic Cycle, consisting of 19 years, or 235 lunations. The discoverer of this cycle was the Greek astronomer Meton, who lived about 432 B. C. He found that every 19 years the new moons happened on the same days of the month as during the previous cycle. For example: the Ephemeris for 1911 and the one for 1892 will show all the new and full moons not only on the same day, but also in the same Sign and approximate degree as they occur in the year 1930.

If we wish to know the lunations and eclipses for any year in the future, we look up the Ephemeris 19 (or multiples of 19) years earlier. For instance, 1930 gives the Moon's positions in 1949; 1925 for 1944; 1976 for 1995. Where will the full moon be in October, year 2000? The Ephemeris for 1924 can tell you. The total lunar eclipse of September 27, 1996 in four degrees of Aries will be repeated in the same sign and degree September 28, 2015.

Of the major cycles, we are most familiar with the great Sun cycle, the precession of the equinoxes. The yearly cycle of the Sun through the zodiac begins when it crosses the celestial equator about the 21st of March. Day and night are then of equal length. But owing to the revolution of the pole of the earth's axis in a circle of 23.5° radius about the pole of the ecliptic, the Sun crosses a trifle earlier than it did the year before—a matter of 50 seconds of space per year, aggregating one degree in 72 years. Thus it takes the Sun in this precessional cycle 2156 years to transit one sign, and 25,868 years to pass through the entire zodiac, which duration constitutes a Great Sidereal Day.

In this slow receding journey of the Sun we find the key to all great cosmic or sacred cycles, and also the key to eternal progress. A closed circle suggests rigidity, immobility, sameness, monotony.

But this 50 seconds deviation, slight though it is, causes that change which advances every cycle on a higher plane than the previous. Thus there is no "going around in circles" but an upward trend as of spirals upon spirals.

Another great cycle is called the Polar Cycle or Polar Day. Due to an exceedingly slow movement of 50 seconds of space per century, the earth's axis revolves about its own center, completing a revolution in 2,586,800 years. This is equivalent to 100 precessional Sun cycles. A Polar Day measures all creative activity in the earth itself, and also measures the duration of human lifewaves. At the middle of a Polar Day the south pole will point north, and at three-quarter cycle directly toward the Sun.

An ancient Hindu almanac contains a chronological survey by an Atlantean astronomer called Asuramaya. He found a solar cycle of millions of years, designated as the Great Age, which was divided into four smaller ages. In reality, these constitute the four great divisions of time in the history of the earth:

Golden Age comprising...	1,728,000 years
Silver Age comprising.....	1,296,000 years
Copper Age comprising...	864,000 years
Iron Age comprising.....	432,000 years
Total.....	4,320,000 years

Please observe that each age is exactly 432,000 years less than the previous, and the sum of the digits of each age is the number 9, which is the root number of man and the earth at this stage of evolution. In the growth of a human being these four ages correspond to the four stages of Infancy, Youth, Manhood, and Old Age.

Again the four ages describe the four chief stages in the civilization of man:

1. Nomadic (Dawn) age of man. Irresponsibility and childlike dependence. Wanderings.
2. Pastoral. Man's wanderings within a limited area. Beginning of self-expression.
3. Agricultural. Man acquires permanent homes, flocks and herds.
4. Scientific. Manifestation of principles of cooperation, individual responsibility, unselfishness.

At the close of great or major cycles the world is changed geographically as well as atmospherically, owing to the axial motion of the earth and its position with regard to the Sun.

Aside from the Sun cycles there are the greater and lesser cycles of the planets, Moon, and the signs of the zodiac. The regular motions of the planets in their orbits are their cycles of vibration; their wave-length of oscillation, influencing each other and the earth according to their nature. As everything has its own special rate of vibration, or cyclic motion, so every planet in its course of development has to meet the forces sent forth from all the other celestial bodies.

For convenience we mark the time of the orbital cycles of the planets:

- Mercury ☿ in 88 days.
- Venus ♀ in 225 days.
- Earth ⊕ in 365-1/4 days.
- Mars ♂ in 687 days.
- Jupiter ♃ in 4,332 days or about 12 years
- Saturn ♄ in 10,759 days or about 29-1/2 years
- Uranus ♅ in 30,586 days or about 84 years.
- Neptune ♆ in 60,187 days or about 165 years.
- Moon ☾ in 27-1/3 days.

There are great periods in the world's history influenced by the relation of the earth to the zodiac. There are seven of these periods: three larger periods represent the Quality groups of the signs, namely the *three crosses*, cardinal, fixed and mutable; four lesser groups represent the *four elements*—fire, earth, air, water.

When the Cardinal cross is uppermost, that is, when many planets are in Cardinal signs, great changes take place, both in the earth and in the affairs of man. There is a breaking up of old conditions and new ones are established. There are wars, rumors of war, and critical times in general.

When the fixed cross is prominent, there is peace; powerful rulers and leaders hold the world's turbulence in check. Then there is a time, when the common or mutable cross is in evidence, stirring



From Alboul Hassan Ali's *Praeclarissimus in Juditijs Astrorum*, Venice, 1519.

*Arabian astronomer constructing a celestial globe.*

up interest in abstract things. A wave of spiritual impulses sweeps over people, new teachers come forth, enlightenment and culture are favored. The ever changing aspects of the planets to each other, to the Sun, and to the zodiac constitute the analogy between the "heavens above and the earth beneath." The law operating upon all planes of nature is the divine law of correspondences: "As above so below." All the processes and cycles of the solar system, the Macrocosm, are repeated within each human being, the Microcosm.

While we cannot here go into anthropology we may say briefly that it is the grouping of individuals which makes nations and races, and the greater cycles of the planets have more to do with this grouping than we may think. For instance, we say the British nation is ruled by Mars, and its people are in thought and jurisprudence akin to the ancient Romans. The Roman empire formed, culminated and declined during the great cycle of Mars. Another Mars cycle began with the inception of the British nation, in which the Mars element is pronounced. People with the Martian characteristics predominant are born into that nation to learn and to teach the world the lesson of Mars, which is that Strength and Might must unite with Beauty

and Right, liberating the mighty creative force of nature to be used for the glorification of the earth.

Of minor cycles, we may mention the 11 year cycle of sunspots. Sunspots have a minor influence upon the weather conditions on earth, especially in the generation of magnetic storms.

The zodiac is divided into 72 dodecans, corresponding to the 72 years which the sun takes to move backward in the zodiac one degree. These 72 dodecans measure to the 72 heartbeats per minute of a normal human being. Each heartbeat constitutes a cycle. The duration of this cardiac cycle is four-fifths of a second.

We each are a miniature zodiac. Recurrent cycles in the universe show recurrent cycles in human life on a smaller scale. When we know the proportion of one cosmic cycle to another, then we can understand more about our own individual cycles, better enabling us to live in harmony with divine law.

The normal length of a man's life, threescore and ten, is divided into 7 ages. These ages are:

Birth to 4 years, ruled by the Moon—slight growth of mind.

4 to 14 years, ruled by Mercury—disciplinary age, comprising 10 years.

14 to 22 years, ruled by Venus—adolescent age, comprising 8 years.

22 to 41 years, ruled by the Sun—age of maturity, comprising 19 years.

41 to 56 years, ruled by Mars—age of discrimination, comprising 15 years.

56 to 68 years, ruled by Jupiter—age of wisdom and honor, comprising 12 years.

68 to end, ruled by Saturn—age of peace.

The law of repetition or, as it is often called, the law of periodicity, is based on the cyclic periods of the Moon, the planets and the days of the week. Of the *week* which was used in the original Chaldean reckoning, the 6th day was considered a time of onerous activity—clearing out, finishing up, cleansing, preparing for the 7th, the day of rest, of re-creation, adjustment, balance. So also in the human life, the 6th *day* of any cycle is the critical one. For instance, take a year as a cycle, divide it

into 7 periods of 52 days each. Use the birthday as a starting point. 52 days later ends the 1st period (“day”). The 6th will then be the testing time. For example, if January 23rd is the birthday, the 6th period will fall between Oct. 9th and Dec. 1st. “A birthday of July 10th gives March 26th to May 18th as the 6th period. For November 7th, it lasts from July 23rd to September 15th.

The 7 year cycles are related to Uranus, which completes its orbital revolution in 84 years, 7 years in each sign. When Uranus, the awakener, is halfway around the zodiac or opposite to its radical place in the birth chart, which comes about the 42nd year, it is truly a crucial point in everyone's life, whether we recognize it or not. In modern parlance it is called “the dangerous age.”

There are many other planetary cycles to study, the details of which are too great to encompass in a short paper. Let each student try to note and tabulate what the *progressions*, the *transits*, and the *lunations* mean in his own chart. Then indeed will he add to his knowledge, which will not only help himself, but will bring to the science of astrology a greater interest, respect and understanding by the world at large.

Another Golden Age is approaching, the age of true democracy and universal brotherhood. Uranus is the ruler of this the Aquarian Age, which begins when the Sun by precession enters the sign Aquarius in about 700 years. Uranus (♅) is the planet of perfected man, master of life and death, who has finished his cycle of evolution. Its symbol is the portals of wisdom and love, combining the symbols of Mars (♂) and Venus (♀)—the male-female principle, strength and beauty, the equalization of the sexes, which will occur in the coming great Aquarian Age.

While our astrological wheels with the three crosses keep spinning around in the eternal heavens, may we learn the lessons which they so plainly teach, the lessons which lead to the attainment of

Physical purity,  
Emotional stability,  
Mental equilibrium,  
Spiritual unfoldment. □

—Alfa Lindanger