

BUSHFIRES, THE CHIRON ECLIPSE & AQUARIAN COMMUNITY SPIRIT

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Could astrology have predicted the devastating bush fires in Australia and in some way prevented the terrible toll of death and injury? The answer is 'no'. Hindsight, however, is a wonderful thing and there are many astrological pointers that can help us understand the metaphysical symbolism of the bushfires and put the events of the past few weeks into broader perspective.

The 7th February, '*Black Saturday*' fell between a powerful solar and lunar eclipse against a stellium of planets in community-minded Aquarius. Think of an eclipse as suddenly turning the lights off and then realising when the lights come on again that everything looks completely different.

The Astro-Cartography charts for the 10th February show that the pathway of what has been dubbed '*The Chiron Eclipse*' was right in the vicinity of the bush fires. (The Sun was conjunct Chiron and Neptune on Australia's IC (root chakra) at the time of the eclipse). Chiron transits are associated with events that wound (or by polarity heal us). They also relate to the following themes: major moves or relocation; relationship break ups; death of someone close and other traumatic experiences.

All very clever in hindsight, but to select Victoria as a potential location for a natural disaster around the time of the eclipse would have been impossible. The most any astrologer could have said was to expect some emotionally charged or traumatic event (Chiron) with the potential to open up spiritual consciousness and compassion (Neptune).

Secondly we can examine the Australian chart of the powerful Saturn-Uranus opposition on 5th February (representing a sudden disruptive challenge to the old order). Saturn was rising and Uranus setting in the path of the Victorian bushfires (and the Queensland floods), pointing to a sudden and unforeseen challenge to our world requiring a re-evaluation of what is really important and what we can depend on. Again we could not have pinned this down to a given event in a certain area.

Thirdly, when examining the fortunes of a particular country, we can look to the birth chart of its leader. The 10th February eclipse fell on Kevin Rudd's natal Leo Moon, while the transiting South Node (endings) was on his natal Uranus (sudden and unexpected events). We could therefore expect that Rudd would experience unexpected and sudden, highly emotional events at the time of the eclipse, possibly involving death and endings.

Finally, on 7th February, when the bushfires began, the Sun was at 18-19° Aquarius. With chilling synchronicity, the Sabian Symbol for this zodiac degree is: "A forest fire being subdued by the use of water, chemicals and sheer muscular energy". This particular symbol represents "the skill and courage necessary to bring the destructive potential of carelessness of karmic 'visitations' under control". While forest fires may be caused by human carelessness, lightning or the by-products of modern technology, every individual has to face unforeseen situations that test their strength, ingenuity and emotional stability. To survive such times, a person needs faith in self coupled with a belief in higher powers. The image speaks of the need for "total mobilisation of energy and a deep sense of indomitability."

So yes there were indications that early February would be a tumultuous time, but what sense can we make of these energetic happenings and their aftermath?

What has struck all of us, especially those affected by the disaster, is the passionate and compulsive desire of virtually every Australian to do their bit to help out bushfire survivors with money, clothes, food, housing, medical support and volunteer labour. This is that "total mobilisation of energy and a deep sense of indomitability" and the silver lining to our dark cloud. The eclipse over Australia has brought us to our senses and made us realise what is really important.

Last month, just days before the bushfires I wrote: "A climate of fear has developed of late as the global recession takes its hold. It is vital to keep our own energy moving to avoid moving into a position of stagnation and personal recession. Look at what is working in your life and use the Aquarian community-oriented energy to network and help others around you. It is also vitally important to ask for help and accept help yourself – something many find confronting or see as a sign of weakness. In times of ease we can simply ride the wave of individual success, but in times of hardship we need each other to survive."

We all know that these are no ordinary bushfires. Not only have they killed over 200 people and left thousands homeless, we know deep down that this is just the beginning. The beginning of what exactly, we don't know, but we know our Australian way of life is under serious threat. Farmers have lost their crops; fish, pets and livestock have died; wildlife has been wiped out; it may no longer be safe to live in the bush. We talk of rebuilding, but with global warming, water shortages, hotter summers, floods, extreme weather patterns, we can't go back to the way things were, even if we wanted to. It's funny how we've suddenly stopped talking about the economy and started to focus on helping each other, being grateful for being alive and staying safe. It's funny how those who complained how much they lost over the past year found themselves giving surplus possessions and money to those who had lost everything.

Do we really have to undergo crisis in order to embrace our interconnectedness and display our love and care for fellow humans? And having seen the devastation and grief caused by loss of home and loved ones in our own backyard, will we think twice about funding and supporting wars that destroy the homes and lives of people in other countries? Finally, with the blame for many fires being placed on arsonists, will we reflect that arson is simply a local form of terrorism, and that we do not need to look outside our borders for terrorists?

The bushfires have provided much food for thought - perhaps this was the eclipse Australia had to have.