

Eremiados Course Lesson Nineteen



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&
Templum de Octo Rosae Mysticus



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The World Ages in the Tides of Time

PART 2 of 4: FROM THE AGE OF CANCER TO THE AGE OF ARIES
AND THE PLANETARY CONGRESS OF 560 bce
Eremiados Temple Tiron Grade Philosophy Paper No. 8

THE WORLD AGE OF CANCER

c. 8800 to c. 6660 bce

By the beginning of the Age of Cancer, about 11,000 years ago, the human race had domesticated animals and crops, and was just establishing its first permanent settlements.

The gradual shift from being nomadic hunters and gatherers to being settled herders of animals and growers of grain crops has probably been the greatest step forward in all the history of the human species. It had taken perhaps as long as a million or more years for humankind to make the change.

The world's oldest city, Jericho, was first settled in about 8500 bce. A thousand years later, it was still only ten acres in area.

Early social structures simple

Early settlements and small towns were comparatively simple social structures. Originally a village was just the permanent home of a tribe. A feature of a tribe is that all its members are related to each other, if not by blood, then by marriage.

Even when new blood was brought into a tribe, either by trade or by capture, the new members were soon assimilated into the tribal family, if not as full members, then as the mothers of its children.

As is the case with all primate species, a human tribe was usually dominated by one senior male, who was the father, grandfather, great-grandfather, uncle, great-uncle or at least the cousin of everyone else in the tribe.

Astrologically, there are strong links between Cancer and the ideas of domesticity,

home and family and love of the land on which you live.

THE WORLD AGE OF GEMINI

c. 6660 to 4599 bce

Near the beginning of the Age of Gemini, the sailing ship was invented, somewhere in the Mediterranean area. At first, and for many thousands of years, sea voyages were quite short and hugged the coasts.

Sea travel was the second great step forward by the human race. Humans were no longer restricted only to lands accessible by walking across country. Equally important was increasing communications, now possible, between the tiny, otherwise isolated settlements strung out along the fertile crescent between the Persian Gulf and Egypt, as well as with those settlements now being established on Crete and other Mediterranean islands, and on the European mainland.

Astrologically, Gemini is related to ideas of communication and to short journeys.

THE WORLD AGE OF TAURUS

c. 4500 to 2349 bce

At the time when humanity was moving into the Age of Taurus, there began what we would now call urban civilisation. This is a significant step beyond the small settlements and towns of earlier, which had comparatively simple social structures.

Population explosion

At the beginning of the Age of Taurus, there was a population explosion among those human tribes who had settled in what is called 'the fertile crescent', which curves from

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Mesopotamia around the shores of the eastern Mediterranean to the Nile River Valley of Egypt. Mesopotamia was so called because it was the land between the rivers Euphrates and Tigris.

The increase in population was largely due to the improved food supplies which had resulted from the cultivation of grain and the domestication of cattle and sheep.

In addition, there had been technological advances, the invention of irrigation in Mesopotamia and parallel, though not identical, developments in the richly fertile Nile River Valley in Egypt.

By the time of the Age of Taurus, city populations had grown so large that families living together in a city were no longer necessarily related to each other, except perhaps through some legendary ancestor in the remote past.

Elaborate social structures

These developments led to the emergence of elaborate social structures. No individual nor family could handle the amount of work needed to build and maintain the networks of irrigation canals spreading out from the rivers around the cities of Mesopotamia. Military forces arose to defend the canals against attack from neighbouring cities.

Thus, in the city states there arose a variety of social classes, some higher than others in power and wealth. Like the earlier tribal settlements, all this was organised around one dominant male, now known as the King. The religions of the City states regarded the King as a god, the direct representative on earth of the high gods.

Significant differences

There were significant differences between the villages or tribal settlements of earlier millennia and the new city-states that arose in the Age of Taurus, quite apart from their size. The most significant difference was probably in the attitude to the ownership of property.

In the tribal villages and towns, even though each individual could be said to own their personal possessions, the village as a whole belonged to the tribe as a whole. This is similar to, but not quite the same thing as our modern ideas of communal ownership, such as the common ownership of a commune by its members, or the State ownership of property in communist countries.

The tribe was centred on the senior male. He was in complete control of the tribe and village, its buildings, its land, its crops, its herds, its slaves, its resources, everything. The senior male was the tribe. Yet, in a very real sense, the tribe as a whole owned him and, through him, everything else.

In the World Age of Taurus, the move was away from the communal ownership prevalent in earlier ages towards private ownership. A complicating factor, however, was the supremacy of the dominant male, once the head of a family, now the God-King of a city-state.

In the city-states, all the wealth and power was still concentrated in the person of the God-King. By his grace and favour, his family and supporters shared in his wealth and power. Everything in the kingdom, including the people, was the personal private property of the God-King. But it could not be said, as in the earlier tribal structures, that the God-King was also the property of the city-state as a whole.

By the end of the Age of Taurus, the God-Kings were dominant. The incipient approaches towards what we might call democracy in some cities in Sumer in Mesopotamia, evident from the early records engraved on clay tablets, had totally disappeared.

Towards the end of the Age of Taurus, some cities were dominating more than the countryside in their immediate environs. Around about the year 3000 bce, in both Egypt and Mesopotamia, strong rulers united widespread territories into single nations.

By this time, writing was well established throughout the civilisation of the middle

eastern area, having begun as a means of communication between the merchants of one city and another to guarantee that all the trade goods sent from one city had in fact arrived at the other. Astrologically, Taurus has always been associated with one's personal resources and wealth, usually in modern times, money. It has strong links with trade and commerce.

The stage is now set for the onset of the World Age of Aries, the age when God-Kings ruled the world, first and most powerfully in the Middle East, but soon across India and China also.

THE WORLD AGE OF ARIES

2349 to 164 bce

The Age of Aries is the age of the strong individual ruler, with divine right to his power, to whose needs and desires the whole nation was totally subservient. It is in this kind of culture that the manpower and resources of the entire nation of Upper and Lower Egypt could be devoted, year after year for centuries, to building great pyramid-tombs for successive God-King Pharaohs.

Coincidental with the beginning of Age of Aries is Sargon I of Akkad, somewhere between 2371 and 2316 bce, the first World-Emperor. Sargon proudly claimed 'to rule the world from sea to sea', that is, from the Mediterranean Sea to the Indian Ocean. He might even have sent armies to Egypt and Ethiopia. He was the first king to establish an international empire. In his day, he was said to have conquered the world. His renown was such that, for a thousand years after, whenever rulers wished to proclaim how great they were, they would say, 'I am a king after the order of Sargon of Akkad.'

The World Age of Aries began with the first of the world conquerors. At the end of the Age of Aries, as the human race moved into the Age of Pisces, the greatest of all world empires established by one man, Alexander the Great of Macedonia, was collapsing. His empire had extended from India in the east to Europe in the west, from Egypt in the South to Afghanistan in

the north, and it depended totally on his personal ability as a ruler.

Astrologically, Aries is traditionally referred to the kind of person who can take the initiative and act on their own, but often without much thought for the consequences or interest in anything but their own prestige and benefit.

Aries is the most dynamic of the fire signs, and the World Age of Aries coincides with the beginning of the smith's craft. Smiths used fire to forge and work metals for the first time in human history. At this stage, smiths worked only with copper, tin and bronze, which is an alloy of copper and tin.

THE PLANETARY CONGRESS

25 July, 560 bce

During the 6th century bce, there was a rare focusing of planetary energies, when all the planets of the solar system were congregated in one small segment of the heavens, from the point of view of the Earth.

Although it is possible to put a precise date, and even a precise time, when a Planetary Congress is at its narrowest focus, in fact, there is a period of about a week when all the planets, including the Moon are gathered within the one quarter of the heavens. Such Congresses of planets take place each month for three or four months every year, for several years on either side of the tightest congress.

Similar series of planetary Congresses take place every five or six hundred years. There was a series between 1978 and 1987, which was at its tightest span, between 63 and 64 degrees, at 1.57 am, 1st November, 1982.

The previous Planetary Congress was during the 14th century, at the heart of the period of the Black Death, which killed millions of people across the entire Asian and European continents.

Planetary congresses are rarely as closely concentrated as that of 1982, but no other Congress has been as tightly focused as that of

560 bce which took place on July 25, within a few months of the birth of Siddhartha Gauthama, who was to become one of the world's greatest Teachers, the founder of Buddhism, the Eight-fold Way.

The decades surrounding all of the Planetary Congresses are simultaneously times of great difficulty and of enormous advances for the whole human race.

The first half of the 6th century bce saw the entire area from India to Egypt torn apart by widespread conflicts as the Assyrian, Babylonian and Indian empires collapsed. Yet, by the end of the century, one of history's most enlightened monarchs, Cyrus of Persia had stabilised the whole area and brought peace and prosperity to its inhabitants.

The widespread extent of Cyrus' power is indicated by the fact that it is recorded in the Judeo-Christian scripture, *The Book of Esther* that the name of one of the high officials at the Persian court was Krishna, a common name throughout the Indian sub-continent.

The latter part of the 6th century bce was one of the most remarkable periods on a global basis in all human history. Even the extremely limited amount of knowledge we have of southern Africa and the Americas suggests that, there too, there was an upsurge of fundamental cultural and technological achievements.

The 6th century bce around the globe

In China, both Confucius and Lao Tse were writing and teaching during an era of comparative peace that had followed a long period civil anarchy. During this century, the abacus was invented in China.

In India, Gautama Buddha was spreading his message of compassion. In the same area and at the same time, Mahavira was founding the Hindu Jain sect. He was the first Teacher who taught his followers to avoid killing any form of life.

Under Cyrus in Persia, the Medean prophet Zoroaster was reforming the old Persian religion, transforming it into a new religion to be known as Zoroastrianism. Nowadays, followers of the Zoroastrian religion are called Parsees, i.e., Persians.

Among the Israelites, its two most brilliant poets and prophets, Ezekiel and Isaiah [the second of that name] were writing the books that have inspired millions of people ever since.

In Greece there was an extraordinary galaxy of scholars at work: Pythagoras, mathematician and mystic; Anaximander, astronomer, who determined how to predict the solstices and equinoxes accurately for years ahead. The mathematician Thales of Miletus was the first human to be able to predict eclipses ahead of their occurrence; Solon was drawing up Europe's first legal code; and Aesop was writing his folk tales, which are still read and told today.

It was a century of basic technological invention: In China, the abacus, in India, the damming of rivers, and cosmetic surgery; in Persia, the windmill; elsewhere in the Middle East, the wood-turning lathe; in Crete, a school of medicine was founded that, for the first time in history, tried to seek the causes of illness rationally, rather than blaming them on the gods; in the Americas, writing was being invented; in southern Africa, the iron age began.

Sociologically, the most significant events of the 6th century bce were the founding of the Roman Republic in 510 and the establishment of democracy in Athens by Cleisthenes [505 bce].

For our purposes, the importance of the most tightly focused Planetary Congress in human history, which took place in 560 bce, is that, during the 1980s, there was both the formal starting date of a new World Age [1980] and a Planetary Congress [1982] that was the second most tightly focused in human history.