

The New Saturn-Neptune Cycle that Begins in February 2025

by Bill Herbst

Version 1.1 (posted on 13 November 2024)

© 2024 by the author, all rights reserved

From Feb 2025 to April 2027, Saturn will conjoin Neptune in the heavens. Both planets are entering the sign Aries and will align longitudinally at 1° of that sign. This is the beginning of a new Saturn-Neptune cycle, which is about the dreams, ideals, and/or illusions that will shape the next 35 years, until another Saturn Neptune cycle begins in Gemini in 2061. The influence of this soon upcoming new Arian cycle bleeds into every aspect of life — individuals, groups, society, business and economics, government, politics, religion, etc. Old norms will disintegrate as new longings (for good or evil) take hold.

All the many cycles of Saturn are about what manifests in real life, in the actual physical world. Neptune's symbolism is very different from Saturn's. Neptune is about all of life's intangibles — whatever is not concrete. So, the Saturn-Neptune cycle brings together qualities that are paradoxical and exist normally within very disparate and typically separate realms. Like oil and water, these many opposing qualities do not naturally combine or mix well, but the Saturn-Neptune cycle acts to churn them into mutual suspension:

- Reality and Fantasy
- Secular and Spiritual
- Practical and Ideal
- Fact and Belief
- Hard and Soft
- Finite and Infinite
- Sacred and Profane
- Responsibility and Escapism
- Dutiful Devotion and Irresponsibility
- Ugliness and Beauty
- Particle and Wave
- Natural and Supernatural
- Boundaried and Boundless

Saturn's action is to plan and build durable structures from the ground up, one brick at a time. Whether wise or foolish, Saturn is usually both intentional and purposeful. Neptune's action is to infiltrate and disintegrate for the purpose of uplifting the meaning of whatever it touches. Neptune's motivations in us tend to

be mostly unconscious and propelled by emotional longings — the wish to return home to an undifferentiated state of Oneness and thus achieve a security that isn't subject to entropy. Neptune is the ultimate safe haven.

The Saturn-Neptune cycle charts the birth, growth, and development over time of non-concrete and intangible elements from our dreams, visions, longings, and fantasies that appear to fuse with our sense of reality and are then taken to be real. On the one hand, the cycle is about our yearning to bring down what is transcendently evanescent into the denser and more concrete realm of everyday reality. On the other hand, the cycle also shows our human tendency to misunderstand and misinterpret. It reveals our confusion in believing that the realm of what isn't real can be made tangible just by our wanting it to be.

Any cycle that begins near 0° Aries carries particular symbolic importance as representing something truly new. In the pantheon of astrological cycles, very few begin in early Aries at the beginning of the zodiac. The vast majority of cycles begin with or build upon what is already established. What we're likely to get with the early Aries onset of this new Saturn-Neptune cycle is not a repeat of past manifestations within the history of civilization. Something new is emerging for the first time.

This imminent new Saturn-Neptune cycle is particularly relevant for the U.S., since Saturn and Neptune are conjoining precisely on the Lower Heaven of the U.S. Sibly natal chart at 0° 52' of Aries. The roots of our nation are likely to be remade from within — a process of disintegration of the old by rising new ideals. 2025 is the start of this unprecedented chapter of our country's history that may redefine who we are (or believe ourselves to be). That process of replacing old assumptions with new dreams will probably be quite rocky. The old structures give way only grudgingly to new dreams and ideas that are often immature or even childish, but which seek to establish themselves in our perceptions and beliefs about reality.

The active conflicts, struggles, and probable confusion that will accompany the replacement of old assumptions, structures, and institutions with new and more vital dreams are likely to continue for almost a decade. Astrology holds that the critical turning point where the old gives way to the new is in 2033, at the first-quarter square shift of the Saturn-Neptune cycle. From that point until the early 2040s, America may founder and drift as it firms up new institutions. Any attempts to recover or reestablish old norms will probably fail. From 2042 on, the country turns its attention to embracing the "new normal." Whether that will be positive or negative is not knowable from where we are today. It will depend on the variables of millions of decisions that have not yet been made, such as whether our leaders are wise or foolish in their approach to policy.

My take on what will happen over the next decade is to expect much anxiety and suffering within the general public, but significantly less among the privileged

and well-off. The corporate and civil service managerial class of minions for the elites in power could, however, undergo sweeping and sometimes profound changes in an ongoing game of musical chairs to determine who carries our policy and reaps the rewards of obedient service to the powers-that-be.

Astrologically, I don't expect the particular sets of elites who will soon take over at the top to remain static or be permanent. The new Trump bunch coming into power as of January will have majorities in all three branches of government to rubber stamp their policies. Thus emboldened, they will do whatever they can (wrecking-ball-wise) for the coming two years. There's no telling yet from astrology how effective they'll be in tearing down and replacing the existing structures of society and government. Their attempts at radical change could be hugely disruptive or considerably less so as will their ratio of successes to failures. The Republican far-right has been barking for four decades about the changes they want to implement in America. Now we'll see how sharp their bite actually will be. However it goes, though, within four years, this new group of elites is likely to be replaced by a somewhat different cabal of insiders. That new group might be better or worse for the country. Time will tell.

Considered from the context of the U.S. chart and civilizational astrology, 2025 will almost certainly contain many shocks, but how much effective change will actually be implemented is as yet unknown. Given the shifting panorama of cycles, however, whatever is implemented within American society in 2025 will likely be less comprehensive or serious in the long run than what occurs in 2026 and 2027.

In terms of the current public anxieties in the aftermath of the November Presidential election, the upcoming year of 2025 is astrologically less important — and also less harsh and draconian — than what will happen in 2026 and 2027. More than the coming year, those two following years are where the rubber really meets the road.

The Saturn-Pluto cycle that began in late Capricorn during early 2020 continues to be the dominant symbolic indicator within astrology that defines the tenor of our current and future times. A way to say this in real life circumstances is that everything changed with COVID. That 2020 Saturn-Pluto cycle — which lasts for 33 years, until 2061 — is about the breakdown of government and institutions as an effective umbrella to protect society from its worst impulses. In its place, we are witnessing the rise of raw power used to further the interests of those in charge. While self-interest has always been an element that shapes to some extent all human interactions, this current Saturn-Pluto cycle increases that tendency ten-fold, or perhaps even hundred-fold. What was once considered by many as an honorable path of public service is pursued more frequently now as a vehicle for sheer self-aggrandizement — *"What's in it for me?"*

The onset of the this Saturn-Neptune cycle and the birth of new dreams could alter that unpleasant outlook somewhat, but it is probably just as likely (or even more so) that the new cycle will be limited or shaped to fit into the dominant Saturn-Pluto worldview. Put into more poetic terms, the 21st is not a century in modern civilization characterized by gentleness, kindness, or generosity. Time and again, humans are collectively choosing hard-edged selfishness, despite the unpleasant fact that we do so at our own peril.

My understanding of spiritual maturity has always been that it proceeds one person at a time. According to that perspective, there is no "collective awakening" into a higher or more profound consciousness of overall goodness. Each individual must do the hard work to refine the self into a fuller maturity that might if successful contribute to our becoming a more graceful and sentient species. If I'm correct about that, then we're slogging through a very difficult and dangerous period for humanity. I don't know what the end of this long tunnel will look like, nor whether we will emerge from it intact.

As far as I'm aware at the age of 75, I'm unlikely to be alive to see how it all plays out. For those future generations who will inherit the responsibility of carrying the baton for homo sapiens, I hope it goes well for them.