

## THE CONTAINMENT OF SATURN

Having completed the delineation of major transits, we now turn our attention to the vital subject of understanding the containment of Saturn. Containments are very important and extremely easy to find because there are no calculations required. You simply locate Saturn in the natal horoscope and find the closest planet on either side of it. These two planets form the containment, with Saturn in the middle. You could think of it as two slices of planetary bread with Saturn sandwiched in between.

The containment of Saturn reveals the key karmic confinements of this lifetime. It indicates the cause of your Saturn karma, which is important to understand because only the natal chart will manifest. The containment of Saturn clearly defines your karmic limitation. It also reveals what that limitation is moving toward, and it offers you a deeper insight into what can be done to overcome that karma or at least soften it. This is what esoteric astrology is all about — taking theoretical knowledge and converting it into actions that improve your life.

A planetary containment consists of three planets. The first is called the triggering planet, the second is called the contained planet, and the third is called the directing planet. When you look at a containment, always consider the planets in a counter-clockwise direction. Another way of saying this is that you always read a containment from the lower degree of a sign to the higher degree. If a containment is spread over a number of signs, it is read from the earlier sign to the later sign — Aries being the earliest sign and Pisces the latest. The key thing to remember about identifying a containment is you always move forward through the chart, always forward through the zodiac, which is always in a counter-clockwise direction.

An example might be helpful. Suppose you have a chart with the Sun in the first house, Saturn in the second house, and the Moon in the third house. This would be called a Sun-Saturn-Moon containment. The Sun is the triggering planet and the Moon the directing planet. It might be easier to visualize if you think of it as the first house followed by the second house, followed by the third house. This is a counter-clockwise movement.

A containment always consists of three planets. In our example, Saturn is contained by the Sun and Moon. The Sun is the triggering planet. It comes first and gives the containment its energy or impetus. It is the cause of the Saturn confinement. The third



planet counter-clockwise is called the directing planet because it gives the karma symbolized by the containment its direction. If the containment were Mars-Saturn-Moon, the karma would be entirely different because the triggering planet would be Mars instead of the Sun.

Another example might be helpful. Suppose you have a horoscope with Mercury at three degrees Libra, Saturn at eighteen degrees Libra, and the Sun at twenty-nine degrees Libra. This would be a Mercury-Saturn-Sun containment. Mercury would be the triggering planet and the Sun the directional planet, indicating the movement of the karma. Here is another example: The Moon is twenty degrees of Aries, Saturn is ten degrees of Gemini, and the Sun is five degrees of Leo. This would be called a Moon-Saturn-Sun containment. In this case, the containment covers more than one sign. The planet in the lower sign (Aries) is the triggering planet, and the planet in the higher sign (Leo) is the directing planet. The key thing to remember is you always read a containment in a counter-clockwise direction.

Here are four simple steps for identifying the containment of Saturn.

1. Locate the natal Saturn in the chart.
2. Locate the closest planet on either side of Saturn.
3. Determine the triggering planet, which is the first planet clockwise of Saturn. This planet is the cause of Saturn limitation indicated in the natal chart.
4. Determine the directing planet, which is the first planet counter-clockwise of Saturn. This planet symbolizes the destiny of that karma. It indicates what direction the karma will take when released, unless you inhibit its flow or soften it by skillful means.

### **The Theory of Containment**

In science, as in mysticism, all is caused. One cause leads to another which leads to another and another. In the same way, each planet in the chart is an energy that is followed by another and another. The concept mystically is that number one comes first and is followed by number two, which in some sense was caused by number one. Then one and two produce three. In the same way, each planet is modified by the energy of the planet that is in front of it. When we refer to one planet being in front of another, we always mean clockwise, which is most often a planet in a lower degree of the same sign or an earlier sign.

In Mystical Astrology, one planet's energy follows another, which is followed by yet another. These energies always move in a counter-clockwise direction. The theory of containment is based on the understanding that any planet in front (clockwise) of another planet reveals to some degree how that planet will affect the planet that follows it in a counter-clockwise direction. You can look at any planet in the chart and understand it karmically by seeing it as part of a containment. In other words, you can understand the karma of any natal planet on a deeper level just by knowing what planet is in front of it and what planet follows it.

In Hindu Astrology, the concept of containment is called the Doctrine of Yogas, the doctrine of yoking three planets together. Some texts call this a pairing, referring to the pair of planets on either side of Saturn. But the word pairing can be misleading because it makes you think of two planets, and there are always three planets involved in a containment.

Yet there is a significant difference between the yogas of Hindu Astrology and the containments of Western Astrology. In Hindu Astrology, you can only yoke three planets that are thirty degrees or less on either side of one another. A truer yoga would be when all three planets are in the same zodiacal sign or the same natal house. The truest yoga would occur when the planets are in the same sign and house.

In Western Astrology, containments are not limited by the degrees, houses, or signs between the three planets. It makes no difference whether the planets are ten degrees apart or a hundred degrees apart. This is a course in Western Astrology, so we will use the western approach. But it would be wise to keep in mind that there are different systems. Examine individual charts and come to your own conclusions as to whether or not a tighter containment is more forceful than a containment that is more spread out.

Faster moving planets form containments more often than slower moving planets. Therefore, many astrologers say that containments composed of faster moving planets are not as important as containments that include the slower planets. The truth is faster forming containments indicate more personal karmic patterns whereas slower forming containments indicate group karmic patterns. Both are vital in understanding your karmic limitations. I want to emphasize that there are no good or bad containments although they are potentially harmonious or inharmonious, depending on your ability to deal with the energy contained within them.



### Three Levels of Interpretation

The containment of Saturn in your natal chart is a focal point for evaluating your past-life karma. You begin to understand it by identifying the planet in front or clockwise of Saturn. This planet is known as the triggering planet and it indicates the source of your confinement. It causes the Saturn to manifest in a very specific way. The triggering planet reveals where your Saturn karma had its genesis. It tells you where and how the Saturn karma you are experiencing in this life was created in your past. The directing planet, the planet that follows or is counter-clockwise of Saturn, reveals the condition of your Saturn karma at the end of this incarnation if you do not change the patterning.

The containment of Saturn can be interpreted on three levels — sociological, psychological, and mystical. The sociological level refers to people. For example, if the Moon were part of a containment, on a sociological level it would indicate that women and children, your mother, or the general public played a major role in that karma. It is not a question of who caused the confinement. There is no question about that — you caused it. The question is who triggered the karma you created in the past and who will be the bringer of your karma in this lifetime.

The psychological level refers to moods, attitudes, emotions, and thoughts — psychological states that may or may not be directly associated with the sociological symbols. The mystical level relates to deeper causal forces. It has to do with transcendence, which is beyond people, thoughts, and emotions. The term as used here means that the experiences were not triggered by people or by the content of the conscious mind. The karma was activated by a direct experience from the subconscious or unconscious part of the mind.

In the Moon-Saturn-Sun containment, the Moon is the triggering planet, the basis of Saturn's limitation. Saturn is acted upon and triggered by the Moon. The Moon relates sociologically to women, children, and babies. Thus, the limitation of Saturn in this lifetime is the result of a past-life childhood experience or interaction with lunar symbols. The karma will be triggered by childish emotional attitudes and will manifest through your mother or women and children.

The directing planet indicates where Saturn's energy is heading, the direction it will take unless mind-force is applied to redirect it. In this example it is the Sun, which symbolizes the ego. On a sociological level, the Sun will drive a person to encounter powerful people who will give direction to their Saturn karma. Whether that direction

will be positive or negative depends to a great degree on the natal aspects of the Sun. On a psychological level, the Sun will drive the person to develop a stronger or more powerful personality to overcome their limitation.

### **A Deeper Look at Saturn Containments**

Saturn symbolizes an experience or set of experiences where you are reaching a limit. When delineating the containment of Saturn, the triggering planet symbolizes the cause leading to the frustration involved in reaching that limit in the past. The triggering planet also reveals the type of limitation and the conditions of that limitation. The natal Saturn reveals the nature of that limitation or confinement as you experience it in this lifetime. The problem with Saturn is it restricts your self-awareness to the point where you cannot remember your past. So you cannot draw on your experiences or learn from them. This is why humans need a transformational expansion of their consciousness, a mental alchemy that allows them to remember and learn from past personal history.

The directing planet indicates the future trend of the karmic limitation symbolized by the natal Saturn. It reveals how you will conceive, envision, or resolve your frustration. It also indicates how you can soften or overcome it. Once Saturn karma is neutralized or softened, your awareness expands, alchemy occurs, and there is a mental transformation in which your mind opens up and remembers. When you remember the past you are free to learn from it and from your own past personal history. This is what mysticism is all about.

Though Saturn is a symbol of limitation, when delineating containments, think of it as a symbol of order and organization. People who have a good Saturn know how to organize their life, bringing balance and order to it. This is a very positive factor and offers a deeper insight into why Saturn symbolizes foundations and structure. Saturn is also time. I prefer to call it Father Time, which teaches us patience and perseverance and brings wisdom.

Your natal Saturn symbolizes your personal limitations and what you need to learn in order to overcome them. The spiritual challenge of Saturn is learning to work through these limitations without tearing your life apart or disrupting the lives of those around you. The first step in doing this is organizing your thinking so you can overcome your limitations wisely.



The root cause of human confinement is grasping and attachment. People refuse to let go of anything. It may be an emotion, an attitude, or something more tangible. Humans are so attached to things that they cannot clearly see what they need to give up in order to attain greater freedom and happiness. Wisdom is seeing what needs to be removed from your life and giving it up skillfully and harmoniously. This is why Saturn is such a great teacher and spiritual friend. He tests, resists, and demands order. Thus, you become aware of what you need to wisely remove from your life so you can experience greater freedom.

If you do not attune to Saturn's higher vibration, there can be problems. There is no doubt that he brings delays, difficulties, hindrances, and obstructions, but the disharmony or negativity is within the human mind. There is a gold mine within the lead force-field of Saturn. If you are attentive and wise, you can transmute the confining lead of Saturn to spiritual gold, releasing incredible wisdom and power. But that is exactly what people refuse to do because they refuse to sacrifice anything. You need to renounce the things that cause you or others to become confined. When you can do this willingly, you overcome your self-imposed limitations, bringing fulfillment and true freedom into your life.

### **Delineating the Containments of Saturn**

To understand the containment of Saturn as a symbol of your past, present, and future karma, you need to answer the following questions.

- What is the modifying force of Saturn? What sign is it in natively?
- What house is Saturn in natively, and what house does it rule?
- What are the natal aspects of Saturn?
- Are the aspects to and from Saturn closed or closing?
- What planets contain Saturn?
- How are the planets containing Saturn aspected?
- What are the dispositions of the planets containing Saturn?
- Which quadrant is Saturn in natively?

The presence of natal Saturn in a quadrant is a clue symbolizing where and how spiritual learning experiences will manifest. The first quadrant contains the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> houses. The second quadrant contains the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> houses. The third quadrant contains the 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> houses. The fourth quadrant contains the 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> houses.



### **Saturn in the First Quadrant**

This position reveals a need to define the Self more clearly. Saturn in the first quadrant indicates there is limitation because you do not understand the Self. This is the limitation that needs to be removed.

### **Saturn in the Second Quadrant**

This position symbolizes a need to identify where one is limited in thought and action. It implies the inability to clearly define the projections of the Self and indicates a need to define where your mental and physical actions are going.

### **Saturn in the Third Quadrant**

Saturn in the third quadrant reveals a limitation that arises from a failure to see how the Self can and must work harmoniously with other people.

### **Saturn in the Fourth Quadrant**

Saturn in the fourth quadrant indicates limitation because there is a lack of understanding about how the Self influences or fails to influence people and things.

### **Determining the Disposition of Planets in a Containment**

There are four energy patterns that can manifest within containments. These patterns can be defined as: positive-positive, positive-negative, negative-positive, and negative-negative. They are determined by the disposition of the planets containing Saturn and the compatibility of these planets with one another. For example, fire might be positive and water might be positive, but put them together and they become antagonistic to one another.

A positive-positive containment means the Saturn is contained on both sides by so-called benefic planets. This pattern is considered very favorable.

A positive-negative containment means that Saturn's triggering planet is benefic, but the directing planet is malefic. The planet that triggered the confinement and limitation is a positive force, but the karma will move toward the directing planet, which is not positive. This means that it will take a greater amount of energy and more time to break from the limitation. It will also tend to be more difficult to attain a positive outcome. This pattern is considered less favorable.



A negative-positive containment means that the triggering planet is malefic, but the directing planet is positive. This indicates that the resolution of the karma will not take as long or require as much energy to soften as it does with the positive-negative pattern. This pattern is less difficult.

A negative-negative containment means that Saturn is sandwiched between two malefics. Great effort needs to be applied to balance the limitation because it will take much more time. Negative as used here could also mean that the planets containing Saturn are not friendly to one another. This pattern is considered inharmonious.

As a rule, planets are divided into three groups: positive, negative, and neutral. Jupiter and Venus are always considered positive, and according to some astrologers, so is the Sun. Indian astrologers, however, consider the Sun to be a negative influence. Mars, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto are considered negative planetary forces. Many people, however, consider Neptune to be quite positive because it is the religious-artistic symbol, but over the past sixty years I have not seen people who have a strong Neptune to be religious or artistic. Rather, I have seen them as confused, self-deceived, and strongly addicted to various things. Almost all astrologers consider the Moon and Mercury to be neutral, though some say the Moon is positive.

In addition to being positive or negative, a planet can also be strong or weak. A strong planet is not necessarily a positive planet. Strength simply means that a planetary force, for better or worse, is powerful.

There are four significant personal factors that determine whether a planet is positive or negative, strong or weak.

- Your horizon of awareness.
- Your ability to handle the planetary force.
- Your attitude regarding life events.
- Accumulated experiences associated with the planet, which are stored in your memory.

Each planet also has two primary vibrations or energies it can release. These are referred to as its higher and lower vibrations. The nature of a planet's vibrational release is primarily determined by its position in the natal chart — the sign, house, decanate, and degree it occupies, and aspects to and from other planets. Remember that planets in angular houses are very strong, planets in cadent houses are weak, and aspects from Saturn are generally stronger than aspects to Saturn.



The most critical aspects to look for are negative aspects from the Moon or Mercury to Saturn. These are important because the Moon symbolizes the cells of your body and Mercury your mind. The Moon is also your ability to be nourished and symbolizes the general public, on whom your life depends. It also symbolizes your mother and hereditary traits.

It can be quite challenging to have the Moon squared, inconjunct, opposition, conjunct, or parallel to Saturn natively. A parallel of declination between Saturn and the Moon is especially difficult. The Moon symbolizes your cellular memory and Saturn limitation. When a hard aspect links the two, there is a definite astral/biological malfunctioning of the body's computer. It can be overcome. It can be overcome. It can be overcome. But it would be easier if the Moon and Saturn were trined, sextiled, or not linked at all. If Mercury and Saturn form a hard natal aspect, your mind's computer will malfunction. For most people, this is easier to correct than an affliction with the Moon.

The important point to remember is that a containment of Saturn is a specific flow of energy that will move in a specific direction and cause a specific limitation if nothing is done about it. If the energy does not flow easily, deep frustration occurs. This causes your subconscious mind to malfunction. If there is a malfunction because of a hard aspect between the Moon and Saturn, Mercury and Saturn, or both, it indicates obstructions in the flow of the planetary energies either mentally and/or physically. These will produce massive frustration and can lead to serious mental aberrations. Saturn is the hinge. This is the key point. You need to find a way to allow the energy to flow through Saturn so it does not hinder the manifestation of your dream.

### **Retrograde Planets and Saturn Containments**

The significance of a retrograde planet when it is part of a Saturn containment depends on which planet is retrograde — Saturn, the triggering planet, or the directing planet. If the triggering planet is retrograde, it means that the planetary energy is pulling away from Saturn. This symbolizes that you are trying to avoid the issue, which can cause a delay in overcoming the limitation — sometimes until your next incarnation.

If Saturn is retrograde, it symbolizes that the astral energy is spiraling inward and thus away from external manifestation. This means that you are seeking to return to the triggering planet, perchance to recreate the source of the problem.

If the directing planet is retrograde, it means you will break free faster and generally more easily from the limitations and confinements of Saturn. The directing planet's energy is moving toward Saturn, which indicates a movement toward resolution.



One advantage to having a retrograde planet in a containment is that it gives you more time to learn before the karma needs to be resolved. Like all retrogrades, your subconscious mind is seeking more time so it can gain additional data and experience before meeting the future, which is symbolized by the third planet in the containment.

If any of the planets in a containment are retrograde and go direct by progression, the limitation and its causes will become more apparent for a year or so before and after the station point. The same is true if one of the planets is direct at birth and then goes retrograde by progression.

When a thought or action creates a piece of karma, it locks itself into the protein of your cellular structures. It can also be locked into the cellular memory of your mind. In modern language, we would say that in both cases it becomes part of your genetic coding. Retrograde planets and the Moon, which never goes retrograde, are timing mechanisms for the release of that karma.

Some people are intrinsically fearful. It is not because they are bad people or think they did something wrong. They simply carry it with them. Their mother or father contained a genetic coding for fear, which became part of the group karma of the family. Only souls who have that fear karma can be born into that family, though there are rare exceptions.

### **A Note on the Text**

As you study the delineations of the containments in this text, you will note that there is a natural movement or evolution in each one from constriction and confinement to expansion and freedom. The first paragraph of each section describes how this evolutionary movement manifests. The remaining paragraphs outline the cause and expression of the limitation that must be overcome in greater detail.

## THE LAW OF UTU DHARMA

In seeking to understand the process of containments, you need to understand the Law of Utu, which is always at work in the world. This law is more commonly known as the Chinese principle of Yin/Yang. It states that everything is seeking balance. Life can only go so far in one direction before it naturally moves back in the opposite direction. This principle has been expressed historically in various ways.

- You can only walk so far into the woods before you begin walking out.
- You can only go so far into the night before you begin to approach the dawn.
- It only gets so cold in winter before it begins to get warmer.
- The Sun only moves so far south before it begins to move north.
- The Moon can only expand so far before it begins to contract.

In Yoga, this principle is called Utu Dharma, or the Law of Utu. Some people refer to it as the Law of Eternal Return. This principle reveals that if you have a great deal of chaos and disorder in your life, it can only get so disorganized before it will automatically begin to move back toward order. If you take action, you begin the process of setting yourself free. If you fail to take action, you allow the karmic momentum to move at its own pace. If you act, you shorten the time it will take for freedom to manifest. Even if your actions are wrong, they are right. This is because you are performing a kriya — you are doing something. You are starting to move from being controlled by your karma to controlling the karmic conditions of your life.

The Law of Utu states that the karmic confinement or limitation symbolized by a containment can only become so restrictive before it automatically returns toward freedom. The primary purpose of studying the containments is to quicken that return. The speed with which freedom is attained depends on the amount of effort you put forth and how skillfully you direct that energy. The karmic pattern symbolized by a containment was established in a past life and will therefore correct itself in your next incarnation. But this is not acceptable for a seeker. You want to be free in *this* lifetime.

In all your reflections about the containments, remember that Saturn is the principle of order. To gain order you must first simplify your life, which begins by giving something up. The question is what should you give up? If you grasp nothing else in this lesson, grasp these last three vital sentences.



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## THE SUN AS THE TRIGGERING PLANET

When the Sun is the trigger of a Saturn containment, it indicates that, among other things, the personality is the cause of the confinement. If the shortcomings of the personality are addressed, the mind becomes freer. When a containment has the Sun as the triggering planet, you start with a personality that overreacts and perpetuates negative events and problems. By skillfully overcoming these circumstances and solving these problems, the personality becomes more positive. When you correct the cause of the confinement, there is an expansion of the life force that turns back on the self and produces a fuller, less restricted, and more complete personality.

On a sociological level, the Sun symbolizes powerful people — those who have some form of influence or control over your life, like a father, husband, boss, or government agent. Women can also be power symbols, especially mothers and wives. These are the types of people with whom your personality is having problems adjusting. The important thing to remember is that they are associations from a past life that act as triggers for your karma.

On a psychological level, the Sun symbolizes a powerful thought that acts as a trigger for Saturn. In the final analysis, it is a thought that relates to your own ego. But karma associated with the solar concept of power often overrides this psychological factor. This is because the concept of power and how to deal with it is the most perilous thought on the path. If you want to know how important a person feels as opposed to how important a person is and if you want to see a person's self worth from their point of view as opposed to that of others, look to the planet in front of or clockwise to the Sun.

As one progresses on the path and becomes more mystical, one shifts their center of awareness from people to thoughts and then from thoughts to feeling states that are transcendental. This is very difficult to do when the Sun is the triggering planet of Saturn because it means that Spirit itself (Atma), not the personality or mind, has decided to learn a spiritual lesson about life. In so doing, it sets up patterns so the mind and personality will encounter people, conditions, and events that offer an opportunity for the lesson to be learned and wisdom to be gathered. The spiritual lesson to be learned from a containment of Saturn when the Sun is the triggering planet is not really about your personality or mind. The lesson to be learned is about the nature of living entities, whether that is a cow, an ant, a sequoia tree, or you, the Atma.



### **Sun-Saturn-Moon**

The triggering planet of this containment is the Sun. This indicates that your personality as it existed in a past life is the cause of this lifetime's confinement. You break free of this confinement by correcting and improving your personality. If you realize your personality is the cause of your confinement and you handle the containment wisely, your life can be harmonious. If you do nothing to correct the problem, your life will be emotionally frustrating, particularly if the Moon is afflicted natively. To see what the past life problems were, look to your natal Sun by sign, house, quadrant, and aspect. In this case, aspects that are closed (past partile) rather than applying (toward a partile) offer deeper clues. This is true of all containments.

The difficulty is the Moon is the directing planet. Among other things, the Moon symbolizes emotionality that is locked into your cellular memory and family history, especially with your mother. The Moon as the directing planet indicates you need to work through a great deal of emotionality before reaching your freedom. It also means that your mother or women and children will play a key role in your emotionality. This containment indicates you will wrestle with distress, real or imaginary. You need to modify your personality to soften the distress because working your way through it can lead to serious problems with mother, women and children, or the general public. You feel that these lunar symbols will not nourish or encourage you. But the real problem is you do not know how to nourish yourself.

This containment indicates you have a clear awareness of your limitations. Being detached and retaining a state of impartiality is very important to you. It enables you to see what you can achieve. But you need to work toward attaining greater emotional security, which is hard because you need to feel in control to feel secure. The Sun is the personality and the Moon emotions. Thus, you dramatize your personality and its emotions. *The limitation is you think you are your emotions.*

### **Sun-Saturn-Mercury**

This containment brings confinement and limitation caused by your personality. Mercury is the directing planet, which indicates that if not handled well, Saturn produces an illogical mind that becomes negative and frenetic. But if you modify your personality and change your attitude, this containment will cultivate a definite state of realism, which makes the mind stronger, establishes a more realistic and positive pattern of thought, and thus allows the personality to break free of negativity.

You need to clearly define your goals for this incarnation or your mind will jump around and cause an excessive loss of energy. Orderliness and practicality are significant factors in your life. When you do not see the people around you as being practical and orderly, they are not important to you. This is spiritually dangerous because it can make you disapproving or arrogant. You embellish your image of yourself through your thinking. The lesson you need to learn is to become acquiescent and flexible. *The limitation is you think you are your mind.*

### **Sun-Saturn-Venus**

This containment indicates your personality is the triggering planet of your confinement. Venus is the directing planet, symbolizing that if not dealt with skillfully it will result in excessive laziness. The mind thinks, "Yes, I know this is dangerous, but I will do something about it tomorrow." This laziness produces carelessness and a loss of mental energy. This, in turn, causes you to forget what your values are. It is a little like having an afflicted Venus, which can make your principles inactive. If this containment is handled well, you will find beauty, and thus discover higher values and ideals.

Anytime the Sun is the triggering planet, there is a need to soften the personality. The key point is you need to renounce some part of the ego-self or a symbol of your ego in order to become freer. You need to give something up in order to break the confinement. To soften this containment, check the natal Sun. See where it is by house, sign, quadrant, and aspect. Understanding the Sun by quadrant will help reveal what part of the personality needs softening. Use the information about the quadrants as they relate to Saturn, which was discussed earlier in this lesson.

This containment indicates you place way too much importance on sustaining self-control. The excessive way you do this produces an artificial inhibition that appears contrived and insincere to others. This keeps all social contacts superficial and inhibits any meaningful social communications or exchange. Your ego is in charge, meaning your values and ideals are in second place. You need to reassess your values. Your personality dramatizes itself through love. This can be love of money, love of power, love of sex, or love of ego. Whatever it is can be determined by delineating the natal Venus by house, sign, and aspect. *The limitation is you think you are your love.*

### **Sun-Saturn-Mars**

This containment indicates that your personality is the precipitating cause of your confinement because it gets angry, aggressive, argumentative, and destructive. These



emotions cause the personality to become even more negative and bring greater confinement. But if the energy of Mars is lifted and guided, there can be great success. When this happens, you realize you have personality traits that need to be given up in order to become free of your limitations. Then Saturn begins to affect the personality in a positive way. It releases the higher vibration of Mars, producing insights about how to achieve a more stable personality.

You are quite conscious of your boundaries, which you despise. When you encounter a limitation, you respond impetuously, rashly, and like a hothead. Your personality dramatizes itself through its actions. Your ego needs to feel it is in charge. When events or circumstances arise that make your ego feel like it is losing control, real or imaginary, you become disconcerted. It is vital that you identify and clarify your aspirations and objectives if you want to attain your goals. If you can do this, you will discover the positive energy of Mars and find that self-discipline comes more readily. *The limitation is you think you are your actions.*

### **Sun-Saturn-Jupiter**

This containment indicates your personality triggers limitation and confinement by allowing your mind to spill over into anything and everything. This results in carelessness and an overly optimistic way of thinking, which leads to suffering and greater confinement. If these problems are addressed, the confinement will not be too severe. Either way, it eventually leads to an evolution and expanded lifestyle. You learn to organize your life so it is most advantageous, which opens doors to the possibility of earthly success and spiritual unfoldment. The first step is to lift your mind above trivial thoughts and focus it on noble ideals.

This containment symbolizes limitation and confinement caused by carelessness. It is vital that you stay focused on your goals and do not become distracted. The problem is your mind is preoccupied with self-doubt, which makes your personality careless and leads to procrastination. If you deal with this trait skillfully, your life will expand. This state of expansion turns back on itself and causes your consciousness to expand. This produces a personality that is quite philosophical and leads to freedom. *The limitation is you think you are your ideals or philosophy.*

### **Sun-Saturn-Uranus**

This containment indicates your personality is the precipitating cause of limitation and confinement. Your thoughts and actions are not typical or traditional. Sometimes



they are even unacceptable. The personality can be erratic, unreliable, and abrupt. If modified and kept in balance, it can also be unbelievably creative. If handled skillfully, this containment can even lead to genius.

You tend to live in your mind where genius manifests — as does neurosis. If obstacles arise on your path, you perceive them as hindrances to your freedom. This makes you more fully aware that you have limited control of your life, but it also causes your mind to become defiant, unruly, erratic, and inconsistent. The question is simple: Do you want chaotic limitation or orderly freedom? What you need is a controlled structure, but it can only manifest through an inner value system.

You dramatize yourself through your need for freedom. The problem is your ego defines freedom as doing whatever you want to do whenever you want to do it. You are crushed if you feel you cannot express your sacred emotions. Yet your mind thinks self-discipline will bring the freedom you seek. Both are incorrect. Freedom is walking a middle path between extremes. Freedom is becoming one with the Law of Karma. *The limitation is you think you are your concept of freedom.*

### **Sun-Saturn-Neptune**

This containment indicates that your personality confines you, but the true cause of this confinement is confusion. If you do nothing, this confusion will take over your life. It will produce a sense of self that is vague and undeveloped. This, in turn, brings greater confinement. If you address your confusion, you will gain greater insight and find higher ideals. These insights and ideals will turn back on the personality, producing greater freedom. If this containment is handled skillfully, the personality will no longer be a source of limitation because you will have a direct experience — an insight that brings ideals that are quite different from your previous values. In time, these new ideals will cause your personality to become even stronger and freer.

The problem is the things you value in life and consider vital fade away because your mind cannot hold on to them. You need to reflect on the things that are important in your life on a daily basis, or ambiguity and uncertainty will enter your mind. Do not allow an unrealistic sense of responsibility to sidetrack you from artistic or spiritual endeavors. You dramatize yourself with your disorientation. You think that your greatness lies in the fact that your life is vague and nebulous. The ego says, "See, I am great because I am like life. I am nebulous." *The limitation is you think you are your artistic vagueness.*



### **Sun-Saturn-Pluto**

This containment indicates your personality is the cause of your confinement. If it is not handled well, it brings strong emotional obstacles into your life. If it is handled well, which means giving something up internally, it brings the release of true power — self-power, which is self-mastery or the mastery of your self-generated karma.

You are confined because your personality puts emotional obstacles in your way. If you deal with these self-created limitations, you will gain the power to overcome any obstacle. But stay away from extremes or your mind will become hyper-compulsive. Your ego is driven to gain and/or maintain self-control. This can easily get out of balance and turn into a dictatorial drive to control other people. An excessive need to control the lives of people around you can create major obstacles in your life. You dramatize yourself through the expression of your inner powers, but your goals can be defeated by self-doubt and fear. Recognize that your mind is extremely sensitive and emotional. Give it positive forms of expression. If you learn to live with it, great creativity will manifest. *The limitation is you think you are your inner powers.*

## THE MOON AS THE TRIGGERING PLANET

We now turn to the Moon as the trigger of Saturn. The Moon has everything to do with emotionality. It is the reflective and receptive aspect of the personality as opposed to the Sun, which is the dynamic aspect and represents the drive for self-expression. As a trigger, the Moon represents one's emotional personality.

On a sociological level, the Moon symbolizes women, children, mother, and babies. On a psychological level, it symbolizes an emotional fixation of thought that leads to change. On a mystical level, the Moon symbolizes the nurturing principle, revealing one's innate capacity to feed themselves and others. It also represents how we seek to nourish the circumstances and environment around us.

The Sun symbolizes the creative self. When the Sun is the triggering planet, you need to consider what you have created and what you will create in the future. When the Moon is the trigger, you need to reflect on how you are going to feed what you and others have created. In both cases, you need to ponder the questions of self-responsibility and responsibility to your brethren.

### **Moon-Saturn-Mercury**

When the Moon is the trigger of Saturn, emotionality brings confinement. In this case, it is moving in the direction of Mercury, indicating a tendency to become extremely illogical. The personality moves from emotionality to limitation and from limitation to illogical thought. If the emotionality and lack of logic are mastered, the mind becomes more realistic and ceases to be troublesome.

This containment indicates there is a strong emotional need for order in your life, but the mind gets trapped by habits and daily schedules and becomes lazy. Any attempt to move away from your daily pattern induces more emotionality and a loss of vital energy. This causes a major blockage in the mercury chakra and the mind does not function properly. You need to communicate with your inner mind, training it to become unemotional and release any blocked energy. When this energy is released, the mind will adjust, adapt, and acclimate, bringing greater freedom. *The limitation is you act as if you are the mind and thoughts.*



### **Moon-Saturn-Venus**

This containment indicates a personality that has intense emotional needs. Emotionality is the source or trigger of limitation, which brings frustration and leads to laziness. This laziness produces more problems because the mind becomes sloppy. At some point the mind finally says, "I cannot deal with this. I need to find order. I want beauty around me." These thoughts motivate you to seek beauty and to find it. This leads you to a whole new set of ideals. Through these ideals, you find a new life in which beauty manifests higher aspirations.

You have a strong emotional need for order. This brings about a personality that is temperamental, sullen, and mildly despondent if things become unpredictable. You swing from overindulgence and lack of moderation to fits of laziness and inattentiveness. You need to learn how to live with your emotions without acting on them. In time they will pass and balance will return — for a short while anyway. You find your security in beauty, love, and money. These are the motivating principles in your life. *The limitation is you think you are your values.*

### **Moon-Saturn-Sun**

Emotionality is the source of confinement and limitation. It produces a state of frustration that leads toward a despotic state of mind. At some point, everything seems so impractical that you actually become dictatorial. If self-awareness is developed, the mind soon moves away from needing to be in control and begins to focus on what has been accomplished. When this occurs, the mind focuses on what has been achieved and realizes that trying to control everything is a waste of energy. Then the mind thinks, "What have I got to be emotional about? I can accomplish anything I want." This attitude helps you to accomplish even more, which in turn awakens the realization that you are indeed an accomplished person.

You dramatize yourself by being self-centered, which can be expressed positively, negatively, creatively, or destructively. This containment indicates there is a strong emotional need for order. Unconscious responses caused by past-life programming produce a repressed or hindered ego personality. These forces from the past are totally emotional and subjective. Thus, they keep your mind in a continuous state of uncertainty and fear. You need to activate the power of your conscious mind and personality to reeducate and reprogram your subconscious. You need to recognize that awareness of the Self is all-important, or your emotions will become quite destructive. *The limitation is you think you are your personality.*

### **Moon-Saturn-Mars**

This containment indicates that emotionality brings limitation and frustration. This, in turn, produces negative emotions like anger, fear, and hatred. Your actions clearly reveal the positive and negative attributes of your mind. When you move toward positive mental states, the actions that follow are constructive. If the mind is focused with a positive attitude, the actions that follow are even more creative. This produces a state of consciousness called enthusiasm, and it is enthusiasm that overcomes your confinement.

You have a strong emotional need for order in your life, which produces a desire to be in control of everything and everyone. Your mind and personality are very emotional. You strive for detachment but unfortunately achieve indifference, which you perceive as detachment. Part of your subconscious mind wants someone or something to take care of you. Another part wants total control at all times. This polarity causes you to be impulsive and erratic. You stay artificially busy because you do not wish to look deep inside your mind. Thus, you fail to recognize your inconsistent personality and behavior. You sense or know that deep within the mind there is self-doubt and fear. The cure for this doubt and fear is to serve an important cause, a cause greater than yourself. *The limitation is you think you are your actions.*

### **Moon-Saturn-Jupiter**

Emotionality produces limitation that leads to carelessness. You tend to become more and more careless until your life becomes so disorganized that you are forced to do something about it. The flow of karma causes the mind to expand and express greater positivity and creative energy. The problem is you have a strong emotional need for order in your life, which produces a fear of change. This fear is premised on the belief that change will cause your emotions to get the better of you. It makes you incorrectly feel that you are losing control of your mind and emotions. Your key defense is to postpone, delay, and drag your feet, but this only causes more limitation and inhibits normal evolution. You have great potential. Reach out beyond your mind by means of yoga and the esoteric sciences to become free. *The limitation is you think you are your emotional doubts.*

### **Moon-Saturn-Uranus**

The Moon triggers emotionality that results in limitation or confinement. This emotionality produces eccentric thinking and aberrant behavior that satisfies your need to



feel you are free. It gives you a sense of freedom, which is emotionally important because you value freedom so highly. Over time, your behavior becomes so erratic and extreme that you finally understand that your emotions are destructive to your happiness. Through this process, the emotionality of your mind is softened. Then you find yourself on the path to true freedom.

You have a strong need for order in your life. Your mind questions things deeply because of illogical inborn fears. This causes you to react to people in a defiant and rebellious fashion. The genesis of this fear and reactivity is the feeling that everyone and everything will rob you of your freedom, yet you are destroying whatever freedom you have through with your extreme behavior. Find the golden mean between extremes, for therein lies the valley of the Supreme. *The limitation is you think you are your quest for freedom.*

### **Moon-Saturn-Neptune**

Emotionality produces limitation and confinement, which lead to confusion. But life can only become so confusing and your mind only so confused before you begin to create order and find solutions. Your confusion and doubt can be overcome through inspiration and the creativity that follows.

The problem is confusion turns your mind against itself, producing self-reproach. This forces you into daydreaming and flights of imagination. You need to overcome self-doubt and flood your subconscious mind with positive thoughts and affirmations. This will allow you to discharge your responsibilities but attain your spiritual goals. You have a strong emotional need for order. You can be inspired by confusion and incomprehension. Take away your art, your idealism, or your confusion and you feel you die emotionally. *The limitation is you think you are your inspiration or confusion.*

### **Moon-Saturn-Pluto**

This containment indicates emotionality is the source of your limitation. Emotional obstacles that arise overwhelm you to the point that you feel you need to do something. You begin by exerting your energy and then suddenly realize that inside your subconscious mind you have powers that you never dreamt existed. These powers eventually get turned on the emotionality and neutralize it. When this occurs, you have established a personality that is extremely powerful and courageous. You realize that there is nothing that can confine you for long.

You have a strong emotional need for order in your life. This produces moods and insecurities that engulf your mind and can devastate it. If you do nothing to soften this force, it will become obsessive. Yet your subconscious mind will not allow you to let go of doubts, fears, and negative emotions regarding your self-worth. Do something to weaken the intensity of these emotions until you find the thought that takes you out of your self-made confinement. Breathe deeply and contact that which is truly positive — The Eternal Goodness. Let it fill you with the true essence of Life. Emotionally you feel that if you lose what you consider to be your power, which is quite different from your ability to act, you will begin to die. *The limitation is you think you are your visualized power.*

**Author's Note:** As it is used here in reference to the containments, the word *die* means that you feel like your ability to express the planetary energy has been so closed off or restricted that it is absolutely powerless and therefore useless to you.

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## MERCURY AS THE TRIGGERING PLANET

In the next series of containments, Mercury is the triggering planet. When Mercury triggers Saturn, old thought patterns cause confinement. Like all the containments, there is a movement in each of these from constriction to freedom, from confinement to expansion, from limitation to limitlessness, from negative thoughts and actions to positive thoughts and actions, from a destructive pattern to a constructive pattern.

Sociologically, Mercury symbolizes small children and young adults, specifically those who have not yet reached puberty. It also rules writers, teachers, agents, speakers, printers, clerks, and secretaries. On a psychological level, Mercury is thought and your thinking pattern, regardless of whether it is positive or negative, constructive or destructive, logical or illogical.

Mystically speaking, Mercury is reflection upon the nature of thought itself. From this, many questions arise. What is thought? How does thought function? Where do thoughts come from? Where do they go? The most indispensable question is what can thought achieve when it moves from a restricted state of consciousness to an unrestricted state.

### Mercury-Saturn-Moon

Thinking patterns trigger limitation and confinement, which produce emotionality. If the emotionality is handled skillfully, it allows fulfillment to enter your life. When this happens, your thoughts are no longer a source of limitation. Instead they become the foundation for resourcefulness. This containment indicates you have a proclivity to be erratic and unreliable in your thinking. It creates a lack of energy that makes focusing on tasks almost impossible. It also causes your moods to fluctuate, producing constant changes in your everyday life.

Your main problem is the mind fixates on negative opinions, views, and attitudes. If left unchecked, this become exceedingly detrimental and can lead to depression or a loss of direction in your life. Your mind is most alive when it can express itself in an intellectual and emotional manner. If you lose your subjective emotional thinking processes, you feel that you are diminished. *The limitation is you think you are your emotional thoughts.*



### **Mercury-Saturn-Venus**

This containment indicates thinking patterns produced limitation, which in turn cause carelessness, vanity, and laziness. If not handled well, these habits give rise to sloppiness and slovenliness. You have a need for beauty in your life so you move back toward the foundation of beauty, cleanliness, and order. This gives rise to deeper meaning in your life and establishes new values that lead you to seek Truth.

Your mind has difficulty concentrating on specifics and the basics of daily living. Thus, it is vital that you learn to concentrate on what is fundamental to your life. The problem is your mind fluctuates between a self-indulgent need for pleasure and a tendency for strong self-censure. This indicates your mind is in a state of uncertainty, and you have strong doubts. If the beauty you value in life is taken away, you lose your ideals. *The limitation is you think you are your concept of beauty.*

### **Mercury-Saturn-Sun**

Thought patterns cause limitations that give rise to dictatorial attitudes. A dictator thinks to himself, "Look at the things I am getting done. Look at the things I am accomplishing." His mind, however, fails to see the damage being done by the methods he employs to achieve his goals. It may even outweigh the good of his accomplishments. But as the Law of Utu points out, eventually a dictator's mind will shift back in the other direction. Eventually he will think a new thought. He will ask himself how he can accomplish positive things without destroying people's lives or natural resources. When this happens, the mind becomes creative instead of destructive.

This containment indicates you find life very challenging. It is awkward for you to maintain organization in your life. Your mind seems to evade the essentials because it is scattered and inconsistent. This makes it difficult for you to attain your objectives. For your mind to feel alive, it must feel it can express itself. *The limitation is you think you are your purpose.*

### **Mercury-Saturn-Mars**

This containment indicates your thought patterns produce limitation and confinement that lead to negative emotions like anger and resentment. These emotions spill over and generate negative self-confining actions. This continues until you realize that these destructive emotions limit and distort your perception. If you can still the mind, you will clearly see the effect of these emotions and the corresponding actions and

reactions they engender. This, in turn, produces a more positive and constructive pattern of thought that burns away the source of your limitation.

You are adaptable and hardy, which allows your mind to adjust, adapt, and acclimate to anything that manifests in your life, yet your mind is filled with self-doubt and fear. But, if you can clearly establish what needs to be done, you will accomplish it. If you cannot, your mind will become heavily guarded and incapable of achieving anything. If you cannot express yourself fully and aggressively, you feel like you are dying. *The limitation is you think you are your actions.*

### **Mercury-Saturn-Jupiter**

Thought patterns produce a limitation or confinement that is caused by inattention, and this leads to delays. If these delays and the ensuing frustration are handled skillfully and with attention to detail, they will be overcome. When this happens, inattention is transformed into attention, which produces an expansion of the personality. This expanded personality prompts a complete change of thinking. You now pay close attention to details. This causes negative thought patterns to become expansive and positive, which expands your life and brings freedom.

The problem with this containment is you are overly confident and fail to consider the details of your plans. When you build an airplane, the most important things are the rivets because they hold the plane together. The same is true of plans in life — the details hold them together. If you ignore details, you will have serious problems and bite off more than you can chew. You need to learn to clearly focus on the details of your life and maintain that focus. Do not become over-extended. The problem is your mind does not want to be bothered with details. It wants to see everything in an overall unified pattern. If the general activities of your life are taken away, you feel like you will die of boredom. *The limitation is you think you are your aspirations.*

### **Mercury-Saturn-Uranus**

Negative thoughts produce limitation and confinement. This leads to erratic thinking, which produces unreliable and inconsistent behavior. When you recognize that this pattern is self-destructive, the mind will stop or soften the process, releasing remarkably creative thoughts that are akin to genius. This genius redirects its energy back onto the remaining constrictive thought forms and produces a freer life.



The greatest danger of this containment is you tend to focus on your limitations rather than your path to freedom. You can adjust your life to anything or anyone, but you are erratic and eccentric. This does not make you a remarkable person. On the contrary, it makes you unreliable and inconsistent. Take away your ability to think any way you want to and you feel like you will die intellectually. *The limitation is you think you are your mind patterns.*

### **Mercury-Saturn-Neptune**

This containment indicates your limitation is an old thought pattern that produces confusion. It is difficult to remove this confusion because it leads to meaningless thoughts and worthless actions. If you can focus your mind and elevate your thoughts, you will find greater clarity and higher ideals. These new ideals will flow out in a stream of positive thoughts that are followed by constructive actions. They will be philosophical thoughts. Thus, you become a philosopher.

Your problem is you love confusion because it allows you to think whatever you want. When things are vague, you feel like you can think or say anything without contradiction. This is why your mind has a difficult time sustaining order in your life. Mental commotion and changing moods make it difficult for the mind to hold onto concrete ideas. They seem to dissolve away before they crystallize or can be put to use. You need to learn to concentrate. Try to see the thoughts behind your actions and reactions when new circumstances come into your life. Adjust to them in a more realistic way. If you lose your inspiration, you feel your mind is dying. *The limitation is you think you are your vagueness.*

### **Mercury-Saturn-Pluto**

Thought patterns manifest as obsessive behaviors that produce limitation and confinement. The mind tends to lock into one thought and become obsessed with it, which can very easily destroy your happiness. You need to pull your mind away from negative thought forms. Once you realize that obsessive thought patterns make you appear imbalanced, you transform them into positive and constructive thoughts. When these powerful new thoughts replace the negative confining thoughts, you begin to break free of your limitation.

The problem is obsessive thinking restricts your life. Your mind is like fresh cement — once it is fixed on a thought it is impossible to reshape it. If you allow a negative thought to get locked into your consciousness, it can build insurmountable limitations.

If your mind begins to fixate on a thought, you must address it immediately or it will harden into an obsession that produces self-confining actions. Use affirmations to soften the hardened habits of your mind and wash away negative thinking. The greatest danger of this containment is the rigidity of your self-limiting criticism. *The limitation is you think you are your subconscious thinking powers.*

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## FINDING SENSITIVE PLANETS

Study and observation have led astrologers to recognize that certain people are more sensitive to one planet than to another. For example, one person may be more sensitive to Saturn than Jupiter. Another might be more sensitive to Uranus, Mercury, or Venus. This insight leads to the fifteenth general principle of transit astrology.

### The Fifteenth General Principle

Each personality is more sensitive to one planet than it is to the other planets.

There are no set rules for finding a sensitive planet. It is often a planet very close to the MC (one to three degrees) but still in the ninth house. It could also be a planet in the first house that is close to the ascendant or the second house cusp. Sometimes it is the planet that forms the closest hard aspect that is applying to the Sun, Moon, or a planet on one of the four angles.

Not everyone has a sensitive planet, but most people do. It may manifest positive or negative events in your life. Watch your transits to see if you are particularly sensitive to a specific planet. If you are, follow it closely and see what occurs when it forms aspects, makes station points, or transits into a house, sign, or quadrant of your chart.

### Simplified Meaning of the Planets

Every human life is composed of a diverse series of experiences, many of which are dissimilar. In astrology, each planet symbolizes a unique set of experiences. If a person does not permit all the planetary energies a healthy mode of expression in their subconscious mind, the soul becomes troubled or disturbed. Here are the planetary forces and their simplified meaning or significance.

- **Moon** symbolizes your emotional nature, which leads you to the people in your life.
- **Mercury** symbolizes your thinking, which leads you to your resources.
- **Venus** symbolizes your sense of beauty, which leads you to your values.
- **Sun** symbolizes your Self, which leads you to your purpose in life.
- **Mars** symbolizes your energy, which generally leads you to an awareness of your strength.



- **Jupiter** symbolizes your expansive nature, which leads you to your philosophy.
- **Saturn** symbolizes your most obvious karmic limitations and confinements, which lead you to learning life lessons that are crucial for establishing a positive life philosophy.
- **Uranus** symbolizes your concept of freedom, which in the end leads you to your liberation.
- **Neptune** symbolizes your imagination, which leads you to your ideals and principles.
- **Pluto** symbolizes your intensity, which leads you to your regeneration.



### STUDY QUESTIONS - LESSON EIGHT

1. What is a planetary containment?
2. What does the containment of Saturn reveal?
3. What does esoteric astrology try to do with theoretical knowledge?
4. How many planets are involved in a containment?
5. What is the first planet of a containment called?
6. What is the third planet of a containment called?
7. What is the key thing to remember when identifying a containment?
8. In what direction do containments always move?
9. What does the triggering planet of a containment do?
10. What does it mean to say one planet is in front of another?
11. What do faster and slower forming containments indicate about karma?
12. On what three levels can a containment be interpreted?
13. To what does the mystical level of interpretation relate?
14. What does the triggering planet of a containment indicate?
15. What does the directing planet of a containment indicate?
16. What does the natal Saturn symbolize?
17. Why is it important to think of Saturn as a symbol of order?
18. What is the root cause of human confinement?
19. Why is Saturn a great spiritual teacher and friend?



20. What does Saturn's presence in a quadrant symbolize?
21. What four energy patterns can manifest within a containment?
22. What four personal factors determine the quality and strength of a planet?
23. What two primary vibrations do planets release?
24. Why are aspects from the Moon and Mercury to Saturn critical?
25. What happens if the energy flow of a containment is obstructed?
26. What is the advantage of having a retrograde planet as part of a containment?
27. What is the natural movement or evolution of a containment?
28. What is Utu Dharma, and what does it reveal about containments?
29. How do you begin to simplify and bring order to your life?
30. What does the Sun as the trigger of Saturn indicate?
31. What does the Sun symbolize on a psychological level?
32. What planet tells you how important a person feels?
33. When the Sun is the trigger of a containment, what is the spiritual lesson?
34. What needs to be softened when the Sun is the triggering planet?
35. What part of the personality does the Moon represent?
36. What does the Moon symbolize on a psychological level?
37. What does the Moon symbolize on a mystical level?
38. What needs to be reflected on when the Moon triggers a containment?

39. What brings confinement when the Moon is the triggering planet?
40. What does the word *die* refer to when used in reference to containments?
41. What is the source of limitation when Mercury triggers a containment?
42. What is the most indispensable question about the nature of thought?
43. What is a sensitive planet?
44. How do you identify a sensitive planet?
45. To what does the karmic limitation symbolized by Saturn lead?

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