

The Eastern Window

by Penny Farrow



Editor's Note: Cross ventilation produces a breath of fresh air. It is desirable in a house and even in a magazine! In this spirit, we are featuring a series of short articles designed to make some of the basic building blocks and ideas of Vedic astrology more accessible to all. We anticipate that opening the Eastern Window can clarify the complementarity between great astrological traditions.

Joseph R. Biden: Collaborator-in-Chief

"It's been a long, long, long time comin' but my change is gonna come."¹ It's a good theme song for the newly elected 46th President of the United States. Third time is the charm for Joe Biden as he takes office with what is probably the biggest pile of problems on the largest number of fronts ever to confront a new administration. Does he have the right stuff to pull together his team, the opposition, and the country? Whew! That is a big ask. Let's check it out.

Biden's Vedic chart offers quite a lot of insight into the man and how he operates. (See **Chart**, below right.) It would be a mistake to take his humble, and at times even self-deprecating, demeanor as a lack of fighting spirit or any kind of indifference to power. The chart indicates quite the contrary; however, stylistically he is a huge contrast to his predecessor.

Let's start with Biden's Scorpio lagna (Ascendant). Notice that he has Mars in the 12th bhava (house) in Libra and Venus in the 1st bhava making a *Parivartana Yoga* (exchange); this brings Mars back to the lagna (on a virtual level), greatly strengthening his ability to navigate his surroundings and make lemonade out of lemons. While not as assertive as an Aries lagna, nevertheless a Scorpio lagna is interested in power in a more covert way.

The Scorpio lagna dovetails beautifully with a remarkable activation of the *nakshatra*² of Anuradha, an asterism known for its ability to collaborate and work well in a group while maintaining strong leadership capacity, ambition, and focus. The deity for this *nakshatra* is Mitra, an important Vedic deity whose name literally translates as "friend." Though sharing many meanings with the *nakshatra* Vishakha that immediately precedes it, Anuradha is less harsh and tends to follow social norms, as well as honoring agreements and giving others their due. Note that Biden's Ascendant degree, Sun, and Venus are all in Anuradha *nakshatra* (which spans 3°20' to 16°40' Scorpio).

Supporting this tendency toward co-operation and integrity is an outstanding Jupiter, clearly the most powerful *graha* (planet) in his chart. It is exalted, retrograde, and in the same *rashi* (sign) in the birth chart and the *navamsha* chart,³ a very desirable placement known as *vargottama*. Even though afflicted by a powerful Saturn, this Jupiter is poised to make a huge difference in Joe Biden's chart. It influences the levers of power in several significant ways.

Jupiter is the lord of the 5th bhava, an important theme of which is the formation of government. Jupiter is located in the very fortunate 9th bhava, the place of justice, law, and dharma. From there, it aspects back to its own 5th bhava, a favorable aspect indeed. It also aspects the all-important lagna, resulting in Biden's ability to fructify the good combinations in his chart. And most notably, Jupiter is aspecting the Sun. This is extremely significant in a Scorpio chart, as it is the only lagna where the Sun is the lord of the 10th house of government, power, and central authority — the kind of power Scorpios love. Jupiter therefore bridges the meanings of the 5th, 9th, 10th, and 1st bhavas of Biden's horoscope.

Given that powerful Saturn is also influencing these same themes, it is not surprising that Biden's destiny pattern indicates obstacles and delays aplenty in key areas of life, including health, career, root family issues, and a large dose of tragedies and setbacks. Yet in a strong chart, Saturn, properly integrated, can give endurance, hard work, and the capacity to come to terms with reality.

Biden earned his law degree in his Sun *dasha*⁴ and began his legal career in the Sun *dasha*, Jupiter *bhukti* (sub-period). Under the influence of the head of the law firm he worked for, he joined a group that was trying to revitalize the local Democratic Party. Biden switched his registration to Democrat and shortly thereafter successfully ran

Even though afflicted by a powerful Saturn, Joe Biden's Jupiter is poised to make a huge difference in his chart.

	Mo ^{7°55'}	Sa ^{16°53'}	
5 Pis	6 Ari	7 Tau	8 Gem
Ke ^{6°39'} 4 Aqu	Chart: Joseph Biden		Jp ^{2°4'} 9 Can
3 Cap			Ra ^{6°39'} mc ^{26°50'} 10 Leo
2 Sag	Ve ^{5°28'} As ^{10°8'} Su ^{4°30'}	Me ^{28°28'} Ma ^{19°32'}	11 Virg

South Indian chart, Lahiri *ayanamsha*, and the Mean Node

for a City Council seat in late 1969 while still in his Sun dasha. That taste of political success already planted in him the desire to run for the Senate.

He reached that goal just a few years later in his Moon–Rahu period. Rahu is a very interesting graha in Biden’s chart. It is in the 10th bhava of career and in Leo, which means that it will act like the Sun and only the Sun in his particular chart.⁵ But he could not have foreseen that the great achievement of being sworn in on January 6, 1973 as the sixth-youngest senator would follow on the heels of a life-changing horrific tragedy — one in which he lost his wife and daughter in an automobile accident that almost cost the lives of his two sons as well. He had to be talked out of walking away from serving his term, and needed to find the strength to fight through the depression and rage so that he could be a functional parent to his two surviving boys. He managed to be home to put them to bed every night, despite the 90-minute commute both ways from Washington, DC to Wilmington, Delaware. He would go on to hold his seat in the Senate until 2008.

Biden made his first run for president in 1988. It got off to a promising and well-funded start but was derailed by scandals in which he was accused of plagiarism and overstated claims about academic achievements. It was a Mars–Venus period, a tricky combi-

nation in his chart due to Venus’s being the 12th and 7th lord and completely combust. He tried again in 2008 as a more seasoned politician, and though he failed to garner enough support to win the nomination, he built a strong rapport with then-candidate Barack Obama.

Remember Jupiter? As the time ripened and Jupiter came to the center of the stage, it fulfilled its role as kingmaker. In late 2006, Biden’s Jupiter dasha began, and in 2008, he was tapped by Obama to be Vice President of the United States, a position he held for eight years. He had built a compelling reputation as a senator who would work across the aisle and broker deals where there was cooperative give and take. Mitch McConnell gave a moving tribute to Biden when he was leaving the position of Vice President and facing an uncertain political future. According to McConnell, “We got results that would not have been possible without a negotiating partner like Joe Biden. Obviously, I don’t always agree with him, but I do trust him, implicitly. He doesn’t break his word, he doesn’t waste time telling me why I’m wrong. (...) There’s a reason ‘Get Joe on the phone’ is shorthand for ‘Time to get serious’ in my office. You’ve been a real friend. You’ve been a trusted partner, and it’s been an honor to serve with you. We’re all going to miss you. Godspeed.”⁶

Joe Biden decided against running in the 2016 election, as he and the family suffered the devastating loss of his elder son Beau to brain cancer. It was Beau’s dying wish that his father run again, but Joe could not put his family or himself through the stress and rigor of a presidential campaign. This was in his Jupiter–Venus period — again, Venus is a difficult graha in this chart.

Yet the promise and the power of that Jupiter led him to do what natives of Anuradha and Vishakha are wont to do: turn lost battles into triumphant returns. The symbol for these two nakshatras is a triumphal arch. This symbolism points to their purpose, determination, ambition, and desire to fulfill goals, which always pushes them onward.

The last bhukti of Biden’s Jupiter dasha was fittingly a Rahu bhukti, with Rahu in the 10th house of the zenith of governmental achievement, act-

ing like the lord of the 10th, the Sun. So it was that, with both Jupiter and Rahu very powerful on election day by transit, Joe Biden made good on his promise to his son — and the third time was the charm.

Chart Data and Source

Joseph R. Biden, November 20, 1942; 8:30 a.m. EWT; Scranton, PA, USA (41°N25', 75°W40); A: from memory.

References

1. Otis Redding, “A Change Is Gonna Come,” produced by David Porter, Isaac Hayes, and Jim Stewart, from the album *Otis Blue/Otis Redding Sings Soul*.
2. Penny Farrow, “The Eastern Window: Meet the Fascinating Wives of the Moon,” in *The Mountain Astrologer*, Feb./March 2019, pp. 18–19.
3. Penny Farrow, “The Eastern Window: Divisional Charts: A Fine Family or a Rowdy Brood,” in *TMA*, Oct./Nov. 2019, pp. 16–17.
4. Penny Farrow, “The Eastern Window: Timing Is Everything,” in *TMA*, April/May 2018, pp. 14–15.
5. Penny Farrow, “The Eastern Window: Enter the Dragon: The Story of Rahu and Ketu,” in *TMA*, June/July 2020, p. 17. As alluded to in the aforementioned column, Rahu had the boon of being able to take on a disguise. In a chart, we examine the following grahas to understand which grahas (and therefore themes) Rahu will bring forward when it is on the center of the stage: its rashi dispositor, grahas with or aspecting Rahu and the nakshatra dispositor. In Joe Biden’s chart, Rahu is in a Sun rashi and a Ketu nakshatra — a remarkably short list in that nothing is with or aspecting Rahu. We don’t consider Ketu as an extra influence on Rahu since the nodal axis is really one entity. Though split in two with some distinct traits, Rahu and Ketu act in concert on any point of interest, be it a graha or the Ascendant.
6. Amber Phillips, “McConnell just gave a seriously moving tribute to Joe Biden,” in *The Washington Post*, December 7, 2016.

© 2021 Penny Farrow – all rights reserved

Penny Farrow has an M.S. degree from Cornell University and an extensive career as a teacher, researcher, and businesswoman. Involved in the Vedic tradition since 1971, she has studied Jyotisha intensively since 1991, primarily under the personal tutelage of Hart deFouw. She taught Jyotisha and Sanskrit at Vedic Vidya Institute in San Rafael, California for eight years. Now residing in Florida, Penny teaches Jyotisha and Sanskrit full-time, including a new online option. Please visit her newly launched *Cosmic Kaleidoscope Journal* at <https://vedicchart.com/cosmic-kaleidoscope-journal>. Her email is: info@vedicchart.com; website: <http://www.vedicchart.com>

