

# Ceres & the Urge to Belong

By Kelly Lee Phipps

I became fascinated with Ceres back in 1995. I had already fallen for Chiron in my chart consultation work and wanted one more celestial body to dance through the zodiac with the eleven “planets” I was using. After devouring “Asteroid Goddesses” by Demetra George I wanted to add all four asteroids to every chart, but decided I only had room for one. A shaman casting too many bones might be prone to confusion. I wanted twelve celestial bodies to go with twelve signs and houses, to keep the sacred geometry in tact. Ceres, or Demeter in Greek, seemed to fit the bill, largest and queen of the asteroid goddesses, the Earth Mother herself. I secretly used all four asteroids in my personal life with the cosmos, but with clients I employed humble Chiron and flirted with the grain goddess.

After months of utilizing her with themes of fertility, abundance, and nourishment, I found that she resembled Venus in her Taurus guise, but wiser and more profound. She didn’t just show me the money, she showed me what people valued, and where their values had been compromised. I began calling her the goddess of being and belonging. She wanted to express how you could be more natural by sign, and where you could cultivate a reverence for nature and silence by house. Whatever she touched by aspect, she brought up issues of self-esteem, worthiness, values. She wanted to know if you were present, if you belonged, or if you felt abandoned. She pointed out how you were nourished and nurtured as a child leading to your sense of self-worth.

Don’t get me wrong, this goddess of nature had plenty to do with resources. She stocked natural resources in whatever house she occupied. But what really concerned her was inner resources. She knew the values we lived reflected the values we held in our hearts. So I would begin by saying she blessed you with abundance in the house she occupied and work my way toward nature reverence and self-worth.

I had a client and friend who had Ceres conjunct his sun in Aries in the fifth house of creativity and recreation (Chart 1: Birth Data Mar 23 1961 9:30 PM Key West, FL). He was proclaimed a living prophet by the Catholic Church. He was in love with Mary and she blessed him with insight into the higher realms. He received and wrote messages in his journal by the sea. With Scorpio Rising, classically governed by Mars, he could see the investment deals months before everyone else. With Mars and his Moon in the eighth house square to the Sun/Ceres conjunction in the fifth, he began to invest in real estate in his thirties. Within three years he had amassed one million dollars. By seven years, he had twenty million. He just sat at the beach writing and would occasionally call someone with his next business idea. He described it as playing monopoly (fifth house) with homes (Moon). Ceres kept growing his wealth wherever he planted it as long as he honored his deep relationship with the Goddess (Mary in his case).

In 2002, I met a woman on the Internet who wanted me to do her chart. She was Sag Rising with five planets in Aquarius. (Chart 2: Birth Data: Feb 12, 1964 1:17 AM Los Angeles, CA) There was not much earth in her chart; even Venus was in fiery Aries. I was curious about her Ceres though, rising with her Sagittarian Ascendant. She was a speech pathologist gypsy. When I

finally met her in person she became a student of astrology. I was struck by her resemblance to the goddess. She was a mother of twins and her primary concern was feeding and nurturing her children. She was gentle, generous, and voluptuous. She couldn't wait to get her hands in dirt and grow plants or in clay to sculpt. She personified the earth element—she embodied Mother Nature, just as stubborn and always delightful, bountiful, and in love with food. She put on weight easy and had self-worth issues around her waistline

A strong Ceres can point to food disorders. A Ceres/Saturn combo can get anorexic while a Ceres/Jupiter can go bulimic. Ceres loves to eat, to touch, to sense. By her element your senses will be sharpened. In fire she smells, in air she sees, in water she hears, in earth she touches and tastes. She governs your taste buds and shows where you need to be touched. I've see Ceres on the Midheaven inspire people to open restaurants. I've seen Ceres in the sixth house role-playing waitresses at those diners.

Ceres lost her daughter Persephone to the underworld. It's helpful to work with that myth in charts with a strong Venus/Pluto contact. But Ceres has her own view of things, her own story. She was the one who had to let go, let her daughter be abducted to Hades year after year. Pluto is her nemesis. In Scorpio she acts like she's in her detriment. In Taurus, the Earth Mother sign, she acts dignified, even though it's a mistake to grant her sign rulership. In Virgo she acts exalted, bringing in the harvest, but in Pisces she loses her grip on reality—it's her fall sign.

No matter where she sits in the chart you'll find a theme of loss and return. Suzuki said, "We don't need to learn how to let things go, we just need to recognize when they're already gone." When Persephone departs for Hades in your life, Ceres feels it. There's a dark void that opens in your heart, a rip in space and time that sends you spiraling. Ceres is all about surrender, the actual act of surrender, of 'melting to the highest'. She rises to her noblest the day you lose something of value related to her house position or aspects.

I have a Yod to Ceres in the fifth house of children. Maybe that's why she called upon me to advocate her cause? (Chart 3: Birth Data: Feb 5, 1971, 3:14 AM Jackson, MS) I have joint custody with my son's Scorpio mom. She remarried another Scorpio and lives down the mountain in the plains. When six months pass, my son must leave to go down into the valley to be cared for by the Hades pair. He cries when he leaves but he knows he must go. He counts the days till his return. Six months later he re-emerges from the underworld and we have a grand time. Sometimes Ceres is that literal. In the seventh house, relationships might end and re-begin. In the tenth house, the same theme of loss and return may play out with a career.

Back in 1996, I was so impressed with Ceres in my work, that I said they should add her to the ephemeris. Over 4000 charts later, I still use her with every client. The astronomers recently elevated her to dwarf planet status and astrologers are finally taking her seriously too. The latest publication of the famous American Ephemeris is called the New American Ephemeris. What's so new? Ceres has been added to it! And not just as a footnote every month at the bottom next to Chiron and her other three asteroid sisters either. She's got her own sweet column nudged between Jupiter and Mars.

Now astrologers will want to play with her. She's on equal terms with her fellow dwarf planet nemesis Pluto. She's come to teach us to respect nature and to visualize abundance. She alone

knows the true secret of fertility. She alone holds the key to serenity, security, and a deep sense of belonging. Are you ready to open to her nourishment? Add her lush meaning to your chart and see what she can offer you.

I found that those with strong contacts to Ceres quickly become vortices for the re-emergence of the sacred feminine. In our religions, Sophia has been neglected, lost, and almost annihilated. Ceres in your chart shows how and where you can begin to invite the Goddess back to your hearth. Open to her, listen, for she is like a forest. Hear the birds sing and meditate on her spring rain. Let her in your chart and she will come and find you!

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