

COSMOLOGY COURSE

LECTURES TO MEMBERS - Willi Sucher: from 1 Oct. '54 to 1 Apr. '55 (All drawings by Willi Sucher)

Rudolf Steiner House, London, England

(Notes from lecture, unrevised by author)

THE PLANETARY ASPECTS IN 1955 ~ 1 APRIL 1955

One of the most important things that we must realize at present is the fact that we are standing in the midst of a very great battle. We remember that Rudolf Steiner spoke of the time during the last century when the battle between the Michaelic forces and forces of the dragon took place, so to speak, behind the scenes of external events. He also indicated toward the end of his life that, even in his time, the whole situation had changed, and that now the battle comes more and more directly into external life and is fought out on the field of human activities and soul experiences—especially in the sphere of the human soul. This is one of the most fundamental things that one must realize, for only then can we understand the present situations and events that are happening around us in these days. It is not always easy to distinguish or recognize these events, because they are not fought with external weapons; they are fought almost entirely on the platform of the human soul. They are often the elongated objectification of inner processes.

One of the fields where this battle is raging, often unconsciously and where many people do not realize the destruction that is taking place, is the field of what one might call cosmology, or one might call it bluntly, astrology. There are many astrological journals and almanacs of all kinds giving predictions about future events. They even dare to predict future wars, but we can be quite sure that these predictions are not made on the basis of exact and objective research. They are made with the intention to mislead and even with the intention to bring about those events, which is one of the most troubling of the consequences. The events of World War I, which started in 1914, were preceded by just such predictions and without any objective research. There was nothing in the world of the stars that would have produced, with unalterable necessity, those events. Under the disguise of objective research and objective presentation, there was impressed or infused into humanity, so to speak, in quite a subtle manner, the belief that the events would come; and then of course that was the platform on which the evil forces could work and could bring about the events. That is something of which we must be very much aware, especially in these days.

I believe it is not only a matter of being aware. We in the Anthroposophical Society have received through the teaching of Rudolf Steiner the means and the capacities to counteract such tendencies, which are ultimately not so much centered in those human beings who may bring out those journals and almanacs, but rather in the spiritual ahrimanic forces at work behind the scene. This was actually the purpose of the courses that we have been having here: to try to discover the means to counteract these forces and to find a way to work in this whole field of human relationships between stars and human beings. It is our purpose to open the road toward a positive contribution to cosmology, and this we can do with the help of the spiritual hierarchies who influence the events.

With this in mind, let us review the planets again for this year. We realize that Saturn is now retrograde in the constellation of Scales; that is to say it makes a loop. It goes direct again in summer, and in December it will enter the constellation of Scorpion. Now, this is the first point whereby we can try to find ways to infuse and create really positive aspects concerning this movement, this gesture of Saturn through Scales and Scorpion. The more we are able to take this into the sphere of our exercises and our meditation, so much will we be able to contribute or offer, so to speak, to the spiritual world, forces and possibilities that will alter the course of the events that might be predicted elsewhere. I am quite sure we will hear terrible predictions from this alone; but what can we create into it?

Perhaps we can express it in the form of a very ancient conception: one might say that in Scales we have a manifestation of that deity which was called in ancient India, Vishnu, and in Scorpion, Shiva. Just to get into

stride for the moment, we know that the ancient Indians spoke about the great trinity: Trimurti of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. The usual interpretations are sometimes confusing, but they speak of the Father and the Great Creator Brahma, Vishnu the Preserver or Healer, and Shiva the Destroyer. That is where it becomes hazy, as Shiva is not the Destroyer alone. We have in that great Trimurti of the Indians something like a majestic conception of what we have in Christianity, too, as the Trinity. Brahma is somewhere akin to that which we recognize in Christianity as the Father Deity; Vishnu is certainly the Great Preserver or Great Healer, that which we recognize as the Son Deity in Christian esotericism; and then Shiva the Destroyer and God of the Mystics. Shiva is really the one whom Christianity recognizes as the Holy Spirit, namely, that which lives in humanity as the process and tremendous urge to evolve; for no evolution can take place unless it goes through continual setbacks, catharsis, and passing through dark valleys in order to rise. This was misunderstood when people experienced how the Indians revered Shiva as the Destroyer. But Shiva leads us into catharsis, into darkness, and into a total change of nature in order to bring out the fullness of our spiritual capacities. That fullness of spiritual capacities taken together—in both contemporary and historic humanity—is a reflection, in fact, of the Holy Spirit.

You remember when we spoke about Saturn in Scales we referred to this; but now there comes the aspect of Saturn in Scorpion. What can we do, what can we create? We must create concepts; we must create pictures of consciousness and infuse them into this position of Saturn. We must think in positive terms about Saturn in Scorpion. How can we do that? We can do it by thinking of the Holy Spirit, namely, the evolution of humanity through the ages and even in contemporary times. So many things are happening with which we might not agree. Things have happened in the past that have led to disasters. One thing we can do, which would help us as well as help the world, is to realize that the events, whichever turn they may take, finally must serve the good, must serve evolution. Things may go in a terrible roundabout way, but in the end they will lead to that which is contained in the Divine Plan.

We may go even further and create a picture, not just a memory, but perhaps a picture adapted to the modern situation of humanity, and that is the picture of Jonah of the Old Testament. My impression is that he is very much connected with this Saturn in Scorpion. It is a very short description, actually only four very short chapters; perhaps it pays to read them. There we hear first of the initiation of Jonah. We know he was sailing in a ship, thrown overboard, and then swallowed by a whale. He stayed in the belly of the whale for three days, which signifies, of course, that he went through an initiation. Then he was sent to Ninevah, a big town; he went into the town, saw all the wickedness, and then he prophesied. He felt inspired to say that the town would be destroyed in 40 days for the wickedness which was there. When the inhabitants heard this they repented, put on sackcloth and ashes, and they were actually able to reverse the events. The disaster did not come that Jonah had prophesied on account of their repentance. Then Jonah was very angry, because that was his defeat. In the last chapter we hear of a conversation that he has with the Lord, and it implies that the human being, even the prophet, must always be prepared to see that even that which is pre-established, so to speak, in the Akashic records of the world can be altered by human beings.


This is the great lesson that we, even in post-Christian times, can learn from such a book as the Book of Jonah. I believe if we create that understanding and combine it with a sureness and an awareness that things can be turned to the better for all by the active, creative deeds of humanity, that is something which can be carried into such an event as Saturn going into the constellation of Scorpion.

As for the Sun, it is very difficult to speak about the Sun in a kind of summing-up way, because the Sun is of course going through the entire Zodiac in the course of the year, and each day presents us with a new situation. However, there is one thing that might be worthwhile to work out tonight, and that is the Sun eclipses, which will take place in the course of the year. There will be a Sun eclipse on the 20th of June. That will be a total eclipse early in the morning, and they say it will be invisible in Great Britain. I am not so sure that it will really be invisible or whether the Sun will not rise partly eclipsed, at least, but I don't have the evidence here, and I cannot tell you for certain. Anyhow, there is this total eclipse of the Sun, and another one will take place on the 14th of December of this year, which will be an annular eclipse and again will be invisible here. The one on the 20th of June will fall on the eastern part, probably more to the south toward the equatorial regions of the Earth.

Now, remember some time ago when we spoke about the Sun, we had to think about the age of Sun eclipses. We know that Sun eclipses return in the course of 18 years and 11 days, and this is called a Saros Period. Always the same eclipse returns within this interval. If we follow this up, for instance, if we take the one in June, we find that this one started centuries ago and always came back again after 18 years and 11 days. It began in the Middle Ages as a very slight partial eclipse which was only visible near the South Pole. Then gradually the eclipses came back after intervals of 18 years and 11 days, becoming more and more complete until the time was reached when the eclipses within these Saros rhythms became total. So, we could say that at present they are, as a spiritual being, about in the middle of their life. I have traced it back, and I have also traced the one which will take place in December. We can roughly say that the one in June is a bit older than the one in December. The one in December actually leads us back, roughly, into the year 1487. That is very probably when it started to enter its existence. In future they will pass out of existence. The lifetime of such an eclipse is about 1,200 or 1,300 years.

Thus these two eclipses came into existence about 1486-7, which was 26 Saros periods before June 1955. It is quite interesting to see the events that were taking place on the Earth at the time they came into existence. That was the time when the Portuguese explorer-diplomatist-missionary, Pedro de Covilham, was the first of the Portuguese to reach Goa and Calicut, in India, finding the overland route to the eastern spice trade in 1487. At the same time another Portuguese expedition, led by Bartholomew Diaz, reached and named the Cape, coming by sea in 1488 from the west, but they didn't go any further then. The next Sun eclipse of that Saros rhythm was the time when Dom Francisco de Almeida of Portugal became the first Viceroy of the Portuguese colony in India. These are all very important developments, because India and the East were opened, and a new era of eastern colonization had begun. Of course there were also all those overland explorers who went to the East. We hear in the Middle Ages of various reports of people traveling to the East and coming even as far as China. Hence, these events of 1486-8 started an era of not only world exploration, but it was also the era of colonization in the East, and they inaugurated the events which have been taking place since that time though many things have changed. India has become independent since World War II, and all such things have to be taken into account; however, there is still an element between East and West that remains to be redeemed. Many of the situations that are happening today—many of the fears of humanity and much of the struggle of humanity—are connected with this unredeemed East-West problem. It is obviously deeply connected with those events that took place when those two eclipses were more or less born. The one was already certainly older than the other; it is a kind of elaboration of the theme.

If we look at the sky and we see the planets and we try to do such a thing as creating active imaginations, by which we can carry, so to speak, the beings working through the stars, then we can give, in a way, the hierarchies a chance to uplift those forces. It is our responsibility to help uplift the forces from the realm of the elemental beings that predominate in the astrological almanacs and that give opportunity for the adverse beings to take hold of planetary forces and twist them into evil currents. All cosmological interpretation becomes a great planetary symphony without any breaks or discord. This is the criterion of its accuracy: that it should evolve as a harmonious whole. Therefore, what we said about Saturn moving into Scorpio can now be elaborated in more detail by carrying this element from those years of 1486-8 and 1504-5, and taking it into our consideration; because much will depend, too, on whether we have the correct thoughts with regard to this East-West problem. A few people, at least, must have the right thoughts these days.

We've talked about the Moon at length, and I cannot repeat all of it. The Moon moves, as we know, very quickly through the Zodiac; but considering the events during the whole year, we might perhaps single out a significant event that concerns the nodes of the Moon. The node of the Moon, for which we use this sign  for the ascending node, moves against the direction of the planets. The planets move in the direction of the hands of the clock, but the Moon node moves against that, counterclockwise. In the course of this year, actually very soon now, on April 13, the Moon node will stand in Sagittarius, where the Sun is on the 21st of December at the time of the winter solstice. We know that the Moon nodes are gateways—there is even a suggestion of a gateway in the symbol we use—for astral forces coming in from the astral world and entering the earthly world. When such a transition takes place, it means that certain astral forces want to come into the earthly realm. There, too, we can go back and try to find the times when this event happened in the past.

Among the dates that I can mention, we first look at the year 1899. In 1899 the Moon node also moved from

Capricorn to Sagittarius, which signified the time when the Kali Yuga came to an end—that long period of darkness over humanity that began in 3101 BC and was to last for 5,000 years. Since that time it is possible that humanity can approach the spiritual world directly again. Of course that is also connected with the great battle that I mentioned in the beginning, the battle for the reception of the spirit and the dragon forces working against the influx of the spiritual forces of Michael into humanity. In a moment or connection such as this, it is perhaps of benefit to remember all that Rudolf Steiner said about the connection of human beings with the world of the dead.

Another such time was in 1918, when the Moon node was in the same position. It moved through the winter solstice, and just during those days Dr. Steiner spoke very strongly about the connection between the dead and the living. He also tried to bring an awareness of the fact that the Earth, as a planet, has entered the stage of its slow death, its slow external transformation. However, at the same time it is inwardly entering a stage of spiritual awakening and rebirth. Such thoughts help to transform the negative aspects and bring a positive note into these events in the Moon sphere.

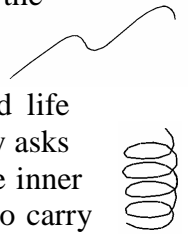
Now we come to Mars. There, too, it is a bit difficult to sort out the events. Two events are taking place that seem to be of special importance. The one is a conjunction with Jupiter. Jupiter will move in the course of the year from the constellation of Twins into the constellation of Crab. Mars will have a conjunction with Jupiter in Crab; the two planets will stand one behind the other. These conjunctions have a rhythmic return at intervals of about two years; which we spoke about earlier. Such events want to ask us something. They are really questions and nothing else, and it is out of our spiritual answers to them that we make an active contribution to the development and evolution of humanity.

What does this conjunction tell us? Conjunctions of Mars and Jupiter took place during the Three Years of Christ's ministry. We can therefore work this out esoterically with the most powerful and healing imaginations. Two such conjunctions took place. The first conjunction of Mars and Jupiter took place during the 40 days of Christ in the desert, after the Baptism in the Jordan; the second conjunction took place during the 40 days of Christ's living together with the Apostles after Easter. This was the time when Christ appeared to them after the Resurrection, in the Resurrection Body, and taught them in a fashion that was quite new to them, which was quite unique. We might say that the supreme divine wisdom of Jupiter, of the Kyriotetes, is combined with the strength of Mars—wisdom and strength are blended. Thus we have those powerful events in the life of Christ: first in the 40 days in the desert when He overcame the adversaries, Lucifer and Ahriman; and the second time when He entered, so to speak, the souls of the Apostles and fought the battle in their souls, when He became the sustainer of their souls so that afterward they could go out into the world and preach the Gospel. In order to do this they needed that sustenance which they received during the 40 days after Easter. The first of these conjunctions took place in Ram, and the other one took place in Twins. Well, we can see that these are helpful pictures that can be most valuable, if we do it seriously. In that uplifted realm of meditation, it can become a contribution to the progress of humanity and an offering to the hierarchies.

The next event that I would like to look at is the superior conjunction of Venus. The astronomical Venus, which we called in our course occult Mercury, is at present still in the constellation of Waterman. In the course of the year, it will come into a superior conjunction with the Sun in the constellation of Lion, where it will be standing behind the Sun. We know that this relates to the Mystery of Golgotha from our past study of these conjunctions. It is one of those five faculties that we must attain and which we must cultivate as we go on the occult path of our development of the ten-petalled lotus. One might call this faculty, which the cosmos, so to speak, asks us to develop, the faculty to realize the essence of the Mystery of Golgotha—that all evolution, all development, and all progress can only be achieved through our courage to go through that which is indicated on a cosmic scale in the Mystery of Golgotha, namely, to go through the death experience, on certain levels at least. We go through constant death experiences, which may be only a state of despair that we experience at a certain time, perhaps an event that brings disappointment or disillusionment, still we may experience it very deeply. Those events are part of our path toward the cognition of the Mystery of Golgotha and toward our amalgamation, so to speak, our identification with the Mystery of Golgotha.

However, these are also stages that can bring us forward, for evolution and inner development does not go in a straight line; it always goes in curves. There is an ascent, and then suddenly we feel that we have reached a summit—we may not even realize that we have reached a summit—and then it is all the worse for us, because

suddenly there is the descent. We experience what seems to be a retrograde movement, a kind of collapsing even, but this is the necessary step in order to rise still higher (top drawing). Then, again the experiences repeat themselves on a higher level. That is how evolution works. Actually, it really forms a spiral. Do we not often find ourselves in the same position, inwardly, in life? It may be a new landscape, but the same situations are there. I believe we have to take these repeated life experiences seriously, realizing that they are realities. We must learn to ask ourselves—as nobody asks or demands it from us—to take that road, through our own inner efforts, step by step toward the inner meaning of the Mystery of Golgotha. Such thoughts and such resolutions may then contribute to carry humanity into the future and avoid much of that which the evil forces intend to inflict on us.



We now come to Jupiter. I mentioned already the fact that Jupiter, which is at present in the constellation of Twins, is actually standing quite near the two stars of Castor and Pollux—they are the main stars of that constellation. Jupiter is now moving away from those two and will be entering the constellation of Crab sometime near the end of May. I mentioned already that Jupiter in Twins is connected with the 40 days after Easter, but there is more to it. What are Twins? In a pre-Christian sense Twins are the adversaries, Lucifer and Ahriman. Christ, on His way down from the Sun, passed through the planetary spheres and was recognized and revealed by Zarathustra as the aura of the Sun; then Moses experienced Him in the sphere of the elements; and the Greeks experienced Him in the ether surrounding the Earth. We know the Sun now to be the seat of Lucifer, and down here in the center of the Earth was the throne of Ahriman.

Thus Twins in pre-Christian times was a picture of those two adversaries: the one in the heights (Lucifer), and the one in the depths (Ahriman). But that changed in the moment when Christ stood in front of the two adversaries, whom He met through the body of Jesus during those 40 days in the desert and after the Baptism. They came toward Him, but Christ rejected them. He actually laid the foundation for a situation that He then fully established during the 40 days after Easter, namely, the power in the human soul that can reject, which can keep the adversaries in check. That is then the picture, the Christian picture of Twins. We can see now that Twins is really three: there is Lucifer in the heights, Ahriman in the depths, but there stands the figure of Christ between them. This is how Christ is portrayed in the statue by Dr. Steiner, The Representative of Man—the statue at Dornach.

There is still another picture that we must work out, an imagination which we can create toward this Jupiter in Twins. It is the picture of that which was expressed by Christ in the words, “I am the true vine, ye are the branches.” Twins really represents the initial stage of the development of the human being on Ancient Saturn, when for the first time that great, cosmic cell division of the greater body took place. In Twins the one great body, which had come into existence through the sacrifice of the Thrones, began to split into two, four, eight, etc., and became the new foundations of our present physical bodies and our individualization. In those words of “I am the true vine”, we are given the comfort and the realization that the mighty Deed of Christ guarantees that this great division will be redeemed, and that “we are the branches”; or, we as the branches of the true vine will be redeemed according to our work and worth. It is all a matter of our inner work; through our inner work we can become branches. Such pictures are mighty pictures, and one can enliven, so to speak, such an event as Jupiter in Twins.

Now we come to Jupiter in Crab. Jupiter in Twins is the problem of the two, i.e., always either in a horizontal way or in a vertical way—I mean now metaphorically. The Twins here are still united within itself, but in Crab the two have come apart; and there is, of course, inherent in this split the danger of further splits. From our point of view, our approach must be a positive one, and we must stand between the two extremes and always try to find the middle way in everything that happens, in everything with which we are confronted. It is sometimes quite healthy to come away from our own standpoint and yet not fall into another standpoint, but to stand in between and try to build a bridge with our own being. At times this may seem useless, in an external sense, but it can be very valuable in a spiritual sense.

Finally, I would like to refer to Mercury, which earlier we called occult Venus. Mercury has three conjunctions with the Sun this year. We will take its superior conjunction with the Sun, which is near to the same time when Venus will also conjunct the Sun, and Jupiter will also join in conjunction. So we have three (drawing): the Sun, Mercury, and Jupiter behind. That will be about the 4th and 5th of August and still in the constellation of Crab, or more or less just in transition from Crab into Lion. These three such swift events in the

course of the year, as well as three loops in the course of the year, refer us back to the Christ events; where we can find the leading motifs or imaginations that we can spiritually inscribe into these events with our inner life.

We can find the impulses behind this conjunction in the fifth chapter of St. John, the healing of the man who had been ill for 38 years. That is the healing, as we said last time, of the astral influences taking place in the astral body, or to speak more precisely, of the sentient soul receiving the impact of the higher Ego. This lives very strongly in this conjunction, or can live in it; it is all a matter of our own efforts. It is very difficult to describe these things, because they are exercises or approaches that have to be determined by each person in order to be able to come into a sense of the healing aspect. Just as an artist may inscribe or experience in a different sphere, it is all a matter of how we take that which is given to us as substance or capacity and how we use it or how we transform it.

As we can see, it is so easy to say this or that will happen in the future in connection with those events. That is terribly easy. Well, of course, there is always the question of whether it will really happen. This is really a parallel to the story of Jonah and his disappointment, because the events that he predicted did not happen, because the Lord and the people decided differently. It is comparatively easy to say that this or that will happen in the future; it is far more difficult to leave everything open and to unite, so to speak, with the spiritual world, with the world of the Lord and to trust, so to speak, in that which can be altered by our own inner human efforts. Therefore it may seem that this kind of cosmology is sometimes a bit feeble, but really it is not. It truly leaves the door open both for a gradual maturity and for rising to the heights of creativeness.



We shall have to consider this Easter as a Spiritual-Cosmic Communion of humanity. You know that the Easter events are connected with events which were inaugurated 33 years ago, actually $32\frac{1}{3}$ years ago. We know from the descriptions of Rudolf Steiner that one Christmas is connected with the Easter that follows about 33 years later. That is, so to speak, the archetypal rhythm that has been inscribed into the Earth through the Christ events. The time between the birth of Jesus and the death on the Cross at Golgotha and the Resurrection is about $32\frac{1}{3}$ years. If we look back from this Easter $32\frac{1}{3}$ years, we come to Christmas of the year 1922. We are celebrating Easter in 1955 and at Christmas 1922 there was the corresponding inauguration of what might arise, might resurrect in 1955. Now again, it is really all a matter of our inner efforts.

What did take place at Christmas 1922? First of all, remember, during the night from the 31st of December 1922 to the 1st of January 1923, the first Goetheanum burnt down. The last event that took place in the first Goetheanum was a lecture by Rudolf Steiner on *The Spiritual Communion of Mankind*. In that lecture especially, which was the last lecture in a whole lecture cycle, he spoke of that great dignity for which humanity of the future must prepare themselves, and these events are starting already now. He also speaks of the possibility that we can create, out of the totality of our own soul being, the holy host and the wine, which can be imbued with cosmic forces and offered to the world infused with the Christ. In the rituals, such as in the sacrament, we receive the bread and the wine, which is imbued with the Christ. But there is something greater, something to which we must wake up and must progress toward, which is that we ourselves, with our whole being, become the holy host and the wine. Thus in our whole being, in our deeds, in what we think, in what we feel, we will become the bread and the wine for the world—one can even say for the whole universe.

Therefore, in our thinking, feeling and willing, we must become the bread and the wine. By creating imagination, inspiration, and intuition in our own being, which are the higher forces of Christ, we infuse an element into our ether body and our physical body that will make of them the holy host and the wine. The physical body becomes the holy host and the ether body becomes the wine, which can go into the world and into the cosmos as a sustenance. What is it that rests in our physical body and in our ether body? It is the cosmos. Our physical body is a picture of the twelve constellations of the zodiacal world, and our ether body carries within itself the functions and activities of the seven planets—the five planets and the two luminaries. Our physical body carries in itself the Zodiac.

Hence in our physical body and our ether body the whole cosmos is present, but it is present there as a question. In fact, there are as many questions as there are celestial bodies in the heavens. In every human being, this asking world is present, and these questions can be redeemed through our astral body and our ego by developing imaginations, inspirations, and intuitions. These are then present in our body as food for the cosmos, which we carry back into the cosmic world at our death, along with that which we have received at birth and before birth. It then remains to be seen whether it is food, whether it is bread and wine for the cosmos, whether we have answered the questions that are present there, and whether we have redeemed that cosmos which is present there in our body.

What we achieve as “bread and wine”, this is our answer and redemption. What we have been doing tonight, what we have been attempting to do here, was no more than an attempt to demonstrate a way in which this can be done. I’ve tried by this attempt to show how by creating thoughts and ideas about the constellations and about the events in the heavens, we can prepare that which must be the feeding essence for the whole cosmos; and that is a way, I believe, to truly and effectively overcome the evil.