

Becoming Human

Venus meets Jupiter in Pisces



Even if one rarely looks up to the stars at night, probably very few have not noticed the two beacon stars shining brightly in the west after sunset getting closer and closer to each other each night. They are Venus (closer to the horizon) and Jupiter. They can be seen now even as the orange glow of sunset remains and the darker blues just begin to inhabit the sky. The New Moon in the stars of Aquarius was on Monday, February 20th. Over the following days, Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday, the crescent Moon scooped up Venus and Jupiter as it progressed into Pisces. Rudolf Steiner speaks of this crescent Moon we see each month just after New Moon in relation to the Grail and the Sun-Spirit:

...the name of the Grail is to be found through the stellar script, not the Grail itself. I have pointed to the fact that in the gold-gleaming sickle of the moon — as any close observer can see — the dark part of the moon emerges and is as though marked off from the bright sickle; and there, in occult writing, is to be found the name of Parsifal....

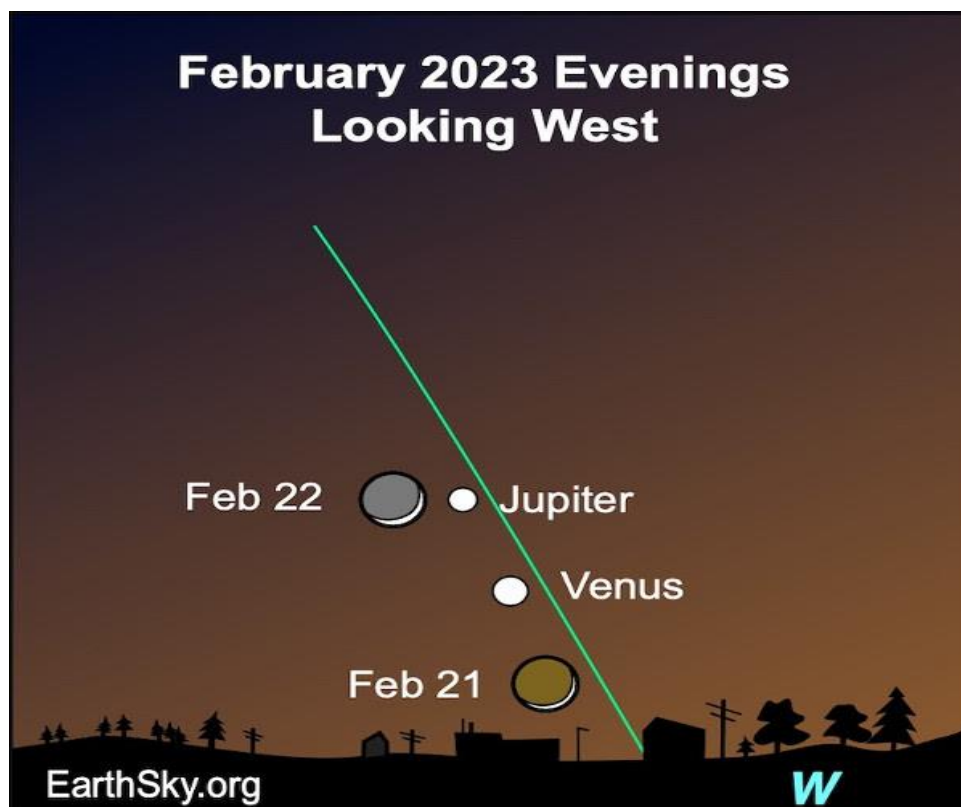
The gold-gleaming sickle becomes apparent because the physical rays of the sun fall on the moon. The illuminated part of the moon shines out as the gold-gleaming vessel. Within it rests the dark Host: physically, this is the dark part not reached by the sun's rays; spiritually, there is something else. When the rays of the sun fall on part of the moon and are reflected in gleaming light, something does nevertheless pass through the physical matter. This something is the spiritual element that lives in the sun's rays. The spiritual power of the sun is not held back and reflected, as the sun's physical power is; it goes through; and because it is resisted by the power of the moon, what we see at rest in the golden vessel is actually the spiritual power of the sun. So, we can say: In the dark part of the moon, we are looking at the spiritual power of the sun. In the gold-gleaming part, the vessel, we see reflected the physical power of the sun. The Spirit of the sun rests in the vessel of the sun's physical power. So in truth the Spirit of the sun rests in the vessel of the moon. And if we now recollect all that we have ever said about this Sun-spirit in relation to the Christ, then in what the moon does physically an important symbol will be manifest. Because the moon reflects the sun's rays and, in this way, brings into being the gold-gleaming vessel, it appears to us as the bearer of the Sun-spirit, for the Sun-spirit appears within the moon's vessel in the form of the wafer-like disc.

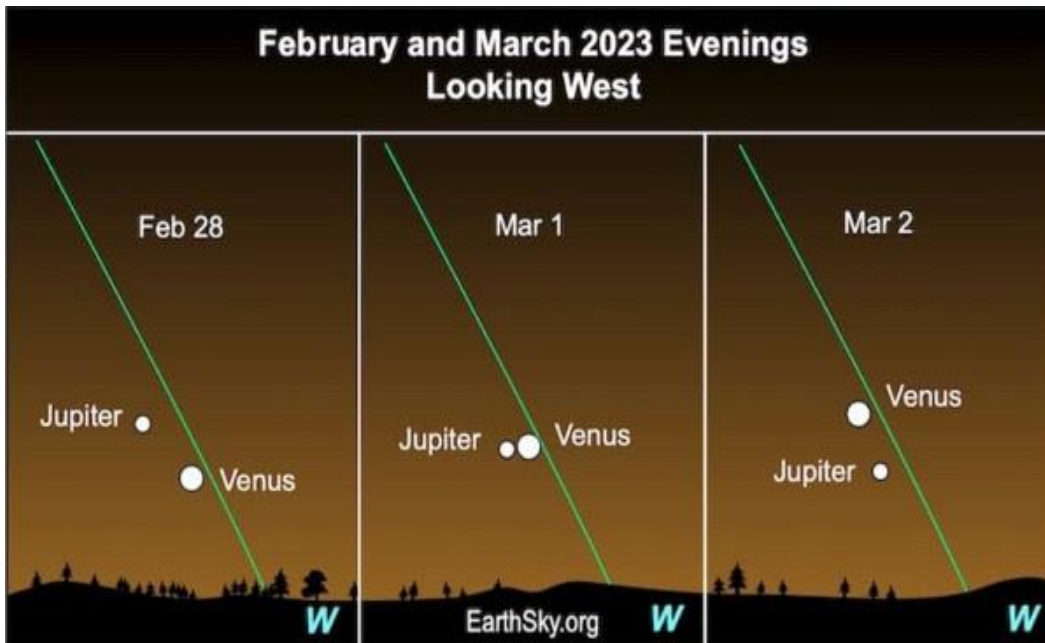
CHRIST AND THE SPIRITUAL WORLD - THE SEARCH FOR THE HOLY GRAIL, GA 149, 2 January 1914, Leipzig



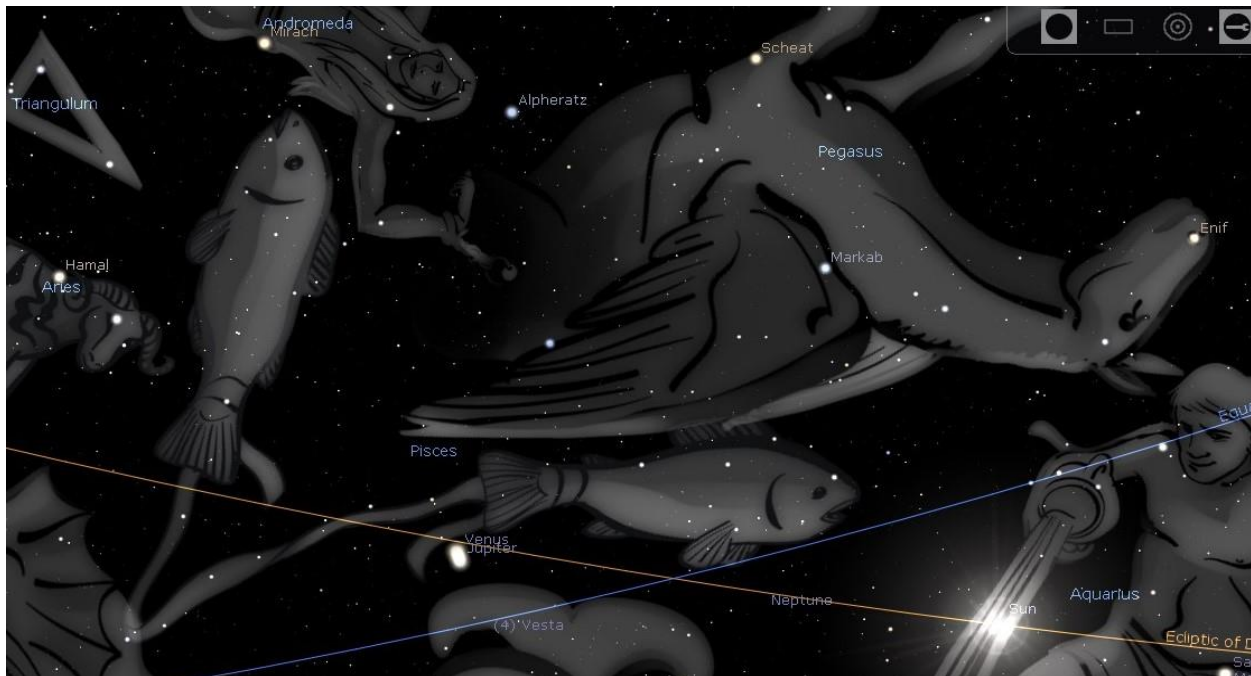
You may recall from the last article; the conclusion of the Holy Nights lunar cycle brought us to the next cycle with the New Moon on January 21st in the stars of Capricorn. Then the crescent vessel scooped up Venus and Saturn which were near conjunction in Capricorn. Both now and in January Venus was evening star. It first appeared as evening star after sunset in December, 2022 and will continue visible in the evening sky throughout the spring. It will journey furthest away from the Sun, to what is called greatest elongation, in early June. Then, missing its home with the Sun, it will turn retrograde and return into the light of the sunset, eventually disappearing into the sunlight as it sweeps between the Earth and Sun to an inferior conjunction with the Sun (directly between Earth and Sun) on August 14th.

After this Grail Moon crescent taking up Venus and then Jupiter, the two come into conjunction on March 1st in the stars of Pisces.





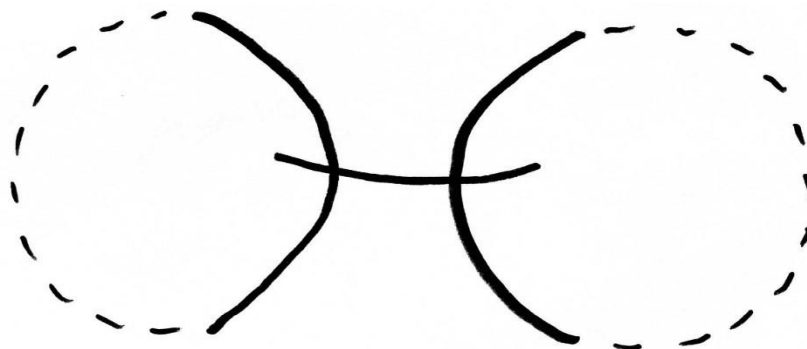
This in itself can inspire us towards our future ideals. But the picture is not yet complete because this conjunction of Venus meeting Jupiter takes place in alignment with the star Alpheratz, which though the image below does not show it, is that one star which is shared by both Andromeda and Pegasus. In fact, in some star maps and according to the pictures presented by Willi Sucher, Alpheratz is the star marking the forehead (third eye?) of Andromeda as well as the tip of the wing of Pegasus arising from the head of Andromeda. She has just been rescued by Perseus from the sea monster. Clearly Alpheratz carries a special call to humanity's future evolution towards the new winged thinking, the living or etheric thinking, arising out of the transformed soul (Andromeda). Observe closely the image below of the heavens on March 1st, 2023. This is what is actually in the heavens when we look west after sunset. We can only see bright Jupiter and Venus, and perhaps, if we are knowledgeable, we can make out the stars of Pisces and Pegasus (the Great Square) and Andromeda. What can one observe and learn from this picture?



We see almost as one star, Venus and Jupiter along the yellow path of the ecliptic, the zodiac road. On February 28th they are only about 2 degrees apart and by March 1st they are only 30 minutes (half a degree) apart, so appear to almost join together. If you go straight up from Venus and Jupiter, you see Alpheratz between Andromeda and Pegasus in this particular representation. Venus and Jupiter stand just into that fish (the Southern Fish) of the two fishes in Pisces, which is swimming towards Aquarius, our future, who one can see pouring the cosmic living water down upon the Sun now in Aquarius and below the equatorial plane of the Earth. The crossing point of the blue line (equator plane) and the yellow line (ecliptic plane) is the Vernal Point, the Spring Equinox point. That intersection point, due to the precession of the equinox, is slowly moving from Pisces (our current Age) toward entering Aquarius, marking the start of the next age, the astronomical 6th Age. There is a distinction between the astronomical age and the cultural age, but this cannot be gone into here. One can see in the picture the Sun approaching this point one degree per day to arrive on March 21st.

Simply contemplating this picture as a living imagination of various planetary and star intelligences communing can become an inspiration for us to aspire towards. The stars stand there silently awaiting us to raise our conscious understanding to what they hold for humanity. The work of astrosophy is to help facilitate that understanding so that we can bring into earth activity what they bear for our becoming. If we do not raise our consciousness to them through the Christ activity in us, then the anti-evolutionary forces active in materialism will prevail.

Pisces is the archetype for our age which we can approach from many angles. The constellations above and below Pisces enhance the depth of this imagination. Above, Pegasus arises from Andromeda pointing to our future winged consciousness. Below, Cetus, the monster from the deep sea of the unconscious forces of the past, seeks to devour Andromeda. The two fishes swim in opposite directions, one towards Aries, the time of the egoism and intellectual thinking developed out of Rome and Greece, a necessary but limited thinking; the other fish swims towards Aquarius, the waters of life and the living thinking of a new age. Our Piscean age is the time between, when the ego fully matures in its capacities in the physical body through the consciousness soul, coming out of the intellectual soul towards the spiritual soul. Rudolf Steiner once described this Piscean age as the time when humanity learns to stand on its own two feet. Pisces is connected to the hands and feet and thus to the will, through which we can transform the Earth or destroy it. Its now in our hands in this time of freedom to turn away from the gods or unite with them. In the two fish we can also see a picture of duality, even polarities, in which we live in this age of decision and choice. We stand always in the tension between the two. Even the symbol used for Pisces is one of two spheres or worlds, joined together, like the rope or ribbon connecting the two fish in the heavens.



Pisces is that constellation marking the axis of the horizontal beam of our great cosmic cross of solstices and equinoxes. Just as Gemini and Sagittarius (also constellations of duality) are the vertical beam of this axis. Pisces is where the Sun almost always stands now at Easter (unless Easter falls at the end of April). So it is deeply connected with the Golgotha/Easter impulse in our age, the sacrifice and dying leading to resurrection.

It is our Piscean task to understand sacrifice to develop the “side by side”, “hand in hand”, brother/sister relationship to our Earth, to our fellow humans, and to the divine world of beings.

Now we have Jupiter joining Venus here in Pisces, directly below the star Alpheratz. Both of these planetary spheres of being ask us to move into the future towards our higher calling. Jupiter as the sphere of the Spirits of Wisdom, wants to become the realization of our higher ideals, the awakening of the new living thinking, the foundation stones for the New Jerusalem. Venus, that sphere of love and reintegration with the divine, became through Christ’s deeds on the Earth, the sphere which carries the new Christ mysteries in the Earth, the foundation for the new mysteries out of the true I Am. Yet Venus, the pentagram, can become the downward pentagram of Lucifer, serving only self-love, self-serving egotism, even the pentagram that serves black magic. The choice in our time of freedom, is up to us.

So perhaps one can see that a simple look up to the stars in the early evening sky during the coming week can expand from a feeling of awe and beauty for the two beautiful bright stars to an immense cosmic imagination to inspire our communion with the higher worlds of being.

We are in the season of Lent, a time of preparation for Easter, of remembering the suffering and sacrifice of Christ in his incarnating into flesh. It is a time when we can come to a deeper feeling for the sacrifice and death in us that can lead to resurrection. Just yesterday a friend gave me a poem, which to me speaks to this starry configuration and indeed in general to our feeling for the stars. It is titled Night Sky, by Kathleen Raine.

There came such a clear opening of the night sky,
The deep glass of wonders, the dark mind
In unclouded gaze of the abyss
Opened like the expression of a face.
I looked into that clarity where all things are
End and beginning, and saw
My destiny there: “So” I said, “no other
Was possible ever.
This is I. The pattern stands so for ever”.

What am I? Bound and unbounded,
A pattern among the stars, a point in motion
Tracing my way. I am my way. It is I.
I travel among the wonders.
Held in that gaze and known
In the eye of the abyss,
“Let it be so”, I said,
And my heart laughed with joy
To know the death I must die.

Jonathan Hilton
February 27th, 2023
Astrosophy.com