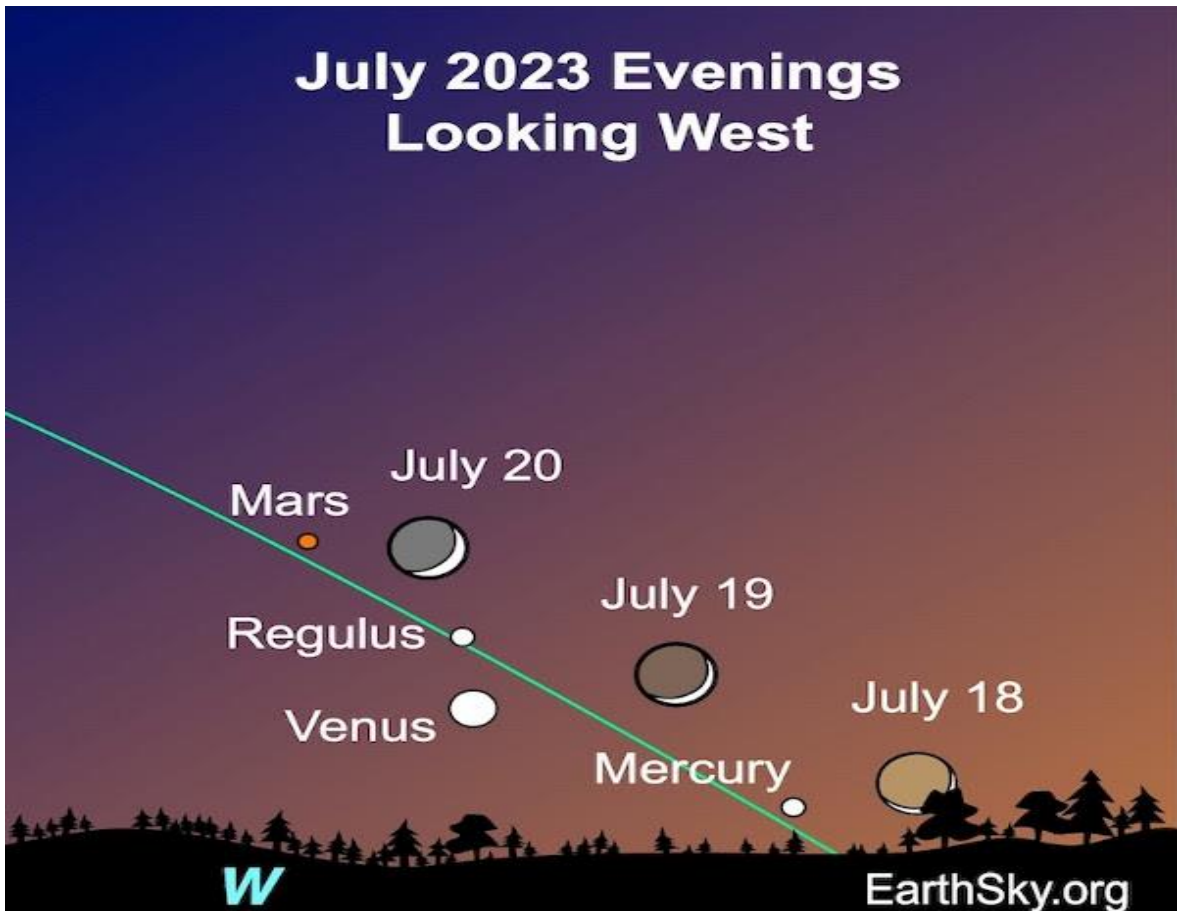


Stars for the Week of July 17th – 22nd
Venus and Mars in Lion and Pluto Opposite Sun



Monday, July 17 New Moon in Gemini

Tuesday, July 18 Crescent Moon in Cancer in the Beehive Cluster or Praesepe (the manger)

Wednesday, July 19 Moon passes Mercury in Cancer

Thursday, July 20 Moon at apogee

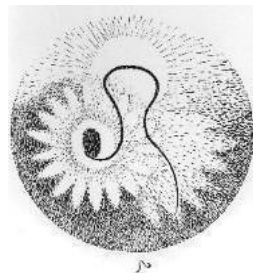
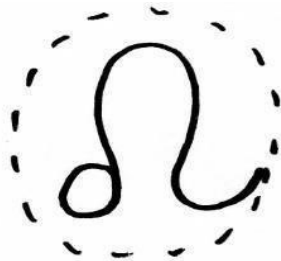
Thursday, July 20 Moon passes Venus and Regulus. Venus is stationary

Friday, July 21 Moon passes Mars in Leo and Mercury enters Leo.

Friday, July 21 Sun enters constellation of Cancer opposite Pluto at cusp Sagittarius/Capricorn

On July 17th, we had the start of a new lunar cycle with the New Moon in Gemini receiving cosmic forces into its growing crescent as it now traverses through the zodiac and planets. Today, Tuesday, it will pass through the "gap" of Cancer, that cluster of stars known as Beehive or Praesepe (the manger). Early Wednesday morning, the Moon will meet Mercury and by the evening it will be approaching Venus and the star Regulus, the heart of the Lion. Now brilliant in the night sky, Venus will astronomically seem to be slowing considerably and appear to stop just near Regulus on Thursday, as it begins its turn retrograde on its journey to return to the Sun from its maximum distance away. One can see Venus, Regulus, the Moon, and Mars all in Leo above the western horizon in the evening (see image). Though Mercury is present also, it will be difficult to see without an unobstructed western view and binoculars. On Friday, the 21st, Mercury steps into Leo and the Moon passes Mars in Leo. By Saturday afternoon, the 22nd, the Moon will leave Leo and step into the stars of Virgo. If we hold the imagination of Virgo as the woman from the Apocalypse, the Sophia with a crown of stars around her head, the Sun in her heart, and the Moon under her feet, then the Moon on Saturday will enter the crown of stars around the head of Virgo.

We can carry, particularly in our hearts (the manifestation of Leo), this picture of Mars and Venus in Leo, with the Moon receiving these forces. Perhaps one image would be the contemplation of the polarities of these two planets in the realm of the cosmic heart region. On the one hand, is the centric nature of Mars, which has led humanity into materialism for the sake of our taking up physical existence to fully develop the consciousness soul and earthly egoity as an independent self. On the other hand, are the forces of Venus, now meeting Mars, which want to reintegrate us through the new IAM mysteries into harmony with the divine spiritual in a conscious way with the new thinking heart, the new etheric thinking, which connects us with the periphery forces. Leo carries the active interrelationship between center and periphery, reflected in our organism in blood and breath. It also carries the impulses for the harmonious relationship, the breathing relationship, between center/self and periphery/self; the relationship between physical and etheric; and the relationship between self and community. This can be seen in the renewed symbols for Leo:



The challenges in this polarity are in becoming too fixed in the center, the personality, stuck in egoism, or in too one-sidedly diffused in the periphery without the center I am. Leo can also become a foundation for the ideal of true community, spiritual communion, both among human beings but also between humans and the divine world.

It is wholesome/healthy only, when in the mirror of the Human Soul, the whole community is forming itself, and when in the community is living the strength of the Single Soul. (Rudolf Steiner given to Edith Maryon. Translation by Rudiger Janisch)

In addition to this meeting of Mars, Venus and Regulus, we should also be aware that as the Moon passes Mars on Friday, the Sun steps into the stars of Cancer and is opposite Pluto, just at the transition of Sagittarius into Capricorn. The Sun will be above in our day consciousness and Pluto will be working through the Earth from below in our night or “unconscious.” This is an important imagination to carry during this opposition, as Pluto is connected with the deepest explosive forces in the interior of the Earth, and with the deepest unconscious forces within our lower nature. This can, in our time, be a powerful picture of the opposition of the Sun-I, to the anti-Sun forces, or the opposition between the Christic and anti-Christic/Asuric forces working especially now in humanity. One way to meet this opposition is to even stand outside at sunset and/or sunrise when the Sun is on one side at the horizon, rising or setting, and Pluto on the other side, rising or setting. In these morning and evening moments we can think this opposition in meditation and take into our thinking and feeling this awareness of the need to be fully Sun-conscious, out of our spiritual I, to meet that which can arise from deep within us as instinctual urges, or unresolved lower impulses.

Pluto has become a central player in recent historical events, particularly beginning in 2020, when it met Jupiter and Saturn leading up to the Great Conjunction of these planets during Holy Nights, 2020. Pluto is now in the same degree as that Great Conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter in December, 2020. It is worth noting that Pluto was opposite the Sun in late December, and on New Year’s Eve, 1922/23 when the Goetheanum was burned, when the anti-Christic destructive fire started below the lecture hall one hour after Rudolf Steiner completed the lecture *Spiritual Knowledge is a True Communion, the Beginning of a Cosmic Cult Suitable for Men of the Present Age* (see Man and the World of the Stars, lecture 5, GA 219)

He speaks in this lecture of the polarity between the upper and lower forces in the human being and the role of the heart/middle in holding them in equilibrium, and about the new spiritual communion in which the human spirit

unites with the earthly world in a transformative process. This is the theme now expressed in these current configurations.

The current opposition of Pluto and Sun can become an imagination for us of the challenges in our time to, out of the Christic I, meet and transform the powerful forces working from Pluto, which carries both the greatest destruction as well as the highest potentiality of the transformation of the physical, ultimately to Spirit Human or Atman. This theme can also be taken up in relation to the polarities in the Venus/Mars conjunction in the heart of the Lion

*Man transforms it by means of his own spirit, when he shares his spirit with the world, by quickening his thoughts to Imagination, Inspiration, and Intuition, thus fulfilling the spiritual Communion of mankind. **It is important that man should become conscious of this.** The more lively and alert this consciousness becomes, the more easily does man find the way to this spiritual Communion. (from the lecture Dec 30th)*

This lecture closes with a verse that is central to astrosophy and with the words Steiner speaks in relation to this verse as a call for human beings on that New Year's Eve just before the fire consumed the "temple" of the first Goetheanum.

*In Earth-activity draws near to me,
Given to me in substance-imaged form,
The Heavenly Being of the Stars.
In Willing I see them transformed with Love!*

*In Watery life stream into me,
Forming me through with power of substance-force,
The Heavenly Deeds of the Stars.
In Feeling I see them transformed with Wisdom!*

Man can experience in this way in his will and in his feeling how he is placed into the world. Surrendering himself to the supreme direction of the universe that is all around him, he can carry out in living consciousness the act of trans-substantiation in the great temple of the Cosmos — standing within it as one who is celebrating a sacrifice in a purely spiritual way. The world becomes the Temple, the House of God. When man as knowing man summons up also powers of will and feeling, he becomes a sacrificing being. His fundamental relationship to the world rises from knowledge into cosmic ritual.

Perhaps star gazing in these evenings, we can look up to bright Venus, Moon, and Mars in Leo with these thoughts. And at sunset and sunrise, carry consciously this opposition of the Sun and Pluto in the morning and evening forces, recognizing the challenge to bring what the title of this lecture calls for: *spiritual knowledge as a true communion, the beginning of a cosmic cult suitable for men of the present age.*

Jonathan Hilton
July 18th, 2023
astrosophy.com