



Jupiter Retrograde: Change your Thinking Wisdom Beckoning - Love Emerging

On July 28th Jupiter began its annual retrograde movement which will last a bit over 3 months. What is a retrograde movement and how might we understand it from an astrosophical perspective?

Retrograde literally means moving backward. How does this happen astronomically? Though our experience tells us that we are stationary and everything else is moving around us, in reality of course all the planets, including our Sun and Earth, are moving. Only the fixed stars are stationary as the realm of duration for our evolutionary cosmic reality. On a higher galactic level they also move within the greater cosmos. But to understand retrograde, we are working from our perception, which is that we stand still in the center point and look out to the moving starry heavens. This is our current centripetal consciousness. The retrograde movement of the outer planets is different than that of the inner planets, Mercury and Venus. For these two, the apparent backwards movement arises because they are coming around the Sun and moving between the Earth and Sun, so appear to go backwards. Then they appear to turn forward again as their orbit takes them again out behind the Sun. For the outer planets, the retrograde movement is based on the Earth's movement, which we experience as the other planet's movement since we do not experience our own movement. It is a bit like a person sitting in a train at

the station looking out at the train on the opposite track. Their train begins to move forward but for a moment they perceive it as if the other train is moving backward. In the case of Jupiter (and the other outer planets), the Earth is now moving in our orbit towards coming between the Sun and Jupiter, which means during retrograde, Jupiter will come opposite the Sun and nearest to the Earth. So, as we are moving around to pass by Jupiter, though it is actually our movement forward, our perspective experience looking into the sky, is that Jupiter is moving backwards. Then as our orbit comes further around, Jupiter seems then to return to its normal forward movement, which is called going Direct. These retrograde movements take various “shapes” depending on the orbital inclination and location of the planet in its orbital path, but they might appear as a kind of loop as in the image above or a hairpin type curve. For the outer planets, due to our annual orbit, they all appear to spend about 40% of the year in retrograde.

Jupiter has a very unique relationship to our year and to our Sun in its time-cycle based on the number twelve. Just as the Earth/Sun (depending on perspective) takes 12 months to go once around the full zodiac of twelve constellations. Jupiter takes 12 years to go once around the full zodiac of twelve constellations. So, in one year, approximately, Jupiter passes through one zodiac constellation as we, in one month, pass through one zodiac constellation. We have this Sun-Jupiter ratio of rhythm with the Twelve. This is a hint for us of the great cosmic dimension of the Jupiter/Sun relationship. For this reason, Jupiter comes into its retrograde phase one month later and one constellation further along the zodiac each year. A living form is created in the cosmos with this twelvefold rhythm. This year, the retrograde loop occurs back and forth crossing the celestial equator, meaning passing back and forth across the spring equinox point with the Sun passing opposite across the autumn equinox point. This happens in the stars of Pisces. (Please note I am speaking of the actual fixed stars, not the tropical zodiac “signs”.) Next year’s retrograde loop and opposition to the Sun will be a further 30 degrees forward in the stars of Aries and so on around the zodiac for twelve years. Next year Jupiter will have crossed fully above the celestial equator and will begin moving through the upper zodiac or northern half of the sky for the next six years, until it has a retrograde loop at the autumn equinox. I will go into this a bit later, but this year, we are spiritually having a culmination/transition event with Jupiter looping in Pisces around the Vernal Point.

The current Jupiter retrograde movement:

July 28th: Jupiter goes retrograde at 9 degrees of the tropical sign of Aries (above the celestial equator and the vernal point at 0 degrees Aries) in the constellation of Pisces. The Sun is then at 6 degrees of the sign of Leo, meaning that the Earth (seen from the Sun) is in Aquarius, moving towards Jupiter. Jupiter is only a few degrees away from the star Alpheratz in Andromeda/Pegasus. I have written about this previously in another context, in relation to Alpheratz as the star of the new “winged” thinking, or clair-thinking.

September 26th (at Michael’s festival): the Sun will have just crossed the autumn equinox in the stars of Virgo (Sophia Divine Wisdom) and be opposite Jupiter which is just above the spring equinox point in Pisces. Seen from the Sun, the Earth meets Jupiter.

November 4th: Jupiter goes direct at 28 degrees of Pisces (also the constellation of Pisces), just before election day in the USA, on Nov. 8th.

Out of astrosophy, our question is not what is Jupiter doing to us, but rather, what is the cosmic question to which we might speak and bring something to the stars out of our free human striving? Willi Sucher once described the gesture of retrograde as the planet “leaning in to us”. It is coming near, leaning in, as our Earth passes nearest Jupiter in our orbit. So, one can begin to think of retrograde movements of the outer planets as a time when we can draw near and take up what that sphere carries

as potentiality, if we choose to unite ourselves with the higher beings of that planetary sphere. It is often an opportunity for a more internal, introspective consideration of how we are meeting the Jupiter question and potential in ourselves and in our world. Jupiter and Saturn and the outer planets are less about our personal lives and more about our human condition on a grander scale, within which of course our personal choices and actions have an impact. Jupiter, even in traditional astrology, is the great beneficent, the bestower. From spiritual science we know that Jupiter is that sphere which bears the impulses of the Spirits of Wisdom, a creative living wisdom. Jupiter particularly holds both the memory of Ancient Sun evolution, when the life body was implanted in the human being and thus bearing a deep connection to the etheric realm of life, as well as the seeds of our distant future evolution, when the Earth shall become a new spiritualized existence on Future Jupiter. In this way, Jupiter is expansive towards the future, bearing the living thinking and the spiritual ideals which we can realize out of our own path of cognition. It points us to the future, to idealism, to a new etheric thinking, to new forms in all areas of life. But it waits for us to bring this to fruition. The Jupiter sphere is also deeply connected with the Christ impulse in the Earth. Just as Saturn carries the Father Will and the memory of our beginnings, so Jupiter carries the Son impulse of the realization of the Father will into the future. The sphere of Jupiter was particularly activated during the Three Years of Christ's incarnation. For it is only out of the Christ impulse working in human beings that the truly new can become.

Now this looping leaning in of Jupiter towards us this year occurs in the stars of Pisces. I mentioned earlier that this indicates a kind of culmination/transition. Pisces is the last constellation of the zodiac, so it represents a kind of completion event, a culmination event, which is at the same time a transition into a new cycle. In evolutionary history, Pisces remembers the great sacrifice of the Thrones of their own fire/will substance to initiate our cosmic evolution. The start of that new evolution once the sacrifice of substance was offered and the activity then of the Spirits of Wisdom taking up the substance, is associated with Aries, the beginning. So, one can see in this an archetype where in Pisces something culminates and is offered in sacrifice as both a kind of completion but also the substance of a new beginning cycle, which is then carried out in Aries initiating the new. Pisces is also the location of the Vernal Point in our time, which is a transition point astronomically dividing the above and below in our cosmos of space, the upper light zodiac from the lower dark zodiac as well as a transition in time in our cycle of the year. So, this loop of Jupiter moves around this vernal point in Pisces, indicating to us perhaps the conclusion or culmination of something and the preparation for a new cycle. The next loop in 2023 will be in Aries, the first constellation, the new beginning.

But this loop, with the opposition to the Sun in Virgo at Michaelmas, close to the equinoxes, the horizontal axis of our world cross, brings us to a deep mystery. It is the relation of wisdom to love, a subject worthy of deep contemplation particularly during this retrograde time. Why? In the book, *Esoteric Science*, Rudolf Steiner makes a powerful statement: "love is wisdom reborn in the I". I relate this to a cosmological picture. We have spoken at length in previous articles about the Great Conjunction and the activity of Saturn, Jupiter and Pluto along the vertical axis of our world cross, the solstices and St. John's/Christmas, in relation to the stars of Gemini/Sagittarius. This was the theme of 2020 leading to major upheavals and transformational activity in humanity, particularly in relation to these outer planets meeting Pluto. This all brought a major challenge centered on the great question of our egoity or identity...or who are we as human beings? This has been a theme that we can definitely see at the root of so many of our challenges in the world today, particularly over recent times. Identity! What is our true humanity? The Great Conjunction and the activity leading up to it in Sagittarius has triggered deep questions arising from upheavals which, though bringing much suffering, confronts us with this question for the future. The horizontal axis of our world cross is the equinox plane of the Michael/Easter axis which lies in the constellations of Virgo/Pisces (Easter is of course a moving festival

so can occur further along). Here we have a picture. The Earth, the place of our becoming an Ego being, the Christic place, standing in the center of this cross of polarities, with the horizontal axis of Virgo/Sophia/Wisdom on the one side at autumn and Pisces/Brotherhood/Love on the other at spring. It is a picture for me of this statement by Steiner. The two are united by us, the Earth, in the center where now lives the Christ. It is also an imagination for me of the Jupiter impulse in humanity since the event of the Resurrection. The Christ deed is the archetype and foundation for wisdom reborn as love through the I AM. Pisces is the constellation of our Age. It is the Age where we must learn as Steiner once described it, "to stand on our own feet", in the consciousness soul age. Only out of spiritual wisdom working through the I AM can we come to that love which is the goal of Pisces, the two hands and feet transforming the world, of humans standing side by side, hand in hand with the divine world of beings, with our Earth home, and with our fellow human beings.

This Jupiter retrograde time, as Jupiter leans in towards us, can be a time of realization of spiritual ideals, of envisioning our world future in ways that bring a new thinking as seed force into social and cultural life. It can serve a deeper spiritual growth and opportunity to realign with a higher wisdom in service of love. I think we can try and see, quietly perhaps, in the coming months how a possible shift might emerge in human awareness of who we are and how we must bring a new kind of love into the world. Even as outer events and external news may distract us and appear to worsen, one can try to see with new eyes and new thinking out of Christ in us, what Jupiter beings ask of and offer to humanity. One way is to consciously work with the cycle of the year in these retrograde months of the Michael season, already dawning this weekend with the Aquariid meteor showers and then August 11-13, the peak of the great Perseid Meteors, a true herald of the Michael season. What is the picture of Michael? He stands as guardian of the Sophia, of the divine Wisdom and as the countenance of Christ, ready to work with human beings in our efforts to transform fallen intelligence into cosmic intelligence again; to bring resurrection forces into the fallen world of the dragon. This is a service to the Jupiter sphere which seeks to lead us into the future with the new living thinking we can achieve on a spiritual path of cognition.

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