



Micha-el and Mars

By Jonathan Hilton astrosophy.com

This article will address a cosmological theme for this time of Michael which addresses a planetary configuration that is of significance for the next two months during this Michael season. It is directly related to our efforts to take up the work of Michael in our time, which is the work of truly recognizing and cultivating our universal shared humanity and the striving to bring a new thinking out of spiritual knowledge into the darkness of our times and into the power of the current materialistic world view.

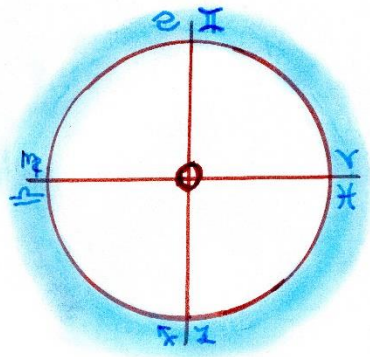
We must be grateful to Rudolf Steiner for bringing to awareness the reality this important spiritual being who is the Spirit of our Times, called Micha-el. Nowhere in other spiritual movements is there such clarity about this central being of our times. He is one of the seven Time Spirits who each bring a different impulse into humanity, which each last for about 350 years. The Michael era began in 1879 and will continue until about 2233. His season in the cycle of the year begins with the Perseid meteor showers in mid-August and on through October. His activity is a central theme to so much of the work of Rudolf Steiner and the task of anthroposophy. In fact, one can say that it was Steiner who founded the Michael School on Earth. Some of Steiner's most profound thoughts on Micha-el were written from his death bed in the early morning hours over the last six months of his life in 1924-25, as the Letters to the

Members. They are published in a collection called The Michael Mystery and have been called “a human guidebook for the 21st Century”.

In our current Covid times when fear, distrust and uncertainty are spread globally, uniting ourselves with the work of Micha-el is even more critical to our understanding of how to be now and how to meet these challenges. The current planetary configuration which I will address is central to these questions.

To build up to an understanding of this configuration, let us first step back and look at our greater world, which includes a deeper understanding of the cycle of the year as well as the greater activity of the cosmic intelligences expressed in the stars and planets around us. I once read but cannot remember where, that Steiner compared our materialistic world view which only exams the physical material world as like “a fly crawling across a painting by Raphael”. Only by expanding our awareness to the “big painting” can we begin to understand the current events in the world.

Plato said, “The World Soul is stretched across the Earth in the form of a cross.” The cross is of course a powerful representation of human existence that applies to many levels, from the physical on up to the spiritual, even including the world changing historical event of the Christ on the cross of death. Plato’s statement reflects a deep truth of our Earth existence. The cross is a form which represents the number four. This is the number for space, which is our current condition of consciousness. We live in the biosphere, the world of the senses, the physical/material realm. Our earth cross is formed by the four cardinal points of north, south, east, west and of the four elements of earth, air, water, fire. Our current human condition is that of a fourfold human being composed of physical, etheric, astral and earthly ego. This fourfold human is the culmination of the first half of human earth evolution, which is called the Mars half of evolution, and indeed the sphere of Mars even in its forms, is the sphere of the fourfold, the square. But as we shall see in this article, our challenge is now to awaken the Higher Self in us in order to develop the higher members of our nature through the power of the Christ I Am working in us. This trinity of our higher nature, sometimes called the Golden Triangle is the trinity of Spirit Self, Life Spirit and Spirit Human. This will be the task for the present and future: to transform the fourfold Mars human into the sevenfold future spirit human. In these times we begin with the awakening of the Higher Self in us through the transformation of our astral nature and our earthly lower ego. This is intimately connected with the task of Michael.



This fourfold form of the cross of earth as well as its transformation into the seven can be extended beyond the physical world and into the what we might call the world of time. This experience of time manifests in the biosphere in the seasonal life cycle of the year and is marked by the four transitional points of the seasons: the equinoxes and solstices. These four transitional points are not visible in space but are calculated based on the apparent movement of the Sun in relation to the Earth. This circle of the Sun's movement through these four points can be further divided at a higher

octave of dimensions to the 12-fold zodiac, which one could say is four trinitized, ($3 \times 4 = 12$). If we take spring as the starting point, the first of the four axis points, this marks the moment when the Sun crosses the great celestial equator and moves into the upper or light zodiac. It enters the sign of Aries. At autumn equinox the Sun transitions again across the celestial equator and crosses into the lower or dark zodiac of the signs. This is the sign of Libra. The solstices mark the vertical axis of the great cross of the year as the equinoxes mark the horizontal beam. However, as we shall see, these "signs" of the zodiac created by the vernal point are not the same as the actual true stars of the zodiac which take us to a higher soul/spiritual level. The signs are rather a life realm zodiac related to this seasonal cycle created by Sun and Earth.

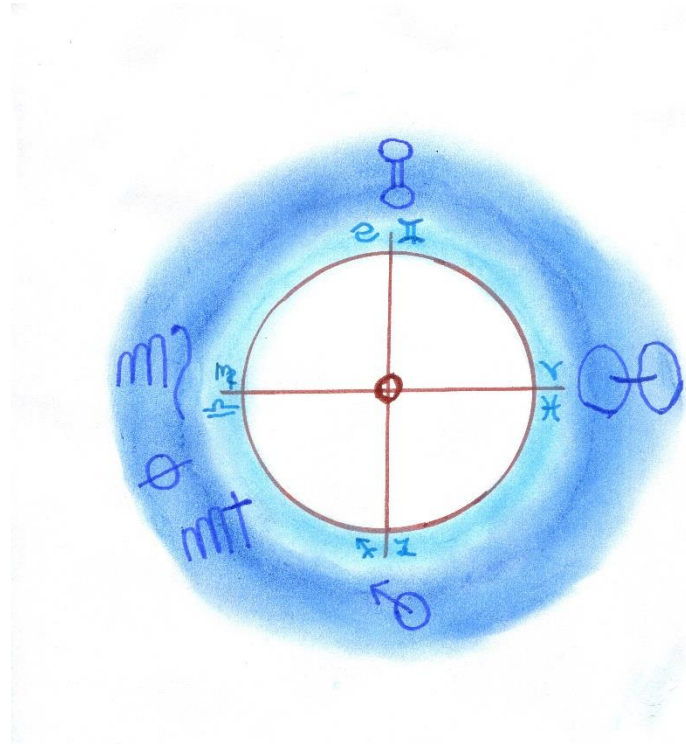
In ancient times we can find how these nature points were the foundation for a rhythmical spiritual life in harmony with nature. Rudolf Steiner speaks at length about this in his lectures collected as *The Cycle of the Year* where he speaks of how the Sun Ego worked from outside on ancient humanity as reflected in these nature religious festivals. However, since the event at the turning point of time, the incarnation of the Logos into the Earth, a great change has taken place in this life realm. This purely seasonal cycle of nature religious festivals has been superseded by the Christic festivals of the year, of which there are seven. Four, the number of space, has now become the seven, the number of time and life. In this transformation of the four of nature to the seven Christic events, we can find the resurrection force which has entered into the life realm of the Earth. From the cross of nature there now emerges the seven roses, so to speak, of the Christic festivals and the new life for the World Soul. Four of these Christic events are roughly aligned with the nature cross, but not exactly. There is a gap between the nature points, the external Sun points of solstices and equinoxes, and these

Christic events. The cross is re-configured within the totality of the seven. Just as there were the three days between the cross of death on Golgotha and the resurrection, or one could say the founding of the new spiritual Sun/Earth, there are three days between the solstices and the Christic festivals. St. John's is on June 24th and Christmas is on December 24th/25th. With the horizontal axis there is even more divergence since Easter is not tied only to equinox, but to a particular rhythm between Sun, Moon and stars and therefore varies, though it is always after the equinox. The day of Michael stands roughly opposite Easter, but is fixed on September 29th, after the autumn equinox.

We can follow these axes to a higher soul/spiritual dimension, and extend them into the non-spatial and non-temporal as a dynamic of the vertical and horizontal in the soul and spiritual realms of consciousness, or of being. This will lead us into our theme for this presentation. When we move outside the Earthly, we must realize we move outside the limitations of space and the consciousness bound to space. In this realm we also move beyond the signs that are bound still to the Earthly and its weaving life with the Sun. With these further extended axes, we come to the fixed stars of the cosmos among which the moving stars, or planets, have their life. Here too these axes are a kind of guide, for as astronomy points out, this spring equinox point (and therefore the entire cross form) is not stationary but it moves along the backdrop of the starry constellations. At about one degree every 72 years it falls back around the zodiac of stars, taking about 2160 years to go through one constellation and ultimately creating the great cosmic cycle of the Platonic Year or World Day with one full rotation. This cannot be gone into in detail now. If we consider that each of the twelve constellations represents a different spiritual world perspective, then this astronomical movement through one constellation defines the spiritual/soul nature of the evolution of human consciousness from one age to the next. Thus, the spring equinox during the time of the Greeks and Romans, which includes the incarnation of Christ, was in the stars of the Ram, or Aries. Now it is in the stars of the Fishes, or Pisces. This means that the autumn equinox now stands in the stars of Virgo, the Virgin. In this way we can see that on a higher level the actual starry constellations as the loftiest spiritual domains of consciousness can provide us a deeper understanding of the tasks of our age, the Age of Pisces.

In order to arrive at this understanding, we must leave our object/physical consciousness and enter into a higher consciousness, which begins with imaginations, by which I mean the anthroposophical meaning of imagination, which is connected to the transformation of thinking. It is not personal fantasy but picture forming out of an objective perception of the spiritual nature of these realms. Today we will use two imaginative or "pictorial" portals to enter into an understanding of these star realms of consciousness to aid us in the understanding of the current configuration. One is through the symbols or hieroglyphs used for them. The other is through the mythologies associated with them, which have been brought down from initiation knowledge of the past. Unlike what materialistic astronomy tells us, these imaginations of the constellations were not created by early people sitting by their fires and inventing stories about the stars to keep themselves entertained. These stories are from the time which Rudolf Steiner calls the mythological consciousness, which preceded our current object consciousness. But, as is right for our consciousness soul age when we must now think

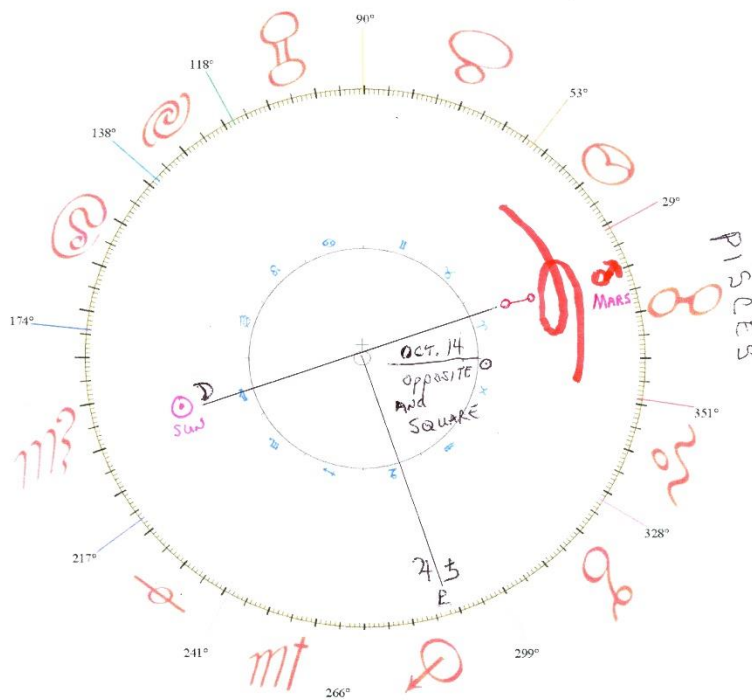
for ourselves, we must take the pictures and stories as a tool for our new capacity of spiritual insight and understanding. In earlier times the pictures spoke for themselves as fairy tales speak to a young child, no interpretation needed. Now we must enter the stories with a new thinking.



So, let us take up the theme of this article, which is the planetary activity now happening along the Pisces/Virgo axis, the horizontal axis which is connected to the Michael season. This configuration is however intimately connected to a world changing configuration in the vertical axis of our age in the Archer and Twins, which I have addressed in previous articles about the meeting of Pluto, Saturn and Jupiter in the Archer. These can be found on my website

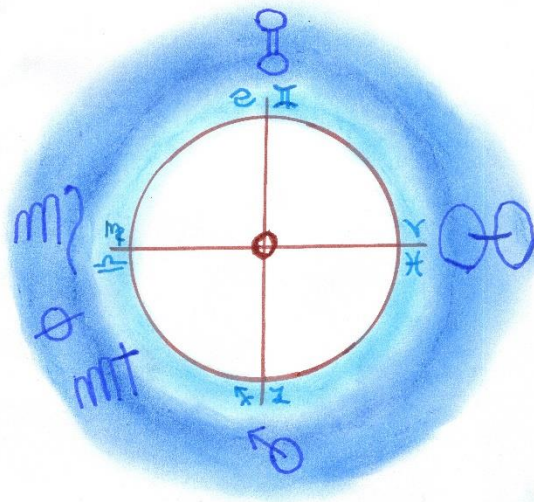
<https://www.astrosophy.com/currentarticles>, WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER! EARTH, PLUTO, SATURN, JUPITER IN 2020 THE CORONA WORLD: PART I and II. This vertical axis configuration cannot be gone into today, but I will be writing a follow up article to further elaborate on this more complete cosmological activity. But as an indication for now, this vertical axis is deeply related to the question of our Self, our Ego in many dimensions. In the Twins, we have the polarity of the Divine above and the Earthly below, an image of hierarchy, which one could say has more of an evolutionary external quality. The Archer is more an image of the duality within the human soul and the striving and challenges to realize the true self. It is the process of transforming the earthly self, the image of the animal body of the Centaur out of which our higher self is to emerge. In this axis lives the great questions: what are we as human beings? Who am I as an I? The rare and powerful planetary configuration along this vertical axis now is creating a cathartic and revolutionary experience to shake us awake to this question in a deeply profound and even painful way. This has been more fully addressed in the previous articles mentioned above.

This brings us to the current configuration which is intimately related to the above configuration and the current human crisis for the autumn.



On September 9th, Mars began a retrograde movement in the stars of Pisces which will take it through what is called a loop. This loop is created by the retrograde movement of Mars which culminates with the opposition with the Sun. This means that Mars is drawing near or leaning into the Earth asking for attention to be paid. The retrograde action is caused when the Earth orbiting the Sun, comes around to conjunct Mars and then slowly passes on as it moves faster than Mars. This creates the "apparent" visual experience of Mars stopping its forward movement along the zodiac and beginning to move backwards across the sky from our perspective. As

the Earth moves on in its orbit, then the backwards movement illusion disappears and Mars then appears to turn and proceed forward again along the backdrop of the zodiac. This "loop" indicates an intensification of the planet's activity before one of the constellations, in this case Pisces. The loop culminates in an opposition with the Sun in the Virgin on October 14th, at just about New Moon which is on Oct 16th, before it goes direct again on November 14th. In this opposition with Mars we have the Moon meeting the Sun in conjunction and then moving past it into a Grail Moon, setting in the west after sunset, as Mars rises opposite in the eastern sky. You can now see Mars in the night sky late evenings in the southeastern sky very bright red and across in the southwest, Jupiter very bright near Saturn. Mars will continue to brighten as it nears the Earth even outshining Jupiter for about a month starting from mid-October. This drawing near of Mars, or its retrograde movement will last until November 14th, when it goes direct again, but Mars will continue in Pisces until Epiphany, Jan 6th, 2021, after the Great Conjunction of December 2020. The time of the loop further intensifies this blocking of the Pisces instreaming. We on the Earth stand "between" these two activities in Virgo and Pisces with the challenges it expresses.



What especially intensifies this opposition of Mars with the Sun on October 14th in the Pisces/Virgo axis is that it will create a T Square formation in the heavens. This means that the top of the T as the opposition line will form a double 90-degree angle (a Mars relationship) to the cluster of Pluto, Saturn, and Jupiter. It will square Pluto exact on October 14th. So, the focal point of action or impact is with Pluto, Saturn and Jupiter, which receives the squaring force from the opposition (cross bar of the T). This is where the intent of the opposition is focused and expressed. It is a highly tense, volatile and challenging relationship which can express itself in crises, trials, and I would even say a kind of humanity wide initiation experience. Upon going

direct, Mars will again transit this same opposition degree location on the same day as the Great Conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter, December 21st this year. This is a powerful configuration which we need to understand as it is a real challenge for these next months.

So, let us not dig into this more deeply to truly understand it. First let us look at the location of the Sun in the Virgin at the time of the exact opposition to Mars in Pisces on October 14th. To fully understand this, we must look at the bigger picture. During the Michael time of year, the Sun passes primarily through the astronomical constellation of Virgo. It is in Leo, the constellation of the heart, during the time of the Perseid meteors, bringing to mind Rudolf Steiner's characterization of the human Michaelic activity as "hearts begin to have thoughts". It moves into the fixed stars of Libra, the cosmic imagination of Michael, at the end of October. In between it traverses the stars of Virgo, which astronomically is a long constellation. Opposite, if one were looking from the Sun, the Earth is passing through the stars of Pisces and now we have Mars making an extended loop in Pisces between the Earth and the stars of Pisces.

To fully understand this Sun in Virgo, we need to encompass the full Michael story in the heavens, which is told in a trinity of constellations, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, for they all compose the cosmic picture of the Michaelic battle taking place in human soul and spiritual life today. We can begin with the new symbols developed by Willi Sucher for this trinity of star constellations.

We can see in these new images a deeper picture of the nature of these constellations. The traditional symbol for Virgo has been evolved into a new symbol, an image depicting the three gates of initiation that lead to the mysteries of wisdom represented by the serpent figure, which has always been in image for wisdom and once adorned the headpiece of Isis in Ancient Egypt. In the symbol for the Scales we have a sphere, half below and half above a horizon line, representing a threshold, a rising and a setting, a gateway between the Virgo/Sophia, the mysteries of living wisdom and the Scorpion, as shown in the next symbol. The new symbol for Scorpio, like Virgo, also represents three gates of initiation but now leading to the mysteries of death, the cross, but since the Christ incarnation, also to the mysteries of resurrection now that the transformative power of the true I AM is united with the Earth.

We can now add the mythological representations of these constellations, which we can see in much artwork that depicts Michael's battle with the dragon, which encompasses the three constellations: Dragon, Michael, Sophia. Here we have in the heavens the starry imaginations which reveal the reality of these stars through which the Sun, the representation of our Higher Ego, travels during the Michael season. Michael is guarding the threshold standing in the Scales between Virgo/Sophia and Scorpion/Dragon. It is the picture of the story told in the Apocalypse and the story of the new Michael age which Steiner describes as the great battle of our time in which the Dragon has been cast down out of the Sophia realm of cosmic intelligence or divine wisdom, and into human beings. This is where the battle takes place now, since the last third of the 19th century -- not in the heavens but within the human being.

I think it is important here to make a distinction that is sometimes overlooked between the imagination of the Roman Catholic figure of St. George and the Dragon and the imagination of Michael. It is perhaps one of the fundamental distinctions between the Catholic religion and the Rosicrucian/Anthroposophical perspective with regard to meeting evil. In the perspective of spiritual science, the dragon is not killed by Michael, but rather is held back from entering where it does not belong and transformed. What has fallen into matter and earthly realities must be redeemed by the human being to become restored as spiritual intelligence. This is done through the force of resurrection implanted into humanity through the Christ. In the St. George story, the dragon is slain, a quite different picture. In the dualism of Roman Catholicism, the "devil" must be avoided and the lower dragon forces slain. In Anthroposophy, we have more a Manichean path, in which the human enters into the darkness of the fallen dragon forces and through the true I AM, and the aide of Michael, transforms that dragon darkness from within. This distinction is significant for our times for it is imperative that we move from dualism to trinity. In Catholicism and many other religious perspectives, we still retain a dualistic mentality of good vs. evil, of god and the devil, of faith and knowledge, of religion and science. In Michaelic anthroposophy we have the transformation of the lower into the higher, not its destruction.

Rudolf Steiner characterizes the new Michael culture as follows:

That which is needed is this: not to distinguish in future between things material and things spiritual in an abstract fashion, but to search for the spiritual in the material itself, so that one could describe the material together with the spiritual, and in the spiritual one could see the

transition to the material, and recognize the way it works in the material. This will be Michael-culture.

(GA 194, The Mission of the Archangel Michael, 11/30/1919).

If we now look at the story of Michael in the Apocalypse, we can shed more specific light on the exact position of the Sun in Virgo at the Mars opposition:

A great sign appeared in the heavens: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head. She was pregnant and cried out in pain as she was about to give birth. Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on its heads. Its tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth. The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that it might devour her child the moment he was born.... Then war broke out in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him....Therefore rejoice you heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short.

Here at the beginning is a threefold picture of Sophia, which is the image for Virgo. In a new astrosophy, we must see each constellation not as a generic single impulse but carrying differentiation within it. In Virgo/Sophia we have a trinity, which I see as representing a kind of threefold image of the I AM within the pleroma or fullness of Sophia, who is about to give birth to a Spirit Child. This threefold I AM can take us deeply into the mysteries of the Ego well beyond the scope of this article. However, we can say that above her head are the crown of twelve stars of the zodiac, representing from one perspective, the True Cosmic I AM, who comes from beyond the zodiac. In her heart/middle region, clothed with the Sun, and the region from which the Child is to be born, we have the Higher Sun Self and below her feet, she stands on the Moon, an image of the Earthly Ego, or sometimes called the lower self. The Child to be born is an image of our Higher Self to be born out of the transformation of the Earthly Self, through the power of the Christic I AM. The image of the Moon below her feet, can be seen as an imagination of the lunar astral nature of the lower self, or that earthly ego built from our karmic embodiments over lifetimes. At the time of the opposition of the Sun with Mars, the Sun is in the feet of the Virgin, which stand upon the moon. So here on the one side, we have a complex picture of what the Sun is “saying” at this October opposition, calling on the human being to address out of the power of the Sun Self the unruly lower astral forces of the earthly ego, the moon under her feet.

Just as the Virgin is the cosmic picture of Divine Wisdom and the mysteries of life, so are the stars of Pisces a cosmic image of the impulses for our current age which started in 1413 AD. The task of our Age is to learn to stand on our own two feet and to develop brother/sisterhood with our fellow humans, with our Mother the Earth and the kingdoms of nature and with the Divine spiritual beings. It is the age of the hands and feet so to speak when we take up and transform our world. The symbol for Pisces also expresses something of its nature. One sees in

the symbol two half circles joined together with a kind of bridge or belt. Willi Sucher evolved this image to complete the two half circles into two spheres, representing the horizontal, side by side relationships to be developed in this age. This horizontal relationship can be seen in some ways as a juxtaposition to or even transformation of the vertical axis in Gemini, the symbol of the spirit above and the earthly below, into a brotherly, horizontal relationship with the greater world. Pisces are the stars through which the Sun is passing at the time of Easter when the deed of love for the Earth was accomplished so that human beings can out of themselves develop the capacity for love. In this picture then of Virgo, the stars of wisdom are opposite Pisces the stars of this impulse for brotherly/sisterly love with the Earth standing in the middle. I am reminded with this picture of Rudolf Steiner's profound statement in *Occult Science: Love is wisdom reborn in the Ego*.

So now let us look into the nature of Mars to better understand this loop, as it will be a central theme over the next few months. I am certain we will witness an intensification of the aggressive nature of Mars and this looping in Pisces will reflect itself, not in fraternity but in the blocking of the impulses of Pisces, through greater polarization, strife, and division. Mars is also foundational in the human capacity for speech. So, we will be called upon to be very conscious of the power of the word, of how speech is used for truth or manipulation in media, in government, in the "voice of the people". It also goes without saying, that this looping of Mars before Pisces carries us through the USA election cycle, which will impact the entire world, not just the United States. An article in *The Atlantic* (soon to be published), titled *The Election That Could Break America*, goes into great detail about the very real possibilities and even planning for a contested election, which could disrupt the country and create conflict into January. Mars is famous as the god of war, aggression and belligerence, yet also of courage and strong will. It is that realm out of which the Earthly Ego, the separate centric Self, which defines itself by what it is not, has been developed. As Willi Sucher once said, Mars exclaims, "What about ME!" It is at the core of polarization and separation from others in egotism. I find it interesting that the position of Mars at the birth of Donald Trump was at his Ascendant (the eastern horizon point) conjunct the star Regulus, the heart of the Lion, Leo. This is not said as a political statement for or against Donald Trump, but as an observation. This is a powerful birth picture. The star Regulus is the "royal star of Kings". But the great question of Regulus is what is a true king? Mars at Regulus can indicate a great leader of courage and dynamism, a kind of King Arthur in service to higher or it can indicate a supreme egotist, a tyrant. It can be a leader who serves devotedly the community of humanity or it can be one who egocentrically seeks power for his own self. In a recent news article, a statement by Alan Dershowitz about how Trump was above the law as President was compared to the statement by King Louis XIV of France, who said, "L'Etat, c'est Moi!", (the nation it's me). Mars at the Ascendant at the Royal Star Regulus is a powerful location that indicates one's basic sense of self, how one presents and defines one's self in relation to the world.

As said before, Mars represents our evolution into separation. In this sense does Rudolf Steiner connect the sphere of Mars with all that has arisen out of the thinking of natural science, in that Mars is that realm in which the human being journeying to incarnation encounters the archetypes of the physical world and the capacity to confront and take up the physical world.

So, the developments of materialistic science are connected to the Mars sphere. This is part of the outcome of the first half of Earth evolution which is the evolutionary plan for separation of the human from the divine in order to create the conditions for freedom. It does not carry freedom itself. That comes only out of the human I, but it has created the conditions for freedom through the process of the human emancipation of self. Yet, humanity is now past the healthy working of the Mars sphere in this capacity and the further descent into a materialistic world conception is counter to the evolutionary goals.

However, it is important to remember, that it is the awakened human being who determines the outcomes of the star events. We make the decisive difference and that human power for change is not quantitative but qualitative. We often still apply materialistic thinking to spiritual affairs in measuring number or quantity as the gauge of power. This does not apply in the spiritual world. We must be clear that the role of the human being in addressing this challenge is pivotal. In our time we are not determined by the stars. They are not a "fate" imposed on us by the gods. Rather they express the cosmic intelligences, i.e. the spiritual consciousness of the spheres, which contains both a call for our creative spiritual activity as well as an awakening to the karmic consequences of our earth activity. Thus, whether Mars is "negative" or "positive" depends on how we have developed our conscious spiritual awareness.

With such an oppositional image of Mars, it is important to also look at an entirely different understanding of the sphere of Mars and its potential for another kind of human activity. It is one that can actually make the most of the Piscean impulse. Rudolf Steiner describes how a seed of transformation has been planted in the Mars sphere since the start of the 17th century. Here we enter into the depths of esotericism and a source for how we can meet this Mars loop in Pisces in these times. He describes how one of the great Spiritual Masters of humanity, the Gautama Buddha, the great teacher of love and compassion who ascended to become a spiritual guide for humanity in the service of Christ, was sent to the Mars sphere to become the redeemer of this "aggressive, war-like realm of Mars". The Gautama Buddha performed for the Mars sphere a deed similar to that of the Christ on Earth, a kind of sacrifice, in order to implant the seed of his great teaching of love and compassion within the Mars sphere. This deed of Gautama Buddha, as Steiner states, was done to "gradually inaugurate the process of Mars' ascending evolution". From that time, those humans, and Steiner is explicit about this, who have united themselves **while on Earth** with the impulses of love and compassion, then in their journey through the Mars sphere in the life after death, can unite themselves with this Buddha deed and bring this impulse from this realm into their earthly activity as a redemptive force of Mars in the next life. Steiner goes on to describe St. Francis of Assisi as a pupil of Buddha in a mystery school, in a prior life, who incarnated to carry in a Christianized form the Buddha impulse of love and compassion. St. Francis lived when a monastic ascetic Christian path of initiation was still valid. This path is no longer appropriate for our times but can be carried forward in a modern way as an example of the transformation of Mars. To go out into the world with the Franciscan impulse of love and compassion is in fact a work of transforming the Mars realm. In conclusion, we have merely scratched the surface of the possibilities and challenges with this current configuration of Mars looping in Pisces in opposition to the Sun and Moon in the feet of the Virgin, in this time of Michael, both forming a Martian T-square relationship and

focal point with the revolutionary clustering of Saturn, Jupiter and Pluto in the Archer. How can we begin to meet what promises to be a time of intensified "old" Mars activity of conflict and aggression in those stars that want to lead us to brother/sisterhood rather than the battles of division and polarity? How can we bring the Christic impulse of love, that creates out of duality a trinity, with the spiritual I Am as the new center? As we look at our world today where fear and rage reign and egotism rules supreme, our work is a real challenge.

We must be spiritually awake to what will be happening and recognize that even the effort in consciousness to perceive truly can make a difference. There are two suggestions as a practical spiritual activity, to bring healing in these months. One is to take up in nightly contemplation and devotion the prayer of St. Francis and to actively seek to apply it in our daily interactions as a transforming activity of the Mars element. The second is to take up the exercises for the development of the 16 petaled chakra (a multiple of four/Mars), which is the Mars chakra in the throat region. These exercises are outlined by Rudolf Steiner in *Knowledge of Higher Worlds*, Chapter 6, Some Effects of Initiation for those who choose to work with these exercises. https://wn.rsarchive.org/Books/GA010/English/AP1947/GA010_c06.html

Steiner says about these exercises: *The better the student's thoughts and speech harmonize with the processes in the outer world, the more quickly will he develop this faculty. Whoever thinks and speaks what is contrary to truth destroys something in the bud of his 16-petalled lotus. Truthfulness, uprightness and honesty are in this connection creative forces, while mendacity, deceitfulness and dishonesty are destructive forces.*

I close with the Prayer of St. Francis, as prayer to be put into action for the transformation of the divisive qualities of Mars and a help to bring a force of healing into the world.

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
Where there is sadness, joy;

O Divine Master,
Grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled as to console;
To be understood as to understand;
To be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
And it is in dying that we are born to true spiritual life.