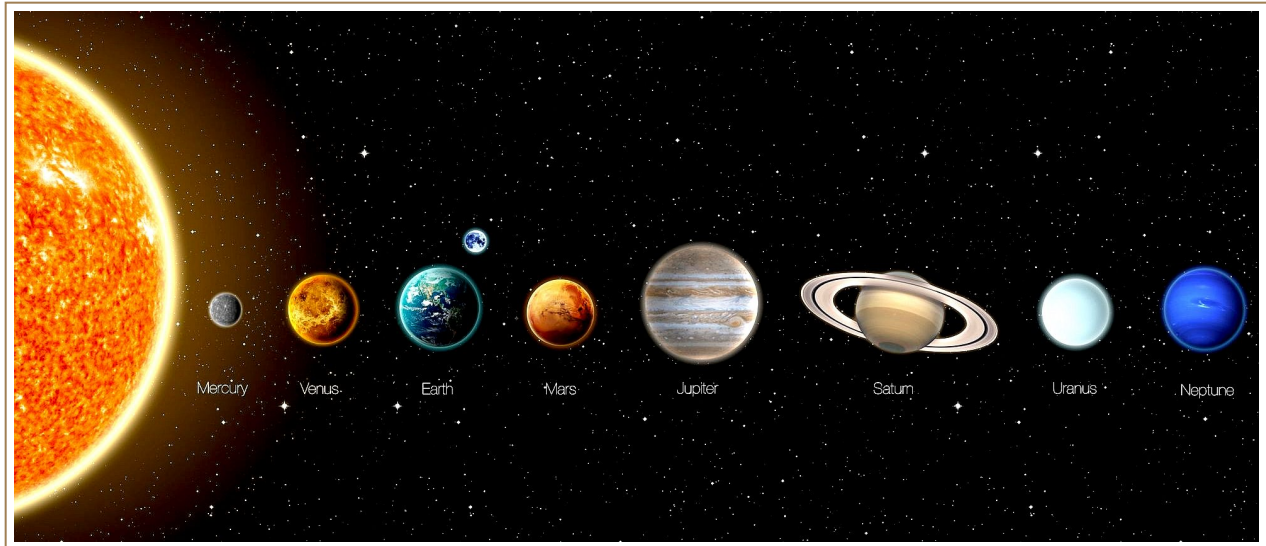


# The Lectures of Rudolf Steiner

## The Spiritual Individualities of our Planetary System's Destiny-Determining and Human-Inwardly-Freeing Planets

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Today I want to clarify certain deep world-mysteries, the knowledge of which has been lost in modern civilization. To realize some of what has been lost, think of the modern conception of the planetary system, that it originated in some kind of rotating, primeval nebula, from which the various planetary bodies coalesced. From this picture we can easily speculate that there are no fundamental differences between these heavenly bodies. This in fact is the prevailing attitude towards them. If the whole planetary system is viewed as a rotating nebula, out of which the heavenly bodies gradually separated, what essential difference is there between, for example, the Moon and Saturn? It is of course true that important research in the last century into earthly substances, particularly into minerals, has led to knowledge about the material composition of the heavenly bodies, and even a certain kind of physics and chemistry for them. This has made it possible for ordinary text-books to give specific details about Venus, Saturn, the Moon, and so on. But all this amounts to no more than making an image of, let us say, the physical organism of man, leaving out of account altogether the fact that he is a being of soul and spirit. With the help of Initiation-science we must again learn to realize that our planetary system, too, is permeated with soul and spirit. And today I want to speak of the various planetary individualities and of their individual characteristics.

Let's begin with the planet nearest the Earth, the planet with whose history is bound up with the Earth's history, though only in a certain sense, and which once played an entirely different part in earthly life from the part it plays today. You know from my book *Outline of Occult Science* that there was once a cosmic age, relatively speaking not in a very remote past, when the Moon was still united with the Earth. The Moon then separated from the Earth and now circles around it.

When we speak of the Moon as a physical body in the heavens, its physical nature is only the most external revelation of the spirit behind it. To those who have knowledge of both its outer and its inner nature, the Moon in our universe presents itself initially as a gathering of spiritual beings living in great seclusion. Outwardly, the Moon acts as a mirror of the universe, and its reflection of the light of the Sun is evident to the most superficial observation. We can say that what comes from the Moon is sunlight, shining upon the Moon and then reflected. First and foremost, then, the Moon is a mirror of sunlight. Now, as you all know, we see what is outside or in front of a mirror but we do not see what is behind it.

The Moon not only mirrors sunlight, but also reflects everything that radiates upon it, although sunlight is by far the strongest. All the heavenly bodies in the universe send their rays toward the Moon, and the Moon, as a mirror of the universe, then radiates it all back in every direction. It can be said, therefore, that the universe is before us in a twofold aspect. It reveals itself directly on Earth, but also in what is radiated back by the Moon. The Sun's rays work with tremendous power in themselves, but also in their reflection from the Moon. Every other radiation in cosmic space is also reflected by the Moon. There is the manifest universe, and there is also its reflection from the Moon.

Anyone capable of observing the mirror-pictures thrown back in all directions by the Moon would have the whole universe before him in reflection. Only that which is within the Moon, that and that alone remains, if I may so express it, the Moon's secret. It remains hidden, just as what is behind a mirror remains hidden. What is behind the outer surface of the Moon, in the innermost sphere of the Moon, is significant above all in its spiritual aspect.

The high spiritual beings peopling this innermost sphere of the Moon are high beings who shut themselves off in strict seclusion from the rest of the universe. They live in their Moon "fortress". A person can develop certain heart qualities in relation to sunlight to such an extent that he does not see the reflection from the Moon, and only for such a person does the Moon become as it were inwardly transparent, and only then can the person penetrate into the universe's Moon-fortress. He then makes the significant discovery, that through the utterances, the teachings of those high beings who have withdrawn into seclusion in this Moon-fortress, certain secrets can be revealed that were once in the possession of the most advanced spirits on Earth, secrets which have long since been lost.

The farther we go back in the evolution of the Earth, the less do we find the abstract truths that pride present-day humanity. More and more we find pictures, truths expressed in pictures. We can wrestle our way through to glimpse some of these deeply significant truths by studying what is still preserved, as a last echo of oriental wisdom, in the Vedas and the Vedanta. We can press on to the primal revelations hidden behind the myths and sagas, and we can realize with wonder and awe that a glorious wisdom was once possessed by men who received it without intellectual effort, as grace from the spiritual world. And finally, we can come to all that was once taught to primeval humanity on Earth by the high beings who have now withdrawn into the universe's Moon-fortress, after leaving the Earth together with the Moon. A certain memory has been preserved of what these high beings once revealed to the peoples of a remote past, to human beings whose nature was quite different from human nature as it is today. If we succeed in fathoming this mystery, which I will call it the universe's Moon-mystery, we realize that these high beings now entrenched in the Moon-fortress were once the

great teachers of earthly humanity, but that all consciousness of the realities of spirit and soul hidden in this fortress has been lost. What is still transmitted to the Earth from the heavens represents only what the outer surface, the walls, as it were, of the Moon-fortress, what the outer surface radiates back from the rest of the universe.

This Moon-mystery was one of the deepest secrets in the ancient Mysteries, for it is primal wisdom that the Moon enshrines within itself. What the Moon is able to reflect from the whole universe forms the sum-total of the forces which sustain the animal world of the Earth now, especially the forces that are connected with the sexual nature of animals. These forces also sustain the animal element in man and are connected with his sexual nature in its physical aspect, so we see that the lower nature of man is a product of what radiates from the Moon, while the highest wisdom once possessed by the Earth lies concealed within the Moon-fortress.

In this way one gradually comes to a knowledge of the "individuality" of the Moon, to an understanding of what the Moon is in reality. All other knowledge of the Moon is only like information we could glean about a human being from a pasteboard image of him displayed in some exhibition. Such an image would tell us nothing whatever about the man's individuality. Equally it is not possible for a science that refuses any approach towards initiation to know anything about the individuality of the Moon.

We turn now to Saturn. In earlier times Saturn was regarded as the outermost planet of our system, Uranus and Neptune having been added much later. We will leave them out of consideration now and think of Saturn as a kind of antithesis to the Moon. The nature of Saturn is to receive many diverse impulses from the universe but not allow them to stream back, at all events not to the Earth. Saturn too, of course, is irradiated by the Sun, but what Saturn reflects of the solar rays has no significance for earthly life. Saturn is an entirely self-engrossed heavenly body in our planetary system, raying his own being into the universe. When we contemplate Saturn, he tells us always what he is. Whereas the Moon, contemplated in its external aspect, tells us about everything else in the universe, Saturn tells us nothing at all about the impulses he receives from the universe. He speaks only of himself, tells us only what he himself is. And just what he is, that reveals itself gradually as a kind of memory of the planetary system.

Saturn presents himself to us as the world body who has steadfastly participated in whatever has come to pass in our planetary system and has faithfully preserved it in memory, in his cosmic memory. He is silent about the cosmic-present. He receives the things of the cosmic-present into himself and works upon them in his life of spirit and soul. True, the hosts of high beings dwelling in Saturn lend their attention to the outer universe, but mutely and silently they receive the happenings in the universe into their realm of soul, and they speak only of past cosmic events. That is why Saturn is like a kaleidoscopic memory of our planetary system. He holds faithfully and silently what has already come to pass in the planetary system. He holds its secrets within himself.

In trying to fathom the mysteries of the universe we normally turn to the Moon, although normally in vain, for we must win the confidence of the Moon beings if we are to learn anything from them about cosmic mysteries, but this is not necessary with Saturn. With Saturn, all that is necessary is to be open to receive the spiritual. And then, to the eyes of spirit and soul, Saturn becomes a living historian of the planetary system. Nor does he withhold the stories he can tell of what has come to pass in the planetary system. In this respect Saturn is the exact opposite of the Moon. Saturn speaks unceasingly of the planetary system's past with such inner warmth and zest that intimate acquaintance with what he says can be dangerous, for the devotion with which he tells of past happenings in the universe arouses in us an overwhelming love for the cosmic-past. Saturn is the constant tempter of those who listen to his secrets. He tempts them to give little heed to today's

earthly affairs and to immerse themselves in what the Earth once was. Above all, Saturn speaks graphically about what the Earth was before it became Earth, and for this reason he is the planet who makes the past unendingly dear to us. Those who have a particular inclination towards Saturn in earthly existence are people who like to be gazing always into the past, who are opposed to progress, who ever-and-again want to bring back the past. These indications give some idea of the individuality, the individual character of Saturn.

Jupiter is a planet with a different character. Jupiter is the thinker in our planetary system, and thinking is the activity cultivated by all the high beings in his world-domain. Creative thoughts received from the universe radiate to us from Jupiter. Jupiter contains, in the form of thoughts, all the educational-craft of the different beings of the universe. Whereas Saturn tells of the past, Jupiter gives a living portrayal of what is congruent, what is present now in the universe. It is necessary, however, for a person to earnestly, intimately take in what he presents to the eyes of the spirit. If a person does not unfurl his own thinking, then he comes for example, how can I say it, not as a clairvoyant, then he comes upon the secret mysteries of Jupiter, which he finds reveal themselves only in thoughtforms, and only when the person himself thinks, only then he comes upon the secret mysteries of Jupiter, who is the thinker of the universe.

When a person attempts to fathom any of the significant enigmatic questions concerning the possibilities of his own being, and then comes up against human physical and etheric obstacles, and especially when he comes up against human astral obstacles, and he is on the wrong tack, then the beings of Jupiter step in and help him. The beings of Jupiter are really the helpers of human nature for the unfolding of human wisdom. And whomever has properly tried to work out in clear thinking an enigmatic question of the possibilities of his own being, and cannot come to a groundbreaking insight, if the person patiently keeps it in mind and continues to work on it, he finds that the Jupiter beings actually help him during the night. And many who have come to a better understanding of a day-riddle at night, as if out of a dream, many would have to admit, if they were really to look at the truth, that the Jupiter-powers bring spirited animated impetus into human thinking, if I may so depict it. As therefore Saturn is the guardian of memory of the universe, Jupiter is the thinker of the universe. To Jupiter the human being owes all that he really knows of the universe's present spiritual state. To Saturn the human being owes all that he has of the universe's soul-spiritual past. It was due to intuition that it was normal in ancient Greece, where people lived intimately with the presence of spirit, it was normal then to hold Jupiter in high honor.

A stimulus to the whole development of the human being is given also through the part played by Jupiter in the cycle of the year. You all know that as far as his apparent movement is concerned, Saturn moves slowly, very slowly, round his orbit, taking some 30 years. Jupiter moves faster, taking about 12 years. Because of this quicker movement Jupiter is able to bring satisfaction to man's need for wisdom more quickly. And when in a certain sense a person's destiny is expressed in the World-All, when at that very time there exists a special relationship between Jupiter and Saturn, then there may come into a person's destiny a wonderful illuminated glimpse, in which, with thinking, much will be revealed in the present concerning the past. And if we look in humanity's world-history, into the epoch of the Renaissance, where a resurgence of old impulses entered in, especially in the last phases of the Renaissance, this renewal of old impulses is associated with a specific planetary configuration between Jupiter and Saturn.

But, as already said, Jupiter is in a certain respect impenetrable and his revelations remain in the unconscious if a man does not bring to them clear and active light-filled thinking of his own. And that is why in ancient times, when active thinking was still at a very early stage of development, the progress of humanity was in truth always dependent upon the relation between Jupiter and Saturn. When Jupiter and Saturn together formed a certain planetary configuration, many things were

revealed to our ancestors in those days. Modern man is more dependent on things removed from their development, which means, Saturn-memory and Jupiter-wisdom are disconnected in a modern person's soul-spiritual development.

We now come to Mars. It is difficult to find appropriate expressions for these things, but Mars may be called the great "Talker" in the planetary system. Unlike Jupiter, who translates his wisdom in thought-forms, Mars always smothers the souls beholden to him with chatter about virtually everything accessible to him in the universe, which for him is not everything. Mars is the most talkative chatterbox planet in our system, and he is particularly active when sleeping human beings talk during dreaming. Mars has a great longing to be talking always, and whenever some quality in human nature enables him to make a man loquacious, he stimulates this tendency.

Mars does little thinking. He has few thinkers, but many talkers, in his sphere. His spirits are always on the watch for what arises here or there in the universe and then they talk about it with great zest and fervor. In humanity's evolutionary course, Mars is the planetary individuality who in manifold ways instigates human beings to make statements about world-mysteries. Mars has his good and his less-good sides; he has his genius and his daemon. His genius works in such a way that men receive from the universe the impulses for speech. The influence of his daemon results in speech being misused in many and various ways. In a certain sense Mars may be called the Agitator in our universe. He is always out to cajole whereas Jupiter wants only to convince.

The planet Venus is again different. In a certain way, I could say, Venus repels, wards off the whole universe. She is demure, prudish, aloof concerning the universe; she does not wish to know anything about the universe. She regards any submission to the universe, I might say, any external universal exposure and submission, as if it would cause her maiden purity, her virginity, to be lost. She is deeply shocked when any impression from the external universe attempts to approach her. She has no desire for the universe and rejects every dancing-partner – it is very difficult to express these things, because the circumstances and conditions have to be described in terms of earthly language –. On the other hand, Venus is highly responsive to everything that comes from the Earth. The Earth is, so to speak, her lover. Whereas the Moon reflects the whole surrounding universe, Venus reflects nothing at all of the universe, and wants to know nothing of it, but she lovingly reflects whatever comes from the Earth. If we are able to glimpse the mysteries of Venus with the eyes of soul, the whole Earth with all of her soulful secrets is there before us once again.

The truth is that human beings on Earth can do nothing in the secrecy of their souls without it being reflected back again by Venus. Venus gazes deeply into the hearts of human beings, for that is what interests her, that is what she will allow to approach her, so that the most intimate experiences of earthly life are reflected again from Venus, in a mysterious and wonderful way. In the reflection she transforms everything, just as a dream transforms the happenings of physical existence. Venus transforms the occurrences of earthly life into dream-pictures. In reality, therefore, the whole sphere of Venus is a world of dreaming. The secrets of human beings in their earthly existence are transformed by Venus into dream-pictures of infinite diversity. She has a very great deal to do with poets, although they are not aware of it.

I said before that Venus wards off the rest of the universe. She does not, however, repel everything in the same way. In her heart, Venus repels what approaches her from the universe but not what comes from the Earth. As I said before, she declines every would-be suitor, but for all that she listens attentively to the utterances of Mars. She transforms and illuminates her dreamlike experiences of earthly things with what is communicated to her from the universe through Mars.

All these things have their physical side as well. Impulses go out from these sources into what is done and into what comes into existence in the world. Venus receives into herself everything that comes from the Earth and she listens always to Mars, without wanting him to know it. And from this process, although the Sun is there in between to regulate it, spring the forces which underlie the organs connected with the formation of human speech.

If a person wants to become familiar with the impulses in the cosmos connected with the formation of human speech, then the person must turn his gaze to this noteworthy living and weaving that plays out between Venus and Mars. And when destiny happens to play out just so in how Venus stands in relationship to Mars, that there may be a tremendous significance for the development of the speech of a folk-soul group, the speech of the folk will be inwardly deepened when Venus for instance stands in quadrature, 90 degrees from Mars. On the other hand, a language tends to become superficial, poor in qualities of soul, when Venus and Mars are in conjunction, and this in turn has an influence upon the people or nation concerned. In this manner impulses are portrayed as they form in the World-All and have their effect on the folk they pertain to.

We come next to Mercury. In contrast to the other planets, Mercury is not interested in things of a physical, material nature as such, but in whatever is capable of combining, of coordinating. Mercury is the domain of the masters of combining concepts and ideas in thinking, whereas Jupiter is the habitation of the masters of wisdom-filled thinking. When a human being comes down from pre-earthly life into a contemplation of the possibilities of his existence on earth, the Moon impulse provides the forces for his physical existence, Venus provides the forces for his basic qualities of heart and temperament, but Mercury provides the impetus for his capacity of reasoning about things, of making sense of them, especially for his intellect. The high master-crafters of coordinative inner knowing have their habitation in Mercury.

There is a remarkable connection between these planets and the life and being of a human being. The Moon, which enshrines beings living in strict seclusion, and reflects only what is first radiated to it from the universe, builds and fashions the outer form, the body of man. It is therefore by the Moon that the forces of heredity are incorporated in bodily constitution. Within the Moon sit those high spiritual beings, who in complete seclusion cosmically muse upon what is fostered and transmitted in the stream of heredity flowing from generation to generation by way of the physical.

It is because the Moon beings remain so firmly entrenched in their fortress that modern scientists know nothing essential about heredity. From a deeper insight, and in terms of cosmic language, at the present time when heredity is discussed in one or another forum of science, these forums may be said to be "Moon-forsaken" and "Mars-bewitched". For science speaks under the influence of the daemonic Mars-forces and has not even begun to approach the real mysteries of heredity.

Venus and Mercury, on the other hand, bring into the human being the karmic element that is connected more with the life of soul and spirit and comes to expression in his qualities of heart and in his temperament. And then Mars, and especially Jupiter and Saturn, when a man has a right relationship with them, act as liberating factors. They wrest man away from what is determined by destiny and make him into a free being. Biblical words in a somewhat changed form might be used as follows. Saturn, the faithful custodian of cosmic memory, says, "Let us make man free in the realm of his own memory". This influence of Saturn is forced into unconsciousness as a human being's memory becomes his own possession, as he thereby acquires the sure foundation of his personal freedom. The inner will-impulse contained in acts of free thinking, however, is due to grace bestowed by Jupiter. It would be in Jupiter's power to rule over and control all the thoughts of men. He is the one in whom we find the thoughts of the whole universe if we are capable of gaining access to them. But Jupiter too has withdrawn, leaving men to think as free beings.

The element of freedom in speech is due to the fact that Mars too has been gracious. Because Mars was obliged as it were to acquiesce in the resolution made by the other outer planets and could not exercise any greater coercion, man is free, in a certain respect, in the realm of speech too, not entirely, but in a certain respect free. From another point of view therefore, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn may also be called the liberating planets, for they give man freedom. On the other hand, Venus, Mercury and the Moon may be called the destiny-determining planets.

In the midst of all these deeds and impulses of the planetary individualities stands the Sun, creating harmony between the liberating and the destiny-determining planets. The Sun is the individuality in whom the elements of destiny-necessity and human freedom interweave in a most wonderful way. And no-one can understand what is contained in the flaming brilliance of the Sun unless he is able to behold this interweaving life of destiny and freedom in the light which spreads out into the universe and concentrates again in solar warmth.

Nor can we grasp anything essential about the nature of the Sun as long as we take in only what the physicists know of it. We can grasp the nature of the Sun only when we know something of its nature of soul and spirit. In that realm, it is the power which imbues warmth in the element of necessity in destiny, which transmutes destiny into freedom in its flame, and if freedom is misused, which condenses it once more into its own active substance. The Sun is, as it were, is the flame in which freedom becomes a luminous reality in the World-All, and at the same time the Sun is the substance, as condensed ashes, in which misused freedom is molded into destiny, until destiny itself can become luminous and pass over into the flame of freedom.

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