Isis Sophia III – Our Relationship With the Stars
By Willi O. Sucher

(Copyright Astrophy Research Center, Inc. 2003)
The diagrams are not included.

CONTENTS

Part One
Chapter I Reflection and Deflection of Historic Events in the Cosmos
II Our Relationship to the Stars in the Moment of Death
III The Interpretation of the Asterogram of Death
IV Where do we stand?

Part Two
Chapter I The Impact of the Cosmos on the Earth
   Astronomical Studies
II Ideas about Embryology and the Stars
III Physiological Deformities and the Stars
IV Cosmic and Physiological Foundations of Soul Life
   Conclusion
   Table for Conversion of Signs into Constellations

Part Three
Chapter I Cosmology and Embryology
II The Zodiac and the Embryonic Development
   The Constellation of Ram
   The Constellation of Bull
   The Constellation of Twins
   The Constellation of Crab
   The Constellation of Lion
   The Constellation of Virgin
   The Constellation of Scales
   The Constellation of Scorpion
   The Constellation of Archer
   The Constellation of Goat
   The Constellation of Waterman
   The Constellation of Fishes
   Conclusion

PART TWO

Chapter I
The Impact of the Cosmos on the Earth

Some time ago an article appeared in Electrical Engineering (May 1952) that described the researches of a few scientists in the U.S. The investigators were mainly occupied with the effects of planetary interrelationships on radio signal behavior. Although the chosen field of research has a limited character, the results are rather revealing with regard to the interconnection between the planetary world and the Earth.

It has long been known that the sunspot cycles are connected with transatlantic short-wave signal variations, and that radio storms are to be expected at times of sunspot maximums. Systematic investigations revealed, however, that these sunspot cycles could be made responsible for radio signal disturbances only to a certain extent. The suggestion was that cosmic phenomena other than sunspots must be studied. Thus, the heliocentric angular relationships of the planets were observed over a long period of time in connection with day-to-day radio signal analysis, and very
satisfactory and encouraging results were obtained. (The forecasting of radio signal disturbances was, on an average, close to 85% accurate.)

Heliocentric angular relationship of the planets is the position of two or more planets in the legs of an angle that has its apex in the place of the Sun. If we could transfer our standpoint from the Earth to the Sun, we would observe the planets in directions somewhat different from those in which we observe them from the Earth. Nevertheless, we should see the various planets at certain times standing in the directions of the legs of definite angles. Two or more planets can take up such positions according to their rhythms of revolution. According to classical astrology, these relative positions are the equivalents of the so-called aspects; but in the case of the researches, which have been mentioned, they are calculated from the place of the Sun in the cosmos.

Thus, angles of 0°, 90°, 180°, and 270° were used, and the times when two or more planets formed such angles were checked against the radio signal analysis. In this way, the satisfactory results were obtained.

As we said above, this kind of research covers only a very limited part of the field of the interrelationship between the cosmos and the Earth. Other experiments have been made over years, and the results are highly convincing with regard to the affinity of earthly forces and substances to cosmic events. However, it seems rather difficult sometimes for modern humanity to assess properly the field of cosmic influences on the Earth and its limits. Here is the point where a close cooperation between natural science and spiritual science is needed in order to find the demarcation line between the sphere of necessity, based on cosmic influences, and the realm of spiritual freedom, for instance, in the human being.

So far, the above experiments, and others, have clearly shown that there exists a close affinity of terrestrial forces and substances to events in the cosmic world. The living organisms on the Earth must also necessarily be involved in this relationship, since they partake through their organism in the properties of the Earth planet. In so far as the bodily constitution of a living organism is essential for the development of some kind of consciousness, the cosmic impacts must also be noticeable in the realm of soul-emotions, etc. However, this does not imply that the soul life of a living being is entirely subject to cosmic influences. Here we must distinguish between the instrument, the organism that is permeated by the cosmic impacts and the character of the being that uses the instrument. We must acknowledge the possibility of a degree of independence within the conscious being.

To study these problems of obviously complicated interrelationships, and to aim at practical, helpful, and therapeutic conclusions, is the task of a modern star wisdom.


Astronomical Studies

The experiments, previously mentioned, suggest that the whole organism of the solar system must be studied in order to gain an insight into the interrelationship. What appears as a phenomenon in one part is related to and caused by events in other parts. For instance, the study of the sunspots alone did not suffice to come to clear conclusions concerning certain disturbances. The planets as well, and very probably other still unknown factors, have to be taken into consideration.

All this suggests that we must have a sound and extensive knowledge of astronomical facts if we embark on any kind of cosmological research. This knowledge is not easily obtained in our age. Generally speaking, it is advisable to study the great pioneers of astronomical science during the last few centuries, although the data of their researches are sometimes not up to date and partly even incorrect. However, a combination of study of classical astronomers together with modern books on astronomy should make up for this deficiency. Modern popular books on astronomy are inclined to impress the reader by the unimaginable vastness of the universe in which we live, whereby the sense for the cosmos as an integrated organism is easily lost. In the end, the readers are usually left with the idea that they are a totally insignificant part within that gigantic cosmic machine of modern astronomical conception.

Besides these more general indications, there exist a number of introductions to astronomy that try to build a bridge between natural and spiritual science. The works of various authors on this subject are available, and personal advice concerning the study of astronomy on this foundation can be given.

Observation and contemplation are the two pillars on which the genuine cosmologist must build his or her house. Very often one of the two principal foundations is neglected. Sometimes it happens that a person knows a good deal about the supposed influences of the stars on human destiny and historic events, but may never have observed a star nor acquired a proper astronomical knowledge. It is comparatively easy to learn about the day-to-day positions of the stars and planets by using astronomical ephemerides, which are published in great numbers and varieties today. One does not even need to know how the planets move in cosmic space. This may suffice as long as
we cling, in a sense, blindly to traditional rules. For a conscientious research, more is required than only the data given in the usual ephemeris. Thus, for instance, the angular positions of the planets from the standpoint of the Sun, which were mentioned in connection with the experiments of a number of American scientists, can only be calculated on the basis of a sound and modern conception of the universe. This basis is needed in order to consciously meet the unexpected in the relationship between the Earth and the cosmos. The knowledge that is contained in traditional astrology has come down to us from an age when humanity was still able to comprehend the laws of motion and rhythm in the universe by a powerful instinct. Modern humanity has lost this instinct almost entirely, though we may have gained the power of observation and thinking. If we do not want to swim, more or less helplessly, in a sea of traditional rules derived from an instinct to which we no longer have access, we must learn to use the newly acquired capacities: observation and thinking. Otherwise, we may expose ourselves to uncontrollable errors and misconceptions.

There is, of course, the other possibility that the modern cosmologist rejects the practice of contemplation. We may then find ourselves staring at a cosmos that we do not understand and that confronts us in every new discovery with an increasing barrier of unanswerable and haunting questions. In both directions we may lose, in a sense, the perception of a living universe with which we are vitally connected.

How can we combine observation and contemplation in any modern sense to the end that we may find a true spiritual understanding of the intricate connection between the stars and ourselves? There are several ways of achieving this. One is to observe the day-to-day positions of the planets in the ecliptic and learn to imagine these positions in the course of the day, even if the planets cannot be seen because of the bright light of the Sun. This can be done by practicing with one of the circular star maps that can be adjusted to any time of the day. The daily positions of the planets, the Sun, and the Moon can be found in the available ephemerides, which are usually calculated on the basis of the Nautical Almanac. These positions can then be transferred to the circular and adjustable star maps, and the directions in which to find the planets can thus be ascertained at any given time. (A very suitable map has been published by J. Schultz at the Goetheanum, Dornach, Switzerland)

So far, this is essentially a matter of observation. To this must be added exercises of contemplation; for instance, we may find the position of Mercury on May 1, 1953, given in the astronomical ephemeris, as being in 19° of the ecliptic sign of ΨAries. This corresponds to the fixed star constellation of Fishes. Therefore, Mercury is in the constellation of Fishes in that moment. (About conversion of “signs” into “constellations” see table at end of this section.)

We can now ask: How did Mercury reach that position? Where did it come from, and what is its aim? We can again make use of the ephemeris, and we will find that it was retrograde during March 1953. It performed a loop, which means that it was in inferior conjunction with the Sun during that period. This took place on 18 March in 28° of the sign of ᾱPisces, corresponding also to the constellation of Fishes. The planet was then standing in one line between the Sun and the Earth. Furthermore, we will find that Mercury will be in superior conjunction to the Sun on 24 May in 4° of the sign of ιTaurus, corresponding to the constellation of Ram. From there it will move into another loop in the signs of ζLeo and ΣCancer in July/August 1953. The inferior conjunction in the course of this loop will take place on 25 July in 3° of the sign of ῳ, corresponding to the constellation of Crab.

Thus we have achieved, in a certain sense, the biographical background of that position of Mercury on May 1, 1953. We can extend this over a whole year, or even longer periods. We shall thus discover the rhythmic laws, according to which Mercury moves through cosmic space in relation to Sun and Earth. We combine, in this way, the mere visual or observational aspect of Mercury at a given time with its rhythmic background. We know its derivations from the past and its aims in the future, which must be inherent in any momentary position. This can tell us a great deal about the nature and implications of the planet.

Such a study of the rhythms of the planets, over shorter or longer periods, can become very fruitful and can enable the student to form a background of personal experience, for instance, in connection with history. It is an advance from the mere observational picture that should be carried through with all possible clarity of thought, to the language of the planets.

This is a very illuminating study, especially in connection with the rhythms of the superior planets Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. For instance, amazing facts can be gathered by contemplating the rhythms of Mars. Its loops (oppositions to the Sun and conjunctions with the Sun) advance rhythmically through the ecliptic and return to their approximate initial positions after a period of roughly sixteen years. It is very instructive to study the eight loops and conjunctions of Mars during such a cycle in connection with historic events.

There is also another way by which a combination of observation and contemplation can be achieved. If we observe the stars, we quite naturally look up from our standpoint into the sky. We then discover that in order to observe the Sun during daytime and the planets and the Moon during the night, we have to turn mainly toward the
South. We may have to turn on certain occasions toward east or west, but we shall certainly not find any planets in the north. If we look toward the south, we notice that the east—where the Sun, the Moon, and the planets are rising—is to our left, whereas the west—the direction in which the celestial bodies are setting, with certain variations according to the seasons—is to our right.

This position is the only one possible, as far as observation is concerned. If we try to advance from observation to an understanding of the stars, we must change our position. Usually we do this unconsciously as soon as we begin to think about the cosmos. We then turn away from the external world and try to sort out our experiences in the realm of inner conception. Mostly, we are not conscious of this procedure as it happens in an uncontrolled way, and this is one of the reasons why “thinking about the stars” has become so unprofitable.

We can accompany the changeover from observation to contemplation with full consciousness. A great help in this direction is a conscious inner change of our position. For observation we must take up a central position. From the point of our eye, we reach out into cosmic space along the line of our focus. If we now imagine that we turn away from our central position and expand our being to the whole periphery, looking from the periphery down to the Earth, we will not see the stars anymore but have them “in our mind”. Of course, we should then also carry the data about the stars in our mind that we acquired by observation; but the direct visual perception would be eliminated for a certain time. If we try to practice such an attitude, we realize at once that it cannot be easily attained. Through our body, which is bound to the Earth by gravity, we are obliged to maintain a central position. Persistent exercise, however, will make it possible—at least for fractions of time—to achieve a peripheral attitude.

Through such a conscious act, the changing over from observation to contemplation can at least be facilitated. The more we succeed in extending our own being in this fashion to the whole cosmos, the more the world of the stars can speak to us. In order to rise to higher planes of perception, we must be prepared to bring sacrifices on lower levels of experience. We silence or eliminate for a time, in this case, the experiences that we have through the senses and can, thereby, advance to a much more comprehensive inner perception. The main condition is that we perform such an exercise in full consciousness. Any dim or dreamy condition of inner awareness would lead nowhere or could even have disastrous consequences.

It must be emphasized that any such external alteration of our position toward the stars can only give us a beginning. An essential and fundamental condition is a well-disciplined and rhythmic life in contemplation and meditation. This must become like our second being, our constant companion and self-chosen tutor. Only then can we expect to find the spiritual meaning of the world surrounding us and even advance to the higher worlds of the spirit itself. It should not be necessary to emphasize that this need is paramount, if we desire to learn to understand the language of the stars.

Contemplation and meditation have been practiced by a humanity that was eager to listen to the spiritual world, since the most ancient times. The existing literature of Eastern civilizations is full of proof. [Through the ages], the methods have changed, together with the change of consciousness in humanity. The development of consciousness works much deeper into the human organization than we may expect from a superficial viewpoint. Thus, Western civilization with its emphasis on modern technology, traffic, general external life-standards, etc., has hardened the body to such a degree that ancient methods of approach to the spiritual world can no longer be employed. Wherever they are employed, under such conditions, they are apt to bring disaster to the integrity of the Western human organization.

From our own experiences over many years, we can say that methods of inner discipline in contemplation and meditation, as they are described in the many books of Rudolf Steiner, are most effective and sound, especially for Western humanity. They take their start from no other foundation than the one that modern humanity has achieved in the course of the development of its consciousness, which is clear and well-controlled observation and thinking.

If such exercises as those suggested by Rudolf Steiner have become something like a second nature, then we can also attempt, at a certain stage, to launch out to a higher understanding of the world of the stars and its interrelationship with the Earth and with ourselves. Even in this direction Rudolf Steiner can give advice. However, we should not underestimate the difficulties of such a path. Penetrating to the mysteries of the cosmic world and to its reflections in the microcosmic universe, really means to ascend to the highest planes of spiritual consciousness that a human being can attain at present. Star wisdom of this kind was called the Royal Wisdom in ancient times and was entered only after many years of profound schooling. We cannot expect that the equivalent star wisdom of modern times can be attained any more easily.

One of the gravest dangers of the cosmologist, in the sense of spiritual science, is that he or she gets submerged in calculation; all the more so as modern science tends to move away from scientific materialism and enter an age of philosophic mathematism—“The old materialism is dead”, exclaims a modern scientist. Matter has been dissolved, as it were, in the course of development of modern physics, into very complicated mathematical equations. It is not
our task here to go deeper into this, but if cosmologists fall into the trap of mere calculation, they may kill their sense for the tremendous flexibility in the cosmos. We have been accustomed to modern science’s concept of the universe of the stars as a stupendously gigantic machine, whose movements and rhythms can be calculated down to the smallest detail. The genuine occultists, however, know only too well that this is not correct with regard to spiritual aspects, and they can even prove it. In the midst of the vast, computable universe, there are still inexhaustible possibilities for the spiritual world when it manifests itself in a human individuality.

Calculation must be used, but it must not become a barrier for the creative employment of the faculties of Imagination, Inspiration, and Intuition—capacities that can be attained by the spiritual exercises indicated by Rudolf Steiner, the founder of Anthroposophy. The results of calculation should rather be used as pointers to higher insight. One who has many years of practice in these matters knows that the accuracy of cosmological research is not inhibited by such methods, but that it is enhanced.

Another danger for the scholar of occult cosmology is the inclination to look up to the stars in an attitude of expectancy, which will lead sooner or later into disappointment. One thing must be realized; just as the human race goes through stages of development, so the universe—the world of the stars—moves through certain stages of evolution. Once in the dim past, people experienced the direct language of the stars, and they were guided by what was speaking to them. Documents that have been dug up in Mesopotamia reveal that such incidents still happened in the days when the ancient civilizations flourished in that part of Asia. However, the situation has gradually changed in our present age. The stars have become silent, and we must search for new means of approach to our relationship with the Earth and with the cosmos.

The direction is indicated by those great events in Palestine at the beginning of our era. At that time Christ, the Spirit of the Cosmos, united with the Earth for the sake of the further continuity of evolution. In a spiritual sense, the Earth became the focus of the universe and its meaning; the working of the stars can only be properly comprehended through this new, Christ-permeated focus. The forces coming from the stars are still flowing into the Earth, and they are also penetrating the organization of each of us. Yet, they could produce no more than an eternal repetition of similitudes. The wheel of cosmic creation would become a kind of eternal death, if it were not renewed by the spiritual potentiality of the Earth. Spiritual progress can only be infused into the cosmos through virtues of real moral imagination, and these are the garments of Christ on the Earth.

Hence, we must learn to read the script of the stars through the medium of the Earth. We are urged once more to take up such an attitude as has been indicated before: to try to expand ourselves spiritually to the periphery, to feel the stars within ourselves, and to look down from the periphery to the Earth. In the mirror of the Earth, the place of those high aspirations of spiritual love and freedom—the very center of the Christ impulse, we can behold the stars anew, and they can become building stones of a new creation. The stars can become spiritually audible in a new fashion and can inspire our life on the Earth in hitherto unknown ways.

All this may appear rather vague, perhaps even presumptuous; however, only the practicing of the described methods and the personal experience obtained can provide the genuine proof and lead to conviction. The transformation of cosmic forces through the Earth and their reflection into space surrounding the Earth is a reality that will break into the modern consciousness more and more. What is necessary is that these forces are recognized with the clarity of consciousness that we have attained in the practical fields of our everyday life. Then they can become a magnificent source of inspiration and healing.