

The Sacred Signs of the Zodiac—Part 2

LEO MARKS the fifth milepost on the journey through matter, and the first descent of the Divine Spark into the world of form. This sign signifies a period of involution on the astral plane wherein strong desire works in the lower nature through passion, instinct, appetite, and animal affection. It is the period of the involutory development of the astral nature of the soul. In the Rosicrucian terminology Leo corresponds to the region known as the Higher Desire World, or First Heaven. Leo symbolizes the burning heart of the Father; it is also the heart of our solar system, the heart of man, etc. It is the dynamo, the eternal pumping station of man, and of the universe. Leo, the lion, is a symbol of power in manifestation and of might, strength, and courage, as forces of the lower quaternary. Leo, the sun, is king of all that it surveys; Leo, the lion, is king of the beasts in a purely literal sense as well as the beasts symbolizing the lower desires and emotions of man. It is possible for a symbol to mean two entirely different and opposing things. Leo, therefore, may symbolize the evil spirit stalking as a lion to devour its prey, or it may signify the all-conquering Christ, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah.

The lion has magnanimity and it also has ferocity. In its magnanimity it represents the great Christ Spirit; in its ferocity it signifies the bestial nature, or the devil. "Behold the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the root of David hath prevailed" (Rev. 5:5). Leo is a symbol of the Son of God manifesting in matter. It is the second of the fire signs representing Spirit (the Father). The great spiritual



Central figure after a Pompeian Wall-painting of Dionysus, from *The Restored New Testament*, by James Morgan Pryse, 1914, New York.

The Enthroned Sun-God and His Twelve Powers

A highly anthropomorphized Dionysus, pagan precursor of the solar Christ, is shown bearing thyrsus and krater and manifesting through the twelve force-fields of the Zodiac, represented by both their traditional symbols and the corresponding Greek/Roman god. Zeus/Jupiter personifies Leo and Demeter/Ceres is associated with the winged figure of Virgo.

Intelligences, or Hierarchies, ruling over the sign Leo are the Lords of Flame. Max Heindel informs us that the first three creative Hierarchies, the Seraphim, Cherubim, and Lords of Flame, have also withdrawn from this sphere of activity, leaving seven actually working with humanity at the present time.

VIRGO is a symbol of the sixth stage of the wheel of life. This sign signifies the completion of

the process of involution resulting in the one perfect matrix of matter fully permeated and informed by spirit and ready to bring forth the qualities of the Christ in the many souls during the coming six phases of evolution. Virgo is symbolic of the Virgin Mary, who represents this matrix of matter in which manifestation takes place. Matter is the feminine receptive principle over which the fiery Spirit (Leo) elevates itself, and what is born of this union is spirit and matter in one, Libra, spirit and matter in equilibrium. This is the secret of the immaculate conception. The man Jesus (Libra) was born from the union of Joseph (Leo) and Mary (Virgo). Mary the virgin also signifies the purified lower nature which has become fit to give birth to the Christ child within each and every soul.

The immaculate conception can and will become an actual experience with each of us when the lower nature becomes sufficiently purified to permit the Higher Self to take command. The sign Virgo signifies the descent of the Ego into the lower region of the Desire World and it is on this plane that the veil of matter corresponding to the desire body is completed. It is Virgo, the celestial virgin, who brings forth, as Mother Matter (*mater*), all things during evolution. Virgo, the sixth sign, signifies the completion of a period of activity which is involution. It is the six days of creation related in Genesis. Symbolism of Virgo includes the wheat ear, which is the Bread of Life, to be gained only through immaculate purity. Christ fed the multitude on loaves (Virgo), and fishes (Pisces). The Lords of Wisdom are the guardians of the constellation Virgo, the highest group of spiritual Being now active in the cosmic drama of life. The number six signifies accomplishment of growth or purpose; it is the number which limits and serves to usher in the seventh creative period,

that of balance.

LIBRA is the seventh guidepost on the journey of the Spirit through matter. This sign is ruled over by the Lords of Individuality. Seven is the perfect number and signifies the consummation of the involutionary arc. It is the beginning and the ending of a cycle. "In six days the Lord made heaven and earth and rested on the seventh." In Libra the balance of spirit and matter is reached, equilibrium between involution and evolution. This is the middle line of the circle on which spirit and matter are equilibrated in man.

Libra marks the time in human development when the individual Spirit incarnated in and took complete charge of the body, or physical form, thereby truly becoming man. It is what distinguishes the human from the animal, each human form having its own indwelling spirit, in contrast to the group

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spirit ruling an entire species of animals. The Ego was born in man at the autumnal equinox, when the sun entered the sign Libra. Born in a stable amongst the animals of the lower desires and emotions, this Divine Spark was destined to conquer the beasts of the lower nature, and when the sun progresses to Capricorn at the winter solstice, the Christ Child is born and is in complete command of the animalistic nature. Hear the prophecy of Isaiah (2:6): "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a Little Child shall lead them."

Jesus (Son of Man) born in Libra, is symbolic of the Higher Self, or Ego, born in the human form, but imperfectly manifest until redemption is accomplished and it is permanently emancipated from its lower nature. This stage marks the beginning of the New Testament in which is told the story of Christ Jesus. Two thousand years ago the

pioneers of the human life wave reached the nadir of materiality and it was then that the Son of Man was born to be the light and salvation of all men, to lead them through the succeeding stages of evolution until the Christ Child be born within all humanity in the Capricorn period.

The Old Testament is chiefly a story concerning the involutory arc and only when the sign Libra is reached does the New Testament begin with the story of the birth and evolution of Jesus (man). Libra (autumnal equinox) signifies the birth of spirit in matter (earth); Capricorn signifies the birth of the Christ Child; and Aries symbolizes the final crucifixion and resurrection, or complete liberation from matter, at the vernal equinox. The symbology of Libra is the setting of the physical sun, as it were, and the rising of the spiritual. The story of Jesus prefigures the story of individual mankind. What He accomplished is the task that lies before each one of us. The celestial man is nothing but a beautiful possibility as long as he is not tested. Innocence cannot be virtue, nor simplicity merit. Man is only that which he has conquered. He is therefore led into the wilderness to be tried and tempted.

SCORPIO is the eighth period of the cycle of life. The number eight signifies the entrance into a new stage or condition of manifestation. This stage is one in which the desire nature is predominant. It represents the lower Desire World, or the region of purgatory on the evolutionary arc, just as Virgo is symbolical of this same region on the involutory arc. Scorpio signifies the mental, emotional, procreative function; this is the multiplying function which gives us to rebirth, and so Scorpio becomes the sign of the “fall into generation” on the physical plane. This is the stage or period in which humanity is now working. It is the sign of form, the Lords of Form being the Hierarchies or Great Intelligences in charge of this special period. The human form is destined to reach perfection during this stage.

Scorpio is symbolical of the wilderness into which man is led to be tempted of the Devil (the Lucifer Spirits who dwell on the planet Mars, ruler of Scorpio). These Martian Spirits are the source of the lower desires and animalistic passions.



From *Miroir de l'humaine salvation*, MS 139, folio 14v. Musée Condé, Chantilly

The Temptation of Christ

The three instances of Christ's temptation described in the Gospels are depicted in this medieval picture. Scorpio energies are the zodiacal focus of degeneration, death and regeneration.

Scorpio symbolizes the organs of generation in activity, in contrast to the symbolism of Virgo (virginity). This is an age, or stage, of sex and the object lesson to be learned here is sex control (not birth control). The lower side of Scorpio is symbolized by the Scorpion, or worm of the dust. When man has wallowed in the muck and mire of animal appetites until he is ready to surrender all, then the real Self within speaks and begins to lead him out of this sphere of temptation. Then the symbol of Scorpio becomes the eagle, who soars above the lower desires and emotions.

Scorpio, the tempter, is called the sign of death as well as of life; for he who falls for temptation goes down in the law of “dust unto dust.” But he who overcomes looks to the sign of the new life. Like the serpent, stripping its skin, he appears as newly born. He who is victorious in Scorpio begins to fight with his own higher nature and desire.

The next sign, SAGITTARIUS, symbolizes the effort of man to rise above the lower animalistic nature. The Higher Self, seated on the horse (intelligence) destroys, with the arrow of the Spirit, the lower

qualities, thus enabling the lower consciousness to rise to the higher mind. Sagittarius, half horse, half man, signifies the change of consciousness from the lower desires to that of the higher mind. It is the stage, or department of life, in which the lower mind is perfected through evolution and therefore "dies." The group of Hierarchies in charge of this constellation are the Lords of Mind, of which the Father is the highest Initiate. It is the ninth period of the cycle of life. Sagittarius corresponds to the First Heaven, or the higher region of the Desire World on the evolutionary arc, just as the sign Leo signified the same region on the involutory arc.

CAPRICORN is the tenth guide post on the path of the neophyte. What he saw in Sagittarius with the eye of the Spirit, he must now try to reach with the foot of action. He must use all the will power and energy at his command to reach that goal. It is the story of the three wise men who, seeing the star in the East, followed it to the place of the birth of the Christ Child. Capricorn, the goat, climbs the mountain, higher and higher, more and more difficult, ever lonelier; it is the man who must seek to realize the vision he has seen. This sign symbolizes the higher mind which is attained by the Ego climbing the mount of aspiration, and by transmutation of the lower mind. The Indian Capricorn is an elephant arising from water; it is the higher mental nature (elephant) arising from the lower nature; the higher mind born of the astro-mental nature (lower waters). When the lower nature is perfected the higher mind is born into the consciousness.

On the evolutionary arc CAPRICORN corresponds to the region of Concrete Thought where the souls of humanity ascend from the lower nature and put on immortality. It is the gateway through which souls ascend and are born into the spiritual planes, in contrast to the opposite sign Cancer, which is the gateway to the material world. Capricorn represents the top of the mountain, the spiritual heights to which the aspirant has climbed. It is the sign of the birth of the Christ Child. All world Saviors have been born when the Sun was in Capricorn, at the winter solstice, because it is then that the rays of the physical sun are at their lowest

ebb and the spiritual rays are at their flood. This sign marks the time when the Great Christ Spirit was born within the man Jesus and it was the beginning of His three years of ministry, because the last three signs of the zodiac (Capricorn, Aquarius, and Pisces) are the signs of service. The Great Spiritual Intelligences who rule over the sign Capricorn are the Archangels, of which the Christ is the highest Initiate. When the Sun by precession has passed through this sign, the majority, or at least the pioneers, of humanity will have the great Christ Spirit born within themselves. Then we shall know Him because we shall be like Him.

AQUARIUS, the eleventh stage on the journey through life is the sign of the Initiate. But he who has scaled the mountain top of spirituality dares not remain estranged from humanity and the world. He who keeps the treasures of the Spirit to himself breaks the law. Therefore, in the sign Aquarius is the symbol of the Waterbearer, the man who pauses and falls on his knees to pour out the pitcher full of living water (spirit) into the valley below. It is here that the Christ delivered His Sermon on the Mount, the mount signifying the spiritual heights to which He had attained, and also the mount of the higher (divine) mind.

Aquarius symbolizes the highest vehicle of the Spirit as the container of Truth (water), which issues from the fountain of the divine reality. It signifies the regenerated and perfected man who may now re-enter the gates of Paradise which are unlocked by the key of purity. Aquarius is the Sign of the streams of living water flowing from His most inward part. In this light do we understand the vision of St. John in Revelation 22:1: "And he showed me a pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."

Aquarius symbolizes the arterial and venous systems of blood circulating throughout the human anatomy, which are the source of physical life. This sign is also symbolic of the white serpent of evolution elevated over the black serpent of involution, signifying the victory of spirit over matter. Aquarius corresponds to the region of Abstract Thought on the evolutionary arc, in contrast to the sign Gemini on the involutory arc. The Angels

are associated with the constellation Aquarius and their highest initiate is Jehovah.

PISCES is the twelfth period of the cycle of life and is the final stage of evolution in this great circle of manifestation. This plane corresponds to the World of Life Spirit on the evolutionary arc just as we saw that Taurus signified this region on the downward journey. Our own human life wave is helping to direct the activities of this period so that we too shall evolve into spiritual intelligences and constitute a creative hierarchy in the true sense.

The symbol of Pisces is the two fishes, the personality and the individuality, and at the close of the cycle, the lower self (Jesus) becomes one with the Higher Self (Christ), or the redeemed souls become one with the Redeemer. The fish symbol was used in early Christianity; on catacomb lamps are two fishes, one swallowing the other. The keyword of Pisces is complete renunciation; love and deep compassion characterize the nature of the candidate in this sign. Two souls (fishes) have finished their journey and are swimming out of the mouth of that pure river of the water of life, bound together by a cord of pure love, returning to the Ocean of Spirit to become united again with Divinity.

The crucifixion in matter is complete, the ram has now become the Lamb, meek and lowly. Returning to the sign Aries at the vernal equinox, the ego achieves final resurrection, or the complete liberation from matter.

This is the story of Milton's *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*. It is the story of each and all of us, the journey of the human life wave around the Circle of Existence. The Prodigal Son now returns to his Father's mansion where he is eagerly awaited by gloriously illumined hosts of heaven and receives the greeting so beautifully expressed by the Brother of the Third Degree, "All hail our new



From *Die Bibel in Bildern*, Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld (1789-1853)

David, the Psalmist—Adoration

The Old Testament practice of sacrificing lambs was supplanted by the cosmic sacrifice of the Lamb of God. David is inspired by the God of the Ten Commandments to praise His justice and mercy. A scribe records the the song of thanksgiving.

born brother.”

We would like to leave with the reader the thought and assurance that no matter how deep we may descend in this dimension of materiality and crystallization, if we will but call on the Spirit within, Who has ever been the guiding light on our cyclic journey, He will gladly respond to our summons and lead us onward and upward to the shores of supernal light.

A passage in the Rosicrucian Temple Service states that “the Bible has been given to the Western World by the Recording Angels; and if we seek the light we shall find it there.” Here is an upbeaming ray of light from King David’s Psalms (chapter 40:1-3): “I waited patiently for the Lord; and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my route. And He hath put a new song in my mouth; even praise unto our God: many shall see it and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.” □

—C.R. Bryan