



TRADITIONAL MARTINIST ORDER

ORATORY SECTION

SECOND DEGREE



LESSON SEVENTEEN

"It is not the head which is necessary to advance in Truth; it is the heart."



SECOND DEGREE

LESSON SEVENTEEN

CONCURRENCE

This planet, of all others, in its symbolical aspect, was the object of divine honors in the eyes of the ancient world. Mars seems to have been the most sincerely worshipped, of all the gods, by our northern ancestors. The greatest glory, in their times, was enjoyed by the greatest warrior. Hence Mars, in his universal character, represented the god of war. He was also symbolized as Vulcan, the celestial blacksmith, who forged the thunderbolts of Jove. This indicates the rule of Mars over iron, steel, fire, and edged tools.

Kabbalistically, the planet Mars signifies the instinct for food within the grand human and therefore represents the sense of taste in the human constitution. We have a direct reference to the expression of these martial forces in reference to the physical sensations in the New Testament, i.e., "eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die." Upon the esoteric planisphere, Mars becomes transformed into the angel Samael (Zamael), wherein are shown the highest attributes of this spirit. As such, it represents the power and ability to appreciate the higher, finer, and more ethereal essences of the life wave, and therefore to have domination over the powers of absorption and assimilation.

Upon the Intellectual Plane, Mars represents the spirit of enterprise, energy and courage. Without the spice of this orb we would be shiftless and weak cowards. Those dominated by the Martial influx are mechanical in the highest degree; and possess an unconquerable, untiring energy, and potent will.

*Initiation into Astrology
Papus (1865-1916)*



SECOND DEGREE

LESSON SEVENTEEN

CELESTIAL SYMBOLOGY: MARS

Dear Initiate,

I greet you before the Luminaries of the Traditional Martinist Order!

Today we are going to continue our study of celestial symbology, and consider Mars, the fourth planet of the Septenary of the Ancients.

As you can see by examining the diagram in the Practical Application of this monograph, Mars is traditionally symbolized by a circle attached to a tilted arrow that is oriented upward. These two symbols united indicate that this planet conveys a powerful energy that is only waiting to shine forth and to manifest. You will also note that this glyph is the universal representation of the masculine and the male gender. It is complementary to Venus.

To understand the place that Mars occupies on the Divine Plane, particularly through mythology, we should first indicate that its distance from the Earth is quite variable. Every 15 years, it passes from about 400 million kilometers (248.6 million miles) to nearly 57 million kilometers (35.4 million miles). At the moment when it is the closest to our planet, its luminosity is at a maximum and it appears as red in color. This is one of the reasons why Mars frightened the Ancients. This feeling of fear was even greater since its proximity to the terrestrial globe seemed to be accompanied by terrifying events, notably natural cataclysms, such as inundations, tidal waves, and earthquakes, etc.

The god Ares personified the planet Mars for the Greeks. According to mythology, Hera, the legitimate spouse of Zeus, conceived Ares when she smelled the flower of immortality in the Garden of Flora. At the same time, the king of the gods was completing the conception of Athena in his own head, daughter of his union with Metis. Zeus and Hera therefore gave birth, each on their own, to two divinities associated with war, yet opposed by nature. Athena displayed wisdom and was armed with a shield that was adorned with the head of Medusa. Ares, violent and vindictive, was armed with a spear, an instrument of death, and a torch, a symbol of the destructive fire. Ares had two servants whose names speak for themselves: Deimos (Dread) and Phobos (Panic). Further, he was often accompanied by Eris (Discord), Enyo (Destructor), and the Keres, divinities who were eager to drink the blood of the dying.



SECOND DEGREE

LESSON SEVENTEEN

Generally, we can say that in myths where violence, life-death opposition, fire and destruction caused by blindness or passion dominate, we can see the allegorical presence of Ares. We find these traits in Roman mythology under the name of Mars. In *The Iliad*, the famous epic created by Homer, these attributes are most characteristically personified in Ajax, who was furious in combat, totally lacking discernment to the point of indifferently killing his friends and his enemies, and leading his own troops to their doom. The destructive nature of this god also appeared throughout Indo-European antiquity, notably in the Nordic symbolism of the god of war: Thor. Further, Mars is closely linked with the history of Rome, because Roman mythology makes Mars the father of Romulus, and because the Roman people excelled in conquest.

In Kabbalah, the planet Mars corresponds to the sephirah Geburah, a Hebrew name that means *Strength*. As with the other sephiroth of the Kabbalistic Tree, it will be the object of a detailed study in the next degree. The angel associated with this planet is Samael, which means in Hebrew, *Venom of God*. According to Judeo-Christian tradition, this angel was the spiritual guide of Esau, the son of Isaac and Rebecca. According to the Midrash *Petirath Mosheh*, he is the one who carried the soul of Moses toward YHVH (Yod-He-Vav-He) at the time of Moses' death. We should also note that in the *Treatise on the Reintegration of Beings*, the circle of Mars is placed at the fourth level of the Celestial Immensity. Together with the circles of the Sun, Mercury, and Saturn, it is part of the four major celestial circles that, according to the words of Martinès de Pasqually, "...are stronger in action and reaction than the three planetary circles that are found below them. This is so because of the immediate proximity that these four major planets have with the Super Celestial."

Let us now consider the influence of Mars on the human plane. In the human body, this planet governs the blood, muscles, vital energy, and all the functions linked to the movements that we accomplish by the action of the will. Regarding this, a number of astrologers believe that Mars conditions our vitality and that it acts directly on our bodily dynamics. It also oversees the activity of the bile and the suprarenal glands. Lastly, this planet is directly linked to masculine sexuality, complementary to Venus, which governs feminine sexuality.

On the psychological plane, the influence that astrology attributes to Mars is characterized by the fact that it is quite bivalent. In other words, its effects are positive or negative, depending on whether or not we master the energy that is specific to Mars. To this effect, we can say that it is double-edged and that it conveys a power that can be constructive or destructive. Naturally, this recalls the duality symbolized by Athena and



SECOND DEGREE

LESSON SEVENTEEN

Ares in Greek mythology. It is therefore men and women themselves, depending on the usage that they make of their free will, who allow one or the other of these two influences to manifest through them, with all the resulting consequences.

When the astral influence of Mars is well mastered, it incites people to act with enthusiasm, courage, and perseverance. It also leads them to be honest and to state their thoughts clearly. Generally, the emanation of this planet, in its most positive aspect, is translated into a tendency to have energetic behavior, to make necessary decisions, and to act according to one's convictions. It is also due to the emanations of Mars that we find the power to defend ourselves against attacks on our integrity, to tackle the trials that we are confronted with, and to struggle against the difficulties that we may encounter while trying to put our legitimate projects into practice.

In its negative aspect, the influence of Mars on human psychology is translated into a relationship to power that manifests through violence, conflicts, and wars. When the energy specific to this planet is not mastered, it makes us the slaves of our animal urges, and makes us angry, aggressive and vindictive. Courage then becomes stubbornness, perseverance becomes blindness, honesty becomes arrogance, and so forth. In other words, the positive virtues attributed to Mars yield to defects that make humans what they are in their most negative aspects; the ego then dominates our behavior, to the detriment of the Divine Soul within us.

Because of the influence that it exerts on humanity, Mars plays an important role on the initiatory plane. In fact, it symbolizes the inner battle that we must fight against our weaknesses in order to express the best of ourselves in our judgments and in our behaviors. Seen in this light, this planet represents the permanent struggle that the future initiate must wage in the depths of oneself to defeat evil and to make Good triumphant. This perfectly illustrates the path of mystical initiation. In Martinist terms, it represents the inner progress that we must accomplish in order for the Old Man or Woman to surrender completely to the New Man or Woman.

On the astrological plane, Mars governs the sign of Aries, which marks the beginning of the zodiac. From a symbolic point of view, this sign contains all the signs that follow in seminal form (and virtually integrates the general characteristics that astrology attributes to all of them). Applied to Mars, this zodiacal correspondence confirms the fact that this planet carries an energy that constantly seeks to be expressed through human beings. It also symbolizes the creative power that we have in the depths of ourselves, and whose source resides in the Power that Martinists designate under the name of Ieschouah.



SECOND DEGREE

LESSON SEVENTEEN

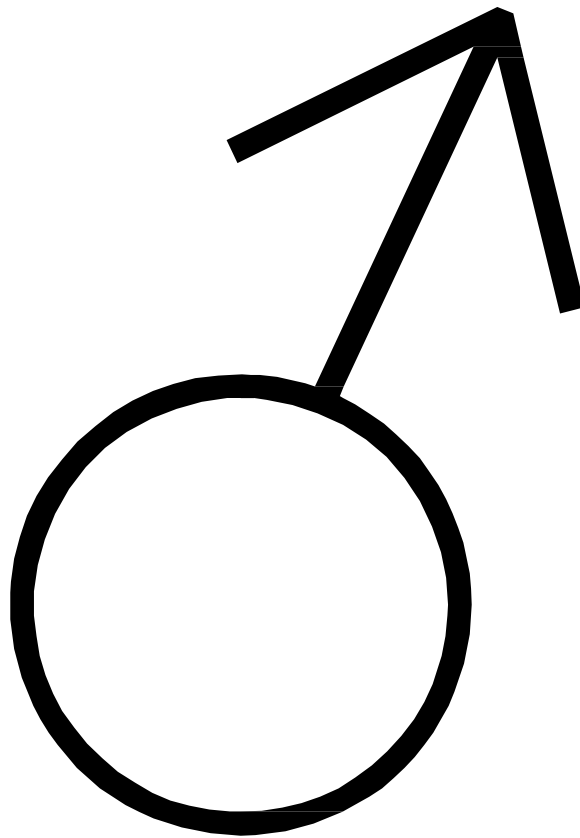
After having seen the symbolism of Mars in mythology and the influence that it exerts on men and women, let us now see its correspondences in nature. In the mineral kingdom, this planet relates to iron, magnetic stone, red chalk, hematite, jasper, ruby, garnet, and generally, with all the stones of an iron nature. In the plant kingdom, absinthe, pepper, mustard, nettle, garlic, digitalis (foxglove), gentian, onion, and all plants of a reddish-brown color, with bristles, or with a slightly repugnant smell or taste, correspond to Mars. In the animal kingdom, the spider, the scorpion, the woodpecker, the hawk, the rooster, the boar, the dog, the wolf, and most of the ferocious and carnivorous animals relate to the planet Mars.

As we have said previously, Mars governs the zodiacal sign of Aries, which in many latitudes coincides with the arrival of spring. At that time, nature is awakening and experiences a rebirth after the winter sleep. It is then that Mars accomplishes its work of regeneration by putting its energy and vitality at the service of the flora and fauna. The plants blossom once more, the trees are in bloom again, and the animals give birth to their young. In other words, Earth again becomes a hymn to life. Thus we find the creative power that astrological tradition attributes to this planet.

To conclude this monograph, let us remember that Mars, represented in mythology by Ares, the god of war, is the very image of combat and action. On the human plane, it conveys a powerful energy that we can use toward positive ends. In nature, it provides its vitality to all beings and incarnates life as it manifests on Earth.

May you ever dwell in the Eternal Light of Divine Wisdom!

PRACTICAL APPLICATION



Traditional Symbol of Mars

SUMMARY

After carefully studying this monograph, read the following summary. It contains the major points that you may want to reflect and meditate on during the coming days. If you have trouble understanding one of the points, return to the explanations given in the monograph. Immerse yourself in learning the points covered in this summary before proceeding with the study of the next monograph.

- The Ancients feared the planet Mars when it came close to the Earth at regular intervals because of its red color.
- The god Ares personified the planet Mars for the Greeks. Ares was violent and vindictive. He was armed with a spear, an instrument of death; and a torch, a symbol of the destructive fire.
- Generally, we can say that in myths where violence, life-death opposition, fire and destruction caused by blindness or passion dominate, we can see the allegorical presence of Mars.
- In Kabbalah, the planet Mars corresponds to the sephirah Geburah, a Hebrew name that signifies *Strength*.
- The angel associated with this planet is Samael, which means in Hebrew, *Venom of God*. According to Judeo-Christian tradition, this angel was the spiritual guide of Esau, the son of Isaac and Rebecca.
- In the human body, Mars governs the blood, muscles, vital energy, and all the functions linked to the movements that we accomplish by an act of the will.
- When the astral influence of Mars is well mastered, it encourages people to act with enthusiasm, courage, and perseverance. It also leads them to energetic behavior, to make necessary decisions, and to carry out their convictions.
- On the initiatory plane, Mars symbolizes the inner battle that we must fight against our weaknesses in order to express the best of ourselves in our judgments and our behaviors.
- Associated with the sign of Aries, Mars symbolizes the creative power that we have in the depths of ourselves, and whose source resides in the Force that Martinists designate under the name of Ieschouah.
- In nature, the influence of Mars can be conveyed by the power of regeneration that it exercises on flora and fauna.

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