

## The History of a Planet

by H.P. Blavatsky

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No star, among the countless myriads that twinkle over the sidereal fields of the night sky, shines so dazzlingly as the planet Venus--not even Sirius-Sothis, the dog-star, beloved by Isis. Venus is the queen among our planets, the crown jewel of our solar system. She is the inspirer of the poet, the guardian and companion of the lonely shepherd, the lovely morning and the evening star. For,

Stars teach as well as shine,"

although their secrets are still untold and unrevealed to the majority of men, including astronomers. They are "a beauty and a mystery," verily. But "where there is a mystery, it is generally supposed that there must also be evil," says Byron. Evil, therefore, was detected by evilly-disposed human fancy, even in those bright luminous eyes peeping at our wicked world through the veil of ether. Thus there came to exist slandered stars and planets as well as slandered men and women. Too often are the reputation and fortune of one man or party sacrificed for the benefit of another man or party. As on earth below, so in the heavens above, and Venus, the sister planet of our Earth, [Venus is a second Earth." says Reynaud, in *Terre et Ciel* (p. 74), "so much so that were there any communication possible between the two planets, their inhabitants might take their respective earths for the two hemispheres of the same world, . . . They seem on the sky, *like two sisters*. Similar in conformation, these two worlds are also similar in the character assigned to them in the Universe." ] was sacrificed to the ambition of our little globe to show the latter the "chosen" planet of the Lord. She became the scapegoat, the *Azazel* of the starry dome, for the sins of the Earth, or rather for those of a certain class in the human family--the clergy--who slandered the bright orb, in order to prove what their ambition suggested to them as the best means to reach power, and exercise it unswervingly over the superstitious and ignorant masses.

This took place during the middle ages. And now the sin lies black at the door of Christians and their scientific inspirers, though the error was successfully raised to the lofty position of a religious dogma, as many other fictions and inventions have been.

Indeed, the whole sidereal world, planets and their regents--the ancient gods of poetical paganism--the sun, the moon, the elements, and the entire host of incalculable worlds--those at least which happened to be known to the Church Fathers--shared in the same fate. They have all been slandered, all bedevilled by the insatiable desire of proving one little system of theology--built on and constructed out of old pagan materials--the only right and holy one, and all those which preceded or followed it utterly wrong. Sun and stars, the very air itself, we are asked to believe, became pure and "redeemed" from original sin and the Satanic element of heathenism, only after the year I, A.D. Scholastics and scholiasts, the spirit of whom

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"spurned laborious investigation and slow induction," had shown, to the satisfaction of infallible Church, the whole Kosmos in the power of Satan--a poor compliment to God--before the year of the Nativity; and Christians had to believe or be condemned. Never have subtle sophistry and casuistry shown themselves so plainly in their true light, however, as in the questions of the ex-Satanism and later redemption of various heavenly bodies. Poor beautiful Venus got worsted in that war of so-called divine proofs to a greater degree than any of her sidereal colleagues. While the history of the other six planets, and their gradual transformation from Greco-Aryan gods into Semitic devils, and finally into "divine attributes of the seven eyes of the Lord," is known but to the educated, that of Venus-Lucifer has become a household story among even the most illiterate in Roman Catholic countries.

This story shall now be told for the benefit of those who may have neglected their astral mythology.

Venus, characterised by Pythagoras as the *sol alter*, a second Sun, on account of her magnificent radiance--equalled by none other--was the first to draw the attention of ancient Theogonists. Before it began to be called Venus, it was known in *pre-Hesiodic* theogony as Eosphoros (or Phosphoros) and Hesperos, the children of the dawn and twilight. In Hesiod, moreover, the planet is decomposed into two divine beings, two brothers--Eosphoros (the *Lucifer* of the Latins) the morning, and Hesperos, the evening star. They are the children of Astroeos and Eos, the starry heaven and the dawn, as also of Kephalos and Eos (*Theog.* 381, *Hyg. Poet. Astron.* 11, 42). Preller, quoted by Decharme, shows Phaeton identical with Phosphoros or Lucifer (*Grech. Mythol.* I, 365). And on the authority of Hesiod he also makes Phaeton *the son of the latter two* divinities--Kephalos and Eos.

Now Phaeton or Phosphoros, the "luminous morning orb," is carried away in his early youth by Aphrodite (Venus) who makes of him the night guardian of her sanctuary (*Theog.* 987991). He is the "beautiful morning star" (*vide* St. John's *Revelation* XXII. 16) loved for its radiant light by the Goddess of the Dawn, Aurora, who, while gradually eclipsing the light of her beloved, thus seeming to carry off the star, makes it reappear on the evening horizon where it watches the gates of heaven. In early morning, Phosphoros "issuing from the waters of the Ocean, raises in heaven his sacred head to announce the approach of divine light." (*Iliad*, XXIII. 226; *Odyss.* XIII. 93; *Virg. Æneid*, VIII. 589; *Mythol. de la Grèce Antique*: 247). He holds a torch in his hand and flies through space as he precedes the car of Aurora. In the evening he becomes Hesperos, "the most splendid of the stars that shine on the celestial vault" (*Iliad*, XXII. 317). He is the father of the Hesperides, the guardians of the golden apples together with the Dragon; the beautiful genius of the flowing golden curls, sung and glorified in all the ancient *epithalami* (the bridal songs of the early Christians as of the pagan Greeks); he, who at the fall of the night, leads the nuptial *cortège* and delivers the bride into the arms of the bridegroom. (*Carmen Nuptiale. See Mythol. de la Grèce Antique. Decharme.*)

So far, there seems to be no possible *rapprochement*, no analogy to be discovered between this poetical personification of a star, a purely astronomical myth, and the *Satanism* of Christian theology. True, the close connection between the planet as Hesperos, the evening star, and the Greek Garden of Eden with its Dragon and the golden apples may, with a certain stretch of imagination, suggest some painful comparisons with the third chapter of Genesis. But this is insufficient to justify the building of a theological wall of defence against paganism made up of slander and misrepresentations.

But of all the Greek *euheremerisations*, Lucifer-Eosphoros is, perhaps, the most complicated. The planet

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has become with the Latins, Venus, or Aphrodite-*Anadyomene*, the foam-born Goddess, *the* "Divine Mother," *and* one with the Phœnician Astarte, or the Jewish *Astaroth*. They *were all* called "The Morning Star," and the Virgins of the Sea, or *Mar* (whence Mary), the great Deep, titles now given by the Roman Church to their Virgin Mary. They were all connected with the moon and the crescent, with the Dragon and the planet Venus, as the mother of Christ has been made connected with all these attributes. If the Phœnician mariners carried, fixed on the prow of their ships, the image of the goddess Astarte (or Aphrodite, Venus Erycina) and looked upon the evening and the morning star as *their* guiding star, "the eye of their Goddess mother," so do the Roman Catholic sailors the same to this day. They fix a Madonna on the prows of their vessels, and the blessed Virgin Mary is called the "Virgin of the Sea." The accepted patroness of Christian sailors, their star, "*Stella Del Mar*," etc., she stands on the crescent moon. Like the old pagan Goddesses, she is the "Queen of Heaven," and the "Morning Star" just as they were.

Whether this can explain anything, is left to the reader's sagacity. Meanwhile, Lucifer-Venus has nought to do with darkness, and everything with light. When called *Lucifer*, it is the "light bringer," the first radiant beam which destroys the lethal darkness of night. When named Venus, the planet-star becomes the symbol of dawn, the chaste Aurora. Professor Max Müller rightly conjectures that Aphrodite, born of the sea, is a personification of the Dawn of Day, and the most lovely of all the sights in Nature ("Science of Language") for, before her naturalisation by the Greeks, Aphrodite was Nature personified, the life and light of the Pagan world, as proven in the beautiful invocation to Venus by Lucretius, quoted by Decharme. She is *divine* Nature in her entirety, *Aditi-Prakriti* before she becomes Lakshmi. She is that Nature before whose majestic and fair face, "the winds fly away, the quieted sky pours torrents of light, and the sea-waves smile," (Lucretius). When referred to as the Syrian goddess Astarte, the Astaroth of Hieropolis, the radiant planet was personified as a majestic woman, holding in one outstretched hand a torch, in the other, a crooked staff in the form of a cross. (*Vide* Lucian's *De Dea Syriê*, and Cicero's *De Nat. Deorum*, 3 c. 23). Finally, the planet is represented astronomically, as a globe *poised above the cross*--a symbol no devil would like to associate with--while the planet Earth is a globe with a cross *over it*.

But then, these crosses are not the symbols of Christianity, but the Egyptian *crux ansata*, the attribute of Isis (who is Venus, and Aphrodite, Nature, also) or the planet; the fact that the Earth has the *crux ansata* reversed, having a great occult significance upon which there is no necessity of entering at present.

Now what says the Church and how does it explain the "dreadful association"? The Church believes in the devil, of course, and could not afford to lose him. "*The Devil is the chief pillar of the Church*" confesses unblushingly an advocate [Thus saith Des Mousseaux. "Moeurs et Pratiques des Démons." p. X -- and he is corroborated in this by Cardinal de Ventura. The Devil, he says, "is one of the great personages *whose life is closely allied to that of the Church*; and without him . . . the fall of man could not have taken place. If it were not for him (the Devil), the Saviour, the Redeemer, the Crucified would be but the most ridiculous of supernumeraries and the Cross an insult to good sense." And if so. then we should feel thankful to the poor Devil. ] of the *Ecclesia Militans*. "All the Alexandrian Gnostics speak to us of the fall of the *Æons* and their Pleroma, and all attribute that fall *to the desire to know*," writes another volunteer in the same army, slandering the Gnostics as usual and identifying *the desire to know* or occultism, magic, with Satanism. [De Mirville. "No Devil, no Christ," he exclaims. ] And then, forthwith, he quotes from Schlegel's *Philosophie de l'Histoire* to show that the seven rector (planets) of Pymander, "commissioned by God to contain the phenomenal world in their seven circles, lost in love with their own

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beauty, [This is only another version of Narcissus, the Greek victim of his own fair looks. ] came to admire themselves with such intensity that owing to this proud self-adulation they finally *fell*."

Perversity having thus found its way amongst the angels, the most beautiful creature of God "revolted against its Maker." That creature is in theological fancy Venus-Lucifer, or rather the informing Spirit or Regent of that planet. This teaching is based on the following speculation. The three principal heroes of the great sidereal catastrophe mentioned in *Revelation* are, according to the testimony of the Church fathers--"the Verbum, Lucifer his usurper (see editorial) and the grand Archangel who conquered him," and whose "palaces" (the "houses" astrology calls them) are in the Sun, Venus-Lucifer and Mercury. This is quite evident, since the position of these orbs in the Solar system correspond in their hierarchical order to that of the "heroes" in Chapter xii of *Revelation* "their names and destinies (?) being closely connected in the theological (exoteric) system with these three great metaphysical names." (De Mirville's *Memoir* to the Academy of France, on the rapping Spirits and the Demons.)

The outcome of this was, that theological legend made of Venus-Lucifer the sphere and domain of the fallen Archangel, or Satan before his apostacy. Called upon to reconcile this statement with that other fact, that the metaphor of "the morning star," is applied to both Jesus, and his Virgin mother, and that the planet Venus-Lucifer is included, moreover, among the "stars" of the seven planetary spirits worshipped by the Roman Catholics [The famous temple dedicated to the Seven Angels at Rome, and built by Michael-Angelo in 1561, is still there, now called the "Church of St. Mary of the Angels." In the old Roman Missals printed in 1563--one or two of which may still be seen in Palazzo Barberini - one may find the religious service (*officio*) of the seven angels, and their *old* and occult names. That the "angels" are the pagan Rectors, under different names--the Jewish having replaced the Greek and Latin names--of the seven planets is proven by what Pope Pius V said in his Bull to the Spanish Clergy, permitting and encouraging the worship of the said seven spirits of the stars. "One cannot exalt too much these *seven rectors* of the world, *figured by the seven planets*, as it is consoling to our century to witness by the grace of God the cult of these *seven ardent lights*, and of these *seven stars* reassuming all its lustre in the Christian republic." (*Les Sept Esprits et l'Histoire de leur Culte*; De Mirville's 2nd memoir addressed to the academy. Vol. II. p. 358. ] under new names, the defenders of the Latin dogmas and beliefs answer as follows:--

"Lucifer, the jealous neighbour of the Sun (Christ) said to himself in his great pride: 'I will rise as high as he!' He was thwarted in his design by Mercury, though the brightness of the latter (who is St. Michael) was as much lost in the blazing fires of the great Solar orb as his own was, and though, like Lucifer, Mercury is only the assessor, and the guard of honour to the Sun." (*Ibid.*)

Guards of "dishonour" now rather, if the teachings of *theological* Christianity were true. But here comes in the cloven foot of the Jesuit. The ardent defender of Roman Catholic Demonolatry and of the worship of the seven planetary spirits, at the same time, pretends great wonder at the coincidences between old Pagan and Christian *legends*, between the fable about Mercury and Venus, and the *historical truths* told of St. Michael--the "angel of the face,"--the terrestrial double, or *ferouer* of Christ. He points them out saying: "like Mercury, the archangel Michael, is the *friend* of the Sun, his Mitra, perhaps, for Michael is a *psychopompic* genius, one who leads the separated souls to their appointed abodes, and like Mitra, he is the *well-known adversary of the demons*." This is demonstrated by the book of the *Nabatheans* recently discovered (by Chwolson), in which the Zoroastrian Mitra is called the "*grand enemy of the planet Venus*." [Herodotus showing the identity of Mitra and Venus, the sentence in the *Nabathean Agriculture* is

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evidently misunderstood. ](*Ibid* p. 160.)

There is something in this. A candid confession, for once, of perfect identity of celestial personages and of *borrowing* from every pagan source. It is curious, if unblushing. While in the oldest Mazdean allegories, Mitra conquers the planet Venus, in Christian tradition Michael defeats Lucifer, and both receive, as war spoils, the planet of the vanquished deity.

"Mitra," says Dollinger, "possessed, in days of old, the star of Mercury, placed between the sun and the moon, but he was given the planet of the conquered, and ever since his victory he is identified with Venus." (*Judaisme and Paganisme*," Vol. II., p. 109. French translation )

"In the Christian tradition," adds the learned Marquis, "St. Michael is apportioned in Heaven the throne and the palace of the foe he has vanquished. Moreover, like Mercury, during the palmy days of paganism, which made sacred to this *demon*-god all the promontories of the earth, *the Archangel is the patron of the same in our religion.*" This means, if it does mean anything, that *now*, at any rate, Lucifer-Venus is a *sacred* planet, and no synonym of Satan, since St. Michael has become his legal heir?

The above remarks conclude with this cool reflection:

"It is evident that paganism has *utilised beforehand*, and most marvellously, all the features and characteristics of the *prince of the face of the Lord* (Michael) in applying them to that *Mercury*, to the Egyptian *Hermes Anubis*, and the *Hermes Christos* of the Gnostics. Each of these was represented as the first among the divine councillors, and the god nearest to the sun, *quis ut Deus.*"

Which title, with all its attributes, became that of Michael. The good Fathers, the Master Masons of the temple of *Church* Christianity, knew indeed how to utilize pagan material for their new dogmas.

The fact is, that it is sufficient to examine certain Egyptian *cartouches*, pointed out by Rossellini (*Egypte*, Vol. I., p. 289), to find Mercury (the double of Sirius in our solar system) as Sothis, preceded by the words "*sole*" and "*solis custode, sostegnon dei dominanti, e forte grande dei vigilant*," watchman of the sun, sustainer of dominions, and the strongest of all the vigilants." All these titles and attributes are now those of the Archangel Michael, who has inherited them from the *demons* of paganism.

Moreover, travellers in Rome may testify to the wonderful presence in the statue of Mitra, at the Vatican, of the best known Christian symbols. Mystics boast of it. They find "in his lion's head, and the eagle's wings, those of the courageous Seraph, the master of space (Michael); in his caduceus, the spear, in the two serpents coiled round the body, the struggle of the good and bad principles, and especially in the two keys which the said Mitra holds, like St. Peter, the keys with which this Seraph-patron of the latter opens and shuts the gates of Heaven, *astra cludit et recludit.*" (*Mem.* p. 162.)

To sum up, the aforesaid shows that the theological romance of Lucifer was built upon the various myths

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and allegories of the pagan world, and that it is no *revealed* dogma, but simply one invented to uphold superstition. Mercury being one of the Sun's *assessors*, or the *cynocephali* of the Egyptians and *the watch-dogs of the Sun*, literally, the other was *Eosphoros*, the most brilliant of the planets, "*qui mane oriebaris*," the early rising, or the Greek .It was identical with the *Amoon-ra*, the light-bearer of Egypt, and called by all nations "the *second born* of light" (the first being Mercury), the beginning of his (the Sun's) ways of wisdom, the Archangel Michael being also referred to as the *principium viarum Domini*.

Thus a purely astronomical personification, built upon an occult meaning which no one has hitherto seemed to unriddle outside the Eastern wisdom, has now become a dogma, part and parcel of Christian revelation. A clumsy transference of characters is unequal to the task of making thinking people accept in one and the same trinitarian group, the "Word" or Jesus, God and Michael (with the Virgin occasionally to complete it) on the one hand, and Mitra, Satan and Apollo-Abaddon on the other: the whole at the whim and pleasure of Roman Catholic Scholiasts. If Mercury and Venus (Lucifer) are (astronomically in their revolution around the Sun) the symbols of God the Father, the Son, and of their Vicar, Michael, the "Dragon-Conqueror," in Christian legend, why should they when called Apollo-Abaddon, the "King of the Abyss," Lucifer, Satan, or Venus--become forthwith devils and demons? If we are told that the "conqueror," or "Mercury-Sun," or again St. Michael of the *Revelation*, was given the spoils of the conquered angel, namely, his planet, why should opprobrium be any longer attached to a constellation so purified? Lucifer is now the "Angel of the Face of the Lord," ["Both in Biblical and pagan theologies," says de Mirville, "the Sun has its god, its defender, and its sacrilegious usurper, in other words, its Ormuzd, its planet Mercury (Mitra), and its Lucifer, Venus (or Ahriman), taken away from its ancient master, and now given to its conqueror." (P. 164.) Therefore, Lucifer-Venus is quite *holy* now. ] because "that face is mirrored in it." We think rather, because the Sun is reflecting his beams in Mercury seven times more than it does on our Earth, and twice more in Lucifer-Venus: the Christian symbol proving again its astronomical origin. But whether from the astronomical, mystical or symbological aspect, Lucifer is as good as any other planet. To advance as a proof of its demoniacal character, and identity with Satan, the configuration of Venus, which gives to the crescent of this planet the appearance of a cut-off horn is rank nonsense. But to connect this with the horns of "The Mystic Dragon" in *Revelation*--"one of which was broken" [ In Revelation there is no "horn broken," but it is simply said in Chapter XIII, 3, that John saw "one of his heads, as it were, wounded to death." John knew naught in his generation of "a horned" devil. ]--as the two French Demonologists, the Marquis de Mirville and the Chevalier des Mousseaux, the champions of the Church militant, would have their readers believe in the second half of our present century--is simply an insult to the public.

Besides which, the Devil had no horns before the fourth century of the Christian era. It is a purely Patristic invention arising from their desire to connect the god Pan, and the pagan Fauns and Satyrs, with their Satanic legend. The demons of Heathendom were as hornless and as tailless as the Archangel Michael himself in the imaginations of his worshippers. The "horns" were, in pagan symbolism, an emblem of divine power and creation, and of fertility in nature. Hence the ram's horns of Ammon, of Bacchus, and of Moses on ancient medals, and the cow's horns of Isis and Diana, etc., etc., and of the Lord God of the Prophets of Israel himself. For Habakkuk gives the evidence that this symbolism was accepted by the "chosen people" as much as by the Gentiles. In Chapter III that prophet speaks of the "Holy One from Mount Paran," of the Lord God who "comes from Teman, and whose brightness was as the light," and who had "horns coming out of his hand."

When one reads, moreover, the Hebrew text of Isaiah, and finds that no Lucifer is mentioned at all in

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Chapter XIV., v. 12, but simply *Hillel*, "a *bright* star," one can hardly refrain *from wondering that educated* people should be still ignorant enough at the close of our century to associate a radiant planet--or anything else in nature for the matter of that--with the DEVIL! [The literal words used, and their translation, are: "*Aik Naphelta Mi-Shamayim Hillel Ben-Shachar Negdangta La-Aretz Cholesch El-Goüm*," or, "How art thou fallen from the heavens, Hillel, Son of the Morning, how art thou cast down unto the earth, thou who didst cast down the nations." Here the word, translated "Lucifer," is Hillel, and its meaning is "shining brightly or gloriously." It is very true also, that by a pun to which Hebrew words lend themselves so easily, the verb *hillel* may be made to mean "to howl," hence, by an easy derivation, hillel may be constructed into "howler," or a devil, a creature, however, one hears rarely, if ever, "howling," In his Lexicon, Art. Parkhurst says: "The Syriac translation of this passage renders it 'howl'; and even Jerome observes that it literally means 'to howl.' Michaelis translates it, 'Howl, Son of the Morning'." But at this rate, Hillel, the great Jewish sage and reformer, might also be called a "howler," and connected with the devil! ]