

Rudolf Steiner's Calendar of the Soul Verse 19:

Verse 19, relates to Life Spirit as well as to Condition 6, "Feel gratitude for everything that falls to your lot."

We are to recognize that it is of the greatest importance that what I have received "in mystery", I must take precious into memory. "In mystery" might be thought of as "in a spiritual way" and with the German word 'geheimnisvoll,' 'to wrap secretively', there seems to reflect the fact that we really have no idea how memory and remembering take place within us. It is a mystery —and yet we are told how important it is that we preserve *what* we have received *since we are going to have to activate it in future for our personal evolution!* This memory "shall awaken my own forces to strive for my highest aim." Let me recognize my destiny, and "Evolving, give my higher self to me."

The "what" may be seen with such gratitude, perhaps astonishment, when we review the beautifully expressed spring/summer verses, revealing nature's gifts of joyous growth and beauty, and feel again not only the many intimate counsels of Ahnen wisdom but even the Cosmic word Itself speaking to us!

Geheimnisvoll das Neu-Empfang'ne
Mit der Erinner'ung zu umschliessen,
Sei meines Strebens weitrer Sinn:
Er soll erstarkend Eigenkräfte
In meinem Innern wecken
Und werdend mich mir selber geben.

original German by Rudolf Steiner



Spirit to Soul Ninetta Sombart

In mystery, what I received
To sheathe within my memory,
Be further meaning of my striving:
In gaining strength it shall awaken
The forces of my self within;
Evolving, give myself to me.

tr. by Daisy Aldan

In these verses the soul is showered with God's caring, promises and intimate sharings.

Verse 8: "The might of senses grows in covenant with Gods creating. . . When godly being will with my soul unite."

Verse 9: " The cosmic warmth fills full my soul and spirit."

Verse 10: The gleaming Sun ascends and takes my human feeling along with it to space expanses. . . .One day you will discern, a godly being has sensed you now." - (or touched you now.)

Verse 11: "The human I can find itself in cosmic I."

Verse 12: "and trusting, seek myself in cosmic light and cosmic warmth."

Verse 13: "There flames within my depth of soul *the Word of Truth of gods*: In grounds of spirit, seek divining to find *your Spirit kinship*."

Verse 14: "But waking, now comes near in senses' shining, cosmic thinking."

Verse 15: "Spirit's 'manifested' glory has enfolded me to grant me strength."

Verse 16: "sheltering spirit gifts will fructify my developing soul."

Verse 17: With deep seriousness the Cosmic Word calls us to use our senses and our thinking in order to fill our depth of spirit from Its "widths of worlds" "to find in future" the God, the Cosmic Word **within us!**

Verse 18 asks if we can expand our soul **to recognize the Being of the world**. It is clear that we are responsible for the formation of our own soul and need to form it so that it is "fit for Spirit garment."

In every verse the soul feels a new connection to the spirit world: I, too, am a cosmic being. How joyful I am to receive these gifts and to know that with maturity I will experience a new impulse —**Spirit Word in me!** I know, too, that all this development is not for egotistic desires, but rather, when my interests are no longer my own but those of the whole world and the whole of humanity. Loving frees oneself and others.

Thus, even as we may feel "in the arms of a caring godhead, what may appear sometimes as the loneliness of selfhood will vanish in the giving of self to all." (Eleanor Merry)

The beautiful lines of the Calendar show me how to find spread out in Nature the earthly expressions of cosmic thoughts. Quietly and powerfully I am urged to make these connections while the opportunity is still there in order that further evolution can proceed rightly —through the spiritual freedom of active human beings.

I feel too that in the cycles of nature I am part of a larger cycle, the journey from birth to death to birth that is my cosmic path. And in my human destiny to be always becoming, always creating, I can experience reverence in the knowledge that I am greater than just my personal self. I am also my Higher Self, and a part of a greater cosmic cycle.



Mysteriously with memory to enclose
That which has newly been conceived,
This be my striving's further aim;
And growing strong, it shall awaken
Powers of Selfhood in my inward being,
And, in becoming, give me to myself.

tr. by Ernst Lehrs



Often Rudolf Steiner brings to us that spiritual life arises from and depends upon the destruction of physical life. Nature dies away, and we are given the opportunity to create new life, not only for ourselves, but at the same time for the future evolution of the Earth. What we are creating is actually the seed for a new macrocosm—for the future Jupiter planetary evolution.

To wrap the new-conceived germ
In memory's secret folds
Be now my striving's master aim:
Gathering strength to waken
Force of my own within me,
Emergent, it shall give myself to me.

tr. by Simon Blaxland de Lange



Iris Sullivan

To clasp in memory the secret grace
That newly I received,
Be this my striving now,
And as it stronger grows,
My own powers will emerge
And in their fullness give myself to me.

tr. by John Thompson .

Last week we entered the second one-third of the Calendar, which has a threefold rhythm in the year's course and which the Calendar wants to make conscious in us. The first 17 verses have to do mainly with our bodily, sensory experiences —our gifts from Nature. The next 17 verses to 35 have to do mainly with our own soul development, and the last 17 verses have to do mainly with the development of the I. Thus, during the course of the year, there are these three distinct stages for the development of body, soul, and spirit. And many more rhythms there are to be found in the Calendar! (See the rhythms of "19" and "33" described below.)

Calendar of the Soul Verse 34

The polar opposite verse from Verse 19 is Verse 34, corresponding to four weeks before Christmas. *In this translation by Ruth and Hans Pusch, you can see in Verse 34 a reflection of the mood of Verse 19.*

Geheimnisvoll das Alt-Bewahrte
Mit neuerstandnem Eigensein
Im Innern sich belebend fühlen:
Es soll erweckend Weltenkräfte
In meines Lebens Aussenwerk ergiessen
Und werdend mich ins Dasein prägen.

In secret inwardly to feel
How all that I've preserved of old
Is quickened by new-risen sense of self:
This shall, awakening, pour forth cosmic forces
Into the outer actions of my life
And growing, mould me into true existence.

To finish this commentary on Verse 19 and the rhythms contained in the Soul Calendar, here is an excerpt from a most interesting and practical essay by Roberta van Schilfgaarde regarding the rhythms of 19 and 33 in the Calendar and of the rhythm of the 'Moon Node Return' of 18.6 years:

There are many rhythms in the Calendar, just as there are in all of life. One that for me has seemed very meaningful is the rhythm of 19 and 33—a rhythm of the Moon and a rhythm of the Sun. We see this number, 19, every year as the age of most high school graduating seniors. It is a moment to be clearly marked, a time when the first part of life, the preparation for adult life, has come to an end. Children have been cared for, nurtured, to the point that they can stand alone fairly well. They are now expected to be less dependent on parents and nurturing teachers and to take much more responsibility for their own lives. In the 12th grade in Waldorf Schools, students look back via the curriculum to all their previous years, even to the time when they were very little, how they then experienced the world, and how little ones should be cared for.

It is a right time for looking back, because it is the time in life of the first "Moon Node Return", actually a rhythm of about 18.6 years. It is a time when the Moon "sets us free" for the first time. The path (orbit) of the Moon around the Earth rises above the ecliptic (the path of the Earth around the Sun), and also descends below the ecliptic. The points of intersection with the ecliptic are called nodes. They are 180° apart. As everything else connected with the cosmos, these nodes are not stationary. They move along on the orbit of the Moon, around the Zodiac, during the course of 18.6 years. When a baby is born, the ascending node (the point at which the Moon's path ascends or rises above the ecliptic) is at a particular place in the Zodiac, and every 18.6 years later it returns to that place. These returns mark special moments in every person's life and bring special experiences. (The famous nine or ten-year change of a child that every teacher knows is the half-way point—the descending node has moved just half way round the Moon orbit and is in the place of the birth ascending node.)

With verse 19 we come to a feeling of the end of summer. It is a verse expressing great gratitude, a true and beautiful expression of the sixth condition of esoteric training. It can remind us of Mary's "Magnificat", also a paean of gratitude, in verses 46ff in Chapter I of the Luke Gospel. The first part of the year, as H. D. van Goudoever also points out, can be for us an archetypal picture of Mary's virginal experience in Chapter I of the Gospel of St. Luke. In Colorado (and much of the dry-air West) the clear radiant blue of the skies is like Mary's blue cloak, sheltering the whole Earth and the conceived Spirit Child that will be born at Christmas to help prepare the Earth's future planetary evolution.

Verse 19 culminates for us what can be seen as this Moon portion of the year. Of course we remember our earlier thoughts about the light and warmth of the Sun, the Beings of light and warmth. However, it is during this time of "spring-summer sleep" that the forces left in the Earth by the Moon and its invisible Beings when the Moon departed in Lemurian times have brought forth the fruits of the Earth. This growth and fruiting activity was laid down in the Earth in long-past ages from very much earlier developments, as Rudolf Steiner has often told us. One can say, the events of evolution have been spread out before us. It has been like a Grail Procession, proceeding before our eyes, with the World Word as Host in the Grail Cup of the Earth, bringing healing to an ailing humanity. Nineteen verses after verse 19 is verse 38, the Christmas verse, when the Spirit child is born in us.

After verse 19 there are 33 verses left in the year, culminating in verse 52. Thirty-three years is a Sun rhythm; it is also the age of Christ-Jesus at the time of the Crucifixion/Resurrection, and since then 33 years has been and is a new rhythm, a Christ rhythm, working in human activity.

What shall we do with these 33 weeks, symbolizing 33 years? What shall we make of them? The answer is entirely up to us, yet it is helpful to remember how Rudolf Steiner referred to this 33-year rhythm, in words that without insight into the rhythm may well be puzzling. —He said that **What humanity brings as thoughts and feelings to Christmas will be reborn in social life at Easter 33 years later.**

This rhythm of 19 can be applied to all verses, not just the interval between 19 and 38. It is my experience that the Calendar “comes alive” in a new way through a constant working with the details of the verses in connection with this rhythm. We can look at any verse to see how the verse 19 weeks later (or earlier) relates to it. As an example, if we look back to verse 51, we see that it speaks of the human eye that must receive its force out of the World Spirit. It is of course true that our eyes receive their physical nourishment from the light of the Sun. However, our inner eyes—clairvoyance or Imagination—are developed through the *spiritual* light of the Sun that is invisible to us. The summer is also a time for receiving forces that work on these inner eyes. Nineteen verses after 51 is verse 18, which speaks of spirit garment and the soul’s worthiness. This spirit garment or spirit clothing includes *new etheric eyes* for the spirit.

In like manner, comparing verses 33 earlier or later than any particular verse will reveal significant connections, deepening meanings in both verses.

Another example is to see how the Equinox/Solstice verses interact with the “cornerstone verses” (7, 20, 33, 46). Looking 19 verses after verse 14, the beginning of summer when we must garner something new, brings us to the fall “cornerstone verse”, verse 33, when we recognize that the Earth itself depends upon our creating ourselves anew. Thirty-three verses after verse 7 brings us to verse 40, the beginning of the fourth quarter of the year.

This rhythm of 19 can also be instructive for parents and Waldorf teachers. For example, teachers may identify the birth verses of their students to help them better understand their charges. Then, by looking 19 verses later, they can see where the individual student is heading, an insight that may be of particular help to high school teachers.

Perhaps this rhythm can be instructive for all of us in another way. If we look at life itself as outlined above, after 18.6 years + 33 years we are 51.6 years old. Our physical strength is still fairly high, and at 51/52, we are usually actively engaged and responsible in our life’s tasks, our careers, whatever our life work has been. Looking back, we may see that a number of events and experiences in the past, almost surprisingly sometimes, have come toward us again and again, to be experienced and looked at in new and better ways. (As the saying goes, “No matter where we go, we take ourselves along.) After another probably active 18.6 years beyond 51/52, we come to the Biblical age of 70 (70.2) years. It seems to me that one can grasp that what we have been given to work with in a lifetime, provides in these last 19, or even more, years after 51/52, an opportunity for more conscious preparation for one’s next life.

In becoming aware of the many intricate rhythms in the Soul Calendar, we have a new appreciation for Rudolf Steiner’s saying that “Every detail in Time is connected with every other detail,” and, that whether we know it or not, in all of these World Rhythms in the Calendar, the World Word, the Christ, holds sway.