

# Rudolf Steiner's Calendar of the Soul Verse 1: The Soul Seeks Christ

Eloise Krivosheia

Dear Friends,

On Easter Sunday we begin, with Verse 1 of *The Calendar of the Soul*, our travel and development of the soul through the year with the Christ always at our side. Every verse beautifully relates to nature as well as to our soul. All 52 verses ask for a raised consciousness. In each we see both the sense world and the supersensible world.

**Calendar of the Soul Verse 1** – We start the year with a soul sense of the Sun --a truly joyful verse, wherein the sun so speaks to the heart and senses that the soul in joy wants to respond to this Spirit Sun from its deepest feelings, even as it strives for understanding.

Wenn aus den Weltenweiten  
Die Sonne spricht zum Menschensinn  
Und Freude aus den Seelentiefen  
Dem Licht sich eint im Schauen,  
Dann ziehen aus der Selbstheit Hülle  
Gedanken in die Raumesfernen  
Und binden dumpf  
Des Menschen Wesen an des Geistes Sein.

*original German by Rudolf Steiner*

When out of farthest worlds  
The Sun communes with sense of Man  
And gladness from the depth of soul  
In vision joins with light  
Then from the sheath of selfhood, thoughts  
File forth toward distances of space  
And dimly join  
Human essence to the Spirit's being.

*tr. by Daily Aldan*

Here are some thoughts about the lines.

**When out of farthest worlds**

**The Sun communes with sense of Man**

The Sun rays commune with our human senses but also with *human understanding*— 'Menschensinn'. As the Sun Being's light and warmth surge through us, 'communicating' to the human I, the feeling of bliss can be experienced. It is because human beings are "light beings" that the Sun can thus commune with us for Christ is The Light Being who gave us our very special etheric body. In this etheric body we carry our memories needed in order to think and understand.

**And gladness from the depth of soul** 'Seelentiefen' -first, heart-felt joy and then comes a deep beholding . . .

**In vision joins with light** - This is inner vision, a nascent wisdom, joining with the light. This joining with the light is filled with life—etheric process-thinking, we might call it.



Artist: Anne Stockton

Light creates our soul members and so the soul rejoices in seeing the Sun. We feel a particular gratitude because we have this knowledge of *our* light—our understanding, where it comes from.

We can say there is a fructification of the soul, for knowledge, from the verb "to know" can also connote fructifying. Light creates both the physical experience for our soul and also brings understandings and thoughts that carry these experiences further.

**Then from the sheath of selfhood, thoughts** -Here we feel our own thoughts—joyous, in gratitude—beginning to flow back to the Sun.

**File forth toward distances of space** -We can feel intimate communication flowing outward into World space from our own Ego. When enveloped in warm feelings, then is our "heart thinking" sheathed with the essence of the Sun.

**And dimly join** - "Dimly" or perhaps gropingly because we have yet to develop our higher spirit members: -our Spirit Self, or higher I, somewhat, but especially not Life Spirit and Spirit Man.

Our thoughts 'file forth' because it is in focused thinking that we join our spirit to Spiritual Beings, one thought following another. Each year, our I thinks spiritual thoughts more capably than the year before.

**Human essence to the Spirit's being.** -The human I indeed joins with Spirit. 'Menschen Wesen' is our essential being, the entirety of the human essence. "Sein" is the Spirit's Be-ing.

This happy, springtime verse also is the first of those that carry the Condition 1 from Rudolf Steiner's *How to Know Higher Worlds*, Ch.5, which is "Strive to lead a healthy life, physically and spiritually."

Hair flowing, arms upraised  
round her head to the Sun,  
in "Spring Joy!"



When from the vastness of this world  
The sun speaks to the human mind  
And joy from the depths of soul  
In beholding joins with light;  
Then thoughts that burst from out  
the self  
Stream into distant space  
Unknowingly uniting  
The human being with the Spirit's  
life.

tr. by John Thomson

**The Verse may lead us into thinking about 'What brings nature forth?'**

In Line 2 the word "Menschensinn" carries the meaning of "deepest comprehension." We are trying to grasp the essence of things.

When we watch a plant grow in its details, we take in its etheric formative forces.\* Beholding the plant with "heart thinking," maybe we even sense what this plant is, what it says to us. In becoming consciously, intimately aware of its growing process, our thinking is strengthened. This corresponds to the first step of the Buddhist Path, Right Perception, Right View. Connecting also to Condition 1, we may ask ourselves, "Do we perceive the world in such a way that it nurtures our mental health?"

\*From Rudolf Steiner we learn that the Sun streams in the etheric forces that bring forth plant shapes. In *The Philosophy of Freedom*, Rudolf Steiner points to how the formative force in a plant is similar to the way we shape our thinking.

**More about the Sun and German "Sinn" from Roberta van Schilfgaard.**

In the first verse of the year, the "Aries Sun" speaks to us. It speaks to our "Sinn." I think it is impossible for any translator to express in one English word the fullness of this German word "Sinn". It is the same word that is found in Verses 47 and 51 ("Sinne"-senses). "Sinn" has numerous meanings, clearly all expressing some aspect of the manifoldness of the human power of grasping both outer and inner worlds with understanding. Among dictionary definitions are: sense, mind, perception, conception, meaning, understanding, significance. We could say, "The Sun speaks to my capacity to grasp the meaning, the significance, of all that Nature brings to my experience."

Through nature the Sun speaks to our twelve senses. These date back to our earliest beginnings, to ancient Saturn evolution, thereby indicating how basic they are to our entire human experience. And thus the Sun can speak to our understanding of the significance of our own being in cosmic becoming, "asking" us to be awake to all that is being re-enacted before us of Nature's -and our own- evolution.

In verse 1, it is therefore our joy to experience a new opportunity to become more than we have been, to be more awake to the spirit happenings that now and in future will surround us. Today, a magnificent spring garden is coming into view, and the gardeners—the elemental beings—and the Hierarchies who guide them, hope that we will be joyful in what it has been their joy to create. If we feel this and also the urge to know the gardeners themselves, we receive particular nourishment from the spring and summer, the time of “sleep.”

Steiner has often made clear that sleep is the younger brother of death. In both cases we enter the spiritual world and are rejuvenated, given fresh forces. In Spring and Summer we also experience a time of rejuvenation each year. In winter our thinking grows firm and strong in the physical world to fill our deeds with greater strength. In summer we live in the sleep of Nature, when cosmic life sends us its thoughts in nature’s formations. We are lifted out into the creative spirit of the world. Although we cannot truly grasp with ordinary sight and thinking how growth and development take place, and we mainly sleep through these spiritual happenings, our feeling and will, if dimly, do experience them.

Perhaps our joy in the weeks of spring is something like that of many little children who become quite lively, even giddy, when it’s bedtime. They seem to be expressing their joy that they will soon be in the soul-spiritual world from which they have recently come, which they still vaguely remember. I think that we, too, experience something of this in the spring. We feel happiness in the warmth and beauty surrounding us, but I suspect that, like very small children, we are also welcoming our time to live in spirit existence.

The essence of the thoughts we developed last year (and, of course, in previous years), which we have given over to Christ, now join Him in His rising with the soul of the Earth into the distances of space. In this union with Christ, we bind our “I” with spirit existence.



Artist: David Newbatt

When out of world-wide spaces  
The sun speaks to the human mind,  
And gladness from the depths of  
soul  
Becomes, in seeing, one with light,  
Then rising from the sheath of  
self,  
Thoughts soar to distances of  
space  
And dimly bind  
Man’s being to the spirit’s life.

*tr. by Ruth and Hans Pusch*



**Christ is Risen!**  
Through Him and His  
Resurrection, we and earth  
are gifted with new forces  
of life. Joyfully we seek  
communion with Him and  
His Creation.

