

Rudolf Steiner's Calendar of the Soul Verse 2: The Soul Finds Its Origin

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Verse 2 relates to the Etheric member of the human being and to Condition 2, "Feel ourselves to be a part of life." This condition is integrated within Rudolf Steiner's description of *The Calendar of the Soul* in his Preface to the 1918 edition. He begins:

"**The year's cycle** has a life of its own, and the human soul can feel this life as it participates in it. In listening week by week to the changing language of the year, the soul will find a way to discover also its own nature; it will realize how forces are stirring within its being and giving it new life and strength.

Such forces are awakened if one develops a profound sympathy with the course of the year and all the meaning it brings to the changing world. Only through such sympathy can the soul become aware of the fine but significant threads that bind it to the world into which it is born."

In the beauty of nature we can be aware that the universe is filled with a grand thinking of many hierarchies and beings. If possible, go into nature to feel the essence of this verse in which our thought force is drawn out from the self into the sense world and beyond, where worlds of spirit can find us. Through this we are able to find *in them* the kernel of our true being. But our soul fruits, our new capacities from fall and winter's experiences, we must find in ourselves.

*Ins Äussere des Sinnesalls
Verliert Gedankenmacht ihr
Eigensein;
Es finden Geisteswelten
Den Menschensprossen wieder
Der seinen Keim in ihnen,
Doch seine Seelenfrucht
In sich muss finden.*

Original German by Rudolf Steiner



To outer universe of sense
The force of thinking loses its
own impress;
The worlds of Spirit find
Once more the human offspring,
Whose seed must be in them,
But then whose fruit of soul
In self must find.

tr. by Daisy Aldan.

Remembering that all the weekly verses demand a raised consciousness and awareness of how in each, life forces and soul forces touch, here are some thoughts about the lines of Verse 2.

To outer universe of sense

The force of thinking loses its own impress; In this "etheric" verse, we can picture us as "sleeping man" (as in nighttime or summer) when the power of our thinking ceases to be just our own. If awakened to a higher awareness, we may also reach beyond the sense world into spirit consciousness—where we sense that we are truly a universal being.

The worlds of Spirit find

Once more the human offspring As all seeds "warm" before sprouting, we may feel a warmth in these two lines. The offspring, that is us in our developing I, again this year approach the Spirit World in "summer sleep", that is, not in full, if any, real consciousness. But if our thoughts have reached out *beyond* the sense world, the verse tells us that the Spirit World is able to find us.

Whose seed must be in them,

But then whose fruit of soul Our life forces come from Christ. Since the mid 1930's the growing "I" of man can truly begin to have spiritual consciousness of its origin. But to attain a "waking sleep," so to fully and consciously find our seed origin, this must be on a level approaching our Higher Self, Higher "I".

In self must find. The seed begins to grow downward. Rudolf Steiner described that we are "an upside down plant," so our seed is in the spirit world, but the fruit, our soul yield, must be on this earthly plane where our evolving work is.

About the Calendar of the Soul - Rudolf Steiner (Preface 1918) continued

"In this Calendar the verse given for each week is intended to **help the soul into an experience of that week as part of the life of the whole year.**

The Calendar is designed to express all that echoes in the soul when it unites itself with that life. It aims at **creating a healthy feeling of at-one-ness with the goings-on of nature, and consequently a strong self-discovery**, in the belief that to share in the yearly movement of the world, in the manner exemplified in these verses, is something for which the human soul has a deep longing, if only it understands its own nature."

We may be reminded of the ancient words of wisdom: O Man, know thou thyself! and Rudolf Steiner's explanation. "When one considers the words, 'Know thyself,' in the Greek, they do not mean that you stare into your own inner being, but that you fructify yourself with what streams into you from the spiritual world. **'Know thyself' means: Fructify, impregnate thyself with the content of the spiritual world!**"

Into the sense world's outer realm
The faculty of thought its separate
nature loses,
The Spirit worlds now find again
Their human offspring,
Who needs to find his seed in them,
But in himself
His soul's own fruit.

tr. by Brigitte Knaack



Out in the sense-world's glory
The power of thinking loses
self-confines,
And spirit worlds discover
Again their human offspring,
Who germinates in them
And yet within himself
Must find the fruit of soul.

tr. by Ruth & Hans Pusch

Just as in the verses before Easter the spirit seeks for and reaches the human soul, so in the period after Easter the human soul must rediscover the spirit ruling in the world.

Human thinking imbued with the essence of Christ's Spirit Light, as from Easter Week on, loosens itself from its personal sphere to become "Man of the spheres," able to connect, even if unconsciously, with the World of Spirits. Meditatively we are to spend some time to *reflect* that we grow from a spiritual seed from Spiritual Beings but the fruit of our existence must ripen and be found by us within our own soul.

Realizing that the germ of our "I", our capacity to be a creator of the future, is in the Wisdom of Spirit Beings, we might wonder what about our fruit. The course of evolution is fore-ordained, but that is not entirely true for each of us. We are not the same as Nature, which returns each spring the same as it was the previous spring. Nature in its repetition cannot become more than it is.

Each individual human being, however, is its own species. We each must create our individual fruit ourselves —fortunately, within an "orchard" of many other "species" with whom we grow in concert. The question is, how much of the forces provided by summer do we take in, so that, growing with autumn and winter experiences, we can attain higher inner development?

Nature speaks to us. If all too often we are too busy or pre-occupied to hear, it is comforting that from what through our inner experience we do "hear" and make our own in the following weeks and months of summer, creative capacities will be formed that will blossom and develop in the outer world as fruitful deeds. Nature speaks to us also in the verses of the *Calendar*. Its very design as described above is to help us feel and unite with the year's life, thereby also to know our own nature, ourselves. In many ways its 52 verses are powerful, nourishing companions helping us to achieve the fruitful life that is our aim.

Through meditating the Calendar, we reach a level of higher consciousness each year.

This Month's Virtue is "Devotion becomes the power of sacrifice".*

**The Virtues: Contemplations by Herbert Witzmann, tr. Daisy Aldan 1975*

Here is a beautiful 6th century prayer of devotion attributed to St. Columba of Ireland.

Be Thou a bright flame before me,
Be Thou a guiding star above me,
Be Thou a smooth path before me,
Be Thou a kindly shepherd behind me,
Today...tonight...and forever.
Alone with none but You my God,
I journey on my way.
What need I fear
When You are near,
O Lord of night and day.
More secure am I within Your hand
than if a multitude did 'round me stand.
~ Amen



Iona Abbey on the remote island of Iona, Scotland, still with a functioning religious community, was established in the 6th century by Columba (of Ireland) and was the launching place for Christianity's spread through Scotland and northern England. This prayer, attributed to St. Columba, is a call to us to trust that the God who led and preserved him in that rugged wilderness, is still our guide today. The Benedictine Abbey Church, 1203, made Cathedral, 1499, was restored in early 1900's.

