In Verse 20 our soul feels strongly cautioned to look truly to where our inner strength and guidance comes from and not to lose that "cosmic light" that's been flowing into us from summer's high lit universe.

May joy and strength be with you!

Rudolf Steiner's Calendar of the Soul Verse 20: Nurture Cosmic Light Within

Eloise Krivosheia

Verse 20 ends the third series of 7 verses and also starts the fourth series. Thus it relates both to the seventh member of the human being, Spirit Human, with Condition 7, "Unite all previous six conditions in your living," and to the first member of the human being, the Physical, thus to Condition 1, "Strive to lead a healthy life, physically and spiritually." Here also begins the fourth step in the "Christianized" Eightfold Path, which is Right Action.

Verse 20, bearing a Luciferic challenge, is also a "window" or "corner verse," relating to Lion, the second of the four corner signs of the Zodiac. (See chart on p. 3**)** The four corner verses 7, 20, 33, and 46, each bear the gravest of warnings regarding soul death. Forming a cross, also a perfect square in the zodiac, their theme is totally different from that of the rest of the Calendar. They are the only ones in which "death" and "extinguish" appear. We may ask why such warnings are given?

So fühl ich erst mein Sein,
Das fern vom Welten-Dasein
In sich, sich selbst erlöschen
Und bauend nur auf eignem Grunde
In sich, sich selbst ertöten müsste.

original German by Rudolf Steiner

Anne Stockton

But now I feel my being
That far from cosmic Being
In Self, must self extinguish
And building on its own foundation
In Self, bring death upon itself.

tr. by Daisy Aldan

"It may indeed strike us as a drastic thought even to contemplate that we could bring death on our own future development toward spiritual freedom, but the verse does not mince words. This future is still in an embryological state and could be stillborn. It is up to us to nurture it wisely." (RVanS)

Feeling our Being already far from our high Mid-Summer Cosmic connection, we have also a strong feeling that in order to keep and move on to greater consciousness, we must not ever lose our new sense of Spirit connection. We must, in the gradually waning light of Summer, beware of unfolding our Self too strongly out of our *own* powers alone lest we destroy that new sense of self which early summer brought forth.

Conscious of earth's bloom of growth changing into autumn's breath of dying—dryer landscapes and harvested fields now appearing—the expanded soul, having reached out to the cosmos, having received the "Word of Worlds," and having taken in a "newly conceived germ of consciousness", now feels, "I must subordinate my lower self for if I leave my higher self and build on my lower self entirely, it will result in death to my true self." But this must not be an *unconscious* (Luciferic) sacrifice of the lower self!

Anxiety Dennis Klocek

I feel at last my life's reality
Which severed from the world's existence
Would in itself obliterate itself
And building only on its own foundation
Would in itself bring death upon itself.

tr. by Ruth and Hans Pusch

Often Rudolf Steiner brings to our awareness that spiritual life arises from and depends upon the destruction of physical life. Death is necessary for new to arise. Tearing down and rebuilding provides new energy, as happens in digestion–for change, for growth. At night we build up with the higher hierarchies what we tear down in us during the day. Thinking itself destroys bodily forces, which must be built up every night in sleep so that new consciousness can be achieved the next day.

Aware of fields harvested and waiting to be newly seeded, the soul in the verse feels strongly that in order to rise to a new higher state, its lower, self-centered being must yield. It must pass through a kind of lower I "death" in order to awaken a new existence, a new feeling of higher self within itself. This verse offers a kind of probation period. Do we need to examine, judge, and get through this time until the path to light begins again? We sense value in examining our ordinary daily life.

Verse 20 can in this sense be called "The Verse of Freedom." It is when we can willingly sacrifice something that is holding us back, that we can then experience a sense of being freed, and we can rise to a new sense of self and purpose. We can rise above our earthly self with its innate egotism.

Thus only do I feel my being,
Which far from world existence,
Would in itself extinguish itself
And building on its own ground only
Would in itself bring death upon itself.

tr. by Brigitte Knaack

And now I feel that my existence,
Remote from the world's reality,
Alone might cease to be,
For if it only built on its own base
Alone it would bring death upon itself.

tr. by. John Thompson .

We experience a strong impulse to weave our actions harmoniously with our thinking, into how we see life; and to act harmoniously with others in our surroundings. We as human beings are now more responsible than ever *for our actions—and our thoughts*. But we need to weigh their effects. And we must be free in thought and action, not so burdened by general opinion, 'public opinion', which Rudolf Steiner tells us will grow ever heavier as evolution progresses, that we lose independent thinking.

And so the verse contains the strong feeling of recognition that I can no longer be just what I once was, my lower self, my egotistical, and so Luciferic nature self, but must reach for connection to my higher self, to the Light, to Christ. The stark reality is that otherwise I bring death upon myself.

Steiner's *Between Death and Rebirth*, GA 141, Lecture 7, pp. 120 to 133 provides an understanding of just what this 'death' is and how certain Luciferic beings want to bring about a dimming of our consciousness, but also what a strong counterbalance is provided to us.

Calendar of the Soul Verse 33

The **polar opposite** verse from Verse 20 is Verse 33, corresponding to four weeks before Christmas. *In this translation by Ruth and Hans Pusch of Verse 33 we see a reflection but transition of the mood of Verse 20.*

So fühl ich erst die Welt,
Die ausser meiner Seele Miterleben
An sich nur frostig leeres Leben
Und ohne Macht sich offenbarend,
In Seelen sich von neuem schaffend,
In sich den Tod nur finden könnte.

I feel at last the world's reality
Which, lacking the communion of my soul,
Would by itself be frosty, empty life,
Revealing it is powerless
To recreate itself in souls,
Would in itself find only death.

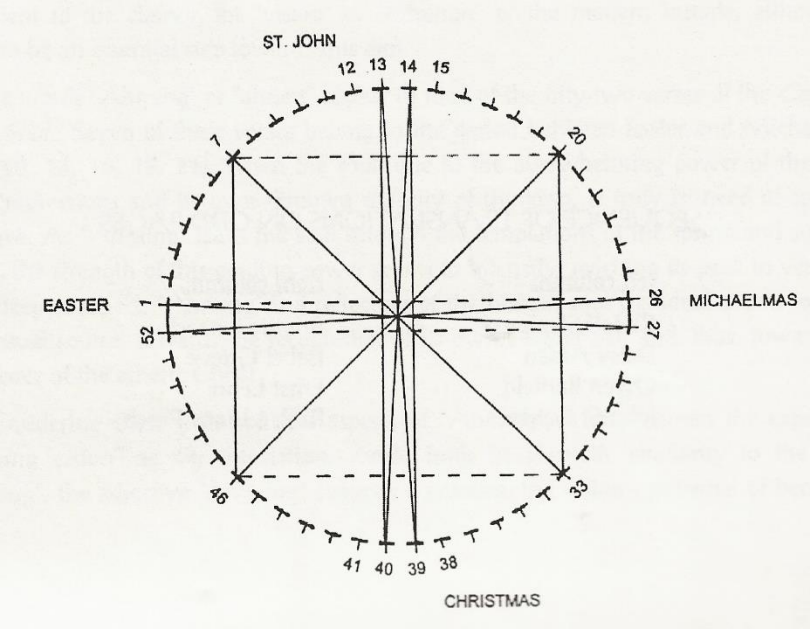
Through meditating the Calendar, our goal is to reach a level of higher consciousness each year.

A Note on the Dates and Numbers in the Calendar

By Karl König

"When Rudolf Steiner introduced the *Calendar of the Soul* in 1912, he emphasized that one must always begin with the first mantram on Easter Sunday. Since Easter falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon of spring, the dates for the fifty-two weeks differ from year to year. (The 1912 dates often given in translations of the Calendar, can therefore only be approximations of the current year's dates.)

"Mirroring the passage of the sun between the equinoxes, from Easter to Michaelmas (verse 1-26) and back from Michaelmas to Easter (verse 27-52), the Calendar of the Soul is composed of 2 x 26 corresponding verses, revealing the polarity of the earth's rhythm of breathing out (reaching its greatest height at the time of the summer solstice) and breathing in (reaching its greatest depth at the time of the winter solstice).



"If one contemplates each verse together with its corresponding verse (e.g. 1/52, 7/46, 13/40, etc.), one can experience a heightened awareness of this polarity during the course of the year. If one also includes the two seasonal opposites of the two corresponding verses (e.g. 1/52 & 27/26, 7/46 & 33/20, 13/40 & 39/14, etc.), one will experience these as a rectangle of interrelated seasonal moods within the cycle of the year.

"A single verse, contemplated in isolation, is unlikely to reveal its mystery, but if one contemplates it in the context of its progression and transformation during the course of the year, which is most beautifully reflected in this intimate fourfold interrelation, the veil may be lifted."

The diagram gives an illustration of this basic structure of the Calendar. Verses 7, 20, 33 and 46 can be seen forming a square, also a cross, in the zodiac. Often, Verses 7 and 20 are viewed as revealing Luciferic temptations; whereas 33 and 46 show more worldly Ahrimanic challenges. These four positions are also associated with the Gospel writers and their zodiacal connections: Mark, Bull or Taurus; Luke, Lion or Leo; John, the Eagle or as fallen, the Scorpion; and Matthew, Waterman or Aquarius."

Note that these "corner" verses occupy the central position in each of the groups of 13 verses.