

Rudolf Steiner's Calendar of the Soul Verse 3: The Soul Frees and Finds Itself

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Verse 3 relates to the Astral member of the human being and to Condition 3 from *Knowledge of Higher Worlds*, "Know thoughts and feelings to be as important for the world as actions."

The 52 verses of the year may be seen in rhythmic sets of 7; the verses of each set relating to a member of the human being in the order: physical, etheric, astral, I, Spirit Self, Life Spirit, and Spirit Human. In this third week, an astral verse, the awakening I can feel that it has a new view of itself through a higher perceiving of where it belongs in the universe, where it has come from, and who are its creators.

Every year in this seasonal resurrection, the "I" can begin to "forget its personal self", freeing it from the lower astral passions, desires, and subjective feelings that weigh down or act as hindrances to living in the higher self. Thus released, the I is free to be able to fathom its true being in Cosmic Being.

Es spricht zum Weltenall,
Sich selbst vergessend
Und seines Urstands eingedenk,
Des Menschen wachsend Ich:
In dir, befreiend mich
Aus meiner Eigenheiten Fessel,
Ergründe ich mein echtes Wesen.

original German by Rudolf Steiner.



Liane Collot d'Herbois: artist

To cosmic All there speaks,
Forgetting self
And mindful of its primal state,
The waxing "I" of Man:
In you, in liberating
Myself from my subjective fetters,
I fathom essence of my being.

tr. by Daisy Aldan.

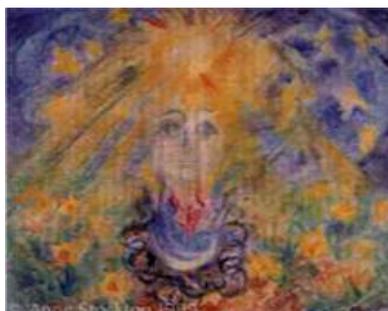
During Springtime with the world coming alive, we try to grasp in thought and feeling the essence of our being, we ask that our thoughts and feelings be true! We try to be mindful (*eingedenk*) of our primal state—our original state with the Cosmic All—but mindful at this stage is more feeling than intellect.

Ergründe (to fathom) also at this stage is closer to a powerful feeling rather than a knowing, for we don't yet have clear knowledge of our essence—of our "I", of who we are. We are still much surrounded by our subjective fetters (*Fessel*), by our upbringing and our environment.

Awakening of the "I" has begun, as we experienced in Verse 1 the Sun speaking to the human senses and understanding, and in Verse 2 Spirit Worlds finding us as their offspring and we recognizing our seed of origin in them. The awakening continues in Verse 3. The "I" continues communication between human being, Sun and the Worlds of Spirit. *Es Spricht, There Speaks!* is a mighty beginning to the verse.

To the universe there speaks
the evolving human ego—
forgetting itself—
aware of its original state:
"As I liberate myself from the chains
of my own subjectivity,
I fathom my true being in you."

tr. by Tom Mellett



Freed from chains of selfhood – Anne Stockton

Thus to the World-All speaks,
In self-forgetfulness
And mindful of its primal state,
The growing human I:
In you, if I can free myself
From fetters of my selfhood,
I sound the depths of my true being.

tr. by Ruth and Hans Pusch

The "I" begins to express what it feels in the encounter with Spirit and wants liberation—freedom from bondage, the chains, of its lower nature—so as to be able to meet its higher nature. It wants to overcome *negativity* in the astral body, realizing the importance of thoughts and feelings for the world as a whole in which it now feels itself. Becoming free of subjectivity so that we can ground ourselves in our true being is the task of Spring and early Summer. Our "I" speaks to the World All with consciousness of this.

Still, we recognize that although the God in Man is beginning to stir to wakefulness, the words, "In You I fathom my true being," do not yet take on the character of an accomplished and finished state. Made in freedom, they are but the dawn of a new self-assertion.

True spiritual discernment will come when we learn to penetrate into nature, and growing through her reach spiritual worlds, from there to penetrate into our own inner being where we meet the spiritual world within us. (Ch. 2, *Knowledge of Higher Worlds* describes the blooming/dying meditation for this training.)

Here, in Verse 3, we embark on the inner path of the soul—the path of the consciousness soul through the year with nature and the Christ.

This verse helps the impulse to rise up into the domain of consciousness and to form from it a longing for a higher state.

The "I" wants its thoughts to be grounded in its higher self—not to be imprisoned in trite thoughts.

In the last line, *Ergründe*, to ground, can mean also to investigate, to probe, to explore thoroughly, to discover, to fathom, or strike root. Translating the last line, "I ground myself in my true being," points not so much to the soul's current attainment but to the goal for which the soul must now prepare itself.

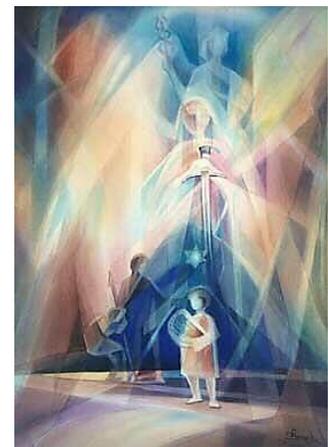
It takes courage to look thus into one's being! But the "I" can encourage itself to live creatively, lovingly. Then we can reach freedom.

--For example, if one is troubled in a group, the "I" can look into what it is doing or saying that might be bringing unwanted things back to it.

A further encouragement in the Verse is noted by Patsy Scala in her *Weekly Meditations*. "Knowing that our idiosyncratic personality traits are not who we really are, that we are part of the essence of the sacred that permeates the world and all that is in it, we can turn to the world, aware that we can and do make a difference.

"We can speak to the universe, knowing not only that we will be heard, but also that we are speaking to another part of our Self, our greater essence. We can become the universe that we truly are."

In this painting by Leszek Forczek we see how music can heal and help the soul to feel its powerful spiritual helpers: first, one's own guardian angel with protective lance and shield, then the great archangel Michael offering more protective, inspiring, guiding, strengthening and heart bestowing Sun forces, and Raphael (above) streaming healing Mercury forces.



The Eightfold Path

Inasmuch as Steiner's verses are also connected to the eight-fold path of Buddha, we may remember through observing these teachings in our daily life, that the eight form a path to ennoble, to purify the astral body. Each set of 7 Calendar verses is especially related to one of the eight teachings. The first seven verses relate to the first teaching, which may be summarized as

-Observe how our ideas and conceptions are acquired. Our ideas must be a true mirror of the outer world, not clouded by our subjectivity.

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