

Rudolf Steiner's Calendar of the Soul Verse 46: Ahrimanic Threat and Memory

Eloise Krivosheia

Verse 46 relates both to our seventh member, our undeveloped Spirit Man, with Condition 7, and to our first developed member, the Physical, relating to Condition 1, "Strive to lead a healthy life, physically and spiritually." Condition 7, "Unite all previous 'conditions' in my living," offers to understand life as these conditions demand; and with the understanding that in the fullness of my being my future divine form is Spirit Man, Man being the spiritual name of our hierarchy. V. 46 is thus both a finish and a new beginning.

Among the many rhythms in the Calendar of the Soul, there are 8 sets of 7 verses, cycling in spiral form through each year. Because each quarter of the year contains 13 weeks, in every 2 sets of 7 verses, the middle 7th verse, serves both to end a set and start the next set. This week (also Step 8 of the Buddhist 8-fold path, "Right Contemplation"), we start the 8th set of 7 weeks, which takes us through to Easter.

As described earlier, the four Corner Verses, 7, 20, 33, and 46, correspond to the middle of each quarter in the year. They each relate differently to a kind of "crossing over the threshold". After each corner verse, a new soul mood can be felt and an increase of consciousness for the further journey through the year. These corner verses carry severe warnings for the Soul —conditions to which it must "wake up." Failure to do so would bring on a kind of death to the soul. The challenges of the Summer and Fall Verses 20 and 33 are considered Luciferic; those of Winter and Spring Verses 46 and 7 relate to Ahriman.

Die Welt, sie drohet zu betäuben

Der Seele eingeborene Kraft;

Nun trete du, Erinnerung,

Aus Geistestiefen leuchtend auf

Und stärke mir das Schauen,

Das nur durch Willenskräfte

Sich selbst erhalten kann.

original German by Rudolf Steiner



Anne Stockton

The world, it threatens to benumb

The inborn force within my soul.

Now you, my memory, arise;

Shine forth from spirit depths

And strengthen my beholding,

Which but through forces of the will

Is able to sustain itself.

tr. by Brigitte Knaack

The Ahrimanic threat in Verse 46 stems from something too strong — world processes which would have us move too quickly, without proper thought clarity, stunning, numbing our consciousness. We are meant to stop and "take stock" of things. To aid thoughtful perception, a different soul faculty must be actively called forth and practiced —the power of true memory.

But this memory is not what is normally thought of, for this memory "shines forth from spirit depths," that holy place in us from where true imaginations arise. It connects to a growing clarity of thinking, to a higher self and warmth of will, which since Christmas we've experienced in further development. What must shine forth now is both a warmth and a clarity of thinking from strong, warmth of heart memory.



Leszek Forczek

The world is threatening to benumb

The innate powers of the soul;

Now, Memory, from spirit depths

Appear in shining light

To strengthen my beholding

Which only through the power of will

Can be sustained.

tr. by John Thomson



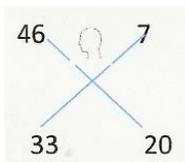
Iris Sullivan

This "memory from spirit depths" has the ability to "strengthen my beholding," that is, "clear seeing with heart and will forces". The threatened "inborn forces of the soul" in Line 2 refers to the human capacity for thinking with which we are born, as well as to our rising consciousness.

Can I hold and safeguard these inborn gifts heightened in these last months? Memory is directed toward the past but is a necessary guide toward the future— now toward even a question asked these days — "Who am I?" Positioned mid-way between Christmas and Easter, week 46 presents a strong challenge.

Well aware of the threat, the Soul puts forth a real cry for help to the "Memory" that shines from spirit depths. Here our developing spirit self is given a real opportunity to act in freedom. These seven pre-Easter weeks are closely connected to the seven following Easter in that what we ourselves do now for our own development has a generating power for our progress after Easter. We do get a new start from Easter, but failing to take ourselves clearly in hand now compromises our progress after Easter.

Enlightened with memory of the Spirit's creative powers witnessed at Christmas, and with will-strengthened memory waking up to the challenge of corner verse 46, the soul, beholding more clearly the inner nature of events, can properly make the crossing past the Ahrimanic threat.



The 4 verses have been called the "Judas" cross, sometimes shown in old documents, so I've been told, with a little skull and crossbones between 46 and 7, indicating Judas' failure to properly make the crossing. But replacement now by a small figure of a head points to an ego taking right action from a higher vision, from increased understanding.

By striving to look to the *inner* nature of events, we'll not feel "benumbed" by barren mid-winter darkness. Will-strengthened perception and our own powers, spirit-given, have the strength for us to act in peace, love and light within the world.

The world, it threatens to benumb
The inborn force within my soul;
Now, memory, come to the fore,
Illuminating from Spirit deeps,
And strengthen my perception,
Which but through force of will
Is able to endure.

tr. by Daisy Aldan.



The world, it threatens to overpower
The inborn forces of the soul.
Now, Memory, arise,
Shining from Spirit depths
And strengthen thou my vision
Which only through the power of will
Can be maintained.

tr. by Isabel Grieve

Corresponding Calendar of the Soul Verses 7 and 46

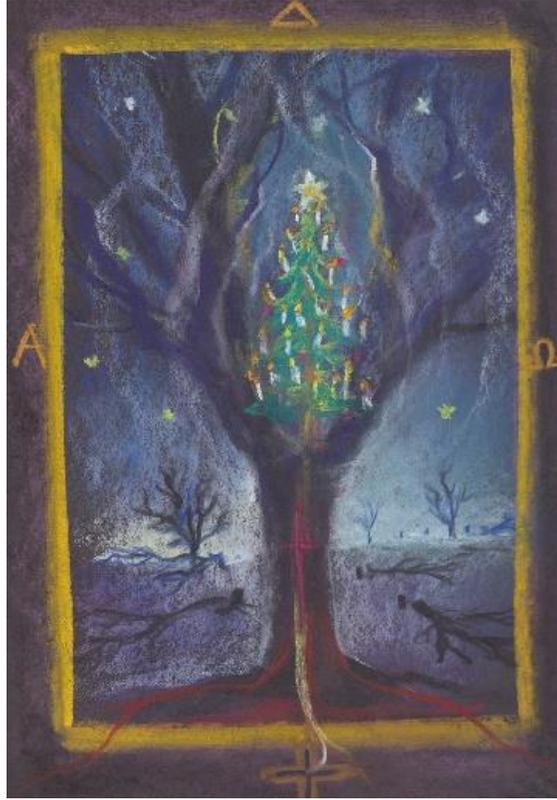
In Verse 7, one week before Whitsun, here translated by Giseler Weber, the threat is that the thinking, with senses so entranced with the world's burgeoning shine, desires to fly away. The rescuing power of something called *ahnen*, often translated as boding, must be cultivated. *Ahnen* is a soul capacity between a wakeful thinking and a dreamy knowing-feeling. Not knowledge based, yet this feeling seems a knowing beyond what is usual for knowledge. A knowing at the tips of the fingers but not yet grasped we may say.

Mein Selbst, es drohet zu entfliehen,
Vom Weltenlichte mächtig angezogen.
Nun trete du mein Ahnen
In deine Rechte kräftig ein,
Ersetze mir des Denkens Macht,
Das in der Sinne Schein
Sich selbst verlieren will.

My self, it threatens to escape
By cosmic light attracted mightily.
Now you, O my divining, enter
Into your rights with force and strength,
Replace for me the power of thought
Which in the senses shine
Desires to lose itself.

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

In times of stress and coldness, I shall remember Spirit connections made and strengthened at Christmas time and in the peace of the Holy Nights.



Lest I lose my balance in benumbing times, I shall in consciousness seek Memory in spirit depths that it shall appear in Shining Light to strengthen my beholding, which with the power of will I shall sustain.

