

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

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Dear Friends,

On Easter Sunday begins the profound *Calendar of the Soul*, an unfolding path of development of the soul through the year. In new ways every verse reveals our soul's inner connection to the life of the year as well as to the care of cosmic beings. All 52 verses bring new considerations, enabling us each year to perceive our gradual raising, widening of consciousness. Aware of Christ always at our side, we experience in each verse new communications with both sense world and supersensible world.

Calendar of the Soul Verse 1 – Thus with Easter the year's path of the "birth of the I" begins. It is 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's 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 can feel a particular gratitude because of this innate knowledge of our light, our understanding, of 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 physical experience for our soul and brings spiritual 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 reaching 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" further carries the idea of "deepest comprehension." The Sun, World Light, speaks to us, wanting us 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 working in a plant is similar to the way we shape our thinking.

More about the Sun and German "Sinn" and further thoughts from Roberta van Schilfgaarde.

In the first verse of the year, the "Aries Sun" speaks to us. It speaks to our Menschen "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.

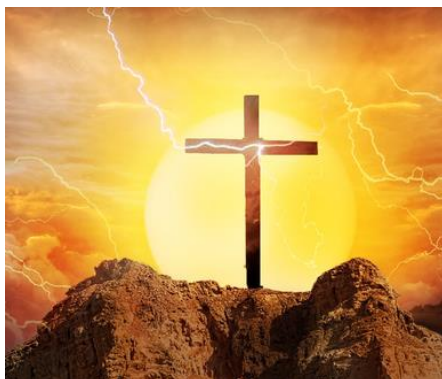
The essence of the thoughts we developed last year (and, of course, in previous years), which we have given over to Christ, now join Him in His rising with the soul of the Earth into the distances of space. In this union with Christ, we bind our "I" with spirit existence.



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.

