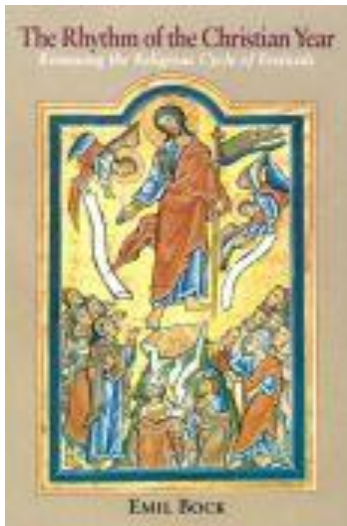


# FESTIVAL OF WHITSUN

Sunday, May 23, 2021

*Acts: 2: 1-4.*

*And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*



Festival of the higher self and the universal human being  
Festival of the Holy Spirit  
Festival of Flowers  
Festival of United Soul Endeavor and spirit community  
Festival of the purified astral body  
- the lifting out of one's egotism into universal caring  
- out of opinion into truth  
- out of opinion into wisdom  
Festival of the human unbound from materialism



**Excerpts from**

**Emil Bock**

***Whitsun: Festival of the Future***

***Holy Spirit – Healing Spirit***

**and**

***The Festival of United Soul-Endeavor***

**Rudolf Steiner June 7, 1908**

***Whitsuntide: Festival of the Liberation of the Human Spirit***

**Rudolf Steiner May 23, 1904**

***“You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free”***

# Whitsun: Festival of the Future

Emil Bock 1992 *The Rhythm of the Christian Year* (Excerpts)

The Whitsun festival is not bestowed on us by nature. It must be uncovered out of the innermost reaches of our soul. It is *the festival of the future*, for the Holy Spirit, which we hope touches us at Whitsun, it is always that which is not yet in existence. It is that which must ever come into existence through a new act of creation. Properly speaking, the Holy Spirit *is* the future. This is the reason why we still have to grow up toward the point of properly celebrating the Whitsun festival. We must mature toward that mighty blowing of the Holy Spirit. For Whitsun is the festival of our true higher self, which as yet only hovers above us. At the same time, it is the festival of community; not the one that emerges from human intimacies but the one that arises through the *harmonizing of our higher selves* that are one in Christ.

Whitsun is the esoteric festival of Christianity, the festival of the secret still in concealment. For while Christianity's outer tradition has always known of the Whitsun festival, any fulfillment of the Whitsun concept was possible only far from



busy external circumstances... Of course, there were sects that spoke of the Holy Spirit but their pronouncements were only caricatures of what lived within the quiet mystic, esoteric circles of Christendom. In the Middle Ages, far removed from the mundane world, the brotherhood of the Holy Grail knew the nature of the Holy Spirit. They knew what it signifies when the dove descends on the sacred chalice. They experienced it; it touched and filled their souls as a higher, the actual reality.

But what does it mean to say that the experience of the Holy Spirit has always been the content of esoteric Christianity? It means that the celebration of Whitsun is not something for beginners but presupposes properly prepared souls. It applies to those souls who are already advanced in prayer and a meditative life.

Even during the very first Whitsun, fifty days after the morning of Easter, what had existed in regard to the Messiah conception now combined with the disciples' experience through mighty and mysterious destiny dispensations of Providence.

... But a "Whitsun" festival had always existed outwardly: the people celebrated it as the festival of the first fruits, the first gifts of newly awakening nature. Now, in the new esoteric context, Whitsun is the festival of the first fruits of the spirit.

As the first ray of the sun broke on that first Whitsun day of the wing-ed flames, the disciples experienced the beginning of a higher soul condition, the first ignition of a higher spirit spark. Mighty fulfillment blew through the room when, on this occasion, **the fiery spirit flames blazed forth directly out of the Easter sun and brought along the experience of the inner presence of the Resurrected One.**

The miracle of Whitsun morn blossoms forth from that of Ascension as does the flower from the bud. Christ's Ascension does not signify his farewell from this world. He did not disappear into a world beyond like the one where we seek our dead. He had already emerged from there through the Resurrection.

We probably comprehend the Ascension event best through the words that Christ spoke to the disciples in preparing them for it: 'I go to the Father. In my Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you.' This is a prediction which, for those to whom it applies, is not fulfilled merely after their death. He does not go to the Father so that those who are his, might be accepted in the eternal mansions after death. No, in the midst of life he prepares a place for them where the many mansions of God are. He does this by his Ascension. Through it, he does not distance himself but increases and consolidates his presence.

What does he refer to when he speaks of the Father? The Father is that mighty, all-embracing, all-supportive, blessing Being; all creatures and all hierarchical beings from the Angels up to the Cherubim and Seraphim are limbs on his corporeality. The whole sense and spirit world are His body and His soul. He is the Father of us all. But humanity finds itself in a tragically separated condition from the Father. On earth, we humans become egoistic, attain a certain detachment, an independence. Yet our true higher self is always with the Father, not in us.

Through the tragic developments that ensued from the Fall, this rift has come about between heaven and earth. The same rift that separates earth and heaven divides human beings as well. All oppression, bitterness and hindrances of earth existence are due to it. This basically is the truth which the Old Testament places in the foreground: that God is separated from humanity by an abyss. But the reason for this is that

humans are separated from their higher self. Their true being is in God. Our earthly being stands before closed doors.

What happened forty days after Easter was that the Resurrected One in his spirit body, which was becoming more radiant and stronger, grew beyond this abyss. When he says, 'I go to the Father,' this means he does what as a consequence of the Fall humans cannot do. He crosses over the abyss with the purified human condition he took along through death. Thus he paves the path to the Father for the human soul. He builds the bridge over the abyss between heaven and earth, between earthly man and true spirit man, and thus between man and God.

Christ's Ascension in fact marks the moment when the saying, 'I and the Father are one,' began to be true in the fullest sense of the word. We see this illustrated in art history, for example, in that, starting at a certain point in time, Christ was depicted in the image of the Father. The man, Jesus of Nazareth, did not look the way he is represented in most paintings of Christ. The bearded Christ image is not a reproduction of how he looked when he walked on this earth. It is an imagination of the fact that the Son and the Father became one. The Son assumes the features of the Father. This is a mystery of the event of Ascension. From Ascension on, when we turn to Christ, we come also to the Father, and with that we enter the sphere where our own true self is present.

It is thus a Pentecostal theme to speak of the ascension of man. We humans are now allowed to follow the tracks of the one who has ascended to heaven; a path up to the heights has been prepared that we can henceforth tread. There, we grow wings. For this to happen we must let the ground of our soul become warm. Just as air only rises when it becomes warm, so it is with our inner being. If our soul does not become warm and animated, it does not rise. Prayer is the means of warming the inmost essence of soul in order that the soul can carry out its



own ascension. Here, it is neither that type of prayer consisting of mere words from the head—which does not warm the soul's ground—nor is it the kind of prayer into which all sorts of wishes and desires from the will's region make one appeal 'for something.'

Solely and purely through prayer *from the heart*, from the feeling human nature, can the soul's very being become warm and animated. This is the form of prayer in which we ask for nothing whatsoever and set out solely on the path to the Father. Then the heart becomes warm and the warmth allows our soul to ascend to where our true self exists. The soul's union with the spirit then comes to pass and only in this way does man's being become complete. The ego we possess, which is merely the shell of an ego, is then filled with the higher self as its true content. Thus we approach that sphere out of which the flames of Whitsun descended upon the disciples.

On the one hand, the Whitsun flames have warmth; on the other hand, they possess light. *Their warmth must arise out of human hearts like a fire.* Then the Spirit responds out of the sphere of the Father, where Christ and the Father are now one. The light flame of the Spirit sinks down, joining the warmth flame of the praying heart. The light flame from above answers to the warmth flame from below. Only when we have actively striven with sufficient patience and endurance to become warm, may we hope for illumination. Becoming warm is our task, then illumination is the answer from heaven. The reciprocal gift for the Ascension-efforts by the human soul is the gift of Pentecost. As the gifts of light from a higher realm come toward us, Whitsun expands into the world.

Now thinking can change and with that the whole activity of human life, which today is formed so utterly out of the intellectual forces. Everyday thinking proceeds from the brain. It moves superficially over external objects and remains

fettered to the physical realm. To be clever, to be bright and to calculate things does not require creativity. It all originates from the brain, more noticeably in one person, less in another.

But once *the human being truly thinks* and not just his brain in cleverness, then the Holy Spirit joins such thinking, for then the true higher self thinks in man. Still, to begin with, without the Christ's Grace of Ascension, this higher self is separated from us. When, in future Christ's Grace bestows on us a new thinking, a new culture can finally come into being from the breath that touches us out of the Spirit of Pentecost.



Iris Sullivan artist

# Holy Spirit — Healing Spirit

Emil Bock 1992 *The Rhythm of the Christian Year* (Excerpt)

The festival of Whitsun is a serious admonition every year, all its radiance notwithstanding. It illuminates a mystery that Christendom has so far neglected to realize.

On Good Friday and Easter, we recall the mighty, objective **renewal of existence** that came about through the Event of Golgotha. The meaning of Whitsun, on the other hand, is the **renewal of consciousness** that must be brought about by individuals on their own. We work on the fulfillment of this task if we apply Easter's God given power to sanctify and Christianize humanity's cultural life and our thinking that extends even to the pursuits of science.

'Holy Spirit' existed at the beginning of humanity's earthly evolution. Through the Christ impulse it can and should exist in a new sense as we look towards the future. What is 'holy' is whole. In the primal beginning, world and man were still whole. As yet, the separating, wounding tear between creator and creation, heaven and earth, and spirit and substance did not exist. The open human soul was still an instrument of divine thinking and will, and thus a vessel of the Holy Spirit.

But then the tear of separation broke creation asunder because man, who desired to think and cognize *on his own*, ate of the Tree of Knowledge. The human being and earth not only fell from the state of being embedded in the womb of the deity, man even separated from his own higher self, which borne by the Holy Spirit remained, but could only hover above him. Less and less could it send its effects into the human being who increasingly became cut off and isolated. When man ate of the Tree of Knowledge, he lost the Tree of Life. Above all, man's gradually awakening thinking and perceiving increasingly absorbed death. It ceased to be open in Madonna-like fashion

to the spirit. It became more human and masculine. The path led from Holy Spirit to unholy spirit and finally to the spirit-devoid condition of our days. How can the spirit in the human being turn once again to the Holy Spirit?

Only a Christianity that struggles through to the decisive Whitsun ascent can build the bridge across the abyss and find ways for healing the wound. This is a Christianity that, while it knows well the mystery of the ancient Holy Spirit, lives above all with the new Christian Holy Spirit and bravely strives for a fundamental renewal of thinking, of world perspective and science.

When in the ninth century, the great rift opened between the East and West Churches in disagreement about the Holy Spirit, a further tragedy occurred when the Church defined the human being as having no spirit member. Thus, although far from the outside world, the quiet, little-known groups around the Holy Grail were considered heretical by the Church. Within these, profound certainty concerning the Holy Spirit prevailed.



When the sacred chalice was lifted up, the members of the circle experienced the descent of the dove of the spirit upon the chalice with the same certainty with which they experienced earthly visible processes.

In so far as the mysteries of the Grail are the mysteries of the human blood and heart, all their experiences were of an *individual* nature in the most intimate sense. The stage of the miracle was the innermost center of the human personality. The chalice, which, when it lit up, had a healing, nourishing and inspiring effect, represented the human heart. The miracle took place inasmuch as the **power of Christ's blood came alive in the human blood**. Here, the new spirit-fount streamed; here, Christendom came into its own in the Pentecostal-Whitsun sense.

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The tragic fate of the Church in the ninth century has turned today into the catastrophic fate of nations and humanity. The Seed for the political East-West problem that threatens humanity like a nightmare lies in the division between the Eastern and Western Churches over the uncertainty concerning the Spirit. It started on religious and ecumenical ground. Today it has arrived in the arena of political tension over power. The East still draws from the ancient pre-individual spirit, which by now is directed exclusively to earthly concerns. With final clever efforts, the collective principle is brought to bear against the individual one.

We speak of the freedom of the individual in the West. But by saying so, we move on uncertain ground because, extending all the way to atomic science, we have had to subscribe to a soulless thinking alien to man, a thinking that remained outside the Christian impulse.

Where is the middle between the dangerous power-concentrations in East and West? Where is the spiritual Europe, where is Christianity? Anything torn apart and ailing due to

spiritual reasons in turn can only be healed by spiritual impulses. This is true to a particularly significant degree of the great wound on the body of humanity, the schism and abyss between West and East. Only a Christianity that struggles through to the decisive Whitsun-ascent, a Christianity that, while it knows well the mystery of the ancient Holy Spirit, lives above all with the new Christian (individual) Holy Spirit and bravely strives for a fundamental renewal of thinking, of world perspective and science, can build the bridge across the abyss and find ways for healing the wound.

Could it not be possible for a Christian stream—its low profile notwithstanding—renewed as it is along the lines of the Grail movement, a Christian stream that continues in a modern way what then was only possible in obscurity and concealment, to bring down the healing remedy from heaven and thus to fulfill the mission of the European middle?

\*



Joseph Mildorfer Swiss 18<sup>th</sup> c painter

When the fiery tongues descended upon the disciples on Whitsun morning, this bestowal of Grace, apportioned as it was to humanity, by no means came upon them merely from outside without their having had a hand in it. The love of Christ which, following the 'loss' of Good Friday and Ascension, now truly blazed forth in the souls of the disciples along with the amazed awakening that brought belated comprehension and cognition.

This love worked like a fire that from within melted away the hard sheathing covering the human being, thus opening the portal to the higher self which, in the sphere of the Holy Spirit,



hovered above in longing. Within their own being, the disciples rediscovered the One whom they had lost outwardly. To an unimaginable degree, they thus came into their own. Along with the Resurrected One, their own true 'I' moved into them.

Whitsun was made possible only on the basis of Easter. The Spirit event emerged from the Son event. In the Resurrection of Christ, '**sovereignty of spirit over matter,**' the most sublime goal for the direction of human lives, manifested fully for the first time. The Christ ego had moved into the rigidified human form, separated as it was from God and the sphere of the Holy Spirit. This Ego had fully penetrated and transformed the sheaths of soul, body and blood. Christ Jesus was not only the divine being who had become man, he was moreover the first complete human being.

Jesus of Nazareth experienced the Pauline principle, 'Not I, but Christ in me' in unique greatness and wholeness. Spirit not only hovered over him; it penetrated him through and through. The sickness of sin (separation) to which human nature is fettered and which places man under the spell of death was healed in him through the fire of the Spirit. Resurrection was the highest intensification of this healing.

The significance of Whitsun and Damascus is inherent in the fact that henceforth, at least in germinal form, the transforming indwelling and sovereignty of the Spirit became effective in other human beings, something that in peerless greatness had been attained in Jesus of Nazareth for all mankind.

Through the baptism, the miracle of spirit communication and spirit sovereignty continued on to the first Christians. This Spirit baptism was not brought about from outside. The 'act of faith' took place as a fiery process within their hearts. Through it, the cognizing, longing-filled love for Christ turned into Christ's indwelling in the human soul; this then became linked with the entry of the Holy, Healing Spirit, that, *from within*, can

become master over matter. The spirit is in man!

The wondrous healings that belonged among the miracles of early Christian community life quite certainly did not occur from without. When healing resulted, it took place from within as the spirit fruit of the living Christ-indwelling. Today also the higher power that can fill your heart through the act of your faith is a healing power.

The act of faith is the inner Grail-process. When the sacred chalice is lifted up in the castle of the Grail and begins to glow, then the words: 'Faith lives, the dove hovers,' resound. The dove of the Spirit descends upon the human heart aglow in faith, and the heart's grail sends healing, nourishing, enlightening effects into one's own being and into the human and natural environs.



We celebrate Whitsun in the right way when we strive in a manner befitting the modern age for a fulfillment of the Spirit mysteries which, like a premonition and foretaste, shone forth once in early Christendom and in the context of the Grail.

Thinking in particular requires healing by the Spirit. As long as only the brain thinks, the reign of the lifeless, of death, spreads out evermore.

When the spirit part of man moves through the Grail's fire into the human being and likewise into human thinking, the Easter and Whitsun garden of a new living culture begins to bud and blossom.

# *The Festival of United Soul-Endeavor (an excerpt)*

Rudolf Steiner June 7, 1908

...In the past, mankind became free of the group-soul. Through spiritual-scientific knowledge mankind is now for the first time in the position to discover, with the utmost certainty of purpose, what will unite mankind again. When men unite together in a higher wisdom, then out of higher worlds there descends a group soul once more....

What is willed by the Leaders of the spiritual-scientific Movement is that in it we should have a society in which hearts stream towards wisdom as the plants stream towards the sunlight. And in that together we turn our hearts towards a higher wisdom, we give a dwelling-place to a 'new' higher group-soul; we form the dwelling-place, the environment, in which this group soul can incarnate. Mankind will enrich earthly life by developing what *enables spiritual beings to come down out of higher worlds.*

This spirit enlivened ideal was once placed before humanity in a most powerful way. It was when a number of men, all aglow with a common feeling of fervent love and devotion, were met together for a *common deed*: Then the sign was given, the sign that could show man with overwhelming power how in unity of soul he could provide a place for the incarnation of the *common spirit*. In this company of souls the same thing was living: in the flowing together, in the harmony of feeling they provided what was needed for the incarnation of a common spirit. That is expressed when it is said that *the Holy Spirit, the universal group-soul, sank down as it were into incarnation*. It is a symbol of what mankind should strive towards, how it should seek to become the dwelling-place for the Being who descends out of higher worlds.

The Easter event gave man the power to develop these experiences; the Whitsun event is the fruit of this power's

unfolding. Through the flowing of souls together towards the common wisdom there will always result that which gives a living connection with the forces and beings of higher worlds, and with something which as yet has little recognition for humanity, namely the Whitsun festival.

When men come to know what the down coming of the Holy Spirit in the future can mean for mankind, the Whitsun festival will once more become alive for them. Then it will be not only a memory of the event in Jerusalem; but there will arise for mankind the everlasting Whitsun festival, the festival of *united soul-endeavor*.

It will depend on men themselves what value and what result such ideals can have for mankind. When in this right way they strive towards wisdom, then will higher spirits unite themselves with men.

## From *The Festival Of The Free Individuality*

Rudolf Steiner -May 15, 1910.

"And then there comes before us the mighty picture, with a force that works like a force present in the soul itself.

Then do we feel the future, as the first understanders felt it under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, if only we are willing to make alive in our souls that which knows nothing of the boundaries separating the different parts of humanity and speaks a language which all souls, all the world over, can understand.

We feel the thought of peace, of love, of harmony, which lies in the Whitsun thought. And we feel this Whitsun thought enlivening our Whitsun festival."



# Whitsuntide - Festival of the Liberation of the Human Spirit

Rudolf Steiner

Berlin, Whit Monday, 23rd May 1904

(Excerpts here. See entire lecture in *The Temple Legend*)

....Whitsuntide is one of the most important festivals and one of the most misunderstood, most difficult to understand. For Christian consciousness it commemorates the coming of the Holy Spirit. This event is described as a miracle—the fiery Holy Spirit poured out over the Apostles so that they started to speak in all manner of tongues—meaning that they could enter into every heart and speak **according to each one's understanding**.

If we wish to reach a more fundamental understanding of it, we must go deeper into the matter. Whitsuntide—as a symbolical festival—is connected with the most profound mysteries—with the holiest spiritual qualities of humanity—that is why it is so difficult to talk about it.



...Through the figure of Prometheus, Greek mythology symbolised free humanity struggling towards culture. Representative of suffering mankind, he is at the same time the giver of freedom [punished by being tied to a mountain rock where a vulture could daily gnaw at his liver].

*Stone to Soul* by Leszek Forczek "For our part, we can choose to let our life remain simply a block of stone - our infinite, eternal and immortal spirit encased in the seeming limitations of our material

existence - or we can choose to resurrect Divinity from our illusions of a limited and mortal life." \*See page 11.

The one who set Prometheus free from his chains is Heracles, of whom it is said that he underwent initiation in the Eleusinian Mysteries.

...Had mankind retained the attitude of Lemurian times [before the Luciferic temptation] we would have been dreamers today. ...Employing his self-awareness, and his awareness of freedom, man must now awaken ...for his *spiritual* knowledge when he was still unfree in Lemuria had been received without his own striving. ...Out of this awakened freedom in humanity of the fifth Root Race, our present epoch, human beings shall again wrest spiritual life. This form of consciousness will again be conveyed through initiates, but it will be not a dreamy, but a *clear* consciousness.

It is the Heracleian spirits, the initiated ones, who will help mankind forward and reveal to him his higher nature, his knowledge of the spirit. ...Materialistic culture of the present time shows us how deeply man has become embedded in purely physical-physiological nature, as Prometheus was enmeshed in his chains. But it is equally certain that the vulture, symbol of lust and craving, gnawing at our liver, will be thrust aside by individuals who have awakened to the spirit. That is the goal to which the initiates would lead mankind through consciousness of self, by means of such movements as the anthroposophical movement, so that humanity can raise itself up in full freedom.

...In this the Whitsuntide mystery is indicated. It is intimated that man has to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit. When the moment arrives in which man is able to kindle the spark of spiritual life within himself, when the physiological nature of man is able to attempt the ascent by means of its own forces, then will the Holy Spirit descend upon him and the time of spiritual awakening will be at hand.

Man's physical nature has to be transfigured so that it can absorb the life of the spirit. Consciousness in the body, the physiological consciousness of today, will even of itself be able to enkindle the spark of spiritual existence in freedom.

Christ's sacrifice is an example which shows that man will be able to unfold a higher form of consciousness out of his life on the physical plane. His lower individuality lives in the physical body, but it must be enkindled so that the higher self can develop. Only then ...can the Holy Spirit appear and be poured forth upon humanity.

Herein lies what is truly Christian; it also embodies the deeper mystery contained in the Whitsuntide Festival. Man lives primarily in his lower organism, in his consciousness imbued with desires. It is right that this is so, because it is only this consciousness which can provide him with awareness of his true goal, to attain freedom. He should not remain there, however, but must raise his ego to the nature of his higher self. He must develop the Spirit Self within him, bring it to birth so that it becomes a spirit of healing — a Holy Spirit.

**...The highest goal of humanity is symbolically expressed by means of the Whitsuntide festival;** that is, that mankind must progress now from an intellectual to a spiritual life. Just as Prometheus was set free from his suffering by Heracles, so will mankind be set free by the power of the Spirit. By descending into matter, mankind has attained self-consciousness. Through the fact that man ascends again, he will become a self-aware Spirit Self.

...That, too, is referred to in Greek mythology. The one whose state of consciousness is not free—the contemplator—the one who does not wish to win redemption in complete freedom and therefore is the opponent of Prometheus—is Epimetheus. Zeus gives him Pandora's box, the contents of which —sufferings and plagues— fall on mankind when it is opened. The only gift which is left behind is hope; the hope that one day, in a future state, he will also progress to higher, clear consciousness—that one day he will be set free. Prometheus had advised him against accepting this doubtful gift from Zeus but unthinking Epimetheus had not listened to his brother, and had accepted the gift.

Thus we see that two ways of life are open. ...Some people steadfastly follow their desire for freedom. Even though it may be dangerous to develop spirituality, they search for it in freedom nevertheless. The others find their satisfaction in the dull round of life and live in blind faith, suspicious of the... endeavours of their fellow men.

...The path (to freedom) is fraught with danger, but it is the only one which leads to the sublime goal of *spiritual freedom*.

Thus the spirit of man should be free and not dull. That also is the aim of Christianity. Health and healing are connected with "holy". A spirit which is holy is able to heal, it sets men free from sufferings and torments. Healthy and free is the human being who is released from the bondage of his physiological state. For only the free spirit is the healthy one, whose body is no longer gnawed by a vulture.

Thus Whitsuntide can be looked upon as the symbol of the freeing of the human spirit, as the great symbol of mankind's struggle for freedom, *for consciousness of his own freedom*.

The Easter Festival is the festival of the resurrection in nature; Whitsuntide is the symbol of becoming conscious of the human spirit —of those, who know and understand, and penetrated through and through by it, go in search of freedom.

Those spiritual movements of modern times which lead to a perception of the spiritual world in clear day consciousness — not in trance or under hypnosis—are the ones which lead to an understanding of such important symbols as this. The clear consciousness, which only the spirit can set free, is what unites us in the Anthroposophical Society. Not the word alone, but the spirit, gives it its meaning.

...Let a spark of understanding of this Holy Spirit flow again into the Whitsuntide Festival, then it will be revived and gain meaning once more. We want to live in a world that makes sense. Whoever celebrates festivals without sparing them a thought is a follower of Epimetheus. Man must see *what binds him to his surroundings* and also to what is invisible in nature. We have to know where we stand. For we humans are not to be confined to a dull, dreamy, semi-existence, we are destined to develop a free, *fully conscious unfolding of our whole being*.

## \*Thoughts about Leszek Forczek's painting *Stone to Soul*

In *Stone to Soul*, Leszek Forczek's painting, we see two figures representing humanity, so bound to the mineral world and so bowed down that they do not see the help offered to them.

But the Divine Sophia—Cosmic Wisdom and Beauty—and therefore Truth and Art—reach out with fervent warmth and heart (her right hand at her heart, her left into the Christ light) to release mankind from its bindings to the mineral world.



Human beings began using the Promethean "fire", which brought us consciousness, individuality and earthly freedom—yet with the danger that knowledge or "science" could be turned to the outer world alone, cutting off our inner world from the Spirit and from one another.

Since the Mystery of Golgotha and Whitsun, the radiant loving impulse of the Christ through the redeemed Lucifer, the Holy Spirit, reaches down right into the **cross of**

**light** now on the earth, offering mankind a Higher Imagination.

Leszek has painted this "cross of light" at the bottom of the painting beginning where the Sophia's hand touches the human hand. Above, the hierarchies in golden light are present, listening, offering, praying (?).

The Christ and the Holy Spirit with the Light of Wisdom and Beauty of Art are the healing forces for the Spirit of man if we but attune to them.

In the painting, the Sun of the future sends rays matching Sophia's colors; Moon retires—its color matching humanity's rigidity. Tools of the material world can be seen on the ground—on Earth.

Rudolf Steiner indicated in his lecture *Truth, Beauty and Goodness*, (January 9, 1923), that we need a strong enthusiasm for truth "to kindle in us—in the unconscious depths of our souls at any rate, a feeling for our pre-earthly existence" in the spiritual world.

A strong and genuine sense of beauty can give us joy and also connect us (unconsciously perhaps) to pre-earthly existence, and at least we will not disown our spiritual existence.

Steiner often described that the world of spirit is all around us, but modern man fails to reach out to it. He needs to be filled with a real sense of truth instead of conventional opinions.

Thus we need not Epimethean "reactive thinking", as in the myth, but Promethean "forethought" thinking.

In material existence we are separated from the spiritual world. We link to it in this life when we experience goodness with loving enthusiasm.

I think Leszek wanted to recognize the Cosmic Sophia as archetype for the Spirit Self, our transformed astral body that is the heart of the Whitsun message, enabling us to form community in a new, loving, more selfless way. *EK*



Whitsun by Nancy Jewel Poer