

THE DEATH OF RUDOLF STEINER IN THE SPIRITUAL WORLDS
Incomplete and Unrevised Notes of a lecture by Willi Sucher, 30 March 1954
In remembrance of Rudolf Steiner's death day, 30 March 1925

Today it is 29 years since we heard of Rudolf Steiner's death. This time between 29 and 30 years is an important rhythm in our life here on Earth and also for the souls who have crossed the threshold. Before we go into the details, we want to consider the experiences of a soul after death.

As we know, the moment of death is indicated by the separation of the ether body, astral body, and ego from the physical body. In the first three days after death, the ether body is freed to live in its element of active, creative, cosmic memory, in which the memory tableau of the life just lived is the primary experience. This is the unfolding of the ether body, in which the soul's life experience is engraved. As the ether body is freed from its physical task, it now lives in its own element and weaves in the ether aura around the Earth—known as “clouds” in the Bible.

As the Earth rotates during these three days, the place where the human being died passes three times through the ether aura of the sky. It is a kind of baptism, whereby the ether body adjusts itself to the cosmic ethers related to the planets in the sky at death. Rudolf Steiner spoke of this death asterogram as being much more important than the birth moment, as it provides a more exact and satisfactory result of human connections with the starry world. The starry sky at the moment of death is like a nativity into the spiritual world, for as an embryo swims in the waters before birth, so the soul swims in the cosmic ether after death.

In the depths of the universe is the fixed-star Zodiac, in which the planets are distributed in an endless multitude of possible aspects. Saturn is the outermost planet that is visible with the naked eye. It holds the memory of the life histories of all human beings and their experiences. As Dr. Steiner indicated, the human soul experiences its just-lived life in reverse during the first three days after death. Our researches have shown that when a human being dies, the planets are distributed to catch the memory-pictures and preserve them. There are intimate connections between the ether body and the cosmic world, with which it merges about three days after death of the average human being. In the positions of the planets in the death asterogram of a soul, we find the cosmic reflection of the individual's life on Earth. There is also the possibility that a human ether body can be preserved, as in the case of a highly developed initiate.

Let us think this through in connection with Rudolf Steiner's death. I wish to give you the aspect of the sky on 30 March 1925, about 10:25 am: The Sun was in the constellation of Fishes, Venus was nearby, and Mercury was in transition from Fishes to Ram. Mars was in Bull, and underneath it was the Moon, which was rising. Jupiter was in Archer, and Saturn had set in Scales. This aspect in the sky represents the tableau at the moment of Dr. Steiner's death. Here we can find a true picture of the life on Earth.

Saturn leads us back to about 1896 in the life of Dr. Steiner, when he was about 35 years of age. It was a time that Dr. Steiner wrote about in his autobiography as a time of inner crisis; for although he was living in the fullness of the spirit, even his best friends, such as cultivated souls like Hermann Grimm the famous historian, could not understand what he had to say. He experienced within himself the question, “Must one forever remain silent?”, referring to his inner world. It was a moment when the world was faced with complex decisions. Saturn is now again in Scales, and humanity is again faced with world decisions. Significantly, Saturn in Scales can also be found in the death asterograms of astronomers such as Copernicus, Tycho Brahe, and Kepler. At those times, important world decisions were also made that influenced humanity.

Rudolf Steiner decided to speak, and in 1912 the original Soul Calendar was published, which contained the “imaginings of the constellations”. Leitsätze, from the cosmological point of view: the handing-over of World Karma from the Father to the Son. Scales is definitely connected with the Son Deity of the Trinity and with the Good Friday Events. It is like a thread through human destiny, a question of Grave or Altar (Stagnation or Transformation), and exemplifies the question of whether to speak or to remain silent.

Jupiter in Archer shows other aspects in the life of Dr. Steiner. It shows the birth of the deed, the capacity of the human being to bring the Idea into the Deed. Jupiter is always connected with this. This brings us to events that lead up to the year 1901-2 and the birth of anthroposophy, when *Christianity as Mystical Fact* was written.

The Sun was in Fishes, which swim in opposite directions connected by a thin ribbon of stars. In the language of Fishes, one fish swims toward Waterman, the past, and the other swims toward Ram, the future. In Dr. Steiner's life, this position leads us to 1908-9 when he wrote *Occult Science* and lectured on the Apocalypse. One can say that from these deeds a substance was amalgamated with the Sun in Fishes. While on Earth, we see with our physical eyes; however, when a soul crosses the Threshold to the world where we no longer use physical eyes, we only experience darkness. However, light can be produced through the will by occult training, through closing the gates of the senses to the physical world. In the darkness we experience a mirror, reflections of Imaginations of past and future events. Steiner relates these in *Occult Science* (especially world evolution) and in his lecture cycle on the Apocalypse. One can say that the substance of Dr. Steiner's efforts have been amalgamated with the Sun in Fishes.

Mercury was in transition from Fishes to Ram. Mercury represents intelligence that endeavors to lead the human being from personal intelligence to cosmic intelligence. It brings us into the time of 1910, when Steiner revealed the time of the Second Coming of Christ, the revelation of Christ in the etheric world. If an individual can penetrate the spiritual background of Ram, it will be found that Ram is connected with the descent and incarnation of the Lamb of God from the realm of the Kyriotes, the Spirits of Wisdom, and the deeds of these Beings. Thus we find in his Ram the great Imagination of the Second Coming of Christ.

In the opposition of Saturn in Scales to that of Mercury in Ram, we are led to the preparation and the time of the Christmas Foundation Meeting. This is not an affair that is only for our Society, but this Meditation concerns the whole of humanity. It is the beginning of the new Christmas Mysteries, helping to bring about the experience of Christ's Being in the human soul. In these Mysteries, the Shepherds' and Kings' approach from either side of our soul, opening the road to the heart and the head, and to the Spirit of the World—the Risen Christ. We must prepare, preserve, and work with what we were given and be responsible for it, until humanity of the future can understand this speaking of the Spirit of Christ.

Both Mars and Moon are in the constellation of Bull. They are planets that are deeply connected with the realization of spirit in matter. In the Moon, when it appears as a Cup, or Chalice, spiritual-cosmic forces are gathered and then “emptied” into the Earth; the spiritual forces of creation are offered to the Earth. Mars is like a rock in the universe against which ancient spiritual substance bounded and broke up, to create matter—the working of spirit in plants, etc. Both Mars and Moon are connected with making spirit visible in matter. This brings us to the time of 1912-13, when eurythmy, the visible Word, came into existence, the Mystery Dramas were completed and performed, and in 1913 the Foundation Stone of the first Goetheanum was laid. A gateway was opened, as Bull is the cosmic region of the Word, and the Goetheanum was the House of the Word, a portal open to the spirit.

In the moment of Rudolf Steiner's death, the Twins are rising. This constellation signifies the backbone of his work, the time connected with his carving of the great statue of Christ between the twin adversaries, Lucifer and Ahriman. During this time he spoke and gave advice on how to meet the adversaries and how we can stand upright in our battle against them.

This was the life tableau of Rudolf Steiner, which we have now chronologically descended from Saturn to the Moon. It is possible that his life body was not dissolved. From the evidence I have collected, I am almost certain that it was not dissolved but is still working there, though I cannot present my conclusions now.

Saturn was in Scales at birth and also now at death. This Saturn in Scales may help us answer the question of why he had to leave then, when there was apparently still so much left to be done. The question for him was, “grave or altar?” He experienced the grave of civilization in World War I, and he made an attempt to help resurrect it with *The Threefold Commonwealth*. I believe his death was a necessity to give us the possibility of becoming independent. We who recognize him as our teacher are faced with the same question: grave or altar. The world in the last thirty years has had much of the “grave” present in it. We have also received a lot of knowledge about the spiritual world; however, unless we transform that which we have received, it will remain the “grave”. We should transform our knowledge of the spiritual world into a new power to come, as it still

remains entombed. It is my belief that this experience of entombment will pass, and the future is nearer than we think, when the “grave will become the altar of transformation.”

Saturn is again very near Scales today. We must know where we stand, for the very life, the very existence of anthroposophy depends on it. Saturn is a general reminder that decisions have to be made, decisions not to bury what we know in the “grave” of our personal intelligence, but to transform it to work through our hearts and radiate into the world.

With these thoughts we may remember the death of Rudolf Steiner, which in a certain way may be a spiritual birth. [Ed. Note: Saturn was again in Scales in 1981, as it was also again there in 2011.]