

## *Journey Through the Spheres-Beethoven*

Incomplete Lecture by Willi Sucher

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Then, as the wave moves toward the Sun, ebbing away and losing its momentum (we must imagine this as qualitative and not a quantitative element), we can imagine the orbits of Venus and Mercury.

Now in the process of incarnation, we certainly have the fact that on the one hand we take up the ingredients our soul desires through Saturn, Jupiter and Mars—we would take up the building stones not only in a physical sense but in a psychological sense—in order to build up the body in which are infused organs coming from those spheres that radiate in the opposite direction. This means that they would already infuse a momentum of dissolution, of spiritualization into that body built up from the other side. Thus, we must always imagine the totality of our organization: physical life and soul. This is coming from one side, but also infused into it are those [spirit] elements that already bear the element of dissolution, of spiritualization, in them.

As soon as a human soul is born, it begins to die on account of certain systems built into its organism. We know that we need a certain amount of bodily matter, but that matter is exchanged roughly every seven years. Our body is never stable, with regard to quantity; it is constantly changing; it is constantly transformed. This is brought about by the systems of circulation and breathing, and also by the entire metabolic process—that which takes place in the kidneys, etc. There we have a breaking up of these spheres of organic functioning in our being, which already constitute that process of breaking down, until the organism finally has fulfilled its task and the soul is released from the body by death.

Then what happens? Now the real process begins of putting aside all the affinities that commenced in these stages of incarnation from the sphere of Saturn down to the Earth. Now the real emancipation begins, and that continues for a long time after death; for a long time we slowly, step by step, emancipate our Self from its affinities to life on Earth, from all that we experienced on Earth in the realm of sense perception. It was always known that after death the soul is obliged to emancipate itself from its affinities with earthly existence.

It was known in Greece that the Hero in the underworld has to undergo painful processes; for instance, one would have to stand in the midst of a pool of water, while above there would be trees that were laden with fruit. However, the fruit could not be reached and the water vanishes. It is the region where we are obliged to emancipate ourselves from our affinities to the earthly realm, because our affinities no longer exist; we no longer have the organs to satisfy them. Therefore, this time of purification, on the way to the Sun, sometimes assumes even the character of a burning fire; a fire in which the desires and emotions and earthly affinities are burned up, so to speak.

The first place that we enter is the sphere of the Moon, but more in the portion that is turned toward the Sun. It is there where we emancipate our Self from all that which the Moon did for us before our birth, when it gave us our body during the embryonic development. During that earlier time, the Moon is very powerful and provides us with our body. Therefore, everything concerning conception and the time of gestation is strongly connected with the Moon.

The Moon is a kind of Imagination; it takes into that vessel (the crescent) all those Imaginations coming from Saturn into the Earth, all those great pictures of the human form, and they become one integrated Imagination of the human form. Moreover, the Moon is able to weave these into what will become human matter. However, after death the opposite has to be done, and we must now step out of that region of the Moon and step by step leave behind all that the Moon did for us previously.

Then long after death, we go further and enter the sphere of Venus. It is here where we emancipate our Self from all that concerned our relationships to other human beings; for instance, from family, from communities and so forth; because before birth, Venus introduced an element into our organism, as it came into existence, that enabled us to create relationships. But now we must emancipate our Self from that element, and we do this in the sphere of Venus.

Finally, we enter the sphere of Mercury, where we have to leave behind all that we clung to as a personality—all wishes in a personal sense. They may have been idealistic wishes, even charitable concerns,

such as being fully convinced that we were doing something for humanity. Even in these affinities, an element of egotism lives, something that relates even things of an idealistic nature to the self. In order to satisfy that self, we sometimes do things that seem altruistic, but in reality they are egotistic. We must leave these behind, and this is done in the sphere of Mercury, which builds into our organism the capacity to realize the self, to realize personality as intelligence and as personal will.

Now our soul is prepared to enter the Sun. We have said that the Sun is a hole in space, but it is really a point in the universe where space comes to an end, where we have a gateway into the non-spatial world; it is a gateway into the spiritual world. While passing through the spheres of Venus and Mercury, we are in the soul world, but by going through the Sun, we enter the non-spatial, spiritual world. The Spirit world of the Sun has an affinity to the spiritual worlds that lie beyond our solar universe.

There are great secrets that can be worked out mathematically, such as by going through the center of a circle, we come back to the periphery. The Sun is the gateway to the spiritual world; however, as soon as we enter it, we move toward the periphery by entering the spheres of Mars, Jupiter and Saturn. But the journey has not yet come to an end, as we then enter the higher spheres of the spiritual world, that which is beyond the boundary of the solar universe.

After death in the spheres of Mars, Jupiter and Saturn, we meet the real pictures of what we built into our physical body when we descended into the previous life just lived. We meet our whole organization, not only the physical body but the life and soul bodies. All this is something like a curtain. We are really born out of the Spirit, and we are Spirit in reality; however, certain forces weave a veil of illusion around it, so that we cannot see the truth as to why we are on Earth. However, after death, having laid aside the physical body and having entered the spiritual world via the Sun, we can now see the real background of that which forms the physical body, and this we realize in the sphere of Mars, where we no longer have our bodies, we then see the background, the thought Beings who form our physical bodies; for thoughts are living Beings.

Here on Earth we see the crystal, which is heavy, and we can analyze it, etc; but all that has been made by spiritual Beings in ages long gone by. Now we find those Beings here in the sphere of Mars, who have created that physical body of the crystal. It is in the sphere of Mars that we find those forces that have created the crystal. We do not find the crystal there; we find all that which is around it that has created it. The crystal disappears, and we are then only aware of that which worked from the outside to create that crystal, and the same happens with regard to everything we experience on Earth as solid bodies.

When we enter the sphere of Jupiter, we experience the real background of what it is that makes things live on Earth. For instance, we see the plant; we see its growth progress. What does it mean “to grow”? Of course, we can analyze a plant; we can burn it and analyze the ashes, and we can find the chemical constituents of the plant. However, if we take these chemical elements and put them together, we shall never get a plant, for there is obviously something working in the plant that makes it grow into a definite form. What is it that does that? We call it life. What is life? It is a principle that flows through the world like mighty streams which enliven everything. It is there in the sphere of Jupiter that this life is taken up. It is there where we found the great Architects of the universe, the spirit Beings who planned the solar universe, who had the Wisdom to foresee each single step of evolution and, thereby, were able to arrange everything in such a fashion that it fulfilled its purpose. That is Life. Life is not thinking it out as we would do in a laboratory; this does not give us the power to make things live. These spirit Beings exercised the power of Cosmic Love, and out of that capacity, they contributed to the building of the human body. Once we have laid aside our affinities after death, we stand face to face with those forces that give life to everything on the Earth. Now we see the truth. After death we can perceive life. Of course, it is no longer perceiving with the physical eyes, but it is with an inner organ.

Finally we enter the sphere of Saturn. There we gain something of the fundamental character of all existence. Saturn is the outermost of the planets; in a sense, it is the boundary of the solar universe—in the modern, scientific view that every planet has the character of a comet. Saturn is a sphere of fundamental character; it is a gateway, a boundary, where the world of the fixed stars are on the verge of turning into something of a solar character; namely, on this side here—the outer planets—it helps us to incarnate and to visualize what lies before us, as well as that which lies behind us as our past lives on Earth.

In the sphere of Saturn, we meet the Creative Principles, the Beings who gave us soul existence. We find here the true background for all that which on the Earth is soul being. What do we mean by that? If we regard

an animal, we see that it is conscious of a certain measure of existence—perhaps only a dreamy consciousness of what it is doing—and that it is drawn by sense perceptions to its surroundings. The cow is drawn to the meadow where it can find food; it has an inner perception. What is that? And what is that element which makes us self-conscious, for we use that capacity too? When we see a door, we know we can go through that door, we are conscious of it. We say that it is the soul capacity which is working; but what is it? It is rather a riddle that we are confronted with on Earth, for we cannot penetrate these regions by logical thinking. We experience Soul as working in ourselves, but we do not know what it is. There in that region of Saturn, we stand face to face with those Beings who create the souls foundation, that which lives in us as soul—and also in other beings, such as the animals.

Down here on the Earth, there might take place a conflict between human beings, a battle where emotions clash with emotions, passions with passions, and these passions and emotions move human bodies. We cannot see that soul element with our ordinary eyes, but there in the sphere of Saturn we experience those passions like a thunderstorm, like thunder and lightning moving and working in the sphere of soul existence; we see it with organs of inner perception. Therefore, Saturn is able to weave the thread from incarnation to incarnation, from one existence on this planet to another, because in the sphere of Saturn we find the true reality, the background of soul existence. Then we enter still higher realms, going beyond the boundary of the solar universe, and enter the Spiritual World, but I do not wish to speak of that tonight.

You can read about it in Rudolf Steiner's book, *Theosophy*, where it is elaborated. He does not mention in this book (and he had a reason for it) that while this process is going on, the passing first into the Soul world and then to the Spirit world, that all this is connected with the passing of the soul through the sphere of Saturn. Thus you see after death that we are connected with the stars and with the planets in our solar universe. One can express this in broad terms, and of course all these things must be done with great reverence.

We can contemplate the sign through which a soul passed away at the moment of death, and then we would experience what that soul is experiencing after death: how that soul entered Soul-land and what the aim is with regard to Spirit-land—whether that soul seeks the Spirit Sun where space comes to an end. All such details one can see if one contemplates the position of the sign at the moment of death. Just as we can speak in the moment of birth of the whole setting of cosmic events, which give us a description of the complicated human being who enters the world, so we can read at the moment of death, how one is born into the Soul-land, and finally into the Spiritual world. It is certainly a birth at the moment of death.

I said in the beginning of this lecture that at this moment of death, it is the human being who carries something to the cosmic world. However, first of all we must put aside, we must shelve all that which still clings to the earthly world. We must develop and lay bare the spiritual kernel of our being, so that we can really offer our Self to the spiritual world.

How can we know that the human soul is capable of bringing something to the cosmic world? How is that possible? As we descend at birth, we take up cosmic essences in varying degrees of densification. Out in the cosmos, we take up ingredients that form certain regions of our organization, which are still of an invisible nature, such as "life", that life which nobody can see with physical eyes. It is a mystery belonging to the invisible world; yet, it is a mighty power, as you know yourselves, for we carry that life in our body through our earthly existence. As a matter of fact, it is our life organization that keeps us alive; it is life, that invisible something, which is the medium that constantly battles against the natural course of the chemical elements submerged in our body.

What are these chemical elements? They are the disintegration processes that were built into our body. Ordinarily, as soon as we put them in water, they undergo certain reactions; however, in our bodies these chemical processes are turned in a different direction. The natural process of chemical reaction is decay. Why shouldn't this chemical reaction, which takes place in the body, also take place from the beginning? This is the deed of the life body that we took up on our way to incarnation and which permeates our being. Then at the moment of death, this life body becomes unemployed; it has nothing more to do. There is nothing to maintain it any longer, and it is left to itself. Therefore, it has the tendency to return to the cosmos, but now it has been enriched. It belonged to our being, and it has been enriched with all the experiences we had on Earth as a struggling human being—good or bad. Thus, every soul must hand this back, this life essence that kept us alive

on the Earth. It goes back to that realm from which it came, but now it has been permeated with the biography of our soul experiences.

Life is a biography, and that life body is really a living biography of every human being. A biographer sits down and writes, but a human biographer usually cannot live up to such detail. It is this element, this life body, which our soul hands back to the cosmos. It is only one of the things that we hand back, but it is the first one, and into it is written our life experiences, our biography. It enters the sphere of cosmic life as a whole, and so our soul has something to offer: everything belonging to the very complicated composition of our physical existence. In that life body are chiefly contained the most important facts and incidents of the life.

I am now telling you stories that sound terribly far-fetched and off the track, but the truth of them is well known. Many people have even written about these things—people who have crossed the threshold of death for a moment, perhaps for an instant, and then come back. They all tell the same story: that in one flash of a second, they saw their whole life, all woven together in one picture. Certain experiences happen at 10, 20 30 years, coming one after another in time, but these people say they experience the totality of their lives in one great picture. Time becomes space, in a sense. This fact is well known; it is acknowledged.

What causes this? In the moment of a nearly fatal accident, the life or etheric body leaves the physical body. It has become independent, and in that life body is the living biography. Everything is written down in a living way, and now that the life body is not directly connected to the physical body, the soul experiences its biography, but in a strange fashion that is all drawn together.

Now I should like to show you the death chart of Beethoven. When he was born, Saturn had arrived at the constellation of Lion. However, most of the time during the pre-natal life, Saturn was in Crab. In Crab is the element of something coming to an end, and only when the abyss is bridged can we go into the future. In the first half of its sign is contained the descent from cosmic existence through the course of evolution—that dying into mineral substance—and the second half would then mean the resurrection of that which died into matter. Something has come apart here, which has created an abyss between the two parts. However, during the three years of Christ's ministry, Saturn was in the constellation of Crab, and by His Deed, Christ established that bridge. Now all who can unite with Christ in their hearts, will find the bridge that leads into the future.

We have something of this in the Saturn of Beethoven. How did he experience it? It was in his bitter experience with regard to the most precious organ that he needed for his earthly career. At 28 years of age, he lost his hearing. He was as “chained to a rock”—his inner ear became hardened. The inner ear, that wonderful organ where you have the spiral, those subtle bones that must be in a state of equilibrium and flexibility; once that is gone, the hearing is destroyed. He had descended to the point where that which had been flexible had now become rigid.

How would the average person have reacted at such a loss? Most likely, such a person would have given up a career of becoming a composer. But Beethoven was not of that character; he battled with it. It happened toward the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, about 1789, that he first noticed that he was going deaf. A few years later, about 1800-1801, he wrote an overture to an opera that he never finished called, *Creations of Prometheus*. I believe this is something wonderful. It is so wonderful that when one experiences it for the first time, it can give one an uplift that would knock a hole through the ceiling. Why?—because he really described himself in that overture. As I have said, he was “chained to a rock”—not like Prometheus, but in a metaphorical sense. He also had something else of the Prometheus destiny: a very strong solar energy, because in the myth, he brought the fire of the Heaven to humanity. Imagine what that meant to humanity! If we had not received the gift of fire, the whole of our technical development in this modern world would not have existed. The Gods became jealous of Prometheus, and Zeus had him chained to a rock. While he was hanging high up in the mountains, an eagle came and ate his liver—that is what the myth says. His liver grew constantly, and as it grew, it was eaten away. At Beethoven's death, it was found that his liver had shrunk to half its size, and that is what he died of—a Prometheus destiny. In spite of all these things, Beethoven broke through. This fact is contained in his living biography; the soul goes back to the cosmic world, because it no longer has work to do. Therefore, the sky at the death of a human being reveals the character, the invisible configuration of that life organization.

Why is this? The life forces that we use for our earthly existence came from the cosmos, so it is quite natural that its countenance appears in the world of the stars. I should like to show you that wonderful

relationship with regard to the composition of Prometheus. When Beethoven died, the Earth was in the constellation of Virgin and Venus was in Waterman..., just one facet that Beethoven handed back to the cosmos. One can actually work out in detail which part of the biography is represented in one such particular facet of the whole sky at the death of Beethoven. [Ed. Obviously there is something missing here!]

Contained in that Venus is that particular part of the biography which refers to the composition of Prometheus. So, if one had the eyes to see the cosmic forces, one would have seen in the place where Venus was standing in the sky, etherically inscribed, the time when he wrote Prometheus. If we drew a line through the Earth, we would come to the point where Saturn was standing at the time of his birth. In this is contained all that divine destiny, that being chained to a rock, losing his hearing; and now at death everything seems transformed. The gentle Venus steps into that place and completely redeems that part over there (Saturn), which Beethoven had to live through in his deafness. It is all transformed into that mighty Imagination of Prometheus, who brought the gift of fire to humanity, in spite of everything.

Beethoven did the same thing: he brought the fire of enthusiasm for music. Think of his last symphony, the 9<sup>th</sup>; there we have the fire flaming up to heaven in the finale. Here we have the demonstration of what can happen in the lifetime of a human being. On the one hand, at the time of his incarnation, he receives that rather difficult aspect, leading back to previous incarnations. He had to take this into his present incarnation in order to get a grip on it, and he completely transformed it. In its place, he put the Imagination of Prometheus. He not only put that imagination into place, he enacted it in his life.

You can be sure that every human being is called upon to bring about such redemptions. That is the real meaning of our connection with the stars. It is not that we find either a soft cushion or one of needles; the real meaning is that we are called upon to transform the world of the stars, and here we have an example. One could produce thousands of examples to prove that people do transform the world of the stars. Beethoven did this when he wrote Prometheus, which is a demonstration of his victory over an adverse destiny. It is not only a concern of Beethoven's; it was a concern of the whole cosmos. It is Venus that takes it up and is thereby transformed. Something was brought into the sphere of Venus by the life of Beethoven that changed the sphere, and if we think of the many people going into the world of the stars during the course of the ages, surely that world of the stars will truly have been greatly transformed. This will take away any sting from conventional astrology, and we shall be able to grasp something very special.