

Appendix 12

Cosmic Word, Cosmic Self, and Cosmic Thinking

What follows concerns the parallels and polarities between summer and winter times of the year, in which cosmic Word, cosmic thinking, and cosmic I/Self are mentioned. We will look at the interval that goes from verses 10 to 17 in summer and the one from 35 to 48 in winter. The verses go from cosmic I to cosmic Word, passing through cosmic thinking in the summer and from cosmic Self to cosmic thinking in the winter, passing through cosmic Word. The different sequencing is significant, as is the difference between the terms *cosmic I* and *cosmic Self*, which corresponds to differences in the German text of the original verses. The sequences are highlighted below, with some early, intermediate, and late stages also mentioned:

Summer: Verses 10 to 17

Verse 9: forgetting the narrow will of Self

Verse 10: **cosmic Word** announces itself in our unconscious.

Verse 11: **cosmic I** approaches us

Verse 13: **God's own word of truth**

Verse 12: seeking ourselves in cosmic light and cosmic warmth

Verse 15: enchanted weaving of spirit within outer glory

Verse 14: **cosmic thinking** approaches us in sense appearance

Verse 17: **cosmic Word** speaks in us

Verse 18: **cosmic Word** speaks in our soul

Verse 19: to encompass with **memory**

Winter: Verses 35 to 48

Verse 34: sense of Self (spirit Self)

Verse 35: my Self at home within the **cosmic Self**

Verse 36: **cosmic Word** intent on revelation speaks in our soul

Verse 38: **cosmic Word** and Spirit Birth

Verse 39: sense of Self

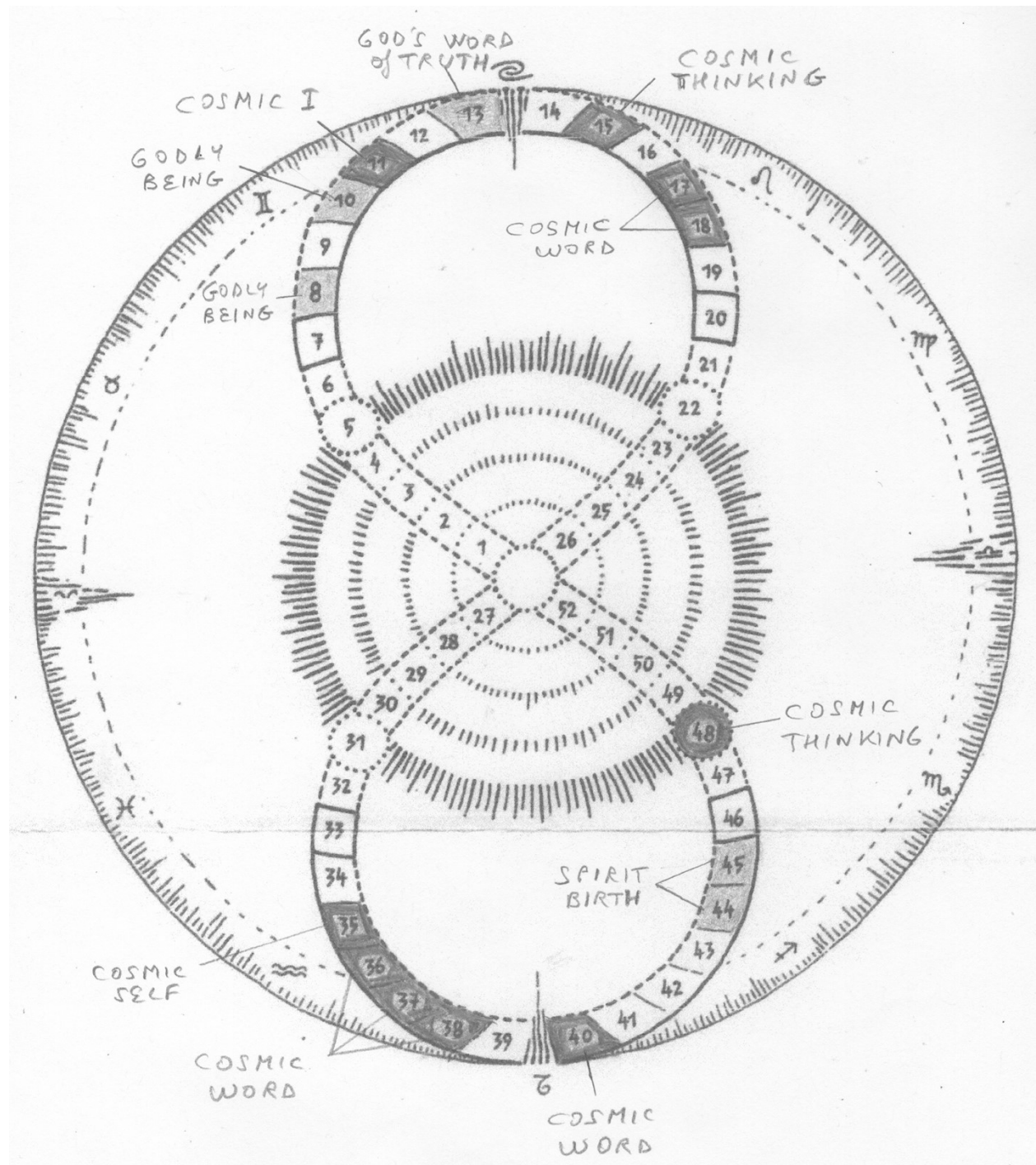
Verse 40: **cosmic Word** to fill the vain delusion of my Self

Verses 44–45: Spirit Birth (echoed)

Verse 47: cosmic Life

Verse 48: **cosmic Thinking** awakening love

Verse 49: Cosmic life and clarity of thought



The first immediate difference between the two times of the year is the fact that the process is much more spread out in winter than in summer.

Summer

In summer we go from cosmic I (11) to cosmic thinking (14) to cosmic Word (17). The whole is spread out over 7 verses, although, as we will see, the theme is already announced on verse 8.

Easter has been the object of our connection with the Christ impulse. This theme, metamorphosed, returns in verse 6 (Ascension time) with a flash of revelation of the Self, soberly countered by the admonishment that the Self is threatening to dissolve, as it were, immediately after (verse 7). The time of Whitsun follows with the announcement of a Godly being who wants to unite with us. To the growing intimation of the voice of conscience, this being speaks to us close to the time of Saint John. In the verses that immediately precede, the gesture of Saint John the Baptist appears in the soul as the desire to “decrease that He may increase” expressed in various ways: “human thinking must rest content in quiet dream-life” (verse 8); “when I forget the narrow will of Self” and “lose yourself to find yourself” (verse 9). In verse 10 the godly being is intuited, and it follows that He can speak in verse 11, this time explaining the reason of the request of verse 8. We must lose ourselves so that the human I can find itself in the cosmic I. Then the being that we intuit in verse 10 is the same that has a name in verse 17, its mirror verse, where he speaks as cosmic Word.¹

In essence what is distinctive of summertime is the presence of cosmic Word in the background. The question asked with “you shall in future know there has perceived you now a Godly being” (verse 10) is answered in verse 17 when cosmic Word speaks. Thus cosmic Word accompanies us over the arc of the verses here explored, but only makes Himself known at the culmination.

During summer we are as if inbreathed by the cosmos, but can only awaken a dim memory of our experience. This fathoming of cosmic Word and cosmic thinking mirrors what Rudolf Steiner tells us of the soul’s journey between death and a new birth:

Between death and a new birth we become aware that the words which are outspread in the Universe and reveal its essential nature, enter into us when our being is inbreathed and manifest themselves within us as the *Cosmic Word*. Here on Earth we speak as we breathe out; in the spiritual world we speak as we breathe in. And as we unite with our own being what the Logos—the Cosmic Word—says to us, the *Cosmic Thoughts* light up within our being.²

What we see of the summer progression is that cosmic thinking approaches us, but as something external to our being, though it can nevertheless touch us. And, although cosmic Word is present throughout, we can only fully

¹ Mirror verses are those that face each other in the axis St. John/Christmas of the Calendar of the Soul.

² Rudolf Steiner, *Man and the World of Stars*, lecture of November 26, 1922.

awaken to His presence in verse 17, which is the culmination of the process. This corresponds to another reality of the journey between death and a new birth. While our inner being lives spread out over the whole of the spiritual world on one hand and receives revelations from it, this is only part of a "breathing process," which is followed by a return to ourselves:

But there is another condition, in which we have first suppressed and then obliterated altogether, this consciousness of the Higher Beings manifesting in us. Then—to use earthly terms—we are "out of our body"—the condition is of course entirely spiritual, but let us put it in this way: *we are out of our body*. In this condition we know nothing of the world that lives within us [the world of the hierarchies], but we have as it were "come to ourselves." We no longer live in the other Beings of the Hierarchies but we live wholly in ourselves. Between death and a new birth, we should never have consciousness of ourselves if we lived only in the one condition.

The previous merging into our spiritual environment is contrasted with a coming back to ourselves. Thus, it is natural that in summer we are first approached by cosmic Word—we live under His wing so to speak—and only later awaken to ourselves and recognize Him. What carries over of this second state of being in the spiritual world, as a faint reflection into our world, is the faculty of memory.³ Not surprisingly verse 19 bids us retrace with our memory the arc of the summer experience thus far, in order to awaken "ever strengthening selfhood forces."

The verses 17 and 18 form a very significant prelude to verses 35 and 36, their complementary ones—verses 17 and 36 of cross 10 on one hand, 18 and 35 of cross 9 on the other—through which our exploration of the winter sequence begins. Verse 35 in which our Self connects with cosmic Self corresponds to the last verse in which cosmic Word is mentioned in summer (verse 18). Verse 36, in which cosmic Word consciously lights up in our soul, is verse 17's complementary in the calendar's cross 10 at the time of Advent. In both verses 17 and 36, cosmic Word speaks in the soul. The future of cosmic Word that verse 17 announces ("find in future time myself in you") is realized in verse 36 ("imbue your labor's aims with my bright spirit light").

³ "The possibility for us to have experiences at a definite moment and then after a lapse of time to draw forth from the depth of our being something that brings pictures of these experiences into our consciousness—this faculty of memory that is so necessary in our earthly life, is the faint reflection, a shadow, of our independent state of life in the spiritual world." Rudolf Steiner, *Man and the World of Stars*, lecture of December 15, 1922.

Winter

In winter the Calendar of the Soul goes from cosmic Self (35) to cosmic Word (36) to cosmic thinking (48). What takes place in seven weeks in summer is here spread out over fourteen verses, encompassing at their beginning part of the time of Advent and the Holy Nights, and extending further almost to the beginning of spring. In winter we recognize the divine within us and how it connects us to the Christ (Cosmic Self), then we remember the cosmic Word—as it were all of the summer season rendered conscious—and finally we become able to generate cosmic thinking by rising up to Imagination and beyond. We manifest the cosmic Word outwardly (verses 36 to 38) until we penetrate cosmic thinking.

About our relationship to cosmic Word and cosmic thinking in relation to the wintertime of the year, we can quote at length from the same lecture mentioned above:

Passing from the heavenly into the earthly realm, the human being experiences one side only of the etheric world. The etheric world extends through all the spheres of the planets and the stars. But the moment the heavenly faculties are transformed into the earthly, the human being loses the experience of the *Cosmic Morality*. Orientation among the Beings of the Higher Hierarchies is experienced not merely as a manifestation of natural laws but as *moral* orientation. Likewise the Logos speaks in the human being not in an a-moral way as do the phenomena of Nature—for although they do not speak in an anti-moral way, they speak “a-morally.” The Logos speaks morality; so too the Cosmic Thoughts light up as bearers of morality.⁴

What was given to us in summer, albeit with our active effort of surrender, is what we need to recreate in the soul out of human faculties in the winter through protracted personal effort. We need to reconnect to the sphere of cosmic morality, which is not given in the journey through the earthly ethers, to which winter corresponds. In the breathing of the cosmos in summer, everything happens over a very short interval of time. We are surrounded by cosmic Word, as it were, and this lights up as awareness of our cosmic I first, and later as cosmic thinking approaching us in the beauty of appearance in the sole space of seven verses. We are bathed, as it were, in the cosmic ethers that speak to us through cosmic morality. Things can only be different in winter.

⁴ Rudolf Steiner, *Man and the World of Stars*, lecture of November 26, 1922.

In summer we reach from our human I (*Menschen Ich*) to the cosmic I (*Welten Ich*) in verse 11. Our I becomes part of the cosmic *I am*; it is accepted by it once the human I takes the resolve to “lose itself” in order to be absorbed by a larger reality, which it cannot raise to full consciousness. It is the same with cosmic thinking, which comes to us through sense appearance.

In winter this encounter has a different quality. In verse 35 this is raised to consciousness by an I that can consciously say *I am*; a self-referential *I am*, or cosmic Self (*Weltenselbst*, no longer *Welten Ich*). The first (verse 11) speaks of an *I am* beyond ourselves; the second one (verse 35) is the *I am* of which we can partake consciously.

The sequence is longer and different in wintertime, the reflection of our purely earthly and more personal approach to the ethers and to cosmic Word. Here on the earthly level, which the time of winter echoes, we need to recreate morality, which is not given on the earthly ethers, as it is in the cosmic ethers.

Thus in winter we need to awaken to the cosmic Self first (verse 35), from which is initiated our personal transformation. Cosmic Self brings to the forefront the awakening of the treasures received during the summer. Cosmic Word starts speaking through us in a deeply moral way, and thus everything in the verses 35 to 48 speaks of our desire to transform the world of senses through the strength of the spirit, to imbue the world of the senses through the morality we have wrested from cosmic Word.

Advent becomes thus a time of incubation of cosmic Word. In verse 36 His appearance makes a startling contrast to cosmic Word of the summertime. It speaks “intent on revelation” and makes a deeply moral request of the human being. His presence is to be felt in “our labor’s aims” and furthermore through our willingness to sacrifice. In verse 37 this quality of resolve is carried further, and it involves our heart and our courage. Cosmic Word’s spirit-light is what we want to carry into the night of winter so that it “transfigures all things.” The awakening of the heart is the prelude to the spirit child of Christmas, which we carry in our soul for the joy of the worlds around us.

After Christmas, during the Holy Nights, we enter in connection with the Spirit Self—sense of Self in the calendar (verse 39), which will cleanse our heart of all that is unworthy of cosmic Word (verse 40). Entering the new year, our service to the world and fellow human being and the development of the forces of heart and courage becomes human love (verse 41). When we reach the goal, cosmic thinking (verse 48) becomes our prerogative. This time it comes from within us, no longer from the cosmos through cosmic Word, as it does in verse 14. And with it comes love, no longer bound to the human sphere (as in verse 41) but as an objective, creative force.