

## **From Michaelmas to Christmas in the Calendar of the Soul**

“In the midst of winter, I found there was, within me, an invincible summer. And that makes me happy. For it says that no matter how hard the world pushes against me, within me, there’s something stronger—something better, pushing right back.”

Albert Camus

The verses after Michaelmas, marking the fall season, give us at a bird’s eye view a remarkable progression. At first the rising of the Self (more strongly from 21), of the light of soul (from 22), and of the Michaelic will (from 24) form the foundations that give way to the growing power of thinking (verses 28 to 30). While these forces continue to work in the background, feeling is affirmed in verses 30 to 35. By the time of verse 35 the sense of Self emerges anew, affirmed in the certainty of its future powers. Soon after it is the cosmic Word that is present almost uninterruptedly in verses 36 to 40. This overlaps with the forces of the heart and soul warmth in verses 37 to 40 but also beyond, up to verse 43. The above is offered as the background against which everything that follows acquires a deeper meaning.

### **The Time of Michael**

We will now look at verse after verse and characterize the path that takes us from Michaelmas to Christmas. What is most remarkable is how one verse continues and merges into the next one and how some verses echo previous ones at regular intervals though in a metamorphosed and potentized fashion, as it were.

#### Verse 26

O Nature, your maternal life  
I bear within the essence of my will.  
And my will's fiery energy  
Shall steel my spirit striving,  
That sense of self springs forth from it  
To hold me in myself.

In this verse it is the Michaelic will that comes to the fore. The verse indicates its origin in the metamorphosed cosmic life ("Nature's maternal life") of the spring and summer seasons. The goal announced is that of the strengthening of the Self, through the "sense of Self," the recognition that our earthly Self is but a shadow of our eternal Self and hence the resolve to let our personality be guided by this higher Self. We now move from the nurturing gesture of Virgo into the sign of dynamic equilibrium of Libra (verses 27 to 30).

#### Verse 27 (Autumn)

When to my being's depths I penetrate,  
There stirs expectant longing  
That self-observing, I may find myself  
As gift of summer sun, a seed  
That warming lives in autumn mood  
As germinating force of soul.

With the stirrings of the sense of Self the higher Self becomes an undeniable aspiration growing in the sanctuary of the soul. Just as the period around Easter expresses external growth (e.g. in the expression of "the joy of growth," "the force of cosmic life," "life of worlds," ...), so now the Calendar's "summer of the soul" renders possible an inner germination and growth. Light, warmth and life live within the soul and the Self grows from the ground of the soul.

#### Verse 28

I can, in newly quickened inner life,  
Sense wide horizons in myself.  
The force and radiance of my thought  
Coming from soul's sun power  
Can solve the mysteries of life,  
And grant fulfillment now to wishes  
Whose wings have long been lamed by hope.

The analogy of the growth of the soul with external growth is carried further. Whereas verse 27 looked at the ground of the soul in which the Self-seed germinates, verse 28 looks at the Sun of the soul expressed in the radiance of the power of thinking, which bestows its light on the Self. This is a force that renders us new citizens of the world. From the inward look of 27 a bridge is created toward the human being's environment.

Armed with the light of thought we can address the mysteries of the mind and accomplish our goals in life.

#### Verse 29

To fan the spark of thinking into flame  
By my own strong endeavor,  
To read life's inner meaning  
Out of the cosmic spirit's fount of strength:  
This is my summer heritage,  
My autumn solace, and my winter hope.

The theme of hope continues from verse 28 projecting the soul forward. Sun and soil of the soul come together, just like light and life do in verse 5 in the spring, after the soul merges with the external cosmic light (verse 4). We are at the almost exact opposite time of the year. The two goals of verse 28 are restated even more clearly in their integration and seeking of balance, at present between thinking and the will. Notice that the power of thought has to be rendered more active, highlighted from verbs like fanning or kindling; the will coming from the "cosmic spirit's fount of strength" has to be tempered and directed by the act of reading or interpreting, which implies distancing and reflection.

#### Verse 30

There flourish in the sunlight of my soul  
The ripened fruits of thinking;  
To conscious self-assurance  
The flow of feeling is transformed.  
I can perceive now joyfully  
The autumn's spirit-waking:  
The winter will arouse in me  
The summer of the soul.

Although hope is not mentioned again, its outcome of confidence in the future is palpable in the joyful outlook. The last verse of the time of Libra accomplishes one more integration: that of thinking and feeling, winter and summer. The light of thinking merges with the warmth of feeling to uphold the Self. The task that we undertook with strong deliberation (e.g., verse 26 of Michaelmas) is now accompanied by a feeling of joy, transforming our perception of the season, not as a challenge but as something to be actively embraced. The fall no longer subdues us. It manifests spirit-waking and offers the promise of the summer of the soul in the depth of winter.

Libra has helped us integrate all the polarities within our soul; it has connected the above with below, the past with the future and brought confidence and hope in the soul. We enter now the sign of Scorpio, spurring us to overcome egoism and the lower personality and to be reborn to a spiritual life. With it comes the desire to transform ourselves and to make the world our home.

#### Verse 31

The light from spirit depths  
Strives to ray outwards, sun-imbued;  
Transformed to forceful will of life  
It shines into the senses' dullness  
To bring to birth the powers  
Whereby creative forces, soul-impelled,  
Shall ripen into human deeds.

Some themes alternate in this time of the year while others are added. The verse takes the Michaelic task further. Whereas in spring the light penetrates to the depths in the sphere of life (verse 5), here in another "light verse" (cross 5), the light of soul generated in verse 22 (also of cross 5) becomes "forceful will of life." The light penetrates through the soil of the soul and emerges strengthened from it. The soul yearns to see its presence in the world be directed by truly creative forces.

#### Verse 32

I feel my own force, bearing fruit  
And gaining strength to give me to the world.  
My inmost being I feel charged with power  
To turn with clearer insight  
Toward the weaving of life's destiny.

Together with the themes of fruiting/ripening, feeling starts a crescendo. In this verse it takes centerstage. And the theme of verse 29—integration of thinking and will—is brought a stage further. The will that has been subdued through detachment and reflection acquires new power. Light is shed for it upon the web of karma. When it recognizes the "weaving of life's destiny" through the light of thinking it can start to give direction to the creative forces of the previous verse. We are thus invited to recognize the role of the "second being in us," the orchestrating baton of the higher Self.

We can take greater responsibility in a higher sense, not just as individuals but as the whole of humanity as the next verse stresses.

### Verse 33

I feel at last the world's reality  
Which, lacking the communion of my soul,  
Would in itself be frosty, empty life,  
And showing itself powerless  
To recreate itself in souls,  
Would in itself find only death.

What we have fathomed in thinking is foreshadowed now in feeling before it will take hold of our will in the second part of winter. Now the soul intuits its larger responsibility toward the world. The idea that the order of Nature is completely separate from the human being, common to conventional science, can no longer find place in the soul directed by enlivened thinking and Michaelic resolve. We are the tenth hierarchy and as such we hold a co-creator position in the order of the universe. The macrocosm awaits us to awaken to our task.

### **Advent and Holy Nights**

We now enter the time of Advent and the sign of Sagittarius spurring us to develop a sense of truth. We now are citizens of the world and we can turn with wonder to new dimensions of being.

### Verse 34

In secret inwardly to feel  
How all that I've preserved of old  
Is quickened by new-risen sense of self:  
This shall, awakening, pour forth cosmic forces  
Into the outer actions of my life  
And growing, mould me into true existence.

Feeling once more leads the way. First it strengthens the Self and then it tells us that to achieve our co-creator mission we will be able to offer cosmic forces for the advancement of world evolution. This is what contributes to a feeling of living a truer, fuller life than the one that is given to ordinary consciousness. Because we take this step in feeling we know that resolve must follow.

The first of Advent makes an appeal to our enthusiasm and sense of Self. As the forces of Nature have completely waned the soul faculties continue to rise. The Father forces act in the will and the physical body can become the body of hope.

#### Verse 35

Can I know life's reality  
So that it's found again  
Within my soul's creative urge?  
I feel that I am granted power  
To make my self, as humble part,  
At home within the cosmic self.

True life of the previous verse becomes now "life's reality" and the creative forces of 31 transform the "creative urge" in the power to unite with the cosmic Self. The sense of sacredness of the Self that has accompanied us since shortly before Michaelmas becomes a milestone when it recognizes the brotherhood / sisterhood of all selves in their cosmic, Christ origin. The forces of the Son work on the etheric body that becomes the body of love. Now we can truly respond to the yearning to pour cosmic forces into our deeds (verse 34).

#### Verse 36

Within my being's depths there speaks,  
Intent on revelation,  
The cosmic Word mysteriously:  
Imbue your labor's aims  
With my bright spirit light  
To sacrifice yourself through me.

The voice that speaks at once within our hearts and in the vastness of the universe—the cosmic Word—now surges in our soul. It is a further response to our yearning to "pour cosmic forces." And what makes this possible is the willingness and joy of sacrifice. With deeds inspired by cosmic Word we bring "spirit light" into the world.

Before the turning point of verse 33 the force of thinking has been growing. Now it makes room for the light of revelation speaking through cosmic Word. Through this we can start purifying the astral body so that it becomes the body of faith. The forces of the Holy Spirit act in our thinking. The certainty of knowledge can foster resolve for sacrifice.

### Verse 37

To carry spirit light into world-winter-night  
My heart is ardently impelled,  
That shining seeds of soul  
Take root in grounds of worlds  
And Word Divine through senses' darkness  
Resounds, transfiguring all life.

The deeds—of which we have been speaking for a few verses—have first become tangible cosmic forces and are now “shining seeds of soul.” The germinating power (verse 27) touches not only the soul but the world that surrounds us. Through these seeds the cosmic Word echoes in the world and takes root. It continues to work through the human being, to resound “transfiguring all life.”

The whole force of the Self is now aligned head and heart with cosmic Word. It gives weight to the resolve to answer the challenge of verse 33. The ego that can transform its Double in the way pointed out by Scorpio, anticipates the Mystery of Golgotha.

After a long stress toward the external world, the verses that follow will turn the soul inwardly. We now enter the sign of Capricorn, in which we are called to integrate heights and depths and develop courage. We will also unite light of thinking and warmth of heart.

### Verse 38

The spirit child within my soul  
I feel freed of enchantment.  
In heart-high gladness has  
The holy cosmic Word engendered  
The heavenly fruit of hope,  
Which grows rejoicing into worlds afar  
Out of my being's godly roots.

Our personal winter hope of verse 29 becomes universal hope radiating from us into the world. Before it becomes conscious, the spirit birth of verses 44 and 45 is announced through the echo of the cosmic/historical significance of the Christ deed at its origin. It is still in its infancy, and it's bestowed from without, before it will grow within and become a full reality. The verse very much calls to the feeling realm, particularly to the joy of

Christmastide. A new theme emerges in fact with the first mention of the heart. We could say that now the cosmic Word calls us to an outward expansion of the heart.

Verse 39 (winter)

Surrendering to spirit revelation  
I gain the light of cosmic being;  
The power of thinking, growing clearer,  
Gains strength to give myself to me,  
And quickening there frees itself  
From thinker's energy my sense of self.

The birth bestowed from without is mirrored within by the sense of Self, no longer as an aspiration (verses 26) or feeling (verse 34), but consciously known, now that we are immersed in the mood of the Holy Nights. Because it is uniting itself with feeling and the forces of the heart thinking is strengthened. With the certainty of our cosmic essence we gain and spread the light that comes from cosmic Word.

Verse 40

And when I live in spirit depths  
And dwell within my soul's foundations,  
There streams from love-worlds of the heart,  
To fill the vain delusion of the self,  
The fiery power of the cosmic Word.

We have arrived at the time of Epiphany. The cosmic Word has taken residence in our soul. It isn't the spirit birth yet, rather another step of sobering of our lower self. The cosmic Word acts in the warmth of the heart as a cleansing fire.

We have thus come from Michaelmas to Christmas and experienced an inner transformation by meeting with the cosmic Self and cosmic Word. The Michaelic will has tempered our dedication to the Self. Thinking has turned us to the macrocosm in devotion. Feeling has led us into the first half of Advent, before cosmic Word and warmth of heart have kindled us with enthusiasm and devotion to the goals of world co-creation first announced in verse 33. In essence we have gone from affirming the Self as the growing reality of the soul to the Self creator of worlds.