



Detail, Beatrice addressing Dante from the chariot, Purgatory XXX, by William Blake, c. 1824-1827

Ephemera ~ February 2023

Of Immediate, rather than fleeting, interest





FEBRUARY IS NOT ONLY THE ANNIVERSARY MONTH of RUDOLF STEINER'S BIRTH

in 1861, it also marks the anniversary of his first description of anthroposophy as a spiritual movement in February 1913, and of his unique description of the being of Anthroposophia, a being he describes as a celestial goddess that descends toward humankind, just as Beatrice descended to guide Dante in his Divine Comedy. The Anthroposophical Society had been newly-formed on 28 December in 1912, and in the following February, the First General Meeting of the Anthroposophical Society took place, at Berlin. The record of Rudolf Steiner's talk on the occasion is rich, deep, and essential reading, and is included in the book [The Effects of Esoteric Development](#).

“What we receive through anthroposophy is our very own being.”

Rudolf Steiner's birth toward the end of February also falls in among some interesting birth, death, and feast days, including among them the birth of [Renaissance humanist](#) Pico della Mirandola on 24 February in 1463; [the Feast of the First and Second Finding of the Head of John the Baptist](#); and the Feast of Matthias, the only disciple to be chosen by his fellow Apostles, rather than by the Christ, and whose story appears solely in the first two chapters of the New Testament *Acts of the Apostles*. It's curious to consider that Matthias' feast day was originally observed in February, given his role in the event of the Pentecost, which occurs in the spring, 50 days after Easter. But if we place the feast day in the cycle of the year according to the rhythms in the human life, we find that February is nine months after May, and this corresponds to the physical, or gestational rhythm in human becoming. Rudolf Steiner spoke about this rhythm together with the egoic, astral, and etheric rhythms in January 1909, lecture five, included in the book [Disease, Karma, and Healing ~ Spiritual-Scientific Enquiries into the Nature of the Human Being](#). It is not insignificant that Pentecost in 1860 occurred on May 27, nine months before Rudolf Steiner was born.

“Since then Christian consciousness still preserves this primeval consciousness in an abstract way by consecrating individual days to the memory of saints, who, rightly understood, should give new life to the spiritual cosmos. By being born on a particular day of the year we should receive the name of the saint whose day it is on the calendar. What is meant to be expressed here in a more abstract way, was more concretely expressed in primeval times, when in the Mysteries the cosmic name of a person was found in accordance with what he experienced as he descended to earth, when with his being he created vowels with the planets and added them to the consonants of the Zodiac.”



St. Matthias the Apostle, by Rubens, c. 1611

From GA 209 on the Alphabet, by Rudolf Steiner:

“...And in those ancient days men were instinctively aware that they brought a name down with them from the cosmos to the Earth.



THE MOON will be New on Monday, February 20th. The first visibility of the waxing crescent will occur the next evening, when the Moon appears just below Venus, the brilliant evening star, looking west an hour after sunset. On Wednesday, February 22nd, the waxing crescent will be spectacularly close to Jupiter, also in the West an hour after sunset. One week later, on Wednesday, March 1st Venus and Jupiter will be in close conjunction, scripting their mystery into the end of the season over the western edge of the world. There are a couple of places to look for generating ideas about what such a celestial configuration may mean, including [Christ and the Spiritual World - The Quest for the Holy Grail](#), in which Rudolf Steiner describes in a rare, personal way, his method of researching where to find the name of Parsifal; and again in the *Spiritual Individualities of the Planets*, included in the book [Initiation Science](#).

Looking ahead to the Vernal Full Moon, which always occurs during the Holy Week, we find that it will occur overnight Wednesday, April 5 to Thursday, April 6, 2023 (depending on your time zone). As witness to the return of the Sun over the celestial equator, this first full Moon of the spring can be used to inform our preparation for the spiritual new year inaugurated by Easter. This year it places the accent mark on the events that unfolded overnight Wednesday

to Thursday. On this evening, Mary anointed the Christ with costly oil, an activity that so incensed Judas Iscariot that, later that evening, he covenanted to betray the Christ. This story can be found in each of the four Gospels.



Rembrandt study for Judas returning the 30 pieces of silver, c. 1629

DATES MENTIONED HERE:

- 28 December 1912 Anthroposophical Society founded
- 3 February 1913 Essence of Anthroposophy lecture
- 20 February 2023 New Moon
- 21 February 2023 Moon meets Venus
- 22 February 2023 Moon meets Jupiter
- 24 February birth of Pico della Mirandola
- 24 February Feast of First and Second Finding of Head of John the Baptist
- 24 February Feast of Matthias
(observance changed to May in 1970)
- 25 February 1861 Rudolf Steiner birth
- 5 & 6 April 2023 Vernal Full Moon

Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. -Matthew 27:3