

2012 AND WORLD PENTECOST—article by Robert Powell, whose PhD thesis on the history of the zodiac has been published and who is editor of a new sidereal cosmological publication, the *Journal for Star Wisdom*, the 2012 edition having been published in November 2011 (see below at the end of this article for details)

Now published as appendix 3 in my new book *Prophecy-Phenomena-Hope: The Real Meaning of 2012* (SteinerBooks, 2011), this article “2012 and World Pentecost” was originally written to introduce the *Journal for Star Wisdom* at this special time leading through the pivotal year 2012, the deeper significance of which is discussed here as the fulfillment of Rudolf Steiner’s prophecy of a World Pentecost. The content of this article is an edited version of the transcript of my lecture on World Pentecost held on July 24, 2009 in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.¹ This article addresses from a different standpoint part of the content of the book written by Kevin Dann and myself, *Christ & the Maya Calendar*.² A central theme of the book is the year 2012. This point in time is the end date of the Maya Long Count Calendar. This calendar is coming to an end at the winter solstice of the year 2012, specifically on December 21, 2012. Many books have been written about this date. Some authors are prophesying a variety of catastrophes. Others are saying that we are going to wake up on December 22, 2012 and find ourselves in a kind of paradise, with all the terrible things occurring here on the Earth finished (“over and done with”). These are two extremes, and obviously it is not so simple.

The Maya Long Count calendar began a long time ago, in the year 3114 BC, specifically August 11, 3114 BC (Gregorian calendar date). Historians use a method of dating that excludes the year zero, referring to the year 3114 BC. Astronomers have a slightly different method of dating. For astronomers, 3114 BC is the year –3113. Because historians go straight from 1 BC to 1 AD, excluding the year zero, astronomers identify 1 BC as the year zero, 2 BC as the year -1, 3 BC as the year -2, etc., and this makes it a lot easier for computation with dates, by including the year zero. Given that the Maya Long Count calendar began in -3113 and finishes in 2012, we can add 2012 and – 3113 and deduce that this calendar lasts for a total of 5125 years.

The classical Maya culture flourished from between about 250 to about 900 AD, a period of almost 700 years. During this time the Maya civilization flourished as an agriculturally intensive and city-centered culture. It was a period of large-scale construction and the recording of inscriptions on monuments, exemplifying a significant intellectual and artistic development, the most notable monuments being their stepped pyramids. There were a number of remarkable Maya cities in Mesoamerica and it was a culture that included highly developed art and

¹ In gratitude to Kelly Calegar, who organized the lecture and two subsequent workshops in Chapel Hill, and who transcribed the lecture.

² Robert Powell & Kevin Dann, *Christ & the Maya Calendar: 2012 and the Coming of the Antichrist* (Great Barrington, MA: Lindisfarne Books, 2009).

architecture, agriculture and astronomy. Then this culture collapsed in a relatively short space of time, whereby most of the cities were abandoned, although some Maya cities in the Yucatan continued to flourish for centuries more until the Yucatan was conquered by the Spanish in the sixteenth century. Although many ideas have been put forward to explain the collapse of the classical Maya civilization, to this day we do not know with any degree of certainty what really happened. All kinds of monuments were left behind. During the twentieth century these were decoded and the few surviving Maya texts were deciphered. From this breakthrough came the discovery that there were actually three calendars that the Maya used. The one that ends in the year 2012 is called the Maya Long Count calendar. What is this calendar about?

Although the Maya retreated from their cities, there are at the present time still about seven million descendants of the Maya in southern Mexico, the Yucatan Peninsula, Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, and western Honduras. From those who have done research among these descendants, there is some knowledge of the ideas and beliefs of the Maya. For example, it is surmised that the period of 5125 years of the Long Count Calendar is what the Maya called the *Fourth Age* or *Age of the Fourth Sun*. The fourth age is followed by the fifth age, and anyone who has studied chronology can recognize that here there is a parallel with Hindu chronology.³ In Hindu chronology, the ages are called *Yugas*. According to the book called *The Laws of Manu* we are still in the fourth age, or fourth Yuga, referred to as the *Kali Yuga*. Hindu chronology refers to a sequence of four Yugas, whose names are Krita Yuga, Treta Yuga, Dvapara Yuga, and Kali Yuga. Then, according to some Hindu sources, will follow the fifth Yuga, called Satya Yuga. *Yuga* means simply *age*.

This teaching of the Yugas became transmitted to Greece, where expressions were used that are more familiar to us. The Greek poet Hesiod, for instance, used the designations Golden Age, Silver Age, Bronze Age, and Iron Age. The Iron Age of the Greeks corresponds to the Hindu Dark Age or Kali Yuga. Against the background of Hindu chronology, we have a fairly clear idea of what is signified by the succession of ages or Yugas.

It is striking that in Hindu chronology the fourth age, Kali Yuga, began very close in time to the start of the fourth age in the Maya calendar. Kali Yuga, according to Hindu chronology, began at midnight on February 17/18 in the year 3102 BC (astronomers would say, in the year -3101). And this date differs by merely twelve years from the start of the Maya Long Count Calendar. Clearly there is a correspondence here. However, according to the dating for the Kali Yuga originally derived from the ancient Sanscrit text entitled *The Laws of Manu*, it is stated that the Kali Yuga lasts for 432,000 years. If we accept this dating, it would imply that at the present time we are less than 5120 years into Kali Yuga which, then, would last a further (approximately) 427,000 years.

³ Ibid., Chapter 6, for the parallel between the Hindu Yugas and the Maya calendar.

Interestingly, there are Hindu teachers, including Sri Yukteswar, the teacher of Yogananda,⁴ who indicated that one has to look at the dating of the Yugas differently – that they are not the purported great, lengthy periods of time. Another individual who also took up the theme of the dating of the Yugas was Rudolf Steiner, who mentioned on various occasions that Kali Yuga lasted for a period of five thousand years. My astrosophical research confirms this indication and I was able to determine the end date of Kali Yuga to be September 10, 1899.⁵ Between -3101 and 1899, five thousand years elapsed, this being the length of Kali Yuga, which is regarded as the fourth age.

Moreover, Rudolf Steiner gave a very precise meaning to the ending of the fourth age, Kali Yuga. He spoke of the New Age, the *Age of Light*, which then began in 1899. In Hindu chronology, according to some sources, the Age of Light is Satya Yuga, the fifth age that follows the fourth age, Kali Yuga. This fifth age or Satya Yuga, according to Rudolf Steiner, has to do with an event he refers to as the *second coming of Christ* which, however, is not the return of Christ in a physical body. Instead, Christ's return is in an *ethereal* body – a body of light. Through his reappearance in the world of the etheric, the invisible world of life forces, Christ has the ability to appear simultaneously to people in different places around the world. This is occurring now, during this Age of Light (Satya Yuga) that began in 1899.⁶

Following these indications, I have written a book about this called *The Christ Mystery*, and in this book I translated into English various accounts of people who have had experiences of Christ in his ethereal form.⁷ The experiences described there generally occurred as a matter of grace, and on the whole they are very beautiful and profound life-changing experiences. In November 2008 I had the good fortune of meeting a young woman, Judith von Halle, who on Good Friday in the year 2004 received the stigmata, which are the visible wounds/signs of Christ.⁸ She is Jewish, and it is very unusual for a Jewish woman to receive this grace of bearing

⁴ Yogananda came from India to the United States and founded the Self Realization fellowship in Southern California in 1920.

⁵ Robert Powell, *Chronicle of the Living Christ: Foundations of Cosmic Christianity* (Great Barrington, MA: SteinerBooks, 1996), p. 418. See also, Robert Powell, *The Christ Mystery: Reflections on the Second Coming* (Fair Oaks, CA: Rudolf Steiner College Press, 1999).

⁶ Rudolf Steiner, *The Reappearance of Christ in the Etheric* (Great Barrington, MA: SteinerBooks, 2003), lecture of January 25, 1910.

⁷ *Ibid*, Chapter 1.

⁸ Judith von Halle was born in Berlin in 1972. She attended school in Germany and the U.S. and studied architecture, graduating in 1998. She encountered Anthroposophy in 1997 and began working as a staff member at Rudolf Steiner House in Berlin, where she also lectured from 2001,

the stigmata – perhaps it is even the first case of this. In addition, she is not Catholic; up until now, virtually all recorded cases of the stigmata have been within the Catholic Church. Moreover, Judith von Halle is an Anthroposophist, who has studied the works of Rudolf Steiner. What is striking about her experience is that until she received the stigmata she enjoyed eating, but from the time she received the stigmata she found she was no longer able to eat any food. In fact, eating made her ill. Now her only intake is water, and this only occasionally.

When I met her in November 2008 she had not eaten for four and a half years, yet she was radiantly healthy! In terms of her consciousness, an incredible change came about when she received the stigmata. She came into communion with Christ. In particular, she came into communion with the resurrection body of Christ. Through this communion with the resurrection body of Christ, she receives all she needs to live.⁹ She does not need anything else. She receives such abundance from the communion with Christ's resurrection body that she does not need any physical nourishment. She is a living testimony to Steiner's indication about the reappearance of Christ and that through this new and living relationship with Christ, human beings will have the possibility of undergoing a dramatic change of consciousness. Judith von Halle has indeed gone through a remarkable change of consciousness since Easter of the year 2004.

It was a significant meeting, to meet someone who is in contact with the living Christ to such a degree that she has received the visible wounds of Christ, the stigmata. She is a remarkable testimony to the unfolding of the New Age which, in light of Rudolf Steiner's indications, is the age of Christ's second coming. Today, the expression *New Age* is well known; it is a widely used expression. However, most people do not realize that it was Rudolf Steiner who introduced this term and that it has a very explicit meaning having to do with the return of Christ in an ethereal form – his *second coming*. To summarize: the end of Kali Yuga, the Dark Age, in 1899 heralded the beginning of the New Age, the Age of Light, Satya Yuga, the age of Christ's second coming.

while maintaining an architectural practice. In 2004, her life was transformed when she received the stigmata. Her first book was published in German in 2005, and she now works principally as a lecturer and author. She lives part of the time in Berlin and for the remaining time in Dornach, Switzerland. Among her books in English translation are the following: *And If He Had Not Been Raised: The Stations of Christ's Path to Spirit Man* (London: Temple Lodge Press, 2007), *Illness and Healing: The Mystery Language of the Gospels* (London: Temple Lodge Press, 2008), *The Lord's Prayer: The Living Word of God* (London: Temple Lodge Press, 2007), *Secrets of the Stations of the Cross and the Grail Blood: The Mystery of Transformation* (London: Temple Lodge Press, 2008).

⁹ Judith von Halle, *And If He Had Not Been Raised: The Stations of Christ's Path to Spirit Man* (London: Temple Lodge Press, 2007), p. 23: "The life-force emanating from the Resurrection strengthens me inwardly so much that I can be outwardly nourished by it."

However, there is still the question what this has to do with the year 2012? In order to grasp this connection, we need to first consider the Hindu understanding of Kali Yuga.

The Hindu understanding of the starting date of Kali Yuga is that it was also the death date of Krishna. In India there are a tremendous number of gods and goddesses who are revered in the Hindu religion. There are many different spiritual groups and movements. But all love Krishna! Krishna is the central figure in Hinduism. Rudolf Steiner spoke about Krishna, and what he indicated points to a relationship between Krishna and Jesus. Rudolf Steiner, when speaking of Jesus of Nazareth, spoke of a pure soul that had never gone through the event of the Fall, a pure soul that had come into incarnation on the Earth *for the first time* as Jesus. In other words, Jesus of Nazareth had never been incarnated on the Earth before and was therefore a pure being. However, Steiner also indicated that even though Jesus had not been incarnated on the Earth before, he had worked from higher realms to assist humankind on the path of spiritual evolution. In fact, according to Steiner, Jesus of Nazareth is the same being who in the Hindu religion is called Krishna – in other words, Krishna and Jesus are one and the same.¹⁰

If we read the *Bhagavad Gita* carefully, as the primary source for our understanding of Krishna and the most widely known Hindu sacred scripture, we come to recognize that Krishna had not been incarnated in a physical body but had overlighted an individual and had taught through that individual. Krishna was not actually incarnated but was overlighting Arjuna the charioteer. The teachings of Krishna were presented *through* Arjuna. When speaking of the “death” of Krishna at that point in time, at the start of Kali Yuga, what is really meant by this is that the “death” of Krishna was actually the event of Krishna withdrawing from Arjuna to return to higher realms. The remarkable level of consciousness which Arjuna had attained through being overlighted by Krishna was no longer. For Arjuna it meant darkness; he had been enveloped in the incredible light coming from Krishna, and then, when Krishna “died” – or rather, withdrew – Arjuna experienced darkness.

This experience was symptomatic for nearly all human beings who would experience this darkness sooner or later in the subsequent period of time, during the course of Kali Yuga. It was indicative of the future period of time in which humanity would experience the loss of light consciousness, which is why this time period is called the Dark Age, or Kali Yuga. In our time we find this darkness to be the normal state of consciousness. Generally we are not aware of our spiritual origin, that we are divine beings who have incarnated here upon the Earth. And usually we are not aware of our previous lives on the Earth, let alone our experience in spiritual realms in between incarnations on this planet. Thus, more often than not, we are unaware of who we are in a deeper sense or where we were before we came into existence here on Earth. From the

¹⁰ Rudolf Steiner, *The Bhagavad Gita and the West: The Esoteric Meaning of the Bhagavad Gita and its Relation to the Letters of St. Paul* (Great Barrington, MA: SteinerBooks, 2009).

standpoint of Krishna consciousness, which Arjuna received through being overlit, we are living in darkness. And now, the Age of Light means the coming again of this *same being* who overlit Arjuna and was then incarnated as Jesus of Nazareth. Through his second coming he is *again* awakening the light-filled consciousness that existed at the time of Krishna/Arjuna and which, later, various people received through Christ – St. John, the author of the *Book of Revelation*, being a notable example of an individual who was overlit by Christ Jesus.

We can find many outstanding examples of human beings who have attained this light consciousness even during the Dark Age. St. Paul, for example, had an experience of blinding light at the gates of Damascus through which he received an imprint of Christ Jesus, whom he then proclaimed on his travels to the different communities scattered around the Mediterranean. Other individuals, as well, attained this light-filled Christ consciousness that filled both Paul and John. These individuals were forerunners of the new experience of Christ that is opening up in our time. Through grace, they received Christ consciousness even during the Dark Age of Kali Yuga. Now, during the New Age, Satya Yuga, we are coming into a time when more and more human beings are attaining Christ consciousness that existed in a preliminary form as Krishna consciousness in ancient times and which is reappearing in our time in a new way through the encounter with Christ in his second coming.

Judith von Halle, who I mentioned previously, is an example of someone who has come into this light-filled consciousness, from which she is able to communicate extraordinary things. Rudolf Steiner himself bore witness to the presence of Christ. He had a “Paul” or “Arjuna” experience in 1899, which he describes in his autobiography. *Out of this direct experience he then began his life’s work as a spiritual teacher to proclaim the reality of the event of Christ’s return in a new form, an ethereal form, in our time.* What Steiner stressed, however, is that we come into Christ consciousness, this light-filled consciousness of spiritual awareness, if we actively seek it, because Christ leaves us completely free, and if we do not ask, we do not receive, unless by virtue of grace. Generally speaking – although there are, as described earlier, also Christ encounters through grace – we come into Christ consciousness above all through actively seeking Christ. This is a very important consideration. The question is: What does all this have to do with the year 2012?

In *Christ & the Maya Calendar* I have indicated that we are able to come to a true understanding of the significance of the transition in 1899 from the Dark Age to the New Age of Light if we comprehend that since 1899 Christ is working in Earth evolution in a new way – yet, nevertheless, at the same time the impulses of the Dark Age continue on into the present time. In other words, since 1899 we are living in a period of a great epic struggle between the forces of light, led by Christ, and forces of darkness, which are opposing the light of Christ. In the Christian tradition the *Letters of John* refer to the *Antichrist* as the force opposing Christ. From the subtitle (*2012 and the Coming of the Antichrist*) of *Christ & the Maya Calendar*, it is evident that this theme is a central focus in the book, the theme of the apocalyptic struggle between the forces of light and the forces of darkness since 1899 and continuing into our time.

Let us now consider the difference between the end date of the Kali Yuga according to Rudolf Steiner, which is the year 1899, and the end date of the Maya calendar, which is the year 2012. What is this difference about? My understanding is that the Maya astronomers were aware, like the Hindu chronologists, that humanity entered into a dark age which would end around the present time. As discussed above, looking at the starting points of both the Maya calendar (in 3114 BC) and Kali Yuga (in 3102 BC), there is only a twelve year difference between these two starting dates. However, what the Maya astronomers seemed to have grasped is that there would be a period of conflict between the forces of light and darkness before the *real* New Age would begin. That would explain why the Maya astronomers came to the year 2012 as the start of the New Age instead of the year 1899.

At this point in time we are rapidly approaching the year 2012. Summarizing the above: Rudolf Steiner spoke of 1899 as the start of the New Age, which can also be thought of as the Age of Christ's second coming. However, for those people who originally devised the Maya Calendar, it seems that they intuited that the *real* start of the New Age would not be until the year 2012, since they may have recognized the possibility that humanity must first pass through a little more than a century of experiencing the conflict between the forces of light and those of darkness – in the period from 1899 to 2012.

There is, moreover, a cosmological background to the 2012 date. In order to grasp this background, it requires that we first understand the structure of our galaxy. A map of the galaxy shows the center of the galaxy, called the *Galactic Center* (see image below). In the Platonic tradition that which was conceived to be at the Galactic Center was called the *Supra-Celestial Sun*, thought of as a Great Sun in the midst of the stars of our galaxy whereby, of course, the ancients had a completely different relationship to the heavens than we have now through modern astronomy, and so their understanding of the galaxy was quite different from ours.



An image of the Milky Way galaxy

As a point of departure, let us consider that all the stars in the heavens are Suns like our Sun. We can think of our Sun as our *local star*. Every single star, or Sun, is a miniature copy of the Supra-Celestial Sun – at least, this was the conception in the Platonic stream to which Neoplatonists such as Proclus (412-485) belonged. I shall refer to it simply as the *Central Sun*, a term that conveniently expresses the fact that it is located at the center of the galaxy. The Central Sun is the Supra-Celestial Sun at the center of the galaxy, i.e. at the Galactic Center. However, it is to

be noted that this is somewhat different from the understanding of modern astronomy. The current astronomical concept of the Galactic Center is that there is a *super-massive black hole* there, whereby it has to be borne in mind that this is purely a theoretical concept which is, moreover, an inadequate concept – one that does not grasp that in the central region of the galaxy, at the Galactic Center, there is the point of transition from creation to pure spirit, or *vice versa* from pure spirit to creation.

Everything has come into existence from the Central Sun. All the stars in our galaxy have been born, directly or indirectly, from this great center which, if we were able to enter into this realm, we would find is a realm of pure spirit.¹¹ In the book *Christ & the Maya Calendar* there is an appendix about the Central Sun, revealing that it is not at all a super-massive black hole. It is a great center which can be thought of as the Divine Heart of our galaxy, supporting everything in the galaxy, just as the heart maintains everything in the human organism. Ultimately it is the power of Divine Love that streams from this Divine Heart, the Central Sun. In the words of Dante it is a matter of, “The love that moves the Sun and the other stars” (*The Divine Comedy: Paradise* 33: 144-145). All the stars (our Sun is one of about 100 billion stars in the Milky Way galaxy) are orbiting around the Central Sun in a clockwise direction. Our Sun takes approximately 227 million years to go once around the Central Sun. On its passage around the Central Sun, it travels through different regions of the galaxy. This is a key concept for understanding what the Dark Age is and how it arose.

Imagine walking in nature on a beautiful, sunny day and then an enormous black cloud comes and hides the Sun, so that the atmosphere grows cold and dark. In experiencing this, one knows that the Sun is going to re-appear and so normally one would not be overly concerned. By way of analogy, it may be surmised that it was something like this which Maya and Hindu chronologists perceived long ago in relation to the passage of our Sun around the Central Sun. Of course, they could not formulate it in this way, because at that time there was not a clear conception of the movement of our Sun around the Galactic Center. For us now, knowing of this movement by way of modern astronomy, the question is: What is emanating from the Central Sun which holds everything together (100 billion or more stars) in their orbits around this great center?

¹¹ The expression “all the stars” has to be modified. Certainly it is true to say that all first generation stars have been born directly from the Galactic Center. However, there are second generation stars which have been born from first generation stars. For these second generation stars, therefore, it is appropriate to say that “by virtue of line of descent” they have been born from the Central Sun – in other words, indirectly (rather than directly).

The answer lies in considering the Central Sun as the Ultimate Source of existence from which is streaming Divine Love, Light, and Life¹² – issuing forth from the Central Sun at the heart of our galaxy and sustaining all 100 billion stars in their orbits. This means that every star in the galaxy, including our Sun, receives from the Central Sun. In turn, from our Sun it is “stepped down” to a level of vibration appropriate for us here on the Earth. Thus, Divine Love – stepped down to an appropriate level – pours through our solar system, emanating from our Sun. Literally, our existence is maintained not only from the Sun but in a larger sense from the Ultimate Source, the Central Sun.

The Sun moves in a clockwise direction around the Central Sun and the Earth moves in a counter clockwise direction around the Sun. Visualizing the yearly passage of the Earth around the Sun, there is a time each year when the Earth is between our Sun and the Central Sun. At this moment there is an alignment: *Sun – Earth – Central Sun*. Then, visualizing the Earth’s passage continuing around the Sun, a new alignment occurs six months later in which, from the Earth, the Sun is seen in conjunction with the Central Sun. At this moment during the cycle of the year there is then a line, or alignment: *Earth – Sun – Central Sun*. At the present time in the twenty-first century, this alignment happens every year around December 18/19. Visualizing the Earth continuing to progress around the Sun, it returns again a further six months later to its position between the Sun and the Central Sun: *Sun – Earth – Central Sun*. This cosmic alignment happens six months later, because the Earth takes one year to go around the Sun, and between the two forms of alignment the Earth makes half a circuit around the Sun during which half a year elapses. At the present time, the cosmic alignment of the Earth between the Sun and the Central Sun happens every year around June 18/19 (six months after December 18/19). It was extraordinary to discover that this galactic alignment (*Sun – Earth – Central Sun*) took place at the historical event of Pentecost. When I discovered this, I realized that I had found an important key revealing that Christianity is a cosmic religion. The event of Pentecost was a cosmic event, a galactic alignment of the Earth with the Central Sun at the heart of our galaxy.

It is important to note that in our time the alignment of the Earth between the Central Sun and our Sun takes place June 18/19 each year. However, because of the phenomenon known as the *precession of the equinoxes*, this date changes in the course of the centuries. When we go back to the time of Christ, because of the shift that occurs on account of the precession of the equinoxes, this alignment was on a different date – on May 24 in the year AD 33 – which was the historical date of Pentecost. In *Chronicle of the Living Christ* I have written how this date and many other dates in the life of Christ were determined with a very high degree of accuracy.

¹² By way of abbreviation, in this article *Divine Love, Light, and Life* is shortened simply to *Divine Love*.

What took place at that historical event of Pentecost? If we take seriously the words of Christ, “I and the Father are one” (John 10:30), the implication is that Christ was one with the whole galaxy, that his being extended all the way up to the Galactic Center, the Divine Heart at the center of our galaxy. This consideration is supported by the statement made by Rudolf Steiner that every step that Christ took was in harmony with the whole universe:

In Palestine during the time that Jesus of Nazareth walked on Earth as Christ Jesus – during the three years of His life, from His thirtieth to His thirty-third year – the entire Being of the cosmic Christ was acting uninterruptedly upon Him, and was working into Him. The Christ stood always under the influence of the entire cosmos; He made no step without this working of the cosmic forces into and in Him...It was always in accordance with the collective Being of the whole universe with whom the Earth is in harmony, that all which Christ Jesus did took place.¹³

Thus, “I and the Father are one” could be formulated in modern language as “I and the collective Being of the whole universe are one.” At the time of Rudolf Steiner, during the first quarter of the twentieth century, “the universe” meant “the galaxy.” There was no conception at that time, generally speaking, that there were other galaxies beyond our galaxy. Speaking of “the whole universe,” Rudolf Steiner’s words meant to his audience of that time “the whole Milky Way galaxy.” In other words, Christ was connected with the whole Milky Way galaxy with every step he took and, correspondingly, he was inwardly united with the Central Sun, the Divine Heart at the center of our galaxy.

Let us now consider Dante’s great vision from his extraordinary poem *The Divine Comedy*. In the last half of *The Divine Comedy*, the part entitled *Paradise*, Dante describes being inwardly transported to the highest realm of existence, which he refers to as the *Empyrean*. In contemplating this image (below) which is a depiction by Gustav Doré of Dante’s experience of the Empyrean, is one not reminded of the other image (above) depicting our galaxy?

¹³Rudolf Steiner, *Spiritual Guidance of the Individual and Humanity* (Gt. Barrington, MA: Anthroposophic Press, 1992), p. 28.



Illustration to Dante's Divine Comedy, Paradiso by Gustave Doré:

Dante and Beatrice beholding the Empyrean in the form of a snow-white rose

(Empyrean derives from the Ancient Greek word "Pyr" meaning fire,

which reminds us of Daniel Andreev's expression "Astrofire" for the Galactic Center)

This portrayal by Doré is of Dante's vision of the snow-white rose in the Empyrean. In the language of the *Book of Revelation*, what is here in the center of this celestial white rose is the *Throne of God*. Around the Throne of God are the angelic beings of the spiritual hierarchies, participating in the work of creation. The whole, in the words of Dante, is shaped in the form of a snow-white rose, which is also an image for Divine Sophia. In the mystical tradition – to which Daniel Andreev's *Rose of the World* is a recent contribution – Sophia is conceived of as being

the celestial rose.¹⁴ Sophia embodies the Wisdom (“plan”) of creation. Sophia embraces the whole of our galaxy. Like Christ, she is an “offspring” of the Creator, a *God-born* being (rather than a created being like the angelic beings of the spiritual hierarchies). She embodies the plan of creation. Further, in the *Book of Revelation*, Sophia is referred to as the *Bride of the Lamb*. The Lamb is the expression used in the *Book of Revelation* for Christ. Sophia is the Divine Feminine counterpart of Christ. It thus emerges that Christ is a being who – like his Divine Feminine counterpart, Sophia – is connected with the whole Milky Way galaxy. Long ago Christ chose to incarnate upon the Earth in the human being Jesus of Nazareth – a process that extended over aeons of time.¹⁵

From his vantage point in higher realms, the being we call Christ was able to see that humanity was entering a period of darkness, the dark age of Kali Yuga. He came in the middle of this Dark Age in order to bring the light of the Central Sun into the darkness. In the words from the prologue to the *Gospel of St. John*: “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness overcometh it not” (John 1:5).

Christ incarnated to prepare a group of human beings, the twelve disciples, to be able to receive *directly* the Divine Love emanating from the Central Sun. Exactly this was the event of Pentecost. The work of Christ was to prepare this group of human beings to receive the outpouring of Divine Love from the Central Sun. In the Christian tradition this is depicted as tongues of fire coming down on the heads of the disciples. Through this event the disciples became enlightened and transformed. Christ consciousness was born within them. They received the Holy Spirit, and they were then able to go out and teach and heal in the name of Christ. They became apostles.

The Holy Spirit is nothing other than the continual outpouring of Divine Love from the Central Sun – the pouring out of the fire of Divine Love that underlies all existence and which has brought all things into being. Christ came from the Central Sun and prepared a group of human beings on Earth to be able to receive at Pentecost the outpouring of Divine Love *directly* from the Central Sun, through which they came into Christ consciousness. Let us recall, as indicated above, that Pentecost on May 24 AD 33 was a cosmic event at which the alignment *Sun – Earth – Central Sun* took place.

According to Rudolf Steiner the event of Pentecost, which took place nearly two thousand years ago, is to become a world event. He spoke of this as the coming *World Pentecost*. What does he

¹⁴ Daniel Andreev, *The Rose of the World* (Great Barrington, MA: Lindisfarne Books, 1997). See also, Robert Powell & Kevin Dann, *Christ & the Maya Calendar: 2012 and the Coming of the Antichrist* (Great Barrington, MA: Lindisfarne Books, 2009), Chapter 9 & Appendix 1.

¹⁵ Robert Powell, “Sophia and the Rose of the World” – <http://sophiafoundation.org/articles/>

mean by this? The World Pentecost is an event comparable to Pentecost two thousand years ago. However, it will be a *world event*, not just an event that impacts a relatively small group of people in a particular geographical location. At that time in AD 33 it was a matter of many thousands of people, initially the twelve disciples who became apostles, who then went out onto the streets of Jerusalem, to the pool of Bethesda, and baptized three thousand people that day (and thousands more subsequently). In contrast, the World Pentecost will be an event of the outpouring of Divine Love *for the whole of humanity*. Will humanity be sufficiently prepared to receive this? And when is the World Pentecost going to happen? And, further, what might this foretell concerning our primary question regarding the significance of the year 2012?

Let us contemplate once again the movement of our Sun around the Central Sun. From the beginning of Kali Yuga or the Maya calendar, around 5120 years ago, our Sun entered a part of the galaxy where there had previously been a constellation that had been destroyed long ago. Our Sun thus came into a region of cosmic debris that acted as a shield of cosmic dust so that our Sun – and consequently the entire solar system – was no longer receiving the full outpouring of the great wave of Divine Love from the Central Sun. While the spiritual beings undergoing their evolution upon our Sun are at such a high level of spirituality that they are still able to focus upon and receive the outpouring of Divine Love from the Central Sun, this is not the case for most human beings on the Earth, with the exception of a few highly evolved spiritual masters. The Hindu and Maya astronomer-chronologists evidently intuited that this shielding effect impeding the inflow of the great wave of Divine Love from the Central Sun would last for only a limited period of time, as in the analogy used earlier of being out on a walk and experiencing the Sun disappearing behind a cloud, knowing that the Sun will eventually reappear from behind the cloud. The date of the start of the New Age has been a matter of forecasting when the Sun would pass out of the shielding effect of cosmic dust belonging to this part of the galaxy where there are the remnants of a constellation that was destroyed long ago through which our Sun has been passing for some 5120 years. It is a matter of forecasting when our Sun will pass out from this galactic region of cosmic dust and debris to begin to receive again the great wave of Divine Love that is continually proceeding from the Central Sun. The prophecy of the Maya astronomers, who were attuned to the galactic level of existence, is that this will occur around the end of 2012. This is not so far away. According to the astrophysical research presented in this article, we are rapidly approaching the event of a galactic alignment at the winter solstice in 2012 through which humanity as a whole will receive a great wave of Divine Love – and this is precisely the event prophesied by Rudolf Steiner as the *World Pentecost*. Whether this event will occur exactly when the galactic alignment occurs on December 21, 2012, or whether it takes place at some later point in time, it is important that we consciously prepare for it.

In using the expression *galactic alignment* in relation to the year 2012, it has to be clarified that this galactic alignment is not with the Central Sun as at the historical event of Pentecost. Rather, it has to do with the Sun at the winter solstice crossing the Galactic Equator during the 36-year period from 1980 to 2016, as discussed in *Christ & the Maya Calendar*, where the expression

“2012 Window” is used to denote this 36-year period. In the next article in this issue of the *Journal for Star Wisdom*, “Sun on the Galactic Center” by David Tresemer, it is pointed out that the galactic alignment of the winter solstice Sun with the Galactic Center will not take place until about the year 2230, which raises the question whether *this* will be the time of the World Pentecost rather than 2012? In the voluminous literature concerning the date of the end of the Maya calendar, 2012 is well known as falling within the period 1980-2016 of the galactic alignment of the winter solstice Sun with the Galactic Equator. The new perspective offered in this article is that – if this date intuited by the Maya truly does denote the *real* start of the New Age – 2012 marks the end of the (approximately) 5120-year period of the Sun’s passage through the local galactic region of cosmic dust and debris obscuring our solar system from the Central Sun and that the exit of our Sun from this dust-filled local galactic region signifies the (re-)opening to the great wave of Divine Love proceeding from the Central Sun *and that this is the World Pentecost*.

Obviously, it is important that as many people as possible know about this approaching event. For we can only receive the benefits of the great wave of Divine Love if we know about it and prepare for it; otherwise it is possible that we might experience it as a kind of scourging. How may this be understood?

There is a grand and magnificent painting by Michelangelo in the Sistine Chapel in Rome, *The Last Judgment*. There in the middle of this picture one sees Christ together with the Virgin Mary, surrounded by the apostles. One also sees on one side souls descending, fleeing away from Christ. These are referred to as *the souls of the damned*. On the other side one sees souls ascending; these souls, who are being drawn toward Christ, are called *the souls of the blessed*. This great work of art portrays the two possible ways of encountering the approaching great wave of Divine Love. In other words, the coming World Pentecost can be experienced either as a tremendous blessing or as a scourging. It will be experienced as a scourging if the presence of Divine Love calls forth shame for all of the negative things one has ever done, calling forth shame to such a degree that one is overwhelmed and one’s inner response is to flee the World Conscience, who is Christ. Potentially, therefore, shame can cause one to become overwhelmed to such a degree that it results in the impulse to flee. Therefore, in order to prepare for the World Pentecost, to be prepared to receive the powerful incoming wave of Divine Love, one needs to come to terms with one’s *shadow side*, so that one is not overwhelmed by one’s *lower nature* when it is exposed to the light of the World Conscience (Christ). A further important point in contemplating Michelangelo’s great work of art is that Christ does not at all appear in a judgmental mode at the center of the painting. He appears in a blessing way. Nevertheless, judgment takes place *simply by virtue of Christ’s presence*. The souls of the damned flee because their conscience shrinks in the face of the World Conscience (Christ), whereas the souls of the blessed, having attained a certain degree of expiation through raising the content of the subconscious into consciousness and thus purifying their lower nature, are attracted irresistibly toward the World Conscience.

Expressed in a positive way, we have to raise our level of vibration in order to come into and receive the approaching wave of Divine Love. Let us remember that this is an event that is happening on a global scale. Throughout the whole world human beings have to come to terms with the shadow, the lower side of human nature, and at least *begin* to work upon transforming the negative into something positive. Hence the importance of knowing the deeper level of significance of the year 2012. This also helps us to understand why some people write of 2012 as a kind of “stepping into paradise”, because in a certain respect – at least, potentially – this is true. It also helps us understand why others write of tremendous catastrophes associated with the end date of the Maya calendar in 2012, which could also be true if humanity does not prepare to receive the great wave of Divine Love, preparation for which entails undergoing purification. Purification can be undertaken voluntarily. On the other hand, catastrophe brings with it the necessity of new orientation and, correspondingly, purification.

To summarize: the work of Christ in returning in an ethereal form in the twentieth century has been – and continues to be – to prepare *humanity as a whole* to receive and come into harmony with and unite with the approaching great wave of Divine Love from the Central Sun – the event described by Rudolf Steiner as *World Pentecost*, a galactic alignment, just as Pentecost in AD 33 was an alignment with the Central Sun at the heart of our galaxy. Rudolf Steiner’s life was dedicated to preparing humanity for the awakening of Christ consciousness in order that as many human beings as possible are able to experience the World Pentecost positively. As Christ was descending from above in ethereal form to enter into the Earth’s etheric aura in 1933, Rudolf Steiner was striving on an ascending path to meet with Christ descending from the cosmos.¹⁶ In Rudolf Steiner’s biography, toward the end of his life, a very significant event took place through which Christ’s path of descent met with Rudolf Steiner’s ascending path so that he was able to receive directly from the Etheric Christ. Through this encounter, which took place at Christmas 1923, Christ imparted to Rudolf Steiner a *direct transmission (infusion)* through which he was imbued with a cosmic impulse from the Etheric Christ. The nature of that impulse is best characterized by the words *Divine Love*. As a result of this encounter, through Rudolf Steiner the Etheric Christ gave to humanity a meditation – the Foundation Stone Meditation – in which is encapsulated that which is called the *Foundation Stone of Love*, and through this meditation it is

¹⁶ The year 1899 denotes the dawn of the New Age, the beginning of the return of Christ into the Earth’s etheric aura, a process which took thirty-three and one-third years to complete, on January 8, 1933 – thirty-three and one-third years being the length of Christ’s life. As described below, later in this article, some twenty-four years into this period – on December 25, 1923 – a most significant occurrence within this process took place, corresponding to the *baptism* in relation to the Etheric Christ. This baptismal event at Christmas 1923 is evident when it is cognized that Rudolf Steiner stood in relation to the Etheric Christ, preparing the way for him, in a way analogous to that of John the Baptist who prepared the way for the coming of Christ into a physical body at the baptism in the River Jordan.

possible to enter into the impulse of Divine Love which is an expression of the *direct presence* of the Etheric Christ in our time. This came through Rudolf Steiner *for the whole of humanity* and is something of extraordinary significance! Working with the Foundation Stone of Love helps one to enter into the right level of vibration to be able to receive the great wave of Divine Love that is coming at the World Pentecost.¹⁷

There are many other aspects relating to the present time that are discussed in the book *Christ & the Maya Calendar*. One important aspect concerns the forces of darkness opposing the coming of Christ. Because of the approaching World Pentecost, the forces of darkness know that they do not have much time to accomplish their agenda, which is to take over the world, including humanity and the whole of nature. There are all kinds of phenomena in the present world that are working upon the consciousness of human beings in a negative way. Whereas Christ respects individual human freedom, these opposing forces *do not*, and they work not only upon adults, who are at least capable of freedom of choice through exercising their free will (based upon a conscious understanding of what is entailed in making a choice), but also upon children and young people in all kinds of ways.

In particular, the opposing forces work through certain aspects of modern technology. There are all kinds of ways in which a young person's consciousness is captured by modern technology. It is not unusual to find a 13-year old who will come home from school and go to their bedroom, which is equipped with their own television set and computer, not to mention the omnipresent mobile phone, in the privacy of the bedroom then to enter into a virtual world, to a large extent cut off from the rest of the family. Moreover, more and more sophisticated technologies are arising to seduce the consciousness of young people, who in former times would play in nature or with friends, and who often used to have something of an inner religious life, including prayer and even meditation. It used to be natural for a child between the age of seven and fourteen to come into some form of religious consciousness – turning toward the angels or toward God. Nowadays, there is hardly a possibility of turning toward the angels, because the mobile phone is in use, or there is some other technological distraction, preventing the interior dialogue that is the foundation for supersensible experience. How can young people receive communications from their guardian angel when they are constantly bombarded by technology? *This is an enormous challenge in our time*. This is not to say we should not use technology, because it is undoubtedly very useful on a practical level. However, we have to be aware of the negative impact of technology, and how *this negative impact is affecting precisely the part of us we call the life body or the etheric body through which we are able to connect with Christ!*

¹⁷ Lacquanna Paul & Robert Powell, *The Foundation Stone Meditation in the Sacred Dance of Eurythmy* (Palo Alto, CA: Sophia Foundation of North America, 2007).

As a remedy to this attempt by the forces of darkness to penetrate and harden our etheric bodies, endeavoring to cut us off from Christ and attempting to prevent us from being open and receptive to the gift of Divine Love, we need to strengthen our etheric body and open ourselves to the meeting with Christ, whose being *is* Divine Love and who is seeking, above all, *to unite with human beings*. However, it is important that we turn to him *in freedom*, and open ourselves to him whose being is *unfathomable mercy*. It is Rudolf Steiner's great gift to humanity to have brought into existence a new form of sacred movement – eurythmy – which strengthens the etheric body and prepares us for union with the being of Christ in his ethereal form at the present time, as the bearer of Divine Love and unfathomable mercy and compassion. Eurythmy is by no means the only way, yet it is one of the ways offering a path leading to what is needed as a preparation for the approaching great wave of Divine Love.

Whether or not the onset of the great wave of Divine Love will be around December 21, 2012 remains to be seen. Apart from the Maya calendar, there are other prophecies that point to this time period as a time of transition.¹⁸ In the last analysis, however, it is difficult to pinpoint with any degree of accuracy the exact time when our solar system will exit the region of cosmic dust and debris in this local part of the galaxy which our Sun – on its path around the Central Sun – has been traversing now for some 5120 years. However, that the World Pentecost will come, of this we can be sure. And it is essentially and intrinsically an *inner event* for which inner preparation is required.

In light of the foregoing, it emerges that Christ's incarnation some two thousand years ago is now being replicated, but on a different level. Two thousand years ago the events surrounding Christ's coming unfolded on the physical level in the region of Palestine, whereas now they are taking place on a global level, impacting the whole world. And now the time-scale is different, extending over a much longer period of time than the 3½ years of Christ's ministry. Rudolf Steiner's Christ experience in 1899, denoting the commencement of his mission to proclaim the coming of the Etheric Christ, can be likened to the beginning of John the Baptist's mission in AD 29. The flow of the baptismal waters of Rudolf Steiner's proclamation to his followers culminated in their participation in the profound baptismal event of the Christmas Foundation Meeting – the giving of the Foundation Stone Meditation on December 25, 1923. Even the time at which the Foundation Stone Meditation was first spoken (10 AM) coincides with the time (10 AM) of the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan on September 23 AD 29.¹⁹ As Rudolf Steiner indicated, he heard the words of the Foundation Stone Meditation from the World Logos

¹⁸ Robert Powell & Kevin Dann, *Christ & the Maya Calendar: 2012 and the Coming of the Antichrist* (Great Barrington, MA: Lindisfarne Books, 2009), Chapter 10.

¹⁹ Robert Powell, *Chronicle of the Living Christ: Foundations of Cosmic Christianity* (Great Barrington, MA: SteinerBooks, 1996), pp. 37-38.

(Christ). Just as the Logos descended to unite with the physical vessel provided by Jesus of Nazareth at the baptism in the Jordan, so the Etheric Christ descended to unite with the vessel created by the assembled people at the Christmas Foundation Meeting and spoke to those gathered there through the words of the Foundation Stone Meditation spoken by Rudolf Steiner.

Through bringing down the Foundation Stone of Love from cosmic heights – in the shape of a dodecahedron (this being the form, visible in the etheric realm, of the “Grail stone”) – the Etheric Christ began his work of preparing humanity for the World Pentecost, just as two thousand years ago Christ during the 3½ years of his ministry prepared his twelve disciples for the event of Pentecost at the galactic alignment on May 24 AD 33. What has not been described in this article, and which will be the subject of a subsequent article, is where the crucifixion and the resurrection of the Etheric Christ fit into this discussion. This would lead too far afield, to go into right now. Instead the focus in this article is upon the Etheric Christ’s baptismal event on December 25, 1923 paralleling the event of the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan on September 23 AD 29 on the one hand, and upon the World Pentecost event – if the Maya prediction is correct, due to commence with the galactic alignment on December 21, 2012 – paralleling the historical Pentecost event at the galactic alignment on May 24 AD 33. Whether the event of World Pentecost will occur exactly when the galactic alignment occurs on December 21, 2012, or whether it will take place at some later point in time (for example, around 2230, when the Sun at the winter solstice will align with the galactic center), it is important that we consciously prepare for it. It is quite possible that the World Pentecost will actually be an unfolding process, starting with an initial in-streaming of the Pentecostal wave of Divine Love at the end of the Maya calendar on December 21, 2012, and gradually intensifying until the Pentecostal wave of Divine Love culminates with the alignment of the Sun at the winter solstice with the galactic center in approximately 2230.²⁰ To immerse oneself in the words of the

²⁰ This process would correspond to a gradual emergence of our Sun (and solar system) from the region of cosmic dust and debris left from the remnants of the Sagittarius Dwarf Galaxy’s assimilation into the Milky Way Galaxy: “For only a few percent of its 240-million-year orbit around the Milky Way galaxy does our Solar System pass through the path of Sagittarius debris. Remarkably, stars from Sagittarius are now raining down onto our present position in the Milky Way. Stars from an alien galaxy are relatively near us” (professor of astronomy Steven Majewski, discussing the two-billion-year-old shape of the Sagittarius debris trail in relation to the structure of our Milky Way Galaxy, at <http://blogs.discovermagazine.com/badastronomy/2007/06/27/is-the-sun-from-another-galaxy/>). Regarding the date (approximately 2230) of the alignment of our Sun at the winter solstice with the center of the Milky Way Galaxy, it is interesting to note that this date coincides closely in time with the year 2234, which marks the end of the Age of Michael (1879–2234). The Age of Michael is the current archangelic period for humanity and the Earth. The archangelic periods, each 355 sidereal years in length, are a succession of historical periods in which, during each

Foundation Stone Meditation is a potent way of preparing oneself for the coming great wave of Divine Love signifying World Pentecost. As expressed in the closing words of the Foundation Stone Meditation, words through which the human being turns to the Etheric Christ for his light in one's mind, his love in one's heart, and his goodness in one's will:

*O Light Divine,
O Sun of Christ,
warm thou our hearts,
enlighten thou our heads,
that good may become
what from our hearts we found
and from our heads direct
with single purpose.*

This is the essence of what is needed to prepare for the approaching World Pentecost.

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Journal for Star Wisdom 2012

[Editor and contributor Robert Powell,](#)

[With contributions from: William R. Bento, Wain Farrants, Brian Gray, Claudia McLaren Lainson,](#)

period, one of seven Archangels, in succession, assumes the task of guiding humanity and the Earth: Michael/Sun (607–152 BC); Orphiel/Saturn (152 BC–AD 204); Anael/Venus (204–459); Zachariel/Jupiter (459–814); Raphael/Mercury (814–1169); Samael/Mars (1169–1524); Gabriel/Moon (1524–1879); and Michael/Sun (1879–2234). The period of 355 years is associated with the planet Mercury, during which Mercury completes 1,474 orbits of the Sun and, simultaneously, 1,119 synodic periods (orbits of the Earth). See Rudolf Steiner, *From the History & Contents of the First Section of the Esoteric School, 1904–1914*, Complete Works volume 264 (Great Barrington MA: SteinerBooks, 2010) in which he refers to the archangelic periods, though without giving a precise dating.

[Robert Schiappacasse](#), [Richard Tarnas](#), [David Tresemer](#)

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The *Journal for Star Wisdom 2012* is a special edition that addresses directly the challenges facing humanity in our time. It includes articles of interest on star wisdom (*Astrosophy*), as well as a guide to the correspondences between stellar configurations during the life of Christ and those of today. This guide comprises a complete sidereal ephemeris of geocentric and heliocentric planetary positions and an aspectarian for each day through the year. Published yearly, new editions are available beginning in October or November for the coming year. According to Rudolf Steiner, every step taken by Christ during his ministry between the baptism in the Jordan and the resurrection was in harmony with—and an expression of—the cosmos. *Journal for Star Wisdom* is concerned with the heavenly correspondences during the life of Christ and is intended to help provide a foundation for Cosmic Christianity's cosmic dimension, which has been largely absent from mainstream Christianity during its two-millennium history. Readers are invited to contemplate the current movements of the Sun, Moon, and planets against the background of the zodiacal constellations (sidereal signs) in relation to corresponding stellar events during the life of Christ. In this way, it becomes possible to open oneself to attune to the life of Christ in the etheric cosmos.

The main focus of this year's journal is the significant year of 2012 as a pivotal year in the history of humanity and the Earth.

CONTENTS:

- **"The Rose of the World (Rosa Mira)"**
by Daniel Andreev
- **"Editorial Foreword"**
by William Bento and Robert Powell
- **"Working with the Journal for Star Wisdom"**
- **"2012: Prophecy Phenomena Hope"**
by Robert Powell
- **"Ensouling Star Wisdom"**
by William Bento
- **"The Venus Eclipse of the Sun, 2012"**
by David Tresemer
- **"Joan of Arc: A Forerunner of Our Age"**
by Wain Farrants
- **"Kaspar Hauser: The Child of Europe"**
by Wain Farrants
- **"World Transits 2000-2020: An Overview"**
by Richard Tarnas
- **"My Path to Astrosophy"**
by Robert Schiappacasse
- **"Anthroposophic Foundations for a Renewal of Astrology"**
by Brian Gray
- **"The Two Become One: Possession or Enlightenment?"**
by Claudia McLaren Lainson
- **"Working With the *Journal for Star Wisdom* Star Calender"**
by Robert Powell

- **Symbols Used in Charts / Time**
- **"Commentaries and Ephemerides," January-December 2012**
by Claudia McLaren Lainson
- **Monthly Astronomical Sky Watch:**
Monthly Preview of Planets Visible in the Evening Sky
by Sally Nurney
- **Glossary**
- **References**

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