



Darkness will sweep across America on 21 August 2017, during a rare total eclipse of the Sun. The Moon's shadow will traverse the continental United States, earning the nickname: 'The Great American Eclipse'. This is an emphatically exceptional event.

For a solar eclipse to touch only America, especially at this time in history, seems like something we need to be awake to, giving us an opportunity to apply research from Spiritual Science to investigate this powerful sign from the heavens.

In '[Human Questions, Cosmic Answers](#)', Rudolf Steiner tells us that a solar eclipse is 'the physical event behind a significant spiritual reality'. On a normal day when there is no eclipse, the rays of the Sun penetrate down to the earth, meeting and mediating the rays of human will streaming out into the cosmos. At the time of a solar eclipse, since all the 'unbridled impulses of human will' are not met by the Sun, they are able to radiate out into the darkness, 'surging out into universal space in an abnormal way'.

An eclipse acts like a 'safety-valve' to provide an outlet for pressure that has been building up; it is an opportunity to blow off steam - to avert the danger of a more catastrophic explosion. Well it can certainly be said that there is a lot of hot air in America right now, and that the pressure is building up. Perhaps we can see this as a gift from the cosmos, like the grace an illness can bring to help foster our spiritual growth. It may be wise to view this as good news; that this safety-value is going to help blow off some steam!

Under normal conditions these 'evil impulses of will' which are sent out into the cosmos by human beings are burned up and consumed by the rays of the sun, so that they can injure only humanity itself, but can do no universal harm. When, however, there is an eclipse of the sun, opportunity is given for the 'evil' which is willed on earth to spread over the cosmos. (Steiner calls it 'evil' because unconscious, animalistic, selfish instincts or passions 'miss the mark')

When we take this into account, keeping in mind the condition of America today, with our current culture; it seems that this eclipse is a perfect storm; allowing the deep unconscious fear, scorn and hatred of 'ugly Americanism' to become a contagion released into the cosmos - Unless we can counteract it with our good will.

And so with an urgent sense of duty, The [Central Regional Council](#) of the Anthroposophical Society in America, will gather to help meet and mediate these 'undigested instincts' in the American unconscious, that are want to wreak havoc during the solar eclipse. We will endeavor to hold the shield and sword of Michael; working also with the Archangel of Summer Uriel, whose earnest gaze points up the imperfections of humankind, so that we may strive to meet the Christ-Will in our higher "I". We will also strive to redeem and bring healing to the Folk Spirit of America: Columbia, whose name invokes the Dove of Peace and the Wisdom of Sophia.

At this [Central Regional retreat](#), we take The 'Bridging Project, our current theme of working with "The Influence of the Dead on Destiny" into the realm of 'Speaking with the Stars', our previous theme; for we know that in the life

between death and re-birth the human being is engaged in an intimate conversation with the 'Stars'.

We will prepare for, view, and work to hold the light during the solar eclipse, which will sweep from West to East across all of America, and will be visible in the St. Louis area where we will gather.

Through the social arts of eurythmy, song, study, color, meditation, and an interactive '[Pageant](#)', we will engage with the spiritual significance of this powerful cosmic and earthly event. Afterward we will process, share, and continue the conversation, working to understand the mysteries of the will.

On a personal note, while contemplating and preparing for the retreat, as synchronicity would have it, in a meeting with friends from the [Center for American Studies](#) in Concord, I got the idea to write '[From Light Thru Darkness into New Light](#)' - A Pageant for the 'Great American Eclipse'.

Hold us, dear friends in our time of darkness, for we are all truly a circle within a circle.

~[Hazel Archer-Ginsberg](#)

[Reverse Ritual](#) - Understanding Anthroposophy Through the Rhythms of the Year

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