

The Ahrimanic  
Deception Lecture  
*by*  
Rudolf Steiner

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## **The Ahrimanic Deception**

Lecture by Rudolf Steiner

The lecture presented here was given in Zurich on October 27, 1919. In the collected edition of Rudolf Steiner's works, the volume containing the German texts is entitled, *Der Innere Aspekt des sozialen Rätsels; Luziferische Vergangenheit, Ahrimanische Zukunft*

Zurich, October 27, 1919

In addressing a public audience today on the most important question of our time, it makes a great difference if one speaks from a knowledge of the deeper forces of world-historical evolution, that is, from initiation-science, or if one speaks without such knowledge. It is relatively easy to speak about modern questions if one relies upon data of external knowledge which are considered scientific, practical, and so on. It is, however, extraordinarily difficult to speak about these questions from the standpoint of initiation-science - from which indeed everything is derived with which we have to deal at such gatherings as ours today. For he who speaks from that standpoint about problems of the time knows that he is opposed not only by the casual, subjective opinions of those to whom he speaks. He knows too that a great part of mankind today is already under the control, from one side or another, of Ahrimanic forces of a cosmic nature which are growing stronger and stronger. To explain what I mean by this, I must give you a kind of historical survey of a fairly long period of human history.

From various statements which have been made here and which you will also find in some of my lecture-courses, you know that we have to place the beginning of our modern age in the middle of the fifteenth century. We have always called this period - of which we are really only at the beginning - the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch. It has replaced the Greco-Latin Epoch, which we reckon from the middle of the eighth century B.C. to the

middle of the fifteenth century; and further back still, we have the Egyptian-Chaldean epoch. I have merely indicated this so that you may remember where, in human evolution as a whole, we place the epoch in which we feel ourselves standing as modern men.

Now you know that at the close of the first third of the Greco-Latin Epoch, the Mystery of Golgotha took place. And from many different aspects we have characterized what really came about for human evolution through the Mystery of Golgotha, in fact for the whole evolution of the earth. Today, into this broad historical survey, we will place various things concerning mankind which are connected with this Mystery.

With this in view, let us glance back into far earlier times, let us say, into the ages about the beginning of the third millennium B.C. You are aware how little is said in external historical tradition about this early evolution of the human race on earth. You know, too, how external documents point over to Asia, to the Orient. From many anthroposophical sources, you will know that the further we go back in mankind's evolution, the more we find a different constitution of the human soul, and something like an ancient, original wisdom underlying the whole evolution of humanity. You know, further, that certain traditions of an ancient wisdom of mankind were preserved in close, secret circles, right into the nineteenth century. They have even been preserved into our own time - but not, for the most part, at all faithfully.

When a man of today learns to know something of this original wisdom, he is astounded at the depths of the realities to which it points. Yet in the course of the studies we have been pursuing for many years, it has been shown that this widespread wisdom-teaching of ancient times must always be contrasted with the understanding of life and the world that was possessed by the old Hebrew people and bore a completely different character. With a certain justice the widespread original wisdom is described as the heathen, pagan element, and to this is opposed the Hebrew, Jewish element. From external traditions and literature you are aware how the Christian element then arose out of the Jewish.

You can already gather from these external facts something that I beg you to bear in

mind, namely, that it was essential in humanity's evolution to confront the ancient heathen element and its wisdom with the Jewish element out of which Christianity evolved partially, at all events. The primeval heathen or pagan wisdom in its totality was not destined to have the sole influence on the further evolution of mankind. And now the question must arise: Why had the ancient pagan wisdom, which is in many respects so wonderful, to experience a new form, a transformation, through Judaism and Christianity? This question inevitably arises.

The answer is supplied for Initiation-wisdom only through a very, very weighty fact, through an event which took place far over in Asia at the beginning of the third millennium of the pre-Christian era. Clairvoyant vision finds in looking back that an incarnation of a supersensible Being in a human being had taken place there, just as in the Event of Golgotha an incarnation of the supersensible Christ Being had taken place in the man Jesus of Nazareth. The incarnation that took place at the beginning of the third millennium B.C. is extraordinarily difficult to follow up, even with the science of seership, of initiation. It gave humanity something of immense brilliance, having an incisive effect. What it gave to humanity, in fact, was the primeval wisdom. beginning of the third millennium B.C.

Viewed externally, one can say that it was a wisdom penetrating deep into reality; cold, based purely on ideas, permeated little by feeling. The actual inner nature of this wisdom can be judged only by going back to that incarnation which took place over in Asia at the beginning of the third pre-Christian millennium. It is revealed to the retrospective clairvoyant gaze that this was an actual human incarnation of the Luciferic Power. And this incarnation of Lucifer in humanity, which in a certain way has been achieved, was the origin of the widely extended ancient wisdom based on the Third Post-Atlantean civilization.

There was still an after-effect, even in Grecian times, of the widespread cultural impulse that was derived from this Asiatic, Luciferic human being. Luciferic wisdom was of the utmost benefit to man in that epoch of evolution - brilliant in a certain way, graduated

according to the different peoples and races among which it was spread. It was plainly recognizable throughout the whole of Asia, then in the Egyptian civilization, the Babylonian civilization and even in the culture of Greece.

All that was possible to the humanity of that time in thought, in the realm of poetry, in deeds, was in a certain way determined through the entry of this Luciferic impulse into human civilization.

It would, of course, be extraordinarily philistine to wish to say: That was an incarnation of Lucifer, hence we must flee from it! Such philistinism could make one also flee from the beauty and greatness that has come to mankind from this Luciferic stream, for the fruits of Greek culture with all their beauty, proceeded, as already said, from this stream of evolution. The whole of Gnostic thought existing at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha, an impressive wisdom shedding light deep into cosmic realities - this whole Gnostic knowledge was inspired by the impulse coming from Luciferic forces. One must not say that Gnostic thought is therefore false; one is merely characterizing it by saying that it is permeated by Luciferic forces.

Then, considerably more than two thousand years after the Luciferic incarnation, came the Mystery of Golgotha. It may be said that the men among whom the impulse of this Mystery spread were still fully imbued in their thinking and feeling with what had come from the impulse of Lucifer. And now there entered into the evolution of civilized humanity an entirely different impulse, the impulse proceeding from the Christ. We have often spoken of what this Christ Impulse signifies within civilized humanity. The Christ-Impulse - I will only touch on this today - was taken up by the hearts and minds that I have just characterized. One might say that it shone into all the best that came to man from Lucifer. And in the first Christian centuries, men understood the Christ through what they had received from Lucifer. These things must be faced without prejudice; otherwise it is not really possible to understand the particular way in which the Christ Impulse was received in the first centuries of our era.

As the Luciferic impulse began to fade more and more, men were also increasingly unable to absorb the Christ Impulse in the right way. Consider how much has become materialistic in the course of modern times. But if you ask yourself what in particular has become materialistic, you must receive the answer: a great part of modern Christian theology. For it is simply the starkest materialism to which a great part of modern Christian theology succumbs when it no longer sees the Christ in the man Jesus of Nazareth. It sees only the human being, the 'simple man of Nazareth,' the man whom one can understand if one will only raise one's self a little to some sort of higher understanding. The more the man Jesus of Nazareth could be regarded as an ordinary human being, one belonging to the ranks of other noted human personalities, the better it pleased a certain materialistic trend of modern theology. Of the supersensible element of the Event of Golgotha, modern theology is willing to recognize little, very little. The impulses entering humanity from a Luciferic source sank down gradually into the soul. On the other hand, however, another impulse, which we call the Ahrimanic, is growing stronger and stronger in modern times. It will become increasingly strong in the near future and on into future ages. The Ahrimanic impulse proceeds from a supersensible Being different from the Being of Christ or of Lucifer. Equally with 'supersensible' one can say 'subsensible' - but that is not the point here. The influence of this Being becomes especially powerful in the Fifth Post-Atlantean Epoch. If we look at the confused conditions of recent years we shall find that men have been brought to such chaotic conditions mainly through the Ahrimanic powers.

Just as there was an incarnation of Lucifer at the beginning of the third pre-Christian millennium, as there was the Christ Incarnation at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha, so there will be a Western incarnation of the Ahriman being some little time after our present earthly existence, in fact, in the third post-Christian millennium. To form a right conception of the historical evolution of mankind during approximately 6000 years, one must grasp that at the one pole stands a Luciferic incarnation, in the center, the incarnation of Christ, and at the other pole the Ahrimanic incarnation. Lucifer is the power that stirs up in man all fanatical, all falsely mystical forces, all that physiologically tends to bring the blood into disorder and so lift man above and outside himself. Ahriman

is the power that makes man dry, prosaic, philistine - that ossifies him and brings him to the superstition of materialism. And the true nature and being of man is essentially the effort to hold the balance between the powers of Lucifer and Ahriman; the Christ Impulse helps present humanity to establish this equilibrium.

Thus these two poles - the Luciferic and the Ahrimanic - are continuously present in man. Viewed historically, we find that the Luciferic preponderated in certain currents of cultural development of the pre-Christian age and continued into the first centuries of our era. On the other hand the Ahrimanic influence has been at work since the middle of the fifteenth century and will increase in strength until an actual incarnation of Ahriman takes place among Western humanity.

Now it is characteristic of such things that they are prepared long in advance. Ahrimanic powers prepare the evolution of mankind in such a way that it can fall a prey to Ahriman when he appears in human form within Western civilization - hardly then to be called 'civilization' in our sense - as once Lucifer appeared in human form in China, as once Christ appeared in human form in Asia Minor. It is of no avail to give oneself illusions today about these things. Ahriman will appear in human form and the only question is, how he will find humanity prepared. Will his preparations have secured for him as followers the whole of mankind that today calls itself civilized, or will he find a humanity that can offer resistance. It does not help at all to give oneself up to illusions. People nowadays flee the truth, and one cannot give it to them in an unvarnished form because they would ridicule it and scoff and jeer. But if one gives it to them through the "Threefold Social Organism" as one now tries to do, then they will not have it either - not the majority, at any rate. The fact that people reject these things is just one of the means which the Ahrimanic powers can use and which will give Ahriman the greatest possible following when he appears in human form on earth. This disregard of the weightiest truths is precisely what will build Ahriman the best bridge to the success of his incarnation. And nothing will help us to find the right position in regard to the part played by Ahriman in human evolution except an unprejudiced study of the forces through which Ahriman's influence works, as well as learning to know the forces through which

mankind can arm itself against being tempted and led astray. For this reason we will cast a brief glance today at various things which would foster support of Ahriman and which Ahrimanic powers, working out of supersensible worlds through human minds down here, will particularly employ in order to make his following as numerous as possible. One of the means is this - that it is not realized what is the actual significance for man of certain kinds of thought and conception which predominate in modern times. You know, indeed, what a great difference there is between the way a man felt himself to be within the whole cosmos in the Egyptian age, let us say, and even in the time of Greece, and how he feels since the beginning of the modern age, since the close of the Middle Ages. Picture to yourselves a well-instructed ancient Egyptian. He knew that his body was constituted not merely of the ingredients which exist here on earth and are embodied in the animal kingdom, plant kingdom, mineral kingdom. He knew that the forces which he saw in the stars above, worked into his being as man; he felt himself a member of the whole cosmos. He felt the whole cosmos not only quick with life, but ensouled and imbued with spirit; in his consciousness there lived something of the spiritual beings of the cosmos, of the soul-nature of the cosmos and its life. All this has been lost in the course of later human history. Today man gazes from his earth up to the star-world and to him it is filled with fixed stars, suns, planets, comets, and so on. But with what means does he examine all that looks down to him out of cosmic space? He examines it with mathematics, with the science of mechanics. What lies around the earth is robbed of spirit, robbed of soul, even of life. It is a great mechanism, in fact, only to be grasped by the aid of mathematical, mechanistic laws. With the help of these mathematical, mechanistic laws we grasp it magnificently! A student of spiritual science is undoubtedly just the one to value the achievements of a [Galileo](#), a [Kepler](#), and others, but what penetrates human understanding and consciousness through the tenets of these great spirits in human evolution merely shows the universe as a great mechanism.

What this means is only revealed to one who is able to grasp man in his *whole* nature. It is all very well for astronomers and astro-physicists to present the universe as a mechanism which can be understood and calculated by mathematical formulae. This indeed is what a man will believe in the time from waking in the morning till going to

sleep again at night. But in those unconscious depths which he does not reach with his waking consciousness but which yet belong to his existence and in which he lives between going to sleep and waking, something quite different concerning the universe flows into his soul. There lives in the human soul a knowledge which, although unknown to the waking consciousness, is yet present in the depths and moulds the soul - a knowledge of the spirit, of the life of the soul, of the life of the cosmos. And although in his waking consciousness man knows nothing of what goes on there in communion with the spirit, soul and life of the universe while he sleeps - in the soul the things are there; they live within it. And much of the great discord felt by modern man is derived from the disharmony between what the soul experiences and what the waking consciousness acknowledges as its world-conception.

And what does the whole spirit and purport of anthroposophical spiritual science say about such things? It says: What the ideas of Galileo, Copernicus, have brought to mankind is grand and mighty, but not an absolute truth, by no means an absolute truth. It is one aspect of the universe, one side from a certain standpoint. It is only through the arrogance of modern man that people say today: "Ptolemaic world-system - childishness; that is what men had when they were still children. We have made such great strides - right 'to the stars' and *that* is what we now take as the absolute." It is just as little an absolute as the Ptolemaic system was an absolute, it is *one* aspect. The only right view - according to spiritual science - is to realize that all that is accepted by way of mere world-mathematics, mere world-schematism of a mechanical order, does not furnish man with absolute truth about the universe, but with illusions. The illusions are necessary because mankind goes through varied forms of education in its different stages of evolution. For modern education we need these illusions of a mathematical nature about the universe, we must acquire them, but we must know that they are illusions. And most of all they are illusions when we transpose them into our daily environment, when, in accordance with the atomic or molecular theories, we even endeavour to create a kind of astronomy for the substances of the earth. A right attitude in regard to the whole of modern science, insofar as it thinks along these lines, will recognize that its knowledge is illusion.

Now, in order that his incarnation may take the most profitable form, it is of the utmost interest to Ahriman that people should perfect themselves in all our illusory modern science, but without knowing that it is illusion. Ahriman has the greatest possible interest in instructing men in mathematics, but not in instructing them that mathematical-mechanistic concepts of the universe are merely illusions. He is intensely interested in bringing men chemistry, physics, biology and so on, as they are presented today in all their remarkable effects, but he is interested in making men believe that these are absolute truths, not that they are only points of view, like photographs from one side. If you photograph a tree from one side, it can be a correct photograph, yet it does not give a picture of the whole tree. If you photograph it from four sides, you can in any case get an idea of it. To conceal from mankind that in modern intellectual, rationalistic science with its supplement of a superstitious empiricism, one is dealing with a great illusion, a deception - that men should not recognize this is of the greatest possible interest to Ahriman. It would be a triumphant experience for him if the scientific superstition which grips all circles today and by which men even want to organize their social science, should prevail into the third millennium. He would have the greatest success if he could then come as a human being into Western civilization and find the scientific superstition. But I ask you not to draw false conclusions from what I have just said. It would be a false conclusion to avoid the science of the day; that is the very falsest conclusion which could be drawn. We must get to know science; we should get an exact knowledge of all that comes from this direction - but with the full consciousness that we are receiving an illusory aspect, an illusion necessary for our education as men. We do not safeguard ourselves against Ahriman by avoiding modern science, but by learning to know its character. For modern science gives us an external illusion of the universe, and we need this illusion. Do not imagine that we do not need it. We must only fill it in from quite another side with actual reality gained through spiritual research, we must rise from the illusory character to the true reality. You will find reference in many of my lecture-courses to what I am telling you today, and you will see how everywhere it has been sought to enter fully into the science of our time, but to lift it all to the sphere where one can see its real value. You cannot wish to get rid of the rainbow because you know it to be an illusion of light and color! You will not understand it if you do not realize its

illusory character. But it is just the same with all that modern science gives you for your imagination of the universe, it gives only illusions and that must be recognized. It is by educating oneself through these illusions that one arrives at the reality.

This, then, represents one of the means used by Ahriman to make his incarnation as effective as possible - this keeping of man back in scientific superstition.

The second means that he employs is to stir up all the emotions that split men up into small groups - groups that mutually attack one another. You need only look at all the conflicting parties that exist today, and if you are unprejudiced you will recognize that the explanation is not to be found merely in human nature. If men honestly try to explain this so-called World War through human dis-harmonies, they will realize that with what they find in physical humanity they cannot explain it. It is precisely here that "supersensible" powers, Ahrimanic powers, have been at work.

These Ahrimanic powers are working, in fact, wherever dis-harmonies arise between groups of men. Now the question arises on what foundation is most of what we are considering based?

Let us proceed from a very characteristic example. - The modern proletariat has had its *Karl Marx*. Observe closely how the doctrines of Karl Marx have been spread among the proletariat, with Marxist literature reaching practically immeasurable proportions. You will find all the methods of our present-day science used in the books; everything is strictly proved, so strictly proved that many people, of whom one would never have supposed it, have fallen victim to Marxism. What was the actual destiny of Marxism? It spread at first, as you know, among the proletariat and was firmly rejected by university science. Today there are already a number of university scientists who have veered round to acknowledging Marxist logic. They adhere to it because its literature has proved that its conclusions are in excellent accord, that from the standpoint of modern science Marxism can be quite neatly proved. Middle-class circles have unfortunately had no Karl Marx who could have proved the opposite for them; for just as one can prove the

ideological character of right, morality, and so forth, the theory of surplus value and materialistic historical research from the Marxist standpoint, so is it possible to prove their exact opposite. A middle-class, bourgeois-Marx would be fully able to prove the exact opposite by the same strict method. There is no sort of swindle or humbug about it; the proof would work out right.

Whence does this come? It comes from the fact that present human thinking, the present intellect, lies in a stratum of being where it does not reach down to realities. One can therefore prove something quite strictly, and also prove its opposite. It is possible today to prove spiritualism on the one hand and materialism on the other. And people may fight against each other from equally good standpoints because present-day intellectualism is in an upper layer of reality and does not go down into the depths of being. And it is the same with party opinions. A man who does not look deeper but simply lets himself be accepted into a certain party-circle - by reason of his education, heredity, circumstances of life and State - quite honestly believes - or so he thinks - in the possibility of proving the tenets of the party into which he has slipped, as he says. And then - then he fights against someone else who has slipped into another party! And the one is just as right as the other. This calls forth chaos and confusion over mankind that will gradually become greater and greater unless men see through it. Ahriman makes use of this confusion in order to prepare the triumph of his incarnation and to drive men with increasing force into what they find so difficult to realize - namely, that by intellectual or modern scientific reasoning today, one can prove anything and equally well prove its opposite. The point is for us to recognize that everything can be proved and for that reason to examine the proofs put forward in science today. It is only in natural science that reality is shown by the facts; in no other field can one consider intellectual proofs valid. The only way to escape the danger that threatens if one accepts the lures of Ahriman and his desire to drive men deeper and deeper into these things, is to realize through anthroposophical spiritual science that human knowledge must be sought for in a stratum deeper than that in which the validity of our proofs arises. And so, in order to create dissensions, Ahriman also makes use of what develops from the old conditions of heredity which man has really outgrown in the Fifth Post-Atlantean Epoch. The

Ahrimanic powers use all that is derived from old circumstances of heredity in order to set men against each other in conflicting groups. All that comes from old differences of family, race, tribe, peoples, is used by Ahriman to create confusion. "Freedom for every nation, even the smallest . . ." These were fine-sounding words. But the powers hostile to man always use fine words in order to bring confusion and in order to attain the things that Ahriman wishes to attain for his incarnation.

If we inquire: Who stirs up nations against each other? Who raises the questions that are directing humanity today? - the answer is: the Ahrimanic deception which plays into human life. And in this field men very easily let themselves be deceived. They are not willing to descend to the lower strata where reality is to be found. For, you see, Ahriman skillfully prepares his goal beforehand; ever since the Reformation and the Renaissance, the economist has been emerging in modern civilization as the representative governing type. That is an actual historical fact. If you go back to ancient times, even to those that I have characterized today as the Luciferic - who were the governing types then? *Initiates*. The Egyptian Pharaohs, the Babylonian rulers, the Asiatic rulers - they were initiates. Then the priest-type emerged as ruler and the priest-type was really the ruler right up to the Reformation and the Renaissance. Since that time the economist has been in command. Rulers are in fact merely the handymen, the understrappers of the economists. One must not imagine that the rulers of modern times are anything but the understrappers of the economists. And all that has resulted by way of law and justice - one should only study it carefully - is simply a consequence of what economically oriented men have thought. In the nineteenth century the "economical" man is replaced for the first time by the man thinking in terms of banking, and in the nineteenth century there is created for the first time the organization of finance which swamps every other relationship. One must only be able to look into these things and follow them up empirically and practically.

All that I stated in the second public lecture here (*The Social Future*, October 25, 1919) is profoundly true. One could only wish that it were followed up in all details; it would then be seen how fundamentally true these things are. But just because this rulership of the

mere 'symbol for solid goods' (that is to say, money - quotation from the lecture) has arisen, Ahriman has been given another essential medium for the deception of mankind. If men do not realize that the rights-state and the organism of the Spirit must be set against the economic order called up through the economists and the banks, then again, through this lack of awareness, Ahriman will find an important instrument for preparing his incarnation. His incarnation is undoubtedly coming, and this lack of insight will enable him to prepare it triumphantly.

Such means can be used by Ahriman for a certain type of man. But there is another type - indeed the two are often mixed in one personality - and this also, from a different direction, provides Ahriman with an easy way to success.

Now it is a fact that in real life, total errors are not so harmful as half- or quarter-truths. Total errors are soon seen through, whereas half- and quarter-truths mislead people. They live with them, these partial truths become a part of life and cause the most horrible devastation.

There are people today who do not realize the one-sidedness of the Galileo-Copernican world-conception, or who at least do not see its illusory character, or are too easygoing to examine it. We have just shown how wrong that is. But there are also people today, numberless people who acknowledge a certain half-truth, a very significant half-truth, and who do not go into the question of the purely hypothetical justification of it. Strange as it may appear to many people, it is just as one-sided to view the world solely through the Gospel and reject any other search into true reality, as it is to view the world from the standpoint of Galileo and Copernicus, or of university materialistic science in general. The Gospel was given to those who lived in the first centuries of Christianity, and to believe that today the Gospel can give the *whole* of Christianity is simply a half-truth. It is therefore also a half-error which befogs people and thus furnishes Ahriman with the best means of attaining the goal and the triumph of his incarnation.

How numerous are those who think they are speaking out of Christian humility, but in

reality out of dreadful arrogance, when they say: "Oh, we need no spiritual science! The homeliness, the simplicity of the Gospels leads us to what men need of the eternal!" A frightful arrogance is expressed, for the most part, in this apparent humility, which can very well be used by Ahriman in the sense I have indicated. For do not forget what I explained at the beginning of today's lecture, how in the time in which the Gospel falls, men were still permeated by the Luciferic impulse in their thought, feeling and general views, and that they could understand the Gospel by a certain Luciferic Gnosis. But the grasp of the Gospel in this *old* sense is not possible today. No real understanding of the Christ can be gained if one relies merely on the Gospel, especially in the form in which it has been handed down. There exists nowhere today a less true understanding of Christ than in the various faiths and confessions.

The Gospel must be deepened by spiritual science if we wish to gain an actual grasp of the Christ. It is then interesting to examine the separate Gospels and arrive at their real content. To accept the Gospel as it is and as numberless people accept it today, and particularly as it is taught today, is not a path to Christ; it is a path away from Christ. Hence the confessions are moving further and further away from Christ. To what sort of Christ-conception does a man come who will accept the Gospel and only the Gospel, without the depth given by spiritual science? He comes ultimately to a Christ - but that is the utmost that he can reach through the Gospel alone. It is not a reality of the Christ, for today only spiritual science can lead to that. What the Gospel leads to is an hallucination of the Christ, a real inner picture or vision, yet *only* a picture. The Gospel today provides the way to come to a vision of the Christ, but not to the reality of Christ. That is just the reason why modern theology has become so materialistic. Theological commentators and expounders of the Gospel have asked themselves: What is to be made of the Gospel? They decide at length that in their view the result is similar to what one gets when one examines the case of Paul before Damascus. And then these theologians, who are supposed to confirm Christianity, but who really undermine it, say: Paul was simply ill, suffering from nerves and he had a vision before Damascus.

The point is that through the Gospel itself one can come only to hallucinations, to visions,

but not to realities; the Gospel does not give us the real Christ, but only an hallucination of the Christ. The real Christ must be sought today through all that can be gained from a spiritual knowledge of the world.

These very people who swear by the Gospel alone and reject every kind of real spiritual knowledge, form the beginning of a flock for Ahriman when he appears in human shape in modern civilization. From these circles, from these members of confessions and sects who repulse the concrete knowledge brought by spiritual endeavor, whole hosts will develop as adherents of Ahriman. Now this is all beginning to come into existence. It is there, it is at work in present humanity and one who speaks to men today with the knowledge of spiritual science speaks into it, no matter whether he is speaking on social or other questions. He knows where the hostile powers lie, that they live supersensibly and that men are their poor misguided victims. This is the call to humanity: "Free yourselves from all these things that form such a great temptation to contribute to Ahriman's triumph!"

Many people have felt something of this sort. But there is not yet courage everywhere to come to an understanding with the historical impulses of the Christ, Lucifer and Ahriman in the urgent way that is necessary and that is emphasized by Anthroposophy. Even those who have an idea of what is necessary will not go far enough. For instance, look at examples where there arises some knowledge that the secular materialistic science with this Ahrimanic character must be permeated with the Christ Impulse, and how, on the other hand, the Gospel must be illuminated through the explanations of spiritual science. Consider how many people struggle to the point of really shedding light in either of these directions by means of spiritual-scientific knowledge! Yet humanity will only acquire the right attitude to the earthly incarnation of Ahriman if it sees through these things and has the courage, will and energy to illumine both secular science and the Gospel by the Spirit. Otherwise the result is always superficialities. Think, for example, of how Cardinal Newman - who, after all, was an enlightened man, one who followed modern religious development - at the time of his investiture as Cardinal in Rome stated openly in his address that if the Christian Catholic teaching was to survive, a new revelation was

necessary. We have no need, however, of a new revelation; the time of revelations in the old sense is over. We need a new science, one that is illumined by the Spirit. But men must have the courage for such a new science.

Think of a literary phenomenon like the Lux Mundi movement that originated with certain eminent theologians, members of the English High Church, at the end of the eighties and beginning of the nineties of the last century. It consisted of a series of studies, imbued throughout with the endeavor to build a bridge from secular science to the contents of dogma. One might call it a floundering hither and thither, never a bold grasping of secular science, never an illumination of it with the spirit. There was no unprejudiced examination of the Gospel with the knowledge that the Gospel of itself is not enough today, that it must be elucidated and illumined. But mankind must be courageous in both directions and say: secular science by itself leads to illusion, the Gospel by itself leads to hallucination. The middle way between illusion and hallucination is found only by grasping reality through the Spirit. That is the point. We must see through such things as these today. Purely mundane science would make men entirely subject to illusion; in fact ultimately they would commit only follies. Quite enough folly is perpetuated today already, for surely the World War catastrophe was a great folly! Yet many people were involved in it who were thoroughly saturated with the official secular science of our time. And if you notice what remarkable psychological phenomena at once crop up when some sect or other places *one* of the four Gospels in the foreground, then you will more easily understand what I have been saying about the Gospels today. See how strongly inclined to all sorts of hallucinations are sects that pay heed solely to the Gospel of St. John, or solely the Gospel of St. Luke! Fortunately there are four Gospels, which outwardly contradict one another, and this has so far prevented the great harm which such one-sidedness would cause. By being faced with four Gospels people do not go too far in the direction of the one, but have the others beside it. One Gospel is read aloud on one Sunday and another on another Sunday and so the illusory power of the one is counterbalanced by that of another. A great wisdom lies in the fact that these four Gospels have come down to the civilized world. In this way man is protected from being caught up by some one stream, which will take possession of him -

as in the case of so many members of sects - if he is influenced by one Gospel alone. When solely *one* Gospel works upon him it is particularly clear how this leads at last to hallucination.

In fact, it is essential today to give up much of one's subjective inclination, much of what one is attached to and thinks pious or clever. Mankind must above all seek universality and the courage to look at things from all sides.

I wished to say this to you today so that you may realize that what one tries now to bring about within humanity has truly deeper grounds than just some sort of subjective prejudice. In fact one can say that it is read from the signs of the times and that *it must be brought about*.

## **Christ in Relation to Lucifer and Ahriman**

### INTRODUCTION

The decision to construct the first Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland was made in May, 1913, when Rudolf Steiner visited the future building site. Construction began within a few weeks and the exterior of the building was completed in April, 1914. Work on the interior proceeded at a slower pace and lasted through World War I (1914-1918). In 1914, Rudolf Steiner had begun a scaled-down model of the Christ sculpture that was later to be installed in the Goetheanum.. As the work on the sculpture itself began, he frequently explained its significance in his lectures.

One of Rudolf Steiner's lecture tours, May 6 through May 18, 1915, took him to Vienna, Prague and Linz. In all three cities he stressed that the Christ figure in the sculptured group would have to be portrayed as a being in equipoise between the polar forces of Lucifer and Ahriman and that this being was symbol of, and model for, man's own existence here on earth. The Linz lecture, which is here translated, presents the group in a world-historical context and relates the significance of the Lucifer-Christ-Ahriman configuration to the events surrounding World War I. Steiner sees a parallel between Christ's central, but equalizing position and Central Europe's mission in World War I. He implies that Germany's and Austria's militarism and political intransigence alone did not lead to war against the world powers in the East (Russia) and the West (France, England and, since 1917, the United States). According to Steiner, World War I was the earthly expression of a struggle between luciferic forces in the East and ahrimanic forces in the West, and it was Central Europe's destiny to mediate between these forces.

The fundamental polarization of East and West that Rudolf Steiner saw emerging

more than six decades ago is now a political reality. While most historians today concede that World War II was in part caused by the circumstances surrounding World War I, few would accept Rudolf Steiner's statement from his Linz lecture that World War I was "destined by the European karma" or, to state it more concretely, that it was unavoidable. If the war could not have been avoided, then the question of who was to blame or who caused it is, as Steiner says, irrelevant. Based on this position, Steiner suggests that only one question has relevancy: "Who could have prevented the war?" This question seems to contradict Steiner's statement that World War I was destined by the European karma. A quick glance at the historical record may help to clarify what Steiner meant.

In suggesting that the Russian government and possibly England, could have prevented the war, Steiner simply deals with possibilities outside the realm of what had to happen according to European karma. Russia's instigation of the two Peace Conferences in the Hague (1899 and 1907) was indeed self-serving and hypocritical, for it was Russia that, in 1914, mobilized its armed forces without considering British proposals for peace negotiations. Under these circumstances and considering the political immaturity of the German leadership, it was not surprising that the German Kaiser and his generals over-reacted to the Russian mobilization and interpreted it as a declaration of war. Kaiser Wilhelm II and Czar Nicholas II, who were cousins, frantically exchanged telegrams in which one beseeched the other to preserve the peace, but to no avail. The war machinery was already overheated by the forces of chauvinism and materialism so that even from this vantage point Steiner was correct in maintaining that war was unavoidable.

Regarding the possibility of preventing the war, a glance at the major Western powers involved in the controversy, and at Germany, reveals the following historical facts. France, for thirty years an ally of Russia, did nothing to prevent the war because she did not attempt to delay the hasty Russian mobilization. Her representatives said later that France regretted the Russian action, but there seems little doubt that France was more interested in presenting herself as the innocent

victim of an attack. On the other hand, England's foreign secretary, Sir Edward Grey, could have prevented the war if he had taken earlier measures to discourage Germany's militarists from asserting themselves in their country, but in view of the English tradition and the English Constitution, this was probably not possible. Finally, the confusion in Germany itself was caused by a lack of understanding of who had legitimate authority to make decisions. Eventually, the political decisions were made by generals who managed to spread the belief that the fatherland was in peril and that Germany herself was not the attacker, but the attacked. Thus, theoretically, any one of these three powers could have prevented the war but that, as Rudolf Steiner points out in the lecture, is not the real issue.

Furthermore, the war did not emerge out of a French or Russian moral conviction that was responsive to Germany militarism. Rather, the goal of crushing German militarism emerged well after the war had begun. The war could be interpreted, in this sense, to be inevitable because it was not generated from a goal, but exploded and then developed its goals. In this war of attrition, materialism camouflaged itself with nationalistic sentiment and strove for absolute expression and triumph.

It is against such a background of perplexity and misguided fervor that Rudolf Steiner's message to Central Europeans must be read. In rejecting the question of who had caused the war, Steiner dismissed as equally irrelevant the question of who was to blame for materialism. Materialism was there, as was Ahriman. Steiner admonished the Central Europeans to counterbalance materialism by adopting a spiritual perception of life and by striving for an encounter with the Christ.

This profound spiritual responsibility that Steiner put on the Germans in 1915 was disregarded and the challenge passed by. After World War I it was not the Christ, but Adolf Hitler who, under the guise of "savior," emerged as Germany's Nemesis and was thus catapulted into a central position. When Hitler was finally destroyed, Central Europe broke up into two parts, one of which disappeared behind the Iron

Curtain, while the other aligned with the West.

As it stands today, Rudolf Steiner's call to instate the Christ in His central position has yet to be fully received and responded to not only by the people living in what is left of Central Europe, but also in the rest of the world.

- *Peter Mollenhauer*

Linz, May 18, 1915

SOME DAY WHEN THE BUILDING in Dornach that is dedicated to the spiritual sciences is completed, it will contain, in a significant spot, a sculpture dominated by three figures. In the center of this group a figure will tower as if it were the manifestation of what I would call the most sublime human principle ever to unfold on earth. Hence, one will be able to experience this representation of the highest human principle in the evolution of the earth-the Christ, who in the course of this evolution lived three years in the body of Jesus of Nazareth. A special task in the portrayal of this Christ figure will be to make two ideas visible. Firstly, it will be important to show how the being that we are concerned with dwells in a human body. Secondly, it must also become apparent how this human body, in every facial expression and in every gesture reflects a magnificent degree of spiritual refinement, which descended with the Christ from cosmic and spiritual heights into this body in its thirtieth year. Then there will be the remaining two figures of the group, one to the left and the other to the right of the Christ figure, if that is the proper name for the figure that I have just sketched. This Christ figure is placed in such a way that it seems to be standing in front of a rock that towers noticeably at His left side, with its peak extending over His head. On top of the rock there will be another figure, winged but with his wings broken, who for this reason begins to fall into the abyss. One feature in the Christ figure that must be worked out with special artistic care is the manner in which he raises his left arm, for it is precisely this gesture that precipitates the breaking of the wings. It must not appear, however, as if the Christ Himself were breaking the wings of this being. Rather, the interaction of the two figures must be portrayed artistically to show how the Christ, by the very motion of raising his hand, is expressing his infinite compassion for this being. Yet this being cannot bear the

energy flowing upward through arm and hand, an energy that is evidenced by indentations that the fingers of the extended hand seem to leave in the rock itself. When this being comes into proximity with the Christ being, he feels something that may be expressed in the words: I cannot bear the radiation of such purity upon me.

This feeling dominates so essentially as to break this upper beings wings and cause his imminent plunge into the abyss. To make this visible will be a particularly important artistic task and you will see how the meaning of this interaction could easily be misunderstood. Imagine, for example, an artistic portrayal of the Christ suggesting that merely by raising His hand He would radiate such power onto the being that his wings would be broken, forcing the plunge into the abyss. In that case it would be the Christ Himself who irradiated this being, as it were, with hatred, and thereby caused his descent. Such an impression must under no circumstances be conveyed. Rather, the being must be portrayed as having caused his own fall, for what is to be shown plunging downward, with broken wings, is Lucifer.

Now let us consider the other side of the group, toward the right of the Christ figure. There, the rock will have a ledge and, therefore, will be concave underneath. In this depression there will be another winged figure, who with his arm-like organs turns toward the ledge above. You have to visualize this as follows. To the right is the depression in the rock and in it stands this winged figure with wings entirely different from the figure on top of the rock. The wings of the figure on top of the rock resemble those of an eagle, whereas the figure in the depression has bat-like wings. This figure virtually buries himself in the cave, working in shackles, ever busy undermining the earthly realm.

The Christ figure in the middle has his right hand directed downward and the left one upward. Again, it will be an important artistic task not to show the Christ as wanting to shackle this figure; rather, he has infinite compassion for this being, which is Ahriman. Ahriman cannot bear this compassion and he writhes with pain from what the hand of the Christ exudes. This radiance from Christ's hand causes the golden veins down in the rock

depression to wind around Ahriman's body like strong cords and shackle him. What is happening to Lucifer is his own doing; the same is true with Ahriman. This concept is going to take form as a sculpture that will be set up in a significant place in the new building. Above the sculptured group we will attempt to express the same motif through the medium of painting, but then the concept must be expressed differently. To summarize, the group of three figures: Christ, Lucifer and Ahriman will stand at the bottom as a sculpture, and above, the same motif will appear as a painting.

We are injecting this configuration of a relationship between Christ, Lucifer and Ahriman into our Dornach building because the science of the spirit reveals to us in a certain way that the next task regarding the comprehension of the Christ impulse will be to make man finally understand how the three forces of Christ, Lucifer and Ahriman are related in this world. To this day there has been much talk about Christianity and the Christ impulse, but man has not yet gained a clear understanding of what the Christ impulse has brought into the world as the result of the Mystery of Golgotha. Certainly, it is generally admitted that there is a Lucifer or an Ahriman, but in so doing, it is made to appear that from these two one must flee, as if one wished to say, "I want nothing to do with Lucifer and Ahriman!" - In yesterday's public lecture (see Note 1) I described the way in which the divine-spiritual forces can be found. If these forces did not want to have anything to do with Lucifer and Ahriman, either, the world could not exist. One does not gain the proper relationship to Lucifer and Ahriman by saying, "Lucifer, I flee from you! Ahriman, I flee from you!" Rather, everything that man has to strive for as a result of the Christ impulse must be seen as similar to the equilibrious state of a pendulum. In the center, the pendulum is in perfect balance, but it must oscillate to one side or the other. The same applies to man's development here on earth. Man must oscillate to the one side according to the luciferic principle and to the other according to the principle of Ahriman, but he must maintain his equilibrium through the cultivation of Paul's declaration, "Not I, but Christ in me."

To understand the Christ in His quintessential activity we must conceive of Him as a reality, as a working force. That is to say, we must realize that what wove itself into our

evolution here on earth through the Mystery of Golgotha was present as a fact. It is not important how well or how inadequately this fact has been understood by mankind up to this time; what is important is that it has been present, influencing human development on earth. Much could be said to explain exactly what man has not understood about the Christ impulse up to this time; the science of the spirit will have to contribute its share to bring about a full comprehension of how the Christ impulse has come from spiritual heights and influenced man's development on earth through the Mystery of Golgotha. In order to realize how the Christ has become a working force, let us visualize - as has been done elsewhere - two events in the annals of man's evolution that have influenced the development of the entire Western world.

You will remember an important event from history when Constantine, son of Constantius Chlorus, defeated Maxentius and thus introduced Christianity externally into the mainstream of Western civilization. Constantine had to fight that important battle against Maxentius so that he could establish Christianity in his western empire as the official religion. Had this battle not taken place as it did, the entire map of Europe would have been different. But this battle really was not decided by military skill, that is, not by the intellectual prowess available to people in those days, but by something entirely different. Maxentius consulted the so-called Sibylline Books, the prophetic oracles of Rome, which guided him into leading his army out of the assured safety of Rome's walls into the open field, in order to confront Constantine's army. Constantine, on the other hand, had a dream before the battle in which he was told, "If you approach Maxentius under the banner of the Mystery of Golgotha you will reach a great objective!" Indeed, Constantine carried the symbol of the Mystery of Golgotha - the cross - when he led his forces into battle, even though his army was three-fourths smaller than that of Maxentius. Enthused by the power emanating from the Mystery of Golgotha, Constantine won that historical battle resulting in the external introduction of Christianity to Europe. When we realize the extent to which people in those days understood the Christ impulse purely by intellectual means, it is not surprising to find that there ensued an endless theological quarrel. People argued whether or not Christ was consubstantial with the Lord in all eternity, and so on. Let us say this, that the degree of knowledge of the Christ impulse

available to human beings in those days is not important, but rather the fact that the Christ impulse was present and that through his dream it guided Constantine to bring about what had to happen. What is important is the actuality of the Christ and His real and visibly active power. Only in the science of the spirit do we begin to understand *what* the Christ impulse is.

Another historical event was the struggle between France and England. It changed the map of Europe in such a way that we can say that if France had not been victorious over England, all conditions and relationships would have become different. But how did this victory happen? It happened because the Christ impulse has worked itself into the subconscious of the soul up to the present time, when it is increasingly becoming a conscious force. So we can see in the evolution of the Western spirit how the Christ impulse seeks out in the souls of men those conditions by which it can become effective in some individuals. Legends have preserved for us the manner in which the Christ impulse can assert itself within the Western spiritual tradition. In part, these legends refer generally to ancient pagan ages, but they take us back to those heathen times in which an understanding of Christianity was beginning to germinate.

If the soul does not consciously seek initiation as delineated in *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and Its Attainment*, but becomes saturated with the Christ impulse as if by way of natural initiation, then the most favorable period for this process is from December 25 to January 6. We can understand this clearly by realizing that for occult knowledge it is evident that the earth is not only what geologists describe. Geologists conceive the earth's components as being similar to the skeleton of man. Yet the spiritual also belongs to our earth whose aura has been permeated by Christ. During the day's twenty-four hours, this earth sleeps and is awake just as we are. We must familiarize ourselves with the fact that the state of wakefulness on earth occurs during the winter, and the state of sleep during the summer. The earth spirit is most awake in these twelve or thirteen days from Christmas to the Epiphany. In ancient ages when, as you know from the various presentations in my lecture series, human beings elevated themselves to a sort of dreamlike clairvoyance to reach a spiritual understanding of the world, in those ages the

most favorable tints for this process was summer. Thus, it is quite natural that whoever wants to elevate himself to spiritual heights by means of a more dreamlike clairvoyance will have an easier time of it during the summer, when the earth is asleep. Therefore, St. John's midsummer-day was in ancient ages the most propitious time to raise the soul to the spiritual level. The old way of spiritual interaction with the earth has been replaced by a more conscious elevation that can best be reached during the earth's wakefulness.

For this reason, legends inform us that unusually endowed people, who are particularly suited by their karmas, pass into an extraordinary state of consciousness that resembles sleep, but only on the surface. its inner quality is such that it can be inspired by those forces that elevate human beings to the domain we call the spirit world. A beautiful Norwegian legend (see Note 2) tells us that Olaf Åsteson, in church on Christmas Eve, falls into a sleeplike state and when he awakens on January 6 is able to relate the experiences he had in this condition. This Norwegian legend does in fact describe the experiences that one perceives first as the soul world - and then as something that feels like the spirit world, but with everything being expressed as images, as imaginative forms.

This time of year has been most favorable in those epochs when human beings were not as advanced as they are in our time. Now it is no longer possible for the Christ impulse to penetrate the souls of men in this way, as if by natural initiation. Nowadays man must make a conscious effort and climb to initiation in a way similar to that achieved through the instructions given in my book *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*. We are living in an age when natural initiations are becoming increasingly rare and will eventually disappear. Yet one initiation that could still essentially be called a natural initiation took place when the Christ impulse worked itself into the soul of the simple country girl, The Maid of Orleans. It was she who caused the victory of the French over the English. Again, not the human mind nor the talents of military leaders were decisive factors in changing the map of Europe so magnificently, but rather the Christ impulse working itself into the subconscious of the Maid of Orleans and inspiring her to radiate its presence in all of history.

We would now have to examine whether something similar could have occurred in the Maid of Orleans by way of natural initiation and ask whether her soul was inspired in the nights from the 25th day of December to the 6th of January. From her biography it seems difficult to demonstrate that she was even once in a sleep-like state during the twelve or thirteen special days when the Christ impulse could have entered her soul, inspiring her to act as its human shell on the battle grounds of France. Yet, that is precisely what happened. There is a time when the karma of a particular individual can facilitate such a sleep-like state in a human being. During the last few days prior to a person's birth he lives in the mother's womb in a dreaming, sleep-like state. He has not yet perceived with his senses what is happening in the world outside. If by virtue of his karma a person were especially suited to receive the Christ impulse during these last few days in the womb, then these days could also be days of natural initiation. Strengthened by and saturated with the Christ impulse, such a person would have to be born on the sixth day of January. Joan of Arc was born on that day. It is her special mystery that she was born on the 6th day of January and had spent the time from Christmas to the day of Epiphany in a peculiar sleep-like state in the womb of her mother where she received her natural initiation. Now consider the profound connections beyond the external developments that we are accustomed to call history. As a rule, the external events that are reconstructed from historical documents are of the least significance. What is of decisive historical significance is the plain date in our calendar indicating that Joan of Arc was sent into this world on the 6th day of January. Thus, supernatural forces become active in the sentient world and we must read the occult signs that present this fact to us. They tell us that the Christ impulse had already streamed into the Maid of Orleans before her physical birth, as if by way of natural initiation.

I want to explain these facts in order to instill in your souls a feeling for the fact that the external perception must take into account unknown forces and connections beyond what we ordinarily call history. European history has been guided by the Christ impulse since the Mystery of Golgotha, whereas Asia retained a world view that is not yet fully sensitive to the Christ impulse. To be sure, Europeans have been led into considering the wisdom of India as something especially profound. Not only is it characteristic of Hindu

thought, if not of all Asian religious perception, however, that its entire attention is directed to the time preceding the appearance of the Christ impulse, but also that the state of religious perception is preserved as it was in those days. If something remains behind in the evolutionary process it can be interpreted to have absorbed something luciferic, and for this reason Asian religious evolution is the carrier of a luciferic element. A glance at the religious development of Asia will inform us that it contains much of what mankind as a whole once possessed but was later forced to abandon. We must in part cleanse Western culture of the luciferic remnants and in part we must elevate them in such a way that the Christ impulse can enter.

Moving from Asia to the East of Europe, we notice how Russian orthodox Christianity has remained stationary at an earlier stage of Christian development, refusing to advance and thereby keeping something of the luciferic element. In short, we can detect a luciferic remnant in the East, which, I would say, a wise guiding force left behind for the evolution of mankind in general.

Looking to the West and especially to American culture, a different characteristic quality stands out. The characteristic feature of American culture is to explain everything from external appearance. This kind of perception can certainly lead to great and significant achievements, but still, externals are usually expected to provide answers to all questions. Suppose we in Europe, and especially in Central Europe, notice a person who earlier in his life did not yet have an opportunity to dedicate himself to Christ and to the spiritual cosmic forces. If some event in this person's life brought about his conversion, we want to know what had gone on in his soul. We are not interested in learning that there was a leap forward in his development because such a phenomenon could certainly be found everywhere. The most incorrect pronouncement made by the empirical sciences is that nature does not make any leaps (see Note 3). Yet there is a tremendous leap from a green plant leaf to the red petal of a flower, and there is another significant leap from petal to the calyx. This pronouncement is therefore patently false; the truth of all development rests precisely on the fact that leaps occur everywhere. Hence, when a person who for some time was leading an external existence is suddenly induced by something to turn to

spiritual things, we are not interested in the fact that it happened. What does interest us is the inner force and power that can bring about such a conversion. We will want to look into the soul of such a person and ascertain *what* has caused such a reversal. The inner workings of the soul will interest us.

How would the American proceed? He would do something quite peculiar. In America, conversions of this sort have been observed frequently. Well, the American would ask the people who have experienced conversions to write letters. He would then gather all these letters into a bundle and say, "I have received these letters from some two hundred people. Fourteen percent of all these souls experienced a conversion out of sudden fear of death or hell; five percent claimed altruistic motives; seventeen percent because they aspired to ethical ideals; fifteen percent had experienced pangs of conscience; ten percent acted in obedience to what they were taught; thirteen percent because they saw that others were converted and imitated them; nineteen percent because they were forced by a good whipping at the appropriate age, and so on." In this fashion the most extreme souls are isolated, sorted and tallied and the result is claimed to be founded on "scientific data." The findings are then compiled in books that are sent out and billed as "soul science." For these people all other evidence is unsound, or as they claim, rests on subjective notions. There you have an example of the externalization of the innermost phenomena, and so it goes with many, many things in America. At a time that cries out for special spiritual deepening, the material external brand of spiritism is rampant in America! Everything there has to be tangible.

That is a materialistic interpretation of spiritual life. We could mention many other instances from which it would be possible to see how the culture of the West is seized by the ahrimanic principle, and what principle causes the pendulum to swing to the other side. In the East we are confronted by the luciferic and in the West by the ahrimanic principle. In Central Europe we have been assigned the immensely important task of finding the equilibrium between East and West. Therefore, the plastic group in our building in Dornach must represent what we consider the most significant spiritual task of our age, that is, finding the equilibrant relationship between Lucifer and Ahriman.

Only then will it be recognized how the Christ impulse was meant to influence evolution on earth, when the Christ is not simply brought to preeminence, but is known in the proper way as exemplary force in balance with Lucifer and Ahriman.

The following may illustrate that no clear understanding has yet been reached concerning the relationship of man and of Christ to Lucifer and Ahriman. In a period, even the greatest phenomena are not always free from a one-sided attitude that may characterize the age. It is impossible to overestimate the significance of Michelangelo's magnificent painting *The Last Judgment*, which can be found in the Sistine Chapel in Rome. Christ is portrayed in triumph, directing the good people to the one side and the wicked to the other. Let us look at this Christ figure. It does not possess the features we would like to emphasize in the Christ of our building in Dornach. Even though Lucifer towers above, it must be shown that the Christ raises His hand in compassion. Lucifer is not supposed to be toppled by the power of Christ, but plunges down by his own power because he is unable to bear the radiance of the Christ nearby, and the Christ looks up and raises his brow toward Lucifer. Similarly, Ahriman is not conquered by any hatred from Christ, but because he feels he cannot stand the forces emanating from Him. The Christ, however, towers in the middle as the One who is carrying the Parcival principle into the new age and who, not through His power but through His very being, induces others to overcome themselves, rather than being overcome by Him. In Michelangelo's painting, we see a Christ who uses His very power to send some to heaven and others to hell. In future, such an image will no longer be seen as the genuine Christ, but rather as a Christ having luciferic qualities. Of course, this observation does not detract from the greatness of the painting, in fact, we acknowledge it. We simply must admit, however, that Michelangelo was not yet capable of painting the genuine Christ because the development of the world had not yet advanced to such a point when this could be done. There has to be a clear understanding that we cannot turn our attention just to the Christ, but must set our sight on the threefold configuration: Christ, Lucifer, Ahriman. I can only hint at this, but spiritual science will eventually bring to light the full content of the mystery, Christ in relation to Lucifer and Ahriman.

Now consider the following. Looking eastward we can make out luciferic forces even in the eastern regions nearest to us, while in the West we see ahrimanic forces. As a matter of fact, in spiritual scientific consideration we must adopt a mode of perception by which neither objects nor nations, nor the spirit of nations, are observed with sympathy or antipathy, but rather in accordance with their characteristics. What is called the national mentality of a person steeped in the heritage of his people depends to a large degree on the activity of the physical body and the ether body. From the time of our falling asleep to the moment of our awakening we live with our spiritual-intellectual being as astral body and ego, and during this period we also live outside our habitual national identity. Only during the time from our awakening to the time when we fall asleep do we partake in our nationality, because then we are immersed in our physical body. For this reason man overcomes his sense of national identity little by little during his stay in kamaloka. There he strives toward a union with humanity as a whole in order to live most of the time between death and rebirth in the sphere of humanity as such. Among the characteristics discarded in kamaloka is one that specializes us as members of a nationality.

In this connection the various nationalities differ considerably from one another. Let us, for instance, compare a Frenchman with a Russian. It is a Frenchman's particular trait that he is especially persistent in holding onto, and dwelling in, what the collective soul of his people carries into his physical body and ether body during his life between birth and death. This can be seen in his definitive idea - not as an individual but as a Frenchman - of what it is to be French. Above all, he stresses the importance of being French and what that means to him. But this notion held by Frenchmen or by anyone else from a Romance culture about their nationality affects the ether body by clearly imprinting the idea of nationality on it. A few days after the Frenchman has passed through the gate of death he loses his ether body; it is then a closed entity that has a prolonged existence in the etheric world. The ether body is unable to dissolve for a long time because it is impregnated with, and held together by, the Frenchman's idea of nationality. Thus, if we look to the West we see the field of death filled with firmly defined ether bodies.

Now, if we take a closer look to the East, at Russian man, we recognize his peculiar trait;

his soul, upon passing through the gate of death, carries an ether body that dissolves in a relatively short period of time. That is the difference between the West and the East. When the ether bodies of Western Europeans are separated after death, they tend to maintain a certain rigidity. What the Frenchman calls "Gloire" is impregnated in his ether body as a national Gloire. He is condemned for a long time after his death to turn his spiritual sight onto this ether body, and to look at himself (The Russian, however, looks little at himself after his death.) Through all this, Western European man is exposed to the ahrimanic influence because his ether body has been infected by materialistic thinking.

The speedy separation and the diffusion of the ether body is accompanied by a feeling of sensual pleasure, which is also present as a most peculiar ingredient of national sentiment. How is this expressed in the East (Central Europeans do not understand this just as they do not empathize with the East.) Consider Dostoevsky and even Tolstoy or those leading writers who are constantly speaking of "Russian man"; their jargon is an expression of an undefined sensual pleasure surging from their national sentiment. Even in Solowjow's philosophy, we find a vague and stifling quality that the Central European man cannot reconcile with the clarity and purity he seeks. This search for clarity and purity is related to what is active in Europe as spiritual power.

In Central Europe there exists another condition, an intermediate state and something I can now dwell on in greater detail than was possible in yesterday's lecture. I mentioned that something exists in Central Europe that could be called the inner disposition toward striving. As a Central European, Goethe could have written his Faust no differently in the eighteen-forties: he was always striving! This striving is innermost nature. It was in Central Europe where the mystics made their appearance - those mystics who were not satisfied with the mere knowledge of the divine-spiritual principle but wanted to experience it in their own souls. To experience the Christ event internally was their very endeavor. Now take Solowjow who proceeds above all from a historical premise that the Christ died for mankind. That is correct, but Solowjow is a soul who, similar to a cloud, perceives spiritual life as something outside himself. Somehow he thinks that everything

is viewed as a completed event, while Central European man demands that everyone experience the Christ event again in himself. Solowjow stresses time and again that Christ has to die so that man can be human. Meister Eckhart, in contrast, would have responded like this: "You are seeing Christ in the same way in which one looks at something external." The point is that we should not look only at historical events, but that we should experience the Christ within ourselves. We must discover something within ourselves that passes through stages similar to those experienced by Christ, at least spiritually, so that we can rediscover the Christ event within ourselves.

Now it will certainly seem strange and fantastic when mankind nowadays is told that in Central Europe the close association of the "I" with the Christ principle had put a stamp on the entire development of the area, to the effect that even the linguistic spirit of a people took up this association and equated "I" (Ich) and "CH" (Christ): I-CH conjoined became "Ich." In pronouncing "Ich" in Central Europe one utters the name of Jesus Christ. That is how close the "I" wants to be to the Christ, longing for the most intimate closeness with Him. This living together, as one, with the spiritual world, which we in Central Europe must strive to attain in all intellectual fields, is not known in the West or in the East. Therefore, something in the twentieth century is necessary so that the Christ principle can gradually spread over the entire European continent. I have frequently emphasized in several lecture series (see Note 4) that in November 1879 the spiritual being we call the Archangel Michael had reached a special stage of development. Michael had become, so to speak, the leading spirit who is now preparing the event that has to take place in the twentieth century. This is alluded to in my first mystery play (see Note 5) as the appearance of the etheric Christ on earth. It will come to pass that at first a few, and gradually more and more souls will know that the Christ is really here, is again on this earth, but as an ether body and not as a physical body.

Certain preparations are necessary. When some souls in the course of the twentieth century become clairvoyant to life in the etheric world - and that will happen - they would be disturbed by those ether bodies that are residual from Western Europe. The spiritual eye would perceive them first of all and would have a distorted vision of the

Christ figure. For this reason Michael has to fight a battle in Europe. He has to contribute something to the diffusion of these rigid ether bodies from Western Europe. To accomplish this task, he must take the ether bodies from the East, which strive for diffusion, and join with them in a struggle against the West. The result of this is that since 1879 a violent struggle has been in preparation between Russian and Western European ether bodies and is now raging in the entire astral world. This furious battle between Russia and France is indeed going on in the astral world and is led by Michael; it corresponds to the war that is now being waged in Europe. We are often shaken by the knowledge that the events in the physical world take place as exact opposites to those occurring in the spiritual world, and that is precisely what is happening in this case. The alliance between France and Russia (see Note 6) can be blamed on the seductive powers of Ahriman or, if you will, on the ahrimanic element, the twenty billion francs that France gave to Russia. This alliance is the physical expression of a struggle raging between French and Russian souls, a struggle that has an impact on Central Europe as it strives in its innermost soul for an encounter with the Christ. It is the karma of Europe that we in Central Europe must experience in an especially tragic way what the West and East must settle between themselves. The only possible interpretation of the external struggle between German and French elements is that the German element lies in the middle and serves as an anvil for both East and West. Germany, which is hammered by both sides in the conflict, is in reality the subject of their own controversy. That is the spiritual truth and quite different from what is happening in the physical world. Consider how different the spiritual truth is from what is happening in the physical world! This must strike contemporary man as grotesque, but it nevertheless is the truth, which must have a shocking effect on us.

There is yet another extraordinarily important matter worth mentioning. Surely history seems to be contradicted when we see that England, even though she has in the past always been allied with Turkey against Russia, now has to fight with Russia against Turkey. We can understand this contradiction only through occult observation. On the physical plane England and Russia are allies in the fight against the Turkish element, yet occult vision, perceiving this struggle from below through the physical plane and then

onto the astral plane, sees that in the North it is Russia and in the Southeast it is Turkey that appear to be allied with England. This is due to the fact that the alliance between England and Russia is only of significance on the physical plane, but has no corresponding value in the spiritual world since it rests entirely on material interests. From below one sees that England and Russia are allied in the North only on the physical plane. In the Southeast, looking through the physical plane, one perceives on the astral plane a spiritual alliance between the English and the Turks while they are both fighting the Russians. Thus, on the physical plane, England is an ally to Russia and on the astral plane Russia is attacked by England. This is how we must see the events as they unfold in external reality inasmuch as they reveal themselves as external history. What is behind this history is something entirely different.

There will be a time when people will speak about the present events differently than they are doing now. You will have to admit, the entire war literature contains something rather unpleasant. True, some valid statements are made, but there are also many disagreeable ones. Above all, there is one thing that is disagreeable. There is much talk about how it is still too early to discuss the question of who has caused the war and so on. People delude themselves about the facts when they say that at a later date the documents in our archives will surely bring to light who is to blame for the war! In reference to the external events, however, the matter can be resolved fairly easily, provided one judges dispassionately. Chamberlain, in his *War Essays* (see Note 7) is correct (even though he is in error about the details) when he says that it is possible to know the key issues of this war. All that is without a doubt accurate, but it leaves the proper question unasked. For example, there is but *one* question that can be answered unequivocally, if only it is properly posed, and this question is: Who could have prevented the war? - The constantly recurring question: Who is to blame for this war? and many other questions just are not appropriate. Who could have prevented the war? The answer to this question can be no other than that the Russian government could have prevented the war! Only in this fashion will it be possible to find the appropriate definition for the impulses that are at work in each situation. Of course, war had been desired by the East for decades, but had it not been for a certain relationship between England, Russia and France, it could not

have broken out. Therefore, one might ascribe the greater blame to England. Yet all these conjectures do not take into consideration the underlying causes that made this World War a necessity. It is naive to believe that war could have been avoided. People these days talk as if it did not have to come about when it was, of course, destined by the European karma.

I wanted to allude to some of this by sketching the spiritual differences between East and West. It is not important that we look for external causes. All we have to know is that this war was a historic necessity. When that is understood the individual causes do not matter. What is important is the proper attitude toward the various effects, for one effect can impress our souls in an especially significant way. It is remarkable and a characteristic phenomenon that a war like this one produces many unexpended ether bodies. Since this is the biggest war in man's conscious history, this phenomenon is present to a corresponding large degree. Ether bodies are produced that are not worn out. You see, the ether body that man carries with him can support him for a long period of time, until he reaches seventy, eighty or ninety years of age. But in a war human beings are sacrificed in the prime of their lives. You know that man, when he passes through the gate of death loses his ether body after a short period of time. A person dying in a war, however, loses his ether body when normally it could have supported his physical body for a long time, in many cases for decades. Those ether bodies entering the etheric world prematurely are preserved with all their powers. Consider now the countless number of unexpended ether bodies of those going through the gate of death at an early age. There is something distinctive about these ether bodies. I would like to illustrate this fact with an example that concerns our Movement, and after that I wish to explain how the ether bodies of the young soldiers who have gone through the gate of death will emerge in the etheric world in the near future.

This fall we witnessed in Dornach the death of little seven-year-old Theodor Faiss; his family belonged to the Anthroposophical Society and was employed not far from our building project. The father used to live in Stuttgart before moving to Dornach. He worked as a gardener in the vicinity of the building and lived there with his family. He

himself had been drafted soon after the beginning of the war and at the time of the event I would like to relate, he was staying in a military hospital. Little seven-year-old Theodor was really a sunny child - a wonderful, lovely boy. Now, one day the following happened. We just had a lecture that I delivered in Dornach about the work that goes on in the building. After the lecture someone appeared and reported that little Theodor's mother had not seen him since late in the afternoon. It was ten o'clock at night and we could not help thinking that a terrible accident had happened. This afternoon a horse-driven furniture van had been in the vicinity of the so-called canteen; it was seen on a narrow street where it was forced to turn. To my knowledge, no van as huge had reached that spot in decades. Little Theodor had been in the canteen before the van had turned. He had been delayed there, otherwise he would have gone home earlier with the food that he had fetched from the canteen for supper. It so happened that he covered the short distance to his home in such a way that he reached the very spot where at that moment the van turned over and fell on him. Nobody had noticed the accident, not even the coachman because he was tending to his horses when the van turned over and did not know that the child was buried under it. When we were informed that the child was missing we tried to heave the vehicle up again. Friends fetched tools and alerted Swiss soldiers to help us with the task. Naturally the child had been dead since five-thirty in the afternoon. The van had crushed him immediately and he had died of suffocation.

This case can be used as an example of what I have often tried to explain by means of a comparison: causes are mistaken for effects, and *vice versa*. I have frequently used the following example. A person falls into the river and people hurry to the spot where it happened. When they find a rock, they conjecture that the victim had stumbled over it and this caused him to fall into the river and drown. Thus, they are sure that the man had died because he fell into the river. If one were to conduct an autopsy, however, it might turn out that he had suffered a heart attack and as a result, was already dead when he fell into the water, but he fell into the water because he had died. You will frequently encounter a similar confusion of cause and effect when life situations are assessed, and even more frequently in the general sciences.

The situation with little Theodor was that his karma had expired, so that it is actually possible to say, "He himself ordered the van to the place of the accident." I have told you this externally tragic case in detail because we are here concerned with a child's ether body, which could have supported his life for decades. This ether body has passed into the spiritual world with all of its unexpended powers, but where is it? What is it doing? Since that day, anyone attuned to occult perception who is working artistically on the building in Dornach or is there simply to pursue his thoughts will know that the entire ether body of the child, with all its powers, is enlarged in the aura of the Dornach building. We must distinguish that the individuality is elsewhere; it goes its own way, but the ether body was separated after a few days and is now present in the building. I will never hesitate to assert that the powers needed for intuition are those of this ether body that was sacrificed for the building. The relationships behind ordinary life are often quite different from what we are able to suspect. This ether body has become one of the protective forces of the building. Something tremendously stupendous lies in such a relationship.

Now let us consider the vast amount of power that ascends to the spiritual world from the unexpended ether bodies of these who are now walling through the gate of death as a result of military events.

The way in which events are connected is different from what people can imagine; the karma in the world takes its course in a different way. It is the task of spiritual science to replace fantastic notions with spiritually true ideas. For example, we can hardly imagine something more fantastic and untrue, from a spiritual perspective, than what has taken place in the last few decades. Let us ask what has been accomplished by the (Hague) Peace Conference (see Note 8) which aimed at replacing war with law, or international law, as it was called. Since the Peace Conferences were held, wars have never been more terrible. During the last few decades this Peace Movement counted among its special patrons the very monarch who has waged the bloodiest and most cruel wars ever known in history. The launching of the Peace Conferences by the Russian Czar must therefore be considered the biggest farce in world history; it is also the most abominable. This must be

labeled a luciferic seduction of the East; the details can be easily traced. No matter how one may view the situation, the human soul is shocked by the fact that in the beginning, when the war impulses made their way into Central Europe, the people there made few comments about the situation, even in places where they gathered for the purpose of discussion, such as the German Parliament in Berlin. Little was said, but the events spoke for themselves. In contrast, there was much talk in the East and West. The most shocking impressions come from the debates among various political parties in the St. Petersburg Duma. Representatives of these parties uttered, with great fervor, endless variations of absolutely meaningless phrases. It was terrifying to see the luciferic seduction at work. The fires raging in this war, however, are intended to warn and admonish the human race to be on guard.

From what is now happening, a few souls must come to a realization that we cannot go on like this; human evolution must take up the spiritual! Materialism is confronting its karma in this, the most terrible of all wars. In a certain sense, this war is the karma of materialism. The more this fact is realized by human beings, the more they will abandon their arguments about who is to blame for the war, and then they will have to realize that this war has been sent into world history to admonish man to turn to a spiritual perception of human life in its entirety.

Not only does materialism cause human souls to embrace materialism, it also perverts man's logic and dulls his feelings. We in Central Europe are still lacking a full understanding of what I have stated before. We in Central Europe must be most intimately engaged in the continued development of the Christ impulse. To do this we must, among other things, try to understand the minds that have already sown the seeds. Just one example. Goethe wrote a theory of color, which physicists regard as something - well - something that deserves no more than an indulgent smile, as if they wanted to say, "What did the poet know about colors? He was nothing but a dilettante." Since the 1880's I have tried to gain acceptance for Goethe's theory of color in spite of the findings of modern physics (see Note 9). Why does nobody understand that? The answer is that Central Europe has been imbued with the materialistic principle that has come to us from

the British folk soul. Newton, whom Goethe had to oppose, has been victorious over everything emanating from Goethe's spirit. Goethe also established a theory of evolution that demonstrates how human beings, simply by grasping spiritual laws, can progress from the state of greatest imperfection to one of greatest perfection. People found this too difficult to understand. When Darwin published his theory of evolution in a more comprehensible fashion, it was readily accepted. Darwin, a materialistic thinker who was inspired by the British folk soul has conquered Goethe, a man whose perceptions resulted from a most intimate dialogue with the German folk soul.

Ernst Haeckel's experiences were tragic. During his entire life he nourished himself intellectually by leaning on the ideas of Huxley and Darwin; his materialism is basically an English product (see Note 10) Yet when the war broke out, Haeckel was enraged about what emerged from the British Isles. He was one of the first to return British medals, diplomas and honors; instead, he should have returned his brand of Darwinism and physics, which is tinged with English thought. This is what we have to realize if we are to understand how Central Europe can strive for an intimate harmony with the laws of the world.

The greatest damage is done when what is poured into a child's soul induces the child to develop merely materialistically later in life. This trend has been on the increase for several centuries. Ahriman has even inspired one of the great British writers to compose a work that is calculated to impress the child's soul materialistically. The intent is hardly noticeable because ordinarily, one does not see all this as preparatory to a materialistic orientation. The work I am talking about is *Robinson Crusoe*. The description of Robinson is so shrewd that once the mind has accepted the ideas in the Robinson tale, it cannot avoid thinking materialistically thereafter. Mankind has not yet recovered from the ill effects perpetrated by the inventors of Robinson tales; they existed before and exist now. Much more could be said. These statements are not made to say something derogatory about the people of the West who have to be what they are. Rather, I wish to point out how the people in Central Europe must discover the connections to great values that are just now germinating but will grow to determine future developments. In this

regard, the significance of Austria is especially noteworthy. During the past few decades several men there aspired to profound accomplishments, for example, Hamerling in the area of literature, Carneri who set out to deepen Darwinism, by extending it to the moral realm, as well as Bruckner and other artists from a variety of disciplines. What matters here is the concern of a people for these things.

Now let us consider the unexpended ether bodies that are still in existence. They were cast off by human beings who had learned, through a great event, how to sacrifice themselves for their people's spiritual commonalty, a commonalty no longer present for them, at least on the surface. If a spiritual scientist today asserts that there is a collective soul of people and that it exists as archangel and so forth, he will be ridiculed. What is called a people's collective soul by the materialists is nothing but the abstract sum of attributes that the people of a nation possess. The materialist considers the people as nothing but the sum of human beings who co-exist in the same geographic area and share a sense of commonalty with each other. We, on the other hand, speak of a people's spiritual commonalty in such a way that we know that the spirit of a people is present as a real being of the rank of an archangel. Even though somebody who sacrifices his life for his people is not fully conscious of the real spirit of his people, he nevertheless confirms by the manner in which he goes through death that he believes in a continuity of life after this death. He believes that there is more to a people's spiritual commonalty than meets the eye, that is, it is related to, and co-exists with, the supersensible world. All those going through death confirm in a more or less conscious way that there is a supersensible world, and that realization is imprinted on their ether bodies. In a future time of peace, the unexpended ether bodies will be among people living on earth and will continually send the following sounds into the music of the spheres: there is more in the world than what mere physical eyes can perceive! This spiritual truth will ring forth as part of the music of the spheres through ether bodies that the dead have left behind. These are aside from what they are taking along as their individuality, which they retain during their lives between death and rebirth. We must listen to what lives and echoes from these ether bodies, because they were discarded by people who went through death and in so doing, affirmed the truth of the spiritual world. Mankind's greatest sin will be to ignore

what the dead call out to us when their ether bodies speak. One's glance at the spiritual world will be infinitely enriched if one considers that those who have lost loved ones - fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers, sons and daughters - may tell themselves that those who were sacrificed continue to live for humanity, as a reminder of what is yet to come!

If one were to rely only on what is taking place in the physical world, there would be little hope for the successful continuation of the spiritual movement through which a spiritual scientific world view is to be cultivated. Recently, a good and faithful colleague aged thirty or so died. My words to this soul that had gone through the gate of death requested that it should continue to work in our spiritual scientific field as faithfully and as courageously as it had done here on earth, utilizing all of its acquired knowledge. This colleague had worked diligently with us here on the physical plane; my message to him for his life between death and rebirth was that he should continue to work with us after death as he had done in life, for we are counting on these so-called dead as we are counting on the living. Our spiritual-scientific world view must be alive to such a degree that the gap between the so-called dead and the living can be overcome: we must feel the dead among us as if they were alive. We want not only theory, but life. Thus we wish to point out that when there is peace, there will be a living tie between those on earth and those who have gone through the gate of death. Man will be able to learn, and must learn, from the dead how they contribute to the great spiritual progress that must take hold on earth.

Sometimes life offers us an opportunity to see how human logic alone does not suffice. I would like to mention an example - not for personal reasons but because I want to characterize the way our Movement is viewed by the public. A few years ago an article was printed in a respected South German journal (see Note 14) by a famous contemporary philosopher about our spiritual science. This treatment of spiritual science was intended to impress the public purely because the essay was authored by a famous philosopher. The editor took great pride in the fact that he was able to present an article about spiritual science by such a famous man. Of course, everything was skewed and the

facts about spiritual science were distorted. But what did it take for the editor to realize that the account about spiritual science that he had sponsored in his monthly journal was distorted? The war broke out and the author of the article sent several letters to the editor. These letters contained some of the most disgusting remarks about Central European culture that one could imagine. The professor had railed and sneered at it. The editor then printed these letters in his journal as examples of the stupidity of this kind of thinking, commenting that anyone who writes this way belongs in an insane asylum. We are confronted by a curious fact. A good editor needed such an experience in order to see that the author, whose article on spiritual science had severely damaged the public image of the Movement, belonged in an insane asylum. If the man belongs in an insane asylum now, however, then the same was true before, when he wrote the article on spiritual science!

So it goes in the world! To be a judge of what is going on, man must garner other supports than those ordinarily available to him. The spiritual scientist who can clearly demonstrate that truth finds its own way, is on firm ground. Spiritual science, however, must be active in the evolution of mankind so that what is necessary, happens. Early in history Emperor Constantine had to accomplish his mission so that the Christ impulse could bear on the subconscious from the spiritual world. Later, the Christ impulse became active in the Maid of Orleans; what had to happen did indeed take place. Today, the Christ impulse must continue to bear on man, but more on his consciousness. In the future, there must be souls who will know that up there in the spiritual world there are those who sacrificed themselves as individuals and who admonish us to emulate their own belief in the active force of the spiritual, which they attained in death. The forces in the unexpended ether bodies beckon to the future, as well: to understand their message is to admit it into one's soul. Below, however, there must be souls who will perceive this truth and prepare for it through the proper and active understanding of our spiritual science. Our spiritual science must cultivate souls on this earth who will be capable of sensing what the ether bodies of the dead up there will say to us in the future. These souls will know that in the beyond there are forces to admonish human beings who had to be left on earth. When spirit-conscious souls down here harken to the hidden sounds of the

spiritual world, then all bloodshed, all sacrifices and all suffering, past and future, will bear fruit. I do hope that quite a few souls come together through spiritual science and perceive the voices from the spiritual world that are resounding especially because of this war. Summarizing the final words of today's reflection, I wish to say a few words to you that are merely an expression of my feeling for what I want to instill in your souls.

From the warrior's valor, From the blood of battles, From the pain of the  
bereaved. From a people's sacrifice Will the spirit fruit arise - Will the souls  
embrace the spirit Consciously, with inner eyes.

With such feelings in our hearts we forever want to imbue ourselves with the meaning of the rose cross so that we can perceive it in the proper way as the motto for our doing, weaving and feeling. Not the black cross alone. He who tears the roses from the black cross and has nothing left but the black cross, would fall into the clutches of Ahriman. The black cross in itself represents life when it strives to embrace inanimate matter. Also, if one were to separate the cross from the roses, keeping only the latter, one would not find the proper thing. For the roses, separate from the cross, tend to elevate us to a life of selfish striving toward the spiritual, but not to a life in which we reveal the spirit in a material world. Not the cross alone, not the roses alone, but the roses on the cross, the cross carrying the roses: That is our proper symbol.

## NOTES

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The footnotes below are translations of the annotations appended to the original publication of this lecture. Titles of books and articles are given in their German form; they are followed by free translations in parentheses which do not necessarily refer to an English translation.

- . "Die übersinnliche Erkenntnis und ihre stärkende Seelenkraft in unserer schicksalstragenden Zeit" ("Supersensible Perception and Its Strengthening Soul-force in Our Time of Destiny"). Corresponding

remarks can be found in the Berlin lectures of April 16 and 23, 1915, published as: "Aus schicksalstragenden Zeit", ("From a Time of Destiny") Bibl.-No. 64 in the *Gesamtausgabe (Complete Works [of Rudolf Steiner])*, Dornach, 1959.

- . "Welten-Neujahr. Das Traumlied von Olaf Åsteson" ("Cosmic New Year. The Legend of Olaf Åsteson's Dream"), Hanover lecture of January 1, 1912. Published as a separate edition in Dornach, 1958; *Gesamtausgabe (Complete works)*, Bibl.-No 158. In this form the pronouncement was first made by Karl von Linné in his *Philosophia Botanica*, Stockholm, 1751, no. 77.
- . Cf. especially "Die spirituellen Hintergründe der äusseren Welt - Der Sturz der Geister der Finsternis" ("The Spiritual Background of the External World - The Fall of the Spirits of Darkness"), 14 lectures, Dornach, September 29 to October 28, 1917. *Gesamtausgabe (Complete works)*, Bibl.-No. 177, Dornach, 1965.
- . "Die Pforte der Einweihung" ("The Portal of Initiation"), first scene. *Gesamtausgabe (Complete works)*, Bibl.-No 14, Dornach, 1962.
- . The alliance was negotiated in 1897 by President Faure of France and Czar Nicolas II of Russia.
- . Houston Stewart Chamberlain, *Neue Kriegsaufsätze (New War Essays)*, Munich, 1915, p.36. "The reference is to the Hague Peace Conference of 1899 and 1907, which were both initiated by Czar Nicholas II.
- . Rudolf Steiner was asked in 1882 to edit Goethe's scientific writings in Kürschner's *Deutsche National-Literatur*. Volume I was published in 1883; it contained writings on the formation and transformation of organisms. Rudolf Steiner's introductions and critical commentaries to the four volumes were published as a special edition, entitled: Rudolf Steiner,

*Goethe's Naturwissenschaftliche Schriften (Goethe's Natural-Scientific Writings)*, Dornach, 1926. A German edition was published in Freiburg, 1949. *Gesamtausgabe (Complete Works)*, Bibl.-No. 1. Cf. the correspondence between Kurl Julius Schröer, Joseph Kürschner and Rudolf Steiner in *Blätter für Anthroposophie*, 13 Jg. No. 2, February 1961.

- . Ernst Haeckel: "I have always readily acknowledged the magnificent contributions of the small insular British empire to the enrichment of human civilization. These were possible because of its advantageous insular position and its geographic alliances. In addition I worked on Darwinism for the past fifty years and had many personal dealings with Darwin, Huxley, Lyell, John Murray and many other famous natural scientists in England and Scotland; these were pleasant and fruitful personal relationships." Haeckel, *Ewigkeit. Weltkriegsgedanken über Leben und Tod, Religion und Entwicklungslehre (Eternity, World War Reflections on Life and Death, Religion, and the Theory of Evolution)*, Berlin, 1915, p.65 and 114.
- . Robert Hamerling, 1830-1889. Cf. Rudolf Steiner, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Literatur 1886-1902 (Collected Essays on Literature, 1886-1902)*, Bibl.No. 20, *Gesamtausgabe (Complete Works)*, Dornach, 1957; *Mein Lebensgang (The Course of My Life)*, Bibl.-No. 28, *Gesamtausgabe (Complete Works)*, Dornach, 1962; "Robert Hamerling, ein Dichter und ein Denker und ein Mensch" ("Robert Hamerling, the Poet, the Thinker and the Man"), Dornach, 1939.
- . Bartholomäus Ritter von Carneri, 1821-1909. Cf. Rudolf Steiner, "Carneri, der Ethiker des Darwinismus" in *Methodische Grundlagen der Anthroposophie 1884-1901* ("Carneri, the Moral Philosopher of Darwinism" in *Methodological Foundations of Anthroposophy, 1884-*

1901), Bibl.-No. 30, *Gesamtausgabe (Complete Works)*, Dornach, 1961: also "Vom Menschenrätsel" ("On the Riddle of Man") and *Mein Lebensgang* (The Course of My Life).

- . Anton Bruckner, 1824-1896.
- . Wincenty Lutoslawski, "Rudolf Steiners sogenannte 'Geheimwissenschaft'" in *Hochland*, 8.Jg., 1.Heft Oktober 1910, S.45-58. ("Rudolf Steiner's so-called 'Occult Science'" in *Hochland*, VIII, 1, October 1910, p.45-58). Professor Karl Muth, editor of the journal, writes an editorial comment in No. 7 of the same year, in which he describes Lutoslawski as an "author who is eminent as a man and as a thinker." Later, in *Krisgshefte der Suddeutschen Monatshefte*, Munich, February 1915, p.623-631, Muth refers to his correspondence with Lutoslawski and writes, among other things: "in addition to making several small contributions to *Hochland*, Lutoslawski also published in this journal three lead articles which aroused considerable attention among the readers: one article on the theosophy of Rudolf Steiner, another one on exercises to strengthen the will, and the third one on his conversion to the Catholic faith. His published notes contain peculiar biographical clues . . . Where in Germany - except in an inane asylum - would there be a human being like this lector of philosophy from the University Geneva - a man who seems to be completely disoriented as he confronts the magnitude of our contemporary world-historical situation with complete blindness and a paucity of ideas! The relief which his overwrought brain received through his epistolary outpouring did not satisfy him; he now insists that his latest letter should come to the attention of the public as well."

Christ in Relation to Lucifer and Ahriman

Lecture by Rudolf SteinerLinz, May 18, 1915GA 159

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## **Lucifer and Ahriman**

From The Imagination of Pentecost by Richard Leviton

Lucifer's "profound tragedy" is the agony of being caught in Time, of seeing cosmically unbounded Mahat working in an organic, manasic mortal body, of experiencing the constriction of cosmic intelligence by the pressure of materiality. Lucifer's cosmic enthusiasm for cognitive independence, for individualized intelligence, for word-building imaginations, cannot countenance the limitations of materialization that is the human experience of the Fourth Sphere called Earth. Why can't they be like me? Lucifer asks, swooping archangelically over the fields of human life like an exultant lark. (Pages 234)

Steiner's assertion that Lucifer, one of the primordial spiritual beings of the universe, actually incarnated as a human being ("an earthly incarnation of Lucifer in a man of flesh and blood") is one of his odder conceptions, especially if taken literally. (Pages 234-235)

It was as if Lucifer, regent of human manas and hierophant of the Mysteries, momentarily took human biological form as a living fount of inspiration for the primeval, "pagan" wisdom culture. In that capacity he brought the ancient Rishis, the original teachers of a young humanity, the world of "intellectualistic thought," the domain of high reason and pictorial conceptions, and the ideal of a cosmic and unconditioned activity of Intelligence and Will." Intellectually, Lucifer taught the Rishis how to fly. Lucifer, Steiner reminds us is a proud spirit who prefers to "soar away" on the wings of free-ranging intelligence into the empyrean "where lofty visions open out." And he likes human company. Through the Luciferic influence, humans build imaginative pictures that surpass physical reality. Lucifer is the archangelic heaven that inspires "the airy viewpoint of a bird" in people, an updraft that lofts them high above actual life circumstances. The liability of this aerial ballet is "an excessive interest in our own concoctions," a conceptual self-absorption that regards with disinterest the affairs of our human fellows. In a deep sense, Lucifer cannot accept the consequences of what happened when humanity, through his efforts, was brought into physical substance. (Pages 234-235)

Lucifer prefers ideas in their purity, as if they never found expression, through densification, on Earth. Of course, this is the same manastic world-building principle at play in the living imaginations or thoughts of the gods, but somehow, when translated to Earth and practiced by humans, it becomes inappropriate to the intended goal of the elaboration of the human Ego in a psycho-physical base, Lucifer clearly wants to pull humans away from the material Earth, Steiner observed. He wants to prevent humans from gaining a complete orientation in the physical plane, because, he feels, if they truly came to feel truly at home on the earth, they might altogether forget the supersensible pleasures of intelligence and sever their lifeline with the Light-Bearer. Page 236.

Lucifer's "continual and terrible war" to tear humans away from their proper residence on Earth is played out unilaterally through ever shell of human consciousness, into the deepest physical aspects of our being. Within the physical organism, Lucifer's sovereign domain is the head, the brain, and skull - the perfected, "noblest" organs of human thinking. In our time, the head is already in a retrogressive evolution and in fact "dying." The human head actually developed long before the rest of the physical organism. Steiner said: what brought the human head out of its antecedent animal form into its present human shape was the Luciferic influence. The Luciferic spirits gained residency in the human head when Michael thrust them out of the supersensible world into the mineralized skull of the Human, and they've been there ever since.

But Lucifer is also with us in every breath we take. He enters the human physiology through the breathing, which is the doorway to the blood and circulatory system. The key to the breathing process is the etheric body. An etheric body that is over exuberant, too widely extended, too intensely inclined towards the starry world, produces "an excessively vigorous breathing process," and this provides the Luciferic forces their opportunity to enter the body. With every breath, Lucifer strives to "dissolve and evaporate" the materialized human, to lure it into the Luciferic "sea of colors and flowing light." Meanwhile, this airy etheric expansion and its corresponding soul feeling of "falsely mystical hopes," disorders the human blood and the "warmth process," the

rightful carrier of the Ego. Anything that disorders the unfoldment of the human Ego de facto obstructs the Christ, whose sphere of influence is the Ego.

The Luciferic inflation, however, is only one hand of the assault on the incarnate human, only one pole of the profound cosmic dialectic waged throughout every aspect of our life here in the Time and Long Dominion. Lucifer's manasic dilation out of matter is exquisitely counterpoised by Ahriman's intellectual compression into matter.

#### Ahriman: The Contraction into Time

Every since the bifurcation of Boundless Time into the polarized bings of Lucifer and Ahriman, Lucifer has sought to fly free from the confines of finite time lived in matter with human intelligence secure in his talons. Meanwhile, Ahriman willingly dove head first into the weightiness, the gravity, of materiality, burying cosmic intellectuality deep in the Earth. Generally, Steiner's view of Ahriman is markedly less bleak than the Zoroastrian picture of Angra Mainyu as apocalyptic evil.

Ahriman, said Steiner, entered human evolution as a legitimate co-creator commissioned by the gods to be the rightful Lord of Death and the intellect. The gods appreciated Ahriman, if warily, as "asage of death," a cosmic being necessary to the progressive unfoldment of human evolution. Ahriman's principal domain is the mineral kingdom, a world that is "utterly dead," but his sovereignty properly encompasses all of external nature. In the human sphere, Ahriman takes every opportunity to encourage humans in the exclusive, material use of their intellect.

Yet Ahriman's legitimate commission empowers him to deliver the passing moment and its valuable sensory contents back to eternity. In other words, Ahriman helps humans considerably in physical world activitiars: in this he is our "cherished companion," helping us gather the sense-world fruits that he wishes to return to the atemporal. Ahriman is an assiduous, compulsive saver: he preserves everything, gleaning all the "precious treasures" from each passing moment to lay upon the altar of eternity.

Ahriman's great strongholds are libraries, filled with the "preservation and avoiding change is so extreme, quipped Steiner, that he would stop the snake from shedding its skin.

While Lucifer strives to capture Time by bringing the eternal into the passing moment. Ahriman in contrast struggles to capture Space from Time. Ahriman's basic problem is self-contraction; he suffers from a kind of ontological claustrophilia. From his own "self-love in acting," Ahriman's world has contracted into a frosty, darkened cavern of one being- his own; in this condition he affirms only himself and denies the rest of the world. For Ahriman, freedom means "the proud feeling of manifesting himself in the action, said Steiner, and that's why he needs more space: space for more matter, for more preservation, for more egoistical self-being. Ahriman needs space in which to materialize the spiritual world, to capture intelligence within materiality, and to hold humans spellbound and "fastened permanently" to the Earth. That's the dangerous, "evil" side of an Ahriman working beyond his lawful domain in human life, an insidious influence that acutely overshadowed the materialistic nineteenth century beginning in the 1840's. So the Druj was alive and well in the century of materialism, said Steiner, Even in the supposedly psychic 1990's we cannot unequivocally declare ourselves exempt from the Ahramanic deception. In fact, our time may present a perfect opportunity for Ahriman to work his craft at seducing human intellect away from Michaelic spirituality.

Ahriman appropriates the human intellect by encouraging us to form material, physical, sense-bound concepts to describe the supersensible world. Ahriman exerts a subtle corruption to the Luciferic pictorial, imaginative faculty; we start off building a concept of supersensible wisdom as being like a library, then without catching the exact moment, fine we've slipped into a very concrete reification of librarians, desks, books, filing cabinets, due dates, and author indexes. We have unwittingly materialized - made it literal, turned it to stone - a supersensible reality. Ahriman tempts the intellect, struggling to form coherent concepts, to picture the subtle worlds according to physical laws and material activities. Through this conceptual gravity Ahriman anchors the human ever more deeply in the sensory world but in such a way that occult the presence

of the spiritual. "In every illusion that matter is the sole reality, we must perceive the whispered prompting of Ahriman, Steiner warns us. (Pages 238-240)

Ahriman is loathe for us to apprehend spiritually the supersensible world, to really approach it with subtle, pictorial, living imaginations, because these would free us from sense-bound gravity which is his proper domain and base of action. The more we materialize our intellect and permeate our thinking only with the concerns of physical existence, the more remote become the supersensible worlds, and the more potently present looms Ahriman, who claims his sovereignty on Earth. Ahriman succeeds when humans gain acquaintance of the physical world in a non-spiritual way: that is, when humanity settles for a false gnosis, for acquaintance with the Lie, as the Zoroastrians would say.

Ahriman fosters the illusion that elemental matter is a reality in itself, that physical-sensory life is the consummation of existence. It is not hard to see how Ahriman's materialism effectively bars all outlook on the spiritual world for many people; an objective survey of the parameters of modern scientific theory and research demonstrates this readily. The arbiters of contemporary scientific and medical thinking almost unilaterally refuse to see through the material world to its true, spiritual foundations. Matter and the body have no causal relation to spirit and mind. They tell us endlessly. It's not just the external word that Ahriman materializes. He permeates human consciousness, too, with the conviction that the human is nothing more than a "completely developed animal," fighting for survival among the fittest, as Darwin, the nineteenth century's protege of Ahrimanic thinking, so concretely expressed. That the human might be the living image of the Godhead is anathema to Ahriman and irritating to the physical scientists. Where Lucifer wants to pull the human soul out of the restrictive physical shell into the illusion of celestial freedom, Ahriman would discard the soul-spiritual core altogether, exalting instead the material sheath and everything that comes to expression through the body, like instincts and impulses, even the subhuman elements. By this, Ahriman aims to make human nature "more and more earthy." (Page 241)

...Ahriman was permitted to exercise his maximum influence on human life before incarnation, employing the forces of heredity, but he could not interfere with humans after death, on their outward arch into the cosmos, Lucifer was allowed to wield his influence on humans after they had passed through the gates of death but not on the inward arch from the cosmos to Earth; Lucifer could employ the forces of climate, education, and modes of behavior as legitimate spheres of influence. These appointments defined their lawful jurisdiction.

A proposition of this scale is inevitably ambivalent. Ahriman buries manas in matter, while Lucifer exalts manas in the ether. Ahriman permeates intellectuality with gravity, while Lucifer imbues imagination with levity. What transforms Lucifer and Ahriman from positive irritants to injurious opponents is why operate outside their rightful domain.

## **The Balance in the World and Man, Lucifer and Ahriman**

Rudolf Steiner (3 lectures: Dornach, Nov. 1914; GA 158)

### Lecture I

THE idea of other worlds lying beneath or behind the physical world is very familiar to us, and as an introduction to what I propose to put before you, I want to speak today of certain characteristics of these worlds. By widening and extending the knowledge we already possess, still other aspects of this subject will become clear to us.

As you know, the world bordering upon that known to our ordinary consciousness is the so-called world of Imagination. The world of Imagination is far more inwardly mobile and flexible than our physical world with its clear-cut lines of demarcation and its sharply defined objects. When the veil formed by the physical world is broken through, we enter an ethereal, fluidic world, and when we experience this first spiritual world, the feeling arises that we are outside the physical body. In this spiritual world we are at once conscious of a new and different relationship to the physical body; it is a relationship such as we otherwise feel to our eyes or ears. The physical body in its totality works as if it were a kind of organ of perception; but we very soon realize that, properly speaking, it is not the physical but the *ether-body* that is the real organ of perception. The physical body merely provides a kind of scaffolding around the ether-body. We begin, gradually, to live consciously in the ether-body, to feel it as a sense-organ which perceives a world of weaving, moving pictures and sounds. And then we are aware of being related to the ether-body within the physical body just as in ordinary life we are related to our ears or eyes.

This feeling of being outside the physical body is an experience similar in some respects to that of sleep. As beings of spirit-and-soul we are outside the physical and etheric bodies during sleep, but our consciousness is dimmed during the experience, and we know nothing of what is really happening to us and around us.

You will see from this that there can be a relationship to the physical body quite different from that to which we are accustomed in ordinary life. This is a fact to which attention

must be called by Spiritual Science and it is an experience which will become more and more common in human beings as evolution leads on into the future.

I have said repeatedly that the cultivation of Spiritual Science today is not the outcome of any arbitrary desire, but is a necessity of evolution at the present time. This feeling of separation from the physical body is an experience that will arise in human beings more and more frequently in the future, without being understood. A time will come when a great many people will find themselves asking: "Why is it that I feel as if my being were divided, as if a second being were standing by my side?" This feeling will arise as naturally as hunger or thirst or other such experiences and it must be understood by men of the present and future. It will become intelligible when, through Spiritual Science, people begin to understand what this experience of division within them really signifies.

In the domain of Education, particularly, attention will have to be paid to it; indeed we shall all have to learn to pay more heed than hitherto to certain experiences which will become increasingly common in children as time goes on. It is true that in later life, when the whole impression made by the physical world is very strong, these feelings and experiences will not be particularly noticeable in the near future, but as time goes on they will become more and more intense. They will occur, to begin with, in children, and grown-up people will hear from children many things which in the ordinary way are pooh-poohed but which will have to be understood because they are connected with deep secrets of evolution.

We shall hear children saying: "I have seen a being who said this or that to me, who told me what to do." - The materialist, of course, will tell such a child that this is all nonsense, that no such being exists. But students of Spiritual Science will have to understand the significance of the phenomenon. If a child says: "I saw someone who came to me, he went away again but he keeps on coming and I cannot get rid of him" - then anyone who understands Spiritual Science will realize that a phenomenon which will appear in greater and greater definition as time goes on, is here revealing itself in the life of the child. What does this really signify?

We shall understand it if we think of two fundamental and typical experiences, the first of

which was particularly significant in the Greco-Latin age, while the other is significant in our own time, when it is beginning, gradually, to take shape. Whereas the first experience reached a kind of culmination in the Greco-Latin epoch, we are slowly moving towards the second.

Experiences deriving from the influences of *Lucifer* and *Ahriman* are all the time playing into human life. In this basic experience of man during the Fourth Post-Atlantean or Greco-Roman epoch, Lucifer's influence was the greater; in our own epoch, Ahriman is the predominant influence. Lucifer is connected with all those experiences which, lacking the definition imparted by the senses, remain undifferentiated and obscure.

Lucifer is connected with the experience of breathing, of the in-breathing and the out-breathing. The relationship between a man's breathing and the functioning of his organism as a whole must be absolutely regular and normal. The moment the breathing process is in any way disturbed, instead of remaining the unconscious operation to which no attention need be paid, it becomes a *conscious* process, of which we are more or less dreamily aware. And when, to put it briefly, the breathing process becomes too forceful, when it makes greater claims on the organism than the organism can meet, then it is possible for Lucifer (not he himself but the hosts belonging to him) to enter with the breath into the organism.

I am speaking here of a familiar experience of dream-life. It may arise in many forms and with growing intensity. A nightmare in which the disturbed breathing process makes a man conscious in dream, so that experiences of the spiritual world intermingle with the dream and give rise to the anxiety and fear which often accompany a nightmare - all such experiences have their origin in the *Luciferic* element. When, instead of the regular breathing, there is a feeling of being choked or strangled, this is connected with the possibility that Lucifer may be mingling with the breathing.

This is the cruder form of the process, where, as the result of a diminution of consciousness, Lucifer intermingles with the breathing and, in the dream, takes the form of a strangler. That is the crude form of the experience. But there is an experience more delicate and more intangible than that of being physically strangled. It does not, as a rule,

occur to people that a certain familiar experience is really a less crude form of that of strangulation. Yet whenever anything becomes a problem in the soul or gives rise to doubt concerning one thing or another in the world, this is a subtler form of the experience of being strangled. It can truly be said that when we feel obliged to *question*, when a riddle, either great or trifling, confronts us, then something seems to be strangling us, but in such a way that we do not heed it. Nevertheless, every doubt, every problem is a subtle form of nightmare.

And so experiences which often take a crude form, become much more subtle and intangible when they arise in the life of soul itself. It is to be presumed that science will be led some day to study how the breathing process is connected with the urge to question, or with the feeling of being assailed by doubt; but whether this happens or not, everything that is associated with questioning and doubt, with feelings of dissatisfaction caused when something in the world demands an answer and we are thrown back entirely upon our own resources - all this is connected with the Luciferic powers.

In the light of Spiritual Science it can be said that whenever we feel a sensation of strangulation in a nightmare, or whenever some doubt or question inwardly oppresses or makes us uneasy, the breathing process becomes stronger, more forceful. There is something in the breathing which must be harmonized, toned down and modified if human nature is to function in the right and normal way.

What happens when the breathing process becomes excessively vigorous and forceful? The ether-body expands, becomes too diffuse; and as this takes effect in the physical body, it tends to break up the physical body. An over-exuberant, too widely extended ether-body gives rise to an excessively vigorous breathing process and this provides the Luciferic forces with opportunity to work.

The Luciferic forces, then, can make their way into the human being when the ether-body has expanded beyond the normal. One can also say that the Luciferic forces tend to express themselves in an ether-body that has expanded beyond the limits of the human form, that is to say, in an ether-body requiring more space than is provided within the boundaries of the human skin.

Of attempts made to find an appropriate form in which to portray this process, the following may be said. - In its normal state, the ether-body moulds and shapes the physical form of man. But as soon as the ether-body expands, as soon as it tries to create for itself greater space and an arena transcending the boundaries of the human skin, it tends to produce other forms. The human form cannot here be retained; the ether-body strives to grow out of and beyond the human form. In olden days men found the solution for this problem. When an extended ether-body - which is not suited to the nature of *man* but to the Luciferic nature - makes itself felt and takes shape before the eye of soul, what kind of form emerges? The *Sphinx*!

Here we have a clue to the nature of the Sphinx. The Sphinx is really the being who has us by the throat, who strangles us. When the ether-body expands as a result of the force of the breathing, a Luciferic being appears in the soul. In such an ether-body there is then not the *human*, but the *Luciferic* form, the form of the Sphinx. The Sphinx is the being who brings doubts, who torments the soul with questions.

And so there is a definite connection between the Sphinx and the breathing process. But we also know that the breathing process is connected in a very special way with the blood. Therefore the Luciferic forces also operate in the blood, permeating and surging through it. By way of the breathing, the Luciferic forces can everywhere make their way into the blood of the human being and when excessive energy is promoted in the blood, the Luciferic nature - the Sphinx - becomes very strong.

Because man is open to the Cosmos in his breathing, he is confronted by the Sphinx. It was paramountly during the Greco-Latin epoch of civilization that, in their breathing, men felt themselves confronting the Sphinx in the Cosmos. The legend of *Oedipus* describes how the human being faces the Sphinx, how the Sphinx torments him with questions. The picture of the human being and the Sphinx, or of the human being and the Luciferic powers in the Cosmos, gives expression to a deeply-rooted experience of men as they were during the Fourth Post-Atlantean epoch, and indicates that when, in however small a degree, a man breaks through the boundaries of his normal life on the physical plane, he comes into contact with the Sphinx-nature. At this moment Lucifer approaches him and he must cope with Lucifer, with the Sphinx.

The basic tendency of our Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch is different. The trend of evolution has been such that the ether-body has contracted and is far less prone to diffusion or expansion. The ether-body, instead of being too large, is too small, and this will become more marked as evolution proceeds. If it can be said that in the man of ancient Greece, the ether-body was too large, it can be said that in the man of modern times the ether-body is compressed and contracted, has become too small. The more human beings are led by materialism to disdain the Spiritual, the more will the ether-body contract and wither. But because the organization and functions of the physical body depend upon the ether-body - inasmuch as the ether-body must permeate the physical in the right way - the physical body too will always tend to dry up, to wither, if the contraction of the ether-body is excessive; and if the physical body became too dry, men would have feet of horn instead of the feet of a normal human being. As a matter of fact, man will not actually find himself with feet of horn, but the tendency is there within him, owing to this proclivity of the ether-body to weaken and dry up. Now into this dried-up ether-body, *Ahriman* can insinuate himself, just as Lucifer can creep into an extended, diffuse ether-body. Ahriman will assume the form which indicates a lack of power in the ether-body. It unfolds insufficient etheric force for properly developed feet and will produce hornlike feet, goat's feet.

*Mephistopheles* is Ahriman. There is good reason, as I have just indicated, for portraying him with the feet of a goat. Myths and legends are full of meaning: Mephistopheles is very often depicted with horses' hoofs; his feet have dried up and become hoofs. If [Goethe](http://wn.elib.com/Bio/Goethe.html) <<http://wn.elib.com/Bio/Goethe.html>> had completely understood the nature of Mephistopheles he would not have made him appear in the guise of a modern cavalier, for by his very nature Mephistopheles-Ahriman lacks the etheric forces necessary to permeate and give shape to the normal physical form of a human being.

Yet another characteristic of Mephistopheles-Ahriman is due to this contraction of the ether-body and its consequent lack of etheric force. The best way to understand this will be to consider the nature of man as a whole. Even physically, the human being is, in a certain respect, a duality. For think of it. - You stand there as a physical human being. But the in-breathed air is inside you, is part of you as a physical being. This air, however,

is sent out again by the very next exhalation, so that the "man of air-and-breath" pervading you, changes all the time. You are not merely a man of flesh, bone and muscle, but you are also a "breath man." This "breath man," however, is constantly changing, passing out and in. And this "breath man" is connected with the circulating blood.

Within you, separate as it were from this "breath man," is the other pole: the "nerve man" with the circulating nerve-fluid. The contact between the "nerve man" and the blood is a purely external one. Just as those etheric forces which tend towards the Luciferic nature can only find easy access to the blood by way of the breath, so the etheric forces which tend towards the Mephistophelean or Ahrimanic nature can only approach the nervous system - *not* the blood.

Ahriman is deprived of the possibility of penetrating into the blood because he cannot come near the warmth of the blood. If he wants to establish a connection with a human being, he will therefore crave for a drop of blood, because access to the blood is so difficult for him. An abyss lies between Mephistopheles and the blood. When he draws near to man as a living being, when he wants to make a connection with man, he realizes that the essentially *human power* lives in the blood. He must therefore endeavor to get hold of the blood.

That Faust's pact with Mephistopheles is signed with blood is a proof of the wisdom contained in the legend. Faust must bind himself to Mephistopheles by way of the blood, because Mephistopheles has no direct access to the blood and craves for it. Just as the Greek confronted the Sphinx whose field of operation is the breathing system, so the man of the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch confronts Mephistopheles who operates in the nerve-process, who is cold and scornful because he is bloodless, because he lacks the warmth that belongs to the blood. He is the scoffer, the cold, scornful companion of man.

Just as it was the task of Oedipus to get the better of the Sphinx, so it is the task of man in the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch to get the better of Mephistopheles. Mephistopheles stands there like a second being, confronting him. The Greek was confronted by the Sphinx as the personification of the forces which entered into him together with excessive vigor of the breathing process. The human being of the modern age is confronted by the fruits of

intellect and cold reason, rooted as they are in the nerve-process. Poetic imagination has glimpsed, prophetically, a picture of the human being standing over against the Mephistophelean powers; but the experience will become more and more general, and the phenomenon which, as I have said, will appear in childhood, will be precisely this experience of the Mephistophelean powers.

Whereas the child in Greece was tormented by a flood of questions, the suffering awaiting the human being of our modern time is rather that of being in the grip of preconceptions and prejudices, of having as an incubus at his side a second "body" consisting of all these preconceived judgments and opinions. What is it that is leading to this state of things?

Let us be quite candid about the trend of evolution. During the course of the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch, so many problems have lost all inner, vital warmth. The countless questions which confront us when we study Spiritual Science with any depth, simply do not exist for the modern man with his materialistic outlook. The riddle of the Sphinx means nothing to him, whereas the man of ancient Greece was vitally aware of it. A different form of experience will come to the man of modern times. In his own opinion he knows everything so well; he observes the material world, uses his intellect to establish the interconnections between its phenomena and believes that all its riddles are solved in this way, never realizing that he is simply groping in a phantasmagoria. But this way of working coarsens and dries up his ether-body, with the ultimate result that the Mephistophelean powers, like a second nature, will attach themselves to him now and in times to come.

The Mephistophelean nature is strengthened by all the prejudices and limitations of materialism, and a future can already be perceived when everyone will be born with a second being by his side, a being who whispers to him of the foolishness of those who speak of the reality of the spiritual world. Man will, of course, disavow the riddle of Mephistopheles, just as he disavows that of the Sphinx; nevertheless he will chain a second being to his heels. Accompanied by this second being, he will feel the urge to think materialistic thoughts, to think, not through his own being, but through the second being who is his companion.

In an ether-body that has been parched by materialism, Mephistopheles will be able to dwell. Understanding what this implies, we shall realize that it is our duty to educate children in the future - be it by way of Eurythmy or the development of a spiritual-scientific outlook - in such a way that they will be competent to understand the spiritual world. The ether-body must be quickened in order that the human being may be able to take his rightful stand, fully cognizant of the nature of the being who stands at his side. If he does not understand the nature of this second being, he will be spellbound by him, fettered to him. Just as the Greek was obliged to get the better of the Sphinx, so will modern man have to outdo Mephistopheles - with his faunlike, satyrlike form, and his goat's or horse's feet.

Every age, after all, has known how to express its essential characteristic in legend and saga. The Oedipus legends in Greece and the Mephistopheles legends in the modern age are examples, but their basic meanings must be understood.

You see, truths that are otherwise presented merely in the form of poetry - for instance, the relations between Faust and Mephistopheles - can become guiding principles for education as it should be in the future. The prelude to these happenings is that a people or a poet have premonitions of the existence of the being who accompanies man; but finally, every single human being will have this companion who must not remain unintelligible to him and who will operate most powerfully of all during childhood. If adults whose task it is to educate children today do not know how to deal rightly with what comes to expression in the child, human nature itself will be impaired owing to a lack of understanding of the wiles of Mephistopheles.

It is very remarkable that indications of these trends are everywhere to be found in legends and fairy-tales. In their very composition, legends and fairy-tales which seem so unintelligible to modern scholars, point either to the Mephistophelean, the Ahrimanic, or to the Sphinx, the Luciferic. The secret of all legends and fairy-tales is that their content was originally actual *experience*, arising either from man's relation to the Sphinx or from his relation to Mephistopheles.

In legends and fairy-tales we find, sometimes more and sometimes less deeply hidden,

either the motif of the riddle, the motif of the Sphinx, where something has to be solved, some question answered; or else the motif of bewitchment, of being under a spell. This is the Ahriman motif. When Ahriman is beside us, we are perpetually in danger of falling victim to him, of giving ourselves over to him to such an extent that we cannot get free. In face of the *Sphinx*, the human being is aware of something that penetrates into him and as it were tears him to pieces. In face of the Mephistophelean influence he feels that he must yield to it, bind himself to it, succumb to it.

The Greeks had nothing like theology in our modern sense, but were very much closer to the wisdom of Nature and the manifestations of Nature. They approached the wisdom of Nature without theology, and questions and riddles pressed in upon them.

Now the breathing process is much more intimately connected with Nature than is the nerve-process. That is why the Greek had such a living feeling of being led on to wisdom by the Sphinx. It is quite different in the modern age when theology has come upon the scene. Man no longer believes that direct intercourse with Nature brings him near to the Divine Wisdom of the world, but he sets out to *study*, to approach it via the nerve-process, not via the breathing and the blood. The search for wisdom has become a nerve-process; modern theology is a nerve-process. But this means that wisdom is shackled to the nerve-process; man draws near to Mephistopheles, and owing to this imprisonment of wisdom in the nerve-process, the premonition arose at the dawn of the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch that Mephistopheles is shackled to the human being, stands at his side.

If the Faust legend is stripped of all the extraneous elements that have been woven around it, there remains the picture of a young theologian striving for wisdom; doubts torment him and because he signs a pledge with the Devil - with Mephistopheles - he is drawn into the Devil's field of operations. But just as it was the task of the Greek, through the development of conscious Egohood, to conquer the Sphinx, so we, in our age, must get the better of Mephistopheles by enriching the Ego with the wisdom that can be born only from knowledge and investigation of the spiritual world, from Spiritual Science.

Oedipus was the mightiest conqueror of the Sphinx; but every Greek who wrestled for manhood was also, at a lower level, victorious over the Sphinx. Oedipus is merely a

personification, in a very typical form, of what every Greek was destined to experience. Oedipus must prove himself master of the forces contained in the processes of the breathing and the blood. He personifies the nerve-process with its impoverished ether-forces, in contrast to those human beings who are altogether under the sway of the breathing and blood processes. Oedipus takes into his own nature those forces which are connected with the nerve-process, that is to say, the Mephistophelean forces; but he takes them into himself in the right and healthy way, so that they do not become a second being by his side, but are actually *within* him, enabling him to confront and master the Sphinx.

This indicates to us that in their rightfully allotted place, Lucifer and Ahriman work beneficially; in their wrongful place - there they are injurious. The task incumbent upon the Greek was to get the better of the Sphinx-nature, to cast it out of himself. When he was able to thrust it into the abyss, when, in other words, he was able to bring the extended ether-body down into the physical body, then he had overcome the Sphinx. The abyss is not outside us; the abyss is man's own physical body, into which the Sphinx must be drawn in the legitimate and healthy way. But the opposite pole - the nerve-process - which works, not from without but from *within* the Ego, must here be strengthened. Thus is the Ahrimanic power taken into the human being and put in its right place.

Oedipus is the son of Laios. Laios had been warned against having a child because It was said that this would bring misfortune to his whole race. He therefore cast out the boy who was born to him. He pierced his feet, and the child was therefore called "Oedipus," i.e., "club foot." That is the reason why, in the drama, Oedipus has deformed feet.

I have said already that when etheric forces are impoverished, the feet cannot develop normally, but will wither. In the case of Oedipus this condition was induced artificially. The legend tells us that he was found and reared by shepherds after an attempt had been made to get rid of him. He goes through life with clubbed feet. Oedipus is Mephistopheles - but in this case Mephistopheles is working in his rightful place, in connection with the task devolving upon the Fourth Post-Atlantean epoch.

The harmony between ether-body and physical body so wonderfully expressed in the creations of Greek Art, everything that constituted the typical greatness of the Greek - of

all this, Oedipus is deprived in order that he may become a *personality* in the real sense. The Ego that has now passed into the head becomes strong, and the feet wither.

The man of the *Fifth* Post-Atlantean epoch has quite a different task. In order to confront and conquer the Sphinx, Oedipus was obliged to receive Ahriman into himself. The man of the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch, who confronts Ahriman-Mephistopheles, must take Lucifer into himself. The process is the reverse of that enacted by Oedipus. Everything that the Ego accumulates in the head must be pressed down into the rest of man's nature. The Ego, living in the nerve-process, has accumulated "Philosophy, Law, Medicine, and, alas, Theology too" - all nerve-processes. And now there is the urge to get rid of it all from the *head* - just as Oedipus deprived the *feet* of their normal forces - and to penetrate through the veils of material existence.

And now think of Faust standing there with all that the Ego has accumulated; think of how he wants to throw it all out of his *head*, just as Oedipus deprives his *feet* of their normal forces. Faust says: "I have studied, alas! Philosophy, Jurisprudence and Medicine too, and saddest of all, Theology" . . . he wants to rid his head of it all. And moreover he does so, by surrendering himself to a life that is not bound up with the head. Faust is Oedipus reversed, i.e., the human being who takes the Lucifer-nature into himself.

And now think of all that Faust does, so that having Lucifer within him, he may battle with Ahriman, with Mephistopheles who stands beside him. All this shows us that Faust, in reality, is Oedipus reversed. The Ahriman-nature in Oedipus has to get the better of Lucifer; the Lucifer-nature in Faust has to help him to overcome Ahriman-Mephistopheles. Ahriman-Mephistopheles operates more in the external world, Lucifer more in the inner life. All the misfortunes that befall Oedipus because he must take the Ahriman-nature into himself, are connected with the external world. Doom falls upon his race, not merely upon himself. Even the doom that falls upon him is of an external character; he pierces his eyes and blinds himself; similarly, the pestilence which sweeps his native city - this, too, is an external doom. Faust's experiences, however, are of the soul - they are *inner* tragedies. Again in this respect, Faust reveals himself as the antithesis of Oedipus.

In these two figures, both of them dual - Oedipus and Sphinx, Faust and Mephistopheles - we have typical pictures of the evolution of the Fourth and Fifth Post-Atlantean epochs.

When history, in time to come, is presented less as a narration of external happenings and more as a description of what human beings actually experience, then and only then will the significance of these fundamental experiences be fully understood. For then man will perceive what is really at work in the onflowing evolutionary process, of which ordinary science knows only the external phantasmagoria.

In order that the Ego should be strengthened, it was necessary for Ahriman-Mephistopheles to enter into Oedipus - the typical representative of the Greeks. In the man of the modern age, the Ego has become too strong and he must break free. But this he can only do by deepening his knowledge of spiritual happenings, of the world to which the Ego truly belongs. The Ego must know that it is a citizen of the spiritual world, not merely the inhabitant of a human body. This is the demand of the age in which we ourselves are living. The man of the Fourth Post-Atlantean epoch was called upon to strive with might and main for consciousness in the physical body; the man of the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch must strive to become conscious in the spiritual world, so to expand his consciousness that it reaches into the spiritual world.

Spiritual Science is thus a fundamental factor in the evolution of the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch.

## **The Balance in the World and Man, Lucifer and Ahriman**

### **Lecture II**

IN the lecture on the Kalevala (see Note 1), I made a statement which you will probably not have found easy to understand. You will remember, I spoke of a "being" that stretches across Europe from west to east; and I spoke of it as having three limbs that reach out in an easterly direction. I said that for the ancient Finnish folk these three limbs were known as Wainamoinen, Ilmarinen, and Lemminkainen, and that they were what we today, in our more materialistic language, call the gulfs of Riga, Finland and Bothnia. You will probably have wondered how I could say that these gulfs had anything to do with a being, when they are obviously nothing else than extensions of the surface of the sea. There is no body; how then can it be possible to speak of a being?

I can well imagine that this difficulty might arise in your minds, and it is typical. For again and again you will find that truths which come from the spiritual world lay themselves open to the charge of being contradictory. The very fact that they do so is significant and is quite as it should be; and the only way to arrive at a satisfactory solution of the contradiction is in every case to make a still deeper study of the matter in question. And this I want to do today in respect of certain problems in spiritual knowledge. But first let me preface what I have to say with a few introductory words.

We will glance, to begin with, at some of the prejudices concerning the nature of man that are prevalent in the materialistic thought of our time. Let us take one example. Various physical processes are to be found in man, among others processes of the brain and nervous system; and it is common knowledge that when these processes take place, processes take place also in the soul. The conclusion is drawn that the processes in the soul are no more than the *expression* of the physical processes. The materialist studies what goes on in the body of the human being, finds there - or rather pre-supposes hypothetically - delicate nerve-processes, and says: The thinking, feeling and willing processes are in reality only accompanying phenomena of what is going on all the time as physical processes. This view is quite commonly held today and it will undoubtedly strike deeper and deeper root into the materialistic thinking of the near future. From the

point of view of logic it is about as clever as the following would be. - Suppose someone walking along a road discovers tracks on it - here, parallel ruts, and here again, marks like the soles of human feet. He thinks this over and says to himself: "The material of which the road is made has undergone certain changes and influences, with the result that it has in some places become packed together so as to form ruts, whilst at other places it has been sucked downwards and we see on the surface what looks like the impress of a human foot."

Such a conclusion is of course a crudely mistaken one, the truth being that a wagon has passed and made the two ruts with the wheels, and a man has also been walking on the road and made the other impressions with his feet. Not the nature of the soil, but the man and the wagon are responsible for the tracks.

The case is no different with the processes that go on in our nervous system! Whenever we think or feel or will, we are setting up processes that are of the nature of soul-and-spirit. And so long as we live in the physical world, these processes are united with the physical body, they leave their tracks in it - just as the wagon and the man leave their tracks behind in the road. But these tracks in the body have no more to do with the material of which the body is made than have the tracks in the road to do with the materials of which the road is constructed. In reality, the processes that take place in the matter of the brain and in the matter of the nerves have nothing whatever to do with the actual thought-processes. The relation between them is no nearer than the relation between what the man and the wagon are doing and what is going on in the surface of the earth over which they are moving. It is really quite important to take a little trouble to consider the matter in this light. For it reveals to one that the anatomist or physiologist who investigates merely the physical processes in the organism is like a spirit-being who moves about under the earth without ever coming up to the surface, and who has never even seen men or wagons. All he can do is to observe from below that unevennesses occur in the surface of the earth; he never comes close up to them, and he sees them always from the other side. Investigating them in this limited way, he imagines the earth itself has given rise to them by its own activity. The moment such a spirit were to come out on to the surface, he would become acquainted with the true state of affairs. This is

exactly how it is with the anatomist and physiologist who work from the materialistic point of view. They are always under the earth - for to know nothing of Spiritual Science is to be "under the earth!" What they investigate is the material processes, and these have nothing to do with what is happening above in the realm of soul-and-spirit. It will be man's task in the near future to free himself from this anatomical and physiological thinking and work through to a spiritual-scientific thinking. Then he will feel as an underground imp might feel who was suddenly lifted up above the earth and saw for the first time how the tracks he had observed from below had really come about. Imps burrowing under the earth - that is what the scientists are, who take account only of the spiritual that is under the earth - for even the material is spiritual! And mankind will have to experience the great shock that must inevitably come when these underground imps come out into the open - into the realm, that is, of the soul-and-spirit.

These introductory words were necessary in order to prepare you for the subject of today's lecture, which I think you will find helps to solve the contradiction of which we were speaking - that the gulfs of Bothnia, Finland and Riga are obviously mere surfaces, and yet I spoke as though they were a being, or rather limbs of a mighty being stretching from west to east.

We are accustomed to speak of ourselves as beings of space, and we are right; as human beings we are spatial beings. When, however, we come to consider what we are in reality, that is quite another matter. The fact is, man is in reality something altogether different from what we imagine him to be when we look at him only in the outer Maya, in the phantasmagoria of external appearance. There he appears of course as a being of space, spatially enclosed within his skin. But directly we try to carry our thought a little deeper, we are confronted with three great problems or riddles in respect of the human form.

The first of these riddles conceals itself under all manner of puzzling and mystifying illusions. For the external Maya of appearance deceives us again and again in regard to our own existence; and you can find traces of this deception in the science of the present day, particularly at certain points where science is quite at a loss and has been forced to construct all manner of hypotheses. Hypotheses have for example been constantly brought forward to account for the fact that man has two eyes and two ears and yet does

not see or hear double. How is it that these organs are symmetrically disposed? How is it that they are present not singly but in pairs? This simple fact offers science a hard nut to crack, and you have only to glance through the literature on the subject to find what a very great deal has been written on this question of why we see with *two eyes* and hear with *two ears*.

Man is really coarsely organized; we can sometimes find evidence of this in the very way we speak. For in reality we have also two noses! Only they have grown together and are not so obvious as the two eyes and two ears. Hence we do not speak of two noses, but of one nose; crudely organized as we are, we never discover that we have two! It is nevertheless the case that in all human perception a symmetry comes to expression, a right-and-left symmetry. Had he not two ears, two eyes, and two noses, man would not attain to the perception of his own I or Ego.

Correspondingly, man needs also for the Ego experience *two hands*. When we clasp the hands together and feel the one with the other, we immediately get something of an Ego experience. And it is really a similar process, when we unite into one whole the perceptions of two eyes or two ears. Every time we make a sense perception, we perceive the world from two sides, from left and from right. And to the fact that we have these two directions of perception left and right, and bring them together - to this fact we owe our Ego-nature as human beings. Otherwise we would not be I- or Ego-men at all. If, for example, our eyes were situated near our ears and we had no possibility of combining the lines of vision, we would always remain beings who are involved in a Group Soul. To be an Ego-being we must make the right and the left meet. Throughout the whole realm of human perception there is always this crossing of right and left in the middle. Look at this vertical line on the blackboard. Imagine that a plane projects out here from the blackboard along this line. Everything comes, from left and right, up to this line of incision. We, my dear friends, are ourselves actually in this plane. We are not in space, we are only in this surface, this plane. We are not beings extended in space, we are *surface beings*, that come about through the crossing of the impulse from the left with the impulse from the right. And if to the question: Where are you? you want to find an answer, not in accordance with Maya, but in accordance with reality, then you must not

point to the space where your body is standing and say: "I am here," but you will have to say: "I am in the place where my left man and my right man meet." In reality you are there, and only there. Just as we had surfaces in the case of the being of whom I spoke before, surfaces where air and water meet, so in man we have the left half and the right half. In that being the two halves were different, in man they are alike; but man is also a surface being, man is a plane. It is Maya that we see him as having form and figure.

Whence then has man this form and figure? He has it because he stands in the midst of a battle. A being from the left is fighting in man with a being from the right. If we were able to be entirely within our left half we would have a powerful perception of the one being, and if we were in our right half we would have a correspondingly powerful perception of the other being. Our existence as a double being arises from the fact that the Luciferic being is fighting in us from the left and the Ahrimanic being from the right.

Let us try to make a picture of it in our minds. From the left the Luciferic being fights his way through and throws up, as it were, his fortifications, and from the right Ahriman fights his way through and throws up his fortifications. And all that you can do is to stand in the middle between the two. The left part of you - your left man, as it were - is the fortification set up by Lucifer, and your right man is the fortification set up by Ahriman. And the whole art of life consists in finding the true balance between them. We do it unconsciously whenever we perceive with the senses. When we hear with the left ear and with the right ear, and then unite into a single perception the impulses that reach us in this way, or when we feel with the left hand and with the right hand and unite the two perceptions, we are placing ourselves into the surface that lies on the boundary of the conflict between Lucifer and Ahriman. As narrow as - no, narrower than - the blade of a knife is the space that is left to us in the middle, where we have to play our part. Our organism does not really belong to us; we are a battlefield for the Luciferic and Ahrimanic powers - and for other powers too, of like nature with them, but into that subject we cannot enter now.

We men are thus in reality surface beings wedged between two entities that are no concern of ours! Our left man does not concern us, neither does our right man: what concerns us is the process that goes on between the two.

And now we can develop a little further the comparison I made use of before. For, as we all recognize, there are processes perpetually going on under the earth; but it is not these that make the tracks in the road. Similarly, what happens in you in the right and left half of your organism, all the processes that take place between Lucifer and Ahriman, have nothing whatever to do with the experience you have in your soul. What goes on down below the surface of the earth - the worms creeping about, the changes in temperature in accordance with the seasons of the year, and so forth - all this has no connection with the tracks that have come in the road, and it is these tracks that are comparable with what takes place in the organism of man. Our researches in physiology and anatomy reveal to us the fight that is being waged within us between Lucifer and Ahriman, but they do not compel us to give ourselves up to the superstition that the life of the soul owes its origin to these processes going on between Lucifer and Ahriman. That is a complete mistake; the life of the soul takes its course within the soul itself - that is to say, in the surface, in the plane, not in the spatial organism at all.

Now the working of Lucifer and Ahriman is not the same in all parts of the human organism, and it is interesting to observe its gradation. Beginning from the head, we find that there Lucifer and Ahriman have thrown up fairly equal fortifications; the left and right halves of the head are very similar. This means that the forces of left and right have in the head not much possibility of interplay and the surface between them is left comparatively undisturbed. There in the middle is the surface, with Lucifer on the left and Ahriman on the right; and because the left and right halves of the head are so similar in form, Lucifer and Ahriman spring back from one another, and in between them man is able to develop a quiet surface activity. Thinking, pure thought as such, is very little disturbed by Lucifer and Ahriman; because in the head they recoil from one another.

When, however, we follow the form of man further down, we find a change. On one side Lucifer works powerfully and builds up the stomach, on the other side Ahriman does the same and builds up the liver. The stomach is the means with which Lucifer fights from left to right; and no true understanding can come about of the relation between stomach and liver, until we see how Lucifer has built up the stomach as a kind of weapon of defence, and Ahriman the liver. These two - stomach and liver - are perpetually waging

war one against the other, and physiology would do well to study the conflict. And if the heart of man tends to lean a little over towards the left, then that is an expression of the fact that Lucifer from one side and Ahriman from the other are trying each to grasp something for himself. The whole left and right relationship is an expression of the fight that is being waged in man between Lucifer and Ahriman. We said that in the case of man, what lies on either side of the middle surface is, generally speaking, alike. We have, however, already seen that this is true only for the upper part of man; as we follow the form of man downwards, the similarity gradually disappears. In the case of the being of whom I spoke before, with the three outstretched limbs - Lemminkäinen, Ilmarinen and Wainämöinen - the one half is air and the other water; the two halves are totally different in kind. And even in man, when we attain to clairvoyant knowledge it becomes clear to us that there are two distinct halves. For no sooner have we suggested away the physical body and turned our attention to the etheric body, than we find that the left half grows brighter and clearer than the right half. The left half is all shining and gleaming with radiant light, and the right half is wrapped in darkness and gloom. Yes, that is actually how it is with the left-right human being.

There are, however, other directions in accordance with which man takes up his position in the world of space. Expressed in the language of occultism, this means nothing else than that he is placed in still other ways into the midst of the fight between Lucifer and Ahriman. Let us go on, then, to consider how man stands in space with a forward and backward orientation, looking before and behind. Instead of observing him as a being of left and right, we will now direct our thoughts to the front and back of the human form. From this aspect also we find that man is not the being of space he appears to be. For as from left and from right Lucifer and Ahriman do battle with one another across man, and what shows in space is really only the barricades they put up one against the other, so also from behind Ahriman is fighting and from in front Lucifer. From behind Ahriman thrusts forward his activity, and from in front Lucifer thrusts forward his activity in opposition. Man stands in the middle between them. In connection, however, with the forward and backward direction in man we discover that Lucifer and Ahriman do not succeed in coming so close to one another as to leave nothing but a surface between them. We find here a somewhat different state of affairs. Ahriman comes only as far as

the plane which can be drawn through the spinal column, and Lucifer as far as the plane which can be drawn through the breast bone, where the ribs end and meet. In between these two planes lies a space which separates Lucifer and Ahriman one from the other, where the effects of their working are thrown together in confusion. There they stand and fight - not at close quarters, but as though shooting at one another across the intervening space. And there stand we in the midst of the fight. Thus, in respect of the direction before and behind, man is a being that has space.

In the left-right direction the fight between Lucifer and Ahriman is waged principally in the sphere of thought. Thoughts are whirled across from left and from right and meet in the surface in the middle. Cosmic thoughts and cosmic forms of thought impinge upon one another here on the human surface in the middle. In the direction before and behind, Lucifer and Ahriman do battle more in the realm of feeling. And since here the opposing forces do not approach one another so nearly, in the space that is left between them we ourselves have room to be together with our own feelings. When we have thoughts that offer opposition to one another from left and from right, then we have the feeling that these thoughts belong to the world. With our thoughts we think the objects that are in the world outside. When we make our own thoughts, then these thoughts are a mere phantasmagoria; they do not any longer belong to the world. In our feelings, on the other hand, we belong to ourselves; for there Lucifer and Ahriman do not quite meet, there we have room to be active in between them. This is the reason why in our feelings we are so essentially within ourselves.

We human beings are creatures of the beings of the higher hierarchies, and they have created us in accordance with the manner of their working. We are beings of surface between left and right because the higher beings have made us so and placed us so into space. It is they, the Gods, who do not suffer Lucifer and Ahriman to come together in man. We are in this sense creatures of the good Gods. The good Gods, working out of their creative thoughts and purposes, took as it were this resolve. "A conflict is going on," they said, "between Ahriman and Lucifer. We must set up a wall and enclose a region which they will not be able to enter, where they will not be able to carry on their strife at close quarters." We human beings have thus been placed into the struggle between

Lucifer and Ahriman as creatures of the good Gods; and the better we stand our ground in the struggle, the more truly are we creatures of the good Gods.

In respect of the before and behind, there the good Gods do not allow Lucifer to enter right into us; they created a barricade in the place where the ribs meet in the breast bone. And the wonderfully constructed tower that encloses the spine and the brain is a fortification the good Gods have erected against Ahriman. Ahriman cannot pass this line; all he can do is to send his arrows of feeling across to Lucifer. There in the space between stand we ourselves, separating the two from each other.

There is still a third direction in man, the direction from above downwards. Here again we have to make the discovery that the true state of affairs is not as it seems in external appearance. For from below upwards works Ahriman, and from above downwards Lucifer. Again we find that the good Gods have thrown up a barrier against Lucifer; at a certain plane in man his influence is held in check. You will find the plane by taking the skeleton and removing from it the skull. There where the skull rested on the cervical vertebrae, imagine a horizontal surface. This invisible horizontal surface is the barrier, where man can take his stand and hold up the Luciferic influence that comes from above. Lucifer can come no further, he can only shoot his arrows thence down into man. And his arrows are now arrows of will. From left to right fly arrows of thought, from front to back arrows of feeling and from above downwards as well as from below upwards, arrows of will.

Here, too, we have left to us an intermediate field of action. For about in a line with the diaphragm, you have the surface that acts as a barricade against the upward pressure of Ahriman. Ahriman can reach only as far as the diaphragm with his missiles of will, he can come no further with his will, with his essential being; and in between the two planes lies our own field of action.

You see how complicated the human being is! Take any one portion of the human figure - for example, the left Side of the face. As a being of thought, Lucifer can fill entirely this left side of the human countenance; as a being of feeling he can also penetrate it up to a point; and as a being of will he can enter right into and through it from above. And you

can go on to discover for every part of the body how Lucifer and Ahriman work in the human being of space by means of cosmic impulses of thought and feeling and will, remembering always that as beings of thought we are actually only surface beings, whilst as men of feeling we have a space between the before and the behind where we can unfold an activity of our own, and again as men of will we have a field of activity between the above and the below, between the surface we imagined drawn through the top of the cervical vertebrae and the surface of the diaphragm. You see, you have first to abstract all those parts that do not belong to man at all, before you can build up a true idea of the human form. Then, and only then, are you in a position to do this.

The truth is, the whole form of man has been put together by forces working from without. It receives its distinctive character from outside itself, and we do not understand the form of man so long as we consider it merely as it appears at first sight; we only understand it when we know how it is connected with the whole cosmos of space, when we are able to see how from right and left, from above and below, from before and behind, Luciferic and Ahrimanic forces are bearing in upon man, and giving him the character of a being of space.

And now, my dear friends, this is also the way in which you must approach something else that has been shaped and formed in accordance with the true cosmic working in the world. I mean our building here in Dornach. If you look at the Goetheanum (see Note 2) merely in its outward appearance, you might be disposed to think that the actual building itself, the space occupied by the wood, was the most important part. That is, however, by no means the case. The most important part is what, judging by appearances, does not exist! Take any one of the forms; the essential part of that form is not the shaped and sculptured wood, but is where there is nothing - where the air bounds the wood. The way to obtain the true and real Goetheanum would be to take an immense mound of wax and make a model of the inside of the building, and then study this model or impression. What you go into when you enter the building, what you stand within and cannot see but can only feel - that is the thing that matters. I said once on a former occasion that our building is built on the principle of a "Gugelhpf" (see Note 3) cake mould. Imagine you have a tin mould and you bake your cake in it. Which is the more important - the mould

or the cake? Obviously the cake. What matters is that the cake should receive the proper "Gugelhopf" shape. As far as the mould is concerned, all that matters is that the mixture, when it is poured into the mould and baked, should turn into a cake of the desired form.

Similarly, in our building it is not the surrounding walls that are of importance, it is what is enclosed within the surrounding walls. And within the walls will be the feelings and thoughts of the people who are in the building. These will develop aright if those who are in the building turn their eyes to its boundary, feel the forms and then fill these forms with forms of thought. What is inside the building will be like the cake, and what we build is the mould that holds and shapes the cake. And the mould has to be of such a kind that it leads to the development of right thoughts and right feelings. This is the principle underlying the new art in contradistinction to the art of olden times. In the art of olden times the essential thing was what is outside in space; but in the new art something else is of account. What is outside is no more than the mould, and the essential thing cannot really be created by the artist at all, it is what is within.

Nor is this true only of plastic forms. It is equally true of painting. The important thing is, not what is painted, but the experience in feeling to which the painting gives rise. Painting too is no more than a cake mould!

The truth is, my dear friends, we have here touched the very heart and core of the moment in evolution in which we stand. This is the step in evolution that has now to be taken, the step forgive the trivial comparison - from the cake mould to the cake. The cake is in this case the Spiritual; to enter into the world of the Spirit - that is the direction in which all our endeavor must now be set. If we fail to recognize this fact, we shall never be able to appraise correctly what we are trying to do here in art. For if we look at this art from the standpoint of the old, we can very easily exclaim: "But I see nothing beautiful in it!" We mean, I see no beautiful cake mould - never suspecting that the mould is not what matters at all, but the cake that is to be inside it. When we once understand this principle in art, my dear friends, we shall be very near understanding the whole meaning and significance of the step forward in spiritual evolution which is to be made through Spiritual Science. Through Spiritual Science man must learn to work his way out of the "Gugelhopf" mould into the "Gugelhopf" itself. He must, for example, get free of the

superstition that the origin of thought lies in the brain processes, when as a matter of fact in the processes that go on in the brain *cosmic* processes are at work and conflicts are being waged between Lucifer and Ahriman. Man must learn to see that the thoughts and feelings of the human soul are tracks graven into the twistings and turnings of these conflicts and have nothing to do with the material processes - in other words, with the Luciferic and Ahrimanic processes.

Let me draw another comparison. Suppose we were to go into a beautiful garden - beautiful particularly in the whole arrangement and lay-out of the flower beds - and we wanted to pronounce an opinion on this beautiful garden. And suppose we were able to look down a hole in the earth and spied there a little underground imp who said to us: "I will tell you how it is that here are roses and over there are violets, and why you find a bush in one place and flowers in another. For I creep about all the time under the surface, and I can see the earth and the soil which has caused all these flowers - violets, roses and the rest - to spring up." We could answer: "Yes, you describe these processes very nicely; all that you tell me is quite true and must necessarily happen. But for the garden to come into existence as I see it, something else is required - gardeners must have been at work there. They work, however, in a region which you have never seen and about which you have never troubled your head at all."

In like manner, we must learn to say to the anatomist and physiologist: "I find your activity when I look down through a hole in the earth. Down there you are creeping about and discovering processes which certainly have to take place, but which have nothing at all to do with what takes place in the soul and spirit above ground. And you will only be able to interpret correctly what takes place down below, when you study the relationships that hold sway between the Luciferic and Ahrimanic worlds and those other hierarchies who bring Lucifer and Ahriman into balance."

Here we must refer to another fact in human evolution, that has hitherto only had influence in man's conception of the Ego, but that we shall learn to know in a much fuller and wider way through Spiritual Science. A time will come in the future when men will say: "We are told in the Bible of the breath of Jehovah which was breathed into man. But into what part of man was the breath breathed?"

If you recall all that I have said in this lecture, you will be able to see that the region into which the breath was breathed is the intervening region that is in between the onsets from before and behind and from above and below - there, in the middle, where Jehovah created man, as it were in the form of a cube. There it was that he so filled man with His own being, with His own magic breath, that the influence of this magic breath was able to extend into the regions in the rest of man that belong to Lucifer and Ahriman. Here in the midst, bounded above and below and before and behind, is an intervening space where the breath of Jehovah enters directly into the spatial human being.

What I have been giving you in this lecture is spoken in respect of the human being of *physical space*. As you see, even here we can widen our outlook and learn to behold man as he stands within the cosmos. But there are also moral and spiritual aspects of what is apparently external and spatial. And in these aspects too, where the workings of the human *soul* are concerned - if not in so striking a way as in the case of spatial man, yet here too, what meets us at first is found to be no reality, but only a phantasmagoria. In morality, in logic and in all the activity of the soul, Lucifer and Ahriman are working one upon the other, and man stands at the boundary between them. Of this most important and significant chapter in the understanding of the human being we will speak tomorrow.

Note 1: 14th November, 1914. Not yet published in English.

Note 2: The first building, destroyed by fire on New Year's Eve, 1922/23.

Note 3: A shaped cake made in Vienna. Note by Translator.

## **The Balance in the World and Man, Lucifer and Ahriman**

### **Lecture III**

FROM the previous lecture you will have been able to see that the very form of man's body is a result of the co-operation of Luciferic and Ahrimanic powers.

It is particularly important in the present age for man to recognize this co-operation between Luciferic and Ahrimanic powers; for only by such recognition can he gradually learn to understand the forces that are at work behind the external phantasmagoria of existence. We know very well that we have no occasion either to *hate* Ahriman or to *fear* Lucifer, since their powers are inimical only when they are working outside the realm where they belong. We spoke on this subject at some length in Munich last year (see Note 1); and we have also given indications in this direction in lectures here in Dornach.

When we saw last time how the physical spatial body of man owes its form to the interaction of Luciferic and Ahrimanic powers, we were dealing with the most external element of human life in which Lucifer and Ahriman play a part. We come a little nearer to the inner nature of man when we pass from the physical to the etheric body. The etheric body may be regarded as the shaper of the physical body. At the foundation of our physical organism - and embedded at the same time in the whole etheric world - lies this etheric organism, in perpetual inner movement. Luciferic and Ahrimanic powers are active here too, as well as in the physical body. Man as etheric being - and it is important to recognize the fact - is also placed into the counterplay of these forces.

In order to give focus to our study of this question, let us now turn our attention to the three fundamental activities of the human being in so far as he is *not physical* human being. I refer to the activities of Willing, Feeling and Thinking.

So long as we regard man in respect of his physical body alone, we do not of course see this willing, feeling and thinking. Only in its physiognomy or in the performance of certain gestures or the like, does the physical body give us any indication of what is in man's inner nature. The etheric body, however, which is in perpetual movement, is continually giving expression to man's thinking, feeling and willing.

A purely external science finds itself in difficulties when it comes to consider these activities of the human soul. If you will study the various philosophies you will find that one gives pre-eminence to the will, another to thought; and there are again others which consider feeling as the most important force in man. But as to how thinking, feeling and willing unite in man to form a whole - to that problem none of the philosophies of modern times can offer a solution. This inability to form a correct idea of the relationship between thinking, feeling and willing in the life of the soul is not unlike the difficulty someone might experience who, in order to relate himself rightly to the world around him, set out to form a clear conception of man as he appears in the external world. We do not know - so say the philosophers - whether the human soul in its essential nature has more the character of willing or feeling or thinking. It is exactly as if someone were to say: "I have no idea what a 'man' really is. One person brings me a five-year-old child and says: There is a man for you! Then another person comes along and points me out a much taller being, who is what is called 'middle-aged.' Finally a third person comes and shows me an entirely different being, with wrinkled countenance and grey hair. And now I am really at a loss to know what the being called 'man' is, for I have been shown three totally different beings with this name." Of course the true answer is that they are all of them "man." The one is very young, the second somewhat older and the third quite old; they are very different in appearance. But by taking all three ages *together* we acquire a knowledge of "man." It is the same with willing, feeling and thinking. The difference there too is one of age. Willing is the same soul-activity as thinking, but willing is still a child. When it grows a little older, it becomes feeling, and when it is quite old it is thinking. The matter is made difficult by the fact that the different ages live together in our soul in these three activities.

We have explained on other occasions (and you may read of it in my book *The Threshold of the Spiritual World*) that when we leave the physical world we come into a world where the law of *change* prevails instead of the law of persistence or fixity. There all is in constant change; what is old can suddenly grow young again and vice versa. Hence in that world the three activities can and actually do appear at one and the same time. Willing shows itself contemporaneously as young willing, as older willing (i.e., feeling) and at the same time also as quite old willing (i.e., thinking). The different ages are in

that world intermingled, everything is mobile. This is how it is with the etheric body of man.

These changes cannot, however, simply come about of themselves. To begin with, a uniform and single action of the soul does not come to consciousness at all in ordinary life, we are quite incapable of bringing such a thing into consciousness. If we think of the etheric body in the likeness of a flowing stream - for it is in the etheric body that we have to make our observations - then we are obliged to say that this stream of soul-activity does not come to consciousness at all in our life; but into this stream, into this perpetual movement of the etheric body that flows in the current of time, Luciferic - and again Ahrimanic - activity enters. Luciferic activity has the result of making the will *young*. When the activity of our soul is streamed through by Luciferic activity the result is will. When the Luciferic influence predominates, when Lucifer makes his forces felt in the soul, then will is active in us. Lucifer has a juvenating influence on the whole stream of our soul-activity.

When, on the other hand, Ahriman brings his influence to bear on our soul-activity, he hardens it, it becomes *old*, and thinking is the result. Thinking, the having and holding of thoughts, is quite impossible in ordinary life unless Ahriman exerts his influence within our etheric body. We cannot get on in our life of soul, in so far as this comes to expression in the etheric body, without Ahriman and Lucifer. If Lucifer were to withdraw entirely from our etheric body, we would have nothing to fire our will. If Ahriman were to withdraw entirely from our etheric body, we would never be able to attain cool thinking. In between stands a region where Lucifer and Ahriman are in conflict. Here they interpenetrate; their activities play into one another. It is the region of feeling. The etheric body has actually this appearance; one can perceive in it Luciferic light and Ahrimanic hardness. If you could look at it, you would not of course see it as we might try to show it in a drawing; you would see it all in movement. But there are places where the etheric body seems to be quite untransparent, as if it had ice tracings in it. Forms and figures show themselves which resemble the patterns made by ice on a window pane. These are hardenings in the etheric body, and they are the result in it of the life of thought. This freezing of the etheric body at certain places is due to Ahriman; his forces

have found entry there by means of thought. There are also places which seem to be full of light. Here the etheric body is transparent and gleams and glows with light. It is Lucifer who sends his rays into the etheric body of man and makes there centers of will. Then there are regions in between, where the etheric body is in perpetual movement and activity. Here you see at one moment hardness - and then suddenly the hardness is caught by a ray of light and melts right away. Hardening and dissolving, in perpetual alternation - such is the expression of the activity of feeling in the etheric body.

Not only, therefore, is the form of the physical body of man called into being by the interplay of Luciferic and Ahrimanic forces - now creating a balance, now disturbing it again - but in the whole etheric body too, Luciferic and Ahrimanic forces are continually active. When the Ahrimanic forces gain the upper hand, we have an expression of thinking; when the Luciferic forces are in ascendance, we have an expression of willing; and when they are in mutual conflict one with the other, we have an expression of feeling. Thus do Luciferic and Ahrimanic forces play into one another in the etheric body of man. We human beings are as it were ourselves the resultant of these forces, we are placed into their midst.

Now we must not imagine that we are present in this interplay with our full Ego. Our earthly Ego, the Ego that we have acquired in the course of earth evolution, can only come to its full consciousness in the physical body. Not until the time of Jupiter will the Ego be able to unfold itself completely within the etheric body. In all that takes place within the etheric body the real Ego of the human being has no immediate part. Had the progress of world evolution gone on without the intervention of Luciferic and Ahrimanic forces, then man would have been an altogether different being. He would, for example, have been able to have perceptions in his physical body, but he would not have been able to have thoughts. The capacity to have thoughts he owes to the fact that Ahriman can acquire influence over his etheric body. And he has impulses of will because Luciferic forces can acquire influence over his etheric body. These forces are therefore necessary for man, they must needs be present.

We have said that with our earthly consciousness we cannot descend fully into the etheric body. Only in the physical body can we experience our full Ego-consciousness. With the

etheric body we enter a world with which we cannot fully identify ourselves. And it is so, that when Ahriman enters into our etheric body, something more enters in with him besides the thoughts he forms there. Nor is it only impulses of will that enter our etheric body with Lucifer. And the same must be said of the feelings, the realm where the two are in conflict. In so far as Ahriman lives in our etheric body we dive down with our etheric body into the sphere of the elementary Nature spirits - the Earth, Water, Air and Fire spirits. We are not cognizant of the fact because we are not able to descend fully into our etheric body with our Ego. Nevertheless it is always so. Within this etheric body not only does there live the power of the thoughts that we ourselves think, but the influences also of the Nature spirits; these enter in and make themselves felt. When a man has met with these Nature spirits he is able afterwards to tell of some experience he has had which he did not have in his ordinary Ego-consciousness. For it is when he, is in an abnormal condition that man meets the Nature spirits, namely, when the etheric body is to some extent loosened from the physical body.

How can such a thing happen? It can happen in the following way. The etheric body of man is in communion with the whole surrounding etheric world, therefore also with the whole sphere of the Nature spirits. Let us imagine, to take a simple case, that a man is walking along a road. When he is walking along a road in the daytime with his ordinary consciousness, his etheric body is properly in his physical body and he perceives with his Ego-consciousness what one is normally able to perceive with the Ego-consciousness. But now suppose that he is walking along a path by night. When we walk along a path by night, it is generally dark, and this fact will of itself produce in many persons a "creepy" feeling. And just because he gets into this condition, then the peculiar sensations that he experiences enable Lucifer to seize hold of him. His etheric body becomes loosened from the physical body, and then this emancipated etheric body can enter into relation with the surrounding etheric world.

Now let us suppose that the man comes into the vicinity of a churchyard where etheric bodies are still present over the graves of recently deceased persons. In the condition in which he is, with his etheric body loosened, he is perhaps able to perceive something of the thoughts which are still remaining in the etheric bodies of the dead persons. Suppose

someone has died only a short time ago leaving debts behind him; he died with the thought that he has incurred debts. Then it can be that this thought is still present in the etheric body of the person after he has died. We do not of course ordinarily perceive the thoughts in the etheric body of a dead human being. But for a man who has come into the condition I have described it might well be possible. He could enter into relation with the etheric body of the other and perceive within it the thought: "I have incurred debts." And then because this experience strengthens the Luciferic power in him, there arises in him the feeling: "I must pay the debt for him." He experiences in this way in his etheric body something he would never experience in the physical body in normal life. Such an experience does not happen to us in ordinary human life, and when it comes it makes an extraordinary impression upon our consciousness. For it arouses the knowledge: "I have had a strange and singular experience. I have not had this experience within the body, nor can I ever have it within the body." We have the feeling quite distinctly that we are *somewhere else* than in our body, and that is a strange, an unaccustomed feeling. We experience at the same time an overpowering desire to return once more into the body, we long for help to return again into the body.

This feeling of longing to return attracts to us certain elementary Nature spirits for whom this very feeling in us is food and nourishment. They come, because they are attracted by the feeling, "I want to be drawn into my physical body," and they help us to find the way back to it. If one is asleep in the ordinary way, one finds the way back quite easily. But when one has undergone an experience such as I have described, it is difficult to find the way back. You must not of course imagine that we see the situation as we perceive things in the physical body; no, we see it imaginatively, in pictures. Someone comes to us - it is really a Nature spirit, appearing perhaps in the guise of a shepherd, and gives us the advice: "Go to a certain castle, I will take you there in my wagon," - or some similar words. The situation may even be still further developed. The body which we have left and outside of which we have had the experience, may assume the appearance of an enchanted castle from which we have to release someone when we return into it. So do we "imagine" in pictures the longing for the physical body and the help that the Nature spirits bring to us. And then we come back into the physical body - that is to say, we wake up.

People who have had such experiences will tell us that they feel they have in actual reality come into contact in this way with the thoughts of a dead man. They say to themselves: "That feeling I had was not something that was merely in myself, it was no mere dream that I dreamed, it was a feeling that communicated to me something that was taking place *in the world outside*. It is of course all expressed in pictures, but it does truly correspond to an event." I will now read to you such a picture, where a man narrates what he has experienced. As you will see, it was an experience somewhat similar to the one of which I have spoken. He describes it as follows. "When I had taken leave of the soldiers I met three men. They wanted to exhume a dead person who owed them three marks. I was filled with compassion and at once absolved the debt, in order that the dead man might rest in peace and not be disturbed in his grave. I walked on a little further. A strange man with pale countenance accosted me, invited me to mount a leaden carriage, and persuaded me to go with him to a castle. In the castle, he said, dwelt a princess, who had declared she would marry only a man who came to her on a carriage of lead. He turned to the driver and said: 'Drive in the direction of the sunrise.' Then came a shepherd who said: 'I am the Count of Ravensburg.' He ordered the driver to drive faster. We came to a door and we could hear a tumult within. The door was opened. The princess asked the man whence he came and how it had been possible for him to drive in company with that old man - and behold, I saw that he who had led me thither was a spirit. Then I entered in at the door and took possession of the castle."

That is to say, he came back into his body. There you have the description of just such an experience as I have been speaking of.

And what is such an event, when it happens to someone who then tells others of it? It is a Märchen (a fairy-tale - see Note 2).

You must not imagine that an experience of this nature is the only way in which man comes into relationship with the external etheric world through his etheric body. There is another. And that is, in an activity which is only *half* conscious, an activity in which the Ego only half participates - namely, the act of *Speech*. Our speaking is not so conscious as our *thinking*. It is not the case that speaking is something which belongs to us and which we have in our power. In speech live etheric Powers, and a good part of our

speaking is unconscious. The Ego does not reach fully down into speech. When we speak we are in communication through our etheric body with the surrounding etheric world. We learn to *think* as individuals, but not to *speak*. We are taught to speak through the fact that our Karma places us into a particular set of circumstances in life. We have already seen how we may come into relation with the Nature spirits in abnormal conditions when the etheric body is loosened, and now we find that inasmuch as we speak and do not merely think silently, we come into relation with the Folk Spirits. The Folk Spirits enter our etheric body and live there - without our being aware of it. This life of the Folk Spirit within the human being really belongs just as little to his fully conscious Ego activity as does the "Märchen" of which I have told you. So much, then, for the activity of Lucifer and Ahriman in man's etheric body.

The Luciferic and Ahrimanic forces enter also into the astral body. When we come to study the astral body of man, we must turn our attention to what is the distinguishing mark of the astral human being as he is on earth - namely, consciousness. In the physical body *form* and *force* are the essentials, in the etheric body, *movement* and *life*: in the astral body, *consciousness*. Now in the body of man we have not only one consciousness, but two; the ordinary waking state and the state of sleep. But, strange to say, neither of these two states is entirely natural to us. Natural would be for us an intermediate state between the two, a state which, as a matter of fact, we never really consciously have.

If we were perpetually awake we would scarcely be able to develop in a proper, orderly manner through the various ages of life. Something is always present in us which is less awake than we are in our day-consciousness, and only by virtue of this are we in a position to evolve and develop. Ask yourselves, how much do you expect to be able to evolve through all that you experience and receive in ordinary life? For the most part, we merely satisfy thereby our desire, our curiosity, or our need of sensation. It is not often we act with deliberate intent to place what we experience in waking day life in the service of our development. The truth is, development takes place through the fact that something is continually sleeping in us, even in the daytime. I am not alluding to the habit of dropping off to sleep in the daytime! But when man is wide awake by day, something still remains fast asleep in him, and this it is which brings it about that he does

not remain for ever a child, but evolves further.

The ordinary waking state is what comes to consciousness through our astral body. In this ordinary waking state we are, however, *too strongly* awake, we are too intensely given up to the external world; we are, in fact, quite lost in it. How does this come about?

The reason is that the waking consciousness lives under the influence of Ahriman. Ahriman has great power over our waking consciousness. It is quite different in the case of the sleep consciousness. In sleep consciousness we are *too little* awake. We are too engrossed in our own evolution; we are so completely and so powerfully within ourselves that all consciousness is obliterated. In sleep consciousness, Lucifer has the upper hand.

This is then how the matter stands with our astral body. When we are awake, Ahriman has the upper hand over Lucifer, and when we are asleep Lucifer has the upper hand over Ahriman. They are in equilibrium only when we dream; there they pull with equal force, they strike a balance between them. The ideas which are called forth by Ahriman in day consciousness and which he causes to harden and crystallize, are dissolved and made to disappear under the influence of Lucifer; everything becomes pictures when Ahriman is no longer busy fixing them in rigid ideas. They melt and become mobile in themselves. A state of equilibrium is induced in a pair of scales by having both scale-pans equally laden; we have, then, not a state of rest but a state of equilibrium. It is the same with the life of man. We have not in man a state of rest, but a state of equilibrium; and the two forces which hold the scales and each of which at certain times brings extra weight to bear, are Lucifer and Ahriman. In waking consciousness Ahriman's side sinks down, in sleep consciousness Lucifer's. Only in the intermediate state, where we dream, are the two scale-pans held in poise, not at rest, but delicately poised in equilibrium.

We can go on to carry our study into still higher regions of human life. Here too we shall find evidence of how Lucifer and Ahriman fill the world with their inter-working. Two ideas play a great part in human life. One is the idea of duty. We might also say, when we consider it from a religious point of view, the idea of commandment or behest. We speak sometimes, do we not, of the "behest of duty." The other idea, which can be placed over against it, is the idea of right (or rights).

If you will reflect a little on the part played in human life by these two ideas of *duty* and of *right* - I mean, the "right" one has to do this or that - you will very soon realize that they are polar opposites, and that men's inclinations are turned now more in the direction of duty, and now again in the direction of right. We live certainly in an age when people are more ready to speak of right than duty. All possible spheres of life claim their rights. We have Workers' Rights, Women's Rights, and so on and so on.

Duty is the opposite idea of right. Our age will be followed by an age when duties will be more regarded than rights, and this will be directly attributable to the influence of the anthroposophical spiritual world-conception. In the future - certainly, in a rather distant future - we shall have movements where less and less emphasis will be laid on the demand for rights and people will inquire more and more as to their duty. The question will rather be: What is our duty as man, as woman, e.g., in this or that situation of life? The present epoch that demands rights will be succeeded by an epoch that asks after duties.

We said that right and duty play into life like two polar opposites. Whenever a man turns his thought and attention to duty, he looks right away from himself. Kant has given great and grand expression to this fact. He pictures duty as a lofty goddess, to whom man looks up: "Duty, thou great and exalted Name, thou has nought to do with fondness nor with favor; all that thou requirest is to submit thyself and serve." Man beholds duty, so to say, raying down upon him from regions of the spiritual world. In a religious sense, he feels duty as an impulse laid upon him by the Beings of the higher Hierarchies. And when man surrenders himself to duty, he goes right out of himself. It is in this going-out-of-himself in the feeling of duty, that man can begin to learn how to get beyond his ordinary self.

There is, however, a danger to man in all such going-out-of his ordinary self, in all such endeavor after spiritualization. If man were to give himself up entirely to this, he would lose the ground from under his feet, he would lose his feeling of gravity. Therefore he must endeavor, when he surrenders himself to duty, to find within himself at the same time something that shall give him weight, so that he may keep his sense of gravity. Schiller expressed it very beautifully when he said that man has the best relation to duty when he learns to love duty.

This is really saying a great deal. When a man speaks of learning to love duty he no longer merely surrenders himself to duty; he rises out of himself, taking with him the love with which otherwise he loves himself. The love that lives in his body, in his egoism - this love he takes out of himself, and loves with it duty. So long as it is self-love, so long is it a Luciferic force. But when man takes this self-love out of himself and loves duty in the way that otherwise he loves only himself, he releases Lucifer. He takes Lucifer into the realm of duty and gives him, so to say, a justified existence in the impulse and feeling of duty.

If, on the other hand, a man cannot do this, if he cannot draw forth the love out of himself and offer it to duty, then he will continue to love only himself; and since he cannot love duty, he is obliged to subject himself to her, he becomes a *slave* to duty, he becomes, as we say, a man who "does his duty," - hard and cold and uninspired. He hardens in an Ahrimanic sense, notwithstanding that he follows duty devotedly.

You see how duty stands, as it were, in a midway position. If we surrender ourselves to her, she annuls our freedom, we become her slaves, because Ahriman draws near on the one hand with his impulses. But if we bring ourselves - if we bring all our power of self-love - as an offering and offer it up to duty, bringing thus to duty the Luciferic warmth of love, then the result is that, through the state of balance induced in this way between Lucifer and Ahriman, we find a right relation to duty.

Thus we are truly, in a certain connection, redeemers of Lucifer. When we begin to be able to love our duty, then the moment has come when we can help towards the redemption and release of the Luciferic powers; we set free the Lucifer forces which are held in us as by a charm, and lead them forth to fight with Ahriman. We release the imprisoned Lucifer (imprisoned in self-love) when we learn to love our duty.

Schiller sets himself this very question in his "Aesthetic Letters": How is it possible to rise above slavery to duty and attain to love of duty? Of course he does not use the expressions "Lucifer" and "Ahriman," because he does not see the problem in its cosmic aspect. Nevertheless these wonderful letters of Schiller on the *Aesthetic Education of Man* are directly translatable into Spiritual Science.

Right, on the other hand, immediately shows that it is united with Lucifer. Man does not need to learn to love his right, he loves it already! It is perfectly natural that he should do so. It is natural for Lucifer to be connected with right in man's feeling - man *feels* that this or that is his right. Everywhere that right asserts itself, Lucifer is speaking there too. It is very often only too evident how Lucifer makes his voice heard in the demand of some right. Here it is a question of calling in something that can be set over against right. We have to call in Ahriman to create a polarity to Lucifer. And this we can do by cultivating the polar opposite of love.

Love is inner fire, its opposite is calmness - the quiet acceptance of what happens in the world. As soon as we approach our right with this quiet and calm interest we call in Ahriman. It is not easy to recognize him here, for we set him free from his merely external existence, we summon him into ourselves and warm him with the love that is already united with right. Calm and peace of mind have the coldness of Ahriman; in the quiet understanding of what is in the world, we unite our warmth and our understanding love with the coldness that is in the world outside. And then we release Ahriman, when we meet what has come about with understanding, when we do not merely demand our rights out of self-love but understand what has come about in the world. This is the eternal battle that is waged between Lucifer and Ahriman. On the one hand man learns in a conservative way to understand the conditions that are in the world, he learns to understand how they have come about from cosmic, karmic necessity. That is one aspect of the matter. The other aspect is that he feels in his heart the urge to make new conditions possible, continually to let the old give place to the new. This is the revolutionary current in human life. In the revolutionary stream lives Lucifer, in the conservative stream Ahriman, and man in his life of right lives in the midst between these two poles.

Thus we see how right and duty show each of them a state of equilibrium between Lucifer and Ahriman. We only learn to understand how the physical body, the etheric body and the astral body manifest in life, or how duty and right come to expression in the life of duty and the life of right, when we learn to recognize the interplay of great spiritual Powers, above all of those spiritual Powers who bring about the state of

equilibrium.

For just as what is in the external world stands under the influence of the spiritual forces that bring about balance, so does our moral life too belong in a world of polar opposites. The whole morale of human conduct, the whole ethical life of man with its poles of right and duty, only become comprehensible when we take into account the instreaming forces of Lucifer and Ahriman. And when we look at the life of man in history, that takes its course in an alternation between, on the one hand, revolutionary and warlike - that is to say, Luciferic - movements, and on the other hand, conservative - that is, Ahrimanic - movements, there too we find a condition of balance between Lucifer and Ahriman. In no other way is the world to be understood than by recognizing in it these opposite forces and influences.

What we behold in the world outside is dualistic, it shows itself to us in opposites. And in this connection Manichaeism, correctly understood, has its complete justification. How Manichaeism is fully justified even within a spiritual monism - of that we shall have more to say in the future. The object I have had in view in these lectures is to show you how the whole world is a result of the working of balance.

Particularly evident is the result of the working of balance in the life of art. With this as our starting-point we will go on in later lectures to consider the arts and their evolution in the world, and the part that has been taken by different spiritual Powers in the evolution of the life of art among mankind.

**Note 1:** See *The Secrets of the Threshold*, by Rudolf Steiner.

**Note 2:** See *Goethe's Standard of the Soul*, by Rudolf Steiner.

**The Deed of Christ and the Opposing Spiritual Powers**  
**Lucifer, Ahriman, Asuras.**

Berlin, 22nd March, 1909

GA0107

TO-DAY WE SHALL concern ourselves with the question: What does modern man really possess in spiritual science? The answer to this question will be based on many things that have come to our knowledge in the course of lectures, especially those given last winter. Spiritual science may appear, at first, to be one conception of the world among the many others now existing. It may be argued: The riddles of existence are there; people endeavor with every possible means at their disposal, religious or scientific, to answer these riddles of existence in an effort to satisfy, as it is said, their eagerness and desire for knowledge. Spiritual science may well be considered just another philosophy of life - whether calling itself materialism, monism, animism, idealism, realism, or what you will. It may be represented as something that endeavors to satisfy the desire for knowledge on a par with other modern world-conceptions. But this is not correct. In what man acquires through spiritual science he has something of positive, continuous value in life, something that not only satisfies his thinking, his thirst for knowledge, but is a real and potent factor in life itself. To understand this we must look far afield and consider the evolutionary course of mankind from a particular point of view.

We have often looked back to the times preceding the great Atlantean flood, to the times when our forefathers, that is to say our own souls in the bodies of those forefathers, lived on the ancient continent of Atlantis between Europe, Africa and America. We have also looked still further back, to the Lemurian epoch, when the souls of men incarnated at the present time were at a much lower stage of existence. We shall now speak again of this epoch, reminding ourselves, to begin with, of the following: Man has attained the present stage of his life of feeling, his life of will, his intelligence, my even his form, because higher spiritual Beings in the cosmos have also been at work in earth-existence. We have spoken of these Beings as the "Thrones", the "Spirits of Wisdom", the "Spirits of

Movement", the "Spirits of Form", the "Spirits of Personality", and so forth.

They are the great builders and architects of existence who have led the human race onward step by step to its present stage. But we must bring dearly before our minds to-day that Spirits and Beings other than those who help human evolution forward have also intervened; there are spiritual Beings who oppose the progressive Powers. And for every epoch - Lemurian, Atlantean, Post-Atlantean - it is possible to indicate which particular spiritual Beings bring the "hindrances", which spiritual Beings are the opponents of those whose only aim is the progress of humanity.

In the Lemurian epoch - the first that concerns us to-day - it was the *Luciferic Beings* who intervened in man's evolution, in opposition to the Powers who at that time were striving to help him forward. In the Atlantean epoch, the Spirits opposing the progressive Powers were the Spirits of "Ahriman" or "Mephistopheles". The Ahrimanic or Mephistophelean Spirits - to give the precise names - are those known in medieval times as the Spirits of "Satan" - who must not be confused with "Lucifer".

In our own epoch, as time goes on, other spiritual Beings of whom we shall speak later, will stand as hindrances in the path of the progressive Spirits. We will ask ourselves now: What did the Luciferic Spirits actually achieve in the ancient Lemurian epoch?

These things will be considered to-day from a particular point of view. Of what domain did the Luciferic Spirits lay hold during the Lemurian epoch? The best way to understand this is to cast our minds back over the course taken by human evolution.

You know that on Old Saturn the Thrones poured out their own substance to lay the first foundation of the human physical body. On Old Sun the Spirits of Wisdom imbued man with the ether- or life-body. And on the Earth the Spirits of Form endowed him with the 'I', the ego, in order that by realizing himself as distinct from his environment he might become an independent being. But even if through the deed of the Spirits of Form he had become independent *vis-a-vis* the external world surrounding him on earth, he would never have become independent of the Spirits of Form themselves; he would have remained dependent on them, he would have been directed by them as on leading-strings. That this did not happen was due to something which had, in a certain sense, a beneficial

effect, namely the fact that in the Lemurian epoch the Luciferic Beings set themselves in opposition to the Spirits of Form. It was these Luciferic Beings who gave man the prospect of freedom - but therewith the possibility of evil-doing, of succumbing to passion and desire in the world of sense. Where did these Luciferic Beings actually take hold? They took hold of what had been instilled into man as his innermost member at that time - the astral body. They established their footing in the human astral body and took possession of it. Had it not been for the coming of the Luciferic Beings this astral body would have remained in the sole possession of the Spirits of Form. They would have instilled into this astral body the forces which give man his human countenance, making him into an image of the Gods, namely, of the Spirits of Form. All this man would have come to be; but in his life through all eternity he would have remained dependent upon the Spirits of Form.

The Luciferic Beings had crept, as it were, into man's astral body, so that Beings of two kinds were now working in it: the Beings who bring man forward and the Beings who, while obstructing this constant impulse, had at the same time established the foundations of his independence. Had the luciferic Beings not approached, man would have remained in a state of innocence and purity in his astral body. No passions inciting him to crave for what is to be found only on earth would have arisen in him. The passions, urges and desires of man were densified, debased, as it were, by the Luciferic Beings. Had they not approached, man would have retained a perpetual longing for his heavenly home, for the realms of spirit whence he has descended. He would have taken no delight in what surrounds him on the earth; earthly impressions would have aroused no interest in him. It was through the Luciferic Spirits that he came to have this interest, to crave for the impressions of the earth. These Spirits impelled him into the earthly sphere by pervading his innermost member, his astral body. Why, then, was it that man did not fall away entirely at that time from the Spirits of Form or from the higher spiritual realms as a whole? Why was it that in his interests and desires he did not succumb wholly to the world of sense?

It was because the Spirits who lead humanity forward took counter measures; they inculcated into the being of man what would otherwise not have been his lot, namely,

illness, suffering and pain. That was the necessary counterweight to the deeds of the Luciferic Spirits.

The Luciferic Spirits gave man material desires; as their countermeasures the higher Beings introduced illness and suffering as the consequences of material desires and interests, to the end that he should not utterly succumb to this world of sense. And so there is exactly as much suffering and pain in the world as there is interest only in the physical and the material. The scales are held in perfect balance; the one does not outweigh the other - so many passions and desires on the one side, so much illness and pain on the other. This was the effect of the mutual activities of the Luciferic Spirits and the Spirits of Form in the Lemurian epoch. Had the Luciferic Spirits not approached, man would not have descended into the earthly realm as soon as he actually did. His passion and craving for the world of sense also brought it about that his eyes were opened and he was able to gaze at the surrounding field of material existence earlier than would otherwise have been the case. If evolution had proceeded uninterruptedly along the course intended by the progressive Spirits, man would have had sight of the surrounding world only from the middle of the Atlantean epoch onwards. But then he would have seen it *spiritually*, not as he sees it to-day; he would have seen it as the direct expression of spiritual beings. Because man came prematurely into the earthly sphere, forced downwards by his earthly interests and desires, conditions were different from what they would otherwise have been in the middle of the Atlantean epoch.

The result was that the Ahrimanic Spirits - "Mephistophelean Spirits" as it is equally correct to call them - mingled in what man was able to see and apprehend; thus he fell into error, into what, for the first time, can correctly be called "conscious sin". The host of Ahrimanic Spirits has worked upon man since the middle of the Atlantean epoch onwards. To what did these Ahrimanic Spirits entice him? They enticed him into regarding everything in his environment as material, with the result that he does not see *through* this material world to its true, spiritual foundations. Were man to have perceived the Spiritual in every stone, in every plant, in every animal, he would never have fallen into error and therewith into evil; if the progressive Spirits alone had worked upon him he would have been protected from those illusions to which he must always fall a prey when

he bases himself solely upon the manifestations of the world of sense.

How did those spiritual Beings who desire to further man's progress act in order to combat this corruption, error and illusion arising from the material world? They saw to it - the process was of course slow and very gradual - that man was actually lifted away from the material world as such; this enabled him to shoulder and work out his *karma*. Whereas, therefore, the Beings upon whom it fell to rectify the enticement of the Luciferic Beings brought into the world suffering, pain and what is connected with them, namely death, the Beings whose task it was to rectify the outcome of error concerning the sense-world, made it possible for man, through his karma, eventually to blot out all the error, all the evil he has wrought in the world. For what would have happened if he had become the prey of evil and error? Little by little he would have become one with the evil; no progress would have been possible for him. For with every error, every lie, every illusion, we cast an obstacle in the way of progress. We should fall back in our progress to exactly the same extent to which we had cast obstacles in our path through sin and error, if we were not in a position to rectify them; in other words, we could not reach man's true goal. It would be impossible to attain this goal if the counter-forces, the forces of karma, were not in operation.

Suppose that in some life you commit a wrong. If this wrong were to become firmly fixed in your life it would mean nothing less than that you would lose the step forward which you would have taken had you not committed the wrong; with every wrong, a step would be lost - enough steps to correspond exactly with the wrongs committed. If the possibility of surmounting error had not been given, man must ultimately have been submerged by it. But the blessing of karma was bestowed. What does this blessing mean for man? Is karma something at which to shudder, something to dread? No, indeed! Karma is a power for which man should be thankful. For karma says to us: If you have committed a wrong, remember that "God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap". An error demands that you shall right it; then, having expunged it from your karma you can again take a step forward!

Without karma, no progress would be possible. Karma is a blessing that has been vouchsafed to us, inasmuch as it obliges us to rectify every error, to re-achieve the steps

that thrust us back.

Karma was thus the indirect consequence of the deeds of Ahriman. And now let us go further. In our days we are moving towards the epoch when other Beings will draw near to man - Beings who in the future before us will intrude more and more deeply into human evolution. Just as the Luciferic Spirits intervened in the Lemurian and the Ahrimanic Spirits in the Atlantean epoch, so our epoch too will see the intrusion of Beings. Let us be clear about the nature of these Beings.

Of the Beings who intervened during the Lemurian epoch we must say: They entrenched themselves in the astral body of man, drew his interests, impulses and desires down into the earthly sphere. Where - to speak more precisely - did these Luciferic Beings entrench themselves?

You can only understand this by taking as a basis what is set forth in my book *Theosophy*. There it is shown that the following members of man's being must be distinguished: first, his physical body; then his ether or life-body and his astral body - or as I have called it in that book, the sentient body, or soul-body.

These are the three members with which man was endowed *before* his earthly existence. The foundation of the physical body was laid on Old Saturn, the ether-body on the Old Sun, the soul or sentient body on the Old Moon. On the Earth was added the sentient soul - which is actually a transformation, an elaboration carried out unconsciously, of the sentient body. Lucifer anchored himself in the sentient soul; and there he remains. Through the unconscious transformation of the ether-body, the intellectual soul came into being, a more detailed description of which is contained in the book entitled *The Education of the Child*. It was in this second soul-member, the intellectual soul - the transformed part of the ether-body - that Ahriman established his footing. From there he lures man to false conceptions and judgments of material things, leads him to error, to sin, to lying - to everything that originates in the intellectual or mind soul. In every illusion that matter is the sole reality, we must perceive the whispered promptings of Ahriman, of Mephistopheles. Thirdly, there is the consciousness soul (spiritual soul), arising from an unconscious transformation of the physical body. You will remember

how this transformation came about. Towards the end of the Atlantean epoch, the etheric body corresponding to the head came right into the physical head and gradually brought about selfconsciousness in the physical body. Fundamentally speaking, man is still working at this unconscious transformation of the physical body, at the development of the consciousness soul. *And in the age now, approaching, those spiritual Beings known as the Asuras* (see Note 1) will creep into the consciousness soul and therewith into the human 'I' or ego - for the 'I' lights up in the consciousness soul. The Asuras will generate evil with a far mightier force than was wielded by the Satanic powers in the Atlantean epoch or by the Luciferic Spirits in the Lemurian epoch.

In the course of the Earth-period man will cast away all the evil brought to him by the Luciferic Spirits together with the blessing of freedom. The evil brought by the Ahrimanic Spirits can be shed in the course of karma. But the evil brought by the Asuric powers cannot be expunged in this way. Whereas the good Spirits instituted pain and suffering, illness and death in order that despite the possibility of evil, man's evolution may still advance, whereas the good Spirits made possible the working of karma to the end that the Ahrimanic powers might be resisted and the evil made good, it will not be so easy to counter the Asuric powers as earth-existence takes its course. For these Asuric Spirits will prompt what has been seized hold of by them, namely the very core of man's being, the consciousness soul together with the 'I', to unite with earthly materiality. Fragment after fragment will be torn out of the 'I', and in the same measure in which the Asuric Spirits establish themselves in the consciousness soul, man must leave parts of his existence behind on the earth. What thus becomes the prey of the Asuric powers will be irretrievably lost. Not that the whole man need become their victim - but parts of his spirit will be torn away by the Asuric powers. These Asuric powers are heralded to-day by the prevailing tendency to live wholly in the material world and to be oblivious of the reality of spiritual beings and spiritual worlds. True, the Asuric powers corrupt man to-day in a way that is more theoretical than actual. To-day they deceive him by various means into thinking that his 'I' is a product of the physical world only; they hue him to a kind of theoretic materialism. But as time goes on - and the premonitory signs of this are the dissolute, sensuous passions that are becoming increasingly prevalent on earth - they will blind man's vision of the spiritual Beings and spiritual Powers. Man will know

nothing nor desire to know anything of a spiritual world. More and more he will not only teach that the highest moral ideals of humanity are merely sublimations of animal impulses, that human thinking is but a transformation of a faculty also possessed by the animals, that man is akin to the animal in respect of his form and moreover in his whole being descends from the animal - but he will take this view in all earnestness and order his life in accordance with it.

Man does not as yet entirely base his life on the principle that his true being descends from the animal. But this view of existence will inevitably arise, with the result that men will also live like animals, will sink into animal impulses, animal passions. And in many things that need not be further characterized here, many things that in the great cities come to expression in orgies of dissolute sensuality, we can already perceive the lurid, hellish glare of the Spirits we call the Asuras.

Once again let us look back. We have said that suffering and pain, nay even death, were brought by the Spirits who are intent upon man's progress. The words of the Bible are unambiguous: "In travail shalt thou bear thy children!" Death has come into the world. Death was decreed for man by the Powers opposing the Luciferic Spirits. From whom came the gift of karma itself, who made karma possible for man? - To understand what is here being said you must discard all earthly, pedantic notions of time. Earthly notions of time give rise to the belief that what has once happened here or there will have an effect only upon what comes afterwards. But in the spiritual world it is the case that what comes to pass reveals itself in its effect, *beforehand*; in its effect it is already there, in advance. Whence comes the blessing of karma? Whence has there arisen in our earth-evolution this blessing of karma? From a Power none other than *Christ*.

Although Christ appeared only later, He was always present in the spiritual sphere of the earth. Already in the ancient Oracles of Atlantis, the priests of those Oracles spoke of the "Spirit of the Sun", of Christ. In the old Indian epoch of civilization the Holy Rishis spoke of "Vishva Karman"; Zarathustra in ancient Persia spoke of "Ahura Mazdao", Hermes of "Osiris"; and Moses spoke of the Power which, being eternal, brings about the harmonization of the temporal and natural, the Power living in the "Ehjah ashah Ehjah" (I am the I AM) as the harbinger of Christ. All spoke of the Christ; but where was He to be

found in those ancient times? In the realm to which the eye of spirit alone can penetrate, in the spiritual world. In the spiritual world He was always to be found, working in and from the spiritual world. It is He Who even before man appeared on earth, sent down the possibility of karma. Then He came Himself to the earth, and we know what this has meant for man. We have described what was wrought by Him in the earthly sphere, we have spoken of the significance of the Event of Golgotha and of its effect also upon those who at that time were in the spiritual world, not incarnate in earthly bodies. We know that at the moment on Golgotha when the Blood flowed from the wounds, the Christ-Spirit appeared in the underworld, flooding the whole world of spirit with radiance and light; we have said that the appearance of Christ on the earth is the event of supreme importance also for the world through which man passes between death and a new birth (see Note 2).

The impulse going forth from Christ is in the fullest sense *reality*. We need but ask ourselves what would have become of the earth had Christ not appeared. Precisely from the opposite picture - an earth without Christ - you can apprehend the significance of Christ's coming. Let us suppose that Christ had not come, that the Mystery of Golgotha had not taken place.

Before Christ's Coming, the condition in the spiritual world of human souls who were the most progressed, who had acquired the deepest interest for earthly life, was truly expressed by the saying of the Greeks: Better it is to be a beggar in the upper world than a king in the realm of the Shades. For before the Event of Golgotha the souls in the spiritual world felt completely isolated, enveloped in darkness. The spiritual world in all its gleaming clarity was not transparent to those who entered it through the portal of death. Each one felt isolated, thrust back into himself as though a wall were between himself and every other soul. And this feeling of isolation would have become more and more intense. Man would have hardened within the ego, would have been thrown back into himself, nor could he have found any bridge to the others. And egoism, already intense, would have increased beyond all telling with every new incarnation.

Earth-existence would more and more have made men into utter egoists. There would have been no prospect of brotherhood on the earth or of inner harmony among souls; for

with every journey through the spiritual world, stronger influence would have penetrated the ego. That is what would have happened to an earth without Christ. That the way from soul to soul will be found again, that it has been made possible for the mighty force of brotherhood to pour over all humanity - this is due to Christ's Coming, to the Event of Golgotha. Therefore Christ is the Power who has enabled man to turn earth-existence ultimately to good account, in other words to give karma its true configuration - for karma must be worked out on the *earth*. That man finds in himself the force to profit by his karma in physical existence, that advancing evolution is possible for him - all this he owes to the working of the Christ Event, to the presence of Christ in the earthly realm.

And so we see many diverse forces and beings working together in the evolution of humanity. Had Christ not come upon the earth, man would have been engulfed in error, because having hardened within himself he would have become as it were a globe on its own, knowing nothing of other beings, entirely self-enclosed, driven into that condition by error and sin.

Christ is verily the Light which leads out of error and sin, the Light which enables man to find the way upwards. And now let us ask ourselves: What was it that was lost to man in that he descended from the spiritual world, was ensnared in desires and passions under the influence of Lucifer, and then, under Ahriman's influence, in error, illusion and lying in the earthly world? - He lost direct vision of the spiritual world, he lost understanding of the spiritual world.

What, then, must he regain? He must regain full understanding of the spiritual world. As a self-conscious being, man can grasp the import of Christ's Deed only by realizing with full clarity of understanding, the significance of Christ. The Christ-Power is there in very truth - not brought by man, for the Christ-Power was brought to the earth by none other than Christ Himself. Karma has come into humanity through Christ. But now, with self-consciousness, man must learn to know Christ in His real nature and His connection with the whole universe. Only so can man work in the true sense as an 'I'. What then, does he actually achieve when, after Christ's appearance, he does not merely rest satisfied with

letting Christ's power work upon him unconsciously, with saying: I am content with the knowledge that Christ came to the earth; He will redeem me and ensure my progress! - but when he says: I am resolved to know what Christ is in all reality, how He descended; I am resolved to participate through my own spirit in Christ's Deed! - what does man achieve thereby?

Recall to your minds that because the Luciferic Spirits slipped into his astral body, man has come down into the world of sense, thereby falling prey to the evil but also acquiring the possibility of self-conscious freedom. Lucifer is in very truth present in the being of man, has drawn him down to the earth, has ensnared him in earthly existence; inasmuch as the passions and desires contained in the astral body had first been led by Lucifer into the earthly realm, Ahriman too was able to invade the astral body - in the intellectual soul. Christ appeared, and with Him the force which can bear man upwards again into the spiritual world. But now, if he so wills, man can come to know Christ, he can gather all wisdom to this end. What does he achieve thereby? Something of untold moment! When a man knows Christ, when he absorbs the wisdom which begets insight into what Christ truly is, then he redeems himself *and* the Luciferic Beings through this knowledge of Christ. Were man merely to say: I am content with the fact that Christ appeared and to allow myself to be redeemed by Him unconsciously - then he would contribute nothing to the redemption of the Luciferic Beings. These Luciferic Beings who have brought man freedom, also make it possible for him, if he so wills, to turn it to account in order to understand Christ. Then the Luciferic Spirits are cleansed and purified in the fire of Christianity and the wrong done to the earth by them is changed into blessing. Freedom has been attained; but it will also be carried into the spiritual sphere as a blessing. That man is capable of this, that he is capable of understanding Christ, that Lucifer, resurrected in a new form, can unite with Christ as the good Spirit - this, as prophecy still, was told by Christ Himself to those around Him, when He said: "Ye shall be illumined by the new Spirit, by the Holy Spirit!" This "Holy Spirit" is none other than the Spirit through whom man can apprehend what Christ has wrought. Christ desired not merely to work, but also to be apprehended, to be understood. Therefore the sending of the Spirit by whom men are inspired, the sending of the "Holy spirit", is implicit in Christianity.

In the spiritual sense, Whitsuntide belongs inseparably to Easter. This "Holy Spirit" is none other than the Lucifer-Spirit, resurrected now in higher, purer glory - the Spirit of independent understanding, wisdom-inwoven. Christ Himself foretold that this Spirit would come to men after Him, and in the light of this Spirit their labors must proceed. What is it that works onward in the light of this Spirit? The world-stream of spiritual science, if rightly conceived! What is this spiritual science? It is the wisdom of the Spirit, the wisdom that lifts into the full light of consciousness that in Christianity which would otherwise remain in the unconscious. The torch of the resurrected Lucifer, of the Lucifer now *transformed into the good*, blazons the way for Christ. Lucifer is the *bearer* of the Light - Christ is the Light! As the word itself denotes, Lucifer is the "Bearer of the Light". That is what the spiritual scientific movement should be, that is implicit in it. Those who know that the progress of mankind depends upon living apprehension of the mighty Event of Golgotha are they who as the "Masters of Wisdom and of the Harmony of Feelings" are united in the great Guiding Lodge of mankind. And as once the "tongues of fire" hovered down as a living symbol upon the company of the apostles, so does the "Holy Spirit" announced by Christ Himself reign as the Light over the Lodge of the Twelve. The Thirteenth is the Leader of the Lodge of the Twelve. The "Holy Spirit" is the mighty Teacher of those we name the "Masters of Wisdom and of the Harmony of Feelings". It is through them that his voice and his wisdom flow down to mankind in this or that stream upon the earth. The treasures of wisdom gathered together by the spiritual scientific movement in order to understand the universe and the Spirits therein, how through the "Holy Spirit" into the Lodge of the Twelve; and that is what will ultimately lead mankind step by step to free, self-conscious understanding of Christ and of the Event of Golgotha. Thus to 'cultivate' spiritual science means to understand that the Spirit has been sent into the world by Christ; the pursuit of spiritual science is implicit in true Christianity. This will become more and more evident to men; and then they will realize that in spiritual science they have a potent asset in their lives. Men owe to spiritual science the consciousness which dawns in them by degrees, that Christ is the Spirit Who fills the world with light. And the consequence will be that here on this earthly globe, in the physical world itself, men will make progress in their moral life, in their life of will, in their intellectual life. Through physical life itself the world will be spiritualized in

ever-increasing measure. Men will grow in goodness, strength and wisdom and will gaze with ever deepening vision into the foundations and origins of existence. They will bear with them into the supersensible life the fruits acquired in this physical life, and ever and again bring these fruits back from the supersensible life into a new incarnation.

Thus the earth will more and more become the expression of its Spirit, of the Christ-Spirit. Spiritual science will be understood in the light of the world's foundations, apprehended as a real and active power. In various respects to-day mankind is near to losing the Spirit altogether. In the recent public lecture (see Note 3) it was said that men suffer to-day under the fear of heredity. The fear of the burden of heredity is the direct offspring of our materialistic age. But is it enough if a man simply says to himself that he need not have this fear? - By no means does that suffice. A man who does not concern himself with the spiritual world, who does not instill into his soul what can flow from spiritual science, is subject to the forces of physical heredity. Only by steeping his whole being in what spiritual science can communicate to him does he gain mastery over the forces of heredity, regards it as a factor of no essential significance and becomes the victor of everything that the powers of hindrance place in his way in the external world. It is not by arguing or philosophizing it away, or by contending: Spirit exists! - that man brings the life of the senses under his command, but by permeating himself with the Spirit, by absorbing the Spirit, by having the will to acquire intimate knowledge of the Spirit. Then spiritual science will make men healthier even in the physical world; for spiritual science is itself a therapy that brings vigor and health. And the essential power of spiritual science will become still more evident to us when we consider what becomes of the human being when he passes through the gate of death. The modern mind finds great difficulty here.

Man thinks to himself: Why need I trouble about what happens in the spiritual world? When I die I go into the spiritual world in any case and then I shall see and hear what goes on there! In endless variations one hears this easy-going way of talking: Why should I trouble about the spiritual before I die? When the time comes I shall see what there is to see. My relationship to the spiritual world will not be altered in the slightest, no matter whether I do or do not concern myself with it. - But indeed this is not so! A man who

thinks in such a way will enter a world of darkness and gloom, unable to make very much of what is said in my book *Theosophy* about the spiritual worlds. For it is only by allying himself in spirit and soul with the spiritual world during life in the physical world that man can acquire the faculty of perception in the spiritual world; the preparation must be made in his life here on earth. The spiritual world is there in very truth - the faculty of being able to see in that world must be acquired on the earth; otherwise there is blindness in the spiritual world.

Spiritual science is therefore the power which alone makes it possible for man to enter the spiritual world with consciousness. Had Christ not appeared in the physical world, man would have gone under in that world, could not have found entry to the spiritual world. But Christ lifts him into the spiritual world in such a way that he can see and be conscious there. This depends upon his knowledge of how to unite his being with the Spirit sent by Christ; failing that knowledge, he remains unconscious. Man has to win his immortality through his own efforts, for an unconscious immortality is no immortality. A beautiful saying of Meister Eckhardt is: "What does it profit a man to be a king if he knows it not," - What he meant was: Of what use is the spiritual world to a man if he does not know what the spiritual worlds are in reality? The capacity for seeing the spiritual world can be acquired only in the physical world. Those who ask: Why was it necessary for man to descend at all into the physical world? do well to take this to heart. - Man descended in order to acquire vision of the spiritual world. He would have remained blind to the spiritual world had he not descended and attained the self-conscious manhood which enables him to return to the spiritual world now lying in radiance and light before his soul.

Spiritual science is therefore not merely a "conception of the world" in the accepted sense but something without which - even in the immortal part of his being - man can know nothing about the worlds of immortality. Spiritual science is an active power, permeating the soul as reality. And in that you are present here in the pursuit of spiritual science, you are not only gathering knowledge but you are growing into something you would otherwise not have become. That is the difference between spiritual science and other world-conceptions. The latter are rooted in *knowledge*; spiritual science is rooted in

*being.*

Rightly conceived, these things will make us say to ourselves: With this illumination, an inner, fundamental connection is revealed between Christ, the Spirit, and spiritual science. In face of this connection all the superficial statements made to-day to the effect that a Western trend is being set up in opposition to an Eastern trend of occultism fall to the ground. There can be no question of any such opposition. There are not two occultisms, there is only one occultism; and there is no opposition between eastern and western Theosophy. There is only *one* truth. And what is our reply to be when we are asked: If eastern occultism is the same as western occultism, why is it that in eastern occultism, Christ is not acknowledged? The right reply is that it is not for us to give the answer; that obligation does not rest upon us, for we fully acknowledge eastern occultism. If asked whether we acknowledge what eastern occultism says about Brahma, about the Buddha, we shall answer: Most certainly we acknowledge it. We understand what is meant when we are told that the Buddha attained his exalted rank in this or that way. We deny no single one of the eastern truths; in so far as they are positive truths we acknowledge them all. But shall this prevent us from acknowledging *as well*, what goes yet further? No indeed! We acknowledge what is said by eastern occultism, but that does not prevent us from acknowledging, too, the western truths.

When people allege that it is an inferior way of thinking on the part of orientalists to say that the Buddha died from eating too much pork - as these learned gentlemen assert - and it is explained that this actually has a deep meaning, namely that the Buddha imparted to those immediately around him too much of the esoteric wisdom, so that this overabundance caused the onset of a kind of karma - then we agree that it is so; we say: certainly there lie behind it the deeper esoteric truths as stated by you who are eastern esotericists! - But when the statement that the Apocalypse was revealed to St. John on Patmos amid thunder and lightning is held to be unintelligible (see Note 4), then our answer will be: everyone who is aware of what is really meant, knows that it is a truth! We do not refute what is said about the Buddha but we cannot agree when the validity of the other statement (concerning the Apocalypse) is denied. We do not contest the assertion that the astral body of the Buddha was preserved and was later incorporated in

Shankaracharya. But that does not prevent us from teaching that the astral body of Jesus of Nazareth was preserved and in multiple replicas was incorporated in various individuals dedicated to Christianity, like St. Francis of Assisi or St. Elizabeth of Thüringen. We deny no single truth of oriental esotericism. Therefore when we are asked: Why is anything refuted? Why is there opposition? - it is not incumbent upon us to answer. It would be incumbent upon us to answer if the opposition came from our side. But it does not! The duty to answer rests upon one who denies, not upon one who agrees. That is obvious enough.

In the coming weeks (see Note 5) you will be able to hear of the connection between spiritual science and the Event of Golgotha and you will realize that the whole vocation, the whole mission of the spiritual scientific movement in the world is raised to a higher sphere inasmuch as spiritual science puts into effect the inspiration, the power proclaimed as the Spirit by Christ Himself.

So we see how Powers work together in the world, how everything that appears to oppose the progress of mankind subsequently turns out to be a blessing. We realize, too, that in the Post-Atlantean epoch - from age to age - the Spirit who has brought man freedom will appear again in a new form; *Luciferus*, the sovereign Bearer of Light, will be redeemed. For everything in the great World Plan is good and the evil endures only for a season. Therefore he alone believes in eternity of the evil who confounds the temporal with the eternal; he who does not rise from the temporal to the eternal can never understand the evil.

Note 1: The Asuras are retarded Beings of the Hierarchy of the Archai (Spirits of Personality). They are Beings who instead of furthering man's progress to independence, lure him into gross egoism. In the negative sense they now bear the name originally pertaining to the entire Hierarchy. C.S.P.

Note 2: Cp. Lecture 13, Cycle VIII: *The Gospel of St. John in relation to the other three Gospels, especially to the Gospel of St. Luke*. "At the moment when the Blood flowed from the wounds on Golgotha, the earth - which in the course of evolution had grown ever darker - began to send rays out into cosmic space, began to be

radiant."

Note 3: Berlin, 18th February, 1909.

Note 4: The reference is to a passage in *The Secret Doctrine*, by H. P. Blavatsky. A later volume, compiled by Annie Besant from manuscripts left by Blavatsky includes a statement indicating that the author was not unaware of the significance of thunder and lightening as an accompaniment of spiritual revelations. (C.S.P.)

Note 5: Lecture-Course on the "Spiritual Hierarchies".

## **The Deed of Christ and the Opposing Spiritual Powers**

### **Mephistopheles and Earthquakes**

Berlin, 01 January 1909

The theme of the lecture to-day is of a profoundly occult character, the title - strange as it may seem to begin with - being: "Mephistopheles and Earthquakes". We shall see that not only does the problem of the figure of Mephistopheles lead us into a deep realm of occultism but that the same applies to the problem of earthquakes if explained from the spiritual point of view. I have already spoken here and in several other places about the interior of the earth and have also referred to the question of earthquakes. We shall now approach the subject of these most tragic happenings on the earth's surface, from yet another side.

The figure of Mephistopheles which will be our starting-point to-day, is familiar to you all from Goethe's *Faust*. You know that Mephistopheles is a Being - we shall not enter to-day into the question of how far the poetic presentation tallies with the occult facts - a figure who appears in the drama as the seducer and tempter of Faust who, in a certain respect, may be thought of as the representative of man aspiring to reach the heights of existence. In lectures on [Goethe](#) I have also indicated what spiritual vistas are revealed in the scene of the "Passage to the Mothers", where Mephistopheles holds in his hand the key giving access to the dark, nether region where the Mothers dwell. Mephistopheles himself may not enter this region. He merely indicates that in this mysterious realm there is no difference between "below" and "above":

"Sink then! I might as well say, Mount!"Tis quite the same."

We know too that in characterizing this region, Mephistopheles uses the word "Naught", "Nothingness". In a certain sense, therefore, he represents the spirit who in this "Naught" would be seeking something that is valueless to him. Faust answers as any true seeker to-day might answer a materialistic thinker: "In thy Naught I hope to find the All".

Goethean research has made many attempts to find the clue to the figure of Mephistopheles. In other lectures I have said that the explanation of the name Mephistopheles is to be found in the Hebrew language, where "Mephiz" is the word used for one who obstructs, who corrupts, and "topel" for one who lies. We have therefore to think of this name as belonging to a being who brings corruption and hindrances to man and is a spirit of untruth, deception and illusion.

It may occur to those who read the introduction to *Faust*, the "Prologue in Heaven", thoughtfully, that it contains words which resound as it were across thousands of years. Goethe has let words spoken between the Lord and Job in the Book of Job re-echo at the beginning of *Faust*. In the Book of Job we read that Job is a good, upright and pious man and of how the sons of the Lord of Light present themselves before Him. Among them is a certain enemy of the Light. In a conversation between the enemy of the Light and the supreme Lord, this enemy of the Light says that he has "gone to and fro in the earth", seeking and trying out many things. The Lord asks: "Knowest thou my servant Job?" and the enemy of the Light - for so we will call him - answers the Lord that Job is known to him and that he would assuredly be able to divert him from the Good and bring him to perdition. This spirit has to make two attempts to approach Job and he then lays hold of him through injuring his physical body. He indicates this expressly when he says to the Lord: "Seize his possessions and he will not fall; but touch his bone and his flesh and he will fall!" Who can fail to hear an echo of this in *Faust* when the Lord calls to Mephistopheles in the "Prologue in Heaven": "Knowest thou Faust, my servant!" And then, in similar terms, we hear the retort of the spirit who in the Book of Job comes before the Lord, when Mephistopheles asserts that he can lead Faust gently on the way, that he can win him from the paths which lead to the Good. Here, then, we are listening to sounds striking together in unison across the ages.

When you are thinking about the figure of Mephistopheles, you may often have asked yourselves: Who is Mephistopheles, in reality? Grave mistakes are made here, mistakes which admittedly can be corrected only by deeper, occult insight. The name itself

suggests that Mephistopheles is associated with the devil, or the idea of the devil, for the word "topel" is the same as "*Teufel*" - devil. But the other question - and here we come into a realm of serious fallacies which frequently occur in explanations of the figure of Mephistopheles - the other question is: Whether Mephistopheles can be identified with the spirit we know as Lucifer, who during and after the Lemurian epoch approached mankind together with his hosts and entrenched himself as it were in the evolutionary process? The prevailing tendency in Europe is to identify the figure of Mephistopheles as he appears in Goethe's *Faust* but also in earlier folk-literature (Folk Plays, Puppet Plays and so forth), with Lucifer. Mephistopheles is a familiar character everywhere, and the question is: Are he and his hosts identical with Lucifer and his hosts? In other words: Are the effects of the Mephistophelean influence upon man the same as those of Lucifer? - That is the question before us to-day.

We know when Lucifer approached man. We have studied the course of human evolution on earth through the epoch when the sun with its beings, and subsequently the moon, separated from the earth together with the forces that would have made further development for man impossible. And we have learned that at a time when man was still not ready for his astral body to become independent, Lucifer and his hosts approached him. The effect upon man was twofold. It was towards the end of the Lemurian epoch when, in his astral body, man was actually exposed to the influences issuing from Lucifer. If Lucifer had not approached, man would, it is true, have been protected from certain evils but he would not have attained what must be accounted one of his greatest blessings.

The significance of Lucifer's influence becomes evident when we ask ourselves what would have transpired if since the Lemurian epoch there had been no Luciferic influence, if Lucifer and his hosts had remained separate and apart from man's evolution! Until the middle of the Atlantean epoch man would have evolved as a being who in every impulse of his astral body would have obeyed the influences of certain spiritual Beings of a higher rank than himself; these Beings would have retained their sway over him until the middle of the Atlantean epoch. If that had happened, man's faculties of perception and cognition

would not have been directed to the material world until a much later period. During the Lemurian and early Atlantean epochs, no passions, no desires would have arisen from his sense-perceptions; he would have confronted the world of sense as it were in a state of innocence, obedient in his every action to the impulses instilled into him by higher spiritual Beings. The instincts prompting him to action would not have been of exactly the same nature as those of the higher animals to-day, but more spiritual. His every deed on earth would have been prompted, not by mere impulses, but by a kind of spiritual instinct. As things were, under the influence of Lucifer man came earlier to the stage where he said: This delights and attracts me, that is repellent to me! He reached the stage of following his own impulses earlier than would otherwise have been the case; he became an independent being, with a measure of inner freedom. The consequence was that he was detached in a certain way from the spiritual world. To put it concisely, one might say: Without this influence of Lucifer, man would have remained a spiritualized animal - an animal who would gradually have developed a form nobler and more beautiful than could have been developed by man under the influence of Lucifer. Man would have remained far more of an angelic being if Lucifer's influence had not taken effect in the Lemurian epoch; but on the other hand, the higher Beings would have guided him as it were on leading-strings. In the middle of the Atlantean epoch something would have befallen him suddenly: his eyes would have been fully opened, the tapestry of the whole material world of sense would have lain around him - but gazing upon it he would simultaneously have perceived the Divine-Spiritual, a Divine-Spiritual world behind every physical object. If, therefore, in his former state of dependence man had looked back into the bosom of the Divine whence he had proceeded, beholding the Gods of Light sending their radiance into his soul, guiding and leading him, something would have come about for him - this is not a mere picture but corresponds in a high degree with the reality - namely, that the world of sense in its entirety would have been outspread in transparency before him, revealing behind it those other Divine-Spiritual Beings who had taken the place of what had now been lost. One spiritual world would have closed behind him and a new spiritual world opened before him. Man would have remained a child in the hands of higher, Divine-Spiritual Beings; independence would not have been established in the human soul.

It did not happen so, because Lucifer had approached man and made part of the underlying spiritual world invisible to him. The personal instincts, passions and desires which arose in the human astral body spread a cloud of darkness over the spiritual Beings of the world out of which man is born and who would otherwise have remained perpetually visible to him.

Hence in those great centers of the Oracles in ancient Atlantis the Initiates had expressly trained themselves to behold that part of the spiritual world which had been concealed as the result of Lucifer's influence. The aim of all the preparation undergone by the guardians and pupils of the ancient Oracles in the Atlantean Mysteries was to enable them to perceive that part of the spiritual world of light which in consequence of Lucifer's influence upon the astral body of man had withdrawn from his field of vision. And visible too, were those figures seen by man in the various conditions of soul running parallel with initiation, figures which from a world of Light penetrate into our world decked in the raiment provided by the astral world. In the ancient Oracle centers the Atlantean Initiate beheld in the spirit those figures who were in truth spiritual Beings of a higher rank than he - Beings who had not descended into the physical world and who had therefore remained invisible to ordinary sight when man's eyes were opened prematurely. But since Lucifer himself was an opponent of these worlds of Light, it was inevitable that he too should be visible to the initiates; and the hosts of Lucifer *were* visible to the Atlanteans who in their shadowy, clairvoyant consciousness, in the sleeping state and in conditions midway between sleeping and waking, could be transported into the spiritual world. When part of the world of Light was accessible to these Atlantean men, part of the world opposing the world of Light was also visible; the Luciferic hosts were visible - not Lucifer himself. These noble figures belonging to the world of light were as fascinating and splendid in their astral raiment as those of the opposing world of deception were fearsome and terrible.

Thus it was the influence of Lucifer in the evolution of humanity that made it possible for man to fall into error and evil but also to attain freedom. Had there been no Luciferic

influence, the conditions I have been describing to you would have come about in the middle of the Atlantean epoch: the tapestry of the sense-world would have been outspread before man; the mineral, plant and animal kingdoms would have been materially visible to him; also the phenomena of nature and of the heavens, thunder, lightning, clouds, air - all would have been visible to external sight. But behind it all would have been the unmistakable presence of Divine-Spiritual Beings. Because Lucifer's influence had already taken effect in man's astral body, his physical body - at that time still transmutable - had been so prepared ever since the Lemurian epoch and on into the Atlantean, that it could not become the direct instrument for the physical world of sense with the spiritual world visibly behind it. And so man could not immediately behold the physical sense-world in the form in which it would simultaneously have revealed itself to him as a spiritual world. The three lower kingdoms of nature lay around him; the physical world became a veil over the spiritual world. Man could not, nor can he to this day, see directly into the spiritual world.

But because man had passed through this evolution, a different influence was able to assert itself in the middle of the Atlantean epoch - an influence from quite another side and not to be confused with that of Lucifer and his hosts. Although it was Lucifer who first made it possible for man to come under the sway of this other influence, although it was Lucifer who caused the human physical body to become denser than it would otherwise have become, nevertheless it was necessary for yet another influence to approach man in order to bring him completely into the material world of sense, in order to shut him off entirely from the spiritual world so that he was led to the illusion: There is no other world than the world of material existence outspread before me!

From the middle of the Atlantean epoch an opponent quite different in character from Lucifer approached man, namely the Being who casts such mist and darkness around his faculties of perception that he makes no effort nor unfolds any urge to fathom the secrets of the world of sense. If you picture to yourselves that under Lucifer's influence the sense-world became like a veil, through the influence of this second Being the physical world in its totality became like a dense rind, closing off the spiritual world. It was only

the Atlantean Initiates who were able, through the preparation they had undergone, to pierce this dense covering of the material, physical world.

The Powers who approached man in order to obscure his vision of the other side of divine existence are brought to our notice for the first time in the teachings given to his followers and pupils by Zarathustra, the great leader of the ancient Persians. The mission of Zarathustra was to instill culture into a people who, unlike the ancient Indians, did not by nature yearn perpetually for the spiritual world. Zarathustra's mission was to impart to his people a culture directed to the world of sense, aiming at mastery of the material world through means dependent upon the efforts and labors of physical man. In the civilization of ancient Persia, therefore, man was less subject to the influence of Lucifer than to the influence of that Being who since the middle of the Atlantean epoch had approached mankind, with the result that many of the Initiates at that time had lapsed into the practice of a form of black magic; having been led astray by this tempter, they misused for the purposes of the physical-material world what was accessible to them from the spiritual world. The mighty influence of the forces of black magic which finally led to the destruction of Atlantis had its origin in the temptations of that Being whom Zarathustra taught his people to know as Ahriman ("Angra Mainyu"), the Being who opposed the God of Light proclaimed by Zarathustra as "Ahura Mazda", the "Great Aura".

These two figures - Lucifer and Ahriman - must be clearly distinguished from each other. For Lucifer is a Being who detached himself from the spiritual hosts of heaven *after* the separation of the sun, whereas Ahriman had already broken away *before* the separation of the sun and is an embodiment of quite different powers. The result of Lucifer's influence in the Lemurian epoch was merely the corruption of the faculty, still possessed by man in the Atlantean epoch, to manipulate the forces of air and water. In the book entitled *From the Akasha Chronicle* you will have read that in Atlantean times the seminal forces in plant and animal were still at man's command and could be drawn forth just as the forces used in the form of steam for propelling machines can be extracted from mineral coal to-day. I have told you that when these forces are drawn forth they are connected in a

mysterious way with the nature-forces in wind, weather and the like; and if applied by man for purposes running counter to the divine purposes, these nature-forces are called into action against him.

Here lies the cause of the Atlantean flood and of the devastation wrought by the powers of nature which led to the disappearance of the whole continent of Atlantis. But even before that time, man had lost command over the forces of fire and the power to ally them with certain mysterious forces of the earth. Power over the forces of fire and earth in a certain combination had already been withdrawn from man. But now - through the influence of Ahriman and his accomplices - he again acquired a certain mastery over the forces of fire and earth, with dire consequences. And much that is to be heard about the use of fire in ancient Persia is connected with what I am now telling you. Many forces that are applied in black magic and are connected with it, lead to the result that man lays hold of forces of an entirely different nature and thus gains an influence over fire and earth, with terrible and devastating results. The practice of black magic by the descendants of the Atlanteans in ancient Persia would still have been effective had not the teachings of Zarathustra revealed how Ahriman, as an opposing power, ensnares man and clouds his vision of the spiritual reality behind the world of sense. Thus through Zarathustra and his followers, influence was brought to bear upon a large part of Post-Atlantean civilization; on the one hand men were taught of the workings of the sublime God of Light to whom they may turn, and, on the other, of the malefic power of Ahriman and his hosts.

Ahriman works upon man in countless, infinitely diverse ways. - I have told you that the Event of the Mystery of Golgotha was a moment of supreme importance for the evolution of the world. The Christ appeared in the realm into which man enters after death, where Ahriman's influence was even mightier than in the world around man here on earth between birth and death. In the realm of existence between death and rebirth, Ahriman's influences worked upon man with terrible, overwhelming power. And if nothing else had taken place, utter darkness would gradually have closed in upon man in the 'realm of Shades' - as it was correctly designated by the ancient Greeks. A condition of complete

isolation, leading to the intensification of egoism would have set in between death and rebirth; man would have been born into his new life as a gross and overweening egotist. Hence it is more than a figure of speech to say that after the Event of Golgotha, at the moment when the Blood flowed from the wounds, the Christ appeared in yonder world, in the realm of the Shades, and cast Ahriman into fetters. Although Ahriman's influence remained and is really the origin of all materialistic thinking on the part of man, although this influence can be paralyzed only if men receive into themselves the power emanating from the Mystery of Golgotha, nevertheless they can draw from that Event a power which enables them to find their way once again into the Divine-Spiritual world. Thus it was to Ahriman that the faculty of human cognition was primarily directed. Ahriman was a Being whose existence was divined by men, a Being of whom they had some knowledge through the culture inaugurated by Zarathustra; and from there the knowledge of Ahriman spread among the other peoples and into their world of ideas. Ahriman with his hosts appears as a figure with the most diverse names among the civilized peoples. And owing to the peculiar conditions obtaining in the souls of the European peoples who had remained farthest in the rear of the migrations from West to East, who had been less affected than the others by what had transpired in the ancient Indian, ancient Persian, Egyptian and even in the Greco-Latin civilizations - owing to these circumstances there prevailed among the European peoples from whom the Fifth Epoch of culture was to be born, an attitude of soul which regarded Ahriman alone as a figure of dread. And while many different names were adopted - as for example, "Mephistopheles" among the Hebrew people - in Europe the figure of Ahriman became the "Devil" in his various forms.

Obviously, therefore, we are gazing here into a concatenation of happenings in the spiritual worlds and many a man who claims to be above medieval superstitions will do well to remember the words in *Faust*:

"The little folk ne'er scent the DevilE'en though he have them by the collar".

It is precisely because man closes his spiritual eyes to this influence that he succumbs to

it so completely. Goethe's "Mephistopheles" is none other than the figure of Ahriman and must not be confused with Lucifer. All the errors cropping up here and there in commentaries on *Faust* originate from this confusion - although it was indeed Lucifer who first paved the way for Ahriman's influence. In studying Ahriman one is therefore led back to an original influence of Lucifer, the nature of which can only become clear after long preparatory efforts have been made to understand this intimate connection. The subtle difference between the two Beings must not be overlooked. The essential point is that, fundamentally speaking, Lucifer had brought man under the influence of the powers connected with air and water *only*; whereas it was Ahriman-Mephistopheles who has subjected him to the influence of far more deadly powers and the civilizations immediately to come will see the appearance of many things connected with Ahriman's influence. Through this influence the seeker for the spirit who does not stand upon firm and sure foundations can readily fall prey to the most terrible illusion and deception. For Ahriman is a spirit who sets out to spread deception as to the true nature of the sense-world, especially as an expression of the spiritual world. When a man has a tendency to abnormal, somnambulistic states or through certain wrongful training awakens occult forces whereby egoism is intensified, then Ahriman or Mephistopheles has a ready influence precisely upon these occult forces, an influence that can soon become overwhelmingly powerful. Whereas Lucifer's influence can only bring it about that what confronts a man from the spiritual world (and this applies also to one who is receiving wrongful training) appears to him as an *astral* form visible to the astral body, the manifestations due to the influence of Ahriman are brought to light in that the evil influences on the physical body press through into the etheric body and then become visible as *phantoms*.

In the influences of Ahriman, therefore, we have to do with powers of a much lower nature than the influences of Lucifer. Lucifer's influences can never become as evil as the influences of Ahriman and of those Beings who are connected with the powers of fire. The influence of Ahriman or Mephistopheles can bring it about that in order to attain occult knowledge a man is induced, for example, to undertake certain measures with his physical body. The method that consists in the use and misuse of the physical body is the

most evil that can possibly be applied for the purpose of acquiring occult powers. It is a fact that in certain school of black magic such practices are taught in abundance. One of the most terrible perversions to which man may be subject occurs when the forces of the physical body are taken as the starting-point for occult training.

It is not possible here to enter into closer detail than the indication that all machinations consisting in any way of a misuse of the forces of the physical body emanate from the influences of Ahriman; and because the effect of this penetrates into man's etheric body, it works as a world of phantoms that is nothing else than the garment of powers which drag man down to a level below that of true manhood. Nearly every ancient civilization - the Indian, the Persian, the Egyptian, the Greco-Latin - had its period of decadence; so too the Mysteries, when the Mystery-traditions were no longer preserved in their purity. During these periods many of those who were either pupils of the Initiates but unable to remain at their level or men to whom the secrets of the Mysteries had been unlawfully betrayed, had fallen into perverse and evil paths. Centers of black magic and its forces originated from these influences and have persisted to this day.

Ahriman is a spirit of lies, a spirit who conjures illusions before men, working together with his confederates in a spiritual world. Ahriman himself is no mirage - far from it! But what is conjured before men's eyes of spirit under his influence - that is mirage, illusion. When a man's desires and passions flow along evil paths and at the same time he lends himself in any way to occult practices, then the occult forces which are awakened penetrate into the etheric body and the most evil powers of corruption appear among the illusory images which may themselves often be majestic, awe-inspiring. Such is the terrible influence of Ahriman upon man.

From what has been said you can gather that through Christ's Coming, Ahriman has been cast into fetters - if this expression may be used - but only, of course, for those who endeavor unceasingly to fathom the Christ-Mystery. And outside the forces streaming from the Christ-Mystery, protection in the world against the influence of Ahriman will steadily diminish. In a certain sense - and many signs proclaim it - our epoch courts these

influences of Ahriman. In certain occult teachings the hosts of Ahriman are also called the *Asuras*. These are of course, the evil Asuras who at a certain time fell away from the evolutionary path of the Asuras who endowed man with personality. It has already been indicated that these are spiritual Beings who detached themselves from the evolution of the earth *before* the separation of the sun.

Up to now we have been describing merely the terrible influence that Ahriman can exercise upon a certain abnormal process of development, one that proceeds along occult paths. But in a certain respect the whole of mankind came under the influence of Ahriman during the second half of the Atlantean epoch. The whole Post-Atlantean epoch has within it, in a certain sense, the aftermath of Ahriman's influence - in one region of the earth more, in another less. But Ahriman's influence has asserted itself everywhere and all the teachings given to the peoples by the ancient Initiates concerning the Spirits of Light who are the opponents of Ahriman were given primarily in order to draw these peoples away from Ahriman's influence. It was a good, wisely led education of mankind. But let us not forget that since that time the destiny of Ahriman has been interwoven in a certain sense with the destiny of humanity, and manifold happenings, of which the uninitiated can know nothing, keep the whole karma of humanity in perpetual connection with the karma of Ahriman. To understand what will now be said, we must realize that over and above the karma which belongs to every individual human being, there is at every stage of existence a universal karmic law. All the categories of beings have their karma - the karma of the one differing from that of the other. But karma operates through every realm of existence and there are things in the karma of mankind, in the karma of a people, of a community or other group of human beings, which must be regarded as collective karma, so that in certain circumstances the individual can be drawn into the sway of the collective karma. It will not always be easy for one who cannot penetrate to the root of the matter to discern exactly where the influences of the powers concerned lie in the case of human beings overtaken by such a destiny. An individual within some community may well be entirely guiltless as far as his own karma is concerned; but because he stands within a field of collective karma, calamity may befall him. If, however, he is entirely guiltless, compensation will be made in later incarnations.

In the wider connection we must look not only at the karma of the past but also think of the karma of the future. A terrible fate may befall a whole group of human beings; the reason why just this group should suffer such a destiny is not to be discovered. Someone who might be capable of investigating the karma of an individual will in certain circumstances be unable to find anything at all that could have led to this tragic fate, for the threads of karma are extremely complicated. The cause of such karmic happenings may lie far, far away - but it is connected with these people nevertheless. And it may be that the whole group, while guiltless, has been overtaken by some collective karma which could not overtake those immediately guilty, because circumstances did not make this possible. In such cases the only thing that can be said is this: In the total karma of an individual, everything is ultimately balanced out, including what befalls him without guilt on his part; it is all inscribed in his karma and compensation in the fullest sense will be made in future time. - Therefore in considering the law of karma we must also take into account the karma of the future. Nor must it be forgotten that man is not an isolated being but that every individual has to share jointly in the collective karma of humanity. We must remember, too, that man, together with humanity, is connected with those hierarchies of Beings who have not entered into the physical world and that he is also drawn into the karma of the hierarchies. In the destinies of mankind in the spiritual world a great deal appears the connections of which are not to be sought in the immediate circumstances, but the karmic consequences come to pass inevitably. Since the second half of the Atlantean epoch, Ahriman's karma has been linked with the karma of mankind. Where, then, are the deeds of Ahriman, over and above what is wrought by him in the bodies of men in order to spread phantoms and illusion over the world of sense? Where are these other deeds?

Everything in the world has, as it were, two sides, one pertaining more to man as a spiritual being, the other to what has developed as the kingdoms of nature around him. The earth is the arena of man's existence. To the eye of spirit this earth is revealed as a combination of different layers or strata. The outermost stratum is called the "Mineral Earth" or "Mineral Stratum" because it contains only such substances as are to be found in the ground under our feet. This is the shallowest stratum, relatively speaking. Then

begins the "Fluidic Earth", the material constitution of which is entirely different from that of the "mineral" stratum above it. This second stratum is, as it were, endowed with inner life; and only because the solid, mineral stratum is spread over it are the inner forces of this second stratum held together. If they were released they would instantaneously disperse into cosmic space. This stratum, therefore, lies under tremendous pressure. A third stratum is the "Vapor Earth". It is not a material vapor such as arises on the earth's surface but in this third stratum the substance itself is imbued with inner forces, comparable only with the passions, the inner urges and impulses of man. Whereas on the earth it is only beings like animals and men who can unfold passions, this third stratum - just as the substances of the earth are permeated by forces of magnetism and warmth - is permeated in a material sense with forces similar to those we know as human and animal passions and impulses. The fourth or "Form Stratum" is so designated because it contains the material and the forces of what are encountered in the mineral part of the earth as entities cast into form. And the characteristic of the fifth stratum, or "Fertility Earth" is that even as material it teems with infinite fertility. If you were to get hold of part of this stratum it would perpetually be sending forth new impulses, new sproutings; rampant fertility is the intrinsic quality of this stratum. Then we come to the sixth stratum, the "Fire Earth", containing as "substances" within it, forces that can bring about terrible havoc and destruction. It is actually into these forces that the primordial Fire has been banished.

In and from this stratum the realm of Ahriman operates - in a material sense. What manifests in the phenomena of outer nature, in air and water, in cloud formations, in lightning and thunder - all this is, so to speak, a last vestige on the earth's surface, of forces that were already connected with ancient Saturn and separated from the earth together with the sun. By what is working in these forces, the inner fire-forces of the earth are placed in the service of Ahriman. There he has the center of his activity; and whereas his spiritual influences make their way to the souls of men and lead them to error, we see how Ahriman - in a certain respect shackled - has certain foci for his activity in the interior of the earth. Were we to understand the mysterious connections of what has come to pass on the earth under Ahriman's influence and what Ahriman's own

karma has become in consequence of this, we should recognize in the quakes and tremors of the earth the connection between such grievous, tragic happenings in nature and the power that holds sway on the earth. These manifestations are something that has remained since ancient times as a reaction on the earth against the good Beings of Light. Thus forces allied with the Beings who were thrust away from their connection with the earth at the time when the good Beings of light established the beneficent phenomena around the earth-globe, are active, and in a certain sense we can recognize the echoings of these fire-forces which in earlier times were withdrawn from man's control, in what is wrought by fire in such terrible manifestations of nature. Although the karma of Ahriman has been linked with that of humanity since the time of Atlantis, the suggestion should not arise that any guilt is to be attributed to those who are victims of what Ahriman's karma has evoked. Such happenings are connected with the collective karma of humanity in which the individual has also to share. The *causes* which produce their effects in particular localities as the workings of Ahriman's karma often lie somewhere else entirely. It is however these particular places which afford the necessary opportunity. There we see a connection which seems to be like a relic of catastrophes undergone by humanity in the far distant past. The power to work upon fire which man had formerly possessed, was withdrawn from him. Hence ancient Lemuria was brought to its destruction by the fire of the passions of men. The same fire that is now below was then above; it receded from the earth's surface and the same fire that issued as a kind of extract from the primordial fire is the inorganic, mineral fire of to-day. So too it was with the forces working through air and water which, again by way of the passions of men, led to the Atlantean catastrophes. These catastrophes were evoked by the collective karma of humanity but a relic has remained and this relic awakens the echoes of those earlier catastrophes. Our volcanic eruptions and earthquakes are nothing else than the echoes of these catastrophes. But it should never so much as occur to anyone to attach an iota of guilt to the victim of such a calamity or to withhold compassion in the fullest measure. It must be absolutely clear to an anthroposophist that the karma of these individuals has nothing to do with the guilt to which the catastrophes are due and it should never occur to him to withhold help from anyone because - to put it trivially - he believes in karma and therefore assumes that this destiny was brought on by the man himself. Karma demands

of us that we help human beings because we may be sure that our help means something that is written in their karma and will turn that karma in a more favorable direction. Understanding that is based upon the recognition of karma must necessarily lead to compassion; our compassion for the victims of such catastrophes will be all the greater, for our knowledge tells us that there is a collective karma of humanity from which the individual members have to suffer, that just as such happenings are brought about by humanity as one whole, so too must humanity be answerable for them; we must regard such a destiny as our own and help not only out of a spontaneous impulse but because we know that we are involved in the karma of humanity and share the guilt incurred! A question was handed to me this morning about earthquake catastrophes. The question runs as follows: "What is the occult explanation of earthquakes? Can they be foreseen? If particular catastrophes can be foreseen, why should it not be possible to give some warning beforehand? Such a warning might possibly be ineffective the first time but certainly not on another occasion."

You may remember something of what was said at the end of the lecture on the interior of the earth about the possibility of earthquakes. We will not consider that now but enter directly into this question. In reality it has two sides. The one is: Whether from the occult connections which can be discerned, earthquakes can be foreseen? The answer to this is that the knowledge of such matters belongs to the deepest realm of occult science. In respect of a particular event on the earth, an event with roots as deeply laid as those described to-day, and connected with causes extending widely over the earth - in respect of such an event it is absolutely correct to say that even in a particular case an indication of time can be given. It would certainly be possible for the occultist to give such an indication. But the other side of the question is: whether it is *permissible* for such indications to be given? - For one who confronts the occult secrets from outside it will seem almost a matter of course that the answer will be "Yes!" And yet the truth is that in regard to such events it is actually only twice or three times in any one century - at the very most, twice or three times - that any prediction can be announced from the centers of Initiation. For you must remember that these things are connected with the karma of humanity as a whole and if, for example, they were avoided in one instance they would

inevitably occur in some other place and in a different form. The prediction itself would alter nothing. And just think what a terrible encroachment it would be into the karma of the earth as a whole if human measures were adopted to prevent such happenings. The reaction would be so fearful, so violent, that only in very rare and exceptional cases would a high Initiate, foreseeing an earthquake, be able to make use of his knowledge to help himself or those near him. *With full knowledge* he would have to face his end, as a matter of course! For these things that have been implicit in the karma of humanity for thousands and millions of years cannot be paralyzed by measures adopted during one brief period of evolution. - But there is still more to add.

It has been said already that this very subject is one of the most difficult of all in occult investigation. It is far easier to know something about the astral world, the devachanic world, even about the farthest planets, than about the interior of the earth. Most things one hears are the purest trash, because, as I say, it is one of the most difficult subjects in occultism. The same is true of matters that are connected with these elemental catastrophes. And above all you must realize that clairvoyance is not a matter of just sitting down, inducing a particular condition, and then being able to say what is going on in the whole universe, up to the highest spheres. It is by no means so. To believe any such thing would be as "clever" as to say: "You have the faculty of perception in the physical world; but why was it that when 12 o'clock came and you were sitting in your room, you were neither astonished by nor did you see what happened outside by the River Spree at that hour?" There are hindrances to seership. If the seer in question had gone for a walk at 12 o'clock he would probably have seen what happened. It is *not* the case that all worlds are immediately disclosed through the mere resolve to induce in oneself the requisite condition. The seer has to find his way to the events and investigate them, and these investigations are of the most difficult kind because the hindrances are greatest. - And perhaps at this point something may be said about these hindrances.

If a man is able to walk about on his two legs, you can deprive him of this faculty not only by amputating his legs but also by shutting him up in a cell; then he can no longer walk about. In the same way there are hindrances to occult investigation and in the

domain of which we are speaking they are immensely powerful. I will tell you one of the main hindrances and in doing so introduce you to a mysterious relationship. The greatest hindrance to occult investigation in this domain is constituted by the methods and trend of modern materialistic science. The countless illusions and fallacies accumulating in materialistic science to-day, all the research that is not only futile but is prompted by the vanities of men - these are things which in their effects in the higher worlds make investigation into these manifestations and free vision in the higher world impossible or to say the least, extremely difficult. Free vision is clouded as a result of the materialistic research pursued here on earth. It is by no means easy to get to the root of these things. But only wait for the time when spiritual science has become more widespread and when through its influence the materialistic superstitions prevailing in our world will be swept away! Once the nonsensical analogies and hypotheses leading to all kinds of conjectures about the interior of the earth are cast aside, you will see that when spiritual science has itself been integrated into the karma of humanity, when it finds the way to men's souls and is able from there to overcome the opposing powers and materialistic superstitions, when further research can be made into all that is connected with the bitterest foe of mankind, that Being who fetters man's vision within the world of sense - you will see that it will then be possible, even externally, to influence the karma of humanity in the sense that the dire results of such happenings may be alleviated. The reason why the Initiates must be silent about happenings connected with the great karma of humanity is to be found in the materialistic superstitions of men. Many scientific pursuits are in no way imbued with the Faustian striving for truth but prompted entirely by vanity and ambition. How much scientific research is promoted in the world simply because an individual is seeking for something that will be to his personal advantage! If you sum up all these things you will realize the strength of the force that obstructs vision into the world behind the external phenomena of the material world. Not until this fog has been cleared away will the time come when, in respect of certain mysterious manifestations of nature emanating from the foes of mankind and trespassing deeply into human life, it will be possible for help - and then in no small measure - to be given to mankind. Until that time comes there is no such possibility.

I am well aware that these questions have been given a turn not always in the mind of the one who asks them. But it is often the fate of occult science to be obliged to formulate the questions in the right way before they can be correctly answered. Again do not take this to mean that the mysterious connection between earthquakes and the karma of humanity is a secret that cannot be investigated. It *can* be investigated but there are reasons why only the most commonplace aspects of such questions can be presented to the world to-day. Let the knowledge reach mankind through spiritual science that there is a connection between the deeds of men and happenings in nature and then the time will come when these things can be answered in the way the question demands. Spiritual science may pass through many destinies; its influence may even be crippled, remaining within narrow and restricted circles. Nevertheless it will make its way through mankind, will be integrated into the karma of humanity, and then the possibility will be created for individuals themselves to have an effect upon the karma of humanity as a whole.

## **Search for the New Isis, the Divine Sophia: The Quest for the Isis-Sophia**

A lecture by Rudolf Steiner Dornach, December 24, 1920 GA 202

IN THE FESTIVAL of Christmas something is given to Christendom that directs the thoughts of all circles of Christian people straight to the very deepest questions presented by the evolution of humankind upon earth. Regard the evolution of history from whatever point of view you will, take into consideration historical events in order to understand human evolution, to penetrate the meaning of human evolution on earth - in all history you will find no thought as widely understandable or having as much power to lift the soul to this mystery of human evolution as the thought of the Mystery of Golgotha, as the thought that is contained in the festival of Christmas.

When we look back upon the beginning of human evolution on earth, and follow it through the thousands of years that preceded the Mystery of Golgotha, we find that, although the achievements of the peoples in all the various nations were so great, nevertheless, in reality all these achievements constituted only a kind of preparation - they were a preparatory step toward what took place for the sake of humankind at the Mystery of Golgotha. Furthermore, we find we can only understand what has happened since the Mystery of Golgotha when we remember that the Christ who went through the Mystery of Golgotha has played an active role in the evolution of humanity ever since. Many things in human evolution may at first appear incomprehensible. However, if we investigate them without narrow-minded superstition, for example the kind of superstition that believes that unknown gods should come to the aid of human beings without their active involvement, and that such aid should come just where human beings consider it necessary - if we leave aside such views, we find that even the most painful events in the course of world history can show us the significance and meaning that the evolution of the earth has acquired through the fact that Christ went through the Mystery of Golgotha. It is appropriate for us to study this Mystery of Golgotha - and the mystery of Christmas belongs to it - from a point of view which can reveal, as it were, the meaning of all of earthly humanity. We know how intimate the connection is between

what takes place in the moral-spiritual sphere of human evolution and what takes place in nature. And with a certain understanding of this link between nature and the world's moral order we can approach also another relationship with which we have been concerned for many years - namely, the relationship of Christ Jesus to that being whose outer reflection appears in the sun. The followers and representatives of the Christian impulse were not always so hostile toward the recognition of this connection between the mystery of the sun and the mystery of Christ as the decadent present-day representatives of Christianity so often are. Dionysius the Areopagite, whom we have often mentioned, calls the sun God's monument, and in Augustine we continually find such allusions. Even in Scholasticism we find such references to the fact that the outwardly visible stars and their movements are images of the divine-spiritual existence of the world.

However, we must understand the mystery of Christmas in a far wider context, if we wish to understand what should concern us most of all in view of the important tasks of the present age. I would like to remind you of something which I have repeatedly brought forward in various ways in the course of many years. I have told you: We look back into the first post-Atlantean age, which was filled with the deeds and experiences of the ancient Indian people; we look back into the ancient Persian epoch of post-Atlantean humanity, into the Egypto-Chaldean, and into the Greco-Latin. We come then to the fifth epoch of the post-Atlantean humanity, our own. Our epoch will be followed by the sixth and by the seventh. And I have drawn your attention to the fact that the Greco-Latin, the fourth epoch of post-Atlantean humanity, stands, as it were, in the middle, and that there are certain connections (you can read of this in my little book *The Spiritual Guidance of the Individual and Humanity*) between the third and the fifth epochs, that is, between the Egypto-Chaldean epoch and our own. Furthermore there is also a certain connection between the ancient Persian epoch and the sixth, and between the ancient Indian and the seventh epoch of post-Atlantean humanity. Specific things repeat themselves in a certain way in each of these epochs of life.

I once pointed out that the great Kepler, the successor of Copernicus, had a feeling that his solar and planetary system was repeating, of course in a way appropriate to the fifth

post-Atlantean age, what had lived as the world picture behind the Egyptian priest mysteries. Kepler himself expressed this in a certain sense very radically when he said that he had borrowed the vessels of the ancient Egyptian teachers of wisdom in order to carry them over into the new age.

Today, however, we will consider something which stood, in a sense, at the center of the view found in the cultic rituals performed by the priests in the Egyptian mystery religion; we will consider the mysteries of Isis. In order to call up before our minds the spiritual connection between the mystery of Isis and that which also lives in Christianity, we need only look with the eyes of the soul upon Raphael's famous picture of the Sistine Madonna. The Virgin is holding the child Jesus, and behind her are the clouds, representing a multitude of children. We can imagine the Virgin receiving the child Jesus descending through the clouds, through a condensation, as it were, of the thin cloud substance. Created out of an entirely Christian spirit, this picture is, after all, nothing more than a kind of repetition of what the Egyptian mysteries of Isis revered when they portrayed Isis holding the child Horus. The motif of that earlier picture is in complete harmony with that of Raphael's picture. Of course, this fact must not tempt us to a superficial interpretation, common among many people since the eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century right up to our own days - namely, to see the story of Christ Jesus and all that belongs to it as a mere metamorphosis, a transformation, of ancient pagan mysteries. From my book [Christianity as Mystical Fact](#) you already know how these things are to be understood. However, in the sense explained in that book we are permitted to point out a spiritual congruence between what appears in Christianity and the old pagan mysteries.

The main content of the mystery of Isis is the death of Osiris and Isis's search for the dead Osiris. We know that Osiris, the representative of the being of the sun, the representative of the spiritual sun, is killed by Typhon, who, expressed in Egyptian terms, is none other than Ahriman. Ahriman kills Osiris, throws him into the Nile, and the Nile carries the body away. Isis, the spouse of Osiris, sets out on her search and finds him over in Asia. She brings him back to Egypt, where Ahriman, the enemy, cuts the body into

fourteen parts. Isis buries these fourteen parts in various locations, so that they belong to the earth for ever after.

We can see from this story how Egyptian wisdom conceived of the connection between the powers of heaven and the powers of earth in a deeply meaningful way. On the one hand, Osiris is the representative of the powers of the sun. After having passed through death he is, in various places and simultaneously, the force that ripens everything that grows out of the earth. The ancient Egyptian sage imagines in a spirit-filled way how the powers which shine down from the sun, enter the earth and then become part of the earth, and how, as powers of the sun buried in the earth, they then hand over to the human being what matures out of the earth. The Egyptian myth is founded upon the story of Osiris - how he was killed, how his spouse Isis had to set out on her search for him, how she first brought him back to Egypt and how he then became active in another form, namely, from out of the earth.

One of the Egyptian pyramids depicts the whole event in a particularly meaningful way. The Egyptians not only recorded what they knew as the solution to the great secrets of the universe in their own particular writing, they also expressed it in their architectural constructions. They built one of these pyramids with such mathematical precision that the shadow of the sun disappeared into the base of the pyramid at the spring equinox and only reappeared at the autumn equinox. The Egyptians wanted to express in this pyramid that the forces which shine down from the sun are buried from spring to fall in the earth where they develop the forces of the earth, so that the earth may produce the fruit which humankind needs.

This, then, is the idea we find present in the minds and hearts of the ancient Egyptians, On the one hand, they look up to the sun, they look up to the lofty being of the sun and they worship him. At the same time, however, they relate how this being of the sun was lost in Osiris, and was sought by Isis, and how he was found again so that he is then able to continue working in a changed way.

Many things which appeared in the Egyptian wisdom must be repeated in a different form during our fifth post-Atlantean age. Humankind must increasingly come to understand from a spiritual-scientific point of view the mysteries of the Egyptian priests in a form appropriate to our own age, in a Christian sense. For the Egyptians, Osiris was a kind of representative of the Christ who had not yet arrived on earth. In their own way they looked upon Osiris as the being of the sun, but they imagined this sun being had been lost in a sense, and must be found again. We cannot imagine that our being of the sun, the Christ, who has passed through the Mystery of Golgotha could be lost to humankind, for he came down from spiritual heights, united himself with the man Jesus of Nazareth, and from then onwards remains with the earth. He is present, he exists, as the Christmas carol proclaims each year anew: "Unto us a Saviour is born." It thereby expresses the eternal, not the transitory nature of this event. Jesus was not only born once at Bethlehem, but is born continuously; in other words, he remains with the life of the earth. What Christ is, and what he means for us, cannot be lost.

But the Isis legend must show itself as being fulfilled in another way in our time. We cannot lose the Christ and what he, in a higher form than Osiris, gives us; but we can lose, and we have lost, what is portrayed for our Christian understanding standing at the side of Osiris - Isis - the mother of the saviour, the divine wisdom, Sophia. If the Isis legend is to be renewed, then it must not simply follow the old form - Osiris, killed by Typhon-Ahriman and carried away by the waters of the Nile, must be found again by Isis in order that his body, cut into pieces by Typhon-Ahriman, may be sunk into the earth. No, in a sense, we must find the Isis legend again, the content of the mystery of Isis, but we must create it out of imagination, suited to our own times. An understanding must arise again of the eternal cosmic truths, and it will when we learn to think and compose imaginatively, as the Egyptians did. But we must find the right Isis legend.

The Egyptian was permeated by Luciferic powers, as were all human beings who lived before the Mystery of Golgotha. If Luciferic powers are within the human being and stir the inner life, moving and weaving through it, the result will then be that Ahrimanic powers will appear as an active force outside the human being. Thus the Egyptians, who

were themselves permeated by Lucifer, rightly see a picture of the world in which Ahriman-Typhon is active.

Now, we must realize that modern humanity is permeated by Ahriman. Ahriman moves and surges within human beings, just as Lucifer moved and surged within the Egyptian world. However, when Ahriman works through Lucifer, then human beings see their picture of the world in a Luciferic form. How does the human being see this picture of the world? This Luciferic picture of the world has been created, it is here. It has become increasingly popular for modern times and has taken hold of all circles of people who want to consider themselves progressive and enlightened.

If the mystery of Christmas is to be understood, we must bear in mind that Lucifer is the power wanting to retain the world-picture of an earlier stage. Lucifer is the power trying to bring into the modern world-conception that which existed in earlier stages of human development. He wants to give permanence to what existed in earlier periods. All that was moral in earlier stages also exists of course today. (The significance of morality always lies in the present, where, like seeds for the future, it provides the basis for the creation of worlds yet to come.) But Lucifer strives to separate morality as such, all moral forces, from our world picture. He allows the laws of natural necessity alone to appear in our picture of the external world. Thus the impoverished human being of modern times is presented with a wisdom of the world in which the stars move according to purely mechanical necessity, in which the stars are devoid of morality, so that the moral meaning of the world's order cannot be found in their movements. This, my dear friends, is a purely Luciferic world picture.

Just as the Egyptians looked out into the world and saw Ahriman-Typhon as the one who takes Osiris away from them, so too, we must look at our Luciferic world picture, at the mathematical-mechanical world picture of modern-day astronomy and other branches of natural science, and realize that the Luciferic element holds sway in this world picture, just as the typhonic-Ahrimanic element held sway in the Egyptian world picture. Just as the ancient Egyptians saw their outer world picture in an Ahrimanic-typhonic light, so

modern human beings, because they are Ahrimanic, see it with Luciferic characteristics. Lucifer is present, he is working there. Just as the Egyptians imagined Ahriman-Typhon working in wind and weather, in the storms of winter, so modern human beings, if they wish to truly understand the world, must imagine that Lucifer appears to them in the sunshine and in the light of the stars, in the movements of the planets and of the moon. The world picture of Copernicus, Galileo, and Kepler is a Luciferic construction. Precisely because it arose from and corresponds to our Ahrimanic forces of knowledge, its content - please distinguish here between method and content - is a Luciferic one. When the Mystery of Golgotha took place, the divine Sophia, the wisdom that enables us to see into the world with understanding, worked in a twofold way. Divine wisdom, heavenly wisdom, worked in the revelation to the poor shepherds in the fields, and in the revelation to them because of our new knowledge. We do not lack Christ; but the knowledge of Christ, the Sophia of Christ, the Isis of Christ is lacking.

This is what we should engrave in our souls as a content of the mystery of Christmas. We must realize that since the nineteenth century even theology has come to look upon Christ merely as the man from Nazareth. That means that theology is completely permeated by Lucifer. It no longer sees into the spiritual background of existence. External natural science is Luciferic; theology is Luciferic. Of course if we are speaking of the inner aspect of the human being as you can see from my previous words we could just as well say that in this theology the human being is Ahrimanic. Then in the same way we must say of the Egyptians that they were Luciferic, just as we say of them that their perception of the external world was Ahrimanic. Modern human beings must understand the mystery of Christmas in a new way. They must realize that they must first of all seek Isis, in order that Christ may appear to them. The cause of our misfortunes and the problems of modern civilization is not that we have lost Christ, who stands before us in a far greater glory than Osiris did in the eyes of the Egyptians. It is not that we have lost him and need to set out in search of him, armed with the force of Isis. No, what we have lost is the knowledge of Christ Jesus, insight into his being. This is what we must find again with the power of the Jesus Christ who is in us.

This is how we must look upon the content of the Christmas festival. For many modern people Christmas is nothing more than a festival for giving and receiving presents, something which they celebrate every year through habit. Like so many other things in modern life the Christmas festival has become an empty phrase, And it is just because so many things have become nothing more than a phrase that modern life is so full of calamities and chaos.

This is in truth the deeper reason for the chaos in our modern life.

If in this our community, we could acquire the right feelings for everything which has become mere phrases in the present age, and if these feelings could enable us to find the impulses needed for the renewals that are so necessary, then this community, which calls itself the anthroposophical community, would be worthy of its existence. This community should understand the terrible significance for our age that such things as the Christmas festival are carried forward as a mere phrase. We should be able to understand that in the future this must not be allowed, and that these things must be given a new content. Old habits must be left behind and new insights must take their place. If we cannot find the inner courage needed to do this, then we share in the lie which keeps up the yearly Christmas festival merely as a phrase, celebrating it without our souls feeling and sensing the true significance of the event. Are we really lifted up to the highest concerns of humanity when we give and receive presents every year out of habit at this festival of Christ? Do we lift ourselves up to the highest concerns of humanity when we listen to the words - which have also become a phrase - spoken by the representatives of the various religious communities! We should forbid ourselves to continue in this inner hollowness of our Christmas celebrations. We should make the inner decision to give such a festival a content which allows the highest, worthiest feelings to pass through our souls. Such a festival celebration would raise humankind to the comprehension of the meaning of its existence.

Ask yourselves whether the feelings in your hearts and souls when you stand before the Christmas tree and open the presents which are given out of habit, and the Christmas

cards containing the usual phrases - ask yourselves whether feelings are living in you that can raise humankind to an understanding of the meaning of its evolution on earth! All the problems and misfortune of our time are due to this - we cannot find the courage to lift ourselves above the empty phrases of our age. But it must happen, a new content must [be]come content which can give us entirely new feelings that stir us powerfully, just as those people were stirred who were true Christians in the first Christian centuries, and who felt the Mystery of Golgotha and the appearance of Christ as the highest which humankind could experience upon the earth. Our souls must again acquire something of this spirit.

Oh, the soul will attain to altogether new feelings if it feels committed to experience the new Isis legend within modern humanity. Lucifer kills Isis and then places her body into the infinity of space, which has become the grave of Isis, a mathematical abstraction. Then comes the search for Isis, and her discovery, made possible through the inner force of spiritual knowledge. In place of the heavens that have become dead, this knowledge places what stars and planets reveal through an inner life, so that they then appear as monuments to the spiritual powers that weave with power through space. We are able to look at the manger today in the right way only if we experience in a unique way what is weaving with spiritual power through space, and then look at that being who came into the world through the child. We know that we bear this being within us, but we must also understand him. Just as the Egyptians looked from Osiris to Isis, so we must learn to look again to the new Isis, the holy Sophia. Christ will appear again in his spiritual form during the course of the twentieth century, not through the arrival of external events alone, but because human beings find the power represented by the holy Sophia. The modern age has had the tendency to lose this power of Isis, this power of Mary. It has been killed by all that arose with the modern consciousness of humankind. And the confessions have in part exterminated just this view of Mary.

This is the mystery of modern humanity: Fundamentally speaking, Mary-Isis has been killed, and she must be sought, just as Osiris was sought by Isis in Asia. But she must be sought in the infinite spaces of the universe with the power that Christ can awaken in us,

if we devote ourselves to him in the right way.

Let us picture this rightly, let us immerse ourselves in this new Isis legend which must be experienced, and let us fill our souls with it. Then we will experience in a true sense what humankind in many of its representatives believes, that this new legend fills the holy eve of Christmas, in order to bring us into Christmas day, the day of Christ. This anthroposophical community could become a community of human beings united in love because they feel the need, common to them all, to search. Let us become conscious of this most intimate task! Let us go in spirit to the manger and bring to the Child our sacrifice and our gift, which lie in the knowledge that something altogether new must fill our souls, in order that we may fulfill the tasks which can lead humankind out of barbarism into a truly new civilization.

To achieve this, of course, it is absolutely necessary that in our circles we are prepared to help one another in love, so that a real community of souls arises in which all forms of envy and the like disappear, and in which we do not look merely each at the other, but together face the great goal we have in common. The mystery brought into the world by the Christmas child also contains this - that we can look at a common goal without discord because the common goal signifies union in harmony. The light of Christmas should actually shine as a light of peace, as a light that brings external peace, only because first of all it brings an inner peace into the hearts of human beings. We should learn to say to ourselves: If we can manage to work together in love on the great tasks, then, and only then, do we understand Christmas. If we cannot manage this, we do not understand Christmas.

Let us remember that when we do sow discord, this discord hinders us in understanding the one who appeared among human beings on the first Christmas on earth. Can we not pour this mystery of Christmas into our souls, as something which unites our hearts in love and harmony? If we do not properly understand what spiritual science is, then we will not be able to do this. Nothing will come of this community if we merely bring into it ideas and impulses we have picked up here and there from all corners of the world,

where clichés and routine hold sway. Let us remember that our community is facing a difficult year, that all our forces must be gathered together, and let us celebrate Christmas in this spirit. Oh, I would like to find words that could speak deeply into the heart of each one of you on this evening. Then each one of you would feel that my words contain a greeting which is at the same time an appeal to kindle spiritual science within your hearts, so that it may become a power that can help humanity which is living under such terrible oppression.

Beginning with such points of view, I have gathered the thoughts which I wished to speak to you. Be assured that they are intended as a warm Christmas greeting for each one of you, as something which can lead you into the new year in the very best way. In this spirit, accept my words today as they were intended, as an affectionate Christmas greeting.

Isis-Sophia Des Gottes Weisheit Sie hat Luzifer getötet Und auf der  
Weltenkränze Schwingen In Raumesweitenfortgetragen. Christus-Wollen In  
Menschen wirkend, - Es wird Luzzfer entreissen Und auf des Geisteswissens  
Booten In Menschenseelen auferwecken Isis-Sophia Des Gottes Weisheit.  
Isis-Sophia, Wisdom of God, she has slain Lucifer, And on the wings of the  
powers of the world Carried her hence into the infinite space of the universe. The  
willing of Christ Working in man Shall wrest from Lucifer And on the boats of  
Spirit-knowledge Awaken in human souls Isis-Sophia Wisdom of God. This  
translation edited for clarity

Search for the New Isis, the Divine Sophia: The Quest for the Isis-Sophia

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## **The Etherisation of the Blood**

The following lecture was given by Rudolf Steiner to an audience familiar with the general background of his anthroposophical teachings. He constantly emphasised the distinction between his written works and reports of lectures which were given as oral communications and were not originally intended for print. It should also be remembered that certain premises were taken for granted when the words were spoken. "These premises," Rudolf Steiner writes in his autobiography, "include at the very least the anthroposophical knowledge of Man and of the Cosmos in its spiritual essence; also of what may be called 'anthroposophical history', told as an outcome of research into the spiritual world."

### **The Etherisation of the Blood**

A Lecture By Rudolf Steiner Basle, October 1, 1911 GA 13

WHEREVER we, as human beings, have striven for knowledge, whether as mystics or realists or in any way at all, the acquisition of *self-knowledge* has been demanded of us. But as has been repeatedly emphasised on other occasions, self-knowledge is by no means as easy to achieve as many people believe - anthroposophists sometimes among them. The anthroposophist should be constantly aware of the hindrances he will encounter in his efforts. But the acquisition of self-knowledge is absolutely essential if we are to reach a worthy goal in world-existence and if our actions are to be worthy of us as members of humanity.

Let us ask ourselves the question: Why is the achievement of self-knowledge so difficult? Man is very a complicated being. If we mean to speak truly of his inner life, his life of soul, we shall not begin by regarding it as something simple and elementary. We shall rather have the patience and perseverance, the will, to penetrate more deeply into the marvellous creation of the Divine-Spiritual Powers known to us as Man.

Before we investigate the nature of self-knowledge, two aspects of the life of the human soul may present themselves to us. Just as the magnet has North and South poles, just as light and darkness are present in the world, so there are two poles in man's life of soul. These two poles become evident when we observe a person placed in two contrasting situations. Suppose we are watching someone who is entirely absorbed in the contemplation of some strikingly beautiful and impressive natural phenomenon. We see how still he is standing, moving neither hand nor foot, never turning his eyes away from the spectacle presented to him, and we are aware that inwardly he is picturing his environment. That is one situation. Another is the following: a man is walking along the street and feels that someone has insulted him. Without thinking, he is roused to anger and gives vent to it by striking the person who insulted him. We are there witnessing a manifestation of forces springing from anger, a manifestation of impulses of will, and it is easy to imagine that if the action had been preceded by thought no blow need have been struck. We have now pictured two contrasting situations: in the one there is only ideation, a process in the life of thought from which all conscious will is absent; in the other there is no thought, no ideation, and immediate expression is given to an impulse of will. Here we have examples of the two extremes of human behaviour. The first pole is complete surrender to contemplation, to thought, in which the will has no part; the second pole is the impelling force of will without thought. These facts are revealed simply by observation of external life.

We can go into these things more deeply and we come then into spheres in which we can find our bearings only by summoning the findings of occult investigation to our aid. Here another polarity confronts us - that of sleeping and waking. From the elementary concepts of Anthroposophy we know that in waking life the four members of a man's being - physical body, etheric body, astral body and ego - are organically and actively interwoven, but that in sleep the physical and etheric bodies remain in bed, while the astral body and ego are outpoured into the great world bordering on physical existence. These facts could also be approached from a different point of view. We might ask: what is there to be said about ideation, contemplation, thinking - and about the will and its

impulses on the one hand during waking life and during sleep on the other?

When we penetrate more deeply into this question it becomes evident that in his present physical existence man is, in a certain sense, always asleep, Only there is a difference between sleep during the night and sleep during the day. Of this we can be convinced in a purely external way, for we know that we can wake in the occult sense during the day, that is to say, one can become clairvoyant and see into the spiritual world. The physical body in its ordinary state is asleep to what is then and there happening and we can rightly speak of an awakening of our spiritual senses. In the night, of course, we are asleep in the normal way. It can therefore be said: ordinary sleep is sleep as regards the outer physical world; daytime consciousness at the present time is sleep as regards the spiritual world.

These facts can be considered in yet another light. On deeper scrutiny we realise that in the ordinary waking condition of physical life, man has, as a rule, very little power or control over his will and its impulses. The will is very detached from daily life. Only consider how little of all you do from morning to evening is really the outcome of your own thinking, of your personal resolutions. When someone knocks at the door and you say "Come in!", that cannot be called a decision of your own thinking and will. If you are hungry and seat yourself at a table, that cannot be called a decision made by the will, because it is occasioned by your circumstances, by the needs of your organism. Try to picture your daily life and you will find how little the will is directly influenced from the centre of your being. Why is this the case? Occultism shows us that in respect of his will man actually sleeps by day, that is to say he is not in the real sense present in his will-impulses at all. We may evolve better and better concepts and ideas; or we may become more highly moral, more cultured individuals, but we can do nothing as regards the will. By cultivating better thoughts we can work *indirectly* upon the will but as far as life is concerned we can do nothing *directly* to it, for in the waking life of day, our will is influenced only in an indirect way, namely through *sleep*. When we are asleep we do not think; ideation passes over into a state of sleep. The will, however, awakes, permeates our organism from outside, and invigorates it. We feel strengthened in the morning because what has penetrated into our organism is of the nature of will. That we are not aware of

this activity of the will becomes comprehensible when we remember that all conceptual activity ceases when we ourselves are asleep. To begin with, therefore, this stimulus shall be given for further contemplation, further meditation. The more progress you make in self-knowledge, the more you will find confirmation of the truth of the words that man sleeps in respect of his will when he is awake and sleeps in respect of his conceptual life when he is asleep. The life of will sleeps by day; the life of thought sleeps by night.

Man is unaware that the will does not sleep during the night because he only knows how to be awake in his life of thought. The will does not sleep during the night but it then works as it were in a fiery element, works upon his body in order to restore what has been used up by day.

Thus there are two poles in man, the life of observation and ideation, and the impulses of will; and man is related in entirely opposite ways to these two poles. The whole life of soul moves in various nuances between these two poles, and we shall come nearer to understanding it by bringing this microcosmic life of soul into relation with the higher worlds.

From what has been said we have learnt that the life of thought and ideation is one of the poles of man's life of soul. This life of thought is something which seems unreal to materialistically minded people. Do we not often hear it said: "Oh, ideas and thoughts are *only* ideas and thoughts!" This is intended to imply that if someone has [a piece] of bread or meat in his hand it is a reality because it can be eaten, but a thought is *only* a thought, it is not a reality. Why is this said? It is because what man calls his thoughts are related to what thoughts really are as a shadow-image is to the actual thing. The shadow-image of a flower points you to the flower itself, to the reality. So it is with thoughts. Human thinking is the shadowing forth of ideas and beings belonging to a higher world, the world we call the Astral plane. And you represent thinking rightly to yourself when you picture the human head thus - it is not absolutely correct but simply diagrammatic. In the head are thoughts but these thoughts must be pictured as living beings on the Astral plane. Beings of the most varied kinds are at work there in the form of teeming concepts

and activities which cast their shadow-images into men, and these processes are reflected in the human head as thinking.

#### Diagram 1

As well as the life of thought in the human soul, there is also the life of feeling. Feelings fall into two categories: those of pleasure and sympathy and those of displeasure and antipathy. The former are aroused by good deeds, benevolent deeds; antipathy is aroused by evil, malevolent deeds. Here there is something more than and different from, the mere forming of concepts. We form concepts of things irrespectively of any other factor. But our soul experiences sympathy or antipathy only in respect of what is beautiful and good, or what is ugly and evil. Just as everything that takes place in man in the form of thoughts points to the Astral plane, so everything connected with sympathy or antipathy points to the realm we call Lower Devachan. Processes in the Heavenly World, or Devachan, are projected, mainly into our breast, as feelings of sympathy or antipathy for what is beautiful or ugly, for what is good or evil. So that in our feelings for the moral-aesthetic element, we bear within our souls shadow-reflections of the Heavenly World or Lower Devachan.

There is still a third province in the life of the human soul which must be strictly distinguished from the mere preference for good deeds. There is a difference between standing by and taking pleasure in witnessing some kindly deed and setting the will in action and actually performing some such deed. I will call pleasure in good deeds or displeasure in evil deeds the *aesthetic* element as against the *moral* element that impels a man to perform some good deed. The moral element is at a higher level than the purely aesthetic; mere pleasure or displeasure is at a lower level than the will to do something good or bad. In so far as our soul feels constrained to give expression to moral impulses, these impulses are the shadow-images of Higher Devachan, of the Higher Heavenly World.

It is easy to picture these three stages of activity of the human soul - the purely

intellectual (thoughts, concepts), the aesthetic (pleasure or displeasure), and the moral (revealed in impulses to good or bad deeds) - as *microcosmic* images of the three realms which in the Macrocosm, the great Universe, lie one above the other. The Astral world is reflected in the world of thought; the Devachanic world is reflected in the aesthetic sphere of pleasure and displeasure; and the Higher Devachanic world is reflected as morality.

|                         |                                                       |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Thoughts:               | Shadow-images of Beings of the Astral Plane (Waking)  |
| Sympathy and Antipathy: | Shadow-images of Beings of Lower Devachan (Dreaming)  |
| Moral Impulses:         | Shadow-images of Beings of Higher Devachan (Sleeping) |

If we connect this with what was said previously concerning the two poles of the soul-life, we shall take the pole of intellect to be that which dominates the waking life, the life in which man is mentally awake. During the day he is awake in respect of his intellect; during sleep he is awake in respect of his will. It is because at night he is asleep in respect of intellect that he is unaware of what he is happening with his will. The truth is that what we call *moral principles*, *moral impulses*, are working indirectly into the will. And in point of fact man needs the life of sleep in order that the moral impulses he takes into himself through the life of thought can become active and effective. In his ordinary life today man is capable of accomplishing what is right only on the plane of intellect; he is less able to accomplish anything on the moral plane for there he is dependent upon help coming from the Macrocosm.

What is already within us can bring about the further development of intellectuality, but the Gods must come to our aid if we are to acquire greater moral strength. We go to sleep in order that we may plunge into the Divine Will where the intellect does not intervene and where Divine Forces transform into the power of will the moral principles we accept, where they instill into our will that which we could otherwise receive only into our thoughts.

Between these two poles, that of the will which wakes by night and of the intellect which is awake by day, lies the sphere of aesthetic appreciation which is continuously present in man. During the day man is not fully awake - at least only the most prosaic, pedantic individuals are always fully awake in waking life. We must always be able to dream a little even by day when we are awake; we must be able to give ourselves up to the enjoyment art, of poetry, or of some other activity that is not concerned wholly with crass reality. Those who can give themselves up in this way form a connection with something that can enliven and invigorate the whole of existence. To give oneself up to such imaginings is like a dream making its way into waking life. Into the life of sleep you know well that dreams enter; these dreams in the usual sense, dreams which permeate sleep-consciousness. Human beings need also to dream by day if they do not wish to lead an arid, empty, unhealthy waking life. Dreaming takes place during sleep at night in any case and no proof of this is required. Midway between the two poles of night dreaming and day dreaming is the condition that can come to expression in fantasy.

So here again there is a threefold life of soul. The intellectual element in which we are really awake brings us shadow-images of the Astral Plane when by day we give ourselves up to a thought - wherein the most fruitful ideas for daily life and great inventions originate. Then during sleep, when we dream, these dreams play into our life of sleep and shadow-images from Lower Devachan are reflected into us. And when we work actively during sleep, impressing morality into our will - we cannot be aware of this actual process but certainly we can of its effects - when we are able to imbue our life of thoughts during the night with the influence of Divine Spiritual Powers, then the impulses we receive are reflections from Higher Devachan, the Higher Heavenly World. These reflections are the moral impulses and feelings which are active within us and lead to the recognition that human life vindicated only when we place our thoughts at the service of the good and the beautiful, when we allow the very heart's blood of Divine Spiritual life to stream through our intellectual activities, permeating them with moral impulses.

The life of the human soul as presented here, first from external, exoteric observation and then from observation of a more mystical character is revealed by deeper (occult)

investigation. The processes that have been described in their more external aspect can also be perceived in man through clairvoyance. When a man stands in front of us today in his waking state and we observe him with the eye of clairvoyance, certain rays of light are seen streaming continually from the heart towards the head. Within the head these rays play around the organ known in anatomy as the pineal gland. These streamings arise because human blood, which is a physical substance, is perpetually resolving itself into etheric substance. In the region of the heart there is a continual transformation of the blood into this delicate etheric substance which streams upwards towards the head and glimmers around the pineal gland. This process - the etherisation of the blood - can be perceived in the human being all the time during his waking life.

## Diagram 2

The occult observer is able to see a continual streaming from outside into the brain, and also in the reverse direction, from the brain to the heart. Now these streams, which in sleeping man come from outside, from cosmic space, from the Macrocosm, and flow into the inner constitution of the physical body and etheric bodies lying in the bed, reveal something remarkable when they are investigated. These rays vary greatly in different individuals. Sleeping human beings differ very drastically from one another, and if those who are a little vain only knew how badly they betray themselves to occult observation when they go to sleep during public gatherings, they would try their level best not to let this happen!

Moral qualities are revealed distinctly in the particular colouring of the streams which flow into human beings during sleep; in an individual of lower moral principles, the streams are quite different from what is observable in an individual of noble principles. Endeavours to dissemble are useless. In the face of the higher Cosmic Powers, no dissembling is possible. In the case of a man who has only a slight inclination towards moral principles the rays streaming into him are a brownish red in colour - various shades tending toward brownish red. In a man of high moral ideals the rays are lilac-violet in colour. At the moment of waking or of going off to sleep a kind of struggle takes place in

the region of the pineal gland between what streams down from above and what streams upward from below. When a man is awake the intellectual element streams upwards from below in the form of currents of light, and what is of moral-aesthetic nature streams downwards from above. At the moment of waking or of going off to sleep, these two currents meet, and in the man of low morality a violent struggle between the two streams takes place in the region of the pineal gland. In the man of high morality there is around the pineal gland as it were a little sea of light. Moral nobility is revealed when a calm glow surrounds the pineal gland at these moments. In this way a man's moral disposition is reflected in him, and this calm glow of light often extends as far as the heart. Two streams can therefore be perceived in man - the one Macrocosmic, the other, Microcosmic.

To estimate the significance of how these two streams meet in man is possible only by considering on the one hand what was said previously in a more external way about the life of the soul and how this life reveals the threefold polarity of the intellectual, the aesthetic and the moral elements that stream downwards from above, from the brain toward the heart; and if, on the other hand, we grasp the significance of what was said about turning our attention to the corresponding phenomenon in the Macrocosm. This corresponding phenomenon can be described today as the result of the most scrupulously careful occult investigation of recent years, undertaken by individuals among genuine Rosicrucians. These investigations have shown that something similar to what has been described in connection with the Microcosm also takes place in the Macrocosm. You will understand this more fully as time goes on.

Just as in the region of the human heart the blood is continually being transformed into etheric substance, a similar process takes place in the Macrocosm. We understand this when we turn our minds to the Mystery of Golgotha - to the moment when the blood flowed from the wounds of Jesus Christ.

This blood must not be regarded simply as chemical substance, but by reason of all that has been said concerning the nature of Jesus of Nazareth it must be recognised as

something altogether unique. When it flowed from His wounds, a substance was imparted to our Earth, which in uniting with it, constituted an Event of the greatest possible significance for all future ages of the Earth's evolution - and it could take place only once. What came of this blood in the ages that followed? Nothing different from what otherwise takes place in the heart of man. In the course of Earth evolution this blood passes through a process of "etherisation." And just as our human blood streams upwards from the heart as ether, so since the Mystery of Golgotha the etherised blood of Christ Jesus has been present in the ether of the earth. The etheric body of the Earth is permeated by the blood - now transformed - which flowed on Golgotha. This is supremely important. If what has thus come to pass through Christ Jesus had not taken place, man's condition on the Earth could only have been as previously described. But since the Mystery of Golgotha it has always been possible for the etheric blood of Christ to flow together with the streamings from below upward, from heart to head.

Because the etherised blood of Jesus of Nazareth is present in the etheric body of the Earth, it accompanies the etherised human blood streaming upwards from the heart to the brain, so that not only those streams of which I spoke earlier meet in man, but the human blood-stream unites with the blood-stream of Christ Jesus. A union of these two streams can, however, come about only if a person is able to unfold true understanding of what is contained in the Christ Impulse. Otherwise there can be no union; the two streams then mutually repel each other, thrust each other away. In every epoch of Earth evolution understanding must be acquired *in the form suitable for that epoch*. At the time when Christ Jesus lived on Earth, preceding events were rightly understood by those who came to His forerunner, John, and were baptised by him according to the rite described in the Gospels. They received baptism in order that their sin, that is to say, the karma of their previous lives - karma which had come to an end - might be changed; and in order that they might realise that the most powerful Impulse in Earth evolution was about to descend into a physical body. But the evolution of humanity progresses and in our present age what matters is that people should recognise the need for the knowledge contained in Spiritual Science and be able so to fire the streams flowing from heart to brain that this knowledge can be understood.

If this comes to pass, individuals will be able to receive and comprehend the event that has its beginning in the Twentieth Century: this event is *the appearance of the Christ as an Etheric Being in contradistinction to the Physical Christ of Palestine*. For we have now reached the point of time when the Etheric Christ enters into the life of the Earth and will become visible - at first to a small number of individuals through a form of natural clairvoyance. Then in the course of the next three thousand years, He will become visible to greater and greater numbers of people. This will inevitably come to pass in the natural course of development. That it will come to pass is as true as were the achievements of electricity in the nineteenth century. A number of individuals will see the Etheric Christ and will themselves experience the event that took place at Damascus. But this will depend upon such men learning to be alert to the moment when Christ draws near to them. In only a few decades from now it will happen, particularly to those who are young - already preparation is being made for this - that some individual here or there has certain experiences. If he has sharpened his vision through having assimilated Anthroposophy, he may become aware that suddenly someone has come near to help him, to make him alert to this or that. The truth is that Christ has come to him, although he believes that what he saw is a physical man. He will come to realise that what he saw was a supersensible being, because it immediately vanishes. Many a human being will have this experience when sitting silent in his room, heavy-hearted and oppressed, not knowing which way to turn. The door will open, and the etheric Christ will appear and speak words of consolation to him. The Christ will become a living Comforter to men. However strange it may as yet seem, it is true nevertheless that many a time when people - even in considerable numbers - are sitting together, not knowing what to do, and waiting, they will see the Etheric Christ. He will Himself be there, will confer with them, will make His voice heard in such gatherings. These times are approaching, and the positive, constructive element now described will take real effect in the evolution of mankind.

No word shall be said here against the great advances made by culture in our day; these achievements are essential for the welfare and the freedom of men. But whatever can be gained in the way of outer progress in mastering the forces of nature, is something small

and insignificant compared with the blessing bestowed upon the individual who experiences the awakening soul through Christ, the Christ who will now be operative in human culture and its concerns. Men will thereby acquire forces that make for unification. In very truth Christ brings constructive forces into human culture and civilisation.

If we were to look into early post-Atlantean times, we would find that men built their dwelling places by methods very different from those used in modern life. In those days they made use of all kinds of growing things. Even when building palaces they summoned nature to their aid by utilizing plants interlaced with branches of trees and so on, Whereas today men must build with broken fragments. All the culture of the external world is contrived with the aid of products of fragmentation. And in the course of the coming years you will realise even more clearly how much in our civilised life is the outcome of destruction.

Light itself is being destroyed in this post-Atlantean age of the Earth's existence, which until the time of Atlantis was a progressive process. Since then it has been a process of decay.\* What is light? Light decays and the decaying light is *electricity*. What we know as electricity is light that is being destroyed in matter. And the chemical force that undergoes a transformation in the process of Earth evolution is *magnetism*. Yet a third force will become active and if electricity seems to work wonders today, this third force will affect civilisation in a still more miraculous way. The more of this force we employ, the faster the earth will tend to become a corpse and its spiritual part prepare for the Jupiter embodiment. Forces have to be applied for the purpose of destruction, in order that man may become free of the Earth and that the Earth's body may fall away. As long as the earth was involved in progressive evolution, no such destruction took place, for the great achievements of electricity can only serve a decaying Earth. Strange as this sounds, it must gradually become known. By understanding the process of evolution we shall learn to assess our culture at its true value. We shall also learn that it is necessary for the Earth to be destroyed, for otherwise the spiritual could not become free. We shall also learn to value what is positive, namely the penetration of spiritual forces into our

existence on Earth.

\* See also the section at the end of the text, containing answers given by Dr. Steiner to questions.

Thus we realise what a tremendous advance was signified by the fact that Christ lived for three years on the Earth in a human body specially prepared in order that He might be visible to physical eyes. Through what came to pass during those three years men have been made ready to behold the Christ who will move among them in an etheric body, who will participate in earthly life as truly and effectively as did the Physical Christ in Palestine. If men observe such happenings with undimmed senses they will know that there is an etheric body that will move about in the physical world, but is the *only* etheric body able to work in the physical world as a human physical body works. It will differ from a physical body in this respect only, that it can be in two, three, nay even in a hundred, a thousand places at the same time. This is possible only for an etheric, not for a physical form. What will be accomplished in humanity through this further advance is that the two poles of which I have spoken, the intellectual and the moral, will more and more become one; they will merge into unity. This will come about because in the course of the next millennia men will become aware of the presence of the Etheric Christ in the world; more and more they will be influenced in waking life too by the direct working of the Good from the spiritual world. Whereas at the present time, the will is asleep by day, and man is only able to influence it indirectly through thought, in the course of the next millennia, through the power which from our time onwards is working in us under the aegis of Christ, it will come about that the deeds of men in waking consciousness too can be directly productive of Good.

The dream of Socrates, that virtue can be taught, will come true; more and more it will be possible on Earth not only for the intellect to be stimulated and energized by this teaching but for moral impulses to be spread abroad. Schopenhauer said, "To preach morality is easy; to establish it is very difficult." Why is this? Because no morality has yet been spread by preaching. It is quite possible to recognise moral principles and yet not abide

by them. For most people the Pauline saying holds good, that the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. This will change, because the moral fire streaming from the figure of Christ will intensify recognition of the need for moral impulses. Man will transform the earth by feeling with ever-increasing strength that morality is an essential part of it. In the future, to be immoral will be possible only for individuals who are goaded in this direction, who are possessed by evil demons, by Ahrimanic, Asuric Powers and moreover aspire to be so.

In time to come there will be on Earth a sufficient number of individuals who teach morality and at the same time sustain its principles; but there will also be those who by their own free decision surrender themselves to the evil Powers and thus enable an excess of evil to be pitted against a good humanity. Nobody will be forced to do this; it will lie in the free will of each individual.

Then will come the epoch when the Earth passes into conditions of which, as in so much else, Oriental Occultism and Mysticism alone give some idea. The moral atmosphere will by then have gathered strength. For many thousands of years Oriental Mysticism has spoken of this epoch, and since the coming of Gautama Buddha it has spoken with special emphasis about that future condition when the earth will be bathed in a “moral-ether-atmosphere.” Ever since the time of the ancient Rishis it was the great hope of Oriental Mysticism that this moral impulse would come to the Earth from Vishva-Karman or, as Zarathustra proclaimed, from Ahura Mazdao. Thus Oriental Mysticism foresaw that this moral impulse, this moral atmosphere, would come to the Earth from the Being we call the Christ. And it was upon Him, upon Christ, that the hopes of Oriental Mysticism were set.

Oriental Mysticism was able to picture the consequences of that event but not the actual form it would take. The mind could picture that within a period of 5,000 years after the great Buddha achieved Enlightenment, pure Akashic forms, bathed in fire, lit by the sun, would appear in the wake of One beyond the ken of Oriental Mysticism. A wonderful picture in very truth: that something would happen to make it possible for the Sons of

Fire and of Light to move about the Earth, not in physically embodiment but as pure Akashic forms within the Earth's moral atmosphere. But then, so it was said, in 5,000 years after Gautama Buddha's Enlightenment, the Teacher will also be there to make known to men what the nature of these wonderful forms of pure Fire and Light. This teacher - the Maitreya Buddha - will appear 3,000 years after our present era and will speak of the Christ Impulse.

Thus Oriental Mysticism unites with the Christian knowledge of the West to form a wonderfully beautiful unity. It is also disclosed that he who will appear three thousand years after our era as the Maitreya Buddha will have incarnated again and again on the Earth as a Bodhisattva, as the successor of Gautama Buddha. One of his incarnations was that of Jeshu ben Pandira, who lived a hundred years before the Christian era. The being who incarnated in Jeshu ben Pandira is he who will one day become the Maitreya Buddha, and who from century to century returns ever and again in a body of flesh, not yet as Buddha, but as Bodhisattva. Even now there proceeds from him who later on will be the Maitreya Buddha, the most significant teachings concerning the Christ Being and the Sons of Fire - the Agnishvattas - of Indian Mysticism.

The indications by which the Being who is to become the Maitreya Buddha can be recognised are common to all genuine Eastern mysticism and to Christian gnosis. The Maitreya Buddha who, in contrast to the Sons of Fire, will appear in a physical body as Bodhisattva, can be recognised by the fact that in the first instance his early development gives no intimation of the nature of the individuality within him. Only those possessed of understanding will recognise the presence of a Bodhisattva in such a human being between the ages of thirty and thirty-three, and not before. Something akin to a change of personality then takes place. The Maitreya Buddha will reveal his identity to humanity in the thirty-third year of his life. As Christ Jesus began His mission in His thirtieth year, so do the Bodhisattvas, who will continue to proclaim the Christ Impulse, reveal themselves - in the thirty-third year of their lives. And the Maitreya Buddha himself, as transformed Bodhisattva, speaking in powerful words of which no adequate idea can be given at the present time, will proclaim the great secrets of existence. He will speak in a language that

has first be created, for no human being to-day could formulate words such as those in which the Maitreya Buddha will address humanity. The reason why men cannot be addressed in this way at the present time is that the physical instrument for this form of speech does not yet exist. The teachings of the Enlightened One will not stream into men as teachings only, but will pour moral impulses into their souls. Words such as will then be spoken cannot yet be uttered by a physical larynx; in our time they can be present only in the spiritual worlds.

Anthroposophy is the preparation for everything that the future holds in store. Those who take the process of man's evolution seriously resolve not to allow the soul's development to come to a standstill but to ensure that this development will eventually enable the spiritual part of the Earth to become free, leaving the grosser part to fall away like a corpse - for men could frustrate the whole process. Those who desire evolution to succeed must acquire understanding of the life of the spirit through what we to-day call Anthroposophy. The cultivation of Anthroposophy thus becomes a duty; knowledge becomes something that we actually feel, something towards which we have responsibility. When we are inwardly aware of this responsibility and have this resolve, when the mysteries of the world arouse in us the wish to become Anthroposophists, then our feeling is true and right. But Anthroposophy must not be something that merely satisfies our curiosity; it must rather be something without which we cannot live. Only then are our feelings what they ought to be, only then do we live as building stones in that great work of construction which must be carried out in human souls and can embrace all mankind.

Anthroposophy is a revelation of world-happenings which will confront the men of the future, will confront our own souls whether still in the physical body or in the life between death and a new birth. The coming changes will affect us, no matter whether we are still living in the physical body or whether it has been laid aside. Understanding of these events must however be acquired during life in the physical body if they are to take effect after death. To those who acquire some understanding of the Christ while they are still living in the physical body, it will make no difference, when the moment comes for

vision of the Christ, whether or not they have already passed through the gate of death. But if those who now reject any understanding of the Christ have already passed through the gate of death when this moment arrives, they must wait until their next incarnation, for such understanding cannot be acquired between death and rebirth. Once the foundation has been acquired, however, it endures, and then Christ becomes visible also during the period between death and the new birth.

And so Anthroposophy is not only something we learn for our physical life but is of essential value when we have laid aside the physical body at death.

This is what I wished to impart to you today as a help in answering many questions. Self-knowledge is difficult because man is such a complex being. The reason for this complexity is that he is connected with all the higher Worlds and Beings. We have within us shadow-images of the great Universe and all the members of our constitution - the physical, etheric, astral bodies and the ego - are worlds for Divine Beings. Our physical body, etheric body, astral body and ego form one world; the other is the higher World, the hEaven world. Divine-spiritual Worlds are the bodily members of the Beings of the higher spheres of cosmic existence.

Man is the complex being he is because he is a mirror-image of the spiritual world. Realisation of this should make him conscious of his intrinsic worth. But from the knowledge that although we are reflected images of the spiritual world we nevertheless fall far short of what we ought to be - from this knowledge we also acquire, as well as consciousness of our worth as human beings, the right attitude of modesty and humility towards the Macrocosm and its Gods.

## **Rudolf Steiner's Answers to Questions at the End of the Lecture**

Translated by George Adams

*Question:* How are the words used by St. Paul, “to speak in tongues” (Cor. I: 12), to be understood?

*Answer:* In exceptional human beings it can happen that not only is the phenomenon of speaking present in the waking state, but that something otherwise present in sleep-consciousness only, flows into this speaking. This is the phenomenon to which St. Paul refers. Goethe refers to it in the same sense; he has written two very interesting treatises on the subject.

*Question:* How are Christ's words of consolation received and experienced?

*Answer:* Men will feel these words of consolation as though arising in their own hearts. The experience may also seem like physical hearing.

*Question:* What is the relation of chemical forces and substances to the spiritual world?

*Answer:* There are in the world a number of substances which can combine with or separate from each other. What we call chemical action is projected into the physical world from the world of Devachan - the realm of the Harmony of the Spheres. In the combination of two substances according to their atomic weights, we have a reflection of two tones of the Harmony of the Spheres. The chemical affinity between two substances in the physical world is like a reflection from the realm of the Harmony of the Spheres. The numerical ratios in chemistry are an expression of the numerical ratios of the Harmony of the Spheres, which has become dumb and silent owing to the densification of matter. If one were able to etherealise material substance and to perceive the atomic numbers the inner formative principle thereof, he would be hearing the Harmony of the Spheres.

We have the physical world, the astral world, the Lower Devachan and the Higher Devachan. If the body is thrust down lower even than the physical world, it comes into the sub-physical world, the lower astral world, the lower or evil Lower Devachan, and the lower or evil Higher Devachan. The evil astral world is the province of Lucifer, the evil Lower Devachan the province of Ahriman, and the evil Higher Devachan the province of

the Asuras. When chemical action is driven down beneath the physical plane - into the evil Devachanic world - *magnetism* arises. When light is thrust down into the sub-material - that is to say, a stage deeper than the material world - *electricity* arises. If what lives in the Harmony of the Spheres is thrust down farther still, into the province of the Asuras, an even more terrible force - which it will not be possible to keep hidden very much longer - is generated. It can only be hoped that when this force comes to be known - a force we must conceive as being far, far stronger than the most violent electrical discharge - it can only be hoped that before some discoverer gives this force into the hands of humankind, men will no longer have anything un-moral left in them.

*Question:* What is electricity?

*Answer:* Electricity is light in the sub-material state. Light is there compressed to the utmost degree. An inward quality too must be ascribed to light; light is *itself* at every point in space. Warmth will expand in the three dimensions of space. In light there is a fourth; it is of fourfold extension - it has the quality of inwardness as a fourth dimension.

*Question:* What happens to the Earth's corpse?

*Answer:* As the residue of the Moon-evolution we have our present moon which circles around the Earth. Similarly there will be a residue of the Earth which will circle around Jupiter. Then these residues will gradually dissolve into the universal ether. On Venus there will no longer be any residue. Venus will manifest, to begin with, as pure Warmth, then it will become Light and then pass over into the spiritual world. The residue left behind by the Earth will be like a corpse. This is a path along which man must not accompany the Earth, for he would thereby be exposed to dreadful torments. But there are Beings who accompany this corpse, since they themselves will by that means develop to a higher stage.

Reflected as sub-physical world:

Astral World - the province of Lucifer

Lower Devachan- the province of Ahriman

Higher Devachan - the province of the Asuras

Diagram3

Translated from a shorthand report unrevised by the lecturer. The volume of the Complete Edition of the works of Rudolf Steiner containing the original text of the following lecture, among twenty-two others, is entitled: Das esoterische Christentum und die geistige Führung der Menschheit.. (No. 130 in the Bibliographical Survey, 1961). This English edition of the following lecture is published by permission of the Rudolf Steiner Nachlassverwaltung, Dornach, Switzerland.

## **The Four Sacrifices of Christ**

A Lecture By Rudolf Steiner Basel, 01 June 1914 GA 152

In our present civilization we need, above all, a new knowledge of Christ. This new Christ knowledge is to be gained increasingly through the effects upon us of the science of the spirit. Much, however, that today bears the official seal of Christianity is antagonistic to this new knowledge. It must come to be realized that a school of unselfishness is needed in our present culture. A renewing of responsibility, a deepening of man's moral life, can come only through a training in unselfishness, and under the conditions of the present age only those can go through this school who have won for themselves an understanding of real, all-pervading selflessness.

We can search through the entire evolution of the world without finding a deeper understanding of selflessness than that offered by Christ's appearance upon earth. To know Christ is to go through the school of unselfishness, and to become acquainted with all those incentives to human development that fall gently into our souls, warming and animating every unselfish inclination within us, arousing it from passive to active soul life.

Under the influence of materialism the natural unselfishness of mankind was lost to an extent that will be fully realized only in the distant future. But by contemplating the Mystery of Golgotha, by permeating our knowledge of it with all our feeling, we may acquire again, with our whole soul-being, an education in selflessness. We may say that what Christ did for earthly evolution was included in the fundamental impulse of selflessness, and what He may become for the conscious development of the human soul is the school of unselfishness. We shall best realize this if we consider the Mystery of Golgotha in its most inclusive connection.

This mystery, as we know it, took place once in the physical evolution of the earth. The Being whom we acknowledge as the Christ clothed Himself once in a human body, in the

body of Jesus of Nazareth. But this act was preceded by three preparatory steps. Three times earlier something of a similar nature occurred, not as yet on earth but in the spiritual world, and we have in a sense, three Mysteries of Golgotha that had not yet been fulfilled upon the physical plane. Only the fourth took place in the physical realm, as related in the Gospels and in the Pauline Epistles. This greatest of earthly events was prepared for by three supramundane acts, one taking place in the old Lemurian period and two in the Atlantean. Although these three preparatory events occurred in the supramundane sphere, their power descended to the earth; we shall try to understand the effect of these forces upon human evolution.

In relation to our moral life, our understanding of the world, and in relation to all the activities of our consciousness soul, we must first become selfless. This is a duty of our present culture to the future. Mankind must become more and more selfless; therein lies the future of right living, and of all the deeds of love possible to earthly humanity. Our conscious life is and must be on its way to unselfishness. In a certain connection, essential unselfishness already exists in us, and it would be the greatest misfortune for earthly man if certain sections of his being were as self-seeking as he still is in his moral, intellectual and emotional life. If the same degree of selfishness could take over our senses, it would be a great misfortune because our senses now work in our bodies in a truly unselfish manner.

We have eyes in our body; through these eyes we see, but only because they are selfless and we do not feel them. We see things through them, but the eyes themselves are apart from our perception; it is the same with the other senses. Let us assume that our eyes were self-seeking. What would happen to men? We should approach the color blue, for example, and because our eyes would use up the color immediately within themselves instead of letting it pass through, we should feel a sort of suction in the eyes. If our eyes were as selfish as we are in our moral, intellectual and emotional life, and they wished to experience the effect of red in themselves, we should feel a sharp stab. If our eyes were self-seeking, all our impressions would give us sucking or stabbing pains. We should be painfully conscious that we have eyes. Today, however, humanity is aware of color and

light without having to think of the seeing process. The eye is selflessly extinguished during perception. It is the same with the other senses.

In our senses unselfishness reigns, but they would never have reached this unselfishness if Lucifer, even in the old Lemurian age, had been left to his own devices. The spirit who said, as related in the Bible, "Your eyes shall be opened," made it necessary to transfer man to a sphere of earthly life in which his eyes, if they had developed as they would have done under Lucifer's influence, would have become self-seeking. With every impression - and it would have been the same with the other senses - man would have cried out, "Oh, it stabs me here!" He would not have perceived red in his environment. Or he would have said, "Oh, something sucks in my eyes!" He would not have been aware of the color blue, but would have simply felt the suction. This danger to humanity was averted in the Lemurian age by a Being Who later, through the Mystery of Golgotha, incarnated in the body of Jesus of Nazareth. In this earlier age, however, He ensouled Himself - I cannot say incarnated - in one of the archangels.

While the earth was working through the Lemurian age, a Being living in spiritual heights became manifest - one might say, as a sort of prophecy of John's baptism - in an archangel who offered up his soul powers, and was thus permeated by the Christ. Through this means a force was released that acted within human evolution upon earth. Its effect was a quieting and harmonizing of our senses so that today we can use them and find them selfless. If we, understanding this, have become grateful to the world order, we shall say, looking back to these ancient times, that what makes it possible for us as sensory beings to enjoy without pain all the splendor of surrounding nature is Christ's first sacrifice. By ensouling Himself in an archangel He brought forth the power to avert the danger of the selfish senses in man. That was the first step leading to the Mystery of Golgotha.

The human being will gradually learn to develop this deep, significant and religious feeling when he is confronted with the beauty of nature, when he looks up at the starry heavens and at all that the sun illumines in the animal, mineral and vegetable kingdoms.

He will learn to say, "That I am so placed in the world that I can look at it around me, my senses being instruments for the perception of its splendor rather than sources of pain, I owe to Christ's first sacrifice in preparation for the Mystery of Golgotha." In perspective we see before us a time in which all observation and enjoyment of nature will be permeated by Christ; when men, refreshing themselves in an invigorating springtime, in the warmth of summer, or in any of the other delights of nature, will say to themselves, "In taking up all this beauty into ourselves, we must realize that it is not ourselves, but Christ within our senses Who enables us to experience it."

In the first period of the Atlantean evolution selfishness tried - this time through Lucifer and Ahriman - to take possession of another part of the human organism; that is, the vital organs. With this in mind, let us consider what is intrinsic in our life-organism. What is its essential nature? You need only think what it is like when injured by organic disease. Then man begins to suffer from the self-seeking of heart, lungs, stomach or other organs, and the time comes when man knows that he has a heart or stomach, knows it by direct experience, because he has a pain. To be ill means that an organ has become selfish and is leading its own independent life within us. In ordinary normal conditions this is not the case. Then the single organs live selflessly within us. Our everyday constitution holds us up securely in the physical world only when we do not feel that we have stomach, lungs, etc., but have them without feeling them, when they do not demand our attention but remain unselfish servants of the body.

On some other occasion and at some other time we shall consider the reason why illness results from the selfishness of our organs. Today we will confine our discussion to normal conditions. Had it depended upon Lucifer and Ahriman, quite a different state would have existed as early as the Atlantean period. Every single human organ would have been self-seeking, and the results most extraordinary. Assume, for example, that the human being looked at a fruit or something else in the outer world that can be eaten, or that stands in some sort of relation to his vital organs. Someday these relations of the outer world with our organs will be the subject of genuine scientific study. If the other sciences allow themselves to be aligned with spiritual science, it will be known that when

a human being gathers cherries from a tree and eats them, something enters with the cherries that is related to a particular organ; other fruits are related to other organs. Everything that enters the human organism is in some way related to it. If Lucifer and Ahriman could have carried out their designs during the Atlantean period, then, when we picked cherries, for example, the related organ would have felt an inordinate greed. The human being would have felt, not the self-seeking organ only, but all the other organs also, striving against it with equal selfishness! Let us take a different case. Suppose something harmful were present, for while certain things in the world are related to humanity in a beneficial way, others affect it injuriously. Suppose someone were to approach a poisonous plant, or anything else harmful to this or that organ; he would then recognize that he was confronting something that gave a burnt out feeling to one of his organs.

Now let us consider not what we eat, but the air surrounding us. Every element of the atmosphere is related to our organs. If we had become what Lucifer and Ahriman intended and had been thrown upon our own resources, we should have been chased about the world by animal desires for what satisfied one organ or another, or by terrible disgust for all that was injurious. Just imagine how we could possibly develop ourselves in this world if we had such physical organs that we were tossed to and fro like a rubber ball, a plaything for every agreeable odor that we would run after, or were forced by nausea to flee from. That this did not happen, that our vital organs were subdued and harmonized resulted from the great event in the first Atlantean epoch when, in supramundane spheres, the second step was taken toward the Mystery of Golgotha. The Christ Being ensouled Himself again in an archangel, and what was accomplished by this deed shone down into the earth's atmosphere. Then that harmonizing and balancing of the vital organs took place that rendered them selfless.

In our connection with the outer world we should be continuously exposed to severe illnesses and we could not be at all healthy but for this second Christ event. We see in perspective for the future that the human being will acquire, when he is able to imbue himself with a true understanding of the spiritual world, a feeling of gratitude toward the

spiritual beings upon whom humanity depends. He will say in true piety, "I realize that I am able to exist as a physical man with unselfish organs because not I alone have developed myself in the world, but Christ in me, Who has so conditioned my organs that I can be a man!" Thus we come to learn so to regard all that makes us human, fundamentally and in the most comprehensive sense, that we say, "Not I, but Christ in me." In His three preparatory steps, taken before the actual Mystery of Golgotha, Christ provided for the complete evolution of humanity.

In the last part of the Atlantean period humanity faced a third danger. Thinking, feeling and willing were threatened with disorder through the entrance of selfishness. What would have been the result of this? Well, the human being would have intended this or that, and followed this or that impulse of will, while his thinking would have impelled him in quite a different direction, and his feeling in still another. It was necessary for human evolution that thinking, feeling and willing should become unselfish members of the united soul. Under the influence of Lucifer and Ahriman they could not have done this. Thought, feeling and will, becoming independently self-seeking, would have rent asunder the harmonious working of the Christ. In consequence, toward the end of the Atlantean evolution, the third Christ event occurred. Once more the Christ Being ensouled Himself in an archangel, and the power thus generated in the spiritual world made possible the harmonization of thinking, feeling and willing. Truly, as the rays of the physical sun must act upon earth to prevent the withering of plant life, so must the Sun Spirit be reflected upon earth from supramundane spheres as I have just explained. What would have become of the human being without this third Christ event? As if by furies, he would have been seized by his unruly desires, by the activity of his will. He might have gone mad even though his self-seeking reason might have thought with scornful mockery about all that the raging will brought forth. This was averted by the third Christ event when Christ took for the third time the soul of an archangel as an outer vehicle.

Mankind has preserved some memory of how human passion and human thinking were harmonized at this period by forces that descended from supramundane worlds, but the

sign of this memory is not rightly understood. St. George who conquers the dragon, or Michael who conquers the dragon, are symbols of the third Christ event, when Christ ensouled Himself in an archangel. It is the dragon, trodden under foot, that has brought thinking, feeling and willing into disorder. All who turn their gaze upon St. George or Michael with the dragon, or some similar episode, perceive, in reality, the third Christ event. The Greeks who in their wonderful mythology made copies of what happened in the spiritual world at the end of the Atlantean age, revered the Sun Spirit as the harmonizer of man's thinking, feeling and willing. "Thou Sun Spirit," so said those who knew something about it, "Thou hast ensouled Thyself in an etheric spirit form," for such is the form of those we call archangels today; "Thou has brought thinking, feeling and willing, which might otherwise rage through us in confusion, into order with Thy lyre, sounding upon it harmoniously the tones of the human soul!"

So the Sun Spirit became the guardian of the wild, stormy passions when they, as it sometimes happened, gushed forth in the fumes that rise from within the earth and break through its surface. If a human being should expose himself to them and allow only these vapors to work upon him, then thought, feeling and will would rage madly within him. The Greeks placed the Pythia over those vapors, which, in rising out of the earth, bring the passions into disorder through Lucifer and Ahriman. But Apollo shone upon the Pythia, conquered the unruly passions and she became a sibyl. For the Greeks, Apollo, the Sun Spirit, represented the Christ at the stage of His third sacrifice, and the results of Christ's deed were discerned in the attuning of men's passions under the power of the Pythia, conferred upon her by the god Apollo. In this connection Apollo was to the Greeks what is expressed in the victory of Michael or St. George over the dragon. We see also the meaning of the extraordinary pronouncement of Justin Martyr, a saying which, since it emanated from him, we must regard as Christian, although many representatives of Christianity today would consider it heretical. Justin said, "Heraclites, Socrates and Plato were also Christians, the only kind of Christians possible before the actual consummation of the Mystery of Golgotha." Theologians of today no longer realize it but in the first centuries of Christianity the Christian martyrs still knew that the old Greek sages, although they did not use the name of Christ, if asked about Apollo,

would have answered out of their Mystery wisdom, “The great Sun Spirit, Who in the future will live as a man on earth, appears to us in Apollo as though ensouled in him in the form of an archangel.”

Then came the fourth, the earthly mystery, that of Golgotha. The same Christ Being Who had ensouled Himself three times in archangelic form incarnated through what we call the Baptism by John in the Jordan in the body of Jesus of Nazareth.

I admit that it may seem strange when I say that this great Being was ensouled three times in an archangelic form, and then incarnated in a human being. It would seem a more orderly progression if between His ensoulment as an archangel and His human incarnation He had taken an angelic form. So it may seem to us. Yet, even though it is claimed that the statements of spiritual science are fictitious, truly it is not so. You may gather this from corroborative evidence. If you ask me how it happens that Christ did not descend from hierarchy to hierarchy and only afterward to man - if you were to ask me that, I could only answer that I do not know, for I never make theoretical combinations. The facts adduced by spiritual research are that Christ chose three times an archangelic form, leaving out the angelic form, and then made use of a human body. I leave it to future research to determine the reason, which I do not yet know, though I do know that it is true.

Then came the fourth step in the Mystery of Golgotha, and this averted another danger, that of the Luciferic and Ahrimanic influences upon the human ego or I. In the Lemurian age the sense organs would have become disordered through Lucifer; in the first Atlantean period the vital organs were threatened with disorder and disharmony, and in the late Atlantean era the soul organs, the organs that underlie thinking, feeling and willing. In the post-Atlantean period the human ego itself was endangered.

Because the ego or I at this time was to take its place as a living factor in human evolution, an effort was made to establish harmony between this ego and the powers of the cosmos lest it become their plaything. This might have happened. The ego might have so developed that it could not keep a hold upon itself, and had it been delivered to these

forces, everything that came from the soul would have been overpowered by all sorts of elemental forces that arise from wind, air or water. They would have driven the human being violently in all directions.

Michelangelo painted it. In the Sibyls he showed what had threatened mankind. With wonderful skill he made them express the human types of those who felt the coming derangement of the ego, so that although all possible wisdom might come forth, human beings could neither manage nor direct it. Look at the way in which Michelangelo has painted the different degrees of derangement in egos given over to elemental beings. Upon the other side, however, he gives us something else. In the same space he has painted the musing figures of prophecy whose aspect shows the illumination of what preserves the integrity of the ego toward the cosmos. It touches us deeply when we see in the prophets the urgency, the pressure toward the ego and, on the other side, human beings suffering disorder through the ego itself. Then, standing in this space, is the Christ, incarnate in a human body, Who had to bring into order and harmony the ego that was to come into the world.

Yes, the science of the spirit will impress upon us ever more deeply that this human ego, through the fourth Christ event, the Mystery of Golgotha, can come to true unselfishness. The senses have said, "Not I, but Christ in us." The vital organs have said, "Not I, but Christ in us." In his moral and intellectual life man must learn to say, "Not I, but Christ in me." Every step into the spiritual world shows us this.

I wished to explain this today in order that upon another occasion in the near future we may offer certain occult proofs of these facts in order to show that what we call spiritual science will pour itself into our moral and intellectual lives in such a way that human beings may become students of selflessness, that Christ may live within us so that we may feel Him vitally in every word that is uttered in discussions of spiritual science. One more thing, my dear friends. You know that since 1909 we have been producing our Mystery Dramas in Munich. What we presented on the stage there may be considered good or bad; that is not the present question. What was done there, however, required a

certain spiritual power, a power that does not approach the human being simply because of his existence upon earth. Since we can now work in Dornach and carve our different kinds of hard wood, we need muscular strength. We cannot say that we can give this strength to ourselves consciously. It comes from our bodies, from our souls' capacity; it is not under our control. Equally, we have not under our control all that we perform in the spirit and for which we need spiritual power. That is not entirely dependent upon our natural ability, just as what we do physically is not dependent alone upon our talents but also upon the muscular strength of our bodies. We need spiritual powers that are as much outside ourselves as our muscular strength is outside our souls. I know that superficial critics may say, "You are a fool; you believe that spiritual powers come to you from without, whereas they simply rise from your own inner being." Let them think me a fool; I regard them as belonging to the clever men who cannot distinguish hunger from a piece of bread. I know how spiritual powers from without flow into human beings. The idea that hunger creates the bread that satisfies it - believed only by a crazy man - is as false as that the power of our own soul can create the forces needed for our spiritual activities. These forces must flow into us. Just as we know clearly that our hunger is within us, and that bread comes from without, does one who lives in spiritual worlds know what is within himself and what comes to him from without. Since 1909 I have felt personally, more and more, the spiritual power that came from without whenever there was occasion to develop, in stillness and calm, what was necessary for the Mystery Plays. I knew that a spiritual eye was resting upon what had been accomplished, and I relate this as a direct experience.

In the early days, when we were working at spiritual science in Germany, an acquaintance came to us who accepted with enthusiasm what we were able to give at that time. She accepted what it was possible to give out concerning human evolution, cosmic mysteries, reincarnation and karma, not only with devotion and enthusiasm but added to them a wonderful aesthetic sense. Every experience with this person, whether of teaching or conversation, was steeped in beauty. We were few at that time. We had no need to crowd ourselves into such a room as this, and what we now say to a large audience was then discussed by three people - two others and myself. One of these, the person

mentioned above, left us upon the physical plane in 1904, and entered the spiritual world. Such people go through a development after death. When we produced Schure's reconstruction of the *Mystery of Eleusis* at our Congress in 1907, no spiritual influence was perceptible. In 1909 it began, and has come more and more frequently since then. I have accurate knowledge that it was the individuality of our friend whom, objectively and because of her originality, we all loved. Removed to the spiritual world, she acted as a guardian angel to all that we accomplished in the combining of the aesthetic and esoteric elements in our Mysteries. We felt well protected, and looked gratefully upward, realizing that what penetrated us and flowed over into our earthly activities was an expression of the watchfulness of a spiritual personality. But then when it came to conversation with this personality - one may call it conversation since there was a certain reciprocal action - she asserted that she found the way to us easier the more we were permeated with the thought of Christ in the evolution of the earth. If I were to put into earthly words what she reiterated, I should say, expressing symbolically, of course, what is quite different in the spiritual world, "I find the way to you so easily because you are finding evermore the way to make spiritual science into an expression of the living Word of Christ."

The Christ impulse will become for us the living bridge between earthly life and life in superphysical worlds. From the spiritual world Christ three times conditioned for the human being the spiritual constitution that he needed in order to live rightly. Christ intervened three times, making the human sense, life and psychic organs unselfish. It is now man's task to learn unselfishness in his moral and intellectual life through his understanding of the saying, "Not I, but Christ in me."

The world will recognize that the message of the science of the spirit is the Word of Christ. He said, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." The mission of the science of the spirit in our age is to open doors to the living Christ. The dead, who know that Christ has found the passage from heaven to earthly activities, unite with the understanding of the living. If the dead, as their nearest protectors, bend to the earthly living, they will find those souls most intensive who are penetrated and spiritualized by

the Christ impulse. Christ, as the great Sun Spirit, descended from superphysical worlds through the Mystery of Golgotha in order to find a dwelling in the souls of men. Spiritual science is to be the message, telling how Christ may find that dwelling in human souls. If Christ will find His abode in men's earthly souls, then the Christ power will stream back from the earth's aura into the worlds that He forsook for the salvation of mankind, and the whole cosmos will be permeated through and through by Him.

We can work up gradually to such a deep understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha as this by completely imbuing ourselves with spiritual science. If we thus consider this and, in addition, think of it as a school of unselfishness for the intellectual and moral life of future humanity, we shall realize the necessity of the spiritually scientific proclamation of the Mystery of Golgotha! Then we shall know the meaning of the spiritually scientific impulses that are striving to enter our present life. Then that Christ impulse will penetrate humanity that all men can, indeed, accept, for Christ did not appear to one nation only but, being the great Sun Spirit, He belongs to the whole earth and can enter all human souls, regardless of nation and religion. May many gradually find the way to such an understanding of the Christ impulse and of the Mystery of Golgotha! Then, perhaps, that will appear the most Christian that today is stamped as unchristian and heretical. If we strive, not for a mere intellectual understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha, but for the ability to grasp it with our whole souls, we then need the science of the spirit and, as members of our spiritual stream, we shall belong to those souls who are permitted to know and understand the necessities of mankind now and in the immediate future.

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