

I recently drew your attention to the fact that what takes place in the evolution of the earth and of mankind in particular moves in a descending line. Earth humanity and the evolution of the earth itself is on the path of decadence. I drew your attention to the fact that this is today a recognized geological truth, that geologists who are to be taken seriously admit that the earth crust is in a process of decay. Mankind itself, in particular, is in a process of decay through the sensuous-earthly forces. And mankind, in its evolutionary process, must receive spiritual impulses which counteract decadence. Therefore a conscious spiritual life must enter mankind. We must be clear about the fact that we have already passed beyond the pinnacle of Earth evolution. In order that it may proceed, the spiritual must be taken up more and more clearly and distinctly.

At the outset, this seems an abstract fact. But for the spiritual researcher this is not an abstract fact. You know that we can trace the evolution of the *Earth* through the *Saturn*, *Sun*, and *Moon* states right into the *Earth* state. This evolution may also be characterized in the following way: if we speak of present mankind, we may consider the evolution of mankind through the *Saturn*, *Sun* and *Moon* periods as a preparation, as a pre-state. Only upon the Earth itself did man, as he received his ego, gain his true humanhood, and he will receive further elements into his true being during the subsequent evolutionary stages of the *Earth*.

Mission of the Archangel Michael, Lecture 5, GA 194

Evo. Stage	Earth Incarnation	Characteristic	Humanity	The Hierarchies	Seeds of the Future & Future
1	Saturn	Warmth (Deep sleep consciousness, mineral)	The beginnings of Humanity's Physical Body – Given by the Thrones (Spirits of Will) in sacrifice Time begins	The Archai receive their Ego	The seed of Spirit Man (Atma) is implanted
2	Sun	Gaseous (Sleep consciousness, plant)	The Etheric body is given to Humanity by the Kymotes (Spirits of Wisdom)	The Archangels pass through their human stage	The seed of Buddhi (Life Spirit) is implanted into the Etheric body
3	Moon	Liquid (Dreaming consciousness, animal)	Humanity receives the Astral body from the Dynamis (Spirits of Movement)	The Angels pass through their human stage	The seed of Spirit Self (Manas) is implanted into the Astral body
		Solid (Waking consciousness, human)	Man receives his Ego from the Exusiai (Spirits of Form, Elohim, the God of the Old Testament)		

Earth Epochs	5 <sup>th</sup> Post-Atlantean Cultural Ages	Astrological Age	Major Characteristic	Archal Time Spirit Regencies (Ages)				
				Time Spirit (Archangel)	Period of Reign	Receives Impulses From:	Resulting Influence on Human Affairs	
Earth (current)	Polarian	Ancient Indian (7227 - 5067 B.C.)	Cancer	The beginning of religion (the world is maya)	Gabriel	1471 – 1879	Moon	The Harbinger. [1]
	Hyperborean	Ancient Persian (5067 - 2907 B.C.)	Gemini	Working with the Earth	Michael	1879 – 2230	Sun	Christ's Messenger [2]
	Lemurian (the Fall)	Egypto-Chaldean (2907 - 747 B.C.) (Beginning of recorded history)	Taurus	Working with the laws of space (Sentient Soul)	Oriphiel	2230 – 2590	Saturn	Divine wrath [3]
	Atlantean (the Flood or "Ice Age")	Greco-Roman; MoG (33 A.D.) (747 B.C. - 1413 A.D.)	Aries	Man becomes personality, logical deduction (Intellectual Soul)	Anael	2590 – 2940	Venus	Great deeds of love [4]
	5 <sup>th</sup> Post Atlantean	Germanic-Celtic; (Present) (1413 - 3573 A.D.)	Pisces	Individual Freedom (Consciousness Soul)	Zachariel	2940 – 3300	Jupiter	Bringer of wisdom [5]
	Sixth Epoch	Slavic (3573 - 5733 A.D.)	Aquarius	Common individual wisdom and brotherhood, Christianity reaches fulfillment	Raphael	3300 – 3650	Mercury	Doctor among the archangels [6]
	Seventh Epoch	American (5733 - 7893 A.D.)	Capricorn	War of All against All (End of 5 <sup>th</sup> Post-Atlantean Epoch) [8]	Samael	3650 – 4610	Mars	Spirit of conflict [7]

5	Jupiter	Psychic Consciousness	Imagination	The New Jerusalem	Spirit Self (Manas) evolves to Angelic Kingdom
6	Venus	Super-Psychic Consciousness	Inspiration		Life Spirit (Buddhi) evolves to Archangelic Kingdom
7	Vulcan	Spiritual Consciousness	Intuition	Christ-Sophia Union	Spirit Man (Atman) evolves to Archai

\* All dates are approximations. Some were explicitly given by Dr. Steiner in his lectures, which also varied slightly from one lecture to another. The timing of events fluctuates due to the constant interactions between Cosmic Events and Earthly / Evolutionary events, though all are bound by Cosmic Law.

## Notes

### 1. Gabriel

▲ In the next immediately adjacent spiritual realm, the Beings whom we call the Hierarchy of the Archangeloi, the Archangels, unfold their activity. The Archangeloi have to do with much that also plays a part in the evolution of humanity. They have to do, not with the individual human being, but with groups of human beings. Thus, as I have said in many anthroposophical lectures, the evolution of the *peoples* is under the rulership of Archangelic Beings. But it is also the case that certain epochs in Earth-evolution receive their essential impulses from individual Archangeloi. For example, during the three centuries preceding the last third of the nineteenth century, namely during the nineteenth, eighteenth, seventeenth centuries and part of the sixteenth, we must think of the civilised world as being essentially under the dominion of the Archangel known to Christians capable of speaking of these things, as *Gabriel*. This period was therefore the Age of Gabriel.

This particular Gabriel Age is of great significance for the whole evolution of mankind in modern times, for the following reason. Since the Mystery of Golgotha took place it has been possible for men on the Earth to have this realisation: Through the Mystery of Golgotha, Christ, the sublime Being of the Sun, has come down to the Earth. He has descended from the Sun to the Earth, entering into the body of Jesus and uniting Himself with Earth's destiny. But although the Christ Being has remained united with the Earth, it has not been possible through the succeeding rulerships of Archangeloi from the time of the Mystery of Golgotha until that of the dominion of Gabriel, for the Christ Impulse itself actually to lay hold of the inner physical and etheric forces of mankind. This became possible for the first time under the Gabriel impulse which began to work about three hundred years before the last third of the nineteenth century. Thus, in reality, it is only since that time that *by way of the forces of heredity themselves* the Christ Impulse has been able to penetrate humanity inwardly. As yet this has not been achieved.

[Karmic Relationships IV, Lecture 8, GA 240](#)

### 2. Michael

▲ Well, my dear friends, we have asked about the origin of human intelligence, about the origin of human intelligent behavior which, stating it simply, has its instrument in our head organism. And we have seen that this intelligent constitution of our soul stems from that deed of the Archangel Michael which is commonly presented in the symbol of the fall, the casting down of the Dragon. This is actually a very trivial symbol. For, if we really conceive of Michael and the Dragon, we have to visualize, first, the Michael Being, and, secondly, the Dragon who, in reality, consists of all that which enters into our so-called reason, into our intelligence. Not into a hell does Michael cast his opposing hosts, but into the human heads; there this Luciferic ego continues to live. I have characterized human intelligence as an actual Luciferic impulse. Thus we may say: if we look back into the evolution of the *Earth*, we find the *Michael-deed*, and to this Michael-deed is joined the illumination of man by his reason.

[Mission of the Archangel Michael, Lecture 5, GA 194](#)

Then came the age, when those who can read the spiritual events taking place in the universe, became aware that Michael had rejoined the stream of intellectual life. He is pursuing a new metamorphosis of his cosmic office. Before, he sent the stream of thoughts from the outer spiritual world into the souls of men. Now, since the last third of the nineteenth century, he seeks to dwell within the human souls, whose thoughts are being formed. Before, the human beings who were spiritually akin to Michael watched him perform his works in spirit-regions. Now, they know that they must give him his home in their hearts; now, they dedicate to Michael their own Thought-informed, Thought-sustained spiritual life; now, in free, individual Thought-life, they seek counsel from Michael as to their soul's right path.

The Age of Michael has dawned. Hearts are beginning to have Thoughts. The springs of spiritual fervour no longer flow from the darkness only of mystical feeling, but from clear soul-brightness – Thought-informed and Thought-sustained. To understand this, is to receive Michael into the heart. Thoughts which seek today to grasp the Spirit must spring from hearts that throb for Michael, the fiery Thought-King of the Universe.

[The Michael Mystery, Lecture 1, GA 26](#)

### 3. Oriphiel

▲ Something quite similar to a birth took place on the astral plane in 1879. What had slowly ripened since the 14<sup>th</sup> century could now be carried into the world in a freer way, even though only for a few people. For Gabriel's rule was followed by that of the archangel Michael. He's the radiant sun that lets esoteric wisdom shine out into a small host of people. Materialism is included in the divine plan of creation and it has a purpose in the whole world. But the time has now come for the esoteric sun to shine brightly under Michael's radiant direction. For materialism's dark forces are increasing.

Michael's radiant rule will be followed by a dark, terrible age that starts about 2300.

Together with Michael, a dark God has begun his rule – the God Mammon. For occultism Mammon isn't just the God of money. He's the leader of all base, black forces. And his hosts attack men's bodies and souls to corrode and ruin them. There is a lot of talk about bacterial today, and they influence a lot of things. In future they'll increase in a terrifying way, and many human bodies will waste away from terrible diseases and plagues. The brand of sin will be stamped on men's bodies for all to see. Another archangel – Oriphiel – will rule then. He must come to shake men up to their true vocation through terrible tortures. So that this can happen in the right way a small group of people must be prepared today to spread esoteric life in the black age 400–600 years from now. [DL editor: 2307-2507]

One under Michael's rule who feels the urge to participate in spiritual life is called upon to serve archangel Michael and to learn under him so that someday he'll be mature enough to also serve the terrible Oriphiel in the right way. A sacrifice is demanded from those who want to dedicate themselves to a higher life. One should only want to receive spiritual life and experience an awakening if one later wants to use that to put oneself, one's will and everything one has in the service of mankind only.

In four to six centuries the small group of men who are being prepared today will serve the God Oriphiel so that mankind can be saved. If in that age men wanted to be spiritual leaders who hadn't been prepared to stand fast in all storms and to resist Mammon's hosts, they wouldn't be able to serve the God Oriphiel in the right way, and mankind would not be lifted out of their misery. So in order to do it we must work very earnestly now to fulfill our tasks then.

But when dark powers rage most terribly, the brightest light also shines. Oriphiel has ruled before. And that was the time when Christ appeared on earth. Bad powers of degeneration and decadence were ruling everywhere on earth then. And the human race could only be shaken higher by terrible means. Oriphiel is called the archangel of wrath, who purifies mankind with a strong hand.

The story in the Bible where Christ swings a scourge to chase the money changers out of the temple has a deep meaning. Back when things were darkest on earth, Christ appeared as the savior of mankind. Oriphiel's reign ended 109 years after Christ's appearance, and he was replaced by Anael. Then came Zachariel, then Raphael; Samael ruled during the Renaissance and Gabriel from the 16<sup>th</sup> century until 1879. Then Michael began to rule, and circa 2300 Oriphiel, the terrible archangel of wrath, will be ruling things. And as once before, spiritual light will shine into darkness brightly and radiantly. Christ will appear again on earth, although in a different form than before. We're called upon to receive him and to serve him.

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### 4. Anael

▲ After this we find the age of Anael, who draws his forces from Venus. We find the great deeds of love which spread Christianity during this age, countless deeds of love, namely those deeds of love which live in the footsteps of the Irish monks as they spread Christianity in Europe. And we find that love is also the predominant thing in the rest of Christian life during this reign of Anael.

The period in which Anael reigns is the age of love;

[Lecture to Priests: The Apocalypse, Lecture 6, GA 346](#)

### 5. Zachariel

▲ And we find that love is also the predominant thing in the rest of Christian life during this reign of Anael. The reign of Zachariel follows; he draws his forces from Jupiter, mainly forces of wisdom, but forces which could be but little understood during this age. Instead of a real Jupiter reign, the reign of the archangels began to retire more into the background at this time.

Then comes the age in which events occur that are more or less ignored in outer history. After the age of Zachariel is over, humanity's soul is basically sick. Humanity is very sick, and pathogenic substances spread from east to west. Terrible pathogenic substances exist which are dangerous to Christianity, because the period of Jupiter wisdom has ended.

[Lecture to Priests: The Apocalypse, Lecture 6, GA 346](#)

### 6. Raphael

▲ The age of Raphael, the doctor among the archangels, stands behind the sick things which were left behind from the age of Zachariel.

Raphael who leads man into the secrets of healing nature, of the healing cosmos. In a similar way, at St. John's time, all that can then be seen in weaving pictures would have to be transposed into powerful music, so that the cosmic mystery, as it can be experienced by man at this season of St. John, would speak to our hearts.

[The Four Seasons and the Archangels, Lecture 4, GA 229](#)

Goethe, who was initiated between the periods of his life at Leipzig and Strasburg, knew of the harmony of the spheres. He expressed it at the beginning of Faust in words spoken by the Archangel Raphael: "The Sun makes music as of old Amid the sister-spheres of heaven. On its predestined circle rolls With roar of thunder." In deep sleep, the initiate hears these sounds as if they were the notes of trumpets and the rolling of thunder.

[An Esoteric Cosmology, Lecture 6, GA 394](#)

### 7. RE the Sixth Cycle

▲ If we wanted to write what they wrote in ancient times in a modern form, we would have to sign that in the 5/7 age, that is, we're in a larger, fifth cycle, and we're also in a seventh cycle which intersects this. A seventh cycle signifies an end condition. It was preceded by the sixth Gabriel cycle. A great deal is always decided in a sixth cycle; the end is prepared, and the previous age still works into this sixth cycle.

### Samael

▲ The Michael cycle begins about 1879, the Gabriel cycle begins about 1471. Before that was the fifth Samael cycle, and this archangel gets his impulses from Mars.

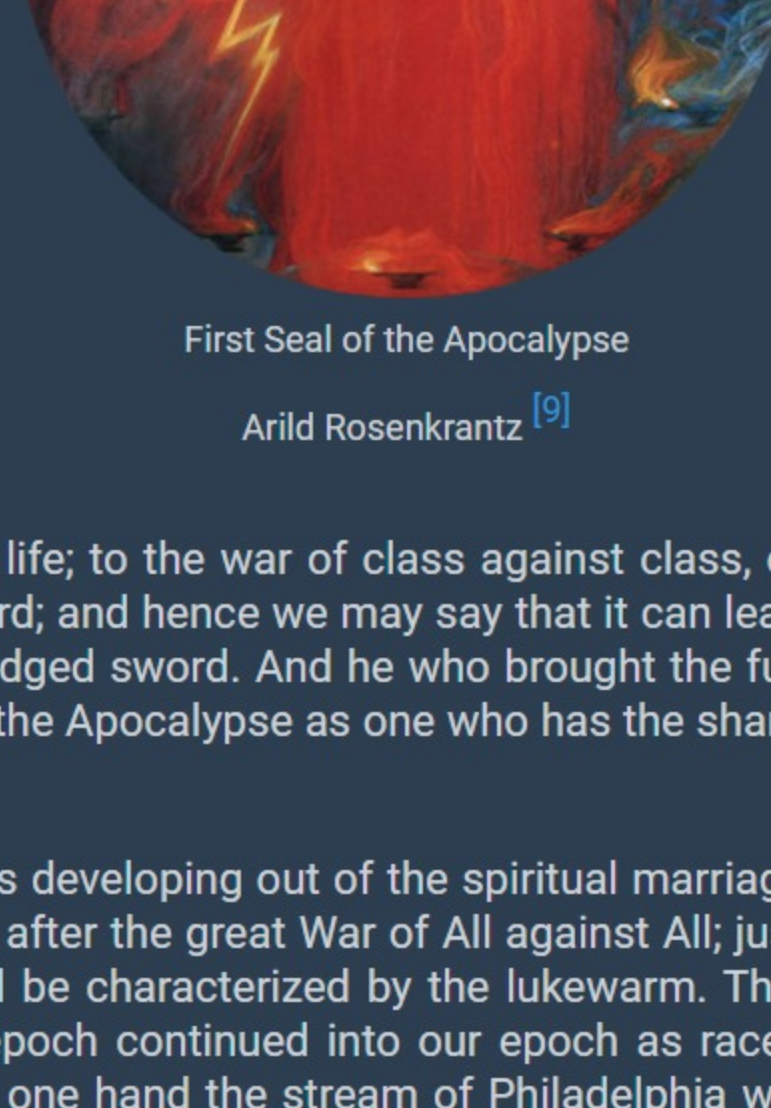
We are living in the fifth post Atlantean period, a sixth one will follow and a seventh one will follow. The catastrophe which then separates us from the next large period which will come the fifth from the sixth period will not just be an external event in nature like the ice age or flood was. This separation of the fifth from the sixth period will become manifest in a more moral way. As I have often mentioned, a war of all against all or a moral catastrophe will separate the fifth from the large sixth period.

Of course, this will also be connected with events in nature, but the latter will be less important. It is introduced by what comes from Mars through Samael, the spirit of conflict, when a prelude for initiation were brought from the spiritual world. At the beginning of our fifth, smaller consciousness soul age we have a warlike of the way our larger age will end after our fifth cultural epoch has been followed by the sixth and seventh ones.

If we listen to what people who still knew something about the secret events which stand behind the public ones said around the beginning of the 15th century when Samael was connecting under the influence of Mars we will get an inkling of the way our large epoch will end. One finds one's way into apocalyptic thinking if one renews numbers with events. If one learns to look at the world in an apocalyptic way, one will, as it were, be able to read the apocalyptic universe, and one will find that countless secrets are revealed to one.

[Lecture to Priests: The Apocalypse, Lecture 6, GA 346](#)

### 8. ▲ We have said repeatedly that our epoch will end, when the seventh age has passed away, by the War of All against All, but this war must really be pictured quite differently from the way we have been accustomed to think of war. We must bear in mind the foundation, the real cause of this war. This foundation or cause is the increase of egoism, of self-seeking and selfishness on the part of man. And we have now progressed so far in our considerations that we have seen what a sharp two-edged sword this "I" of man is. He who does not fully realize that this "I" is a two-edged sword will scarcely be able to grasp the entire meaning of the evolution of humanity and the world. On the one hand this "I" is the cause that man hardens within himself, and that he desires to draw into the service of his "I" his inner capacities and all the other objects at his disposal. This "I" is the cause of man's directing all his wishes to the satisfaction of this "I" as such. Its striving to draw to itself as its own possession all that which belongs to all, to drive away all the other Egos from its realm, to fight them, to be at war with them, is one side of the "I". But on the other hand the must not forget that the "I" is at the same time that which gives man his independence and his inner freedom, which in the true sense of the word elevates him. His dignity is founded in this "I"; it is the basis of the Divine in man.



First Seal of the Apocalypse

Arild Rosenkrantz [9]

Thus the "I" will be the pledge for the highest goal of man. But at the same time, if it does not discover love, if it hardens within itself, it is the tempter that plunges him into the abyss. For it is that which separates men from one another which brings them to the great War of All against All, not only to the war of nation against nation (for the conception of a nation will then no longer have the significance it possesses to-day) but to the war of each single person against every other person in every branch of life; to the war of class against class, of caste against caste and sex against sex. Thus in every field of life the "I" will become the apple of discord; and hence we may say that it can lead on the one hand to the highest and on the other hand to the lowest. For this reason it is a sharp two-edged sword. And he who brought the full Ego-consciousness to man, Christ Jesus, is, as we have seen, symbolically and correctly represented in the Apocalypse as one who holds the sharp two-edged sword in his mouth.

We are now looking with great longing towards the sixth civilization, to that which must be described as developing out of the spiritual marriage between West and East. The sixth stage will be the foundation for the new civilizations which will arise after the great War of All against All; just as our civilization arose after the Atlantean epoch. On the other hand, the seventh race of culture will be characterized by the lukewarm. This seventh age will continue into the new epoch, just as the sixth and seventh races of the Atlantean epoch continued into our epoch as races hardened and stiffening. After the War of All against All, there will be two streams in humanity; on the one hand the stream of Philadelphia will survive with the principle of progress, of inner freedom, of brotherly love, a small group drawn from every tribe and nation; and on the other hand the great mass of all those who are lukewarm, the remains of those who are now becoming lukewarm. (Laodicea).

After the great War of All against All, gradually the evil stream will be led over to good by the good race, the good stream. This will be one of the principal tasks after the great War of All against All; to rescue what can be rescued from those who after the great war will only have the impulse to fight one another and to allow the "I" to express itself in the most external egoism. Such things are always provided for in advance in the spiritual guidance of humanity.

Do not consider it a hard thing if the plan of creation, as something which should be altered, that humanity will be divided into those who will stand on the right and those who will stand on the left, consider it rather as something that is wise in the highest degree in the plan of creation. Consider that through the evil separating from the good, the good will receive its greatest strengthening. For after the great War of All against All, the good will have to make every possible effort to rescue the evil during the period in which this will still be possible. This will not merely be a work of education such as exists to-day, but occult forces will co-operate. For in this next great epoch men will understand how to set occult forces in motion. The good will have the task of working upon their brothers of the evil movement. Everything is prepared beforehand in the hidden occult movements, but the deepest of all occult cosmic currents is the least understood. The movement which is preparing for this, says the following to its pupils: "Men speak of good and evil, but they do not know that it is necessary in the great plan that evil, too, should come to its peals, in order that those who have to overcome it should, in the very overcoming of evil, so use their force that a still greater good results from it." The most capable must be chosen and prepared to live beyond the period of the great War of All against All when men will confront those who bear in their countenances the sign of evil; they must be so prepared that as much good force as possible will flow into humanity. It will still be possible for those bodies, which are to a certain extent soft, to be transformed after the War of All against All by the converted souls, by the souls who will still be led to the good in this last epoch. In this way much will be accomplished. The good would not be so great a good if it were not to grow through the conquest of evil. Love would not be so very intense if it had not to become love so great as to be able even to overcome the wickedness in the countenances of evil men. This is already being prepared for and the pupils are told, "You must not think that evil has no part in the plan of creation. It is there in order that through it may come the greater good."

[The Apocalypse of St. John, Lecture 8, GA 104](#)

### 9. ▲ From a series Rosenkrantz made for Steiner in 1923, illustrating the Seven Apocalyptic Seals. This one is the first in the series, titled "The Mystery of the Creative Word".

The mystery of the creative word represents comprehensively the entire earthly evolution of man. The images in this and the other seals can be found in "The Revelation of St. John" or the Apocalypse. "And I turned to hear the sounds which reached me; then I saw seven golden lamps, and in the midst of the lamps one like unto the Son of Man, in a long garment... with eyes as a flame... and feet of living fire... and a voice like the sound of many waters. And in his right hand were seven stars, and out of his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength."

"Here," Steiner writes, "in general images, most far-reaching mysteries of human evolution are indicated... Every sign and form in the seals is significant... This continuous development from the beginning to the end of the earth reveals itself to the seer, when he sees on the astral plane the archetype of evolving man, as it is reproduced in the first seal."

