

The Apocalypse of St. John

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by

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Introductory Lecture

Spiritual Science — The Gospel — The Future of Mankind

In the autumn of this present year Nuremberg can celebrate an important centenary, for it was in 1808 that this city received one of the greatest German spirits within her walls. He was one of those spirits of whom we hear little to-day and whose works are understood still less; but he will signify very much for man's intellectual life in the future when he is once understood. He is doubtless difficult to understated and it may be some time before people grasp him again. In the autumn of 1808 *Hegel* became Director of the Royal Grammar School in Nuremberg.

Hegel made a statement that we may perhaps take as foundation for what we are going to study. He said: The most profound thought is connected with the figure of Christ, with the outer historical figure. And it is the greatness of the Christian religion that every grade of consciousness can grasp the historical external figure, while at the same time it is a challenge to the most earnest labours of the mind and the deepest penetration. The Christian religion is comprehensible at every stage of culture and yet at the same time it challenges the deepest wisdom. — These are the words of Hegel, the German philosopher.

That the Christian faith, the message of the Gospel, can be understood at every stage of consciousness has been taught for a period to be reckoned almost in millennia. To show that it is a summons to the deepest thought, to a penetration into humanity's whole fund of wisdom, will be one of the tasks of Spiritual Science, if this is understood in its true sense and inmost impulse and made the guide of human life. What we are to consider to-day will be misunderstood if it is thought that Anthroposophy or Spiritual Science is in any way a new religion or desires to establish a new religious faith in place of an old one. One might say, not to be misunderstood, if Spiritual Science is grasped aright, it will be clear that though it is a sure and firm supporter of religious life, in itself it is no religion, nor will it ever contradict any religion as such. It is another matter, however, for it to be the instrument to explain the profoundest truths and the most earnest and vital secrets of religions and show how they may be understood.

It may seem somewhat far-fetched if we make the following comparison in order to show the relation of Theosophy or Anthroposophy to religious documents (and to-day we shall be concerned with the religious documents of Christianity). Anthroposophy is related to the religious documents as mathematical instruction is related to the books on mathematics which have appeared in the course of mankind's history. We have an old work which is really of interest only to students of history versed in mathematics, namely, the geometry of *Euclid*. It contains for the first time in a scholastic form the mathematical and geometrical facts that are now taught to children in school. How few of the children are aware, however, that all that they learn about parallel lines, triangles, angles, etc., stands in that old book, that it was given to humanity then for the first time. It is quite right to make the child conscious that one can realize these things in oneself, that if the human spirit sets its forces in motion and applies them to the forms of space it is able to realize these forms without reference to that ancient book. Yet someone who has never heard of the book and has been taught mathematics and geometry will value and understand it in the right sense if he one day comes across it. He will know how to prize what was given to mankind by the one who set this work for the first time before the human spirit. In this way one might characterize the relation of Spiritual Science to religious documents.

The sources of Spiritual Science are of such a nature that if it is understood in its true impulse it is not to be referred to any kind of document or tradition. Just as knowledge of the surrounding sense-world is given us by the free use of our forces, so can the knowledge of the super-sensible, the invisible lying behind the visible, be given us by the deep-lying spiritual forces and faculties slumbering within the human soul. When man uses the instruments of his senses he can perceive things lying before him and combine them with his intellect. In the same way someone using the means given him through Spiritual Science can look behind the veils of sense-existence to the spiritual causes, to where beings weave and work which are imperceptible to the physical eye and ear. Thus it is in the free use of man's forces, though they are still slumbering as super-sensible forces in the majority of men, that we have the independent source of spiritual knowledge, just as the source of external knowledge lies in the free use of forces directed to the sense-world. And when man possesses the knowledge which introduces him into the super-sensible behind the sensible, the invisible behind the visible, a knowledge as definite as his knowledge of outer objects and events, then he may go to the traditional books and records. Furnished with super-sensible knowledge he may

approach the records through which, during the course of evolution, tidings have reached man of the super-sensible world, just as the geometrician approaches the geometry of Euclid. And then he tests them as the modern geometrician tests the geometry of Euclid; he can prize and recognize these documents at their true value. Nor does one who approaches the records of Christianity equipped with knowledge of the super-sensible world find that they lose in value; indeed on the contrary, they appear in a more brilliant light than they showed first to the mere believer, they prove to contain deeper wisdom than had been dreamt of earlier, before the possession of anthroposophical knowledge.

But we must be clear on another point before we can realize the right relation of Anthroposophy to the religious documents. Let us ask ourselves who is better able to judge the geometry of Euclid — one who can translate the words and give the contents without having first penetrated into the spirit of geometry, or one who already understands geometry and is therefore able to discover it in the book? Let us think of a mere philologist, one who knows nothing of geometry, how many incorrect statements would appear if he tried to convey the meaning of the contents. Many have done this with the records of religion, even those who are supposed to be chosen to fathom their true sense. They have gone to these records without first having any independent knowledge of super-sensible facts. And so we have to-day most careful explanations of religious documents, explanations that explore the history of the time and show how the documents originated, and so on. But the explanations resemble explanations of Euclid's geometry by a non-geometrician. Religion — and this we will hold fast — can only be found if one is aided by spiritual-scientific knowledge, although Spiritual Science can only be an instrument of the religious life, never a religion itself. Religion is best characterized through the content of the human heart, that sum of feelings and emotions through which man's sensitive soul sends up all that is best in it to the super-sensible beings and powers. The character of a man's religion depends on the fire of these feelings, the strength of his sensitivity, just as it depends on the warm pulse-beat in the breast and on the feeling for beauty how a man will stand before a picture. True it is that the contents of the religious life is what we call the spiritual or super-sensible world. But just as little as an aesthetic feeling for art is the same as an inner grasp of its laws — though it may assist understanding just as little are the wisdom, the science, that lead into the spiritual worlds the same as religion. This science will make religious feeling more earnest, worthier, broader, but it will not be religion itself. Grasped in its true sense it may lead to religion.

If we wish to understand the force and significance, the real spirit of the Christian religion we must penetrate far into spiritual life. We must look back into times of a primeval past, the pre-religious age of mankind, and try to envisage the origin of religion. Is there a pre-religious age of humanity? Yes, a time existed on earth when there was no religion; this is acknowledged by Spiritual Science though in a very different sense from the assertions of materialistic civilization. What does religion signify for mankind? It was and for a long time will still be that which the word itself signifies. The word "religion" means the uniting of man with his divine element, with the world of the spirit. The religious ages are essentially those in which man has longed for union with the divine, be it out of the sources of knowledge, or from a certain feeling, or because he felt that his will could only be strong if it were permeated by divine forces. Ages in which man had an inner premonition rather than definite vision, in which he rather sensed that a spiritual world was around him, than saw it — these are the religious ages of our earth. And before these ages were others when man did not need such a sense of longing for union with the super-sensible spiritual world, because he knew that world, as to-day he knows things of the sense world. Does man need to be convinced of the existence of stones, plants, animals? Does he need documents or doctrines to prove to him or let him surmise that there are rocks, plants, animals? No, for he sees them round him and needs therefore no religion of the sense-perceptible world. Let us imagine someone from quite another world, possessing quite different senses and organs of knowledge, one who would not see the stones, plants and animals because to him they were invisible. Let us imagine that he was informed through writings or in some other way of their existence, which to you is a matter of direct sight and knowledge. What would that be for him? It would be religion. If he were informed through some book of the existence of stones and plants and animals it would be religion to him, for he has never seen them. There was a time in which humanity lived amongst those spiritual beings and deeds that are recorded in the religious teachings and teachings of wisdom.

The word "evolution" has become a magic word in many fields of thought to-day, but it has been applied by science solely to outer sense-perceptible facts. To one who regards the world from the standpoint of Spiritual Science everything is in process of evolution, and most of all the human consciousness. The state of consciousness in which man lives to-day, through which when he wakes in the morning he is able to grasp the world with his senses, this state has evolved from a different one. We call the

present consciousness the clear day-consciousness. But this has evolved from an ancient state which we call the dull picture-consciousness of mankind. There, however, we reach back to humanity's early evolutionary stages of which anthropology tells nothing, since it uses only the instruments of the senses and methods of the intellect. It believes that man has gone through stages in the far past which are the same as the animal creation passes through to-day. We have seen in earlier lectures how the relation of man to the animal is to be understood. Man was never such a being as the present animal, nor is he descended from beings like them. If we were to describe the forms out of which man has evolved they would prove very different in appearance from the present-day animal. These are creatures which have stayed behind at earlier stages of evolution, con-served these stages and hardened them. The human being has grown beyond his earlier evolutionary stages, the animal has gone down below them. So in the animal world we see some-thing like laggard brothers of humanity, who no longer, however, bear the form of those earlier stages.

The earlier stages of evolution took their course when there were different conditions of life on the earth, when the elements were not distributed as they are to-day, when the human being was not encumbered with the kind of body he now bears, and yet was man. He was able to wait, figuratively speaking, within the course of evolution for his entry into the flesh, was able to wait until the fleshly materiality had reached a condition in which he could develop the forces of the present spirit. The animals were not able to wait, they became hardened at an earlier stage, took on flesh earlier than was right. They were therefore obliged to stay behind. We can thus picture that the human being has lived under other conditions and other forms of consciousness. If we follow these back for thousands and thousands of years we shall always find different ones. What to-day we call logical thought, intellect, understanding, has only evolved late in man's history. Much stronger were certain forces in him which are already beginning to decline, such, for instance, as memory. In an earlier age memory was far more developed than it is now. With the growth of the intellect in mankind, memory has stepped essentially into the background. If one uses some measure of practical observation one can recognize that what Spiritual Science relates is not said without foundation. People might assert that if that were true about memory, then a person remaining backward in development by some accident, should be backward

least of all in memory. It could also be claimed that if intellectuality were fostered in a person artificially kept back, then his memory would suffer. Here in this city a characteristic case of this very nature is to be found.

Professor Daumer, whom one must hold in the highest esteem, observed this case very thoroughly. It was the case of that human being, so enigmatic for many people, who was once placed into this city in a mysterious way, and who in just as mysterious a way met his death in Ansbach. An author, in order to indicate the mystery of his life, wrote that as he was carried out to burial the sun was setting on the one horizon and the moon was rising on the other. I speak, as you know, of Caspar Hauser. If you disregard all the pros and cons that have been asserted, if you look only at what has been fully verified, you will know that this foundling — who was one day simply there in the street, and who since he did not know whence he came, was called the Child of Europe — could neither read nor write when he was found. At an age of twenty years he possessed nothing of what is gained through the intellect but he had a remarkable memory. As they began to instruct him, as logic entered his soul, his memory disappeared. This transition in consciousness was accompanied by something else. He possessed at first an incredible, an entirely inborn truthfulness and it was precisely in this truthfulness that he went more and more astray. The more he nibbled, so to say, at intellectuality, the more it vanished. There would be many things to study were we to enter deeply into this human soul which had been artificially held back. It is not difficult for the student of Spiritual Science to credit the popular tradition, so unacceptable to the learned people of to-day, which relates that while Caspar Hauser still knew nothing, while he still had no idea that there were beings besides himself of different form, he exercised a remarkable effect upon quite savage creatures. Savage animals humbled themselves and became mild, something streamed from him that made such beasts gentle, although they savagely attacked anyone else. We could in fact penetrate deeply into the soul of this remarkable personality, so enigmatic to many, and you would see how things that cannot be explained from ordinary life are led back through Spiritual Science to spiritual facts. Such facts cannot be learnt by speculation but only by spiritual observation, though they are comprehensible to an unbiased and logical thinking.

All this has only been said in order to show you that the modern consciousness has evolved from another, an age-old-state when man was not in direct touch with outer objects in the modern sense, but on the other hand was in connection with facts and beings of the spiritual world. A human being did not see another's physical form — nor did this form

resemble that of to-day. When another being approached him a sort of dream-picture arose and by its shape and colouring he knew whether the other was antagonistic to him or sympathetic. Such a consciousness perceived spiritual facts and the spiritual world. To-day man is among beings of flesh and blood, at that time, when he turned his gaze to himself and himself was soul and spirit, he lived among spiritual beings. They were present to him, he was a spirit among spirits. Although his consciousness was only dreamlike, yet the pictures that arose in him were in living relation to his environment. That was the far distant age when man still lived in a spiritual world. Later he descended from it in order to take on a corporeal nature suited to his present consciousness. Animals already existed as physical creatures while man still perceived in spiritual realms. He lived at that time among spiritual beings, and just as you need no proof to be convinced of the presence of stones, plants and animals, so man in those primeval times needed no testimony in order to be convinced of the existence of spiritual beings. He lived among spirits and divine beings and therefore needed no religion. That was the pre-religious age.

Then man descended, the earlier form of consciousness changed into the modern. Colours and forms are no longer perceived as floating in space, colour is laid upon the surfaces of sense-objects. In the same measure as man learnt to direct his senses to the outer world, did this outer world draw itself like a veil, like the great Maja, over the world of spirit. And humanity had to receive tidings of the spiritual world through this sheath, religion became necessary.

There is also a state, however, between the time preceding a religious consciousness and the time of actual religion: there is an intermediate condition. Thence are derived the mythologies, sagas, folk-stories of the spiritual worlds. It is a dreary arid learning that has no inkling of real spiritual events and asserts that all the figures of Nordic or German mythology, of Greek mythology with its accounts of the deeds of the gods are merely inventions of popular fantasy. They are not inventions, the peasant folk do not indulge in such fancies and if they see a few clouds stretched across the sky, say that they are little sheep. That the people have such fantasies is a fiction of our modern learnedness which abounds in lively fantasy about such things. The truth of the matter is quite different. The old saga and stories of the gods are the last relics, the last memories of the pre-religious consciousness. They are records of what men themselves have seen. Those who described Wotan, Thor, Zeus, etc., did so because they remembered that such things had been experienced once upon a time. Mythologies are fragments, broken pieces of what had

once been experienced. The intermediate stage was shown in another way as well. Even when clever men had already — let us say — become very clever, there were still persons who under exceptional conditions (call them states of insanity or being carried away, as you will) could see into the spiritual worlds, who could still be aware of what in earlier times was seen by all. They recounted that they themselves still saw something of the spiritual world. This was linked with the memories and led to a living faith among the people. That was a state transitional to the state of actual religion.

We may ask: what paved the way in mankind to an actual religion? It was because men found a means of so developing their inner being that they were once more able to behold the worlds from which they had sprung, which they used to see in a dull consciousness. And here we touch upon a chapter which to many modern minds contains but little probability, the question of initiation. What are initiates? They were those who so developed their inner nature of soul and spirit through certain methods that they grew again into the spiritual world. There is initiation! In every soul super-sensible forces and faculties lie dormant. There is, or at least there can be, a great and mighty moment when these forces awaken. We can gain some idea of this moment if we picture the general course of human evolution. To speak in the words of Goethe we can say that we look back into the far past when the human body had no such physical eye or physical ear as exist to-day. We look back to times when there were undifferentiated organs, able neither to see nor to hear, at the places where these organs are now situated. A time came for physical humanity when such blind organs evolved to radiant points, gradually evolved until light itself dawned upon them. In the same way a time came when the human ear had developed to such a stage that the former silent world revealed itself in tones and harmonies. The sun's forces worked upon the formation of the human eye. And to-day man can live the life of spirit and thus develop the organs of soul and spirit which are largely undeveloped in present mankind.

The moment is possible and for many has already dawned when the soul and spirit are transformed just as once the external physical organism was transformed. New eyes and ears arise through which the light shines and tones resound out of the spiritually dark and silent world. Development is possible, even to the point of living into the higher worlds. That is initiation. And the Mystery Schools provided methods of initiation as in ordinary life the methods of the chemical laboratory or of biological research are made available. The difference is only this — official science

has to prepare instruments and other apparatus for its use, while he who would become an initiate has but one instrument to perfect, namely, himself in all his forces just as the force of magnetism can lie dormant in iron, so there slumbers in the human soul the power to penetrate into the spiritual world of light and sound. And so the time came when normal humanity saw only physical sense-existence and when the leaders were initiates. These could see into the spiritual worlds and give information and explanation of the facts of that world in which man had earlier lived.

To what does the first stage of initiation lead? How does it appear to the human soul? Do not imagine that this development is merely a matter of philosophic speculation, a spinning out, a refinement of ideas. The ideas man has about the sense-world are transformed when he grows into the spiritual world. No longer does he apprehend things through sharply outlined concepts, but through pictures, through Imaginations. For the human being grows into the spiritual process of world creation. The firm definite contours of the physical material world exist, in fact, nowhere else. In the world creative process the animal does not appear with clear outline. One has there something like a basic idea of the animal from which the diverse external forms can originate, a living reality, membered in itself. One must take one's stand strictly on the basis of Goethe's words: "All things corruptible are but a semblance." The initiate learns at first to know and grasp in pictures, he learns to ascend into the spiritual world. There his consciousness must be more mobile than that which serves us for apprehending the surrounding sense-world. Hence this stage of development is called the Imaginative Consciousness. It leads man again into the spiritual world, but not in a dull twilight state. The initiate consciousness to be gained is clear and bright, as clear as man's consciousness by day. There is thus an enrichment, the spiritual consciousness is added to the day-consciousness. In the first stage of initiation man lives in the imaginative consciousness. The documents of humanity record what the initiates experienced in the spiritual world just as information with regard to the science of geometry was imparted to mankind through Euclid. We recognize what stands in these records when we go back to the sources — the spiritual vision of the initiates.

Those were the conditions prevailing among men up to the appearance of the greatest Being who has trodden upon the earth, Christ Jesus. With his appearance anew element entered evolution. If we would understand the essential nature of the new element bestowed on mankind through Christ Jesus, we must realize that in all pre-Christian initiation the candidate was completely withdrawn from ordinary life, he must work upon his soul in

centres of profoundest secrecy. Above all we must realize that when man raised himself again into the spiritual world something of that merely dreamlike picture-consciousness still remained. Man had to retreat from this sense-world to be able to enter the spiritual world. That this is no longer necessary to-day has been brought about through the appearing of Christ Jesus on earth. Through the fact that the Christ-principle has entered humanity, the Central Being, the very Centre of the spiritual world, has once existed historically in a human being on this earth. It is the same Being for whom all these have longed who have developed a religious life, who have beheld in the Mystery Centres, who have left the sense-world in order to enter the spiritual world. The Being of whom it has been proclaimed that man confronts it as his highest nature, this has entered humanity's evolution with Christ Jesus. One who understands something of genuine spiritual science knows that all religious proclamation before the coming of Christ Jesus is a prophecy of him.

When the ancient initiates wished to speak of the highest that was accessible to them in the spiritual world, of that which they were able to see as the origin of all things, then under the most diverse names it was of Christ Jesus that they spoke. We need only remember the Old Testament, itself a prophecy. We remember how when Moses was to lead his people he received the command: "Say to thy people that the Lord God has said unto thee what thou shalt do." Then Moses asks: "How will the people believe me, how can I convince them? What shall I say when they ask who has sent me?" And he was commanded: "Say the 'I-am' has sent thee." Read it again and compare as exactly as you can with the original text and you will see its significance. The "I-Am," what does that mean? The "I-Am" is the name for the divine Being, the Christ-principle of man — the Being of whom man feels like a drop, a spark, when he can say "I am." The stone, the plant, the animal cannot say "I am." Man is the crown of creation inasmuch as he can say "I am" to himself, he can utter a name which does not hold good for anyone but the one who utters it. You alone can call yourself "I"; no one else can call you "I." Here the soul speaks within itself in a word to which none other has entrance except a Being which comes to the soul through no external sense, on no outer path. Here Divinity speaks. Hence the name "I-Am" was given to the Godhead whose being fills the world. "Say that the 'I-am' has told thee !" Thus was Moses to speak to his people.

Men learn only gradually to understand the true, deep meaning of this "I-am." Human beings did not feel themselves as individuals at once. You can still find this in the Old Testament, these men did not as yet feel individual.

Even the members of the German tribes, right into the time of the Christian Church, did not feel themselves to be individualities. Think back to the Cherusci, the Teutons, etc., the German tribes in whose land modern Germany now lies. The separate members felt the tribal ego, and themselves as a part of it. A man would not have said "I am" in the clear, definite way it is said to-day; he felt himself part of an organism composed of those who were related by blood. This blood-relationship assumes the greatest proportions among the followers of the Old Testament religion. The individual felt himself sheltered in the whole folk which for him was ruled by one Ego. He knew the meaning of "I and the Father Abraham are one," for he traced the blood-relationship back through the generations to Abraham. If he wished to go beyond his single ego he knew himself to be sheltered in the Father Abraham, from whom flows all the blood through the generations, which is the external bearer of the common Folk-Ego.

Now if this expression, which signified the highest they knew to the people of the Old Testament is compared with what has been brought through Christ Jesus then a lightning-flash illumines the whole advance that has come about through Christian evolution. "Before Abraham was, was the 'I-am.'" What does this mean? "Before Abraham was the 'I-am.'" (That is the right rendering of the biblical passage.) It means: Go back through all generations, and you find something in yourself, in your own individuality which is even more eternal than what flows through all blood-related generations. Before the ancestors were, was the "I-am," that Being which draws into every human being, of which each human soul can directly feel something in itself. Not "I and the Father Abraham," not I and a temporal Father, but I and a spiritual Father, who has no part in anything perishable, we are one! I and the Father are one. The Father dwells in each separate individual, the Divine Principle lives in him, something which was, which is, and which is to be.

Men have actually only begun after 2,000 years to feel the force of this world-impulse; in future ages, however, they will realize the significance for mankind of this forward step in the remission and evolution of the earth. What the ancient initiates tried to reach could only be realized if one went beyond the individual human being and grasped the spirit of a whole people. If the normal man heard that he would say: That is a transient entity which begins with birth and ends with death. But if he were initiated in the secrets of the Mysteries, he saw as the Folk Spirit, as the actual Being who flows through the blood of the generations, that which was only dimly sensed by the others. He could see what can be reached only in the

spiritual realm and not in external reality. He could see a divine Being who flows through the blood of the generations. To stand face to face in the spirit before this God could only take place in the Mysteries.

Those who were round Christ Jesus with full understanding as his intimate pupils were conscious that a Being of divine spiritual nature stood outwardly before them, clothed in the flesh as human personality. They were sensible of Christ Jesus as the first human being to bear a Spirit who otherwise was felt only by interrelated groups, and who could only be seen in the spiritual world by initiates. He was the Firstborn among men.

The more individualized a man becomes the more he can become a bearer of Love. Where the blood links men together they love because they are led to what they should love. When man is granted individuality, when he tends and nurtures the divine spark within him then the impulses of love, the waves of love, pass from man to man out of the free heart. And thus with this new impulse man has enriched the old bond of love that is bound to the blood-tie. Love passes over gradually into spiritual love which flows from soul to soul and which will ultimately encompass all humanity in a common bond of brother-love. But Christ Jesus is the Force, the living Force, once historically and externally present, through whom for the first time mankind has been brought to the bond of brother-love. Men will learn to understand this bond of brother-love as the perfected spiritualized Christianity.

People say very lightly to-day that theosophy should seek the common kernel of truth in all religions, for the contents of all religions are the same. People who talk like that and only compare religions in order to note the abstract resemblance have no understanding of the principle of evolution. World evolution is not without meaning. All religions undoubtedly contain the truth, but inasmuch as they evolve from form to form they evolve to higher forms. It is true that if you search deeply enough you can find teachings in other religions that are also to be found in Christianity. Christianity has not brought new doctrine. The essential element of Christianity does not lie in its teachings. Take the founders of pre-Christian religions, in their case it was a matter of what they taught. If they themselves had remained unknown, their teaching would have been preserved and this would have been enough. But with Christ Jesus that is not the point. What matters is that he was there, that he has lived here on this earth in a physical body. Not belief in his teaching but in his Person — that is the essential thing. The point is that he has been beheld among mortals as the Firstborn; whom one asks: if Thou wert in the position in

which I find myself, wouldst Thou feel as I do? Wouldst Thou think as I am now thinking? Will, as I am willing? That is the important thing, that he is the greatest example as Personality, with whom it is not a matter of listening to his teaching, but of looking at him himself, and seeing *how he acted*. And so the intimate pupils of Christ Jesus speak quite differently from the pupils and disciples of other religious founders. It is said of those: The Master has taught this or taught that. The disciples of Christ Jesus say: We are not telling you invented myths and doctrines; we say to you what our eyes have seen, our ears heard. We have heard his voice, our hands have touched the Source of Life whereby we have community with you. And Christ Jesus himself said: "You shall bear witness for me in Jerusalem, in Judea to the end of the world." These words contain a very great significance; testimony shall you bear for unto the end of the world. That means that there will at all times be those who, just as the men in Judea and Galilee, could say out of direct knowledge who Christ was, in the sense of the Gospel.

"In the sense of the Gospel" — what does that mean? Nothing less than that he was from the beginning the Principle that lived in all creation. He says, "If you do not believe in me, believe at least in Moses, for if you believe in Moses, then you believe in me, for Moses has spoken of me." We have to-day seen this. Moses has spoken of him by saying: The "I-Am" has said it to me; the "I-am," who up to then was only perceptible in the spirit. The fact that the Christ has entered visibly into the world, appearing as man among men, is what distinguishes the Christ-gospel from the divine proclamations of other religions. In all of these religions spiritual wisdom was directed to something which was outside the world. Now, with Christ Jesus, something entered the world which was to be grasped as the sense-perceptible itself. What did the first disciples experience as the ideal of their wisdom? No longer merely to understand the life of the spirits in spirit-land, but how the Highest Principle could have been present on the earth in the historical Personality of Christ Jesus. It is much easier to deny divinity to this Personality than to acknowledge it. Here lies the distinction between a certain doctrine of early Christian times and what we may call inner Christianity — the distinction between Gnosis and esoteric Christianity. The Gnosis certainly recognizes Christ in his divinity, but it could not raise itself to the conception that the Word has become flesh and dwelt among us, as the writer of the John Gospel emphasizes. He says: You shall look upon Christ Jesus; not as something to be grasped purely in the invisible, but as the Word which has become flesh and dwelt among us. You must know that with this human personality a force has appeared

which will work into the farthest future, which will encircle the earth with the true spiritual love as a force that lives and works in all that lives into the future.

And if man gives himself up to this force he grows into the spiritual world from which he has descended. He will ascend again to where the initiate's vision can already reach to-day. Man will divest himself of what belongs to the senses when he penetrates into the spiritual world. The candidate who was initiated in ancient times could see in retrospect the far past of spirit-life; those who are initiated in the Christian sense through receiving the impulse of Christ Jesus are enabled to see what becomes of this earthly world of ours when humanity acts in the sense of the Christ Impulse. As one can look back to earlier conditions, so, starting from the coming of Christ, one can look into the farthest future. Consciousness will alter again, there will be a new relation of the spiritual to the sense-world. Earlier initiation was directed to time past, to age-old wisdom; Christian initiation reveals the future to one who is to be initiated. That is a necessity; man is to be initiated not only in wisdom, or in feelings but in his will. For then he knows what he is to do, he can set himself a goal for the future. Ordinary everyday people set themselves aims for the afternoon, for the evening or the morning; the spiritual man is able, out of spiritual principles, to set himself distant aims which pulse through his will and make his forces quicken. To set goals before humanity means in the true, highest sense, in the sense of the original Christ principle, to grasp Christianity esoterically. In this way it was grasped by the one who has written the great principle of the initiation of the will — the writer of the Apocalypse. We misunderstand the Apocalypse, if we do not understand it as the impulse given for the future, for action and deed.

Everything that we have let pass before us to-day can be understood out of anthroposophical Spiritual Science. I have been unable to give more than a slight sketch. When through Spiritual Science one grasps what lies behind the sense-world, one can look with understanding at all that has been given in the Gospels, at what has been proclaimed in the Apocalypse. And the more deeply penetrating is one's approach to the super-sensible worlds, the more profound is what one will find in the Christian documents. The records of Christianity will appear in higher brilliance, with deeper truths when one goes to them strengthened with the spiritual vision that may be gained by the help of Anthroposophy. True it is that the simplest heart can have some feeling of what truths lie hidden in Christianity. But man's consciousness will not be satisfied for ever with a dim sensing, it will evolve higher and wish to have knowledge and understanding. Yet even

when it mounts to the highest teachings of wisdom, there will always be mysteries in Christianity still more profound. It is for the simplest heart but also for the most developed intellectuality. The initiate experiences it again as pictures, and so the naive consciousness may divine what truths are slumbering there. Man, however, will demand knowledge and not faith — and even then he will find satisfaction in Christianity. If the explanations of the Gospels are given him through Spiritual Science he will be able to find the fully satisfying content in Christianity. Hence Spiritual Science will take the place of the highest philosophies of the past. It will bear testimony to the beautiful words of Hegel quoted at the beginning: "Profoundest thought is linked with the historical external figure of Christ Jesus, and every degree of consciousness — therein lies the greatness of Christianity — can grasp it externally. At the same time, however, Christianity demands the deepest and most penetrating wisdom. Christianity is for every stage of culture, but it can meet and satisfy the highest demands."



Lecture I

During the next few days we are to occupy ourselves with a very profound theosophical subject. Before beginning our studies let me express my great satisfaction that we are able to place before friends from so many parts of Germany, and indeed of Europe, this deep and important subject. Especially do I express it to our friends in Nuremberg, who for their part are certainly not less happy than the speaker to cultivate for a short period of time anthroposophical life in this city in common with our foreign friends. There has always been in this city a very earnest search for the knowledge of great spiritual truths, and a deep understanding of anthroposophical life, of the true anthroposophical attitude towards life, has always been manifest.

This kind of life which is only understood when our anthroposophical doctrines are not merely a theoretical interest, but something which spiritualizes, kindles and uplifts our inmost life, links us in closer bonds with our fellow-men and with the whole world. It means much to man to feel that everything he sees in the outer world in his objective sense-existence can be recognized as the external physiognomy of an invisible super-sensible existence lying at its foundation. The world and all it contains will at length become to one who applies Anthroposophy to life more and more a physical expression of divine spiritual realities; and when he observes the visible world around him it will be to him as if he penetrated from the mere features of a person's face to his heart and soul. All that he sees externally, the mountains and rocks, the vegetation of the earth, the animals and human beings, human activities — everything in the world surrounding him — will be to him the physiognomical expression, or the countenance, as it were, of a divine existence lying behind it. From this mode of observation new life rises up within him and permeates him; and a different, a noble enthusiasm fires all that he wishes to undertake.

Let me give you a small symptomatic example from my experience on one of my latest lecture tours, showing how significant world history is when looked upon as the expression of the divine spiritual, and how it can speak to us in a new language. A few weeks ago in Scandinavia I noticed that in the entire life of Northern Europe there is still an echo of that ancient period of the Norse world when all spiritual life was permeated by the consciousness of the beings who were to be found as the gods of

northern Mythology. One might say that in those countries one may hear the echoes everywhere of what the Initiates of the Druidic and Trotten Mysteries imparted to their pupils and which constituted the old Norse spiritual life. One becomes aware of the magic breath of that spirit life pervading the North; one sees something like the expression of beautiful karmic connections. One feels oneself placed — as it was my privilege in Upsala — in the midst of all this, when one contemplates the first German translation of the Bible, the *Silver Codex of Ulfilas* ... It came to Upsala through karmic complications of a peculiar kind. It had previously been in Prague. In the Swedish war it was taken as booty and brought to Upsala, and there it now lies; a token of something which can be penetrated by one who is able to look a little more deeply into the nature of the ancient Mysteries. The Mysteries within the ancient European civilizations in which pupils were taught how to penetrate into the spiritual world were all pervaded and permeated by a remarkable characteristic, which could be observed more deeply by those who received initiation in those ancient times. Their hearts were filled with a feeling of tragedy when it was made clear to them that although they were indeed able to glimpse the secrets of existence, nevertheless, something would appear in the time to come which would give the most complete solution of the riddle. They were shown again and again that a higher light was to ray into that knowledge which could be given in the ancient Mysteries. One might say that in all these Mysteries it was prophetically indicated what was to come about in the future, namely, the appearance of Christ Jesus. The undertone, the attitude of expectation, this mood of prophecy lay in the nature of the Northern Mysteries.

The statement I am now about to make must not be pressed too far or too sharply outlined in thought. It is only intended to express symptomatically the deeper truth which lies behind in the legend of Siegfried, which has remained like a last page out of the traditions of the old German Mysteries, there is something like an echo of that mood. When we are shown that Siegfried is really the representative of the ancient nordic initiation, that on the place where he is vulnerable there lies a leaf, that this place is on his back, then one who is able to feel such a thing symptomatically feels: That is the spot on the human being where something different will rest, when such injury as the initiates of the ancient Northern Mysteries experienced can no longer touch him. This spot the Cross shall cover, there the Cross of Christ Jesus shall rest. It did not yet rest there in the case of the initiates of the ancient Northern Mysteries. In the old Mysteries of the German peoples, this is indicated in the legend

of Siegfried. Thus even here is symptomatically indicated how the ancient initiations of the Druids and Troten should be thought of as harmonizing with the Christian Mysteries. The placing of the first German translation of the Bible in the northern world reminds one of this like a physiognomic gesture. And the fact that it is like a karmic chain may also appear symbolically to you by the circumstance that eleven leaves were once stolen from this Silver Codex and that the one who possessed them later on felt such qualms of conscience that he would not keep these eleven leaves and so returned them. As already said, these things ought not to be pressed too far, but they may be taken as a pictorial representation of those karmic developments which come to physiognomical expression in the placing of the first German translation of the Bible in the northern world. And just as in the case of this historical event, so will everything which meets us in life, great or small, also be deepened and irradiated with a new light through the anthroposophical outlook, which sees everything physically perceptible as the physiognomical expression of super-sensible spirit. May we, during this course of lectures, be filled with the conviction that this is the case, and may the spirit and feelings which are to fill our hearts and minds during this series of twelve lectures proceed from this conviction.

In this frame of mind let us approach these lectures which will deal with the most profound document of Christianity, the Apocalypse of John. The deepest truths of Christianity can be considered in connection with this document, for it contains nothing less than a great part of the Mysteries of Christianity, the profoundest part of what may be described as esoteric Christianity. It is therefore not to be wondered at that of all Christian documents this one has been most misunderstood. Almost from the beginning of the spiritual movement of Christianity it has been misunderstood by all who were not really Christian initiates. And it has always been misunderstood at various times according to the prevailing thought and disposition of those times. It has been misunderstood by the ages which, one might say, have thought in a spiritually materialistic way; by the ages which have forced great religious movements into one-sided fanatical party affairs; and it has been misunderstood in modern times by those who, in the grossest and most sense-bound materialism, believed themselves able to solve the riddle of the universe. The high spiritual truths announced in the early days of Christianity, and witnessed by those who were able to understand them, are disclosed as far as is possible in writing in the Apocalypse of John, the so-called canonical Apocalypse. But even in the first ages of Christianity exotericists were little inclined to understand

the deep spiritual truths contained in esoteric Christianity. Thus in the very first ages of Christianity the idea came into exotericism that things which in the world's evolution first take place in the spiritual, and are recognizable by those who can see into the spiritual worlds — that such purely spiritual proceedings were to take place externally in material life. And so it came about that while the writer of the Apocalypse expressed in his work the results of his Christian initiation, others only understood it exoterically; and their opinion was that what the great seer saw — and of which the Initiate knows that spiritually in it takes place over thousands of years — must happen in the very far future in external life and be visible to the senses. They imagined that the writer indicated something like a speedy return of Christ Jesus, a descent from the physical clouds. As this did not happen, they simply lengthened the period and said, "With the advent of Christ Jesus a new period has begun for the earth as regards the old religious teachings, but" — this again was understood materialistically — "after a thousand years the earliest events represented in the Apocalypse will take place in the physical world." Thus it came about that when the year A.D. 1000 actually drew near, many people waited for the coming of some power hostile to Christianity, for an Antichrist who should appear in the sense world. As this again did not occur, the period was further extended, but at the same time the whole prediction of the Apocalypse was elevated to a kind of symbolism — whereas the crass exotericists represented this prediction more literally. With the advent of a materialistic world-conception these things were enveloped in a certain symbolism; external events were invested with a symbolic significance. Thus in the twelfth century Joachim of Floris, who died at the beginning of the thirteenth century, gave a notable exploration of this mysterious record of Christianity. It was his opinion that Christianity contained a deep spiritual power, that this power would have to expand more and more, but that historical Christianity had always given this esoteric Christianity an external interpretation. Thus many people came to this point of view, which was that the Romish Church with the Pope at its head, this externalization of the spirituality of Christianity, was something hostile and anti-Christian. And this was particularly fostered in the following centuries through certain Orders attaching higher value to the fervent spiritual aspect of Christianity. Thus Joachim of Floris found followers among the Franciscans, and these looked upon the Pope as being the symbol of Antichrist. Then in the age of Protestantism this conception passed over to those who looked upon the Romish Church as an apostate of Christianity and Protestantism as its salvation. They considered the Pope as Symbol of Antichrist, and the Pope retaliated by calling Luther the Antichrist. Thus the Apocalypse was

understood in such a way that each party drew it into the service of its own view, its own opinion. Each regarded the other party always as Antichrist and their own party as having the true Christianity. This continued into modern times when modern materialists developed, with which, for grossness, the materialism I have described as belonging to the early centuries of Christianity cannot be compared. For at that time spiritual faith and a certain spiritual comprehension still existed. Men could not understand, only because they had no initiates among them. A certain spiritual sense was there; for although it was crudely imagined that a Being would descend in a cloud, there still belonged to it a spiritual faith. A spiritual life such as this was no longer possible with the crass materialism of the nineteenth century. The thoughts of a genuine materialist of the nineteenth century regarding the Apocalypse may be described somewhat as follows: "No man can see into the future, for I myself cannot. No one can see anything more than I can see. To say that there are initiates is an old superstition. Such persons do not exist. What I know is the standard. I can scarcely see what will happen in the next ten years, therefore no man can say anything about what is to happen in thousands of years. Consequently he who wrote the Apocalypse, if he is to be taken as an honest man, must have been describing something which he had already seen — for I only know what has already taken place and what I can discover from documents. Therefore the writer of the Apocalypse could see nothing more either. What, therefore, according to this, can he relate? Only what has happened to him. Consequently it is obvious that the events of the Apocalypse, the conflicts between the good, wise and beautiful world and the ugly, foolish and evil world, this dramatic contrast is only intended to represent what the author had himself experienced, what had already taken place." The modern materialist speaks in this way, it is his opinion that the writer of the Apocalypse describes things as he himself does.

What, then, was the most dreadful thing to a Christian of the first century? It was the beast which made war against the spiritual power of Christianity, against the true Christianity. Unfortunately only a few people perceived that there was something behind this, but they did not know how to interpret it correctly.

In certain esoteric schools there was a kind of writing in numbers. Certain words which it was not wished to impart in ordinary writing were expressed by figures. And, like much else, some of the deep secrets of the Apocalypse were hidden in numbers, particularly that dramatic event in the number 666. It was known that numbers were to be dealt with in a particular way, especially when such a distinct indication is given as in the

words, "Here is wisdom." "The number of the beast is 666." When such an indication was given it was known that the figures must be replaced by certain letters, in order to ascertain what was intended. Now those who had heard something, and yet really knew nothing, came to the conclusion in their materialistic conception that when letters were substituted for the number 666, the word "Nero" or "Caesar Nero" resulted. And nowadays in a large part of the literature dealing with the deciphering of the Apocalypse you may read: Formerly people were so foolish that they imagined all sorts of things in connection with this passage, but the problem is now solved. We now know that nothing else is intended than the Emperor Nero. Therefore the Apocalypse must have been written after Nero's death, and the writer wished to say by all this that the Antichrist had appeared in Nero, and that what is contained in this dramatic element is an enhancement upon what had preceded it. We need now only investigate what happened immediately before and we shall discover what the writer of the Apocalypse really wished to describe. It is reported that earthquakes took place in Asia Minor when the struggle between Nero and Christianity was raging. Therefore it was to these earthquakes that the writer was referring in the opening of the seals and the sounding of the trumpets. He also mentions plagues of locusts. Quite correct! We know from history that at the time of the persecution of the Christians by Nero there were plagues of locusts. He was, therefore, speaking of these. Thus the nineteenth century has come to materialize the profoundest document of Christianity so far as to see nothing in it but the description of what may be found by a mere materialistic observation of the world.

I have only mentioned this in order to point out how fundamentally this deepest and most important document of esoteric Christianity has been misunderstood. I shall postpone to the last lectures what is to be said about the historical part of the Apocalypse until we have understood what is contained in the Apocalypse. To those who have studied Anthroposophy but little, there can be no doubt that even the introductory words of the Apocalypse show us what it is intended to be. We need only remember that it says that he from whom the contents of the Apocalypse proceeded was placed in an island solitude, which had always been surrounded by a kind of sacred atmosphere, in one of the ancient places of the Mysteries. And when we are told that the author was in the spirit, and that in the spirit he perceives what he gives us, it may indicate to us that the contents of the Apocalypse originate from the higher state of consciousness, to which a person may attain through the evolution of the inner creative capacity of the soul, through initiation. In the Secret Revelation of the so-

called John is contained that which cannot be seen and heard in the sense world, and cannot be perceived with external senses; and it is given in the way in which it can be imparted to the world through Christianity. In the Apocalypse of John we have therefore the description of an initiation, a Christian initiation. For the present we need only briefly recall what initiation is. We shall, indeed, go more and more deeply into the question as to what takes place in initiation, and how initiation is related to the contents of the Apocalypse, but to begin with we will only draw something like a rough sketch and paint in the details later.

Initiation is the development of the powers and capacities slumbering in every soul. If we wish to have an idea of the manner in which it really takes place we must clearly bear in mind what the consciousness of the present normal man is; we shall then also recognize in what way the consciousness of the initiate differs from that of the ordinary man of the present day. What is, then, the consciousness of the normal human being? It is a changing one; two entirely different states of consciousness alternate, that of the day, and that during sleep at night. The waking day-consciousness consists in our perceiving sense objects around us and connecting them by means of concepts which can only be formed with the aid of a sense organ, namely, the brain. Then, each night, the astral body and the Ego withdraw from the lower principles of the human being, the physical and etheric bodies, and therewith the sense objects around man sink into the darkness; and not only this, for until re-awakening unconsciousness prevails. Darkness spreads around man. For the human astral body to-day under normal conditions is so organized that it is unable of itself to perceive what surrounds it. It must have organs. These organs are the physical senses. Therefore in the morning it must plunge into the physical body and make use of the sense organs. Why does the astral body see nothing when during sleep at night it is in the spirit-world? For the same reason that a physical body without eyes or ears could experience neither physical colours nor physical sounds. The astral body has no organs with which to perceive in the astral world. In primeval times the physical body was in the same position. It too did not yet possess what later was plastically worked into it as ears and eyes. The external elements and forces moulded the physical body, formed the eyes and ears, and thus the world was revealed to man, a world which previously was hidden from him. Let us imagine that the astral body, which is now in the position in which the physical body was formerly, could be so treated that organs could be built into it in the same way that the sunlight plastically moulded the physical eyes, and the world of sound the physical ears in the soft

substance of the physical human body. Let us imagine that we could mould organs in the plastic mass of the astral body; then the astral body would be in the same condition as the present physical body. It is a question of moulding the organs of perception for the super-sensible world into this astral body, as a sculptor moulds his clay. This is the first thing. If a man wishes to become a seer, his astral body must be treated as a piece of clay by the sculptor; organs must be worked into it. This was, in fact, always done in the schools of initiation and the Mysteries. The organs were plastically formed in the astral body.

In what does the activity consist by means of which it is possible for the astral body to have organs plastically moulded into it? It might be thought that a person must first have the body in front of him before he can work the organs into it. He might say: "If I could take out the astral body and have it in front of me, I could then mould the organs into it." That would not be the right way, and above all, it is not the way for modern initiation. Certainly an initiate who is able to live in the spiritual worlds could mould the organs like a sculptor, when during the night the astral body is outside. But that would entail doing something with a person of which he is not conscious; it would mean interfering in his sphere of freedom, with the exclusion of his consciousness. We shall see why this has not been allowed to happen for a long time past, and particularly not at the present time. For this reason, even in esoteric schools such as the Pythagorean or old Egyptian, everything had to be avoided whereby the initiates would have to work from outside upon the astral body which was taken out of the physical and etheric bodies of the neophyte. This had to be avoided from the very outset. The first step towards initiation had to be undertaken with man in the ordinary physical world, in the same world where man perceives with the physical senses. But how can this be done? For it is exactly through physical perception coming into earthly evolution that a veil has been drawn over the spiritual world formerly perceived by man, although but dimly. How can one work from the physical world upon the astral body? Here it is necessary that we should consider what happens with regard to our ordinary everyday sense perceptions. What happens in these cases? What happens while man is perceiving all day long? Think of your daily life, follow it step by step! At every step the impressions of the outer world press in upon you, you perceive them; you see, hear, smell, etc. When you are doing your work impressions storm upon you all day long and you work upon these impressions with your intellect. The poet who is not an inspired poet permeates them with his fantasy. All this is true! But all this cannot, to begin with, lead man to the consciousness of

the super-sensible spiritual which lies behind the sensible and material. Why does it not come to his consciousness? Because all this activity which man exercises with respect to the surrounding world does not correspond with the essential nature of the human astral body as it exists to-day. When in the primeval past the astral body proper to man saw the pictures of the astral perception rise up — those pictures of joy and sorrow, of sympathy and antipathy — inner spiritual impulses were present, causing something to rise in man which formed organs. These were killed when man had to allow all the influences from outside to stream in upon him, and at the present time it is impossible for anything to remain in the astral body from all the impressions received during the day which could mould it plastically.

The process of perception is as follows: All day long we are subjected to the impressions of the external world. These work through the physical senses upon the etheric and astral bodies, until the ego becomes conscious of them. The result of what affects the physical body is expressed in the astral body. When the eyes receive impressions of light, these influence the etheric and astral bodies and the ego becomes conscious of them. So, too, with the impressions made upon the ears and other senses. Thus the whole of one's daily life affects the astral body through-out the day. The astral body is continually active under the influence of the outer world. Then in the evening it withdraws from the physical body. It now has no power in itself to become conscious of the impressions in its present environment. The ancient forces of the distant past were killed with the first perception of the present sense world. During the night it has no power because the entire life of the day is incapable of leaving anything in the astral body which could work formatively upon it. All the things you see around you produce effects as far as into the astral body, but that which then takes place is unable to create forms capable of becoming astral organs. It must be the first step of initiation to allow a person to do something during the life of the day, to allow something to play into his soul, which continues during the night when the astral body is withdrawn from the physical and etheric bodies. Imagine that — pictorially expressed — something were given to a person while he is fully conscious, which he has to do, which he has to allow to happen, and which is so chosen, so constructed that it does not cease working when the day is over. Imagine this activity as a sound, which continues when the astral body is withdrawn; this resounding would then constitute the force which worked plastically on the astral body, as at one time external forces have worked upon the physical body. This was always the first step of initiation — to

give a person something to do during the life of the day, which has an after-effect in the life of the night. What is called meditation, concentration, and other practices which a person undertakes during his daily life, are nothing but exercises of the soul, the effects of which do not die away when the astral body withdraws, but reverberate, and then in the night become constructive forces in the astral body.

This is called the purification of the astral body, the purification from all that is unnatural to it. This was the first step, which was also called catharsis, purification. It did not yet constitute activity in super-sensible worlds; it consisted in exercises of the soul which the pupil performed during the day as a training of the soul. It consisted in adopting certain forms of life, certain feelings, a certain way of treating life, so that it could reverberate; and this worked upon the astral body until it had been transformed, until organs had developed in it. When the pupil had progressed so far that these organs had developed in the astral body, the next thing was that everything which had been formed there should be imprinted in the etheric body. Just as the characters on a seal are imprinted in sealing-wax, so must everything which has been formed in the astral body be imprinted in the etheric body. This imprinting is the next stage of initiation; it was called illumination. For it brought with it an important stage in initiation. A spiritual world then appeared around the pupil, just as formerly the sense world was around him. This stage is also characterized by the fact that the events of the outer spiritual world do not express themselves as physical objects do, but in pictures. At this stage of illumination the spiritual world first expresses itself in pictures. The pupil sees pictures. Think of the ancient initiate I referred to yesterday who saw the group-soul of a people. When he had progressed to this stage, he at first saw this group-soul in pictures. Imagine an initiate such as Ezekiel, who, when his illumination began, became aware of spiritual beings as folk-souls, group-souls; he felt himself in their midst; he saw group-souls in the form of four symbolical beasts.

To begin with, the spiritual world appeared to the pupil in significant pictures — that was the first stage. Then followed a further penetration into the etheric body. What at first was present as the impression of a seal, continued as a further penetration into the etheric body. Then there began to be added to the pictures what was known as the music of the spheres. The higher spiritual world is perceived as sound. The higher initiate having, through illumination, perceived the spiritual world in pictures, begins spiritually to listen to those sounds which are perceptible to the spiritual ear. Then he comes to the later transformation of the etheric body, and

afterwards in a still higher sphere something else approaches him. If, for example, there is a screen here and behind it a man is speaking whom you cannot see, yet you may hear sounds. It is somewhat similar with the spiritual world. At first it appears in pictures, then sounds are heard, and then the last veil falls away, so to speak — as if we were to take away the screen behind which the man is standing and speaking. We see the man himself; we see the spiritual world itself, the beings of the spiritual world. First we perceive the pictures, then the sounds, then the beings, and lastly the life of these beings. It is indeed only possible to give a hint of what exists as pictures in the so-called Imaginative world by making use, as symbols, of pictures from the sense world. One can only give an idea of the harmony of the spheres by comparing it with ordinary music. Now what may be compared with the impressions of the beings at the third stage? It is comparable alone with that which to-day constitutes the inmost being of man, his acting in accordance with the divine will. If the pupil works according to the will of the spiritual beings who are helping the world onwards, the being within him will then become similar to these beings and he will perceive in this sphere. He perceives that the element within him which opposes the evolution of the world, which retards its progress, is something which must be thrown off in this world, something which must fall away like a last covering.

Thus the pupil first perceives a world of pictures as a symbolic expression of the spiritual world, then a world of sphere-harmony as a symbolic expression of a higher spiritual sphere, then a world of spiritual beings of whom he can to-day only form an idea by comparing them with the depths of his own being, with that which works within him in accordance with the good powers or even in accordance with the evil spiritual forces.

The neophyte passes through these stages, and they are faithfully portrayed in the Apocalypse of John. The start is made from the physical world. That which is first to be said by means of the physical world is said in the seven letters. What we wish to do in outer civilization, what we wish to say to those working in the physical world, we say in letters. For the word expressed in the letter can produce its effect in the sense world. The first stage provides symbols which must be brought into relation with what they express in the spiritual world. After the seven letters comes the world of the seven seals, the world of pictures of the first stage of initiation. Then comes the world of the sphere-harmonies, the world as it is perceived by those who can hear spiritually. It is represented in the seven trumpets. The next world, where the initiate perceives beings, is represented by those who appear at this stage and who strip off the shells of the forces opposed

to the good. The opposite of the divine love is the divine wrath. The true form of the divine love which carries the world forward is perceived in this third sphere by those who for the physical world have stripped off the seven shells or husks of wrath.

Thus the neophyte is led step by step upward into the spheres of initiation. In the seven letters of the Apocalypse of John we have that which belongs to the seven categories of the physical world, in the seven seals that which belongs to the astral imaginative world, in the seven trumpets that which belongs to the higher world of Devachan, and in the seven husks of wrath that which must be cast aside if the pupil wishes to rise into what is spiritually the highest to be attained in our world, because this spiritually highest is still connected with our world.

To-day we wished to give merely a sketch of the outer structure of the Apocalypse of John, which serves to show that this is a book of initiation. In our next lecture we shall begin to fill in this brief sketch.



Lecture II

Yesterday we described the spirit of the Apocalypse of John in a general way. We tried to give a few broad outlines showing that in this Apocalypse is described what may be called a Christian initiation. To-day it will be my task to present to you in general the nature of initiation, to describe what takes place in a man when through initiation he is enabled to see for himself those spiritual worlds which lie behind the sense worlds; and further it will be my task to give in broad outline a description of the experiences in initiation. For only by entering a little more closely into the nature of initiation can we gradually understand this significant religious record known as the Apocalypse.

First of all we must again consider closely the two states of human consciousness, the one lasting from morning when a person awakes until evening when he goes to sleep, and the other which begins when he goes to sleep and ends when he awakes. We have often brought to mind that man as we know him in his present form is, to begin with, a fourfold being; that he consists of the physical, etheric and astral bodies and the "I." To spiritual vision these four principles appear in their external form as if the human physical body is enclosed in the centre like a kind of kernel. During the day this physical body is permeated by the so-called etheric or life-body which projects very slightly round about the head as a luminous halo, but which also completely permeates the head; further down it becomes more cloudy and indistinct and the more it approaches the lower parts of man the less definitely does it show the form of the physical body.

Now these two principles of the human being are during the day enveloped by what we call the astral body, which projects on all sides like an ellipse, in the shape of an egg, and in its fundamental form it has luminous rays which look as if their direction really were from outside inward, as if they would penetrate from outside to the inner part of the man. Within this astral body are outlined a great number of different figures, every possible kind of lines and rays, many like flashes of lightning, many in curious twists; all this surrounds the human being in the most varied manifestations of light. The astral body is the expression of his passions, instincts, impulses and desires, as also of all his thoughts and

ideas. The clairvoyant consciousness sees portrayed in this astral body all that one calls soul-experiences, from the lowest impulses to the highest ethical ideals.

Then we have the fourth principle of the human being, which one might sketch as if something were sending in rays to a point lying about one centimetre ($\frac{3}{8}$ inch) behind the forehead. That would be the diagrammatic representation of the fourfold man. In the course of these lectures we shall see how the several parts are distinguished in the whole.

This is a picture of man during the day from moving when he wakes, until night when he goes to sleep. Now, when he goes to sleep, the physical and etheric bodies remain on the bed and a kind of streaming-out of the astral body takes place. "Streaming-out" does not express it quite exactly; it is really as if a kind of mist formed. So that in the night we see the astral body which has withdrawn from the physical and the etheric bodies like a kind of spiral mist around the man, while the fourth principle of the human being disappears almost entirely towards one side, that is, it disperses and becomes vague. The lower part of the astral body can only just be seen; it is the upper part which is indicated as the "astral body which has withdrawn."

Yesterday we emphasized what has to happen to a person if he is to receive initiation. If he occupies himself only with the customary activities of the present day he is unable to receive initiation. He must be so prepared that during ordinary daily life he performs the exercises of meditation, concentration, etc., prescribed for him by the schools of initiation. The effect produced by these exercises is, on the whole, the same in all kinds of initiation. They only differ in that the further we go back into pre-Christian schools of initiation, they are directed more to the training of thought, to the exercise of the power of thinking. The nearer we approach to Christian times the more are these exercises directed to train the forces of feeling; and the nearer we come to modern times the more we see how, in the so-called Rosicrucian training — conditioned by the demands and requirements of humanity — a particular kind of will culture, the exercise of the will is introduced. Although the meditations are at first similar to those of pre-Christian schools, there nevertheless prevails everywhere at the basis of the Rosicrucian exercises a particular training of the element of Will. The chief aim is, so to influence a person during the day — even if only for a short time, perhaps five to fifteen minutes — that the effect continues when the pupil falls asleep and the astral body withdraws. This effect was produced by the exercises given in the Oriental

Mysteries, in the Egyptian Mysteries, in the Pythagorean schools, and it also resulted from the exercises of meditation based chiefly upon the Gospel of John. The astral body of a man who performs such, shall we say, occult exercises, gradually manifests many different changes at night. It manifests different light-effects; it shows that plastic formation of the organs of which we have already spoken and this becomes ever more distinct. The astral body gradually acquires an inner organization such as the physical body possesses in its eyes, ears, etc.

Yet this would never lead one to see much, particularly in the case of the man of the present day; the pupil, however, has some slight perception when his inner organs have been developed to a certain extent. He begins to become conscious during sleep. A spiritual environment gleams forth from the otherwise universal darkness. He perceives wonderful pictures of plant life; this was more especially the case in ancient times: to-day it takes place more seldom. These are the most primitive achievements of clairvoyance. Where previously there had been only the darkness of unconsciousness there now arises something of a dreamlike plant structure yet living and real. Much of what is described in the mythologies of ancient peoples was seen in this way. When we read in legends that *Woden, Willy* and *Weh* found a tree on the seashore and that from it they created man, this indicates that it was first seen in such a picture. In all the mythologies you may perceive this primitive kind of sight, this vision of plants. Paradise is also the description of such a vision, Paradise with its two trees of knowledge and of life. It is the result of this astral vision. It is not without cause that in Genesis itself is indicated that Paradise, together with all that is described in the beginning of the Bible, was seen in this manner. First we must learn to read the Bible, then we shall understand how closely and significantly it portrays this mysterious condition in its descriptions. In former times they did not teach of Paradise, of the beginning of the Bible, as we do now. The early Christians were told that "Adam fell into a sleep," and that this was the sleep in which Adam, looking back, perceived the visions described in the beginning of Genesis. It is only in our day that the belief has grown that such words as "Adam fell into a sleep" are just an accident. They are no accident. Every word in the Bible has a deep meaning and only he can understand the Bible who knows how to value every single word.

That is the first thing. Then, however, in the pre-Christian Mysteries something special had to take place. When the pupil had performed his exercises for a long period — and this lasted for a very long time — when he had received what was necessary to produce order in the soul., when

he had absorbed what we now call Anthroposophy, then he was at last able to participate in the old initiation proper. In what did this old initiation consist?

It is not sufficient that organs be formed in the astral body. They must be imprinted in the etheric body. Just as the letter of a seal is imprinted in sealing wax, so must the organs of the astral body be imprinted in the etheric body. For this purpose the neophyte in ancient initiations was brought into a particular condition. For three and a half days he lay in a death-like condition. We shall see more and more that this condition cannot and may not be brought about in our day, but that there are now other means of initiation. I am now describing the pre-Christian initiation, in which the neophyte was for three and a half days put into a death-like condition by the hierophant. Either he was laid in a kind of small chamber, a kind of grave where he lay in a death-like sleep, or he was bound in a particular position with outstretched hands on a cross, for this facilitated the arrival of the condition aimed at.

From many different lectures we know that death takes place in a man through the etheric withdrawing together with the astral body and the "I," and only the physical body remaining behind, At death something takes place which otherwise has never occurred between birth and death in the ordinary course of life. The etheric body never, even in the deepest sleep, leaves the physical body, but is always within it. At death it leaves the physical body. Now during the death-like condition part at least of the etheric body leaves the physical body, so that a part of the etheric body which was within it before, in this condition finds itself outside. This is described, as you know, in more exoteric lectures by saying that the etheric body is withdrawn. That is not actually the case, for we can only now make the necessary fine distinctions. In the three and a half days during which the Priest-Initiate carefully watched over the neophyte, only the lower part of the body of the pupil was united with the etheric body. This is the stage when the astral body, with all the organs formed in it, imprints itself in the etheric body. At this moment illumination takes place. When the neophyte was awakened after three and a half days, what is called illumination had come to him, that which had to follow after purification, which consists merely in the development of the organs of the astral body. The pupil was now a "knower" in the spiritual world; what he had previously seen was only a preparatory stage of vision. This world consisting of forms somewhat resembling plants was now supplemented by essentially new structures.

We have now to describe more exactly what the initiate then began to see. When he had been led to illumination it was clear to him when he was awakened, that he had seen something which he had previously never been able consciously to grasp. What then had he seen? What was he able to call up in a certain sense before his soul as an important memory-picture of his vision? If we wish to understand what he had seen we must cast a glance at the evolution of man. We must remember that man has only gradually gained the degree of individual consciousness he now possesses. He could not always say "I" to himself as he does to-day. We need only go back to the time when the Cherusci, the Heruli, etc., lived in the parts now inhabited by the Germans. The different human beings did not then feel themselves as separate human egos, but as members of the tribe. Just as a finger does not feel itself to be something existing independently, so each Cheruscan did not feel that he could unconditionally say "I" to himself; his "I" was the "I" of the whole tribe. The tribe represented a single organism and a group of men who were related by blood had one "I"-soul in common. In those days you yourselves were members of a great community, just as to-day your two arms belong to your "I." This may be clearly seen in the case of the people dealt with in the Old Testament. Each single member felt himself to be a member of the race. The individual did not speak of himself in the highest sense when he uttered the ordinary "I," but he felt something deeper when he said "I and the Father Abraham are one." For he felt a certain "I"-consciousness which descended from Abraham through all the generations to each member of the race. That which was related by blood was included in one "I." It was like a common group-soul-"I" which included the whole race and those that understood the matter said: That which really forms our inmost immortal being dwells not in the separate members but in the entire race. All of the several members belong to this common "I." Hence one who understood the matter knew that when he died he united himself with an invisible being which reached back to Father Abraham. The individual really felt that he returned into Abraham's bosom. He felt that his immortal part found refuge, as it were, in the group-soul of the race. This group-soul of the entire race could not descend to the physical plane. The people themselves saw only the separate human forms, but these were to them not the reality, for this was in the spiritual world. They dimly felt that that which flowed through the blood was the Divine. And because they had to see God in Jehovah they called this Divinity "Jahve" or also his Countenance, "Michael." They considered Jahve as the spiritual group-soul of the people.

The individual human being on the physical plane could not see these spiritual beings. The initiate, on the other hand, who experienced the great moment when the astral body was imprinted in the etheric body, was able to see first of all the most important group-souls. When we look back into ancient periods of humanity we everywhere find that the present "I" has developed from such a group-consciousness, a group-ego; so that when the seer looks back he finds that the individual human beings flow together more and more into the group-souls. Now there are four chief types of group-souls, four prototypes. If we observe all the various group-souls of the different souls we notice a certain similarity but there are also differences. If we classify them there are four groups, four types. The spiritual observer sees them clearly when he looks back to the time when man was not yet in the flesh, when he had not descended to the earth. We must now consider more exactly the moment when from the spiritual regions man descended into flesh. This can only be represented in great symbols.

There was a time when our earth was composed of very much softer material than it is now, when rock and stone were not so solid, when the forms of the plants were quite different, when the whole was as if embedded like a primeval ocean in water-caves, when air and water were not separated, when all the beings now dwelling on the earth, the animals and plants, were developed in water. When the minerals began to assume their present form, man emerged from invisibility. The neophyte saw it in this way: Surrounded by a kind of shell, man descended from the regions which are now the regions of air. He was not yet as physically condensed when the animals already existed in the flesh. He was a delicate airy being even in the Lemurian epoch and he so developed that the spiritual picture presents the four group-souls: On one side something like the image of a Lion, on the other the likeness of a Bull, up above something like an Eagle and below something similar to Man. Such is the spiritual picture. Thus man moves forth from the darkness of the spirit-land. And the force which formed him appears as a kind of rainbow. The more physical powers surround the entire structure of this human being like a rainbow (Rev. 4). We have to describe this development of man in various realms and in various ways. The above description represents the way it appears to the investigator when he looks back and sees how these four group-souls have developed out of the common Divine-human which descends. From time immemorial this stage has been symbolized in the form represented in the second of the so-called seven seals. [Note 1] That is the symbolic representation, but it is more than a mere symbol.

There you see these four group-souls emerging from an indefinite background, the rainbow surrounding it and the number twelve. Now we must understand what this number twelve signifies. When that which has just been described is seen coming forth, there is a clairvoyant feeling that it is surrounded by something of an entirely different nature from that which emerges from the indeterminate spiritual. In ancient times that by which it is surrounded was symbolized by the Zodiac, by the twelve signs of the Zodiac. The moment of entering into spiritual vision is connected with many other experiences. The first thing perceived by one whose etheric body goes forth is that it seems to him as if he grew larger and larger and extended himself over what he then perceives. The moment comes when the initiate says: "I do not merely see these four forms, but I am within them, I have expanded my being over them." He identifies himself with them. He perceives that which is symbolized by the constellations, by the number twelve. We shall best understand that which spreads itself around, that which reveals itself, if we remember that our earth has passed through previous incarnations. We know that before the earth became earth it went through the condition of Saturn, then through that of Sun, then through that of Moon, and only then did it become our present earth. This was necessary, for only in this way was it possible for the beings we see on the earth around us to come forth as they have done. They had gradually to work through those changing forms.

So when we look back into the primeval past we see the first condition of our earth, that of ancient Saturn which at the beginning of its existence did not even shine. It consisted of a kind of warmth. You would not have been able to see it as a shining globe, but had you approached you would have come into a warmth space, because it then consisted only of warmth.

Someone might now ask: Did then the development of the world begin with Saturn? Have not perhaps other conditions brought about that which became Saturn? Was not Saturn preceded by other incarnations? It would be difficult to go back before Saturn because only with Saturn begins something without which it is impossible to go beyond Saturn, namely, that which we call time. Previously there were other forms of being; that is to say, we cannot really speak of a "before," because time did not yet exist. Even time had a beginning! Before Saturn there was no time, there was only eternity, duration. All was then simultaneous. Only with Saturn did it come about that events followed one another. In that state of the world where there is only eternity, duration, there is also no movement. For time belongs to movement. There is no circulation, no revolution; there is duration and rest. As one says in Spiritual Science: there is blissful rest in

duration. That is the expression for it. Blissful rest in duration preceded that Saturn condition. The movement of the heavenly bodies only entered with Saturn. The path indicated by the twelve signs of the Zodiac was conceived of as signs, and the time during which a planet passed through one of these constellations was spoken of as a cosmic hour; twelve cosmic hours, twelve hours of day and twelve of night! To each cosmic body, Saturn, Sun and Moon, is reckoned a consecutive number of cosmic hours which are grouped into cosmic days; and of these periods of time seven are outwardly perceptible and five are more or less outwardly imperceptible. We distinguish there-fore seven Saturn revolutions or seven great Saturn days and five great Saturn nights. We might also say five days and seven nights, for the first and last "days" are twilight days. We are accustomed to call these seven revolutions, these seven cosmic days, Manvantaras, and the five cosmic nights, Pralayas. If we wish to have it exactly correspond to our reckoning of time, we reckon two planetary conditions together, that is, Saturn and Sun, Moon and Earth; and we then get twenty-four revolutions. These twenty-four revolutions form important epochs in the representation of the world and we picture these twenty-four revolutions ruled by beings in the universe who are represented in the Apocalypse as the twenty-four Elders, the twenty-four rulers of the cosmic revolutions, the cosmic periods. In the seal (shown by Dr. Steiner) they are typified as the cosmic clock. The numbers on the clock are here only interrupted by the double crowns of the Elders to indicate that these are the Time-Kings because they rule the revolutions of the cosmic bodies. The initiate sees this when he first looks back into the picture of the past.

We must now ask: Why does the initiate see this picture? Because in it are represented symbolically in astral pictures the forces which have formed the human etheric body in its present shape, and corresponding with this the physical body. Why this is so you may easily imagine. Imagine a man lying in bed. With his astral body and "I" he leaves the physical body and etheric body. But now the physical and etheric bodies as they are to-day, belong to the present physical human body; and to the present etheric body belong the astral body and the "I." This physical and this etheric body cannot exist alone. They have become what they are because the astral body and "I" have been membered into them. Only a physical body which contains neither blood nor nerves can exist without an astral body and "I." That is the reason why the plant can exist without astral body and "I," because it has neither blood nor nervous system, for the nervous system is connected with the astral body and the blood with the "I." There is no being having a nervous system in the physical body which

is not permeated by an astral body and there is no human being having a blood system in the physical body into which the "I" has not entered. Think of what you do every night. You callously desert your physical and etheric bodies and leave them with the blood and nervous systems to themselves. If it merely depended upon you, your physical body would have to die every night through your deserting your nervous and blood systems; it would die the very moment the astral body and "I" left the physical and etheric bodies. But the spiritual investigator sees how other beings, higher spiritual beings, then occupy it. He sees how they pass into it and do what man does not do in the night, namely, take care of the blood and nervous systems. These are the same beings, however, who have created man, in so far as he consists of a physical body and etheric body, not only to-day but from incarnation to incarnation. They are the same beings who caused the first rudiments of the physical body to originate upon ancient Saturn and who formed the etheric body upon the Sun. These beings who from the very beginning of the Saturn and Sun periods have ruled in the physical and etheric bodies, now rule every night while man is asleep and basely leaves his physical and etheric bodies, surrendering them to death, so to speak; they penetrate and take care of his blood and nervous systems.

Hence, too, it is comprehensible that at the moment when the astral body touches the etheric body in order to imprint itself in it, man is then pervaded by those forces which have formed him; he then sees the picture of the forces which are symbolized in the seal. That which upholds him in life and connects him with the whole universe flashes out at this moment of initiation. He sees what has formed the two members of his being, the physical body and etheric body, that which preserves their life every night; but he himself has still no share in it for he cannot yet work into these two principles of his being. If it depended upon man, the physical body and the etheric body, which during the night lie on the bed, would be condemned to a plant existence, for he leaves them to themselves. Hence to man the state of sleep is an unconscious condition such as the plant always possesses.

Now what has happened, in the case of an ordinary man, with that which has withdrawn during sleep? What has become of the astral body and the "I"? These also are unconscious during the night. The ordinary man experiences nothing in his astral body during sleep at night. But suppose a person were passing through the seven stages of the John-initiation — those important stages in Christian initiation — he experiences not merely what has been described up to now; quite apart from the fact that when the astral body touches the etheric body he is able to develop clairvoyant

power, something else would come about. He becomes conscious of the soul-peculiarities, the human soul-qualities of the astral and devachanic worlds from which his soul is really born. To this picture is added a still higher symbol which seems to fill the whole world. To this symbol of the old initiation there is added for one who passes through the stages of the initiation of John something else which may best be represented by the first seal. The Christian initiation possessed this as the symbol of the old initiation. We are now presenting these things from the standpoint of Christianity, which, however, has to receive them and change them into something different. He sees a spiritual vision (Rev. i, 12) of the Priest-king with the golden girdle, with feet which seem to consist of cast metal, his head covered with hair as of white wool, out of his mouth a fiery sword flaming and in his hand the seven cosmic-stars, Saturn, Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus.

The form in the centre of the second picture seal was only indicated in the old initiation as the fifth of the group-souls. It is that which only existed germinally in ancient humanity and only came forth as what is described as the Son of Man who rules the stars when he fully appears to man in his true form.

Thus from this symbolical representation we must first of all clearly understand that the separation of the various principles in present-day humanity — physical body and etheric body on the one hand and astral body and "I" upon the other — may be so considered, that each may contribute its part, as it were, to initiation, first of all through the form of initiation when the astral body touches the etheric body, when the four group-souls flash out, and then in the treatment of the astral body so that this too acquires the ability to see. Previously the highest vision in the super-sensible world had only reached as far as a kind of plant experience of the world. Through the Christian initiation a higher stage of initiation is reached in the astral body. Here you have the two things mentioned at the beginning of the Apocalypse described from the principle of initiation itself. The writer of the Apocalypse has, however, described them in the reverse order, and rightly so. He first describes the vision of the Son of Man, the appearance of Him Who is, Who was and Who is to come — and then the other. Both are symbols of what the initiate experiences during initiation.

Thus we have described what happens in certain cases of initiation and what at first is experienced. In our next lecture we shall proceed further to the details of these real, actual experiences and we shall find them reflected in the mighty presentation given in the Apocalypse of John.

Notes:

Note 1: Dr. Steiner is referring to the seven symbolic Seals which had been drawn from his indications. They showed stages of human evolution visible in the astral world to the seer. See Occult Seals and Columns with introduction by Rudolf Steiner.



Lecture III

At the close of our last lecture we were able to point out what the specifically Christian and the later Christian-Rosicrucian initiation first gives us in a great and significant symbol. We have indicated the meaning of this symbol, this initiation picture which is also described as the Son of Man who has the seven stars in his right hand and the sharp two-edged sword in his mouth. We saw that this initiation enables a person to have a certain high degree of vision while within his "I" and astral body and outside the physical and etheric bodies. We shall now consider all this still more closely.

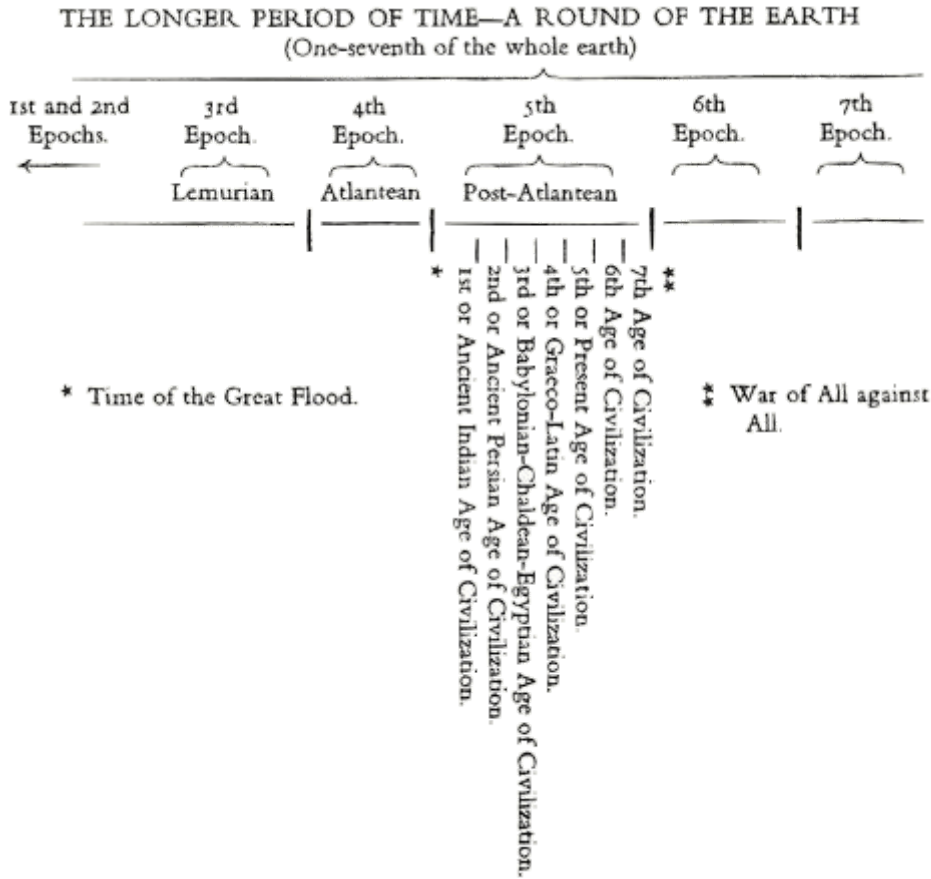
Initiation enables a person to attain that which can only be observed with spiritual vision, with spiritual eyes, which is only clear to super-sensible perception, and only in this way can this be really seen and known. Now one of the first and most important things a candidate for the Christian initiation has to know is the development of humanity in our period, so that he may understand the tasks of man to a higher degree. All that higher knowledge and higher perfection gives to man is connected with the question: What am I and what is my task in this age? The answering of this question is of great importance.

Every stage of initiation leads to a higher standpoint of human observation. Even in the first lecture we were able to point out that man progresses step by step, first to what we call the imaginative world, where in the Christian sense he comes to know the seven seals, then to what we call inspired knowledge, when he hears the "trumpets." and finally to a still higher stage where he is able to understand the true significance and nature of the spiritual beings, the stage of the so-called vials of wrath. But let us now turn our attention to one particular stage of initiation. Let us imagine that the pupil has reached the stage of initiation where he experiences what was described at the close of our last lecture. We shall imagine him just on the border, between the most ethereal beings of our physical world and the one above it, the astral world, where he is permitted to stand as if on a high peak and look down. What can the pupil see from this first pinnacle of initiation?

In spirit he sees all that has happened since the Atlantean flood destroyed ancient Atlantis and the post-Atlantean man came into existence. He sees how cultural periods follow one another up to the time when our

epoch also will come to an end and give place to a new one. Ancient Atlantis came to an end through the waters of the Atlantean flood. Our epoch will come to an end through what we call the War of All against All, by frightful devastating moral entanglements.

We divide this fifth epoch, from the Atlantean flood to the mighty war of All against All, into seven consecutive ages of civilization, as shown in the diagram below.



At one end we imagine the great Atlantean Flood, at the other the great world war, and we divide this into seven sub-ages, seven periods of civilization. The whole epoch containing these seven sub-ages is again the seventh part of a longer period; so that you have to imagine seven such parts as our epoch between Flood and War, two after the great war and four before the flood. Our epoch, the post-Atlantean, is then the fifth great epoch.

When the pupil rises to a still higher pinnacle of initiation he surveys these seven epochs, each with its seven sub-divisions; he sees them when he arrives at the boundary of the astral and of the spiritual or devachanic world. And so it goes on step by step; we shall see later what the still higher stages are.

Now we must bear in mind that the pupil is first able to rise to a peak at which the wide plain of the seven ages of civilization of the post-Atlantean epoch became visible as if from a mountain-top. We all know these seven cultural ages. We know that when the Atlantean flood had swept Atlantis away, the ancient Indian civilization came as the first, and that it was succeeded by the ancient Persian civilization. This was followed by the Assyrian-Babylonian-Chaldaic-Egyptian-Hebrew civilization, this by the fourth age of civilization, the Graeco-Latin, which was followed by the fifth, the one in which we are now living. The sixth, which will follow ours, will be in a certain sense the fruit of what we have to develop in the way of spiritual civilization. The seventh age of civilization will run its course before the War of All against All. Here we see this terrible devastation of civilization approaching, we see also the small group of people who have succeeded in taking the spiritual principle into themselves, and are rescued from the general destruction which comes through egoism.

As we have said, we are now living in the fifth of the sub-ages. Just as from the summit of a mountain, towns, villages and woods appear, so do the results of these ages of civilization appear from the pinnacle of initiation described. We perceive their significance. They represent what has taken place in our physical world as human civilization. For this reason we speak of ages of civilization, in contradistinction to races. All that is connected with the idea of race is still the remains of the epoch preceding our own, namely, the Atlantean. We are now living in the age of cultural epochs. Atlantis was the age in which seven great races developed one after another. Of course the fruits of this race development extend into our epoch, and for this reason races are still spoken of today, but they are really mixtures and are quite unlike those distinct races of the Atlantean epoch. To-day the idea of civilization has already superseded the idea of race. Hence we speak of the ancient Indian civilization, of which the civilization announced to us in the Vedas is only an echo. The ancient and sacred Indian civilization was the first dawn of the post-Atlantean civilization; it followed immediately upon the Atlantean epoch.

Let us recall once more how man lived at a time which now lies more than eight or nine thousand years behind us. If we speak of the actual periods of time, then these figures hold good. The civilization of which we are now speaking was directly under the influence of the Atlantean flood, or the great glacial epoch, as it is called in modern science. The engulfing of Atlantis by the flood was a gradual process, and there then lived upon the earth a race of men of which a part had worked up to the highest stage of development possible to be attained. This was the ancient Indian people, a race which then dwelt in distant Asia, and lived more in the memory of the ancient past than in the present. The greatness and power of the civilization of which written descriptions such as the Vedas and Bhagavad Gita are only echoes, lies in the fact that the people lived in the memory of what they themselves had experienced in the Atlantean epoch. You will remember that in the first lecture of this course we said that most human beings of that epoch were capable of developing a certain dim kind of clairvoyance. They were not limited to the physical sense world; they lived among divine spiritual beings; they saw these divine spiritual beings around them. In the transition from the Atlantean to the post-Atlantean epoch man's vision was cut off from the spiritual, astral and etheric worlds and limited to this physical world. In the first post-Atlantean age of civilization men were possessed by a great longing for what their ancestors had seen in ancient Atlantis, on which, however, the door had closed. Our ancestors saw the ancient wisdom with their own spiritual eyes, though dimly. They lived among spirits, they had intercourse with gods and spirits. Such was the feeling of those who belonged to that ancient sacred Indian civilization; they longed with all their might to look back and see what their forefathers had seen, and of which the ancient wisdom spoke. And thus the land which had just appeared before the physical vision of man — the rocks of the earth, which had just become visible, which previously had been seen spiritually — all this external world seemed of less value to them than that which they could remember. All that the physical eyes could see was called Maya, the great illusion, the great deception, from which they longed to escape. And the most advanced souls in that first age could be raised to the stage of their ancestors by the method of initiation of which a few remnants remain in Yoga. From this proceeded a fundamental religious mood which may be expressed in the words, "That which surrounds us here in external sense-appearance is a worthless and vain deception, the real and true is above in the spiritual world which we have left." The spiritual leaders of the people were those who could transpose themselves into the regions in which man formerly lived.

That was the first age of the post-Atlantean epoch. And all the ages of this epoch are characterized by the fact that man learned to understand the outer sensible reality more and more, so that he came to say: "What surrounds us here and is perceptible to our outer senses, is not to be considered as a mere appearance, it is a gift of the spiritual beings, and the gods have not given us senses to no purpose. That which forms the foundations on earth of a material world culture must gradually be recognized."

What the ancient Indian looked upon as Maya, from which he fled, from which he longed to escape, was looked upon by those who belonged to the second age as their field of action, as some-thing upon which they had to work. Thus we pass to the ancient Persian age, which lies about five thousand years back, that age of civilization in which the earth around man at first seemed something hostile, but no longer — as formerly — an illusion from which he had to flee; he looked upon it as a field of work upon which he had to imprint his own spirit. The Persian considered the earth ruled in its material character by evil, by a power opposed to the good, by the god Ahriman. He controls it but the good god Ormuzd helps man, when man puts himself in his service. When he fulfils the will of Ormuzd he changes this world into arable land of the upper spiritual world, he imprints into the sensibly real world what he himself knows in the spirit. In the second age of civilization the physically real world, the sensibly real world, was a field of work. To the Indian the sense world was still an illusion or Maya; to the Persian it was indeed ruled by evil demons, but it was nevertheless a world out of which man had to drive the evil and bring in the good spiritual beings, the servants of Ormuzd, the god of Light.

In the third age man comes still nearer to the external sensible reality. It is no longer merely a hostile power which he has to overcome. The Indian looked up to the stars and said: "All that is there, all that I can see with external eyes, is only Maya, illusion." The Chaldean priests saw the orbits and positions of the stars and said: "When I observe the positions of the stars and follow their courses it becomes to me a script from which I know the will of the divine spiritual beings. From what I there see I recognize what the gods intend." To them the physically sensible world was no longer Maya but, as the writing of a human being is the expression of his will, so that which was visible in the stars of heaven, which lived in the forces of nature, was to them a divine script. And with love they began to decipher nature. Thus arose the wonderful star-lore of which mankind to-day no longer has knowledge; for what is known as astrology has originated through a misunderstanding of the facts. In the writing of the stars a deep

wisdom was revealed to the ancient Chaldean priest as Astrology, as secrets of what his eyes beheld. He considered this as the revelation of something inward and spiritual.

And what was the earth to the Egyptians? We need only point to the discovery of Geometry, when man learnt to divide the earth according to the laws of space, according to the rules of Geometry. The laws within Maya were investigated. In the ancient Persian civilization they ploughed up the earth, the Egyptians learnt to divide it according to the laws of space, they began to investigate the laws. Still more; they said: "The Gods have not left us a writing in the stars to no purpose, not for nothing have they announced their will to us in the laws of nature. If we wish to accomplish salvation through our own work, then in the arrangements we make here we must produce a copy of what we can discover from the stars." If you could look back into the laboratories of the Egyptian initiates, you would find a different kind of work from that in the realm of science to-day. At that time the initiates were the scientists. They investigated the courses of the stars, they understood the laws of the position and the orbits of the stars and the influence of their aspects upon what took place below on the earth. They said: "When this or that constellation appears in the heavens, this or that must take place below in the life of the State, and when a different constellation arises, something else must take place. In a hundred years' time certain constellations of a different kind will appear," so they said, "and then something corresponding to these must take place." It was predetermined for thousands of years in advance what was to happen. In this way originated what are called the Sibylline books. That which is contained in them is not foolishness; after careful observations the initiates wrote down what was to happen for thousands of years, and their successors knew that this should be carried out, they did nothing which was not indicated in these books for thousands of years according to the courses of the stars. Let us say some law was to be made. They did not at that time vote, as is the case with us; they consulted the sacred books in which was written what should happen here on the earth, so that it might be a mirror of what is written in the stars. They carried out what was written in the books. When the Egyptian priest wrote those books he knew that his successors would carry into effect what was written, for they were convinced of the necessity of law.

Out of this third epoch of civilization developed the fourth. But a few remnants of this prophetic art of the Egyptians have been preserved, such a remnant can still be seen. When they wished to exercise this prophetic art in ancient Egypt, they divided the next age into seven parts and said:

"The first must contain this, the second that, the third that," etc., and this was the plan which succeeding generations carried out. That was the chief characteristic of the third age of civilization.

The fourth contained but faint echoes of it. You may still recognize these in the story of the origin of the ancient Roman civilization. Aeneas, the son of Anchises of Troy, a city which flourished in the third age, set out on his wanderings and came at length to Alba-longa. This name indicates a place where an ancient sacred priestly culture flourished; Alba-longa or the long Alba, the place from which a priestly culture, the culture of Rome was to proceed. We still see the remains of this in the vesture worn by a Catholic priest during the celebration of the Mass. A sevenfold age of culture was sketched out in advance by the priests. The reigns of the seven Roman kings were outlined beforehand. The historians of the nineteenth century have been the victims of a bad joke as regards these seven reigns. They came indeed to the idea that in the secular material sense there is no truth in the story of these Roman kings; but they were unable to discover what lay behind, namely, that this is really a sketch taken from the Sibylline books, of a civilization prophetically drawn out in advance according to the sacred number seven.

This is not the place to go into details regarding the several kings. You would be able to see how the several kings, Romulus, Numa Pompilius, Tullus Hostilius, etc., correspond exactly to the consecutive cultural epochs according to the seven principles which present themselves in such different domains.

In the third age man had been able gradually to penetrate Maya with the human mind. This was completed in the fourth age of civilization, the Graeco-Latin, when in the wonderful works of art man produced a perfect image of himself in the outer material world, and portrayed in the drama of Aeschylus, pictures of human fate. Observe on the other hand how in the Egyptian civilization men still sought the will of the Gods. The conquest of matter such as we see in the Greek age signifies another stage, in which man made a step further in love of material existence; and finally in the Roman age he completely entered into the physical world. One who understands this knows also that in this age we must recognize the full appearance of the principle of personality. Hence in Rome first appears what we call the conception of justice, and man as "a citizen." Only a confused science is able to trace jurisprudence back to all sorts of previous ages. What was previously understood as equity was something quite different. The old law is much more correctly described in the Old

Testament in the Ten Commandments. What God commanded belonged to the ancient idea of law. It is absurd in our age to try to trace back the ideas of law to Hamurabi, etc. True equity and the idea of man as a citizen, was first actualized in Rome. In Greece the citizen was still a member of the municipal body. An Athenian or a Spartan counted for much more as an Athenian or a Spartan than as an individual. He felt himself part of the municipality. It was in Rome that the individual first became a citizen; only then had he reached this stage. This could be proved in detail. What we now call a testament or will did not exist in this sense before Roman times. A will or testament in its present meaning first originated at that time, because only then did the separate human being become determinative in his egoistic will, so as to impose his will upon his successors. Previously other impulses than the personal will were present which held the whole together. Thus it could be shown by many examples how man then entered into the physical world as an individual being.

We are now living in the fifth age, when culture has descended even below the level of man. We are living in an age when man is actually the slave of outer conditions., In Greece the mind was employed to spiritualize matter; we see spiritualized matter in the form of an Apollo or a figure of Zeus, in the dramas of a Sophocles, etc.; there man has emerged as far as to the physical plane but has not yet descended below the level of man. Even in Rome this was still the case. The deep descent below the sphere of the human has only just come about. In our age the mind has become the slave of matter. An enormous amount of mental energy has been used in our age to penetrate the natural forces in the outer world for the purpose of making this outer world as comfortable a place as possible for man. Let us compare our age with former ones. In those ancient times man beheld the vast writing of the gods in the stars; but with what primitive means were the attainments of the civilization of that age, the Pyramids, the Sphinxes, produced? How did man in those days procure his food? Think of all the conveniences of civilization man has achieved up to the present day. What an enormous amount of spiritual energy has been expended to invent and build the steam engine, to think out the railway, the telegraph, telephone, etc.! An enormous force of intellect had to be used to invent and construct these purely material conveniences of civilization — and to what end are they used? Does it make any essential difference to the spiritual life, where in an ancient civilization a man crushed his grain between two stones, for which naturally very little mental power was needed, or whether to-day we are able to telegraph to America and obtain thence great quantities of grain and to grind it into flour by means of

ingeniously constructed machinery? The whole apparatus is set into motion simply for the stomach. Try to realize what an enormous amount of spiritual life-force is put into purely material culture. Spiritual culture has not yet been advanced very much by these external means. For example, the telegraph is very seldom used in anthroposophical affairs. If you were to make a statistical comparison between that which is used for the material culture and that which benefits the spiritual life, you would understand that the spirit has plunged below the human level and has become the slave of the material life. Thus we have a decidedly descending path of culture, up to our age, the fifth age of civilization, and it would have descended ever more and more deeply. For this reason humanity had to be preserved by a new impulse from slipping completely into matter. The earth-being has never before descended so deeply. A stronger impulse, in fact, the strongest, had to come to the earth. This was the appearance of Christ Jesus, who gave the impulse to new spiritual life. We owe to the mighty impulse which came through Christ Jesus such upward impelling forces as existed in the spiritual life during the descent. There were always spiritual impulses present in this descent into matter. Christian life is only now gradually beginning to develop. In the future it will rise to a transcendent glory, because only then will humanity understand the Gospels. When these are fully understood it will be seen what an enormous amount of spiritual life they contain. The more they are disseminated in their true form, the more will it be possible for humanity, in spite of all material culture, to develop a spiritual life and rise again into spiritual worlds.

Now that which develops from age to age in the post-Atlantean epoch is represented by the writer of the Apocalypse as being expressed in small communities. These small communities, divided in space in the external world, represent to him these cultural epochs. When he speaks of the community or Church at Ephesus he intends the following: "I assume that at Ephesus there was a community which accepted Christianity in a certain sense; but as everything develops only gradually, there is always something remaining from each cultural epoch. In Ephesus we have indeed a school of initiates, but the Christian teaching is there coloured in such a way that we can still recognize every-where the ancient Indian civilization." He wishes to show us the First Post-Atlantean Age. Hence this first age he represented by the community at Ephesus, and that which is to be announced is to be communicated by letter to the community at Ephesus. We must represent it approximately thus: The character of that remote Indian age of civilization of course remained; it continued in various

streams of culture. We find something of this character in the community at Ephesus, which comprehended Christianity in such a way that it was still determined by the typical character of the ancient Indian civilization.

Thus in each of these letters we have a representative of one of the seven post-Atlantean ages of civilization. In each letter it is said: "Ye are so and so. This and that side of your nature is in accordance with Christianity, but the rest must become different." The writer of the Apocalypse says to each cultural epoch what may be retained, and what no longer harmonizes and should become different.

Let us see whether the seven consecutive letters really contain something corresponding with the character of the seven consecutive cultural epochs. Let us try to understand what the tenor of these letters would have to be if they were to correspond with what has just been said. The writer thinks: In Ephesus is a community, a church; it has accepted Christianity but colours it with the tone of the first cultural epoch — strange to external life, not filled with love for that which is the real task of post-Atlantean humanity. The one who directs this letter to the community is satisfied that they had put away the worship of gross sensuality and turned to the spiritual life. We know what the writer of the Apocalypse means from the circumstance that Ephesus was the place where the Mysteries of the chaste Diana were cultivated; he indicates that the turning away from matter specially flourished there, the renunciation of the sensual life and the turning to the spiritual; but, "I have this against thee, that thou hast left thy first love," the love which the first post-Atlantean site should have, which expresses itself in looking upon the earth as the field in which the divine seed must be sown.

How, then, does he who dictates this letter characterize him-self? He describes himself as the forerunner of Christ Jesus, as the leader of the first cultural epoch. Christ Jesus speaks as if through this leader or master of the first age of civilization, that age when the initiates looked up to the spiritual world. He says of himself that he holds the seven stars in his right hand and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are nothing else than symbols for the seven higher spiritual beings who are the leaders of the great ages of civilization. And of the seven candle-sticks we are expressly told that they are spiritual beings who cannot be seen in the sense world. Reference is also made to these in clear words in the Yoga initiation; but he also shows that man never works according to evolution if he hates external works, if he ceases to love external works. The community at Ephesus forsook the love for external works. So it is quite

rightly said in the Apocalypse, "Thou hatest the works of the Nicolaitanes." "Nicolaitanes" is nothing else than a designation for those who express life merely in a material sense. In the time referred to in this letter there was a sect called the Nicolaitanes, who considered the external fleshly sensual life of primary importance. "This you shall not do," says the one who inspires the first letter. "But do not forsake the first love," says he also, "for inasmuch as you love the external world you vivify it, you exalt it to spiritual life." "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear; to him that overcometh will I give to eat not merely of the perishable tree, but of the tree of life." That is, he will be able to spiritualize the life of the senses and so elevate it to the altar of the spiritual life.

The representative of the second age of civilization is the community or church at Smyrna. The leader of humanity addresses this one through his second ancestor, the inspirer and master of the ancient Persian civilization. The mental attitude of the ancient Persian was as follows: "There was once the God of Light who had an enemy, external matter, the dark Ahriman. At first I was united with the Spirit of Light, who first was there. Then I was membered into the world of matter, into which the backward and hostile power, Ahriman, instilled himself; and now, in conjunction with the Spirit of Light, I shall work upon matter and embody the spirit in it. Then, after the evil Deity has been conquered, the good Deity, the Spirit of Light, will reappear." "I am the first and the last, who is killed in material life and made alive again in the spiritual resurrection." So we read in the second letter, "I am the First and the Last, Which is, and Which was, and Which is to come, He who has become alive again" (Rev. I, 8). It would lead too far to go through every sentence in this way, but we must consider more closely the sentence which describes minutely how a person stands as a member of the community at Smyrna when he transforms it into the Christian principle. There we read that man gives life to dead matter, that he spiritualizes it. He is not destroyed by it. If he were, then death would be an event leading him to a spiritual life in which the results of this earthly life could have no place. Let us take a person who has not lived his life in such a way that he can gather its true fruits. He takes no fruits with him into the spiritual life. But only from these fruits can he live in the spiritual world. If, therefore, he brought with him no fruits he would experience the "second death." By working in this earthly field he is saved from the "second death." "He who hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith. He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death" (Rev. ii. 11).

Now we shall pass on to the community at Pergamos. It is the representative of the age when humanity came down more and more to the physical plane, when man saw in the starry script something that his spirit could understand, something that was given him in the third age of civilization. Man works by means of that which is within him. Through his having an inner being he can investigate the outer world. Only because he was gifted with a soul could he investigate the courses of the stars and invent geometry. This was called "exploration by the word," and is expressed in the Apocalypse by the "sword of my mouth." Hence the one who caused this letter to be written, points out that the power of this age is an incisive word, a sharp two-edged sword. It is the Hermes word of the old priests, the word by which the powers of nature and the stars were explored in the old sense. That was the civilization gained primarily by means of the inner astral soul-forces of man in the physical world. If it were still achieved in that old form, it would verily be a two-edged sword, for then wisdom would be perilously near the edge between white and black magic, between that which leads to blessedness and that which ends in destruction. Therefore he says he well knows that where the representatives of this age dwell, there also is Satan's seat. This indicates all that could lead astray from the really great purposes of evolution; and the teaching of Balaam is none other than the teaching of the black magicians. For that is the teaching of the devourers of the people. The devourers of the people, the destroyers of the people, are the black magicians who work only in the service of their own personality and therefore destroy all brotherhood, they devour everything which lives in the people. But the good side in this civilization consists in man's beginning to purify and transform his astral body. This is called the "hidden manna." That which is merely for the world, transformed into the food of the gods, that which is only for the egotistical man transformed into the divine, is called the "hidden manna." All the symbols here indicate that man purifies his soul so as to make himself into the pure vehicle of Manas or the Spirit Self. To this end, however, it is still necessary to pass through the fourth age of civilization, for then the Saviour appears, Christ Jesus himself.

The community at Thyatira. Here he announces himself as the "Son of God," who has "eyes like flames of fire and feet like brass." He now announces himself as the Son of God. He is now the leader of the fourth age of civilization, when man has descended to the physical plane, when he has created his image even in the media of external culture. The period has now come when the Deity himself becomes man, becomes flesh, becomes person; the age in which man descended to the stage of

personality, where in the sculptures of the Greeks the individualized Deity appears as personality, where in the Roman citizen personality comes into the world. At the same time this age had to receive an impulse through the Divine appearing in human form. Man, who had descended, could only be saved through God Himself appearing as man. The "I Am" or the "I" in the astral body had to receive the impulse of Christ Jesus. That which previously only existed as a germ, the "I" or the "I Am," was to appear in history in the outer world. The Son of God may therefore, as the leader of the future, say, "And all the churches shall know the 'I Am,' which searches the minds and hearts" (Rev. ii. 23). Stress is here laid upon the "I Am," upon the fourth principle of the human being. "As I have received from my Father; and I will give him the morning star" (Rev. ii. 28). What does the morning star mean? We know that the earth passes through the conditions of Saturn, Sun, Moon, Earth, Jupiter, Venus and Vulcan. That is the way it is usually expressed, and it is quite correct. But I have already pointed out that the Earth-evolution is divided into the Mars period and the Mercury period on account of the mysterious connection existing in the first half of the earth-evolution between the earth and Mars, and in the second half between the earth and Mercury, so that in the place of Earth (the fourth period of evolution) we some-times put Mars and Mercury. We say that the earth in its evolution passes through Saturn, Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus. And the most potent stellar force in the second half of the earth is seen in Mercury. Mercury is the star representing the directional force, the upward tendency in which man must be enveloped. Here I come to a point where a little secret, so to say, must be unveiled, one which may only be divulged at this point. The teachers of spiritual wisdom have always had what might be called a mask for those who would only have misused it, especially in bygone times. They did not express themselves directly, but presented something which was intended to conceal the true state of affairs. Now the esotericism of the Middle Ages resorted to drastic measures and called Mercury Venus, and Venus Mercury. In truth if we wish to speak esoteric-ally, as the writer of the Apocalypse has done, we must speak of Mercury as the morning star. By the morning star he meant Mercury. "I have given the direction upwards to thine 'I' or ego, to the morning star, to Mercury." You may still find in certain books of the Middle Ages which describe the true state of affairs, that the outer stars of our planetary system are enumerated thus: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Earth, and then comes, not as it is now, Venus, Mercury, but the reverse, Mercury, Venus. Therefore it says here, "Even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star" (Rev. ii. 27, 28).

And now we have come to our own epoch, the one to which we belong and have to ask: Is this Revelation fulfilled right into our own age? Were it to be fulfilled, he who has spoken through the four preceding ages would have to speak to us, and we should have to learn to understand his voice and become familiar with our task for the spiritual life. If there is to be a spiritual movement and if it is to understand the mysteries of the universe, then, in so far as it is to agree with the Revelation of John, it must fulfil what the speaker, this great Inspirer, demands of this age. What does he demand and who is he? Can we know him? Let us try. (Rev. iii. 1): "And unto the Angel of the Church in Sardis write." (We must feel that we ourselves are spoken to here.) "These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars." What are the seven Spirits and the seven stars?

In accordance with the concept of the writer of the Apocalypse, man as we know him is an outer expression of the seven human principles we have enumerated. These are the principle of the physical body, of which the external physical body is the expression, the principle of the life body whose expression is the etheric body, the principle of the astral body. This last when transformed yields Spirit Self, the transformed etheric body, Life Spirit, and the transformed physical body, Spirit Man; in the centre is the "I"-principle. These are the seven spiritual constituents in which the divine nature of man is displayed as in the members of a leader. According to the technical expression used in occultism these seven principles are called the seven Spirits of God in man. And the seven stars are those from which we understand what man is to-day and what he is to become in the future. The consecutive stars of the incarnations of the earth, Saturn, Sun, Moon, Earth, Jupiter, Venus and Vulcan, are the seven stars which make the evolution of man comprehensible. Saturn gave to man the plan for his physical body, the Sun that of his etheric body, the Moon that of his astral body, and the Earth has given him the "I" or Ego. The next three — Jupiter, Venus and Vulcan — develop the spiritual being of man. If we understand the call of the spirit who has these seven stars and the seven Spirits of God, the sevenfold nature of man in his hand, then we shall be studying Anthroposophy in the sense of the writer of the Apocalypse. To study Anthroposophy is to know that the writer is here referring to the fifth age of human evolution in the post-Atlantean epoch, to know that in our age, when man has descended most deeply into matter, we are again to ascend to spiritual life by following the great individuality who gives for our guidance the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars, in order that we may rightly proceed on our path.

And if we follow this path we shall bring into the sixth age the true spiritual life of wisdom and of love. The spiritual wisdom we have acquired will become the impulse of love in the sixth age, which is represented by the community expressing itself even in its name, the community of brotherly love, or Philadelphia. All these names are carefully chosen. Man will develop his "I" to the necessary height, so that he will become independent and in freedom show love towards all other beings in the sixth age, which is represented by the community at Philadelphia. In this way the spiritual life of the sixth age will be prepared. We shall then have found the individual "I" within us in a higher degree, so that no external power can any longer play upon us if we do not wish it; so that we can close and no one without our will can open, and if we open no opposing power can close. These are the Keys of David. For this reason he who inspires the letter says that he has the key of David: And to the Angel of the community in Philadelphia write: These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth and no man openeth. ... Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it" (Rev. iii. 7) — the "I" that has found itself within itself.

In the seventh age those who have found this spiritual life will flock around the great Leader; it will unite them around this great Leader. They will already belong so far to the spiritual life that they will be distinguished from those who have fallen away, who are lukewarm, "neither cold nor hot." The little flock which has found spirituality will understand him who may then say, when he makes himself known, "I am he who contains in himself the true final Being towards which everything is steering." For this final Being is described by the word, Amen. "And unto the Angel of the church of Laodicea write: Thus saith the Amen, he who in his being presents the nature of the end" (Rev. iii. 14).

So we see that in the Apocalypse of John is presented the contents of an initiation. Even the first stage of this initiation, where we see the inner progress of the seven post-Atlantean ages, where we still see the spirit of the physical plane, shows us that we are dealing with an initiation of the Will. For this book can inspire our will at the present time when we know that we ought to listen to the inspirers who teach us, when we learn to understand what the seven stars and the seven Spirits of God signify, when we learn that we ought to carry the spiritual knowledge into the future.

Lecture IV

In the last lecture we showed how the Apocalypse of John prophetically points to the cycle of human evolution lying between the great upheaval upon our earth which the legends of various peoples describe as a flood, and geology the glacial period on the one hand, and that event which we designate as the War of All against All on the other. In the epoch between these two events lies everything prophetically referred to in the Apocalypse — that book which reveals to us the beings of past ages in order to show what is to fire our will and our impulses for the future. We have also seen how we ourselves, in the spiritual movement to which we belong, should consider the words of the so-called fifth letter as a summons to action, to work. We have seen that we ought to follow that Being with the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars. Then we saw how, through this spiritual movement, the next age is prepared which is represented by the community of Philadelphia, the age when — among all those who have understood the word of the summons — there is to be that brotherly love over the whole earth which is described in the Gospel of John. Afterwards another age, the seventh, will follow, which the writer of the Apocalypse describes by saying that on the one hand there is placed all that is bad in the community representing the seventh age, that is lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, that could not warm to the spiritual life and hence must fall away, and on the other hand those who have understood the word of invitation, those who will form his following who says, "I am the Amen," that is: I am he who unites in himself the goal of the human being, who contains the Christ principle in himself.

Now let us keep for a later occasion all that could be added in further explanation of the several letters and in justification of the several names of the cities. To-day we shall pass on in our studies to that which presents itself to the pupil when he advances to the next stage of initiation. We were confronted by the seven sub-ages of the present cycle of humanity, and we have said that this entire cycle with its seven sub-ages is itself a small cycle contained in a longer period also containing seven epochs. Our epoch, which embraces seven ages, was preceded by the Atlantean epoch, during which were prepared the races whose echoes still exist. When the seventh age of our present epoch is at an end, it will be followed by another epoch again consisting of seven parts. The present epoch is preparing indirectly for the following one, so that we may say, our age of

civilization will gradually pass over into one of brotherly love, when a comparatively small part of humanity will have understood the spiritual life and will have prepared the spirit and attitude of brotherly love. That civilization will then again divide off a smaller portion of human beings who will survive the event which will have such a destructive effect upon our epoch, namely, the War of All against All. In this universal destructive element there will be everywhere individuals who lift themselves above the rest of warring humanity, individuals who have understood the spiritual life and who will form the foundation for a new and different world in the sixth epoch.

Something similar also took place during the transition from the fourth epoch to ours. When one who with spiritual vision can review the course of time has passed back through the ages we have considered, the Graeco-Roman, the Babylonian-Egyptian, the ancient Persian and the ancient Indian and beyond the time of the great flood, he comes into the Atlantean epoch. We need not now consider it in detail but we must at least understand how this Atlantean civilization passed over into our own. There, too, the greater part of the Atlantean population was not sufficiently mature to develop farther, it was incapable of coming over into our epoch. A smaller part, living in a region near to our present Ireland, developed to the highest flower of the civilization of Atlantis and then journeyed towards the East. We must clearly understand that this was only the principal stream. There were always peoples who emigrated from the West to the East, and all the later peoples of Europe, of northern and central Europe, proceeded from the stream which then went from the West to the East. Now that most advanced part of the Atlantean population was under the guidance of a great leader of humanity and eventually settled down as a very small tribe of chosen individuals in Central Asia. From this point the colonists migrated to the various regions of civilization mentioned, to ancient India, to Persia, Egypt, Greece, etc.

You might now be inclined to say: Is it not an extremely bitter thought that whole bodies of peoples remain immature and do not develop their capacities; that only a small group becomes capable of providing the germ for the next civilization? This thought will no longer disquiet you if you distinguish between race-development and individual soul-development, for no soul is condemned to remain in one particular race. The race may fall behind; the community of people may remain backward, but the souls progress beyond the several races. If we wish to form a true conception of this we must say that all the souls now living in bodies in civilized countries were formerly incarnated in Atlantean bodies. A few developed there in the

requisite manner, and did not remain in Atlantean bodies. As they had developed further they could become the souls of the bodies which had also progressed further. Only the souls which as souls had remained backward had to take bodies which as bodies had remained at a lower stage. If all the souls had progressed, the backward races would either have decreased very much in population, or the bodies would be occupied by newly incoming souls at a low stage of development. For there are always souls which can inhabit backward bodies. No soul is bound to a backward body if it does not bind itself to it.

The relation between soul-development and race-development is preserved to us in a wonderful myth. Let us imagine race following race, civilization following civilization. The soul going through its earth mission in the right way is incarnated in a certain race; it strives upward in this race, and acquires the capacities of this race in order next time to be incarnated in a higher one. Only the souls which sink in the race and do not work out of the physical materiality, are held back in the race by their own weight, as one might say. They appear a second time in the same race and eventually a third time bodies in similarly formed races. Such souls hold back the bodies of the race. This has been wonderfully described in a legend. We know, indeed, that man progresses further in the fulfilment of the mission of the earth by following the great Leaders of humanity who point out the goals to be attained; if he rejects them, if he does not follow them, he must remain behind with his race, for he cannot then get beyond it. Let us think of a personality who has the good fortune to meet a great Leader of humanity, let us suppose such a personality confronting Christ Jesus himself, for example; he sees how all his deeds are evidence for leading humanity forward, but he will have nothing to do with this progress, he rejects the Leader of humanity. Such a personality, such a soul would be condemned to remain in the race. If we follow this thought to its conclusion such a soul would have to appear again and again in the same race, and we have the legend of Ahasuerus who had to appear in the same race again and again because he rejected Christ Jesus. Great truths concerning the evolution of humanity are placed before us in such a legend as this.

We must distinguish between soul-development and race-development. No soul is undeservedly obliged to remain in an old body, no soul will undeservedly remain in a body belonging to our age. Those who hear the voice which calls them to progress will survive the great period of destruction — the War of All against All — and appear in new bodies which will be quite different from those of the present day. For it is very short-

sighted if one thinks of the Atlantean bodies of men as being like the present bodies. In the course of thousands of years the external physiognomy changes and after the great War of All against All man will have quite a different form. To-day he is so formed that in a certain sense he can conceal the good and evil in his nature. The human physiognomy already betrays a good deal, it is true, and one who understands this will be able to read much from the features. But it is still possible to-day for a scoundrel to smile most graciously with the most innocent man and or taken for an honest man; the reverse is also possible; the good impulses in the soul may remain unrecognized. It is possible for all that exists in the soul as cleverness and stupidity, as beauty and ugliness, to hide itself behind the general physiognomy possessed by this or that race. This will no longer be the case in the epoch following the great War of All against All. Upon the forehead and in the whole physiognomy it will be written whether the person is good or evil. He will show in his face what is contained in his inmost soul. What a man has developed within himself, whether he has exercised good or evil impulses, will be written on his forehead. After the great War of All against All there will be two kinds of human beings. Those who had previously tried to follow the call to the spiritual life, who cultivated the spiritualizing and ennobling of their inner spiritual life, will show this inward life on their faces and express it in their gestures and the movements of their hands. And those who have turned away from the spiritual life, represented by the community of Laodicea, who were lukewarm, neither warm nor cold, will pass into the following epoch as those who retard human evolution, who preserve the backward forces of evolution which have been left behind. They will show the evil passions, impulses and instincts hostile to the spiritual in an ugly, unintelligent, evil-looking countenance. In their gestures and hand-movements, in every-thing they do, they will present an outer image of the ugliness in their soul. Just as humanity has separated into races and communities, in the future it will divide into two great streams, the good and the evil. And what is in their souls will be outwardly manifest, they will no longer be able to hide it.

If we look back and see how humanity has hitherto developed on the earth, we shall find that this development of the future just described is quite in harmony with it. Let us look back to the origin of our earth after Saturn, Sun and Moon and a long interval had passed. The earth then emerged anew out of the cosmic darkness. At that time, in the first part of the earth development, there were no other creatures upon the earth besides man. He is the first-born. He was entirely spiritual, for embodiment

consists in a densification. Let us imagine a body of water suspended in space which, through a certain process, partially crystallizes into ice, first a small part and then the same process continually repeated. And now let us imagine that the small pieces of ice which have crystallized fall from the body of water, so that they are now separated from the whole mass. Now, because each small piece of ice can only grow larger so long as it is in the whole body of water, when it has separated from this it remains at the same stage. Let us imagine a portion of the body of water separated in the form of very small pieces of ice; let us imagine that the freezing of the water continues and at the next stage more water assumes the form of small lumps of ice; these again fall out, and so on, till finally a very large part is crystallized out of the mass of water and takes the shape of ice. This last has taken the most out of the mother-substance of the water; it has been able to wait the longest before separating.

It is the same in evolution. The lowest animals were unable to wait, they left their spiritual mother-substance too early and hence have remained behind at an earlier stage of evolution. Thus the gradually ascending grades of lower beings represent backward stages in evolution. Man waited until the last; he was the last to leave his spiritual divine-mother-substance and descend as dense substance in fleshly form. The animals descended earlier and therefore remained at that stage. We shall see the reason for this later. At present we are interested in the fact that they descended and have remained at earlier stages of evolution. What, therefore, is an animal form? It is one which, had it remained united with the spirit from which it proceeded, would have developed up to our present humanity. But the animal forms have remained at a standstill; they have left the spiritual germ; they have separated themselves and are now degenerating. They represent a branch of the great tree of humanity. In ancient times man had the various animal natures within him, as it were, but then separated them off one after another as side branches. All the animals in their different forms represent nothing else than human passions which condensed too early. That which man still possesses spiritually in his astral body, the several animal forms represent physically. He kept this in the astral body until the latest period of earth existence, and hence he could progress the furthest.

Man still has something within him which must separate itself from the universal evolution as a descending branch, as the other animal forms have done. That which man has within him as tendency to good and evil, to cleverness and stupidity, to beauty and ugliness, represents the possibility of an upward progress or a remaining behind. Just as the animal form has

developed out of progressing humanity, so will the race of evil with the horrible faces develop out of it as it progresses towards spirituality and reaches the later goal of humanity. In the future there will not only be the animal forms which are the incarnated images of human passions, but there will also be a race in which will live what man now hides within him as a portion of evil, which to-day he can still conceal but which later will be manifest. Let us make clear the chief thing that will appear by an illustration that may perhaps seem strange to you.

We must understand that this separation of the animal forms was actually necessary to man. Each animal form which separated in bygone times from the general stream signifies that man had then progressed a step further. Imagine that all the qualities distributed throughout the animal kingdom were in man. He has purified himself from them. Through this he was able to develop higher. If we take a muddy liquid and allow the gross matter in it to settle to the bottom, the finer part remains at the top. In the same way the grosser parts which man would have been unable to use for his present condition of development have been deposited in the animal forms. Through man having cast out of his line of development these animal forms — his elder brothers, as it were — he has reached his present height. Humanity has risen by throwing out the lower forms in order to purify itself and it will rise still higher by separating another kingdom of nature, the kingdom of the evil race. Thus mankind rises upward. Man owes every quality he now possesses to the circumstance that he has rejected a particular animal form. One who with spiritual vision looks upon the various animals knows exactly what we owe to them. We look upon the lion form and say, "If the lion did not exist in the outer world, man would not have had this or that quality; for through his having rejected it he has acquired this or the other quality." This is the case too with all the other forms in the animal kingdom.

Now the whole of our fifth epoch of human evolution (including the various stages of civilization from the ancient Indian to our own), really exists in order to develop intelligence and reason and all that belongs to them. Nothing of this existed in the Atlantean epoch. Memory was present and also other qualities, but to develop the intelligence and what pertains to it — the turning of the attention to the outer world — is the task of the fifth epoch. If we direct our spiritual vision to the surrounding world and inquire, "To what do we owe the fact that we have become intelligent; what animal form have we put forth from ourselves in order to become

intelligent?" curious and grotesque as it may appear, it is nevertheless true to say that if there were not around us the animals which belong to the horse nature, man would never have been able to acquire intelligence.

In former times men were aware of this. All the intimate relations existing between certain races of men and the horse originate from a feeling which may be compared with the mysterious feeling of love between the two sexes, from a certain feeling of what one owes to this animal. Hence when the new civilization arose in the ancient Indian age, it was a horse that played a mysterious role in religious ceremonial, in the worship of the gods. And all customs connected with the horse may be traced back to this fact. If you observe the customs of ancient peoples who were still clairvoyant such as, for instance, the old Germans, and notice how they placed horse-skulls in front of their houses, this leads you back to the fact that these people were aware that man has grown beyond the unintelligent condition by separating out this form. There was a profound consciousness that the acquisition of cleverness is connected with it. You need only remember the Odyssey and the wooden horse of Troy. Such legends contain deep wisdom, much deeper than our science contains. Not without reason is such a type as the horse employed in legend. Man has grown out of a form which once contained within it that which is now embodied in the horse; and in the form of the centaur, art still represented man as connected with this animal in order to remind him of the stage of development out of which he had grown, from which he had struggled free in order to become the present human being.

What thus took place in bygone times in order to lead to present humanity will be repeated at a higher stage in the future. It is not the case, however, that this would in the future have to run its course in the physical world. Those who become clairvoyant at the boundary between the astral and the devachanic planes can see how man continually purifies and develops that which he owes to the separation from the horse nature. He will accomplish the spiritualizing of the intelligence. After the great War of All against All he will elevate to wisdom, to spirituality, that which to-day is merely reason, merely cleverness. This will be experienced by those who then will have reached the goal. The fruits of that which was able to develop in humanity in consequence of the separation of the horse nature will be manifested.

Now let us imagine one who clairvoyantly looks into the future of mankind. What will he see, what will it show him? Everything which man has prepared throughout the seven ages of civilization (for his soul was

incarnated in the past civilizations and will again be incarnated in the future ones) will be there in a following age, and survive the great War of All against All into the more spiritual epoch. In each age he took what could be taken up. Think how your soul lived in the ancient Indian civilization! You then received the wonderful teachings of the Holy Rishis; although you have forgotten them you will re-member them again later. Then you progressed further from one incarnation to another. You have been able to learn what the Persian, the Egyptian and the Graeco-Roman civilizations made possible. All this is within your soul to-day, but it is not yet outwardly manifest in your countenance. You will live further into the age of Philadelphia and into the age which will be led by the "Amen." And a community of people will develop more and more who will manifest in their countenances what has been prepared in the various ages of our epoch. What is already working in your soul, that which you received in the Indian age, will appear in your physiognomy in the first sub-age of the epoch following upon the great War of All against All. And that which a man acquired in the ancient Persian age will change his countenance at the second stage. And so on, stage after stage. The spiritual teaching, which you who now sit here receive and unite with your souls, will bear its visible fruit in the epoch after the great war. You are now uniting with your soul that which the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars give. You carry it home. No one will read it in your faces to-day, nor even after centuries; but it will come after that great war. In the sixth epoch there will come a fifth age and then you will bear the image of it in your face; on your forehead will be written what you have now worked out, what are now your thoughts and feelings.

So step by step, after the great war, will issue and reveal itself all that is now hidden in the soul. Let us imagine the beginning of the great war; the soul which has heard the call which from age to age the Christian principle has uttered, will live on after all that is indicated in the "letters." What these ages can give has been given throughout seven ages. Let us imagine how the soul waits, how it waits on. It is sealed seven times. Each age of culture lays one seal upon it. Within you is sealed what the Indians wrote in the soul; within you is also imprinted what the Persians, the Egyptians, Greeks and Romans have written in the soul, and what our own age of civilization inscribes in it. The seals will be unloosed, that is, the things written there will be outwardly revealed after the great War of All against All. And the principle, the power, which brings it about that the true fruit of

our ages of civilization shall be made manifest in the countenance, is to be found in Christ Jesus. Seven seals of a book must be opened. What is this book? Where is it?

We will explain what a book is according to the Bible. The word "book" occurs in the Bible only seldom. This must not be overlooked. If you search in the Old Testament you will find the word in Genesis (Gen. v. 1): "This is the book of the generations of man; When God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; and he created him male-female, and blessed him, and called his name Adam." You may then open where you will, you will only find the word "book" again in the first Gospel (Matt. i. 1). "This is the book of the generation of Christ Jesus, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham begat Isaac, and Isaac begat Jacob," etc. Again generations are enumerated. That which flows through a long series is enumerated. And again the expression "book" appears here in the Apocalypse of John. It appears where it is said that the Lamb alone is worthy to open the book with the seven seals. The expression "book" has always the same significance, it is never used otherwise. We only need to understand the records literally. A book in our present sense is not intended. The Domesday book or register of landed property had the old signification of the word "book." The word "book" is used where something is entered consecutively, where one thing depends upon another, where a possession is registered so that it may be handed down from generation to generation. In such a record we are dealing with something whereby a foundation is made for that which is handed on by heredity. In the Old Testament the word "book" signifies a document in which are recorded the generations transmitted through the blood. It is there used in no other sense than that the generations are recorded. It is used afterwards in the first Gospel in the same way for the recording of the lineage. Hence what follows consecutively in time is written in a "book." By a book nothing else is ever intended than the recording of what follows in time, that is to say, approximately in the sense of a chronicle, a history. The book of life which is now laid down in humanity, in which from age to age is written in the "I" of man that which each age supplies, this book which is written in the soul of man and which will be unsealed after the great War of All against All, this book is also meant here in the Apocalypse. In this book there will be the entries made by the various ages of civilization. Just as through the generations the entries were made in the genealogical tables of the old books, so it is here, only that in this case that which man spiritually acquires is written down. And as he acquires through intellectuality what it is possible to acquire in our age, the gradual progress of this development

will be represented imaginatively by the symbol which corresponds with this quality. By having passed through the Indian age in a frame of mind in which he turned away from the physical world and directed his gaze towards the spiritual, man will, in the first age after the War of All against All, gain the victory over the things of sense. He will be the victor by acquiring what was written in his soul in the first age. Further, that which appeared in the second age, the conquest of matter by the ancient Persians, will appear in the second age after the War of All against All; the sword here signifies the instrument for the over-coming of the external world. That which man acquired in the Babylonian-.Egyptian age, when he learned how to measure everything correctly is seen in the third age after the great war, as that which is represented by the scales. And the fourth age shows us what is the most important thing, that which man acquired in the fourth age of our epoch through Christ Jesus and his appearance on earth; the spiritual life, the immortality of the "I." All that is not fit for immortality, that which has to die, falls away; this must appear for the fourth age.

Thus everything that has been prepared throughout the ages of this present epoch comes out consecutively in the next, and it is indicated by the symbol which corresponds with the intelligence. If we read about the opening of the first four seals in the sixth chapter of the Apocalypse of John, we shall see that what is revealed expresses stage after stage in a mighty symbolism, what will in the future be revealed. "And I saw, and behold a white horse" — this indicates that the spiritualized intelligence comes forth. "And he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him; and he went forth to conquer, and he conquered. And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, 'Come and see.' And there went out another horse that was red. And to him that sat thereon was given power to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another." (That that might be destroyed which is not worthy to take part in the ascent of humanity.) "And to him was given a great sword. And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, 'Come and see.' And I beheld, and lo, a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, 'A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny.'" "Measure" and "penny" to indicate what humanity learned in the third age; the fruits are carried over and unsealed. And in the fourth age Christ Jesus came to conquer death, and the manifestation of this achievement is seen. "And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, 'Come and see.' And I looked and

behold a pale horse; and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him." "Behold a pale horse" — this all falls away, falls into the race of evil; but that which heard the call, which overcame death, partakes in the spiritual life. Those who have understood the "I Am" and his call are those who have overcome death. They have spiritualized the intelligence. And now what they have become can no longer be symbolized by the horse. A new symbol must appear for those who have understood to follow the call of him who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars. They now appear under the symbol of those who are clothed in white garments, who have put on the robes of the immortal, eternal, spiritual life.

We are then further told how all that appears which goes upward to good and that which goes downward to evil. This is clearly expressed. "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain because of the word of God and because of the testimony which they held; and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou judge and not avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet a little season, until there came to them their fellow-servants and their brethren, who should be killed as they were" — will be killed as to the external form and live again in the spiritual. How is this expressed?

Let us realize what according to Anthroposophy becomes of the external sense world. How have we described the seven stars? We went back to Saturn and showed how the physical human body originated, how it was constructed out of warmth. We then saw how the Sun appeared; we drew a mental picture of it. The sun is for us not merely a physical sun; it is the bringer of life which in the future of humanity will appear as the highest form of spiritual life. The moon is to us the element which retards the rapid march of life and slows man down to the necessary pace. Thus we see spiritual powers in sun and moon. And the knowledge we acquire through Anthroposophy also appears rightly symbolized in a future age; to our spiritual vision the sun and moon appear as the forces which have constructed man. Symbolically the external physical sun and the external moon disappear, they become like a human being, but in an elementary form! "And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood." All this is the symbolical fulfilment of what we are seeking in spiritual life. Thus we see that what is being prepared in this epoch is prophesied in significant pictures for the next epoch. We now carry invisibly within us the transformation which we take in hand with the

sun and moon when the physical changes into the spiritual elements. When spiritual vision is directed toward the future, the physical disappears and the symbol of the spiritualizing of humanity appears before us.

To-day we have pointed out in somewhat bold features what the seven seals and their unveiling in the Apocalypse should say to us. We must go still deeper into the subject, and then much of what might seem improbable to us to-day will become quite clear. We have, however, already seen how the mighty pictures described by the seer regarding the present and future development of humanity are arranged in a necessary order; how this goes on into the future and thereby gives us stronger impulses to live into the future and to do our share in the spiritualizing of human life.



Lecture V

Yesterday we saw how the human race will develop when our present epoch has run its course, how it will divide, so to speak, into two streams, into the good and the evil races, and how the secrets of this future are unsealed through the "seven seals" which are symbolically unloosed in the Apocalypse of John. After this general analysis concerning the manifestation in the outer physiognomy of what is being prepared in our epoch in the souls of men, one might well ask: How is it that the Apocalyptist describes the seals in such frightful pictures? We shall best answer this question if we now introduce an intermediate consideration into our whole study of the Apocalypse.

So far we have tried to confirm the statement that the Apocalypse of John represents an initiation, the Christian initiation, through which the future of humanity is revealed. We shall best understand what follows if we now look back and consider once more the past epochs of human evolution. We will do this to the extent which is necessary for the explanation of the Apocalypse. We know already the general outlines. We know that our earth, which forms the present dwelling-place of man, took its rise in the far-distant past, but that as earth it was the reincarnation of another planetary being usually called the old Moon or the Cosmos or Planet of Wisdom, in contradistinction from our present earth, which we designate as the Cosmos or Planet of Love. The Cosmos of Wisdom or the ancient Moon is again only the re-embodiment of a still earlier condition which we call the Sun-planet; that is not the present Sun, which is a fixed star, but the Sun-planet. And the Sun-planet is the reembodiment of ancient Saturn. We have therefore to distinguish four consecutive conditions of our planetary existence which we call Saturn, Sun, Moon and Earth.

We will now describe these four conditions so far as we need this for the explanation of the Apocalypse of John. When with spiritual vision we go back to the ancient Saturn existence, we come to a remarkable planet. This ancient Saturn is a heavenly body upon which is to be found nothing of our present minerals or solid earthly substances, no animals or plants, no water or fluid substances, no current of air or gas. If you were to imagine that with the present eyes — which did not then exist — you were somewhere in space and approached this Saturn, you would be able to see

nothing of its first condition, for it did not yet shine. With your eyes you would have been unable to see anything of Saturn from outside in the first half of its existence. Had you approached it and penetrated into the space it filled, you would have felt somewhat as if you had crept into a heated oven, if you had then been able to use the present senses. You would only have been able to distinguish this globular space from the rest by its being warmer than its surroundings. Of all the conditions we now know, warmth is the only one we meet with on ancient Saturn; but it is a remarkable kind of warmth. You would not find it equally warm in all parts. In some parts it is warmer and in others colder, so that if you were to trace and connect the parts of equal warmth by lines, there would appear figures perceptible only through the difference in warmth. Every-thing is warmth, but organized, differentiated warmth. Were you to fly through the whole of Saturn in this way you would say, "There is indeed something present, but something which I can only perceive through the various degrees of warmth." These differentiated conditions of warmth were all that existed of the present characteristics of our earth, and the first beginnings of the physical human body were expressed at that time in this warmth. That which then existed you still have within you to-day, only it has withdrawn from outer space and is within your being it is the warmth of your blood. If you were to construct figures from your blood-warmth you would have the echoes of that part of your physical body which existed on ancient Saturn. The warmth you now have in your blood is the first foundation of the physical body, the oldest part of it, so that you may also say: The whole of Saturn consisted of blood-warmth. You would be able to find something like the figures which could be drawn to-day, if you were to trace the various channels of your blood according to the different degrees of warmth. That is the physical existence of ancient Saturn. Of all the present physical substances it only possessed warmth, and of all the beings now peopling the earth there was only man, and of him there existed only the foundation of the physical body. Saturn consisted only of such foundations of physical human bodies formed out of warmth. Just as a blackberry is made up of separate little balls, so was Saturn composed at that time, but of human beings such as we have just described.

On the other hand it was surrounded by spiritual beings. Just as the earth is now enveloped in air, Saturn was enveloped in a spiritual atmosphere. Beings lived there who were at various stages of development, but they all needed this dwelling-place of Saturn at their stage of development at that time. It was necessary to them; they could not have done without this dwelling-place. There were those, for example, who also had seven

principles, but not like the present man. The latter has his seven principles, which we call the Seven Spirits of God, in such a way that one begins with the physical body. With these beings it was not so. For example, there were beings who had an etheric body as their lowest principle. They had a physical body only by anchoring their etheric body, as it were, to the physical bodies of Saturn and so using these.

Thus as compared with our present earth this Saturn is in substance a very rarefied cosmic body; it did not possess any-thing like our air or gas; these would have been too gross for it. It possessed only warmth, and surrounding the warmth were spiritual beings. Now through the beings in its environment developing further, Saturn passed through various changes. One of these changes may easily be described by saying that in the middle of its development Saturn actually begins externally to light up; so that if one follows it, it appears at the beginning as a dark warmth-body, then it begins to glimmer, and towards the end sends forth a dim light into the world. This spiritual atmosphere around Saturn which contains various beings, contains amongst others a certain definite kind of beings in whom we are particularly interested. About the middle of the Saturn evolution these beings passed through the stage man is now passing through upon the earth. They are the Spirits of Personality. About the middle of the ancient Saturn period they have approximately reached the stage of development of man. You will, of course, not fall into the mistake of asking, "Did they then have bodies such as the present human beings?" It would be a great mistake to suppose that these men had human fleshly bodies. It is possible to pass through the human stage in the most varied forms, and these Spirits of Personality passed through their human stage on Saturn in such a way that to begin with they used as physical body that which was present in the atmosphere as warmth; that as ether body (which they did not yet possess) they used what was contained in the atmosphere; and lastly they also used what existed as astral substance; as yet they possessed nothing of this themselves. Essentially they had at that time an "I"-vehicle, an "I," and this "I," which was at the human stage, which lived exactly as the present human "I" upon the earth, passed at that time through these various stages of humanity upon Saturn in another form and un another way. Thus about the middle of the Saturn period we have the Spirits of Personality in this human stage. If one reckons in this way, that which I have just related is the middle stage of the Saturn evolution. There are three others which precede it and three others following it. These are called "Rounds" or "Epochs" of Saturn. If you imagine the whole evolution of Saturn you may picture it thus:



In the middle (X) are the Spirits of Personality. At each of the three preceding and the three following stages certain beings become man just as our earth can be divided into seven epochs, so too can the Saturn evolution — at every stage some beings or other, and it was always just when the time had come for them to be able to use what was on Saturn in order to pass through the human stage. Thus we have seven kinds of beings upon Saturn, who there passed through their human stage, who rose to the human stage, who therefore in the ensuing stages no longer need to develop this. The present man was not yet man upon Saturn. The beings who have become man upon Saturn — whose representatives are the Spirits of Personality — progress further and are to-day exalted above man, they have man within themselves, so to speak. They carry him within them as, for them, a past stage of evolution.

Now after Saturn had proceeded with its evolution for a certain length of time, the whole passed over into a spiritual sphere, into a condition not externally perceptible to senses like those of the present day. Then came the second embodiment of our earth, the Sun-planet. This was distinguished by the fact that comparatively early in its development it had progressed so far that it radiated light. This was because it consisted not only of warmth but because the warmth material had already condensed into gaseous, airy material. There was neither water nor solid substance; it consisted of an airy or gaseous mass. But it was already able to be a luminous body; it could have been seen by the present eye as a planet shining in space. When this planet had so far developed, it was possible for the etheric body to be membered into the first rudiments of the physical human body. Thus man now consisted of physical and ether body, while on Saturn he possessed only the first rudiments of the physical body. But he had not progressed far enough to have his own astral body. Human forms looked quite different from those of to-day. Man had the form of plant existence, for like a plant he possessed a physical body and an etheric

body, but upon the Sun he looked quite different from our present plants. With this progress of development was connected the fact that a second kind of being appeared on the Sun. Upon Saturn there were only men, no other beings. It consisted only of men, as a blackberry consists of little berries. Now some of these human germs remained at the Saturn stage, they had not all reached as far as was possible. These backward beings coming from Saturn cannot therefore acquire an etheric body and must remain on the Sun merely with a physical body, thus they have only progressed as far as man upon Saturn. These beings who upon the Sun have merely the physical body are the first germs of our present animals, so that upon the Sun we have human germs with physical body and etheric body, and animal germs with physical body only.

Again it is the case that in the middle of the Sun period certain beings pass through the human stage. This the present man could not yet do. The spiritual beings around the Sun who then pass through the human stage are called the Fire Spirits, Archangels. To-day they are two stages above man. They bear man within themselves; they experienced in another form what man experiences now in his earthly existence. But the Sun also passes through seven stages, and at each stage there are beings who reach the human stage, so that again during the Sun period we have seven phases of development. If they go back into their own past, they see, as it were, a peculiar stage in their life, of which they may say, "At that time when beneath me there was no solid earth and no watery globe, I experienced what man experiences to-day. I can therefore feel and experience what man experiences upon the earth." These beings can say this to-day. They understand it because they too have experienced what man now experiences during, his earthly life.

Then once again came a kind of intermediate condition in which to outer observation (if this had indeed been possible) the luminous planet gradually ceases to glow, then it disappears from a certain stage of clairvoyant observation and is only apparent to the highest spiritual vision. Then it again emerges in a new form of existence, to a third condition which we call the Moon condition. This is the third embodiment of our planet, the ancient Moon. This has now developed so far in the evolution of its substance that what formerly upon the Sun was merely gas has now condensed to water. Through the entry of the watery element, man — who gradually develops again like the plant from the seed — can receive the astral body; so that man now consists of three parts, the physical body, etheric and astral bodies. He is not yet really man, for he does not yet possess an "I" in these three bodies.

Certain beings always remain behind at every stage, therefore the beings who remained behind upon the Sun, who were unable to attain to the Moon stage and who only passed through their Sun stage on the Moon, are now unable to incorporate the astral body; upon the Moon they consist only of physical and etheric body. These are especially those who already remained behind upon the Sun, but who in the meantime had developed so far that they could take up an etheric body. These are again the ancestors of our present animals. Those, however, which were not yet so far advanced upon the Moon that they could take up an etheric body, are the ancestors of still lower beings, the present plants. Thus upon the Moon we have three kingdoms, the human kingdom, consisting of physical body, ether body and astral body; the animal kingdom, consisting of physical body and etheric body; and the vegetable kingdom consisting only of physical body.

Again there are certain beings who about the middle of the Moon period pass through their human stage. They are the spirits who in the literature of spiritual science are usually called the Spirits of Twilight or Angels. They also carry man within them as memory. And again the Moon passes through seven such stages. At each stage there are beings who can pass through human existence. It is always the case that some beings hurry forward and others remain behind. Thus upon the Moon too we have seven grades of beings who had passed through their human stage when the Moon had finished its evolution.

Now in order to understand the ancient Moon fully, we must mention something of importance which took place in the course of the old Moon evolution. When it began, or at least shortly after the beginning, it was a fluid globe. Had it developed further in this way throughout its seven stages it would not have been able to give man the right foundation for his further development. It was only fitted to be a preparatory stage for earthly humanity by dividing first into two planetary bodies. One of these was the forerunner of the present sun, and the other which separated was the forerunner of the present earth, but in such a way that you must imagine the earth mingled with the present moon, so that the present earth and moon were then one. Now imagine these two bodies, earth plus moon on the one hand and the sun on the other, separated from each other; the ancient Moon as a watery body and the ancient Sun on the way to becoming a fixed star. Something very essential was connected with this division. It was primarily the sun which brought about the separation and took with it the finest parts, the most etheric substances, while the grosser substances remained behind in the Moon, that is, the present earth plus

the present moon. Hence the sun is composed of extremely fine substances, while the Moon becomes a much denser body, a watery mass. Through the sun taking with it the finest and most spiritual forces, it could now be the arena for much more highly developed beings. In fact, many of those high beings who were still able to bear the Saturn existence would have been hindered in their development if they had been bound to the Moon any longer. They needed a field of activity with the finest materials; only there could they develop. So they drew their field of action forth and developed further upon the sun. On the other hand, with the Moon, which had suffered a densification through the exit of the finer substances, there were connected those human germs which consisted of physical body, etheric body and astral body, and there were also the germs of the animals and plants. Now this ancient Moon had an extraordinary appearance. You would not yet find anything like rocks or arable soil, although it already circled round its sun. Mineral substances did not yet exist. The principal part of this Moon, upon which these beings hopped about, so to speak, was a kind of mush, a kind of pulp or puree. The basic substance of the ancient Moon consisted of this puree, just as the basic substance of our earth consists of soil. In it were embedded masses, like, shall we say, wood and the bark of trees. If you were to climb a mountain to-day you would walk upon rocks. At that time you would have passed over a basis which, if it was solid, was something like a surface of wood substance. Instead of granite you would have found blocks which might be compared to wood. Of course this is speaking comparatively. Such was the basic substance and out of it came continually luxuriant growths. This was the lowest kingdom, the present mineral kingdom, which at that time lay between the present mineral and vegetable kingdoms. In a certain way it was alive. It continually produced luxuriant growths. It was not like it is now. If to-day there should be a deposit of soil which one wishes to be rid of, it must be carried away by external means. This substance of the ancient Moon died away — but not like separate plants — it died away and formed itself afresh. It was continually in inward living motion. The fundamental substance of the Moon was in a continuous state of decay and growth. And out of this foundation grew another kingdom. Through the exit of the Moon from the Sun the earlier kingdoms had changed. Upon the Sun they corresponded approximately to our kingdoms. Through the exit of the Moon the ancient plant kingdom was forced down about half a stage, and so were the other kingdoms, so that the next kingdom was a kind of animal-plant kingdom, but it grew out of the ground. The animal-plants grew out of the ground; they were in the form of plants, but when one took hold of them they had sensations, they squeaked, etc. They were

actually half animal and half plant; plants inasmuch as they grew on the ground, most of them firmly rooted to the ground, and animals inasmuch as they had a certain capacity for sensation. And the kingdom which preceded the present human beings were human-animals, beings standing between the present man and the present animals; higher than the present apes, but not as high as the present human beings. That was approximately the form of our human ancestors upon the Moon.

Legends and myths have preserved these truths in a wonderful way. Think how a German legend has preserved the secret hidden behind all this. Certain beings always remain behind. Beings between the present plants and the present animals, which could only take root in a vegetable basis such as was the substance of the ancient Moon — these beings also remained behind, and on this account are incapable of thriving on the mineral ground of our present earth. Our present plants can grow in this, but those which stood between the plants and animals and which needed a living basis, cannot, if they have remained behind, grow in mineral soil. Mistletoe is such a plant. Hence it has to "sponge" upon the present plants because it is a backward being. It no longer has sensation, although the astral body enveloping mistletoe is quite different from that of other plants. The German legend perceived that mistletoe does not belong to our earth, that it is a stranger. In the god Baldur the legend recognizes the god of the earth-sun, the earth force. No being of the earth can approach him with hostile feelings. Hence also the god whom the German legend knew to be a straggler, namely, Loki, cannot kill Baldur with anything belonging to the earth; he has to kill him with a branch of mistletoe, because this is a stranger among the creations of the earth, and for this reason can serve the straggler, Loki, who is not related to the earth gods. Deep wisdom is hidden behind these legends, and in this legend of Baldur-Loki, this can be clearly traced. It can also be seen in the customs connected with the mistletoe. If you were to study these you would find that what is said about them proceeds from an ancient wisdom.

Then in the second half of the Moon-evolution came the time when the Sun-beings, as well as the beings who had remained behind upon the Moon., had attained what had to be attained during the old Moon period. And then the Sun and Moon united again; they came together and for a time continued their evolution as one body.

Then the evolutionary condition gradually darkened and passed through the purely spiritual condition usually called Pralaya, and then came the dawning of our Earth evolution. At first this dawning cosmic body

contained not only our present earth substance; it consisted of what you would obtain if you were to mix together in a gigantic cauldron the substance of the present sun, earth and moon. That was approximately the condition at the beginning of the earth's evolution. This was first a kind of repetition of the Saturn condition and then of the Sun condition and then of the Moon condition.

Now the most important thing for us to realize is that man really only becomes man in the present sense in the middle of the Earth evolution. In the Earth period also we have to distinguish seven conditions. We are now in the fourth. Three have gone before and three will follow. It was in the fourth principal cycle that our present human race was to become man. Now, just as in all the Rounds upon Saturn, Sun and Moon, certain beings reached the human stage (upon Saturn the Asuras or Original Forces, upon the Sun the Archangels, and upon the Moon the Angels), there were always beings who remained behind. Upon the Moon there were also beings who could no longer reach the human stage, backward Angels, shall we say, who could only catch up their human stage upon the Earth planet during the first three Rounds. Man reached this stage at the fourth. We therefore say: Before man three other kinds of beings passed through the human stage upon the earth, and the fourth to pass through the human stage upon the earth is man himself. At that moment in cosmic evolution when man is about to become man, all the beings who have been able to pass through the human stage, throughout Saturn, Sun, Moon and the first three Rounds of the Earth, are beings who have more or less progressed beyond man. But they are all able to look back, as it were, and remember the stage at which they themselves passed through the human stage. They could look down upon the evolving human being and say, "He is now becoming something which we have already been, something which we can understand; although we passed through the stage under different circumstances." For this reason they could guide and regulate his evolution from the spiritual world.

Let us enumerate how many of these beings there are who are able to look back at the human stage, who are able to understand evolving man. Seven from the Saturn evolution, plus seven from the Sun, plus seven from the Moon stage, plus three from the Earth; twenty-four beings in all. Twenty-four "Men" look down upon the present man. These are the beings whom for good reasons we have called the guides of evolution, the directors of time. Time is connected with evolution. They are the twenty-four Elders who meet us in the Apocalypse of John. They are the same beings who are described in the part relating to the secret of the seven

seals. They are described as the real directors of history, the true Alpha and Omega. Thus we have also found the twenty-four Elders again here and you see how the Apocalyptist who wrote this important document has secreted in his pictures in a wonderful way what we ourselves are able to find from the study of the spiritual evolution of the world.

Now certain beings had remained behind at every stage; so that the backward Saturn beings came out upon the Sun as the first foundations of the present animal kingdom, and the backward Sun beings came out at the Moon stage as the first foundations of the present plant kingdom. Only upon the Earth did a stage of evolution appear as the mineral kingdom. We have stressed the fact that upon the Moon there was as yet no mineral kingdom, man had as yet no rocks to walk upon. At the time when present man began to pass through the human stage, the first mineral masses, the first crystals appeared in the planet which then stood at a stage between the substances of the ancient Moon and the present earthly substance. This was the moment when the mineral kingdom burst forth, and you find this bursting forth described in a very unique manner in the Apocalypse of John where he says: "Around the throne it was crystallized like a glassy sea." This "glassy sea" is to indicate the bursting forth, the budding forth of the mineral kingdom in its primary form. Thus we see that this secret of cosmic evolution is also indicated in the Apocalypse of John. And from it we have also learnt to perceive that to this degree the writer wishes to present to us in his mighty pictures exactly what we are able to recognize in the development of the earth from the spirit life itself. But in this way the Apocalyptist has led us, at the beginning of his book, to the heights where man can see the pictures of the future stages of evolution.

We have now laid a good foundation to link up again with what we have already learnt about the first ages of the future evolution of humanity. In this digression we have now cast a glance into the past, to where man is ready to become man, where the mineral kingdom shoots forth. And now we shall see how human evolution proceeds further as far as to our own age and thence into the future. We shall find the connection with the secret of the seven seals and their unsealing, up to the outpouring of the vials of wrath.



Lecture VI

In material science it is customary — with the exception of a few circles who in modern times have come to a different explanation — to represent our present solar system as having developed out of a kind of nebula which embraced a space as far as the orbit of Neptune, that is, as far as the orbit of the outermost planet of our solar system. And then, it is supposed, through a condensing process, our sun and the planets moving round it gradually formed. As we have said, there are now a few exponents -who have a somewhat different view; but they too do not bring forward anything essential for us who take a spiritual view. So our sun and the planets circling round it are supposed to have formed themselves into globes. In connection with this a neat little comparison has always been made use of in the schools, and it is still employed to-day, to show by ocular demonstration how a whole planetary system can originate through rotation. Some oily liquid is taken, which, when placed in water takes a globular form. Then a small disc is cut and inserted through the equatorial line of this oily ball so that it is divided into two halves. This is then rotated by means of a pin stuck through the centre of the disc, and one sees at first one drop separate itself and circle as a separate body round the large globe, then a second and a third drop, and finally a large drop remains in the centre around which many smaller ones revolve. "A planetary system in miniature!" says the experimenter. Then he says: Why should not our solar system originate from that primeval nebula in this way, if we can now imitate it in this miniature solar system? Usually this comparison seems to be extremely illuminating and people now understand how once upon a time Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Earth, Venus, Mercury separated from that primeval nebula. But the whole affair, not only the comparison but the whole idea, proceeds from the emptiness of all present-day thinking, for the persons in question, otherwise quite learned men, who put forward this illustration in such an illuminating manner, forget only one thing, namely, that they themselves are present and turn the pin. Now self forgetfulness is very good in certain realms of life, but in this case, if the experimenter is forgotten, the most important thing is forgotten, for without him the drop of oil would never rotate at all. The learned person who believes in such a superstition — this superstition is called the Kant-Laplace system — should at least be logical in his thinking, he should at least presume that some sort of being must have sat on a gigantic stool in space at that time and set a gigantic axis in motion. But human thought

has gradually become so accustomed to consider only the material, that the contradiction in such a comparison is no longer noticed. As a matter of fact, there is a certain truth in this so-called Kant-Laplace system, although the truth is different from the materialistic explanation of the matter. There is a certain truth in it because to spiritual vision everything contained in our present solar system actually appears as having proceeded from such a primeval nebula; only to him who can really investigate historically it is clear that the good in the Kant-Laplace hypothesis comes from occult traditions. This was forgotten when the word "occultism" became something of which one was afraid, as children are of the chimney-sweep. That which really took place did not happen without the influence of spiritual beings and powers. Matter can do nothing unless spiritual beings are behind it.

It would take us too far to-day if, linking on to what was said yesterday, we were to explain the whole of our solar system. Leaving the planets such as Jupiter, Saturn, etc., out of our present study, let us only keep in mind what is of special importance to human life and human evolution.

At one time there was, in fact, such a nebula; and in this all the parts of our solar system were as if dissolved. But, bound up with this nebula, so that they belonged to it, were all the beings mentioned in the course of our observations yesterday. For example, all the beings who passed through the human stage in the twenty-four Rounds were connected with this cosmic nebula. Other beings too were bound up with it. They all dwelt in this nebula which, if not thought of in connection with these beings, is a fantastic abstraction. In the way the materialistic chemist imagines this nebula, it is impossible; it exists only in thought, there is no reality. In reality, the nebula only exists because it is inhabited by a number of spiritual beings. For when this nebula again became visible, there were connected with it all the beings who once inhabited ancient Saturn, who then passed through the various stages of evolution through Sun and Moon right on up to Earth, when after a long intermediate pause the Earth-nebula arose, so to speak. The other beings also with whom we became acquainted on the Sun, were connected with this nebula. It is the whole choir of these beings, who filled the nebula, who produced the movements. For it is beings who create their field of work.

For example, there were beings who needed a dwelling place quite different from that of man if they were to undergo the evolution suited to them. The men who lived upon the ancient Moon as the ancestors of the present men had only physical body, etheric and astral bodies. With these

three members of their being they came out of the so-called pralaya again like a plant from the seed. Thus when the entire system began it was unsuitable for the beings who had brought with them the germs for the present man. Had the speed of development been maintained which our solar system had at the beginning when it came forth from the cosmic twilight, man would have been unable to find the path of his evolution. It would have been as if you were now to be born and then in a very short time become old. If the speed of evolution natal to the Sun had been maintained, man would have grown old quickly; he would be unable to take the slow course through the decades which he now actually does; after a short time he would have white hair, he would be old almost before he was a child.

But this was not to be. There were beings who needed a quicker tempo. These only went through a part of evolution with man, then they took out the heavenly body which now stands as the sun in the heavens and made it their dwelling place. They drew out the substance of the sun together with their own being. For the sun which sends its light to us to-day is inhabited by spiritual beings, just as our earth is. With every sunbeam descending to the earth come the actions of those spiritual beings who in the course of the evolutions of Saturn, Sun and Moon had progressed so far that they were able to participate in the rapid development taking place on the present sun. High, exalted beings were connected with this sun existence at the beginning of our earth development. These separated from the earth; and that which then remained you must imagine as if you had mixed together the present moon and earth in a great cauldron, and this mingled earth and moon circled round the sun for a time.

Thus before we reached the point described yesterday as human incarnation, we have first to recognize the separation of the sun from the earth, that is, the present earth plus the present moon. Upon the sun remained the beings who are the spiritual directors of earthly events. When they came over from the ancient Moon there were seven such beings; in Genesis they are called Elohim, Spirits of Light. For a time they went through their evolution together with the earth, then they drew forth the sun so that they could now work upon the earth from the sun. These Elohim, these Spirits of Light, were seven in number. Six of them united their existence with the actual cosmic sun, and one, known in the Old Testament as Jehovah, separated from them and remained at first united with the earth. He guided and directed the earthly evolution from within, while the others worked upon it from without. That was the position for a time. But after what was pointed out yesterday concerning the ancient

Moon, you will understand that with the withdrawal of the sun was connected a condensation of all that emerged as earth plus moon. There came a period in the earth's evolution when not only the substance, but all beings, underwent a coarsening. For example, the beings who later became man, who at that time were very soft and delicate, underwent a coarsening through taking on horrible instincts. A coarsening of all life took place.

Evolution could not remain thus if man were to arise. A coarsening would have taken place, everything would have become more and more dense and the human beings would have stiffened into mummies, they would have become mummified. And there would very soon have been a planet upon which some-thing not exactly beautiful, but human-like mummies, statues would have collected. The earth would have become mummified. A different event had to take place. Through the government of Jehovah, as cosmic spirit, that which you now see as the moon as the burnt-out moon-dross in the heavens, was separated from the whole mass of earth plus moon. Not only were the grossest substances separated but also the grossest beings. Hence only through the withdrawal of the sun it was brought about that man did not proceed too quickly in his evolution, and through the withdrawal of the moon it was brought about that he did not develop towards a condition of drying up, densification, or mummification.

Thus the earth was separated from the whole mass, and now the course of human evolution was guided on the earth under the influence of these two heavenly bodies — that is, of course, of their beings, the six sun Spirits and the moon Spirit, who had separated himself for the salvation of man. And it was so guided that on the whole these two forces were balanced. Through the exit of both the sun-forces and the moon-forces, exactly the right tempo for human development was attained.

Now in order to understand this more clearly, imagine a man as if influenced only by the sun. You know that man goes through his evolution upon the earth in many, many incarnations. Man began with his first incarnation, then took on a new body over and over again, until he goes through his last incarnation. He passes through a series of incarnations, as a result of which he develops slowly and rises from one incarnation to the next. Men trod the surface of our earth as true spiritual infants. Since the separation of sun and moon from our earth they have risen to the present stage. All these souls will return in different bodies up to the end of the earth's evolution. Now if man were influenced by the sun alone he would

have to pass through in a single incarnation all that he now goes through in so many. The right tempo comes into the many incarnations through the balancing of the forces between the sun and moon from without.

Modern man was gradually shaped during the period which followed the withdrawal of sun and moon; the first germs of the present-day man were then created. That was at a time when man moved upon this earth in quite a different way from that in which he moves now. You must not imagine that when the moon had just gone forth man moved upon this earth in a fleshly form as he does now. There appear again all the forms which had previously been there, as a repetition; and when the earth was liberated from the sun and moon it looked approximately like the old Moon, even softer. And if a being with eyes organized like those of the present day had looked at the earth he would not yet have been able to see man. On the other hand, certain other beings were there who were not sufficiently mature to await a later time. These had to take bodily form while the stage of evolution was still incomplete; so that some time after the moon's departure from the earth certain forms of the lower animals could already be seen physically condensed. Man had not yet descended, nor yet the higher mammals. Man was still a spirit being. He floated as a spirit round the earth and took into himself the finest substances from the environment of the earth. Then gradually he densified so far that he could descend to where the earth had already become solid and islands had formed.

Thus we see that the first human beings appeared comparatively late in the earth's evolution and at that time they had a very different constitution from the present human being. I cannot describe to you the forms of those men which first crystallized, so to speak, out of the spirit. Although you have already heard much that is difficult to believe, you would be greatly shocked if I were to describe to you the grotesque forms of the bodies in which your souls were then incarnated. You would not be able to bear such a description. However, at a later date, when these things which are only now beginning to come to the consciousness of man through Anthroposophy, when they more and more penetrate men's consciousness, this will have to be made known, and it will have a tremendous result, it will be extremely important to the whole life of man. For only when man learns how his body has developed, how the organs he now possesses have gradually developed out of entirely different forms, will he feel that remarkable relationship existing between the organs in the human body which to-day are apparently far apart. He will then see the correspondence between certain organs, for example, between the appendix and the windpipe, which in their earlier form grew together in those remarkably

formed beings. All that to-day is man is the previous form unrolled as it were, the previous form unfolded in the most varied ways. Organs which to-day are separated formerly grew together. They have, however, kept their relationship, and very frequently this relationship is manifested in illnesses. It is seen that when a certain organ is diseased another one is of necessity involved. Hence those who really study medicine will have to make many discoveries, of which the present medical age, which is only a collection of notes, does not dream; then only will physicians really learn something about the true nature of man. All this is merely to point out how entirely different was man's earlier form.

The solid parts have only been built into this human form gradually. There were originally no bones in the human body, even when it had already descended. The bones were developed from soft cartilaginous structures which traversed the human body like cords. These in their turn originated from quite soft substances, and these soft substances from fluid substances, these from airy, the airy from etheric and the etheric from astral which had densified from spiritual substantiality. If you trace it back you will find that everything material has originated from the spiritual. Everything is in archetype in the spiritual world. It was only the Atlantean epoch that the bones, formerly merely indicated, actually developed in man.

We must now more closely examine Lemurian humanity in order the better to understand the writer of the Apocalypse. I need only indicate that following the first period, when the moon had separated from the earth and man descended, he was of a very different nature as regards his will power from what he became later. At that time the will of man worked magically — by his will he could work upon the growth of flowers. When he exerted his will he could make a flower shoot up quickly, a capacity which can only be acquired to-day by an abnormal process of development. Hence at that time the natural surroundings depended upon how the will of man was constituted. If it was good it worked soothingly upon the billowing waters, upon the storm and upon the fiery structures which were then all around, for the earth was to a great extent of a volcanic nature. Man worked soothingly upon all this through a good will and destructively through all evil will. Whole islands could be destroyed by evil will. Thus the human will was in complete correspondence with its environment. The tracts of land upon which man then lived were destroyed essentially by the evil will of man, and only a small part of mankind was saved (we have here

to distinguish between race-development and soul-development) who lived on into the epoch which we may describe in so far as words can express clairvoyant perception.

After this catastrophe by fire we come to the Atlantean epoch when the human race developed essentially on a continent which now forms the bed of the Atlantic Ocean, between the present Europe and America. At that time man lived under very different physical conditions. At the beginning of the Atlantean epoch he was a structure which perceived in quite a different way from the present man; we have already indicated this in the first lecture and again later; to-day we shall again point out this different kind of vision of the man of that epoch. He still had a kind of spiritual vision, because the construction of his body was different from what it is now. The etheric body was not yet so firmly bound up with the physical body. The etheric body of the head extended far beyond the physical body. Only towards the last third of the Atlantean epoch did the projecting etheric body draw in and take the form of the present physical human head. Since the form of the ancient Atlantean was so very different from that of present man and his members so differently joined together, his whole life of consciousness, his whole soul life was also different. And here — if we wish to understand the Apocalyptist — we must touch upon a very important, but a very mysterious, chapter.

If you were to enter this ancient Atlantis, you would find that it was surrounded not by such pure air as the present earth but by air saturated with volumes of mist, with water. This air became clearer and more transparent the further Atlantis developed, but the mists were densest where the more advanced Atlantean civilization referred to developed. The thickest mists were there, and from these developed the foundations of the later civilizations. Atlantis was covered far and wide by those mists. A division of rain and sunshine such as we have to-day did not then exist. Hence in ancient Atlantis that which you know as the rainbow could not appear. You might search the whole of Atlantis and you would not find it. Only when the condensation of the water led to flooding, when the great flood spread itself over the earth, could the rainbow originate physically. And this is a point where from Spiritual Science you will gain the greatest respect for the religious records. For when you are told that after the flood, Noah, the representative of those who then saved the human race, sees the rainbow first appear, this is really an historical event. After the flood humanity saw the first rainbow; previously it was not physically possible. Here you will see how profound, how literally true the religious records are. To-day many are distressed when one says that the religious records are

literally true. Many quote a saying which is true; it is quoted, however, by lazy people, not as a true statement but from indolence. It is the saying: "The letter killeth but the spirit giveth life." From this they deduce the right to take no notice at all of what stands in the records, to have no longer the will to recognize what is actually there, for it is the "dead letter" they say. And so they like to let their spirit shine and concoct all sorts of fantasies. These persons may indeed be very clever in their explanations, but that is not the point; the point is that we ought really to see in the records what is contained in them. "The letter killeth but the spirit giveth life" has the same significance in mystical language as the saying of Goethe, "He who has not this, this dying and becoming, is but a sad guest upon the dark earth." This saying does not mean: "If you wish to lead some one to a higher knowledge you must slay him," but it means that just through the culture of the physical world man must uplift himself to spirituality. So also the letter is the body of the spirit, and we must first have and understand it, then we may say that we can find the spirit in it. The letter, the understood letter, must then die so that the spirit may be resurrected from it. This saying is not an injunction to fancy anything you please about what is contained in the religious records. When we recognize the true significance of this rainbow as we have represented it, something like deep respect for the religious records invades our soul, and we get an idea of how, through the deepening of the understanding by the teachings of Anthroposophy, man first attains to true and real feelings and advances to a true understanding of the religious records by an act of will.

We will now look back into ancient Atlantis. We have already said that man then lived in a different state of consciousness and that his memory was different from what it is now; but the difference is much more considerable. If we go far back not merely into the later period of Atlantis but to the beginning, we then find the human consciousness very different from that which we possess to-day.

Let us once more consider the present consciousness. During the day a person uses his senses. At night he goes to sleep. On the bed lie the physical body and the etheric body; the astral body and the "I" withdraw. The sphere of consciousness darkens. The man of to-day sees nothing and hears nothing. Then again in the morning when the astral body and the "I" re-enter the physical body and etheric body, physical objects again confront him. How was it in the early Atlantean epoch? Let us take the moment when in the morning man plunged into the physical body and etheric body; at that time he did not have a physical world around him such as we have to-day. All the present objects which are now seen with

clear outlines were then seen as if surrounded with an aura, with coloured edges, quite indistinct. In ancient Atlantis the appearance was somewhat similar to what is now seen when in the evening there is a dense fog and you cannot see the street lamps clearly, but surrounded by coloured edges. Thus it was in early Atlantis. All objects were seen indistinctly, not with clear outlines and surfaces as to-day, everything was as if enveloped in coloured mist. Only gradually have clear outlines developed. Had we looked at a rose in the first portion of Atlantis it was as if a cloudy structure arose and in the middle something red. Only gradually did the external colour appear to be laid on the surface; only later did objects obtain sharp outlines.

Hence you see that the physical world surrounding man was quite different in ancient Atlantis. It was also different when at night he rose out of his physical body when — shall we say — he went to sleep. Really it was not sleep in the present sense. However, the entire world of the misty physical formations remained below, and a spiritual world arose. Possessing no sharp outlines man lived within a spiritual world. Spiritual beings were his companions. In the first portion of the Atlantean epoch day and night alternated in such a way that when man plunged into his physical body he had only hazy, indistinct pictures of the physical world; but when at night he left the physical body he was able to live spiritually, although somewhat indistinctly, among spirits; he moved among spirits. And above all, man's entire life of feeling was also different in the Atlantean epoch. At that time when he went out of his physical body and etheric body, he did not feel fatigue and the need for rest. Neither did he find rest. He had to enter into the spiritual world; that was then his sphere of activity. On the other hand, when the morning came, he felt the need for rest and sought out his resting-place, which was his own body. There he lay peacefully. He crept into his own body and rested during the day.

Thus in the first period of Atlantis it was entirely different from what it is now. During the Atlantean epoch, man gradually passed from the very opposite conditions into those of the later period. This came about more and more as the etheric body was driven into the physical body. This occurred during the last third of the Atlantean epoch. Before this event man felt himself as a waking being above in the spiritual world; but as yet he did not say to himself "I," he did not possess self-consciousness. When he withdrew from the physical body and etheric body in order to go into the brilliance of the night, he felt himself to be a member of the spirituality which was above, he felt himself safely hidden, so to speak, in his group-soul. It always became bright around him during the night; but he felt

himself dependent. Just as our finger belongs to our "I," so man felt that he belonged to the group-souls which are seen spiritually as the four heads of the Lion, Eagle, Bull and Man, described in the Apocalypse of John. Man felt himself transposed into one such group-soul. And only when, snail-like, he was in his bodily shell did he feel that he possessed something of his own. For the circumstance that man became an independent being resulted from his being able to envelop himself in his body. He had, however, to pay for this confinement in his body by the gradual obscuration of the spiritual world, until it completely withdrew. In its place the world which he saw below when he was in the physical body became brighter and clearer. In this way it gradually dawned upon him that he was an "I," that he had self-consciousness within him. He learned to say "I" to himself.

If we wish to characterize what took place at that time we must imagine man creeping out of his "snail-shell," as it were, into the spiritual world. There he is among spiritually divine beings. There resounds to him from without the name of what he is. One group heard the word which in the original language was the word for that group; another group heard a different word. Man could not name himself from within; his name sounded into him from without. When he thus crept out of the "snail-shell" of his body he knew what he was, because this knowledge was poured into his soul. Now when in his body he learned to perceive the physical environment, he learned to feel himself as "I," he learned to feel within himself the divine power which previously was poured into him, he learned to feel God within him. The God nearest to him, who pointed to his "I," he called Jehovah. This God was the "I"-leader, and man felt the power of this God arising within his "I."

External events were connected with this. When the first Atlantean thus descended into his physical body and looked out into space, he did not see an actual rainbow; in the place where the sun later emerged, he saw something like a circle formed of colour; the sun did not yet penetrate in power, but acted through the mist; though hindered and held back by the fog, its forces influenced the earth. It appeared very gradually. All that we have described as the awakening of external consciousness was connected with the emergence of the sun from the mist. That which was up above where the other six spirits had their abode, who together with Jehovah had to guide the earth evolution, gradually emerged and shone down upon the earth in deeds.

What had taken place in man? When previously he rose out of his body, when it was night, so to speak, his soul and spirit entered into the inner astral brilliance to which the external sun is not necessary. This brilliance surrounded him. It was the same light which later shone down physically from the sun, from mighty spiritual beings. As he gradually enclosed himself in his physical consciousness, the door of inner vision was closed. Darkness surrounded him when at night he left his physical and etheric bodies and entered the spiritual world. To the extent to which he confined himself, to the same extent arose the external light which represents the deeds of the spiritual beings of the sun; the light of the spiritual beings shone externally upon the earth. Man prepared himself to look upon the external light as something material. The light shone in his then darkened inner being, but the light was not then comprehended by his darkness. This is a world-historical event. Man bought his self-consciousness at that time through spiritual darkening. In this way man grew out of the brilliance connected with the group-souls. But it was only the very first dawning of the individuality. It was a long, long time before he really grew possessed of it. The last portion of the Atlantean epoch passed away and the flood came.

The post-Atlantean epoch began. The ancient Indian civilization passed away. True self-consciousness had not yet developed. Then came the Persian and Babylonian-Egyptian ages. Man gradually matured so as to develop self-consciousness within him. At length came the fourth age. At this stage something of tremendous importance took place for which all that had gone before was the preparation. Imagine yourself now uplifted from the earth to a distant star and gifted with spiritual vision, looking down to the earth from that distant star. You would then see that this earth as physical body is not only physical body, but that an etheric body and an astral body belong to it, just as with man. The earth has all this too. You would see the earth surrounded by its aura and from that star you would be able to follow the development of the earth's aura for thousands of years. You would see this earth surrounded by all sorts of colours; in the centre the physical kernel and around it the aura floating in various forms and colours; and in this spiritual atmosphere of the earth you would see the most varied structures. You would see these colours and forms change in various ways in the course of thousands of years; but there would come a moment, a moment of great importance, when the whole aura assumes a different form and colour. Seen from outside the earth then appears in a new light; and this takes place extremely quickly, so that one has to say: From this moment a fundamental trans-formation of the earth has taken

place; its aura has changed completely. When is this? It is the moment when upon Golgotha the blood flowed from the wounds of the Redeemer. This moment is an extremely important one, the most important moment in the whole of the earth's evolution! The moment when the blood flows from the wounds of the Redeemer is the same as that in which the aura of the earth shapes itself anew. An entirely new power enters in, the power which gives the most important impulse to the earth's evolution, for which all that we have considered up to now was only the preparation.

To the chemist the blood of Golgotha is the same as any other blood; but in reality it is quite different. It signifies that the substance of the blood flows down to the earth, and that the spirit corresponding to it fills the aura of the earth with new impulses and new forces which have significance for the future evolution of humanity. From there the forces which change the earth stream forth, from there they stream through man. Only a small part of what flowed in at that moment has been realized up to now. Ever more and more man will learn to understand what the earth has become through that moment of Golgotha, and what man can develop towards in that consciousness which he has gained since Atlantis. What, then, has man gained since Atlantis? Two things: the "I"-consciousness and the faculty of sight in the external world. That which previously was open to him, the spiritual world, has been closed. Truly these earlier men saw what the later myths relate — Woden, Mercury, Jupiter, Zeus. They saw all these beings at night; they were then among them. This door to the spiritual beings has closed. In its place man gained the world now surrounding him. The spirits have withdrawn from him; all that he was able to see at that time has disappeared. Formerly he saw the Divine when he slipped out of the snail-shell of his physical body. He had now to see the Divine within the body if it were to appear before him. This means nothing else than that we must receive the Divine in bodily visible shape because human consciousness has become adapted to physical vision, and for this reason the Divine Itself had to assume bodily physical form. Therefore the Divine appeared once on the earth in a fleshly body. It had to appear in this form because man had advanced to this stage of perception it had to be presented in this way to his perception so that he could understand it. And all the appearances which had previously taken place at other stages of evolution had to be united in that greatest event in the earth's history, which will throw light on the whole future and which we shall now unveil from the Apocalypse; in that event which physically looks as if drops of blood stream down to the earth, but spiritually as if something rises up which changes the aura of the earth. The force which then flowed in will

work together with the earth throughout the whole future. The earth-soul, the spirit of the whole earth, was then inoculated with something new. The Christ principle united with the earth at that time and the earth has become the body of this Christ principle. So that the statement is literally true, "He who eats my bread treads me underfoot." When man eats the bread of the earth he eats the body of the earth and this is the body of the earth-spirit which, as the Christ-Spirit, since the event on Golgotha, is united with the earth. And man walks upon the earth-body, he treads this body underfoot. All can be understood literally if only we are able first of all to comprehend the text in the right way.

To such a man as the writer of John's Gospel, all that he knew, all that he could grasp with spiritual vision, was a summons to understand the greatest event in the earth's evolution. Of all that he was able to stream through spiritual vision he said, "I must use it in order to understand Christ and His work." It was the intention of the writer of the Apocalypse to use all his occult knowledge in order to explain the Event of Golgotha. Whatever he could learn from occult science was regarded by him as a road to wisdom, helping him to understand this event which he has placed before us in such a wonderful way, and regarding which we shall see what it signified for him.



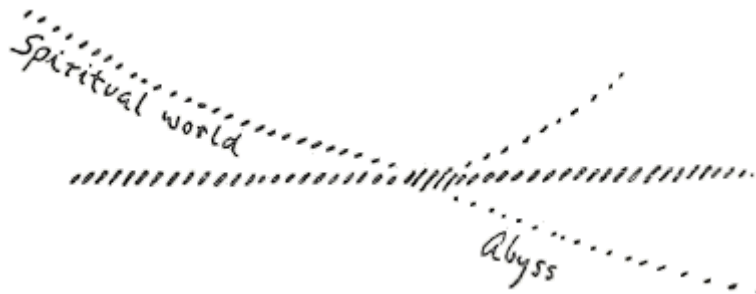
Lecture VII

For the modern man there always seems something hazardous in the prophecy of future events. We have already seen that in the seven seals we had to point out facts which are to come in the evolution of humanity, and as we unveil the Apocalypse of John, more and more we shall have to exercise this prophetic art. The question now is: What grounds are there for speaking at all of these things? We already referred in part at the beginning of our lectures to what lies at the basis of this. We said that at a certain stage of initiation the Initiate sees in the spiritual world that which descends later and becomes a physical event. But in the last two lectures we have shown that there is another basis for the prophetic art. We showed how man has developed out of spiritual spheres to his present existence. Now the future is in a certain sense a repetition of the past; not that the things of the past will happen again in the same way, but past events repeat themselves in a changed form.

In our last lectures we pointed out that in the ancient Atlantean epoch man had a kind of clairvoyance, and that, especially during his night condition, he consciously ascended into spiritual worlds; and we must clearly understand that the condition of a certain clairvoyance will be repeated in humanity. Between the Atlantean epoch and that which will come after the War of All against All we have our epoch, which we have described. In a certain way that which existed previously, that which was in the Atlantean epoch, will be repeated after our epoch, but there will be a very great difference. In the Atlantean epoch man had a dreamy, hazy, clairvoyant consciousness, and when he ascended into the higher worlds his clear self-consciousness faded and he then felt himself within the group-soul. After the great War of All against All man will again see into the higher worlds in a certain way. He will again have the former hazy clairvoyance, but in addition he will possess what he has gradually acquired in the external physical world.

Between the Atlantean flood and the great War of All against All man has had to renounce for a time the power to see into the spiritual world. He has had to content himself with seeing only what is around him in the physical world in the so-called waking consciousness. This is now the normal condition. But in its place it has become possible for him fully to develop his self-consciousness, his individual "I," during this time, to feel

himself within his skin as a separate "I"-personality, so to speak. This he has won. Now he also retains this individuality when he again rises into the higher spiritual worlds, and this ascent will be possible to him after the great War of All against All. But this ascent would not be possible if he had not taken part in that great cosmic event in the middle of our epoch which runs its course in the physical world, as was shown in the last lecture. Man would have been obliged to sink down into a kind of abyss had he not been preserved from it by the entry of Christ into our world. We must keep in mind that man has descended completely into the physical world in this epoch of ours.



Let us represent the physical plane by this line; above it what is called the spiritual, the heavenly world, and below it what is called the abyss. Man really reaches the line separating the spiritual world from the abyss in the fourth age, which we have described. We described the ancient Indian age, when man was still, on the whole, in the spiritual sphere. Previously he was above in the spiritual world. In Atlantis he still had a dim clairvoyance. He now comes down and reaches the line during the period of the Roman Empire. In this Empire man became fully conscious as an external sense-being, as a personality. That was at the time when the Roman idea of justice came into the world, when every one's aim was to be a separate personality, an individual citizen. Man had then reached the line. At this point it was possible either to return or sink below it. We have now, in fact, reached a point in human evolution — and all that I am saying is in accordance with the apocalyptic presentation — when in a certain way humanity is confronted by the need for a decision. We have already shown that in our age an enormous amount of mental and spiritual energy is used to provide for the lowest needs; we have shown how the telephone, telegraph, railway, steamboat and other things still to come have absorbed a tremendous amount of spiritual force; they are only used for the mere satisfaction of lower human needs. Man, however, has only a certain amount of spiritual force. Now consider the following: Man has

used an enormous amount of spiritual force in order to invent and construct telephones, railways, steamboats and airships, in order to further external culture. This has to be so. It would have gone badly with humanity if this had not come about. This spiritual power has also been used for many other things. Only consider how all social connections have gradually been spun into an extremely fine intellectual web. What tremendous spiritual force has been expended so that one may now draw a cheque in America and cash it in Japan. An enormous amount of spiritual force has been absorbed in this activity. These forces had once to descend below the line of the physical plane, so to speak, which separates the spiritual kingdom from the abyss. For in a certain way man has actually already descended into the abyss, and one who studies the age from the standpoint of Spiritual Science can see by the most mundane phenomena how this goes on from decade to decade, how a certain point is always reached where the personality can still keep a hold on itself. If at this point it allows itself to sink down, the personality is lost, it is not rescued and lifted into the spiritual worlds.

This may be illustrated by the most mundane things. I could prove it to you, for example, in the details of the development of banking affairs in the second half of the nineteenth century. Perhaps it is only for future historians to show clearly that a fundamental change then came about which we may describe by saying that in banking affairs the personality was gradually shattered. I should have to draw your attention to the time when the four Rothschild's went out into the world from Frankfurt, one to Vienna, another to Naples, the third to London, the fourth to Paris. The whole of banking affairs was then brought into a personal sphere by the personal talent directed to them. The personality immersed itself in finance. To-day you see banking affairs becoming impersonal, they are passing into joint stock companies; capital is no longer managed by a single personality. Capital begins to control itself. Purely objective forces are working in capital, and there are already forces in this realm which draw the will of the personality to themselves, so that the personality has become powerless. Thus with seeing eyes one can penetrate into these mundane things and one can see everywhere how humanity, as regards the personality, has descended to the lowest depth. Now the personality may save itself and ascend again. It can save itself, for example, by really learning to strengthen its inner soul-forces and depend upon itself and make itself independent of the objective forces of capital. But the personality may also throw itself into these forces, it may in a certain way sail into and plunge into the abyss by allowing itself to be ensnared by the

forces active in capital. The most important point of time, when the human personality descends to the earth and would have to turn back again, is the point of time of the appearance of Christ Jesus on the earth. He gave to the earth the power which made it possible for man to rise again; and he rises to the extent to which he has fellowship with Christ Jesus. Humanity will ascend to the point where the understanding dawns of what this event signified, so that for a large part of humanity this Christ impulse becomes the innermost impulse of their being, from which they work in life. Men must learn to understand more and more what Paul said: It is not I who work; but Christ works in me.

Therefore if the impulse which descended to the physical world in the fourth age enters into the hearts of men, if it becomes the impulse behind their activity, then the ascent takes place, and all the souls who find this union with the Christ principle find the way upward. But all the souls who failed to find this union would have gradually to go down into the abyss. They would have gained the "I"; they would have attained egoism, but would not be in the position to rise up again with this "I" into the spiritual world. And the consequence to a man who makes no connection with the Christ principle would be that he disconnects himself from the spiritual ascent; instead of ascending he would descend and harden himself more and more in his "I." Instead of finding in matter merely the opportunity to develop the "I" and then rise up again, he would only descend deeper and deeper into matter.

Yes, everything repeats itself. The possibility arose for man to enter our physical world. By surviving the Atlantean flood it has become possible for him to create and develop his present human countenance. This is really an image of the spiritual "I"-divinity dwelling in man. Towards the end of the Atlantean epoch the etheric body united with the physical; its forces drew into the physical head and thereby man received his present human countenance, in which the spirit of God is reflected.

Let us suppose that he were to deny that it was the spirit which has given him the human countenance; then he would not use the body as an opportunity to attain the "I"-consciousness and again spiritualize himself; but he would grow together with the body and love it so much that he would only feel himself at home in it. He would remain united with the body and go down into the abyss. And because of not having used the power of the spirit, the external shape would again come to resemble the previous form. The man who descends into the abyss would become animal-like. Thus humanity will realize what we have already indicated.

Those who use the life in the body merely as an opportunity to gain the "I"-consciousness will descend into the abyss and form the evil race. They have turned away from the impulse of Christ Jesus, and from the ugliness of their souls they will again create the animal form man possessed in former times. The evil race, with their savage impulses, will dwell in animal form in the abyss. And when up above those who have spiritualized themselves, who have received the Christ principle, announce what they have to say regarding their union with the name, Christ Jesus — here below in the abyss will sound forth names of blasphemy and of hatred of that which brings about the spiritual transformation.

A person who thinks superficially might say at this point: Yes, but very many have lived who have experienced nothing of the Christ-impulse; why should not these have partaken in the impulse of Christ Jesus? This is objected from the materialistic side: Why should salvation only come with Christ Jesus? If persons who are not Anthroposophists say this, it is comprehensible; but if Anthroposophists say it, then it is incomprehensible; for they ought to know that man returns again and again, and the souls which lived in earlier times will return in new bodies in the period after the event of Christ, so that there are none who could not participate in the event of Christ Jesus. The above objection can only be made by one who does not believe in re-embodiment.

Thus we see how the division takes place. There will come a time when those who have striven for spiritualization will be capable of living in the spiritual world, a time when that which they have formerly acquired will be made manifest, when they will bear the name of Christ on their forehead because they learned to look up to Him. Now when the seal is opened man will have imaged in his outward figure what he bears inwardly in his heart. One who inwardly bears Christ in his soul will after the unsealing bear in his face the sign of Christ; his external form will be like Christ Jesus; but those who remain in the civilizations before the appearance of Christ Jesus will have to experience some-thing else. These four civilizations, the ancient Indian, Persian, Assyrian-Babylonian-Chaldean-Egyptian-Jewish and the Graeco-Latin were preparatory ages. The soul had to go through the bodies of these civilizations in order to prepare itself for the great event of the appearance of Christ Jesus on earth. During the period of preparation there were two great forces. The forces which brought men together were forces which had their material foundation in the blood. If men had simply been placed side by side in their present form, what was to develop in humanity would never have originated.

Prior to the earth the old Moon was the bearer of our creation. This old Moon was the Cosmos of Wisdom; our Earth is the Cosmos of Love. It is the mission of our Earth to bring men together in love. In the future, when the seventh trumpet has sounded and the earth has dissolved, when it has lost its physical substantiality and is changed into an astral heavenly body, then love, the force of love, will have flowed into the whole human race, into everything earthly. For this power of love must flow in as the earth-mission of humanity — just as you now see the power of wisdom in your environment. We have often drawn attention to that wonderful construction of the thigh-bone. This does not consist of a compact mass, but of many delicate lattice-like structures which are so wonderfully put together that the greater carrying capacity is attained with the expenditure of the smallest amount of material, such as no engineer of the present day can achieve. And if we were to examine everything we should find that the wisdom man has gained in the course of his earthly evolution was already contained in the earth.

How often have we been told in the course of lessons on history that man has made continual progress and that he has grown wiser and wiser! You will remember how these several stages were presented; for example, you were shown that at the beginning of modern times man arrived at the point where he invented gunpowder, paper from rags, wood-pulp, etc. You have experienced pleasure in seeing how mankind has ascended. By means of his intellect man has learned to make paper. One might suppose it was an original invention. But to one who contemplates the world in its totality this appears in a different light. The wasps could do this long before, for the wasp's nest is constructed of material which is exactly the same as paper. Thus thousands of years before in the nest of the wasp there already existed what man afterwards achieved through his subjective wisdom. Not the single wasp is able to make paper, but the group-soul, the ego which holds together the whole group of wasps. It possessed this knowledge long before man. And wherever you look, if you are not blind, you will find wisdom in everything.

Do not imagine that this wisdom had not to develop! The world was not always thus filled with wisdom. It was only during the Moon evolution that it gradually flowed into all that now surrounds us. During the Moon period, that which was all chaos was rearranged so as to acquire wisdom. If you could direct your gaze to the Moon evolution you would find every-thing chaotic, so to speak, but as yet no wisdom. Only in the course of the Moon evolution was wisdom poured into the various beings and creations, so that it was there by the time the Earth came forth from the twilight. All things

are now filled with wisdom. And as man to-day looks into his environment and sees wisdom in everything, so will he, when he has reached Jupiter, see all the beings around him in a remarkable way. They will pour out something like the fragrance of blissful love. Love will stream forth from all things, and it is the mission of the earth-evolution to develop this love. Love will then flow through everything, just as wisdom is now in everything. And this love is poured into earthly evolution by man's gradually leaning to develop love.

He was not able to have spiritual love immediately, love had first to be implanted in him at the lowest stage. It had to have a material vehicle, namely, the blood-relationship. The first schooling was to exercise love in the realm of blood-relationship; the separated human beings were brought together through that which coursed through their veins being imbued with love. This was the preparatory school of love; it was, in fact, the great school of love. And the impulse which spiritualizes this love, which does not merely allow it to remain where it works physically, but imparts it to the soul, is the great Christ-impulse in the world.

Now, had only this one impulse of blood-brotherhood operated, human evolution would have taken a strange course throughout the whole of antiquity. The beings who were the guides of the ancient times, and above all Jehovah, led men together in love, so that they united in blood-relationship; but if men had been united only through blood-relationship before the appearance of Christ Jesus, then individual human beings would never have been able to progress to personality. The individual would have been emerged in the tribe. As it was, the individual did very much lose himself in the whole. The consciousness that one is an individual human being has only developed very gradually. In the Atlantean epoch there could be no question of a man feeling himself as an individual being, and this was also the case much later. People do not understand how names were given in ancient times, otherwise they would discover how men then felt. Think of the people of the Old Testament; in pre-Christian times they experienced their "I" — if they wished to feel it aright — by no means in their separate personality. Each one who thoroughly felt the impulse streaming from the Old Testament said: I and Father Abraham are one. For he felt that he was secure in this community which reached back to Abraham, whose blood flowed through all the generations down to the last. Hence he said: "I feel that I am not a lost member when I realize that my blood is the same as that of my Father Abraham."

And they tried to follow the community back still further. They felt secure in the group-soul. They pointed to Noah, to Adam. It is no longer known what these names signify. It is not known that in those ancient times the consciousness of man was quite different from what it is to-day. A person can only remember with difficulty what happened in his childhood, and memory certainly stops at birth. In the time of the patriarchs a man remembered not only what he himself had experienced but what his father, grandfather and great-grandfather had experienced. This was in his memory, just as with you the remembrance of your childhood. He did not know that his life specially began with his birth. The memory reached back for hundreds of years. No name was given to the separate consciousness, for there would have been no meaning in it. As a person remembered the experiences of his father, grand-father, great-grandfather, etc., a common name included the whole chain. The names Adam or Noah signify the remembrance which passed through several generations. As far as the memory of the experience of Noah extended, the chain was called Noah; this was an inner man, a spiritual being, who lived through several generations. It would have been considered meaningless to give a name to the outer man.

Thus the name Adam applied to a spiritual being, and the individual human being was not yet aware of his "I." He would have disappeared in such a community but for the impulses which continually attacked this merging in the community, and whose object was to tear man away from the blood-ties and bring him to independence. In his astral body nestled certain spiritual beings who gave him the impulse not to allow his consciousness to become submerged. These were the Lucifer beings. It was they who in the pre-Christian period worked against the unification and it is to them that man owes his independence, his developing personality. It is extremely important to understand that we owe to Jehovah that which strove to unite, and to the Lucifer spirits that which strove to separate. In the early ages of Christianity there was a saying which ran: "Christus versus Luciferus," i.e. Christ is the true Light-bearer; for Lucifer means the Light-bearer. Why is Christ called the true Light-bearer? Because through him has now become justified what previously was not justified. Previously there was a tearing asunder; men were not mature enough to be independent. Through the "I"-impulse which they received through Christ Jesus they had progressed so far that in spite of the "I" they could develop love of one another. Thus that which Lucifer wished to give to humanity in anticipation, so to speak, when humanity was still not sufficiently mature, was brought to humanity by the true Light-

bearer, Christ Jesus. He brought the impulse to independence, but he also brought the spiritual love which unites those who are not related by blood. Through him came the epoch when humanity matured to the point which Lucifer previously wished to bring about. This saying, "Christus verus Luciferus," was later no longer understood. He alone who rightly understands it learns to know the first teachings of Christianity.

We have therefore to comprehend this impulse in this way; we have to see how humanity was prepared for the standpoint it had to attain. Thus the Indian, Persian, Egyptian, Graeco-Latin periods were times of preparation pointing to the great Christ-event. But it is possible for man to harden himself, as it were. Let us imagine a person living at the time of Christ Jesus, and let us imagine that he could consciously decide what he wished to do. If Christ Jesus were to come he could say, "Oh, what was there previously is sufficient for me, I wish to know nothing, I will have no fellowship with Christ Jesus." He would have in his soul the forces, the impulses, which could be acquired in the time before Christ Jesus, which could be gained through the Indian, Persian, Egyptian and Graeco-Latin civilizations. But in cosmic evolution a man ought only to have such impulses until a new one arrives. If he stands still, then he remains behind at this stage. We must not misunderstand historical development; we must not say that the same principle works in all civilizations, for it is not for nothing that one civilization is built up on another. Let us suppose some one wished to sleep through the Christian development. He would then live into the future until after the great War of All against All, but he would have nothing of the great love-principle of Christ which brings the Egos together, which makes communities of individuals. He would have everything which leads the Egos into the abyss. He would have the separating forces. This brings us to a consideration which may give rise to the question: Why does the unveiling of the first four seals provide such a comfortless picture? Because here come forth the men who wish to remain in these four preparatory civilizations in which is contained the old form of Lucifer that drives men asunder. Hence in the unveiling of the seals we are shown, too, how they got the form which they have acquired. They have slept through the event of Christ Jesus and are re-born in the forms which can be given them without the influence of the Christ-principle. Hence there appears again that which indicated the mere intelligence, the mere intellect; the horse appears four consecutive times. The old form of man appears which he obtains by receiving into himself the horse nature. This form appears at the opening of the seals.

And when the fifth seal is opened what is then brought to our notice? Those who in the preceding period have learned to understand the event of Christ Jesus! These are clothed in white garments, they have been passed by, figuratively they have been slain, they are those who are preserved for the spiritualization of the world. Thus it is the union with the Christ-principle which brings it about that men have these white garments and appear when the fifth seal is opened. Here we see a clear indication that the time when Christ appears is an important epoch for mankind; it is the epoch which brings it to pass that after the War of All against All the four ages may appear when those who have remained behind are tormented by the materiality which had proceeded with evolution and to which they have chained themselves; they are tormented by all the evils and torments of the coarsened, hardened materiality. Everything which is now described in the breaking of the seals represents nothing else than the descent into the abyss. While in the fifth seal we are only briefly directed to those who are chosen, we are shown for the rest those who remain in materiality, who go down into the abyss, who assume the forms which existed previously because they did not progress, because they have not acquired the power to transform these shapes.

You may form a picture of it; imagine that your human forms were to-day made of indiarubber; and within this rubber human body is your inner soul power which gives this rubber body its human form. Imagine that we take out the soul-force, then the rubber body would collapse. Men would receive animal forms. At the moment when you draw the soul out of this human body of rubber, man would manifest the animal form. What man has gained for himself is like something which he produces to-day by his own power. If you could observe what he formerly produced in the astral body you would see its likeness to the animal. It is really an inner force such as this which gives the rubber man the present form. Imagine that this power is removed, imagine man not fertilized by the Christ power; he springs back into the animal form. Thus it will happen to those who fall back. They will afterwards form a world beneath the present world, so to speak, a world of the abyss, where man will again have assumed animal shape.

Thus we learn to understand the direction evolution will actually take. That which is now prepared will come out again bit by bit in the future, just as that which was laid down in the Atlantean epoch has come out bit by bit in our epoch. I have said that in the last third of the Atlantean epoch a small colony was formed from which our civilizations have been derived, and from which the two following will also originate. It will be somewhat

different in the next epoch which will succeed all these. There will not be a colony limited to one place, but from the general body of humanity will everywhere be recruited those who are mature enough to form the good, the noble, the beautiful side of the next civilization, after the War of All against All. This again is a progress as compared with the earlier Atlantean epoch when the colony developed in one small place, but with us there is the possibility that from all races of the world will be recruited those who really understand the call of the earth mission, who raise up Christ within themselves, who develop the principle of brotherly love over the whole earth; and indeed, in the true sense, not in the sense of the Christian confessions, but in the sense of the true esoteric Christianity which can proceed from every civilization. Those who understand this Christ-principle will be there in the period following the great War of All against All. After our present purely intellectual civilization, which is now developing in the direction of the abyss of intellect — and you will find that this is the case in every field of life — there will come a time when man will be the slave of the intelligence, the slave of the personality in which he will sink. To-day there is only one way of preserving the personality, and that is to spiritualize it. Those who develop the spiritual life will belong to the small band of the sealed from all nations and races, who will appear in white garments after the War of All against All.

We are now beginning to comprehend the spiritual world from our immediately present intellectual civilization. It is the aim of true Anthroposophy, from out of the present intellectual standards, to comprehend the spiritual world, and to gather together those who can understand the call to spiritualize the world. These will not form a separate colony but will be gathered from every nation and will gradually pass into the sixth age, that is to say, not yet beyond the great War, but primarily into the sixth age, for necessities still exist which are connected with old race ties. In our epoch, races and civilizations are still inter-mingled. The true idea of race has lost its meaning but it still plays a certain part. It is quite impossible at present for every mission to be carried out equally by every people. Certain nations are predestined to carry out a particular mission.

The nations which to-day are the vehicles of Western civilization were chosen to lead the fifth age to its zenith; they were the nations who were to develop the intellect. Hence wherever this civilization extends we have predominantly the civilization of the intellect, which is still not yet finished. This intelligence will spread still further, people will exercise still more of their spiritual forces in order to satisfy their bodily needs; to slay one

another they will employ much greater spiritual forces before the great War of All against All. Many discoveries will be made in order to be able the better to carry on war, an endless amount of intelligence will be exercised in order to satisfy the lower impulses. But in the midst of it something is being prepared, with which certain nations of the East, the Northern part of the East, are gifted. Certain nations are preparing to emerge from a certain dullness and bring in a spiritual impulse with mighty force, an impulse which will be the opposite pole to intelligence. Before the sixth age of civilization, represented by the Community of Philadelphia, we shall experience something like a mighty marriage of peoples, a marriage between intelligence and intellect and spirituality. At the present time we are only experiencing the dawn of this marriage and no one should understand what is here said as a song of praise to our age; for one does not sing songs of praise to the sun when there are only the first signs of dawn. But we find remarkable phenomena when we compare East and West, when we look into the depths and foundations of the different nations.

Do not let us look upon this as a desire to take sides. These lectures, which are intended to be objective, are far, far removed from any party spirit. But you may compare objectively that which is attained as science and philosophy in the European West with that which appeared in the East, let us say in Tolstoi. One does not need to be a follower of Tolstoi, but one thing is true; in a book such as Tolstoi's about life you may read one page, if you understand how to read it, and compare it with whole libraries in Western Europe. And you may then say the following: In Western Europe one acquires spiritual culture with the intellect; certain ideas are put together out of details which are intended to make the world comprehensible, and the achievements of Western European civilization in this respect will never be surpassed. But if you understand such a book as Tolstoi's *Concerning Life*, you will often find condensed into ten lines what, in these Western European libraries, it takes thirty volumes to say. Tolstoi says something with elemental force, and in a few lines of his there is the same amount of energy as is assembled in thirty such volumes. Here one must be able to judge what comes forth from the depths of the spirit, what has a spiritual foundation and what has not. Just as overripe civilizations contain some-thing that is drying up and withering, so do rising civilizations contain within them fresh life and new energy. Tolstoi is a premature flower of such a civilization, one that came far too soon to be fully developed. Hence he has all the faults of an untimely birth. His grotesque and unfounded presentations of many Western European things, all that he

brings forward in the way of foolish judgment, show that great personalities have the faults of their virtues and that great cleverness has the folly of its wisdom.

This is only mentioned as a symptom of the future age when the spirituality of the East will unite with the intellectuality of the West. From this union will proceed the age of Philadelphia. All those will participate in this marriage who take into themselves the impulse of Christ Jesus and they will form the great brotherhood which will survive the great War, which will experience enmity and persecution, but will provide the foundation for the good race. After this great War has brought out the animal nature in those who have remained in the old forms, the good race will arise, and this race will carry over into the future that which is to be the spiritually elevated culture of that future epoch. We shall also have the experience that in our epoch, between the great Atlantean flood and the great War of All against All, in the age represented by the community at Philadelphia, a colony is being formed, the members of which will not emigrate but will be everywhere; so that everywhere there will be some who are working in the sense of the community of Philadelphia, in the sense of the binding together of humanity, in the sense of the Christ-principle.



Lecture VIII

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 a part of the earth 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 truest sense of the word elevates him. His dignity is founded in this "I," it is the basis of the Divine in man.

This conception of the "I" offers difficulty to many people. It has become clear to us that this "I" of man has developed from a group-soul nature, from a kind of all-inclusive universal "I" out of which it has been differentiated. It would be wrong if man were to crave to go down again with his "I" into some sort of universal consciousness, into some sort of common consciousness. Everything which causes a man to strive to lose his "I" and dissolve it into a universal consciousness, is the result of weakness. He alone understands the "I" who knows that after he has gained it in the course of cosmic evolution it cannot be lost; and above all man must strive for the strength (if he understands the mission of the world) to make this "I" more and more inward, more and more divine. True Anthroposophists possess nothing of the empty talk which continually emphasizes the dissolution of the "I" in a universal self, the melting into some sort of primeval sea. True Anthroposophy can only put forward as the

final goal, the community of free and independent Egos, of Egos which have become individualized. It is just this that is the mission of the earth, which is expressed in love, that the Egos learn to confront one another freely. Love is not perfect if it proceeds from coercion, from people being chained together, but only when each "I" is so free and independent that it need not love, is its love an entirely free gift. It is the divine plan to make this "I" so independent that as an individual being in all freedom it can offer love even to God. It would amount to man being led by strings of dependence if he could in any way be forced to love, even if only in the slightest degree.

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 has the sharp two-edged sword in his mouth.

We have represented it as a high achievement of man that just through Christianity he has been able to ascend to this concept of the free "I." Christ Jesus brought the "I" in all its fullness. Hence this "I" must be expressed by the sharp two-edged sword which you already know from one of our seals. And the fact that this sharp two-edged sword proceeds from the mouth of the Son of Man is also comprehensible, for when man has learnt to utter the "I" with full consciousness it is in his power to rise to the highest or sink to the lowest. The sharp two-edged sword is one of the most important symbols met with in the Apocalypse.

Now if we understand what was said at the close of our last lecture, that after our present civilization will follow that which is characterized in our last lecture through the community of Philadelphia, we must particularly notice that from the sixth age will be taken those human souls who have to

pass over into the following epoch. For, after the War of All against All — as we have already said — there will be expressed in the features all that is in our age being prepared in men's souls. The so-called seventh age will be of very little importance. We are now living in the fifth age of civilization; then follows the sixth, from which will proceed a number of people full of understanding for the spiritual world, filled with the spirit of brotherly love, which results from spiritual knowledge. The ripest fruit of our present civilization will appear in the sixth age. And that which follows it will be what is lukewarm, neither warm nor cold; the seventh age is something like an overripe fruit, which outlasts the War of All against All, but contains no principle of progress.

This was the case also when our culture originated. Let us think of the time before the Atlantean flood. We have said that it was in the last third of the Atlantean epoch — which men experienced on the land now covered by the Atlantic Ocean — when a small group was formed in the neighbourhood of the present Ireland, which had reached the highest stage of Atlantean civilization, and this group then migrated to the East, whence all later civilizations have proceeded. Let us keep this clearly in mind, let us think of this portion of the earth which now forms the ocean west of Ireland, let us think of a migration of people starting from there and going towards the East and from it a number of tribes proceeding, which then populate Europe. All that is contained in the population of Europe originated in this way. The most gifted portion of the Atlanteans wandered towards central Asia; from there proceeded the various civilizations up to our own, as we have described. So we see that our present civilization originated in a small group of Atlanteans.

Atlantis, however, had seven consecutive stages just as our own civilization has seven stages which we know as the ancient Indian, ancient Persian, Assyrian-Babylonian-Chaldean-Egyptian-Jewish, the Graeco-Latin, our own and two further ones. It was in the fifth stage when this emigration began; so that the specially chosen population of Atlantis which lies at the foundation of our culture is taken from the fifth Atlantean race, for in Atlantis we may speak of races. A sixth and a seventh followed. These were, so to speak the lukewarm races. They also survived the great flood but there was no living sprouting force in them. They were related to the fifth Atlanteans civilization somewhat as the bark which is lignified and hardened is related to the sappy stem. These two races which followed the actual root-race were incapable of developing, they were overripe, so to speak. You may still see stragglers of these old overripe races to-day, especially among the Chinese. This Chinese people is characterized by the

fact that it has not identified itself with what was manifested in the fifth race, the root-race. It was when the etheric body entered into the physical body that man received the first germs which enabled him to say "I." They had passed over that period; they had, however, thereby developed the high civilization which is known to-day but which was not capable of development. The fifth Atlantean race sent its people every-where, and they founded new civilizations, civilizations capable of growing and becoming more perfect. Indeed, this all developed from the ancient Indian civilization to our own. The sixth and seventh races of Atlantis allowed themselves to become hardened and therefore became stationary. As we have said, the Chinese civilization is a remainder of that ancient civilization. The old Chinese possessed a wonderful Atlantean heritage but they could not progress any further. Nothing remains uninfluenced from outside. You may examine ancient Chinese literature; it has been influenced from every direction, but its fundamental tendency bears the Atlantean character. This self-completeness, this capacity of making discoveries and going no further, could never bring the Chinese beyond a certain stage — all this proceeds from the character of Atlantis.

Just as it happened at that time with the fifth race, that it provided men who were capable of development and with the sixth and seventh, that they experienced a descent, so will it also be in our epoch. 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).

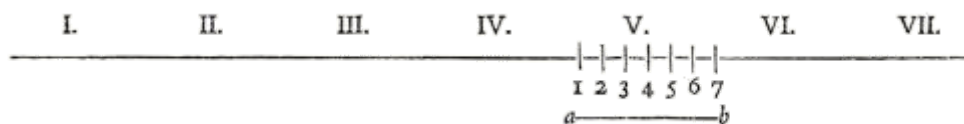
After the great War of All against All, gradually the evil stream will be led over to good by the good race, by the good stream. This will be one of the principal tasks after the great War of All against All; to rescue what can be rescued from those who after the great war will only have the impulse 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 in 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 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." Those who are being prepared in their souls by such teachings, so that in the future they will, be able to accomplish this great task of education, are the pupils of the Manichaeic School. The Manichaeic teaching is generally misunderstood. When you hear anything or read something about it, you find merely phrases. You may read that the Manichees believed that from the very beginning of the world there have

been two principles: good and evil. This is not so, the teaching of the Manichees is what we have just explained. By the name "Manichaeism" should be understood the above teaching and its development in the future, and the pupils who are so led that they can accomplish such a task in future incarnations. Manes is that exalted individuality, who is repeatedly incarnated on the earth, who is the guiding spirit of those whose task it is to transform evil. When we speak of the great leaders of mankind we must also think of this individuality who has set himself this task. Although at the present day this principle of Manes has had to step very much into the background because there is little understanding for spiritual work, this wonderful and lofty Manichaeic principle will win more and more pupils the nearer we approach the understanding of spiritual life.

Thus you see how the present-day humanity will pass into the new epoch beyond the War of All against All, just as that root-race of the Atlanteans lived over into our epoch and founded our civilizations. After the great War of All against All humanity will develop in seven consecutive stages. We have already seen how that which is said concerning the opening of the seven seals in the Apocalypse of John gives us the character of the seven consecutive civilizations after the great war. Then when this civilization — which can only be seen by the initiates in the astral world and in its symbolism — has run its course, a new epoch will begin for our earth development in which again new forms will appear. And this new epoch, which will follow the one just described, is symbolized in the Apocalypse of John by the sounding of the seven trumpets. Just as the epoch after the great War of All against All is characterized by the seven seals, because the seer can only see it to-day from the astral world, so by the sounding of the trumpets is characterized the stage of civilization which follows, because man can only perceive it from the true spiritual world where the tones of the spheres sound forth. In the astral world man perceives the world in pictures, in symbols, in Devachan he perceives it in inspiring music; and in this Devachan is contained the climax, as it were, of what is revealed concerning what follows the great War of All against All.



Thus if we represent it in a diagram, we have our seven ages of civilization in the space between the letters *a-b*, so that we have the ancient Indian civilization as the first, the ancient Persian as the second, the Assyrian-Babylonian-Chaldean-Egyptian-Jewish, the Graeco-Latin, and our own as the fifth stage of the post-Atlantean epoch. The figure IV would be the Atlantean epoch, (a) the great flood by which this comes to an end, and (b) the great War of All against All. Then follows an epoch of seven stages (VI) which is represented by the seven seals, then follows another (VII) also containing seven stages, represented by the seven trumpets. Here again lies the boundary of our physical earth development.

Now the Atlantean civilization (IV), which preceded our own, was also preceded by other stages of civilization; for that of our own (V), which follows the Atlantean, is the fifth -Stage on our earth. Four stages of civilization preceded it. But we can scarcely call the first stage a civilization culture. Everything was still etheric and spiritual, all in such a condition that if it had developed further in this way it would not have become visible at all to sense organs such as ours. The first stage developed when the sun was still bound up with our earth. There were then quite different conditions, one could not speak of anything which looked like the objects now surrounding us. Then followed a stage characterized by the sun separating. Then one characterized by the moon leaving the earth; this was the third stage, which we call the ancient Lemurian. At this point the present man appeared on our earth in his very first form, concerning which I have pointed out that they were such grotesque bodily forms that it would shock you if you were to hear them described. After the Lemurian followed the Atlantean, and finally our own.

So you see that we have on our earth seven epochs of development. The first two were absolutely unlike our epoch.; the third partly ran its course in a region lying between the present Africa, Asia and Australia, in ancient Lemuria. In the very last Lemurian race there was again a small group of the most advanced. These were able to emigrate, and from them developed the seven races of the Atlanteans. The last Lemurian race founded the Atlantean races. The fifth of the Atlantean races founded our civilizations, of which the sixth will found the future civilization after the great War of All against All. And the very last of those civilizations will have to found that which is indicated by the seven trumpets. After that, what will happen? Our earth will then have reached the goal of its physical evolution. All the objects and all the beings upon it will then have been transformed. For if we have had to say that already in the sixth epoch men will show good and evil on their faces, we shall have to say all the more of

the seventh that the form of man and the forms of all the other beings will be an expression of good and evil to a much higher degree than in the sixth epoch. All matter will bear the stamp of the spirit. There will be absolutely nothing in this seventh epoch that can be hidden in any way. Even those belonging to the sixth epoch will be unable to hide anything from him who has the necessary vision. An evil man will express his evil, a good man will express the good that is within him; but in the seventh epoch it will be quite impossible by speech to hide what is in the soul. Thought will no longer remain dumb so that it can be hidden, for when the soul thinks, its thought will ring forth outwardly. It will then be just as thought is already to the Initiates to-day. To them thought now rings out in Devachan. But this Devachan will have descended into the physical world, just as the astral world will have descended into the physical world in the sixth epoch. Even now the sixth epoch can be found in the astral world and the seventh in the heavenly world. The sixth epoch is the descended astral world, that is to say the images, the expressions, the manifestations of it. The seventh epoch will be the descended heavenly world, the expression of it. And then the earth will have reached the goal of its physical evolution. The earth, together with all its beings, will then change into an astral heavenly body. Physical substance as such will disappear. The part which until then had been able to spiritualize itself, will pass over into the spirit, into astral sub-stance. Imagine all the beings of the earth who up to that time have been able to express what is good, noble, intellectual and beautiful in their external material form; who will bear an expression of Christ Jesus in their countenances, whose words will manifest Christ Jesus, for they will ring out as resounding thoughts — all these will have the power to dissolve what they have within them as physical matter, as warm water dissolves salt. Everything physical will pass over into an astral globe. But those who up to that time have not progressed so far as to be a material and corporeal expression of what is noble, beautiful, intellectual and good, will not have the power to dissolve matter; for them matter will remain. They will become hardened in matter; they will retain material form. At this point in the earth's evolution there will be an ascent into the spirit of forms which will live in the astral and which will separate from them-selves another material globe, a globe which will contain beings unfit for the ascent because they are unable to dissolve the material part. In this way our earth will advance towards its future. Through the souls gradually refining matter from within, the substance of the earth will become more and more refined until it receives the power to dissolve. Then will come the time when the insoluble part will be ejected as a special planet. In the

course of seven ages that which has hardened itself in matter will be driven out, and the power which drives it out will be the opposite force to that which will have forced the good beings upward.

What, then, will they have used to dissolve matter? The power of love gained through the Christ-principle. Beings become capable of dissolving matter through taking love into their souls. The more the soul is warmed by love the more power-fully will it be able to work on matter; it will spiritualize the whole earth and transform it into an astral globe. But just as love dissolves matter, as warm water dissolves salt, so will the opposite of love press down — again throughout seven stages everything which has not become capable of fulfilling the earth mission. The contrary of divine love is called divine wrath, that is the technical expression for it. Just as in the course of the fourth stage of civilization this love was imprinted in humanity, just as it will become warmer and warmer through the last stages in our epoch, the sixth and seventh, so on the other hand there is growing that which hardens matter around itself the divine wrath. This effect of the divine wrath, this expulsion of matter is indicated in the Apocalypse of John by the outpouring of the seven vials of divine wrath. Imagine what the whole condition will be; the substance of the earth will become finer and finer, the substantial part of man will also become more and more spiritual, and the coarsest parts will only be visible in the finer part like the skins or shells sloughed off, for example, by reptiles or snails. These harder parts will thus become more and more incorporated in the substance which is growing finer. In the last epoch, the epoch of the sounding of the trumpets, you would with spiritual vision see how men consist of delicate, spiritualized bodies; and how those who have hardened the material principle in themselves have preserved in themselves what to-day are the most important constituents of matter; and how this will fall as husks into the material globe which will be left after the epoch indicated by the sounding of the trumpets.

This is prophetically described in the Apocalypse of John, and it is important to develop a feeling in our souls about this knowledge of what is coming, so that it may fire our will. For what will man have made of himself when the sixth and seventh epochs are over? What will he have made of his body? If we now observe the human body we find that it is not yet the expression of the soul within; but it will gradually become an expression of what the soul experiences within. Man's outer body will thus become an expression of the good by his receiving the highest message, the highest teaching there is on this earth; and this highest teaching is the message of Christ Jesus on the earth; the highest that can be given to us

is the message of Christ Jesus. We must take it up thoroughly, not merely with the understanding; we must take it into our innermost being, just as one takes nourishment into the physical body. And as humanity develops further it will take up the joyful message into its inner being more and more. It is just this reception of the message of love which it will have to regard as the result of the earth's mission. The power of love is contained in the Gospels, the whole power of love, and the seer can say nothing else than: "In the spirit I see a time before me when that which is in the Gospel will no longer be outside in a book but when it will be devoured by man himself."

Our earth evolution depends upon two things. Our earth was preceded by what we call the Cosmos of Wisdom, and that was preceded by what we call the Cosmos of Strength, of Power (certainly the word does not convey much, but we must use it because it has become customary). Wisdom and strength have been received as a heritage from previous stages of evolution, from the ancient Moon and the ancient Sun. We shall see that during our earth evolution this is also expressed by our naming the first half after the representative of the Sun forces, Mars, for we only need note at this point that within our earth evolution we have in Mars that which implanted iron in the earth; in Mars we see the bringer of strength. And in that which rules the second half of the earth evolution we have the representative of the ancient Moon evolution, Mercury, which embodies in the earth the heritage received from the Moon, wisdom. Thus the earth evolution consists of two parts, Mars and Mercury. It has received as a heritage two mighty forces. That which it has inherited from the cosmos of strength is expressed in Mars, and that which it has inherited from the cosmos of wisdom is expressed in Mercury. The mission of the earth itself is to bring love. Love is to be gloriously manifested as the result of the earth evolution. This is a very profound thought expressed by the writer of the Apocalypse. It is the profound thought underlying the whole of the earth evolution.

Let us once more go back to the first portion of the Atlantean epoch, to the time of which we said that the air was still saturated with water. Man was still organized for a water existence. Only in the middle of Atlantis had he progressed so far that he forsook the water and trod upon solid ground. Up to the middle of the earth's evolution we must regard water as the vehicle of human evolution, just as afterwards solid earth. It was only comparatively late that the solid earth became the field of human evolution. It is only half the truth if we speak of the whole of Atlantis as consisting of dry land. In many respects it was not covered, let us say, by

the ocean, but by something between air and water, air-saturated with water. And this water-air was the element in which man lived. Only later did he become capable of living in clear air and standing on solid ground. That was, comparatively speaking, not long ago; so that if we survey the earth's evolution, we may say, expressing it symbolically: On the one hand we have earth and on the other hand water — that is the earlier period. From the water emanates one of the forces, and from the earth emanates the other force, up to the first half of evolution. In the middle of the fourth period we speak of the Mars forces, of the forces given by water, so to speak, and we speak of the Mercury forces in the later time when the solid earth gives the supporting forces. This fits quite accurately into the conception that man is supported in his entire earth mission by two pillars. They represent two parts of the earth's mission, the two heritages man has received from earlier periods. And above them is symbolized what is to be attained through the earth itself, namely love, which is there gloriously revealing itself, which is supported by these heritages. Thus the writer of the Apocalypse really describes it just as it presents itself to those who ascend. Therefore, when we observe what lies beyond the earth and what confronts us when earthly substance dissolves into the spiritual, this is symbolically indicated by what we see in the fourth seal. [See Dr. Steiner's *Occult Seals and Symbols*.] Of course it has to appear reversed, because it represents what belongs to the future. We see the two forces which the earth has received as heritage from the cosmos of wisdom and the cosmos of strength, and we see all that appears as the fulfilment of the earth's mission, as the force of love which man develops. The whole appears to us as the personification of the man of the future. The man of the future here confronts us symbolically, supported by these forces, permeated by this power. The message of love, the book before him, is a book which influences him not only from without but he has to devour it. Here we behold before us the mighty picture which appears at this stage. "And I saw another mighty angel" (that is, a being which is presented thus, because he is already above the present man), "descend from the spiritual spheres" (that is how it is seen by the Seer) "clothed with a cloud, and his countenance was like the sun and his feet like pillars of fire" — these are the two forces of which we have spoken, which the earth has received as a heritage. "And he had in his hand a little book opened; and his right foot was set upon the sea and his left upon the earth. ... And I said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall pain thee in thy belly, but in thy mouth it shall be sweet as honey. And I took the little book from the hand of the angel and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey." Here we have the feeling arising in the

seer when he directs his gaze to the point when the earth passes from the physically material into the astrally spiritual, when the earth mission is attained. And when the seer sees this he learns what is really connected with this message of love, which entered in as an impulse in the fourth age, he learns even in the present life, as the Apocalyptist learnt, what bliss is and the bliss that may lie before humanity. But he learns it in his present body; for if a being wished to live with man, however high he might be, he would be obliged to incarnate in the flesh. And in many respects the present body, just because it offers the spirit the possibility of rising high, also gives the possibility of suffering. While, there-fore, the soul is able to ascend — the soul of the seer — as the Apocalyptist has described, into spiritual regions, in order to receive the Gospel of Love, and in spirit is able to feel the bliss sweet as honey, yet the seer lives in a present-day body, and in accordance with this he must say that the ascent produces in the present body the antithesis of that bliss in many respects. He expresses this by saying that although the little book is at first sweet as honey when he eats it, it gives him severe pains in the belly. But this is only a small reflection of the "being crucified in the body." The higher the spirit rises, the more difficult it is for it to dwell in the body, and this is the symbolical expression for these pains: "being crucified in the body."

Thus we have briefly sketched what will happen in our earth evolution, what lies in front of man in his earthly evolution. We have arrived at the point when man is changed into an astral being; when the best parts of the earth disappear as physical earth and pass over into the spiritual; when only something like a separated portion will through the divine wrath fall into the abyss. And we shall see that even there the last stage at which salvation would not be possible has not yet been reached, although that which is in the abyss is pictured by the most frightful symbols, by the seven-headed and ten-horned beast and by the two-horned beast.

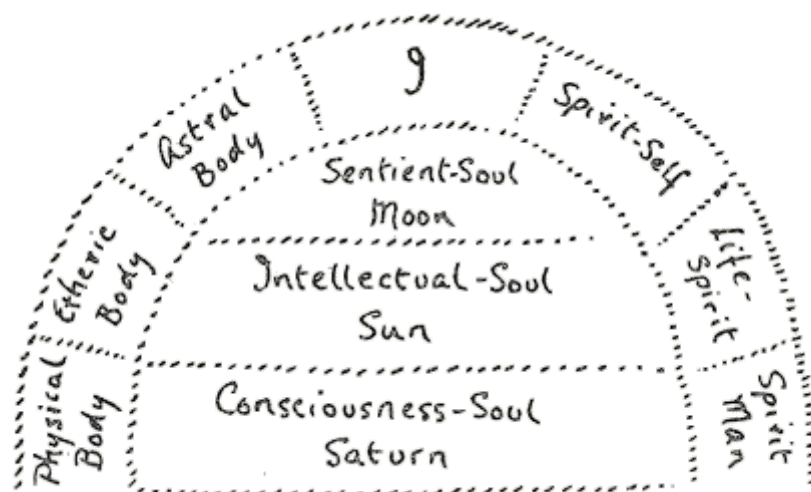


Lecture IX

In our description of the evolution of man we have now reached the point when, after the epoch characterized by the sounding of the seven trumpets, the earth with all its beings passes into another condition, when the physical dissolves, so to speak, and changes into spiritual, but first into astral. An astral earth arises and into it pass all the beings who are ripe for it, that is, who have become capable of overcoming even their material part, and using it in the service of the spiritual. On the other hand, those who are unable to spiritualize the bodily, material part, who cling to the material, are thrown out and form a sort of secondary earth, the study of which is very instructive for gaining knowledge of the future destiny of humanity. But to this end it is necessary that we clearly understand what has become, during this astralizing of our earth, of those who have reached the necessary degree of maturity, who have taken the Christ-principle into themselves and allowed it to become active. We shall now occupy ourselves with what can develop out of man.

We shall best understand this if we have the patience again to consider what man has become and what possibilities of development lie within him for the future. At present man consists of four principles. The first is the so-called physical body; this is the principle man has in common with all the present creations of the mineral kingdom; this part of man one can see with the eyes and grasp with the hands; it is the lowest principle of human nature, which alone remains as the corpse at death. But this physical body would every moment have the same fate as the corpse at death, it would fall to pieces were it not permeated by what we call the etheric body or life body. This etheric body man no longer has in common with the mineral kingdom, he has it in common with the beings of the earthly vegetable kingdom. In every man the etheric body is a combatant which between birth and death holds together the parts of the physical body which continually have the tendency to disintegrate. What is the physical body of man, in reality? It is that which, when death has destroyed the form, after a short time becomes ashes. It is a little heap of ashes, so wonderfully arranged in the life body that the whole man makes the impression he now does upon those who look at him. The second principle, then, is the ether or life body. The third principle, which man has in common with the animals, is the so-called astral body, the vehicle of instincts, desires, passions, thoughts, ideas, etc., all that is usually called the soul in main.

Finally we have the fourth principle in human nature, that which makes man the crown of earthly creation, which makes him stand out above all the other beings, and enables him to develop as "I," as an individual self-conscious being in earthly existence. In the future the evolution of man will unfold in such manner that he will gradually work from his



"I" upon the lower principles, so that the "I" becomes their ruler. When the "I" has thoroughly worked upon the astral body and taken possession of it, so that in this astral body there are no more unconscious and unguarded impulses, instincts and passions, then the "I" will have developed what we call Spirit Self or Manas. Spirit-Self is none other than the astral body, only the astral body is the third principle before it is transformed by the "I." When the "I" transforms the etheric body also, Life-Spirit or Budhi is produced; and when in the remotest future the "I" transforms the physical body so that this is completely spiritualized by the "I" itself (this is the most difficult work, because the physical body is the densest), then the physical body develops into the highest principle of human nature, namely, Atma or Spirit-Man. Thus, if we conceive of man in his seven-fold nature, we have the physical body, the etheric body or life-body, the astral body and the "I." Further, we have that which man will develop in the future; Spirit-Self or Manas, Life-Spirit or Budhi and Spirit-Man or Atma. That is the sevenfold being of man. However, he will only develop these higher principles in the far-distant future. It is not yet in man's power while on the earth to work so far upon himself as to bring all these higher spiritual parts to full development.

If we consider the sevenfold man in this way we shall, however, not fully comprehend the man we see before us to-day. It is indeed true that if we survey man as a whole we may speak of these seven principles, but if we wish to understand the present man we must be more exact. You will remember that the physical body was developed on Saturn, the etheric body on the Sun, the astral body on the Moon, and that the Ego is to be developed on the Earth. It has already developed to a certain high degree.

We must now observe this earthly evolution of man somewhat more closely. The greater portion of humanity will only have gained the power to work quite consciously in the Spirit-Self, in the transformed astral body, at the close of the earth evolution. On the other hand, during our earthly evolution man had to pass through a kind of preparation which made it possible for him to work half-consciously and half-unconsciously, as it were, on his three lower principles.

This half-conscious and half unconscious work began in the Lemurian epoch, to which we have already referred. At that time the "I" began to work in a very dim consciousness, and at first, in fact, on the astral body. If therefore, you follow the earth development from the Lemurian epoch into the first portion of the Atlantean, you will find the "I" worked at first in a very dim consciousness, half unconsciously only on his astral body. That which then appeared on the earth as the product of the transformation of the astral body, we call sentient-soul. Then during the Atlantean epoch, when the air was filled with dense volumes of water-vapour, the "I" worked in dim consciousness on the etheric body and produced what we call intellectual-soul or mind-soul; and from the time when, from the country in the neighbourhood of the present Ireland, the great impulse came which drove the peoples from the West towards the East and led beyond the great Atlantean flood to our new culture, from the beginning of the last third of the Atlantean epoch, the "I" worked unconsciously on the physical body. It worked into what one calls the consciousness-soul, that which gave man the foundation to work out of the group-soul nature a more or less self-conscious "I" which first received the great impulse towards complete individuality with the appearance of Christ Jesus. Then only did we really become capable of what one may call working more or less consciously on the astral body. Really only since the advent of the Christ impulse on earth have we begun to work consciously on our astral body. So that if we speak of man to-day we have to say that he has developed physical body, etheric body, astral body, then sentient-soul (the astral body which was formerly transformed in dim consciousness); the intellectual-soul (the etheric body which was dimly trans-formed in the Atlantean

epoch); and the consciousness-soul (the physical body which was dimly transformed in the later portion of the Atlantean epoch), so that he gradually matured to where he could develop Spirit-Self (Manas) as far as it can be observed in man to-day.

All men now possess the rudiments of the Spirit-Self, but one has more, another less. Many will still have to go through many incarnations before they have developed the Spirit-Self far enough to become aware of what they are working upon within their human nature. But when the earth has reached its goal, when the seventh trumpet begins to sound, the following will be observed: that which exists of the physical body will be dissolved like salt in warm water. The human Spirit-Self will be developed to a high degree, so that man will repeat again and again the words of Paul, "Not I, but Christ in me does everything." This will enable him to dissolve the physical nature and make the ennobled etheric into a being which can live in the astralized earth. Thus man, a new being, will live over into this spiritualized earth.

We might say that the important stage of passing over into the earth which has become spiritualized, is wonderfully expressed in the Bible where it says that everything which man now accomplishes within himself in the physical body during the earth period is like a sowing whose fruit will appear when the earth has become spiritual. "And that which thou sowest is not the body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat or of some other grain. But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body" (1 Cor. xv. 37), That is, the body which is the expression of the soul of the individuality. "There are also celestial bodies and bodies terrestrial, but the glory of the celestial body is one, and the glory of the terrestrial body is another." The earthly bodies will be dissolved, the celestial will appear as the luminous expression of what the soul is. "It is sown corruptible and will rise incorruptible." The incorruptible body will then be resurrected. "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." Paul calls the etheric or life-body, spiritual body, after the physical has dissolved and the etheric passes into the astral earth. Paul here sees beforehand the incorruptible spiritual body, as he calls it.

And now let us consider what it is that man will embody as the expression of his capacity for receiving the Christ. It is the same that hovered before Paul in spirit, and that he calls "the last Adam," while he calls the first man who entered into existence in a physically visible body "the first Adam.". At the end of the Lemurian epoch we already find various animals below, but man is not yet visible to external eyes; he is still

etheric. He condenses, and absorbs mineral constituents and appears in his first form; the physical man gradually appears, just as water condenses into ice, Physical evolution then proceeds so far that what is earthly can dissolve and eventually disappears. Hence the man who has the etheric body appears as the last Adam. The first Adam has the capacity of seeing the earth in the physical body through the physical senses; the last Adam, who assumes a spiritual body, is an expression of the inner capacity for receiving the Christ. Hence Christ is called by Paul the last Adam. This comprises the whole of human evolution; in spirit we see what man will become in the future, whereas before we saw how he descended to the earth.

Now to understand the following we must look a little more deeply into the mysteries of becoming man. If you could observe man before his body became physical, that is to say, when he was still invisible to physical eyes, when he first descended from the etheric, so to speak, by becoming first an airy, watery structure, then a cartilaginous structure — if you could follow him thus you would see that our earth was also quite different. In the time before the descent of man there was really no mineral kingdom. The earth only possessed the heritage of the Moon. The lowest kingdom was the vegetable kingdom, and the earth was much softer. The distribution of the watery and gaseous substances was quite different. If you had looked at the earth before man had descended from the surrounding atmosphere to the solid ground it would not have appeared to you as the abstract product described in modern geology, etc.; one might say that our earth as a whole was at that time more like an organism. It was permeated with all kinds of ordered currents, and was more like a living being than it is now. And man, who existed in that ancient time more as a spiritual etheric being, was not born as he is to-day, but he was, so to say, brought forth out of mother earth herself. It was mother earth herself that produced man, that still spiritually



etheric being. Before man separated from the whole earth, he was a being who was really bound up with the whole earth. imagine a body which is soft, and in it hardened parts appear; this will give you a picture of how men were at that time born from mother earth. They were connected with the earth by all kinds of currents, and remained connected with it. Hence man had an entirely different life; for example, the circulation of the blood, which is now confined within the limits of its skin, extended everywhere into the surrounding earth — it existed in the form of natural forces. If we wished to draw a picture of what it was like at that time we should have to say: there arose within the earth — not perceptible to physical eyes, but to spiritual vision — a part which was raised and could be distinguished from the rest of the environment; but the forces in it were connected by innumerable threads with the rest of the whole earth. That was the beginning of a physical human being. There was a time when the human beings were connected in this way by threads with the rest of the earth.

As we have said, we are now touching upon an important and deep mystery, the last traces of which may be seen in the fact that when man is born at the present time, the connection with the maternal organism made by the umbilical cord is severed. This connection with the organism of the mother is the last remains of the connection man had with mother earth. And just as to-day man is a son of man, born from man, he was once a son of earth, born from the earth, when the earth was still a living being. He became independent through the umbilical cord — by which he was connected with the whole earth — being severed, so to speak; he thereby became a being born from his like. We must clearly understand that the paths of the blood now existing in man are nothing more than

continuations of currents which in the ancient condition of the earth permeated the whole earth, it is the same with the nerves. All the nerves extended into mother earth. These are now sundered, as it were, from that which streamed through the whole earth as nerves. And the other parts of the human being in the same way. Man is born out of mother earth. That which is now enclosed within the skin has been drawn into him from the whole earth. The being of man is taken from the earth, the forces of the whole earth are in him. Before he became a son of man, he was a son of earth. The name Adam really means son of earth. All these ancient names point to important secrets. But when we are aware of this we shall understand that before the visible man appeared on the earth, the latter already contained within it all the forces of this visible man. Before man became a human being the earth was the bearer of all the human forces. Thus the earth is the mother of the human race. Just as little as you can imagine that man could ever grow out of the present stony earth, just as little could he spring forth from the earth, unless it were a living being. What we have just briefly indicated took place in the Lemurian epoch.

This earth was extremely important to man, for in its original form it contained all that man later possessed within him. In one part the heart was prepared, in another the brain; in our earth every nerve fibre was prepared. And just as our inner being was prepared in the earth, in the same way, in that which we shall have developed as our new body when the earth has reached its goal, do we carry within us the form which the future planet, the future embodiment of our earth must assume. To-day man works upon his soul; in this way he makes his body more and more like the soul, and when the earth has arrived at the end of its mission his body will have become an outward image of the soul which has taken Christ into itself. Such a man will survive and implant in the next embodiment of our earth the forces he has thus developed. Jupiter will have an appearance such as men are able to bring about by constructing it out of their own bodies. This Jupiter will, to begin with, receive its form from that which man has made for himself. Imagine that all the bodies you have fashioned are united in a single cosmic globe; that will be Jupiter. In your soul you have the germs of the future form of Jupiter, and of the forces it will contain. And out of Jupiter will be born the Jupiter beings. Thus man is now preparing for the birth of the Jupiter bodies.

What, therefore, must man do in order to give a worthy form to the future embodiment of our earth? He must take care that the work he can now do consciously is done in the Christian way, so that the etheric body which will be an image of this work will enter worthily into the spiritualized

earth. All the parts of this body will be just as man has made them. He will bring into this spiritual earth what he has made of his physical body, and this will be the foundation for his future evolution. Just as your present soul develops in your present body, which you have inherited from the Moon, the future soul will develop in that which you yourselves make out of your own body. Hence the body is described as that which envelops the soul, which clothes the "I," which is inhabited by the "I," as the temple of the selfhood within, the temple of the Divinity dwelling in man, the temple of God. When, therefore, you form this body, you are building a future temple, that is to say, the new incarnation of the earth. You build up Jupiter in the right way by shaping the human body in the right way.

What, therefore, must appear when the earth has reached its goal? A temple of the soul harmonious in all its measurements. Hence the Initiate is commissioned to examine this temple which man will then have built. When this temple of God is measured it will be made manifest whether the soul has done what is right. "And there was given use a reed like unto a rod, and the angel said: Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But leave out the outer court" (Rev. xi. 1). This means, all that was there as a preparation must be thrown out of the temple. Man had first to have physical body and etheric body before he could work on them. These bodies are the outer court, and must fall away, they must be thrown out. That alone which man has made does he keep. That is the temple in which are to live the new beings in the Jupiter period.

We shall live, then, in an earth which has become spiritual. We see how the pattern of this Jupiter period is already being prepared. We see foreshadowed how men bring with them the fruits of their earth existence. And now we must clearly understand that all that was there before reappears in this spiritual condition on the earth, in a higher state of evolution. Most prominent are the bearers of the spiritual currents upon which the earth is founded, and from which it has proceeded. The bearers of these currents appear in living form. If we follow Christian tradition we shall see in Elias and Moses the personal representatives of what we found in yesterday's lecture in the two pillars. In Christian esotericism Elias and Moses are looked upon as those who give the teachings of the two pillars. Elias was the one who brought to man the knowledge and message of the one pillar, the pillar of strength, Moses the one who brought the message of the pillar of wisdom. Moses means wisdom or truth, and Elias means the directing force, that which gives the impulse — it is difficult to express the words in ordinary language. Thus we see these two appear in the

spiritualized earth and, indeed, at the stage of evolution they will then have reached. In the Transfiguration of Christian tradition Christ appeared between Moses and Elias, and this entire procedure appears again at the end of the earth evolution in such a way that the sun, the spiritual sun of love, the manifestation of the earth mission of love appears supported by Sun-Mars, and Moon — Mercury, by Elias and Moses. Just as yesterday we saw the two pillars which at first appear before the Initiate as the symbols of strength and wisdom, and above the sun of love, so we may now picture the evolution of the earth a stage further, and the one pillar will appear in its living nature, in its personal form, as Elias, and the other as Moses, and what is above, as the veritable Christ-principle.

If we now turn our attention away from the earth itself and what is upon it, and consider it in connection with the whole space of heaven, we shall find we have arrived at a very important matter at the time of which we are now speaking. Earth and Sun comprised one body. The earth has developed out of the sun, and the moon has split off. We have said that this had to take place to obtain the right speed of evolution. But now, when man has passed through these stages of development, after he has spiritualized himself, he is ready to unite again with the forces upon the sun, he can proceed at the same tempo as the sun. An important cosmic event now takes place; the earth reunites with the sun. While that of which we have spoken is taking place, the earth unites with the sun. We said that the sun-spirits descended to the earth at the event of Golgotha, that this Christ-principle will be the means of bringing evolution to the point we have described. The earth will then be ready to unite with the sun; and that which was necessary in order that evolution should not proceed too quickly, namely, the moon, will be overcome, for man will no longer need it. The forces of the moon will be overcome. At this stage man can unite with the sun; he will live in the spiritualized earth and at the same time be united with the force of the sun; and he will be the conqueror of the moon. This will be seen on examination to be represented by the symbolical figures of the fifth seal; the woman who bears the sun within her and has the moon under her feet. [The fifth seal in Dr. Steiner's *Seals and Symbols*.]

Thus we have arrived at the moment when man is spiritualized, when he reunites with the forces of the sun, when earth and sun form one body and the moon forces are overcome. Now, we must remember that only the most advanced beings, who have been impregnated by the principle of Christ, have passed through this development. They have reached thus far; but those who have hardened in matter have fallen away and formed, so to

speak, a kind of secondary planet of hardened, flesh-like matter. Now remember what man looked like to astral vision before he descended to the earth as a physical being. We pointed out that he appeared in the four types of his group-soul, in the form of the Lion, the Eagle, the Bull and the Man. These four types of the group-soul meet us, so to speak, before man descends into the physical, before he is individualized. These four typical forms which man had before he entered into the physical body are invisible in the present physical human being. They arc in the soul-force, pressed, as it were, into the human form like india-rubber. It is, in fact, the case that when man loses control over himself, when his soul becomes silent either by going to sleep, or otherwise falling into a more or less unconscious condition, then one still sees to-day how the corresponding animal type comes out. But, on the whole, man has overcome this animal type by having descended to the physical plane. When did he receive the power to overcome in the astral world the animal type?

Now you will remember that we spoke of the seven ages of the Atlantean evolution. These seven ages comprise the first four and the last three. In the first four man was completely group-soul. Then in the fifth age the first impulse to the "I-soul" originated. Therefore we have four stages of development in Atlantis during which man first progresses as group-soul, and each of the first four Atlantean races corresponds to one of the typical animal forms — lion, eagle, bull and man. This passes over into the human stage in the fifth age. These typical forms are then lost. Now imagine that in the present epoch man permeates himself with the Christ-principle and thereby conquers his animal nature more and more; but if he does not permeate himself with the Christ-principle, he does not overcome the animal nature. The four typical heads, lion, eagle, bull and man, remain, so to speak, as something which assumes its form again as soon as it has the opportunity, and in addition come three others, those of the last three races of the Atlantean epoch, when man had already begun to be man. These three also remain if man does not work in his soul so that this animal nature disappears. How then will a man appear on the spiritualized earth who during our epoch has not taken into himself the Christ-principle? He will appear in materiality; he will reappear in the shapes from which he has come. He has had these animal forms and has passed through three others as well. He has left unused that which could have overcome the animal nature. The animal nature springs forth again, and, indeed, in seven forms. As once in Atlantis there emerged the four heads, the animal man, so out of the transformed earth, the astralized earth, seven such typical heads will again emerge, and the drama that took place at that time will

again be enacted. The germ of the spiritual man was there, but he could not yet develop an individual form; he developed the four animal heads. The embryo human being of that epoch is also represented by the woman who brings forth man. The man of the future is also represented by the woman who gives birth to the spiritual man. But that which has remained in the flesh is represented on the secondary earth by the animal with seven heads, just as there were four heads in the period before man had the possibility of overcoming the animal nature, so those who have remained in the animal nature will appear as one entity, as the beast with the seven heads. Thus in the future, after the earth has united with the sun, while the spiritualized earth is above, there actually appears below, all that has not taken into itself the spiritual principle. The animal heads reappear which were there formerly, except that now they are out of their time. They are now the "adversary;" previously they were in the right period, the period of preparation. Thus we see that as at that time there arose from the physical, there now arises from the astral sea — the sun is also astralized — the monster with the seven heads, the seven-headed beast. All that was deposited in man by the etheric body is called in the mystery language — which the Apocalyptist also uses — a head, because when seen clairvoyantly it produces a typical form of head, e.g. a lion's head.

The etheric forces have to work upon it. If we follow the Atlantean evolution we find that the etheric body was still outside the head. That disposition in man due to the etheric is called in the language of the Apocalyptic mysteries "head." This, therefore, refers to what is seen by clairvoyant vision chiefly as a head. But that which is brought about physically in man through some part of the etheric body is called a "horn." Thus in the language of the mysteries a horn is a very mysterious thing. For example, that which has been brought about physically in man through his having passed through that race of the Atlantean epoch in which the lion was the typical group-soul, is called a horn. Thus the physical part which comes from some member of the etheric body is called a horn. A horn is the organ which is the external physical expression for something etheric. I will now speak to you in a concrete manner. All the physical organs of man are really densified etheric organs, they have proceeded from the condensed etheric body. Let us consider the human heart; to-day it is a physical organ, but it has condensed from an etheric organ. This present human heart received its rudiments when man went through the group-soul nature designated as the lion. Thus the heart is the horn of the lion head, for when the etheric body had progressed so far that man appeared with the group-soul symbolized by the lion's head, the

rudimentary foundations were formed for that which later developed into the human heart. From this germ of the lion-man originated the present human physical heart. While, therefore, we trace back the origin of the etheric body to the changing of one head into another, to the addition of one head to another, we understand the human physical body as the addition of one horn to another. The human etheric body actually consists of "heads," the human physical body of "horns." That is the language of the mysteries. All the organs of man have developed out of the etheric body, they are, therefore, nothing but horns.

We have now to reflect upon all that we have heard; for this is something of which even the Apocalyptist says: "Here is wisdom." We shall only understand this wisdom, which the writer of the Apocalypse has put into the appearance of the seven-headed beast with ten horns, if we carefully ponder over what "horn" really is in relation to "head" in the language of the mysteries. We shall see that the beings who have kept these seven heads, because they have remained behind in evolution, have, in fact, acquired in the abyss a physical body which consists of ten hardened members of the physical body.



Lecture X

We have seen that in the Apocalypse of John we have a description of what takes place in Initiation, or rather, the experience of a Christian during Initiation. In the concluding lectures, when we have briefly considered the whole of the Apocalypse, we shall still have to answer the question: What, really, is this document from an historical point of view? Why does such a document exist? But now, as we have reached the important point revealed in our last lecture, when our earth passes into a spiritual condition, though first of all into an astral condition, when certain remarkable beings appear in what has condensed in matter and split away from the normal progress of our earth evolution, it will be useful before we proceed further to make a general survey of certain things contained in the outline of our anthroposophical world conception. For you have seen that in all we have had to consider, certain conceptions as to numbers play a role, and now we are about to form a conception of what the seven-headed and ten-horned beast is, and what the two-horned beast is.

To begin with, we must find our bearings with regard to the outline of the evolution of the world. This runs its course in absolute conformity with certain numerical relations. The layman will be tempted to say — when he hears that the number seven and other numbers play such a great rôle in our studies — "Oh yes, these Anthroposophists are dishing up those old superstitions connected with the number seven, twelve and so on." And when our contemporaries hear of something which develops regularly according to the number seven, they then begin to speak of superstition, although they themselves are really living in exactly the same superstition with respect to something of which they have a little knowledge; for they say, for example, that the rainbow consists of seven colours, the scale of seven tones, since the eighth is only a repetition of the first. And in many other realms one speaks of the number seven — and rightly so. In our study of the great cosmic relationships we speak of the number seven in no other sense than the physicist does when he speaks of the seven colours, and, in acoustics, of seven tones. For us the number seven is simply the result of occult experience, just as the scientist observes and counts the seven colours, so does the spiritual investigator count seven consecutive conditions in the world's evolution. And because the initiates in the Mysteries always knew about these things and expressed them, they passed over into the common consciousness; and the number seven was

found to be of a particular significance. Exactly because the number seven was founded on cosmic relationships, it passed over into common belief, and of course, also into superstition. If we remember what has been said concerning the secret of the seven trumpets, the seven seals, the seven Letters, and what has been said concerning the seven consecutive ages of the Atlantean epoch, we see that in the evolution of the world there are really consecutive periods which are repeated in conformity with the number seven. We shall now give an outline of cosmic evolution, showing that this number governs all its parts.

We have heard that the Earth before it was Earth was Moon, before it was Moon it was Sun planet, and before it was Sun it was Saturn. After the Earth-condition it will pass over into the Jupiter-condition, and then into the Venus-condition, and lastly into the Vulcan-condition, so that we have seven consecutive planetary embodiments of our earth; Saturn, Sun, Moon, Earth, Jupiter, Venus and Vulcan. Now these are the greatest divisions in our whole evolution which with spiritual vision we are able to survey to a certain extent. We have described the three preceding conditions of the Earth. We shall now try to understand the purpose of this evolution and why the Earth passes through these seven conditions. These seven conditions coincide with the development of human consciousness. Each of these conditions: Saturn, Sun, Moon, Earth, Jupiter, Venus and Vulcan, characterizes a definite condition of human consciousness. Let us turn our attention back to the ancient Saturn period. We know that the various parts of which man is now constituted, did not exist at that time, but only the very first beginnings of his physical body. Obviously these first rudiments could not develop such a consciousness as man has to-day. Other beings had a human consciousness, but at that time the present man had a consciousness such as the minerals now have on the physical plane. We call this a deep trance-consciousness. The first germ of man had this consciousness upon Saturn. This Saturn evolution was gone through in order that man might gradually rise to higher states of consciousness. That was the first stage of consciousness, the deep trance-consciousness. Of course it must not be imagined that the degree of consciousness remained the same throughout the whole of the Saturn period, but on the whole the consciousness of man upon Saturn may be characterized as a deep trance-consciousness. It is dimmer even than the consciousness which man has to-day in dreamless sleep, for that was then the consciousness he passed through at the second stage, during the Sun evolution. This is the consciousness now possessed by the plants around us in the physical world.

Then came the Moon stage of evolution. Man then possessed a consciousness which can be understood more easily because in dream-consciousness man has at least a last remnant of the Moon-consciousness. To-day this dream-consciousness is an intermediate condition between dreamless sleep and the ordinary, waking, clear day-consciousness. Thus the third stage of consciousness was reached on the Moon, and it may be compared to the present dream-filled sleep, but it was much more vivid and real. Dream-filled sleep yields a consciousness which consists of odds and ends of ideas and pictures and is but slightly related to the real external world. The Moon-consciousness, which was a consciousness of dream-pictures, had very significant relations with the outer world. It corresponded exactly to what was present in the soul-spiritual environment. There was a repetition of this during the Atlantean epoch. We call it the dream-picture-consciousness; it might also be called the somnambulic-consciousness. The fourth state of consciousness is reached and passed through on our Earth; it is what we call the clear day-consciousness or objective-consciousness.

During the Jupiter period man will rise to a still higher degree of consciousness of which most people to-day have no inkling, when all that we have described has taken place and all that is yet to be added from the Apocalypse of John which is still to be described. Then, when man is saved, so to speak, when he has risen from the abyss or escaped from decadence, when he has risen into the astralized and spiritual earth, this will be the foundation for his attainment upon Jupiter of the consciousness which we may call the "conscious picture-consciousness." If this is to be described it can only be done from the experiences of the Initiates. For initiation is indeed nothing but the acquisition of the capacity to attain at an earlier stage of evolution what normal humanity will gain at a later stage. In the conscious picture-consciousness man is just as self-conscious as he is to-day from morning to evening, but he perceives not only the external objects, but in his soul's field of vision he has pictures; indeed, they are pictures which are by no means dim, but rather are incorporated in the clear consciousness of day. Thus the clear day-consciousness plus the Moon-consciousness gives the Jupiter-consciousness. Man keeps what he now has and in addition gains the capacity of perceiving the element of soul and spirit. To-day the Initiate not only sees man as he is physically, but shining around him he perceives all kinds of spiritual forms which are the expression of his desires, instincts and thoughts; in a word, his aura. It glows and sparkles around the human form like delicate flames, partly like a cloud of light. All this can be seen in the human astral body by the

Initiate, just as the outline of the physical body is seen by the ordinary physical eyes; all this is a picture of what takes place in the soul. The Initiate experiences a consciousness which may be described as Moon-consciousness plus Earth-consciousness.

Then upon Venus comes a sixth state of consciousness which may be described as the inspired-consciousness, the consciousness of inspiration. It is called the consciousness of inspiration because at this stage of consciousness the Initiate perceives not only the feelings, desires, impulses, etc., of the soul, but also its whole inner character as a uniform sound. He begins to perceive that which pervades the world of — shall we say — colour and form-structures as the music of the spheres, so that each single being stems like a musical form within that which had previously been perceived as an astral picture.

The seventh stage of consciousness which will exist on Vulcan we may call the Intuitive-consciousness. Intuition is not the triviality ordinarily understood by the word to-day when one imagines one is able to divine something through a vague feeling — that is a misuse of the word. In the schools of the Initiates, Intuition is applied to the highest stage of consciousness we can imagine, when the soul identifies itself with the spiritual beings and lives within them. Although the soul remains quite individual, it rests within all the objects and beings of its field of vision.

The seven stages of the earth's whole evolution thus present to its seven consecutive states of consciousness. Now each of these must in its turn also be attained in seven stages, and we call these seven stages, which must be passed through every time, Stages of Life. So that we distinguish seven stages of consciousness, and in each of these, seven stages of life. It is difficult in our language to find words to express these seven stages of life. If we merely take our earth into account, we may describe the stages of life by speaking of the seven kingdoms, for the stages of life on earth coincide with the kingdoms. Here we may describe the first stage of life as the first elementary kingdom, the second as the second, the third as the third elementary kingdom, the fourth as the mineral kingdom, the fifth as the vegetable kingdom, the sixth as the animal kingdom and the seventh as the human kingdom. Now we might say that at each of these stages of consciousness seven such stages of life, or kingdoms, are passed through. But if we were similarly to describe the seven stages of life on Saturn as the first, second and third elementary kingdoms, as mineral, vegetable, animal and human kingdoms, this would only give rise to false conceptions, for the expressions for these kingdoms are coined in accordance with our

earthly experiences. And in those primeval times the kingdoms were formed quite differently from what they now are on the earth. We can only say that analogous to these kingdoms there were seven kingdoms on Saturn and seven on the Sun. The seven kingdoms of the Moon were more like the present kingdoms; and as far as the seven stages of life on the earth are concerned, these have become the seven kingdoms of the earth. And on the earth we can, indeed, describe these more easily, although it is extremely difficult to give an idea of the three elementary kingdoms. People think they have a true conception of the mineral, vegetable, animal and human kingdoms, though this is not really the case. Perhaps you will succeed in forming some kind of idea of the three elementary kingdoms if you consider the following. Imagine parts of the mineral kingdom, stones, metals, etc., becoming finer and finer, so that you see less and less of them; they dissolve, so to speak, into finer and finer substance. Suppose it all volatilizes into an extremely delicate, transparent, invisible substance. If you continually refined these substances you would at length produce something which is no longer mineral kingdom but the third elementary kingdom. Then we should rise to a second and a first elementary kingdom. It is difficult for our present qualities of perception to form ideas about these kingdoms which are secreted in and condensed into our world. It is as if these elementary kingdoms had condensed and disappeared, so to speak, into our world. They precede our mineral kingdom. We have seen when this mineral kingdom itself was formed. In earlier periods of the earth's evolution the mineral kingdom existed in the condition of the elementary kingdoms.

Now the other four kingdoms. We see the mineral kingdom around us, also the vegetable, animal and human kingdoms. But we must clearly understand that these designations are really not quite correct in the spiritual scientific sense. The layman describes the present minerals as belonging to the mineral kingdom, the plants as belonging to the vegetable kingdom, the animals as belonging to the animal kingdom and man to the human kingdom. From the lay point of view this is correct, and for all the trivial things of life it suffices, but in the occult sense it is incorrect. For at the present time man is perfected alone in the mineral kingdom. Only in future periods of evolution will he rise to the plant, animal and human kingdoms. As man has an "I"-consciousness at the present time we may certainly call him man, but we must not yet say that he is incarnated in the human kingdom in the sense of Spiritual Science. To this end something else is necessary of which we must now speak.

What can man comprehend to-day? That is the point. He can to-day understand only the mineral kingdom. As soon as he comes to the vegetable kingdom he no longer understands it, the mineral kingdom he can understand. From the forces of the mineral kingdom he can construct houses, machines, etc. When he comes to learn in the same way to observe what the forces are in a plant which makes it grow tall, only this will lift him with his consciousness into the vegetable kingdom. And by learning to comprehend how an animal can feel — at the present time he has only an external view of it — he becomes a member of the animal kingdom. And when he understands not only his own "I" but that of another, when he fully understands a man inwardly, then only does he belong to the human kingdom.

You will best understand that man can now comprehend only the mineral kingdom if you make the following observation. Imagine that a great number of learned men say that plants and animals are nothing more than complicated minerals. And these learned men are expecting a time when they will so combine material substances that these will become plants and animals. They are under the illusion that one can understand the plants as mineral beings, because they have no idea that there is anything else besides the mineral kingdom. Indeed, many say, "You Anthroposophists dream that there is an etheric body, something which extends beyond the merely mineral; but you will dream no more when we succeed in making a living being in our laboratory just as we now produce sulphuric acid from the separate substances, from carbon, nitrogen, oxygen, hydrogen, etc." It is believed that a living being can be constructed in the same way in which sulphuric acid can be produced; it is believed that purely materialistic science will one day be able to do this. It is believed that Anthroposophists are foolish enough to doubt that the time will come when plants will actually be produced in the retort. This time will come. But students of Spiritual Science have always known that this time will come; they know that the time will come when man will take the plant nature into his own being, just as he now has the mineral nature within him. And just as he builds houses of minerals, just as he now uses the forces of the mineral kingdom, so will he in the future, out of the familiar forces of the plant kingdom, produce plant forms and still higher things in the laboratory, without resorting to seeds, without having to call to his aid forces of nature unfamiliar to him. But if this possibility of producing a living organism in the laboratory were to come prematurely, from the point of view of true Spiritual Science this is what would be called black magic. Man must first become ripe for each succeeding step of evolution. There is a saying well

known in Spiritual Science, which runs: Man will only produce living organisms in the experimental laboratory, as he now produces mineral products, when the laboratory-table has become the altar and the mixing of the chemical substances a sacramental act. This is a saying which has always been found in occult circles. Truly, as long as a person enters the laboratory in the belief that he can work with unholy feelings the same as with holy ones, so long will he never be able, with the will of those who guide evolution in the right way, to produce anything living in the laboratory. This will only be possible when it is realized that a mineral product may indeed be produced, even if a scoundrel is standing at the laboratory table, but that a living thing can never be produced under these circumstances. For into the living being flows — when it is put together — something which is M. the man himself. If the man were a villain, what was villainous would flow over, and the being produced would be an expression of villainy. Only when it is realized that man as a whole being works with his whole inner being in what he produces, will the world be ready to produce something that is alive, plants, animals and human beings, in free activity. Man will then have risen into the plant kingdom when he understands the plant nature as he now understands the mineral. He will have risen to the animal kingdom when he understands feelings in such a way that he can make a sensitive being through his own spirit-power, just as he now makes an external object. And he will have ascended to the human kingdom when he can form man anew in free activity.

Thus man is now living in the mineral kingdom; and he is fundamentally the only being which has developed fully in the mineral kingdom, whilst the beings in the other kingdoms stand in many respects at much lower stages than the one designated in Spiritual Science as the mineral kingdom. Thus the plants show as a kind of preparatory stage what man will experience when he himself shall one day be in the plant kingdom. But the plants are not really in the plant kingdom; they are, at the most prototypes; not archetypes, but pointers to a future kingdom in which man will be, when he inwardly passes through the plant nature, just as he is now passing through the mineral nature. This plant kingdom in which man will be, will be distinguished by other things, its nature may be characterized by a moral statement which is, indeed, often repeated intellectually but by no means comprehended. To-day man lives in such a way that the individual, even if he does not acknowledge it, is convinced that it is possible for a person to be happy although his neighbour may be unhappy. It is certainly quite possible for one person to feel happy in spite of others being unhappy. Even if it be acknowledged, speaking intellectually, that the

highest moral principle is that which makes all men happy, in practice, people are convinced that the happiness of one is quite possible without others being just as happy as he. When man is in the plant kingdom he will have reached a stage of evolution morally, at which it will be impossible to feel happy as an individual if others of his kind are unhappy. "The happiness of the individual is inseparably connected with the happiness of all." This statement will rule when man is taken up into the plant kingdom. No man could then feel happy in any way if his happiness were obtained at the expense of others.

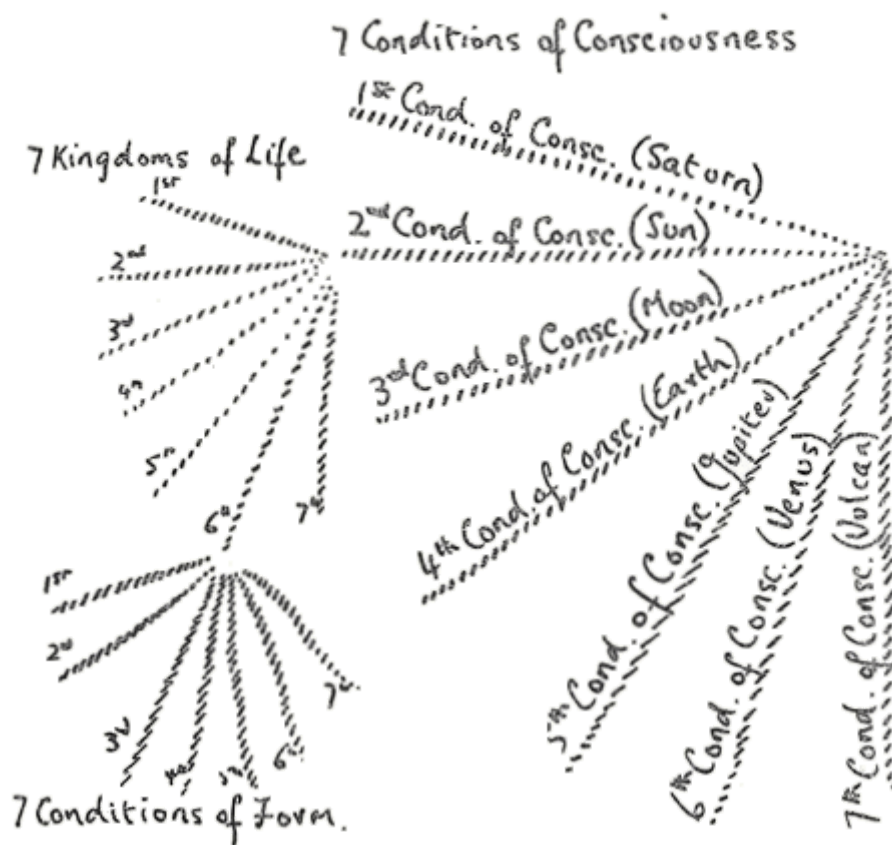
Thus you see that there are very few who are capable of perceiving such subtle ideas as we must have in Spiritual Science if we wish to understand everything. But you also see that man still has long vistas of evolution in front of him. All this he must attain, and very little of it exists as yet.

Thus we speak of seven kingdoms through which man himself passes. Upon Jupiter there will be again seven kingdoms which will still be somewhat similar to the seven earth kingdoms, but they will nevertheless be quite different from these. Upon Venus there will again be seven, and again upon Vulcan. Here we can by no means call them kingdoms any longer, the idea "kingdom" is no longer suitable. If we bear all this in mind we must say that we have (primarily) seven stages of development of consciousness, the Saturn, Sun, Moon, Earth, Jupiter, Venus and Vulcan stages, and at each stage of consciousness seven stages of life, through which every single being which goes through the degree of consciousness must pass. Each stage of life must again pass through seven stages of form, and, indeed, in such a way that you have to consider your present physical stage of form to be in the very middle. Before anything becomes physical it is astral; before it is astral, it is at a certain spiritual stage which is called lower devachan; and before anything descends to this stage it is in a higher stage of devachan. Here we have three stages of form. The first may be designated as formless. The next stage of form we designate as the stage of lower devachan. Then we come to the astral stage. When the astral condenses it becomes physical. Then the physical dissolves again and returns to a more perfect astral; this passes to a more perfect lower devachanic, and this to a higher devachanic. The physical condition of form is in the middle.

Each kingdom (each stage of life) passes through seven conditions of form. You must distinguish between physical and mineral, for they are not the same. As to-day the physical coincides with the mineral in appearance, the two may easily be confused. The mineral kingdom or stage of life

passes through all the stages of form; it can be laid down as mineral kingdom above in the higher region of devachan. It then descends into the lower spiritual region (lower devachan) and is still the mineral kingdom, then into the astral — here it is astrally prepared — and then it condenses to the physical. Thus in each kingdom we have seven conditions of form.

Each condition of consciousness can only run its course in seven conditions of life; each condition of life in seven conditions of form. That is $7 \times 7 \times 7$ conditions. In fact, an entire evolution such as that of the earth passes through $7 \times 7 \times 7$ conditions of form. Our earth was once Saturn; this went through seven conditions of life and each condition of life through seven conditions of form, Therefore you have forty-nine conditions of form upon Saturn, forty-nine upon the Sun, forty-nine upon the Moon, etc.; $7 \times 49 = 343$ conditions of form. Man passes through 343 conditions of form in the course of his evolution. When Saturn was at the very outset of its evolution it began in the highest spiritual to which we can attain, as a structure in the highest part of devachan. That was the first condition of form, and it was entirely mineral. As such it descended to the physical kingdom, and reascended to higher devachan. And here begins the great difficulty, for you must now say, if you wish to use the expressions named: Man passes into the next kingdom. But these expressions do not apply to Saturn. Upon Saturn man passes in this way through forty-nine conditions. The curious thing is that you may now ask: "Man had to pass through conditions of life on Saturn, but he only acquired an etheric body on the Sun. How, then, can one say that he goes through conditions of life?" They were not yet as they were later when he had a life body, they were vicarious. This is brought about through the activity of higher beings. Man has no independent life upon Saturn, but higher beings permeate him with their etheric body, with their astral body, "I," etc. In any case you must understand that upon Saturn man has passed through forty-nine conditions, upon the Sun forty-nine, and forty-nine upon the Moon. Upon the earth of these forty-nine conditions he has only passed through the first three conditions of life and is now in the fourth — in the mineral kingdom. In the first condition of life he was in the first elementary kingdom and there passed through seven conditions of form; in the second condition of life he was



[Note by Translator]

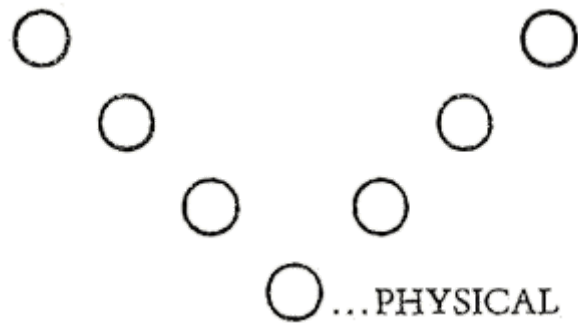
Conditions of Consciousness	Conditions of Life (Rounds)	Conditions of Form (Globes)
Saturn	{ 1st Elementary 2nd Elementary 3rd Elementary Mineral Vegetable Animal Human	{ Arupa Rupa Astral Physical Plastic Intellectual Archetypal
Sun		
Moon		
Earth		
Jupiter		
Venus		
Vulcan		
	Epochs	Ages
	{ Polarian Hyperborean Lemurian Atlantean Aryan 6 7	{ Indian Persian Egyptian Gracco-Latin Anglo-Germanic Slavonic American

in the second elementary kingdom and passed through seven conditions of form; he was in the third elementary kingdom and passed through the seven conditions of form. He is now in the fourth elementary kingdom, which is the same as the mineral kingdom, and he is approximately in the middle of this, somewhat beyond the middle.

From all that we have outlined you will have seen that the whole earth passes through 343 conditions. I beg you to picture it in this way: Saturn originates and passes through forty-nine conditions; it is primarily a fiery mass, a body of heat, and goes through various conditions, but it is always the same globe that passes through these forty-nine conditions. In the same way, the Sun is always one and the same globe which passes through the forty-nine conditions. But there are intermediate conditions. It is as if between the several embodiments of the earth there were a kind of spiritual interval. It is the same with the planets as with man, the planets also pass through spiritual intervals, which lie between the periods of manifestation.

If you clearly understand that in the course of our evolution we have seven conditions of consciousness, you will also perceive how this is connected with what is described in our various books. They are cosmic systems. You will there read that our Earth developed out of an ancient planetary system which is described as Moon. We then went further back from the Moon to the Sun, and from the Sun to Saturn. Each of these conditions is divided into the seven conditions of life — formerly called Rounds; Rounds are the same as conditions of life. And those now called conditions of form were formerly called globes. The latter expression was extremely misleading, for it led to the idea that these seven globes were side by side.

These conditions, from the most remote form, which was almost formless, down through the physical and up again to the formless, are not seven globes existing side by side, but seven successive conditions. The same globe that is now physical was first of all spiritual, then it became denser and denser. It is the same globe simply condensed. Then a portion of it became astral, then a portion physical; it is always the same globe. It dissolves again like salt in warm water, it again becomes astral. We have ascended to this astral where, in the Apocalypse, the vials of wrath are described; there the earth becomes astral again.



Thus you see how the number seven governs the whole of evolution. In the last few days we have given a skeleton outline of this, as it were, in the form of pictures, sometimes truly grotesque pictures, and in any case, such as deviate very much from what can be seen to-day in the physical world. If you conceive of it in this way it is approximately as if you were to erect the scaffolding for a house, the most external part that is intended to be used by the masons. That has, however, nothing to do with the subject; these are only thoughts about the subject, so to speak. We must rise from this purely intellectual scheme, which assists us indeed to understand, to the living structure, by using the pictures which are to be seen in the astral for the various conditions; then only have we what is called occult wisdom. As long as you build up a scaffolding you remain in the thought customary to you in the physical world. The whole scheme we have sketched is only physical thought. This is related to the full reality not at all like the inner framework of a house to the complete building, but only like the outer scaffolding upon which the builders stand. This has to be taken down again when the building is completed. In the same way the scaffolding of thought has to be taken down again if one wishes to have the truth before one as it really is. If one considers this abstraction as the reality, then one is not by any means speaking of true Spiritual Science but only of the concept which the man of the present day can form regarding the spiritual facts. The way in which spiritual facts are presented abstractly at the present time may be seen in such a diagram as I have made, but this in itself is unfruitful. I had to put it before you because we also need such a diagram, but fundamentally it is of no use to one who wishes to progress upon the truly spiritual path. If you describe the whole world, up to the highest spiritual facts, by means of such diagrams, this only has meaning for your present incarnation. In the next you must learn another diagram. This can only be thought by using the brain; it is only adapted for the brain. But as the brain disintegrates at death, the whole schematic presentation then falls to pieces. On the other hand, if you comprehend —

at first in pictures of fantasy — that which really happens, what we have described as the consecutive pictures of the seals seen by spiritual vision, that is something which is not bound up with your physical brain, and which you retain because it does not originate from physical thinking, but from facts seen clairvoyantly. Therefore one must take care not to mistake for spiritual wisdom that which is striven for after the pattern of physical comprehension, which would also schematize the higher worlds. This is a description by means of the ordinary physical intellect. Of course, the physical intellect must play a part; on this account it is even useful to present such a diagram, and we may now carry it a step further.

We have seen that we pass through 343 conditions of form. Now, the subject grows more complicated when we learn that the matter does not end here, but that man must also pass through various conditions with each condition of form. In our mineral condition of life during the Earth period three conditions of form have preceded the present physical condition of form and three others will follow it. But now the physical again passes through seven conditions, and these are the seven of which we have spoken in previous lectures; the first when the sun is still united with the earth, the second when it separates, the third when the moon withdraws, the fourth that of the Atlantean humanity. The Atlantean humanity lives in the fourth epoch of the development of the physical condition of form. Thus within each condition of form you have again seven epochs or so-called root-races, although the expression "race" applies only to the middle condition. We are now living in the fifth epoch, the post-Atlantean epoch, between the great Atlantean flood and the great War of All against All. The sixth will follow this and then the seventh. The sixth epoch is indicated in the Apocalypse of John by the seven seals, and the seventh by the seven trumpets. Then the earth passes over into the astral. That is a new condition of form which again will have its seven epochs.

And still our diagram is not at an end. Each epoch as it runs its course between such events as the great Atlantean flood and the great War of All against All must again be divided into seven ages. As regards the fifth epoch there are the Indian age of civilization, the Persian age of civilization, the Assyrian-Babylonian-Chaldean-Egyptian-Jewish age, the Graeco-Latin age, our own age, then the sixth, which is indicated in the Apocalypse by the community of Philadelphia, and the seventh age of civilization which will follow that.

Thus if we imagine the whole of evolution consisting of nothing but short ages such as these — which, however, are long enough — we have $7 \times 7 \times 7$ stages of development such as the ancient Indian or the ancient Persian. The number of different conditions of this nature which man passes through between Saturn and Vulcan is 16807:

$$\begin{aligned}7 \times 7 \times 7 &== 343. \\7 \times 343 &== 2401. \\7 \times 2401 &== 16807.\end{aligned}$$

Thus you see how the number 7 governs development in the successive periods throughout the whole of evolution. Just as the tones in music progress from octave to octave, so does the whole of evolution take place in octaves of development.

Let us now recall that we have seven of these conditions out of the 16807 in our epoch between the great Atlantean flood and the great War of All against All, and that previously we had seven more in the Atlantean epoch. But we also remember that man went through four of these seven ages of the Atlanteans epoch under quite different conditions from the last three. You know the kind of conditions we have to enumerate. Four of the conditions out of the total number, man went through during the Atlantean epoch in such a way that he felt himself as a group-soul, as we have described, as eagle, lion, bull and man. He gradually developed these four group-souls during these four root-races of the Atlantean epoch. Now because races always continue, just as, for instance, the Indian has continued, although later ones have developed (they pass into one another), for this reason the four heads indicating the group-souls also remained at the beginning of the fifth age of Atlantean civilization and we have this four-headed beast. Now when man began to harden himself from the etheric into the physical, he developed four different parts of the body in accordance with his fourfold group-soul. And through the former group-soul consciousness changing into the individual-consciousness, man had within him a conjunction of the earlier four-foldness at the beginning of the fifth age of Atlantis. He bears within him the four heads which are summed up in his head which gradually arises. It is composed of the four group-heads as it developed in the course of the fifth period. Man has four parts of the physical body corresponding to the four heads. These are the four horns. So that you may imagine that because man was etheric, he had

four heads, four animal heads, only the last is already human-animal, for that is what is meant. He was four-headed, and each force-system corresponding to one of these heads formed physical organs. We saw in our last lecture that there was a force-system which formed the heart, namely, that which is connected with the lion head. The various organs of man are like condensations of the corresponding parts of the etheric body. This is the view of the writer of the Apocalypse. He says: That which is physical is a densification of the etheric. Just as you would think: "This skin thickens and forms a callosity," so the Apocalypticist thinks: "man exists etherically and this condenses and becomes physical." And because man is fourfold, consisting of four group-souls, four condensations are formed. These constitute his physical body. This is the reason why one described as "horn" that which in the physical body corresponds to the etheric body. Horn is a callous thickening. Man is described, as far as he had developed in the fourth age of the Atlantean epoch, as an animal with four heads and four horns. He then evolves further towards an individual human being. This begins in the neighbourhood of the present Ireland. Man passes through the last three ages in such a way that he possesses the germ of the ego-being. He no longer develops an animal body outwardly, but has risen to the human stage. He matures his human nature more and more until he absorbs the Christ-principle. If we regard present-day man, we see that he was not always as he appears to-day. In order for him to become what he now is, he had to pass through four animal group-souls, he had to be incarnated in bodies corresponding to the present lion form, the bull form, the eagle form and the human form. He then pressed forward and became more and more human, and the form of the earlier group-soul disappeared. It is no longer there, man has assumed human shape.

We must now understand an important event which then took place when man assumed human form, for without this understanding one cannot comprehend the Apocalypse of John; it was an event of the greatest importance. Up to this event when man passed into the human soul-nature, something was totally hidden from his vision which later was revealed. Man had a kind of dim, hazy consciousness. When he awakened in the morning he saw everything surrounded by misty formations, so to speak; and when he went to sleep he was in the spiritual world. This appeared to him in pictures; for such is the nature of the spiritual world. I shall now describe something which took place before man passed over physically into the human condition, before he passed from the group-soul nature to full "I"-consciousness.

That which he lived through here upon the earth consisted only of a number of experiences. He then went to sleep and during his sleep was in a dim consciousness in a spiritual world where he lived among gods and spirits, of which an echo remains in the myths and legends. He then experienced mighty pictures; for example, the picture in which he encountered two other beings who threw stones behind them, and out of these stones other beings like themselves grew out of the earth. These were experiences which man had throughout the fourth age of the Atlantean epoch. To express it plainly, we must say that reproduction took place in sleeping-consciousness, not in the waking-consciousness. When man was outside his physical body and in the spiritual world, he accomplished in this condition of picture-consciousness deeds which had to be brought about. The whole act of reproduction was veiled in a spiritual element and appeared to him in the picture of throwing stones behind him. The act of reproduction was enveloped in spiritual consciousness; it lay behind the day-consciousness. Man had no knowledge of sex. In the day-consciousness he did not see himself as existing in two sexes, his soul was untouched by any thought of sex. Not that it did not exist; it did exist, but it rested in the obscurity of a spiritual consciousness; during the day-consciousness he knew nothing of it. With the acquisition of the first germ of the "I"-consciousness man first became aware of sex. That is the moment presented to us in the Bible when Adam and Eve become aware that there is such a thing as sex. This important event took place at this stage in the earth's evolution.

If with spiritual vision you look back to the time which preceded that time, you see only that part of man which is the instrument of the spirit. The other part was invisible, Only the upper part of man could be seen. From the point of time we have mentioned the whole man began to be seen. It is now comprehensible why men began to cover themselves up. Previously they saw nothing which required covering. In this way man gradually emerged into the external world.

If we consider the outer human form as the condensed part of the etheric, we have in the fourth Atlantean age the four horns in addition to the four group-soul heads. Now, however, in the last three ages of Atlantis something twofold begins to develop physically. At each stage where a group-soul head was to develop, a double physical, male and female, was formed. In the first four stages you find man formed with four heads, the condensed etheric with four horns. We now have three more heads which are invisible because the external human form absorbs them. These three are only perceptible to spiritual vision, three etheric heads, a principal

human head between two others which are like shadows beside it, like a double shadow. Thus when the Atlantean flood burst, we have seven group-soul heads, of which the last three always appear in such a way that they have their physical part in a double form, as male and female. From this you see that at the end of the Atlantean epoch the entire group-soul nature of man — although the later portion remains invisible — has seven heads and ten horns. The horns of the first four heads are not separated into male and female, but only the last three. Man has the seven heads and ten horns within him. He must now work upon these through the reception of the Christ-principle so that they shall be destroyed, so to speak. For each time a man dies the sevens-headed and ten-horned nature can clearly be seen in his astral body. This is merely held together like a piece of india-rubber which has been correspondingly formed. Now suppose a person hardened himself during our epoch against the Christ-principle and were to come to the time of the great War of All against All without having had the Christ-experience, suppose he were to come to this time and had thrust the Christ away from him, then when the earth passes over into the astral, that which was there and which he ought to have changed, would spring forth, it would spring forth in its old form. The beast with the seven heads and ten horns would appear, whereas in those who have received the Christ-principle, sex will again be overcome. The hardened ones will keep the six-horned sexuality and will appear in their totality as the beast with the seven heads and ten horns of which the rudiments were laid down in the Atlantean epoch. They will be transformed through the reception of the Christ-impulse, but if Christ is rejected they will remain and will reappear in the epoch indicated by the falling of the vials of wrath and the earth splitting, as it were, into two parts, one in which the Christ-men appear with white garments as the elect, even in the epoch of the seals; and the other part in which men appear in the form of the beast with seven heads and ten horns. Then appears another beast with two horns, symbolized by the number 666.



Lecture XI

We have followed the evolution of our earth so far that we have seen how, after various important events which are described by the opening of the seven seals and the sounding of the seven trumpets, in the future the earth with all its beings will pass into a kind of spiritual condition, with the exception of those who refuse to receive the Christ-principle; this refusal we have to understand as a malevolent and unintelligent spiritual opposition energetically exercised. Of course, when the earth has taken on its astral, its spiritual form, these beings too will be unable to exist in a dense material form — shall we say — in earthly substance; in the epoch following after the sounding of the trumpets, the epoch characterized by the outpouring of the vials of wrath, they will also pass over into astral forms. But the lower nature they will have acquired through not having accepted the Christ-principle will be expressed in the astral by their having essentially the animal form we have characterized, with the seven heads and ten horns. Now from all that has been said you will be able to gather what the relation is between what we call "heads" and what we call "horns"; but in connection with this the question may arise in your mind: Why is it that just certain organs which appear in the physical body are called "horns"? Why does one designate as horns the physical organs and their vestiges in the astral when the earth shall have become astral? It can easily be understood that those who have not taken up the principle of Christ must fall back again into the condition in which man was before he could partake of the Christ-principle. Man was formerly a non-individual being with a group-soul; and we have seen that during the first four ages of the Atlantean epoch he was furnished with the group-souls which are correctly symbolized by the lion, bull, eagle and human heads, but the last must be conceived of as an animal human head. We must imagine that when man reappears in the spiritualized earth and has failed to take in the Christ-principle during our epoch, he will then again appear in the old form, because he has contributed nothing towards the highest development of his previous group-soul nature; and not only in this form but with three heads more, which were added during the ages. Before the great flood of Atlantis three further ages followed after the first four.

In these three ages those who later received the Christ-principle had in a certain way the possibility of taking up three further group-soul heads; but they have transformed them, they have raised the animal nature in man to

a higher stage. They will appear in a spiritualized form when the earth is spiritualized. The others, who have rejected the Christ-principle, will appear with seven heads, because there were before the flood seven ages during which the animal nature was developed. And because in the last three Atlantean ages there was bi-sexuality in contra-distinction to the first four, each head, so to speak, appears with two possibilities towards the animal nature, with male and female possibilities, so that in these three later ages each head appears with two horns; that is man with ten horns altogether. Some one might now say, "I quite understand that those who do not work upon themselves so as to strip off the form which they have and lift it up to the human, will reappear in the animal form; but I do not understand why horns are spoken of! It is quite comprehensible when heads are spoken of, but why horns?" I will now explain why one not only speaks of horns, but must speak of them. The expression is not merely to be understood symbolically, it is reality. Those who fail to take up the Christ-principle into themselves will actually appear in astral form also, but because they have so shaped their instincts that they have held fast, so to speak, to the animal group-soul, the corresponding instincts appear in the astral body which men will then have, in the form of horny protuberances. It is an actual form.

I will explain by means of a single organ how it comes about that the man who does not receive the Christ-principle will actually appear with horns when the earth has become spiritualized. Take the organ of the human larynx and the windpipe. You are continually breathing air in and out through this wind-pipe. This is an activity which man exercises. In a person who spiritualizes himself, this activity is in the service of the spiritual; but in one who does not incline towards the Christ-principle it takes on the character of the old forces belonging to the seven heads. Suppose we illustrate it in this way:



The air continually passes in through the larynx from outside. But you know that the astral body of man surrounds him. The stream of air which passes in will always be in connection with the astral. Now when the earth is spiritualized it can be seen whether the breathing of a man was the servant of the Christ-principle or the servant of the lower forces already in the world before the Christ-principle. If it was the servant of the Christ-principle it loses the form adapted to the present body. Man himself has the power to transform everything which is astral into a higher spiritualized form. If he does not take up the Christ-principle he is unable to draw out of this fleshly form that which is suited to it, and the consequence is that after the fleshly form has fallen away and disappeared, after the physical larynx has gone, this form of the astral body remains, which always comes into the larynx with the breath. This form remains in the shape of a horn. Wherever the external astral forces go in and out of man they remain adapted to the preceding animal form when man passes over into the astral form, that is, he then appears with true astral horns; these are actual astral shapes. They correspond exactly to the penetration of the astral substantiality during the earth life. These pictures do not present random symbols, they present the true form of what will one day appear. This must be clearly understood.

Let us now determine our present position in evolution in accordance with what we have already considered, in accordance with that somewhat uncongenial diagram of many numbers. We now clearly understand that the forty-nine great transformations of Saturn have passed away, the seven conditions of life belonging to Saturn (which in theosophical books are also called rounds), each with its seven conditions of form (globes); and that, further, the forty-nine corresponding Sun-conditions and the forty-nine Moon-conditions have also passed away. Man has so far passed through these 147 conditions in his earlier evolution. Added to these now come the conditions which man has already passed through during our Earth period. The first three conditions of life, which are also called the first three rounds, are behind us, and we are now living in the fourth condition of life, in the fourth round. Now as each of these rounds includes its seven conditions of form, we have completed 3×7 conditions during the first three earth-rounds; therefore to the 147 we must add another twenty-one. We have not yet completed the fourth condition of life, but part of it is behind us; we have finished the first three conditions of form, the almost formless spiritual conditions, the arupa, the rupa and the astral conditions, and are now in the physical. So to the 147 plus twenty-one we must add three more. Thus we have completed 171 conditions of form out of the 343

of the seven planets. You must particularly bear in mind that we are now in the 172nd condition of form, which is the physical earth. During this 172nd condition all that we have described has taken place. When this condition began, the earth was united with sun and moon. During this condition the sun and moon withdrew, and after these events man appeared as he now is upon the physical earth. Then began the Atlantean epoch, of which we have spoken. We have also said that we must again divide this condition of form, which is the 172nd, into seven epochs. The first lies in the far distant past. When it began the sun was still united with the earth. Somewhat figuratively we have grown accustomed to call this epoch the Polarian human race. It is difficult to form any idea of this epoch. Then during the withdrawal of the sun comes the race of the Hyperboreans; then, during the exit of the moon, a third, the so-called Lemurian human race. The fourth epoch within the 172nd condition of form is the Atlantean race. The fifth is the one in which we are living. Following the fourth was the great Atlantean flood. After our own will follow the epoch expressed in the Apocalypse of John by the seven seals; and then comes the one typified by the seven trumpets.

Now we know that each of these seven epochs is again divided into seven ages. Our own epoch, the fifth within the 172nd condition of form, is divided into the ancient Indian age of civilization, the ancient Persian, the Assyrian-Babylonian-Chaldean-Egyptian-Jewish, the Graeco-Latin, our own, a sixth and then a seventh age of civilization. Then follows the great War of All against All. The succeeding epoch is again divided into seven parts, expressed by the seven seals; and the epoch expressed by the seven trumpets is again divided into seven parts. If you now consider that 171 conditions of form will be added to those that have already passed away, you will have 342. One more added to this gives 343 in all; but we are living in this one, it stands in the middle. Some one might now say: "It is really a very wonderful thing that we have the good fortune to be living exactly in the middle of evolution." This must indeed seem a curious fact to those who do not reflect further upon it, that we are living in the middle of evolution! But to one who understands the whole matter it is by no means strange. It is no more wonderful than if some one, standing in an open field in level country where he sees equally far behind and in front, finds himself in the middle of the field of vision. If he goes some distance further, he again sees equally far behind and in front. There would be entirely different conditions in evolution if we were to take our stand at another point. We are always in the middle. Man can always see equally far behind him and before him, even with the highest spiritual vision.

Something else might perhaps strike one. Some one might say: "How is it that you do not say that we are exactly in the middle in other respects? For now it is no longer the case. We are in the 172nd condition of form. The exact middle would be in the fourth epoch of this, but we are now in the fifth, that is, somewhat beyond the middle. This does not exactly agree with the statement that we are actually in the middle." Underlying this there is a remarkable fact, you may understand it by a comparison. If you comprehend this clearly, you will see that it is an important fact. It is really the case that in regard to the great main conditions we are in the middle; but in regard to the conditions which concern us immediately, we stand somewhat beyond the middle. Why is this? Imagine you are travelling through a very level country in a special railway carriage from which you can have a clear view in every direction. Suppose you are able to do this for some length of time. You have a perfectly clear view, and if at any one point in your journey you could rapidly make a sketch of the whole of the surroundings, this picture would be absolutely circular. There is only one case in which this would not be so. Imagine you are sitting in the rapidly moving train and you note the picture you see. At this moment you fall asleep and travel for a time while sleeping. During this time you are unaware of the way in which the picture is changing. You awake. Imagine that at this moment the picture you saw on going to sleep again quickly arises. It does not now agree. The reason is that you have been asleep for a certain length of time. Your picture does not now coincide with the view which is equal in every direction, for there is in addition the part you have slept through.

Let us now ask: "Is it perhaps the case that man has slept from the middle of his evolution up to our age?" It might be explicable to us that the picture would have to agree up to that point. Now, as we have come beyond the middle, it would be possible, if we have slept, that the picture may have altered a little. Has man been asleep? In the occult sense humanity has been asleep since the middle of the Atlantean epoch, because that was the time when the whole human race, as such, lost the ancient dim spiritual vision. From the spiritual point of view man sank as if into a state of sleep. He began to turn his attention to the sense world, and thus, from the point of view of the spiritual world, to pass into a state of sleep; and only when he has regained the higher vision will he have a free view, so to speak, in every direction. There will then no longer be this disarrangement of evolution, there will be the same distance behind and in front. Since the middle of the Atlantean epoch man has, in fact, been asleep, by reason of his being unable normally to participate in the sight of

the spiritual worlds if we leave Initiates out of account — somnambulists also, if you will — we have to say that man does not see; for seeing means really to look into the world. As regards the spiritual world humanity is asleep, and it will continue to sleep for a time. For the period since the Atlantean epoch the statement of John's Gospel holds good: "The light shone into the darkness and the darkness comprehended it not."

Thus in this division there is hidden an important truth, the truth that humanity is living in a dark age, the age of darkness, and the Christ-principle has come in this age in order that humanity might be led forth into the age of light. For this reason it was correct to put the present position of evolution not in the middle, but beyond the middle, because in Atlantis begins the dark age which will continue into our sixth age, when the elect appear in white garments, when they appear as the first of those who are again able, under ordinary normal conditions, to have the spiritual world around them and the age of darkness will have passed away. Then appears the age of which it must be said, "The light shines in darkness and the darkness comprehends the light." For this reason the dark age will also be called the time when man directs his gaze only to the physically material world in the normal condition and does not see the spiritual world behind it. We shall now connect this with what has already been said regarding evolution. When evolution has progressed beyond the seventh epoch, beyond the epoch indicated by the sounding of the trumpets, the earth then spiritualizes itself and passes over first into the astral, then into the lower devachanic and finally into the higher devachanic condition. Afterwards it returns to the same conditions by condensing more and more from the finest spiritual; and the condition comes which usually is described as the fifth round, which again will have seven conditions of form, and in the middle will again pass through a development of what must be characterized as seven successive epochs, or, shall we say, race conditions.

Now let us, even if it be somewhat difficult, look a little more deeply into the following conditions of our earth evolution. Let us turn our gaze to a quite definite point in our future evolution just as we have been considering the present stage. Let us start with our present, namely the 172nd condition. Prior to this 172nd condition the Earth had already completed three sub-conditions; the 172nd condition is the Earth itself. Three have already been completed and it is now in the fourth of these conditions. First, however, we are considering only the conditions of form. We reckon that we are in the fourth condition of life or fourth round. Granted this is so and we say: In this fourth condition of life or round we

have already passed through three conditions of form and are now in the fourth. Now we ask further how many of the sub-conditions have we passed through? The first, second, third and fourth. The last was the Atlantean epoch. This is now completed. We have passed through four conditions and are now in the fifth, the post-Atlantean. Of this fifth epoch we have again passed through four sub-conditions, namely, the ancient Indian, the ancient Persian, the Egyptian and the Graeco-Latin, and are now in the fifth age. So that we can say: before our immediate present stage of evolution we have completed 344 conditions. These 344 conditions which we have completed are described in Apocalyptic language as the *number of evolution*. When, therefore, it is asked: What is the number of evolution, our evolution, the answer is 344. This is not read according to the system of ten, but according to the system of seven. Three conditions (out of the seven) have been gone through, and four conditions (out of the next smaller seven) have been gone through, four conditions (out of again the next smaller seven). That is what is really meant by the 3-4-4. One must not simply read it like other numbers, but it contains, written side by side, the number of stages passed through.

When the earth is spiritualized and has developed to its next conditions, then more and more stages will have been gone through. And the time will come, when six conditions of the first kind, six of the second and six of the third will have been passed through. Just as we now have the 344 as the number of evolution, in the future when six conditions of life, six root-races and six sub-races have been gone through, the number 666 (six six six) will apply, read in the manner above described, which is the method used by the writer of the Apocalypse. Thus a time will come when the number 666 is the number of evolution. This will only be in a very distant future, but this future is already being prepared at the present time. Three great main conditions have been completed and we are now living in the fourth. But when we have reached the great War of All against All, and the epoch indicated by the seven seals has passed away, we shall have gone through six of the middle kind. When the first trumpet sounds we shall have passed through six such main races, and when the first six trumpets are over, we shall have experienced 66. By then humanity will have had opportunity to prepare for the terrible time which will follow much later, when not only 66 but 666 will be reached. All that lies in the future is already being prepared now. The time following the War of All against All, the time after the seventh trumpet is sounded, will see men who, through excluding themselves from the Christ-principle, will have attained a high degree of evil, of the tendency to sink into the abyss. By then these men will have

sunk so low that when the point of time 666 comes they will be able to descend very low into evil, into the abyss of evil. Men will have taken into themselves, already in the period after the great War of All against All, when the seventh trumpet sounds, the germs of this descent into the abyss in the far-distant future. It will, indeed, for a long time be possible for those who have taken these germs into themselves to turn round and be converted, to turn back in their development in order even then to receive the Christ-principle. But the first predisposition will have been formed, and those who retain this tendency will no longer be able — when that distant future has come which is indicated not by 466, but by 666 — to change this tendency into good. They will succumb to the frightful fate of which we have still to speak.

Thus we see that with this number six, whether it is simply six, or six six, or six six six, there is connected something bad for human evolution. We are now living in the fifth main period and the fifth sub-period. After the great War we shall pass into the sixth epoch; but before the great War there comes, immediately after our fifth age, the sixth age, described as the community of Philadelphia. We know that we are now living in the age in which materialism has spread abroad in humanity. We have seen that throughout the past centuries man has become more and more materialistic; but this materialism is such that a person can turn back from it at any time. The materialist still has opportunity to turn back. It is, however, necessary that at the present time a spiritual conception of the world should gain ground, a conception which leads a small group of people to this spiritual view of the world. This group will comprise those who will lay the first foundation of the great bond of brotherhood in the sixth age, which will follow ours, and is, therefore, not very far distant, whose beginning lies in a period which can be counted in millennia and these will bring about the very first division in humanity. Those who persist obstinately in materialism, and also the others who will be inclined to accept a spiritual conception, who in the small group develop a bond of brotherhood, both these will appear in the sixth age. This simple 6 can already be fateful to many, but not finally binding, for a turning back will still be possible. But mankind will continue beyond the great War of All against All. Five epochs will have passed away; the number 6 will appear again. Afterwards the allurements and temptations will come again in order further to develop the materialistic tendencies and to carry them over into the epoch of the sounding of the trumpets, and when six great periods and six smaller periods have passed away, after 66, there will already be very considerable tendencies in humanity which will not be so easy to put

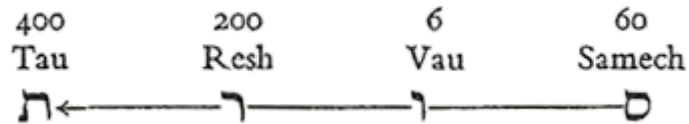
increasingly right as they are at the present time. Thus we see that actually the world of bad tendencies works within humanity and that the good men separate from the evil more and more clearly and definitely, in accordance with the description of the writer of the Apocalypse. The last great separation will be when the number six will be fulfilled not only for the shorter periods but for the longer ones. This will be the case when our earth has completed its six kingdoms of life or six rounds, and within the seventh. round, again six conditions of form. When the earth has finished this, the tendencies of humanity to evil will have developed to a frightful form. Nothing but evil will then appear, with frightful devastating power, in those who have remained evil.

How often, therefore, during our earth period, does humanity have the opportunity to succumb to the enticement of evil? First of all in the age after the present one, before the great War. Then man has a second and a third opportunity as well. This descent into evil is gradual. In the period when the earth has passed over into a spiritual condition, we have to deal first of all with two possibilities. When the earth reunites with the sun, those who have received the Christ-principle will then be ripe to rise into the forces of the earth which unite with the sun; those who have received the possibility of evil will be excluded. These are, as it were, in such a position that they thrust the sun away from themselves, they thrust away that which would enable them to unite with the forces of the sun. They are opponents of this union. For this reason the Apocalypse rightly designated the power, the Being, who leads men so to spiritualize themselves that they can unite with the sun as the Christ, and — as we shall hear — as the Lamb. One describes the Christ-Being as the genius of the sun who unites himself with the earth and becomes also the genius of the earth. He has already begun to be this since the event of Golgotha. But there is also an opposing principle to the Lamb, there is also a Sun-Demon, the so-called Demon of the Sun, that which works in the evil forces of man, thrusting back the force of the Lamb, and it works in such a way that a certain amount of the human race is thrust out of the evolution which leads to the sun. These are the opposing forces of the sun, they are in opposition to the sun; at the same time they are the forces which have the tendency to be entirely thrown out of our evolution when the 666 stages have passed away; they will then be finally cast into the abyss. So that we may say: At the time when the earth is united with the sun there will be excluded, not only that which is symbolized by the beast with seven heads and ten

horns, but also that which is furnished with forces which are in opposition to the sun. All this is destined to disappear into the abyss when the 666 is fulfilled.

Now this 666 has always been written in a very mysterious way; we shall see later on that there is every reason to wrap in mystery the facts with which we are now dealing. And for this reason it was written 666. In the mysteries from which the writer of the Apocalypse received his initiation, they wrote 400 200 660. This is written in such a way that the laity cannot understand it. This 666 was hidden; it was to remain a secret. By having 200 here and by the other figures being transposed, an illusion is produced. Now in the kind of writing used by the Initiates there is a certain principle which consists in letters being expressed by corresponding numbers. Several of the remarkable people who, in the course of the nineteenth century wished to unravel the mystery of the number 666, hit on the principle of expressing letters by numbers, but they have come upon it in such a way that one can say: they have, indeed, heard sounds but not in unison. For they have acquired in an unclear way that which I have now explained and which has always been taught esoterically. They have found out that when one sets letters of the Hebrew alphabet in place of these numbers the result is "Nero," thus they have concluded that 666 signifies Nero. This is not the case. 666 must first be written: 400 + 200 + 6 + 60, and then one can arrive at the meaning. Then one must write 400 as ט (Tau), 200 as ר (Resh), 6 as ו (Vau), and 60 as ם (Samech). These four letters express the four numbers 400 + 200 + 6 + 60. In a wonderful way they have been drawn into this mystery, wonderful through the ingenuity of those who have drawn them in because at the same time the sounds of these four letters have again a special occult significance. What must the number 666 actually mean if it is to express what we have explained? It must mean the principle which leads man to complete hardening in the external physical life, so that he simply thrusts from him that which enables him to strip off the lower principles and to rise to the higher. That which man has obtained as physical body, etheric body, astral body and lower "I," before it rises to the higher — these four principles are at the same time expressed by these four letters, by Samech, the physical body, Vau, the etheric body, Resh, the astral body and Tau, the lower "I." Thus we see that that which is hardened in these four principles before they begin their divine evolution is expressed by the four letters. The writer of the Apocalypse can truly say, "Here is Truth!" For wisdom is contained in it. "Let him who hath understanding consider the number 666."

And now we will read it. We read it in this way, from right to left.



We have then to supply the vowels and it reads: Sorath, Sorath is the name of the Sun-Demon, the adversary of the Lamb. Every such spiritual being was described not only by name but also by a certain symbolical sign. For Sorath, the sun-demon, there was this sign:



a thick stroke bent back upon itself and terminating in two curved points.

Now we must understand the writer of the Apocalypse rightly. At the very beginning he makes a remarkable statement, which is usually wrongly translated. The beginning of the Apocalypse runs, however "This is the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him to spew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John." "Signified it." By this we must understand that he gives the important, the real content of the mystery his signs. He has put that which 666 expresses in signs. What he describes is the sign, and he describes it thus (Rev. xiii. 11): "And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb." These are nothing else than the two strokes at the upper part of the sign, and in order to conceal this he simply calls the two strokes here "horns." It was always the case in the use of the mystery language that one uses a word in more than one sense so as to make it impossible for the uninitiated to understand without special effort. That which he describes here: "It has

two horns like a lamb," is the symbol of the sun-demon, which in the mystery language is expressed by the word "Sorath," and this, if we convert the several letters into their numbers is expressed by the four numbers, 400, 200, 6 and 60. This is a very veiled way of expressing 666. Thus we see that the writer of the Apocalypse is referring to the adversary of the Lamb. When the earth passes over into the spiritual, the forms of men appear below in such a way that they receive their old animal form. The beast with the seven heads and ten horns appears. But there also appears their seducer, the adversary of Christ, who has the great power to prevent their returning to the sun. Man himself cannot be the adversary of Christ, he can only let slip the opportunity to take the Christ-principle into himself, through what dwells in him as false power; but there is such an adversary, the sun-demon. This appears as soon as there is something that can become his prey. Before the prey is there, before the men are there with the seven heads and ten horns, there is nothing to lead astray, the tempter has nothing to seek there; but when men appear with such inclination, then comes the tempter, and he appears as the second beast and seduces them!

Thus at the moment when the earth passes over into the astral condition there appears that in man which existed in him when the earth was still clothed with a covering of water. The human animal appears. From the water one sees the beast with seven heads and ten horns raise itself. Through this human animal having left the earth unused, Sorath, the adversary of the sun, the tempter, can now arise out of the earth, through this he can approach man and tear him down with all his might into the abyss. Thus from this time on we see a being drawing close to man, which has a fear-fill power! What, then, does this being do in order to lead man into the most horrible things one can think of? For man to be led into what is merely immoral, what is already known to normal man, it did not need this monster which appears as the sun-demon. Only when that which in a good sense distinguishes the beings who bring salvation to the human race, only when spiritual eminence is turned to its opposite, only when spiritual power is placed in the service of the lower "I"-principle, can it bring humanity to the point when the beast represented with two horns gains power over it. The misuse of spiritual forces is connected with that seductive power of the beast with the two horns. And we call this abuse of the spiritual power black magic, in contradistinction to its right use, which is white magic. Thus through the separation of the human race there is prepared at the same time the power to attain greater and greater spiritual conditions on the one hand, and thereby to obtain the use of the spiritual

forces, and arrive at white magic; while on the other hand abuse of spiritual forces is a preparation for the most fearful kind of power of the two horned beast — black magic. Humanity will finally be divided into beings who practise white magic and those who practise black magic. Thus in the mystery of 666 or Sorath is hidden the secret of black magic; and the tempter to black magic, that most fearful crime in the earth evolution, with which no other crimes can be compared, this seducer is represented by the writer of the Apocalypse as the two-horned beast. Thus there appears on our horizon, so to speak, the division of humanity in the far distant future; the chosen of Christ, who finally will be the white magicians, and the adversaries, the terrible wizards, the black magicians who cannot escape from matter and whom the writer of the Apocalypse describes as those who make prostitution with matter. Hence this whole practice of black magic, the union which takes place between man and the hardening in matter is presented to him in the spiritual vision of the great Babylon, the community made up of all those who carry on black magic; in the frightful marriage, or rather, unrestrained marriage, between man and the forces of prostituted matter. And thus in the far future we see two powers confronting each other; on the one hand those who swell the population of the great Babylon, and on the other hand those who rise above matter, who as human beings unite with the principle represented as the Lamb. We see how on the one hand the blackest ones segregate themselves in Babylon, led by all the forces opposing the sun, by Sorath the two-horned beast, and we see those who have developed from the elect, who unite with Christ, or the Lamb, who appears to them; the marriage of the Lamb on the one hand, and that of Babylon, the descending Babylon, on the other! We see Babylon descend into the abyss, and the elect, who have celebrated the marriage with the Lamb, rise to the exercise of the forces of white magic. And as they not only recognize the spiritual forces but also understand how to operate then magically, they are able to prepare what they possess in the earth for the next planetary incarnation, Jupiter. They sketch out the great outlines, so to speak, which Jupiter is to have. We see the preparatory forms, which are to survive as the forms of the next earth incarnation, as Jupiter, come forth by the power of the white magicians: we see the New Jerusalem produced by white magic. But that which is described as Sorath — 666 — must first be expelled. That which has succumbed to the principle of the two-horned beast, and hence has hardened itself into the beast with the seven heads and ten horns, is driven forth. The power by which the sun-genius overcomes those who are expelled, which drives them down into the abyss, is called the countenance of the sun-genius and the countenance of the sun-genius is Michael, who,

as the representative, so to speak, of the sun-genius, overcomes the beast with the two horns, the seducer, which is also called the great dragon. This is represented to the seer in the picture of Michael who has the key, who stands by the side of God and holds the opposing forces chained.

Thus is characterized in the Christian-Rosicrucian esotericism the casting out of those who belong to 666, and the overcoming of the dragon, the seducer. Thus before our gaze to-day there appears that which the writer of the Apocalypse has enveloped in mystery, which one must first discover by removing the veil, and of which he says, "Here is Wisdom." "Let him who hath understanding count the number of the beast" (that is, the two-horned beast); "for this number is 666."

Those who have connected this with Nero have made a poor response to this challenge of the writer of the Apocalypse. For you see from what cosmic depths the wisdom must be drawn which leads to the explanation of the number 666. Although to-day you may have to make efforts to understand this passage, you must not forget that it is necessary to make efforts to understand the deepest mysteries. And the Apocalyptist has veiled these deepest mysteries of cosmic evolution. He has veiled then because it is good for man that the most important mysteries should be expressed in symbols. For apart from all the rest, through the powers exercised to decipher the signs is gained much of that which at the same time lifts us up to the good powers themselves. Let us not be cast down because we have to wind our way through a scheme of numbers. If you had had to grasp what was given secretly in the ancient schools in such numbers, before anything else was given, you would have had to go through very much more. There the pupils were obliged to be silent for a long time and quietly listen when nothing but numbers, 777, 666, etc., were explained again and again, at first in their formal meaning. And only when they had grasped this meaning were they allowed to know its actual significance.



Lecture XII

A certain dread concerning the destiny of humanity in the future may come over one who enters with feelings into the thoughts which occupied us at the close of our last lecture. A picture of this future of humanity was brought before us which on the one hand was great and powerful, filling one with bliss, showing the future condition of the man who has understood the mission of our present age upon the earth, who has received the Christ-spirit and is thereby able to keep pace with the necessary spiritualization of our earth, a glorious blessed picture of those men who are called in exoteric Christianity the "Redeemed," and, not quite appropriately, the "Elect." But the opposite picture had also to be put before you, the picture of the abyss in which is found a humanity which was not in a position to receive the Christ-spirit, which remained in matter, which excluded itself, so to speak, from the spiritualizing process leading into the future; and this portion of humanity which has fallen away from the spiritualized earth, and, in a certain sense apart from it, advances towards a frightful fate. When the beast with the seven heads and ten horns glowers at us from the abyss, the beast led astray by the other frightful being, the two-horned beast, this picture gives rise to fear and horror, and many aright ask: "Is it not hard and unwise on the part of Providence to lead a number of men to such a frightful fate, and in a way, to condemn them to the abyss of evil?" And the question might arise, "Would it not have been more fitting for a wise Providence to have averted this frightful fate from the very beginning?"

In answer to these questions, we might, to begin with, say something abstract, theoretical — and it already signifies a great deal for one who can grasp this theoretical statement is his feeling: It is extremely wise that Providence has taken care that this terrible fate is possible for a number of men. For if it were impossible for man to sink into the abyss of evil, he would not have been able to attain what on the one hand we call love and on the other freedom; since to the occultist freedom is inseparably connected with the idea of love. It would be impossible for man to develop either love or freedom without the possibility of sailing down into the abyss. A man unable, of his own free decision, to choose good or evil, would be a being who would only be led on a leading-string to a good which must be attained of necessity and who had no power to choose the good of his own fully purified will, by the love which springs from freedom.

If it were impossible for man to follow in the trail of the monster with the two horns, it would also be impossible for him to follow God out of his own individual love. It was in accordance with a wise Providence to give the possibility of freedom to the humanity which has been developing through our planetary system, and this possibility of freedom could be given on no other condition than that man himself has to make the free choice between good and evil.

But this is only an empty theory, you might say, and man rises but slowly to the point where he not only says this in words and accepts it in moments of speculation as a kind of explanation, but also experiences it in his feeling. Seldom does man now rise to the thought, "I thank thee, O wise Providence, that thou hast made it possible for me to bring thee a love which is not forced but springs up free in my own breast: that thou dost not force use to love thee, but that thou hast given me the choice of following thee." Nevertheless, man has to rise to this feeling if he wishes really to feel this theoretical explanation. We can, however, offer additional comfort, or, rather, another quieting assurance, from a clairvoyant observation of the world. For it was stated in our last lecture that at the present day, he alone has an almost unalterable tendency to the abyss who is already entangled in some way in the prongs of the two-horned beast, which leads men to the practice of black magic. Even for such as now fall into the arts of black magic it will still be possible to withdraw in the future. But those who do not come at all into any contact with black magic arts (and this is for the time being the case with most people), these may have nevertheless a certain tendency in the period following the War of All against All, towards final evil, but the possibility in the future of turning back again and following the good will be far greater than the compulsion unconditionally to follow evil.

From these lectures it may be seen that for those who now turn to a spiritual conception of the world, in order to live beyond the great War into the sixth epoch (which is represented by the opening of the seals), there is the possibility to receive the Christ-principle. They will be able to receive the spiritual elements which are laid down in the age signified by the community at Philadelphia, and in the near future they will manifest a strong tendency towards becoming spiritual. Those who turn to-day to a spiritual view receive a powerful disposition to enter upon the upward path. One must not fail to recognize how important it is even at the present time that a number of persons should not turn a deaf ear to the anthroposophical world conception, which is bringing to humanity in a fully conscious manner the first germs of spiritual life, whereas formerly this

took place unconsciously. That is the important thing, that this portion of humanity should take with it the first conscious tendencies towards the upward movement.

Through a group of people dedicating themselves to-day to the foundation of a great brotherhood which will live over into the epoch of the seven seals, help will be provided for those others, who to-day still turn a deaf ear to the teachings of Spiritual Science. For the present, we have still to go through many incarnations of the present souls before the great War of All against All, and again up to the decisive point after the great War. And afterwards in the epoch of the seals we also have to go through many changes, and men will often have the opportunity to open their hearts to the spiritual world-conception, which is to-day flowing through the anthroposophical Movement. There will be many opportunities, and you must not imagine that future opportunities will only be such as they are to-day. The way in which we are able to make the spiritual view of the world known to others is still very feeble. Even if a man were now to speak in such a way that his voice were to sound forth directly like the fire of the spirit, that would be feeble as compared with the possibilities which will exist in later and more developed bodies in order to direct our fellow-men to this spiritual movement. When humanity as a whole will have developed higher and higher in future ages, there will be very different means through which the spiritual conception of the world will be able to penetrate into men's hearts, and the most fiery word to-day is small and weak compared with what will work in the future to give all souls the possibility of the spiritual conception of the world — all the souls now living in bodies in which no heart beats for this spiritual conception of the world.

We are at the beginning of the spiritual movement, and it will grow. It will require much obduracy and much hardness to close the heart and mind to the powerful impressions of the future. The souls now living in bodies which have the heart to hear and feel Anthroposophy, are now preparing them-selves to live in bodies in the future in which power will be given them to serve their fellow-creatures, who up to that time had been unable to feel this heart beat within them. We are only preparing for the preparers, as yet nothing more. The spiritual movement is to-day but a very small flame; in the future it will develop into a mighty spiritual fire.

When we bring this other picture before our minds, when we let it enter right into our feelings, then there will live in us a very different feeling and a very different possibility of knowledge concerning this fact. To-day it is what we call black magic into which men can, in a certain way, fall

consciously or unconsciously. Those who are now living thoughtlessly, who are quite untouched by the spiritual conception of the world, who live in their comfortable everyday torpor and say, "What does it matter to me what these dreaming Anthroposophists say?" these have the least opportunity of coming into the circle of black magic. In their case they are now only neglecting the opportunity to help their fellow-men in the future in their efforts to attain the spiritual life. For themselves they have not yet lost touch. But those who to-day are beginning in an unjustifiable way to oppose the spiritual life, are really taking up into themselves in the very first beginnings the germs of some-thing one might call black magic. There are very few individuals to-day who have already fallen into black magic in the frightful sense in which this horrible art of humanity must really be spoken of.

This was in the source in a cryptic way i.e. with characters added. The odd markup removed, this is the result:

you will best understand that this really is so if i give but a slight indication of the way in which black magic systematically cultivated; then see may search high and low among all your acquaintances find no one whom could believe he was already inclining to such arts. rest fundamentally only purest dilettantism be easily got rid future ages. it bad enough our day things are sometimes praised with intention defraud people — certain sense also beginning art magic. ideas percolating, although they do not absolutely belong nevertheless mislead people; these rule world to-day certain, circles can flourish amidst materialistic thought, without danger, irreparable next epochs. when man begins practise abc on dangerous path abyss. consists pupil magician being taught destroy life quite consciously, doing cause as much pain possible feel satisfaction it. purpose stab or cut into living feeling pleasure being's pain, we cannot touch upon further stages, horrible told flesh, like vivisector cuts enough, principle vivisection finds its overthrow himself, because kamaloca himself have has caused his victims, for reason leave alone future. who systematically feels follow precipitous magic, draws him closer described two-horned beast.

This seductive being is of quite a different nature from man. It originates from other world periods; it has acquired the tendencies of other world periods and will feel deep satisfaction when it meets with beings such as those evil ones who have refused to take up inwardly the good which can flow from the earth. This being has been unable to receive anything from the earth; it has seen the earthly evolution come but has said, "I have not progressed with the earth in such a way that I can gain anything from earthly existence." This being could only have got something from the earth by being able to gain the rulership at a certain moment, namely, when the Christ-principle descended to the earth. If the Christ-principle had then been strangled in the germ, if Christ had been overcome by the adversary, it would have been possible for the whole earth to succumb to the Sorath-principle. This, however, did not take place, and so this being has to be content with those who have not inclined towards the Christ-principle, who have remained embedded in matter; they in the future will form his cohorts.

Now in order to understand these hosts more clearly we must consider two ideas which in a certain sense may serve as a key to certain chapters of the Apocalypse. We must study the ideas of the "first death" and the "second death." What is the first death and what is the second death of man, or of humanity? We must form a clear picture of the ideas which the writer of the Apocalypse connected with these words. To this end we must once more recall to mind the elementary truths concerning human existence.

Consider a human being of the present day. He lives in such a way that from morning when he awakes until evening when he falls asleep he consists of four principles: the physical body, etheric body, astral body and the "I." We also know that during his earthly existence man works from his "I" upon the lower principles of his being, and that during the earth existence he must succeed in bringing the astral body under the control of the "I." We know that the earth will be followed by its next incarnation, Jupiter. When man has reached Jupiter he will appear as a different being. The Jupiter-man will have thoroughly worked from his "I" upon his astral body; and when to-day we say, The earth-man who stands before us in the waking condition has developed physical body, etheric body, astral body and "I," we must say of the Jupiter-man: he will have developed physical body, etheric body, astral body and "I" but he will have changed his astral body into spirit-self. He will live at a higher stage of consciousness, a stage which may be described as follows: The ancient dim-picture-consciousness of the Moon, which existed also in the first epochs of the earth-

consciousness, will again be there with its pictures as clairvoyant consciousness, but it will be furnished with the human "I," so that with this Jupiter-consciousness man will reflect as logically as he does now with his day-consciousness on the earth.

The Jupiter-man therefore will possess spiritual vision of a certain degree. Part of the soul-world will lie open to him; he will perceive the pleasure and pain of those around him in pictures which will arise in his imaginative consciousness. He will therefore live under entirely different moral conditions. Now imagine that as a Jupiter-man you have a human soul before you. The pain and pleasure of this soul will arise in pictures before you. The pictures of the pain of the other soul will distress you, and if you do not remove the other's pain it will be impossible for you to feel happy. The pictures of sorrow and suffering would torment the Jupiter-man with his exalted consciousness if he were to do nothing to alleviate this sorrow and thus at the same time remove his own distressing pictures which are nothing but the expression of the sorrow around him! It will not be possible for one to feel pleasure or pain without others also feeling it.

Thus we see that man gains an entirely new state of consciousness in addition to his present "I"-consciousness. If we wish to understand the importance of this in evolution we must once more turn our attention to man when asleep.

During this condition the physical body and etheric body lie on the bed, and his "I" and astral body are outside. During the night (if we speak somewhat inexactly) he callously abandons his physical and etheric bodies. But through being able to liberate himself during the night from his physical and etheric bodies, through being able to live at night in the spiritual world, it is possible for man during this earthly existence to work transformingly from his "I" upon his astral body. How does he do this?

To describe this clearly let us take man in his waking state. Let us suppose that in addition to his professional work and duties he devotes a short time to higher considerations in order to make the great impulses his own which flow from John's Gospel, from the words: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God ..." Let us suppose that he allows to rise within him the great pictures brought before him in John's Gospel, so that he is always filled by the thought: "At the beginning of our era a Being lived in Palestine whom I wish to follow. I will so order my life that everything may be approved by this Being; and I will consider myself as a man who has taken this personality as his ideal." But we need not

intolerantly think that John's Gospel alone may be taken. It is possible in many other ways to immerse oneself in something which can fill the soul with such pictures; and although in a certain way we must describe John's Gospel as the greatest revelation which has originated in humanity, which can exercise the most powerful effect, we may, however, say that others who devote themselves to the Vedanta wisdom or immerse themselves in the Bhagavad Gita or in the Dhammapada, will also have sufficient opportunities in following incarnations to come to the Christ-principle just through what they have thus acquired. Let us suppose that during the day a man fills his mind with pictures and ideas such as these, then his astral body is laid hold of by these thoughts, feelings and pictures, and they form forces in his astral body and produce various effects in it. Then when man withdraws from his physical and etheric bodies at night, these effects remain in the astral body, and he who during the day has been able to immerse himself in the pictures and feelings of John's Gospel has produced something in his astral body which during the night appears in it as a powerful effect. In this way man works to-day during the waking consciousness upon his astral body.

Only the Initiate can become conscious of these effects to-day, but men are gradually developing towards this consciousness. Those who reach the goal of the earth evolution will then have an astral body completely permeated by the "I," and by the spiritual content which it will have formed. They will have this consciousness as a result, as a fruit of the earth evolution, and will carry it over into the Jupiter evolution. We might say that when the Earth period has thus come to an end man will have gained capacities which are symbolically represented by the building of the New Jerusalem. Man will then already look into that picture-world of Jupiter; the spirit-self will then be fully developed in him. That is the goal of the earth evolution. What, then, is man to gain in the course of his earthly evolution? What is the first goal? The transformation of the astral body. This astral body which to-day is always free of the physical and etheric bodies at night will appear in the future as a transformed portion of the human being. Man brings into it what he gains on the earth; but this would not be sufficient for the earth evolution. Imagine that man were to come out of the physical body and etheric body every night and were to fill his astral body with what he had acquired during the day, but that the physical and etheric bodies were untouched by it. Man would then still not reach his earthly goal. Something else must take place; it must be possible for man during his earthly evolution to imprint, at least in the etheric body, what he has taken into himself. It is necessary for this etheric body also to

receive effects from what man develops in his astral body. Man cannot yet of himself work into this etheric body. Upon Jupiter, when he has transformed his astral body, he will be able to work into this etheric body also, but to-day he cannot do this; he still needs helpers, so to speak. Upon Jupiter he will be capable of beginning the real work on the etheric body. Upon Venus he will work upon the physical body; this is the part most difficult to overcome. To-day he still has to leave both the physical and etheric bodies every night and emerge from them. But in order that the etheric body may receive its effects, so that man shall gradually learn to work into it, he needs a helper. And the helper who makes this possible is none other than Christ, while we designate the Being who helps man to work into the physical body as the Father. But man cannot work into his physical body before the helper comes who makes it possible to work into the etheric body. "No man cometh to the Father, but by me." No one acquires the capacity of working into the physical body who has not gone through the Christ-principle. However, when he has reached the goal of earthly evolution, man will have the capacity — through being able to transform his astral body by his own power — to work upon the etheric body also. This he owes to the living presence of the Christ-principle on the earth. Had Christ not united him-self with the earth as a living being, had he not come into the aura of the earth, that which is developed in the astral body would not be communicated to the etheric body. From this we see that one who shuts himself up by turning away from the Christ-principle deprives himself of the possibility of working into his etheric body in the way that is necessary during earthly evolution.

Thus we shall be able to characterize in another way the two kinds of men which we find at the end of the earth's evolution. We have those who have received the Christ-principle and thus transformed their astral body, and who have gained the help of Christ to transform the etheric body also. And we have the others who did not come to the Christ-principle; who also were unable to change anything in the etheric body, for they could not find the helper, Christ. Now let us look at the future of mankind. The earth spiritualizes itself, that is, man must lose completely something which he now in his physical existence considers as belonging to him. We can form an idea of what will then happen to man if we consider the ordinary course of his life after death. He loses the physical body at death. It is to this physical body that he owes the desires and inclinations which bind him to the ordinary life; and we have described what man experiences after death. Let us take a person who is fond of some particularly dainty food. During life he can enjoy this, but not after death. The desire, however,

does not cease, for this is seated, not in the physical body but in the astral body, and as the physical instrument is absent it is impossible to gratify this desire. Such persons look down from kamaloka to the physical world which they have left; they see there all that could give them satisfaction, but they cannot enjoy it because they have no physical instrument for the purpose. Through this they experience a burning thirst. Thus it is with all desires that remain in man after death and are related to the physical world, because they can only be satisfied through physical instruments. This is the case every time after death; each time man sees his physical body fall away, and as something remains in him from this physical body it still urges him to the ordinary world of the physical plane, and until he has weaned himself from this in the spiritual world he lives in the fire of desire. Now imagine the last earthly incarnation before the spiritualization of the earth, the laying aside of the last physical body. Those who are now living on the earth will have progressed so far through the Christ-principle that, in a certain way, it will not be very difficult for them to lay aside the very last physical body; they will, however, be obliged to leave something, for all that can give pleasure from the objects of this earth will have disappeared once and for all from the spiritual earth. Think of the last death possible in our earth evolution, think of the laying aside of the last physical body. It is this last death of the incarnations which in the Apocalypse is called the first death, and those who have received the Christ-principle see this physical body as a sort of husk which falls away. The etheric body has now become important to them for, with the help of Christ, it has become so organized that it is for the time being adapted to the astral body and no longer desires and longs for what is below in the physical world. Only through all that has been brought into the etheric body through the help of Christ do men continue to live on in the spiritualized earth. Harmony has been produced between their astral and etheric bodies by the Christ-principle.

On the other hand there are those who have not received the Christ-principle. These do not possess this harmony. They too must lose the physical body, for there is no such thing in the spiritual earth. Everything physical must first be dissolved. It remains as desires for the physical, as the unpurified spiritual, as the spiritual hardened in matter. An etheric body remains which the Christ has not helped to be adapted to the astral body, but which is suited to the physical body. They are the souls who will feel hot fires of desire for physical sensuality; in the etheric body they will feel unappeasable, burning desire by reason of what they have had in the physical life and which they must now do without. Thus, in the next period, after the physical has melted away, we have men who live in an etheric

body which harmonizes with the astral body, and we have others whose etheric body lives in discord because they desire what has fallen away with the physical body.

Then in the further stage of evolution there comes a condition where the spiritualizing of the earth has proceeded so far that there can no longer be even an etheric body. Those whose etheric body completely harmonizes with the astral body lay aside this etheric body without pain, for they remain in their astral body which is filled with the Christ-Being. They feel the laying aside of the etheric body as a necessity in evolution, for they feel within them the capacity to build it up again for them-selves because they have received Christ. Those, however, who in this etheric body desire what belongs to the past cannot retain this etheric body, when all becomes astral. It will be taken from them, it will be torn out of them, and they now perceive this as a second dying, as the "second death."

This second death passes unnoticed over those who have made their etheric body harmonize with the astral body through the reception of the Christ-principle. The second death has no power over them. But the others feel the second death when they have to pass over into the future astral form. The condition of humanity will then be such that those who have reached the goal of evolution will have entirely permeated their astral body with Christ. They will be ready to pass over to Jupiter. Upon our earth they have made the plan of the Jupiter evolution. This is the plan which is called the New Jerusalem. They live in a new heaven and a new earth, that is, Jupiter. This new Jupiter will be accompanied by a satellite, composed of those who are excluded from the life in the spiritual, who have experienced the second death and are, therefore, unable to attain the Jupiter consciousness.

Thus we have such men as have pressed forward to the Jupiter consciousness, who have attained to spirit-self; and such beings as have thrust away the forces which would have given them this consciousness. They are those who only upon Jupiter have attained to the "I"-consciousness of the earth, who exist there, so to speak, as man now exists on the earth with his four members. But such a man can develop himself only on the earth, the earth alone has the environment, the ground, the air, the clouds, the plants, the minerals which are necessary to man if he wishes to gain what may be gained within the four members. Jupiter will be quite differently formed, it will be a new earth, soil, air,

water, everything will be different. It will be impossible for beings who have only gained the earth consciousness to live a normal life; they will be backward beings.

But now comes something more for our comfort. Even on this Jupiter there is still a last possibility, through the strong powers which the advanced will have, to move those fallen beings to turn back and even to convert a number. Only with the Venus incarnation of the earth will come the last decision, the unalterable decision. When we reflect upon all this, the thought we recently considered will be seen in a new light. It will no longer call forth anxiety and disquietude, but only the determination: "I will do everything necessary to fulfil the earth mission."

When we consider all this in the right way, a mighty picture of the future of humanity opens up before us and we get some idea of all that was in the illuminated soul of the writer of the Apocalypse who wrote down what we, in a faltering way, can discover from a study of it. Every word of the writer, indeed every turn of expression, is significant. We must only try to understand it clearly. Thus, according to our last lecture, in 666 we are referred to the beast with the two horns, and then a remarkable statement is made, "Here is Wisdom! Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man." An apparent contradiction, but one of the many contradictions which are to be found in every occult work and exposition. You may be sure of one thing; that an exposition which runs so smoothly that the ordinary human intellect can find no contradiction is certainly not based on an occult foundation. Nothing in world-evolution is so shallow and trivial as that which the human intellect, the ordinary intelligence perceives as free from contradiction. One must penetrate more deeply into the substrata of human contemplation and then the contradictions will disappear. One who observes how a plant grows from root to fruit, how the green leaf changes into the petals, these into the stamens, etc., may say, "Here we have contradictory forms, the flower-leaf contradicts the stem-leaf." But one who looks more deeply will see the unity, the deeper unity in the contradiction. So it is with what the intellect can see in the world. It is precisely in the deepest wisdom that it sees contradictions. Hence it must not disturb us when here in the Apocalypse we meet with an apparent contradiction: "Let him that hath understanding ponder over the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man."

We must once more consider by what means it may be possible for a man to be led astray by the two-horned beast. We have pointed out that since the middle of the Atlantean epoch man has slept through the higher spiritual development, so to speak. This sleep still exists at the present time. But it was necessary. If it had not entered in, that which we call the intellect would never have been developed. Man did not possess this before our epoch, he acted from other impulses. His pictures drove him to action, without reflection. He had lost this ancient gift of spiritual vision and in its place he has developed intellect and thereby descended into matter. This has drawn a veil over the spiritual world, but at the same time the intellect has been acquired. This may be a great hindrance to the spiritual development. At the very last it will be nothing else but this misguided intellect, this misguided intelligence, which can prevent man from coming to the Christ-principle; and if those who at last succumb to the two-horned beast could look back upon what has dealt them the worst blow they would say, "The tendency to descend into the abyss only came later, but that which darkened the Christ-principle for me was the intellect." Let him who has this intellect reflect upon the number of the beast; for only through man having become man, that is to say, through his being gifted with this ego-intellect, can he succumb to the beast 666. For the number of the beast is at the same time the number of a man. And only one possessing intellect can perceive that this is so. It is the number of that man who has let himself be misled by his intellect. Deep truths such as these are concealed in these things.

Thus you see that the writer of the Apocalypse gives you a great deal when you reflect upon the various intimations we have given. He expresses many of the truths known to Spiritual Science. He gives what he promises. He leads man to the vision of what is to come; to the vision of the beings and powers which guide the world. He leads us to the spirit in the first seal, and to the form presented in the last seal. Here we see how the regular form of the New Jerusalem is revealed to him spiritually. The regularity of the New Jerusalem is indicated in the last chapter by its description as a cube. To describe all that is in this last picture would take us too far.

It is now necessary to point out for what purpose the Apocalypse was written. I should indeed have to say a great deal if I were to describe this in detail, but you can at least take away with you one hint, one which we find at a certain part of the Apocalypse. The writer of the Apocalypse says: A time will come when that high degree of consciousness will actually have developed, when man will see the beings who direct the world, the beings

represented by the Lamb and by the appearance of the Son of Man, with the flaming sword. We are referred to this in tones which contain within them that assurance of which we have spoken. The writer of the Apocalypse, who is a great seer, knows that in ancient times men were gifted with a dim clairvoyance. We have described this and have seen how at that time inns were the companions, so to speak, of beings in the spiritual world, and themselves saw the spiritual world. But who has lost this gift of seership? Who? We must now put this forward as an important question. We have seen that fundamentally it was lost by those men who were led to the physical plane, the physical life, when the second half of the Atlantean epoch began. Man looked upon the solid formation of our earth, upon the clearly outlined objects of our earth. The ancient clairvoyance disappeared; he became self-conscious, but the spiritual world was closed to him. The formations which in ancient times filled the air like an ocean of mist, disappeared; the air became clear, the ground distinct. Man descended to the visible earth. This took place comparatively late, it coincided with the attainment of the present intellect, the present self-consciousness of man. Now let us remember what has been said about this earth as well as about the great Event of Golgotha. If some one had observed the earth at that time from a distance with spiritual vision at the moment when the blood flowed from the wounds of the Redeemer, he would have perceived that its whole astral aura changed. The earth was then permeated by the Christ-force. Through this event the earth will be able to reunite with the sun. This power will grow. This is the power which preserves our etheric body from the second death. Christ becomes the Earth-spirit more and more, and the true Christian understands the words, "He who eats my bread treads me underfoot"; he considers the body of the earth as the body of Christ. The earth as a planetary body is the body of Christ; of course at present this is only at its beginning. Christ has still to become the Earth-spirit; He will smite himself fully with the earth, and when the earth later unites with the sun, the great Earth-spirit, Christ, will be the Sun-Spirit.

The body of the earth will be the body of Christ; and men must work upon this body. They began this when they entered upon the earth; they have worked upon this earth with their forces. In all traditions one can find something which is little noticed because little understood. Thus, for example, in the Persian tradition we find that since the time men lost clairvoyant consciousness they have become beings who have pierced the earth. While they live in the phases which they pierce the earth — that is, while they work upon the earth — during this time when they pierce the

body of Christ they do not see with clairvoyant consciousness the guiding powers and, above all, they do not see the Christ face to face. But the writer of the Apocalypse refers to the time when not only those who at that time had spiritual vision will see the spiritual, but when humanity will again have come to the stage where it is possible to see the Christ-Being himself. All will see him, including those who have pierced him, these who had to pass through a portion of their evolution in cultivating the earth, in the piercing of the earth, they will see the Christ. For these sayings are such that they lead those who gradually learn to unveil them deep into the imaginative world of the Mysteries, of the Apocalyptic language.

What, then, did the Apocalypstist wish to write, what did he wish to represent? This question will be answered if we briefly refer to the origin of the Apocalypse. Where do we first find what is written down in the Apocalypse? If you could look back into the Mysteries of ancient Greece, into the Orphic and Eleusinian Mysteries, if you could go back into the Mysteries of ancient Egypt, Chaldea, Persia and India, you would find the Apocalypse everywhere. It existed, it was there. It was not written down, but lived from one generation of priests to another, through the generations of the Initiators, where the memory was so vivid that one could master such abundant material. Memory even in much later times was far better than ours; we need only remember the singers of the Iliad, how they went about and sang their songs from memory. It is comparatively not long ago, that memory has deteriorated so much. In the Mysteries these truths were not written down, but they lived from generation to generation of the Initiators. Why was the Apocalypse written? It was intended to serve as an instruction for those who brought the pupils into Initiation. At that time the one who was to be initiated was led out of the physical body and remained as if dead. But when he had been led out, the Initiator enabled him to see in his etheric body that which later through the Christ-impulse he would be able to see spiritually in the physical body. Thus the ancient Initiates were the prophets who could point to Christ; and they did so. They were able to do this, because Christ is shown in this Apocalypse as due to appear in the future. The Mystery of Golgotha had never yet taken place where a person in the physical body could set forth the whole drama of Initiation historically. Where then could the possibility of this Event of Golgotha be comprehended? At a certain stage the Initiates had comprehended it outside their body. That which took place on Golgotha had taken place before in another consciousness. There might have been thousands there, and yet the Event of Golgotha could have passed by them unnoticed. What would it have been to them?

The death of an ordinary condemned person! It was only possible to understand what took place on Golgotha where the contents of the Mysteries were known. The Initiators could say, You can understand the one whom we have shown you during the three and a half days, whom the prophets announced to you, if you use the means which the Mysteries can give you. The Apocalyptist had received the tradition of the Mysteries orally; he said, "If I am permeated with what can be experienced in the Mysteries, Christ appears to me." Thus the Apocalypse was nothing new; but its application to the unique Event of Golgotha was something new. The essential thing was that for those who have ears to hear it was possible, with the help of what is in the Apocalypse of John, to penetrate gradually to the true understanding of the Event of Golgotha. This was the intention of the writer of the Apocalypse. He received the Apocalypse from the ancient Mysteries; it is an ancient sacred book of humanity and has only been presented externally to humanity by the disciple whom the Lord loved and to whom he bequeathed the task of announcing his true form. He is to remain until Christ comes; so that those who have a more illuminated consciousness will be able to understand him. He is the great teacher of the true Event of Golgotha. He has given to man the means by which he can really understand the Event of Golgotha. At the beginning of the Apocalypse the writer says (I have tried to translate the first few words in such a way that they convey the true meaning): "This is the revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto his servant, to show in brief what must needs come to pass. This is put in symbols and sent through an angel to his servant John, who wrote these things." He wishes to describe it in brief; what does this mean? It means in other words: "If I were to describe in detail all that will take place from now up to the goal of the earth evolution, I should have to write a very great deal, but I will show it to you in a short sketch." This the translators who could not penetrate into the spirit of the Apocalypse have translated as "to show what must shortly come to pass." They thought that what is described in the Apocalypse was to happen in the near future. But it ought to read: "I will briefly describe what will take place." The original text fully admits of the true interpretation I have tried to give in the introduction to *Seals and Columns*.

We have said much in these lectures concerning this ancient sacred record of the human race, much concerning the secrets which the Lord imparted to humanity by the disciple whom he loved. You may have learnt from this that the Apocalypse is a profound book full of wisdom, and have perhaps many times during these considerations been troubled because much in it is so difficult to understand. Now I should like to say one thing

at the close of our studies. All that I have been able to say to you corresponds exactly to the intentions of the writer of the Apocalypse, and was always taught in this way in the schools which have kept to the intention of the writer of the Apocalypse. But it is by no means all that could be said and one can go much deeper into the truths, into the foundations of the Apocalypse. And if we were to penetrate fully into all the depths, what I have been able to say to you would seem only like a first superficial presentation. It cannot be done in any other way, we can at first give only a superficial presentation. One must go through this. One has to begin with the elementary things, and then, when one has gone a little further, greater depths will be found. For below the surface there is a very great deal of which we have been only able to unveil a very little. If you go further along the path which in a certain way you have begun by turning your attention to the exposition of the Apocalypse of John, you will gradually penetrate into the depths of the spiritual life. You will come into depths which cannot possibly be expressed to-day, because they could not be brought into consciousness, because no one has yet ears to hear. The ears must first be prepared to hear, by such explanations as have now been given. Then they will gradually be there, ears able to hear the Word which flows at such profound depths through the Apocalypse. If you have been able to receive a little of what could be imparted, you must be aware that only the most superficial things could be given, and of these only a few observations. May it give you the impulse to penetrate more and more deeply into what can only be surmised through these lectures. If I were to say only what can be said about the surface, I should have to lecture for still many, many weeks. These lectures could only be a stimulus for further study, and those who feel the impulse to penetrate more deeply into the Apocalypse will have received them in the right way.



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