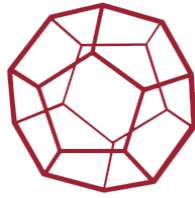


Faith, Love, and Hope

GA 130



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by

Rudolf Steiner

1911

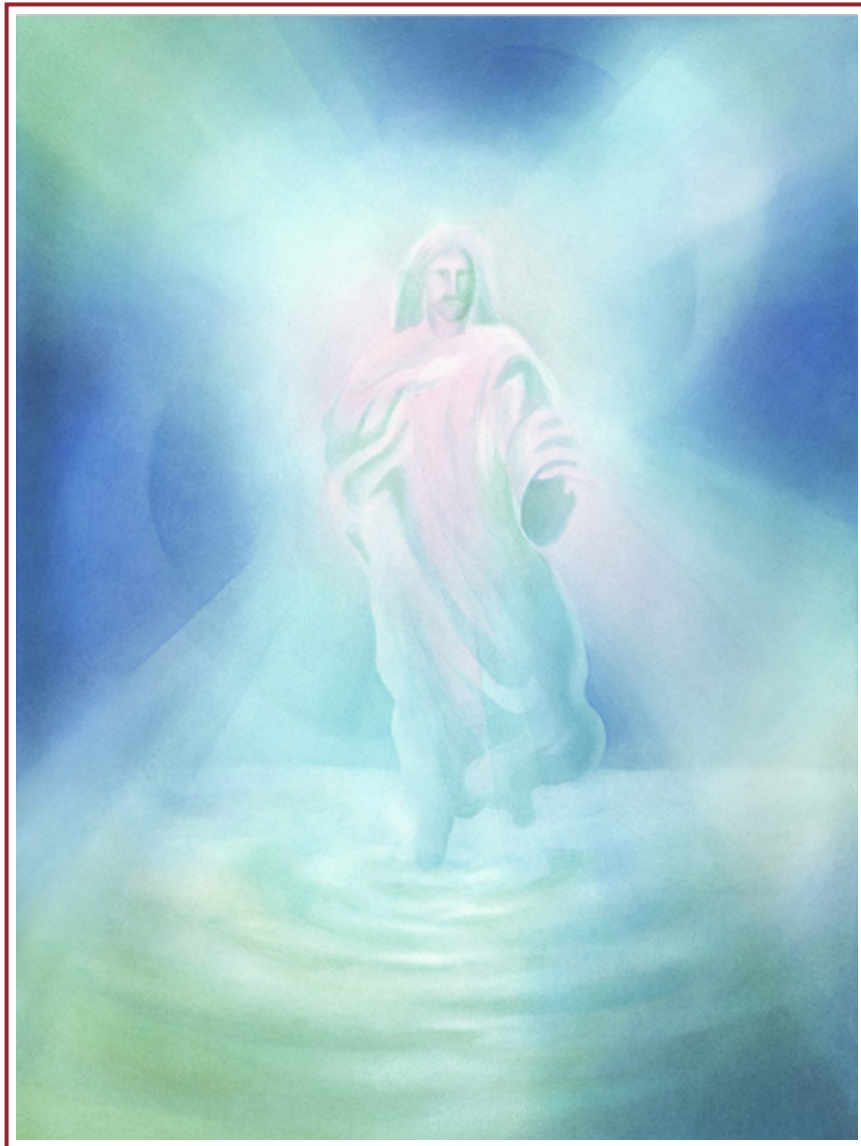
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Christ, Roland Tiller

Preface

Steiner tells us of the three revelations of importance to humankind. The first two will be as familiar to most as the third will be a surprise. The first revelation is the Sinai Revelation in which Moses received the Ten Commandments. The second revelation he calls the Palestine Revelation which gave us the Gospels of the New Testament. The third revelation occurred in the middle 20th Century — it consisted of what is referred to in the New Testament as the Second Coming of Christ in Glory. The glorified body is a phrase which refers to the etheric body or a body in the etheric plane. Christ has been intervening in human destiny from the etheric plane on Earth for almost seventy years as I write these words. Steiner gives us an example of this intervention proceeds.

There will be people, for instance, who, while carrying out some deed, suddenly become aware ... of an urge to refrain from what they are doing, because of a remarkable vision. They will perceive in a dreamlike way what appears to be an action of their own; yet they will not be able to remember having done it.

What these people are experiencing is the bleed through of information from their karmic destiny, a deed from some past lifetime, is entering their minds and preventing them from carrying out a similar deed again.

Another important aspect of these lectures is what the words "faith, love, and hope" mean to humankind for the next 5,000 years. These words, following St. Paul's letter to the Corinthians are usually placed in this order: faith, hope, and love. Steiner makes an excellent case for the proper order of these words, considering the destiny of humankind, to be: faith, love, and hope.

Bobby Matherne



Introduction

These lectures were given by Rudolf Steiner during a period of intense productive activity, involving many journeys. In March and April, 1911, he had given fundamental lectures in Prague and in Italy. In June he gave in Copenhagen the short but pregnant course on "The Spiritual Guidance of Humanity." In August the first performance was given in Munich of his second Mystery Play, "The Soul's Probation." In October the course "From Jesus to Christ" was given in Karlsruhe; here he gave the fundamental spiritual concepts for the understanding of the Resurrection of Christ. With the exception of the course on St. Mark's Gospel, which followed in September 1912, the great courses on the Gospels had already been given during the preceding years, from 1908 onwards. Dr. Steiner had lectured also in many places about the renewed experience of the Christ in the twentieth century; in the Karlsruhe course he described in detail the work of Christ as lord of human destiny — a theme taken up again in these Nurnberg lectures.

For some years the most significant figure among the group of students of Rudolf Steiner resident at Nurnberg had been Michael Bauer, the friend and biographer of the poet, Christian Morgenstern. Not long before these lectures were given, Michael Bauer had come to know Dr. Friedrich Rittelmeyer, who had become widely known in Germany as a preacher and pastor, working from Nurnberg. Through Bauer, Rittelmeyer came to Rudolf Steiner himself.

These lectures may well have been among the first by Rudolf Steiner that Rittelmeyer could have heard. Certainly we may find in them an indication of the great mysteries of destiny that worked in these encounters, and which led towards the foundation, eleven years later, of the Christian Community. For example, Rudolf Steiner describes in these lectures the meaning of the altar in early Christianity.

The theme of Faith, Love and Hope appears in a wonderful way in the second Mystery Play. At about this time Rudolf Steiner gave lectures under this title in other places also, for example in Vienna.

A. B.



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The Third Revelation to Mankind

2 December 1911, Nuremberg

This evening and to-morrow evening we are going to attempt a coherent study of the being of man, and of his connection with the occult foundations of the present time and the near future.

From various indications I have given here you will have grasped that to-day we are, to some extent, facing a new revelation, a new announcement to mankind. If we keep in mind the recent periods of man's evolution, it may well be that we shall best understand what is approaching if we connect it with two other important revelations. In doing so we shall be considering, it is true, only what has been revealed to mankind in times relatively near to our own.

These three revelations — the one now to come and the two others — may be best understood when compared with the early development of a child. Observing the child rightly, we find that on its first coming into the world it has to be protected and cared for by those around it; it has no means of expressing what is going on within it or of formulating in thought what affects its soul. To begin with, the child cannot speak, cannot think; everything must be done for it by those who have received it in their midst. Then it starts to speak. Those who watch it attentively — this is mentioned in my book, *The Education of the Child* — will know that first it imitates what it hears; but that in the early days of talking it has no understanding which can be attributed to thinking. What the child says does not arise out of thought, but the other way round. It learns to think by talking; learns gradually to apprehend in clear thought what previously it was prompted to say out of the obscure depths of feeling.

Thus we have three successive periods in the child's development — a first period when it can neither speak nor think, a second when it can speak but not yet think, and a third when it becomes conscious of the thought-content in what it says. With these three stages in the child's development we may compare what mankind has gone through — and has still to go through — since about 1,500 years before the Christian era.

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The first revelation of which we can speak, as coming to mankind during the present cycle of time, is the revelation proceeding from Sinai in the form of the Ten Commandments. Anyone going more deeply into the significance of what was revealed to mankind in these commandments will find great cause for wonder. The fact is, however, that men take these spiritual treasures so much for granted that little thought is given to them. But those who reflect upon their significance have to know how remarkable it is that in these Ten Commandments something is given which has spread through the world as law; something which in its fundamental character still holds good to-day and forms the basis of the law in all countries, in so far as, during the last 1,000 years, they have gradually adopted modern civilisation. Something all-embracing, grand, universal, is revealed to mankind as if in these words: There is a primal Being in the spiritual world whose image is here on earth — the Ego. This Being can so infuse His own power into the human ego, so pour Himself into it, that a man is enabled to conform to the norms, the laws, given in the Ten Commandments.

The second revelation came about through the Mystery of Golgotha. What can we say about this Mystery? What can be said was indicated yesterday in the public lecture, "From Jesus to Christ". It was shown there how we have to trace back all men in their bodily nature to the original human couple on earth. And as we can understand men in their bodily nature only as descending through the generations from this couple, so, in order rightly to understand the greatest gift coming to our ego, we have to trace this fact, that must sink more and more into our ego during earthly existence, back to the Mystery of Golgotha.

It need not here concern us that in this connection the old Hebrew tradition has a different conception from that of present-day science. If we trace back men's blood-relationship, their bodily relation, to that original human couple, Adam and Eve, who once lived on earth as the first physical personalities, the primal forebears of mankind, and if we must therefore say that the blood flowing in men's veins goes back to that human pair, we can ask: Where must we look for the origin of the most precious gift bestowed on our soul, that holiest, most valuable gift, which accomplishes in the soul never-ending marvels and makes itself known to our consciousness as something higher than the ordinary ego within us? For the answer we must turn to what arose from the grave on Golgotha. In

every human soul that has experienced an inner awakening there lives on what then arose, just as the blood of Adam and Eve continues to live in the body of every human being.

We have to see a kind of fountainhead, a primal fatherhood, in the risen Christ — the spiritual Adam who enters the souls of those who have experienced an awakening, bringing them, for the first time, to the fullness of their ego, to what gives life to their ego in the right way. Thus, just as the life of Adam's body lives on in the physical bodies of all men, what arose from the grave on Golgotha flows in like manner through the souls of those who find the path to it. That is the second revelation given to mankind; they are enabled to learn what happened through the Mystery of Golgotha.

If in the Ten Commandments men have received guidance from outside, this guidance may be compared to what happens to the child before it can either speak or think. What is done for the child by its environment is achieved by the old Jewish law for all mankind, who until then have, as it were, lacked the power of speaking and thinking. People, however, have now learnt to speak — or, rather, have learnt something that may be compared with a child's learning to speak: they have gained knowledge of the Mystery of Golgotha through the Gospels. And the way in which they first understood the Gospels may be compared with how a child learns to speak. Through the Gospels there has come to human souls and human hearts some degree of understanding for the Mystery of Golgotha, which has found its way into human feelings and perceptions, and into the soul-forces arising in us when, for example, we allow the deeply significant, intuitive scenes and pictures drawn from the Gospels by great painters to work upon us. It is the same with traditional pictures — pictures of the adoration of the Child by the Shepherds or by the Wise Men from the East; of the flight into Egypt, and so on. All this leads back in the end to the Gospels; it has reached men's understanding in such a way that they may be said to have learnt to speak, in their fashion, about the Mystery of Golgotha.

In this connection we are now moving towards the third period, which may be compared with how the child learns the thought-content in its own speech and can become conscious of it. We are approaching the revelation which should give us the full content, the thought-content, of the Gospels — all they contain of soul and spirit. For at present the Gospels are no better understood than the child understands what it says before it can think. In the context of world-history people are meant to learn through

Spiritual Science, to reflect upon the thoughts in the Gospels; to let the whole deep spiritual content of the Gospels work upon them for the first time. This indeed is connected with a further great event which mankind can feel to be approaching, and which they will experience before the end of this twentieth century. This event can be brought before our souls in somewhat the following way: If once again we enter into the nature of the Mystery of Golgotha, we realise that those elements of the Christ which rose from the grave of Golgotha have remained with the earth, so that they can directly affect every human soul, and can in each soul awaken the ego to a higher stage of existence. Speaking thus of the Mystery of Golgotha we may say: Christ then became the Spirit of the earth and since that time has remained so. In our day, however, a change in relation of the Christ to men is coming, an important change connected with what all of you have come to know something about — the new revelation to men of the Christ.



This revelation can also be characterised in another way. For this indeed we must turn to what happens when a man goes through the gate of death. (This is something that could not be described in books, but must now be spoken of.) When a man has passed through the gate of death, has experienced the backward survey over his previous earthly life and has come to the point when his etheric body is laid aside and the time has come for his Kamaloka, he is first met by two figures. Usually only one is mentioned, but to complete the picture — and this is a reality for every true occultist — we must say that before his Kamaloka the man is confronted by two figures. What I am now telling you holds good, it is true, only for men of the West, and for those who, during the last 1,000 years, have been connected with Western culture. The man after death is confronted by two figures. One of these is Moses — the man knows quite clearly that it is Moses who stands before him, holding out the tables of the law. In the Middle Ages they spoke of Moses "with his stern law". And in his soul the man is keenly aware of how far in his inmost being he has transgressed against this law. The other figure is "the Cherubim with the flaming sword", who pronounces judgment on these transgressions. That is an experience a man has after death. Thus, in accordance with our Spiritual Science, it can be said that there is a kind of settlement of the man's karmic account by these two figures — Moses with the stern law and the Cherubim with the flaming sword.

In our time, however, a change is approaching, an important change which can be described in this way. Christ is becoming Lord of Karma for all those who, after death, have experienced what has just been discussed. Christ is entering upon His judgship. Let us look more closely into this fact. From the world-conception of Spiritual Science we all know that a karmic account is kept of our life; that there is a certain balancing of the deeds standing on the credit side of the account the sensible deeds, the fine deeds, those that are good — and, on the other side, the bad, ugly, lying deeds and thoughts.

Now it is important, on the one hand, that in the further course of a man's earthly life he should himself adjust the balance of this karmic account. But this living out of the result of his good and splendid deeds, or those that are bad, can be done in many different ways. The particular adjustment in our future life is not always determined after the same pattern. Suppose someone has done a bad action; he must compensate for it by doing a good one. This good action, however, can be achieved in two ways, and it may require the same effort on the man's part to do good to a few people only as to benefit a considerable number. To ensure that in future, when we have found our way to Christ, our karmic account will be balanced — inserted in the cosmic order — in such a way that the settlement of it will benefit as many people as possible — that will be the concern of Him who in our time is becoming Lord of Karma — it will be the concern of the Christ.

This taking over by Christ of the judging of a man's deeds is a result of His direct intervention in human destiny. This intervention is not in a physical body, but on behalf of those men on earth who will increasingly acquire the capacity of perceiving Him. There will be people, for instance, who, while carrying out some deed, suddenly become aware — there will be more and more cases of this from now on, during the next 3,000 years — of an urge to refrain from what they are doing, because of a remarkable vision. They will perceive in a dreamlike way what appears to be an action of their own; yet they will not be able to remember having done it.

Those who are not prepared for such a thing to happen in the course of their evolution will look upon it merely as imagination run wild or as a pathological condition of the soul. Those, however, who are sufficiently prepared through the new revelation coming in our time to mankind through spiritual science — through, that is, this third revelation during the latest cycle of mankind — will realise that all this points to the growing of new human faculties enabling men to see into the spiritual world. They will

also realise that this picture appearing to their soul is a forewarning of the karmic deed that must be brought about — either in this life on earth or in a later one — to compensate for what they have done.

In short, people will gradually achieve, through their own efforts, the faculty for perceiving in a vision the karmic adjustment, the compensating deed, which must come about in future. From this fact it can be seen that in our time, too, we should say, as did John the Baptist by the Jordan: Change your state of soul, for the time is coming when new faculties will awake in men.

But this form of karmic perception will arise in such a way that here and there the figure of the etheric Christ will be directly visible to some individual — the actual Christ as He is living in the astral world — not in a physical body, but as for the newly awakened faculties of men He will manifest on earth; as counselor and protector of those who need advice, help or solace in the loneliness of their lives.

The time is coming when human beings, when they feel depressed and miserable, for one or other reason, will increasingly find the help of their fellows less important and valuable. This is because the force of individuality, of individual life, will count for more and more, while the power of one man to work helpfully upon the soul of another, which held good in the past, will tend constantly to diminish. In its stead the great Counselor will appear, in etheric form.

The best advice we can be given for the future is, therefore, to make our souls strong and full of energy, so that with increased strength, the further we advance into the future, whether in this incarnation — and certainly this applies to the young people of to-day — or in the next, we may realise that newly-awakened faculties give us knowledge of the great Counselor who is becoming at the same time the judge of a man's karma; knowledge, that is, of Christ in His new form. For those people who have already prepared themselves here for the Christ-event of the 20th century, it will make no difference whether they are in the physical body, when this event becomes a widespread experience, or have passed through the gate of death. Those who have passed through will still have the right understanding of the Christ-event and the right connection with it, but not those who have thoughtlessly passed by this third great forewarning to mankind given through Spiritual Science. For the Christ-event must be prepared for here on earth in the physical body. Those who go through the gate of death without giving even a glance into Spiritual Science during their present

incarnation, will have to wait until their next before gaining a right understanding of the Christ-event. It is an actual fact that those who on the physical plane have never heard of the Christ-event are unable to come to an understanding of it between death and rebirth. They, too, must wait until they can prepare for it on their return to the physical plane. When, therefore, their present incarnation ends at death, these men in their essential being remain unconcerned in face of the mighty event referred to — the taking over of the judgeship by Christ and the possibility of His intervening, in an etheric body, directly from the astral world in the evolution of mankind, and His becoming visible in various places.



It is characteristic of human evolution, however, that old attributes of men, not closely connected with spiritual evolution, gradually lose significance. When we consider human evolution since the Atlantean catastrophe we can say: Among the great differentiations prepared during the Atlantean Age, present-day men have become accustomed to those of race. We can still speak, in a certain sense, of an old Indian race, of an old Persian race, of an Egyptian or a Graeco-Latin one, and even of something in our own time corresponding to a fifth race. But the concept of race in relation to human evolution is ceasing to have a right meaning. Something that held good in earlier times will no longer do so in the sixth culture-epoch which is to follow our own — namely, that it is essential to have some spatial centre from which to spread the culture of the epoch. The important thing is the spreading of Spiritual Science among men; without distinction of race, nation, or family. In the sixth culture-epoch those who have accepted Spiritual Science will come out of every race, and will found, throughout the earth, a new culture no longer based on the concept of race — that concept will have lost its significance. In short, what is important in the world of Maya, the external world of space, vanishes away; we must learn to recognise this in the future course of our spiritual-scientific movement.

At the beginning this was not understated. Therefore we see how, when we read Olcott's book, *The Buddhist Catechism*, which once did good service, we have the impression that races always go on like so many wheels. But for the coming time such concepts are losing their significance. Everything subject to limitations of space will lose significance. Hence anyone who thoroughly understands the meaning of human evolution understands also that the coming appearance of Christ during the next 3,000 years does not entail Christ being restricted to a body bound by

space, nor limited to a certain territory. Neither will His appearance be limited by an inability to appear in more than one place at a time. His help will be forthcoming at the same moment here, there, and everywhere. And as a spiritual being is not subject to the laws of space, anyone who can be helped by Christ's direct presence is able to receive that help at one end of the earth just as well as another person at the opposite end. Only those unwilling to recognise the progress of mankind towards spirituality, and what gradually transforms all the most important events into the spiritual — only these persons can declare that what is implied by the Christ-being is limited to a physical body.



We have now described the facts concerning the third revelation and how this revelation is already in process of throwing new light on the Gospels. The Gospels are the language, and, in relation to them, Anthroposophy is the thought-content. As language is related to a child's full consciousness, so are the Gospels related to the new revelation that comes directly from the spiritual world — related, in effect, to what Spiritual Science is to become for mankind. We must be aware that we have in fact a certain task to fulfil, a task of understanding, when we come — first out of the soul's unconscious depths, and then ever more clearly — to discern our connection with Anthroposophy.

We must look upon it, in a sense, as a mark of distinction bestowed by the World-Spirit, as a sign of grace on the part of the creative, guiding Spirit of the world, when to-day our heart urges us towards this new announcement which is added, as a third revelation, to those proclaimed from Sinai and then from the Jordan. To learn to know man in his entire being is the task given in this new announcement — to perceive ever more deeply that what we are principally conscious of is sheathed around by other members of man's being, which are nevertheless important for his life as a whole.



It is necessary for our friends to learn about these matters from the most various points of view. To-day we will begin by first saying a few words about man's inner being. You know that if we start from the actual centre of his being, from his ego, we come next to the sheath to which we give the more or less abstract name of astral body. Further out we find the so-called etheric body, and still further outside, the physical body. From the

point of view of real life we can speak about the human sheaths in another way, and to-day we will take directly from life what can, it is true, be learnt only from occult conceptions, but can be understood through unprejudiced observation.

Many of those who, on account of their so-called scientific world-conception, have become arrogant and overbearing, now say: "The ages of faith are long past; they were fit for mankind in their stage of childhood but men have now progressed to knowledge. To-day people must have knowledge of everything and should no longer merely believe." Now that may sound all very well, but it does not rest on genuine understanding. We must ask more questions about such matters than merely whether in the present course of human evolution knowledge has been gained through ordinary science. These other questions must be put: Does faith, as such, mean anything for mankind? May it not be part of a man's very nature to believe?

Naturally, it might be quite possible that people should want, for some reason, to dispense with faith, to throw it over. But just as a man is allowed for a time to play fast and loose with his health without any obvious harm, it might very well be — and is actually so — that people come to look upon faith merely as a cherished gift to their fathers in the past, which is just as if for a time they were recklessly to abuse their health, thereby using up the forces they once possessed. When a man looks upon faith in that way, however, he is still — where the life-forces of his soul are concerned — living on the old gift of faith handed down to him through tradition. It is not for man to decide whether to lay aside faith or not; faith is a question of life-giving forces in his soul. The important point is not whether we believe or not, but that the forces expressed in the word 'faith' are necessary to the soul. For the soul incapable of faith become withered, dried-up as the desert.

There were once men who, without any knowledge of natural science, were much cleverer than those to-day with a scientific world-conception. They did not say what people imagine they would have said: "I believe what I do not know." They said: "I believe what I know for certain." Knowledge is the only foundation of faith. We should know in order to take increasing possession of those forces which are forces of faith in the human soul. In our soul we must have what enables us to look towards a super-sensible world, makes it possible for us to turn all our thoughts and conceptions in that direction.

If we do not possess forces such as are expressed in the word 'faith', something in us goes to waste; we wither as do the leaves in autumn. For a while this may not seem to matter — then things begin to go wrong. Were men in reality to lose all faith, they would soon see what it means for evolution. By losing the forces of faith they would be incapacitated for finding their way about in life; their very existence would be undermined by fear, care, and anxiety. To put it briefly, it is through the forces of faith alone that we can receive the life which should well up to invigorate the soul. This is because, imperceptible at first for ordinary consciousness, there lies in the hidden depths of our being something in which our true ego is embedded. This something, which immediately makes itself felt if we fail to bring it fresh life, is the human sheath where the forces of faith are active. We may term it the faith-soul, or — as I prefer — the faith-body. It has hitherto been given the more abstract name of astral body. The most important forces of the astral body are those of faith, so the term astral body and the term faith-body are equally justified.

A second force that is also to be found in the hidden depths of a man's being is the force expressed by the word 'love'. Love is not only something linking men together; it is also needed by them as individuals. When a man is incapable of developing the force of love he, too, becomes dried-up and withered in his inner being. We have merely to picture to ourselves someone who is actually so great an egoist that he is unable to love. Even where the case is less extreme, it is sad to see people who find it difficult to love, who pass through an incarnation without the living warmth that love alone can generate — love for, at any rate, something on earth.

Such persons are a distressing sight, as in their dull, prosaic way, they go through the world. For love is a living force that stimulates something deep in our being, keeping it awake and alive — an even deeper force than faith. And just as we are cradled in a body of faith, which from another aspect can be called the astral body, so are we cradled also in a body of love, or, as in Spiritual Science we called it, the etheric body, the body of life-forces. For the chief forces working in us from the etheric body, out of the depths of our being, are those expressed in a man's capacity for loving at every stage of his existence. If a man could completely empty his being of the force of love — but that indeed is impossible for the greatest egoist, thanks be to God, for even in egoistical striving there is still some element of love. Take this case, for example: whoever is unable to love anything else can often begin, if he is sufficiently avaricious, by loving money, at least substituting for charitable love another love — albeit one arising from

egoism. For were there no love at all in a man, the sheath which should be sustained by love-forces would shrivel, and the man, empty of love, would actually perish; he would really meet with physical death.

This shriveling of the forces of love can also be called a shriveling of the forces belonging to the etheric body; for the etheric body is the same as the body of love. Thus at the very centre of a man's being we have his essential kernel, the ego, surrounded by its sheaths; first the body of faith, and then round it the body of love.



If we go further, we come to another set of forces we all need in life, and if we do not, or cannot, have them at all — well, that is very distinctly to be seen in a man's external nature. For the forces we need emphatically as life-giving forces are those of hope, of confidence in the future. As far as the physical world is concerned, people cannot take a single step in life without hope. They certainly make strange excuses, sometimes, if they are unwilling to acknowledge that human beings need to know something of what happens between death and rebirth. They say: "Why do we need to know that, when we don't know what will happen to us here from one day to another? So why are we supposed to know what takes place between death and a new birth?" But do we actually know nothing about the following day? We may have no knowledge of what is important for the details of our super-sensible life, or, to speak more bluntly, whether or not we shall be physically alive. We do, however, know one thing — that if we are physically alive the next day there will be morning, midday, evening, just as there are to-day. If to-day as a carpenter I have made a table, it will still be there tomorrow; if I am a shoemaker, someone will be able to put on to-morrow what I have made to-day; and if I have sown seeds I know that next year they will come up. We know about the future just as much as we need to know. Life would be impossible in the physical world were not future events to be preceded by hope in this rhythmical way. Would anyone make a table to-day without being sure it would not be destroyed in the night; would anyone sow seeds if he had no idea what would become of them?

It is precisely in physical life that we need hope, for everything is upheld by hope and without it nothing can be done. The forces of hope, therefore, are connected with our last sheath as human beings, with our physical body. What the forces of faith are for our astral body, and the love-forces for the etheric, the forces of hope are for the physical body. Thus a man

who is unable to hope, a man always despondent about what he supposes the future may bring, will go through the world with this clearly visible in his physical appearance. Nothing makes for deep wrinkles, those deadening forces in the physical body, sooner than lack of hope.

The inmost kernel of our being may be said to be sheathed in our faith-body or astral body, in our body of love or etheric body, and in our hope-body or physical body; and we comprehend the true significance of our physical body only when we bear in mind that, in reality, it is not sustained by external physical forces of attraction and repulsion — that is a materialistic idea — but has in it what, according to our concepts, we know as forces of hope. Our physical body is built up by hope, not by forces of attraction and repulsion. This very point can show that the new spiritual-scientific revelation gives us the truth.

What then does Spiritual Science give us? By revealing the all-embracing laws of karma and reincarnation, it gives us something which permeates us with spiritual hope, just as does our awareness on the physical plane that the sun will rise to-morrow and that seeds will eventually grow into plants. It shows, if we understand karma, that our physical body, which will perish into dust when we have gone through the gate of death, can through the forces permeating us with hope be re-built for a new life. Spiritual Science fills men with the strongest forces of hope. Were this Spiritual Science, this new revelation for the present time, to be rejected, men naturally would return to earth in future all the same, for life on earth would not cease on account of people's ignorance of its laws. Human beings would incarnate again; but there would be something very strange about these incarnations. Men would gradually become a race with bodies wrinkled and shriveled all over, earthly bodies which would finally be so crippled that people would be entirely incapacitated. To put it briefly, in future incarnations a condition of dying away, of withering up, would assail mankind if their consciousness, and from there the hidden depths of their being right down into the physical body, were not given fresh life through the power of hope.

This power of hope arises through the certainty of knowledge gained from the laws of karma and reincarnation. Already there is a tendency in human beings to produce withering bodies, which in future would become increasingly rickety even in the very bones. Marrow will be brought to the bones, forces of life to the nerves, by this new revelation, whose value will not reside merely in theories but in its life-giving forces — above all in those of hope.

Faith, love, hope, constitute three stages in the essential being of man; they are necessary for health and for life as a whole, for without them we cannot exist. Just as work cannot be done in a dark room until light is obtained, it is equally impossible for a human being to carry on in his fourfold nature if his three sheaths are not permeated, warmed through, and strengthened by faith, love, and hope. For faith, love, hope are the basic forces in our astral body, our etheric body, and our physical body. And from this one instance you can judge how the new revelation makes its entry into the world, permeating the old language with thought-content. Are not these three wonderful words urged upon us in the Gospel revelation, these words of wisdom that ring through the ages — faith, love, hope? But little has been understood of their whole connection with human life, so little that only in certain places has their right sequence been observed.

It is true that faith, love, hope, are sometimes put in this correct order; but the significance of the words is so little appreciated that we often hear faith, hope, love, which is incorrect; for you cannot say astral body, physical body, etheric body, if you would give them their right sequence. That would be putting things higgledy-piggledy, as a child will sometimes do before it understands the thought-content of what is said. It is the same with everything relating to the second revelation. It is permeated throughout with thought; and we have striven to permeate with thought our explanation of the Gospels. For what have they meant for people up to now? They have been something with which to fortify mankind and to fill them with great and powerful perceptions, something to inspire men to enter into the depth of heart and feeling in the Mystery of Golgotha. But now consider the simple fact that people have only just begun to reflect upon the Gospels, and in doing so they have straightway found contradictions upon which Spiritual Science alone can help to throw light. Thus it is only now that they are beginning to let their souls be worked on by the thought-content of what the Gospels give them in language of the super-sensible worlds. In this connection we have pointed out what is so essential and of such consequence for our age: the new appearance of the Christ in an etheric body, for his appearance in a physical body is ruled out by the whole character of our times.

Hence we have indicated that the Christ, in contradistinction as it were to the suffering Christ on Golgotha, is appearing now as Christ triumphant, Christ the Lord of Karma. This has been fore-shadowed by those who have

painted Him as the Christ of the Last Judgment. Whether painted or described in words, something is represented which at the appointed time will come to pass.

In truth, this begins in the 20th century and will hold good until the end of the earth. It is in our 20th century that this judgment, this ordering of Karma, begins, and we have seen how infinitely important it is for our age that this revelation should come to men in such a way that even concepts such as faith, love, hope, can be given their true valuation for the first time.



John the Baptist said: Change your mood of soul, the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. That is, take to yourselves the human ego that need no longer abstain from approaching the spiritual world — a saying which points clearly to what is here in question, namely, that with the event of Palestine the time came for the super-sensible to pour light into the ego of man, so that into his ego the heavens are able to descend. Previously, the ego could come to men only by sinking into their unconscious. But those who interpret everything materialistically say: The Christ, reckoning with the weaknesses, errors and prejudices of His contemporaries, even foretold, like the credulous people of His time, that the millennium would be realised or that a great catastrophe would fall upon the earth. Neither of these events, however, came about. There was indeed a catastrophe, but perceptible only to the spirit. The credulous and superstitious, who believe Christ to have foretold how His actual coming would be from the clouds, interpreted His meaning in a materialistic way.

To-day, also, there are people who thus interpret what is to be grasped only in spirit, and when nothing happens in a material sense they judge the matter in just the same way as was done in the case of the millennium. How many indeed we find to-day who, speaking almost pityingly of those events, say that Christ was influenced by the beliefs of His time and looked for the impending approach to earth of the Kingdom of Heaven. That was a weakness on Christ's part, they say, and then it was seen — and remarked upon even by distinguished theologians — that the Kingdom of Heaven has not come down on earth.

It may be that men will meet our new revelation, too, in such a way that after a time, when the enhancement of men's faculties is in full swing, they will say, "Well, nothing has come of all these predictions of yours", not

realising that they just cannot see what is there. Thus do events repeat themselves. Spiritual Science is meant to gather together a large number of people, until fulfilment comes for what has been said by those with a right knowledge of how during this century the new revelation and the new super-sensible facts are appearing in human evolution. They will then continue their course in the same way, becoming ever more significant throughout the next 3,000 years, until important new weighty facts are once more revealed to mankind.



2 Toward the Sixth Epoch

3 December 1911, Nuremberg

Yesterday we tried to gain a conception of the importance in human life of what may be termed the super-sensible revelation of our age. We indicated that this was to be reckoned the third revelation in the most recent cycle of mankind, and should, in a certain sense, be regarded as in sequence to the Sinai revelation and the revelation at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha. We ought not to look upon this feature of our age as something affecting us merely theoretically or scientifically; as Anthroposophists we must rise to an ever fuller realisation that men, in their evolution, are neglecting something essential if they hold aloof from all that is being announced to us now and will be announced in the future. It is quite appropriate that at first the external world should pass this by, or even treat it as sheer fantasy; and quite natural also that, to begin with, many people should not pay attention to the harmful consequences of disregarding what is here in question. But Anthroposophists should be clear that the souls in human bodies to-day, irrespective of what they absorb at present, are approaching an ineluctable future. What I shall have to say concerns every soul, for it is part of the whole trend of change in our time.

The souls incorporated to-day have only recently advanced to the stage of that genuine ego-consciousness which has been in preparation during the course of evolution ever since the old Atlantean period. But for the people of those ancient days, up to the time when the great change was intimated by the Mystery of Golgotha, this ego-consciousness was gradually freeing itself from a consciousness of which present-day people no longer have any real knowledge. To-day modern men generally distinguish only between our ordinary condition of being awake and the state of sleep, when consciousness is in complete abeyance. Between these states they recognise also the intermediate one of dreaming, but from the present-day standpoint they can regard it only as a kind of aberration, a departure from the normal. Through dream-pictures certain events from the depths of the soul-life rise into consciousness; but in ordinary dreaming they emerge in such an obscure form that the dreamer is scarcely ever able to interpret rightly their very real bearing on deep super-sensible processes in his life of soul.

In order to grasp one characteristic feature of this intermediate state — a state well understood in earlier times — let us take an ordinary dream of which a scientific modern investigator of dreams, able to interpret it only superficially and in a materialistic way, has made a regular conundrum. A highly significant dream! You see, I am taking my example from the science of dreams, which — as I have mentioned before — has to-day been given a place, little understood though it is, among sciences such as chemistry and physics. The following dream, a characteristic one, has been recorded. I might easily have taken my example from similar, unpublished, dreams; but I would like to deal with one which raises certain problems for present-day commentators, who have no key to such matters.

Now the case is this. A married couple had a much beloved son, who was growing up to the joy of his parents. One day he fell ill, and his condition worsened in a few hours to such a degree that, at the end of this one day, he passed through the gate of death. Thus for the ordinary experience of this couple, their son was abruptly snatched from them, and the son himself torn from a life full of promise. The parents, naturally, mourned their son. During the months following there was a great deal in the dreams of both husband and wife to remind them of him. But, quite a long time — many, many months — after his death, there came a night when his father and mother had exactly the same dream. They dreamed that their son appeared to them saying he had been buried alive, having only been in a trance, and that they merely had to look into the matter to be convinced that this was true.

The parents told each other what they had thus dreamed on the same night, and such was their attitude to life that they immediately asked the authorities for permission to have their son's body disinterred. In such matters, however — conditions being as they are — authorities are not easily persuaded; the request was refused. The parents had this further cause for grieving.

Now the investigator who gave his account of the dream, and could think of it only in a materialistic way, was faced with great difficulties. To begin with it is very easy to say: Yes, this is quite intelligible. The parents were thinking so much about their son that it is obvious they would both have dreamt of him. But the puzzling thing was that they should have had the same dream on the same night. The investigator finally explained it in a remarkable way which is bound to seem very forced to anyone reading it. He said: We can only assume that one parent had the dream, and the other, hearing it when awake, got the idea that he (or she) had dreamt it

also. To present-day consciousness this interpretation at first seems fairly obvious, but it doesn't go very deep. I have expressly mentioned that for anyone well-versed in dream-experiences there is nothing unusual in several people having the same dream at the same time.

Let us try now to look into this dream-experience from the point of view of Spiritual Science. The results of spiritual investigation show how a man who has gone through the gate of death lives on as an individuality in the spiritual world. We know, too, that there are definite connections between every thing and every being in the world, and that this is evident in the link that unites those who have departed with people still on earth, when the latter lovingly concentrate thoughts on their dead. There is no question of there not being a connection between those on the physical plane and those who have left it for the super-sensible world. There is always a connection when thoughts are turned at all to the dead by those left on the physical plane — a connection that may continue even when their thoughts are directed elsewhere. But the point is that human beings, organised as they are now for life on the physical plane, are unable when awake to become conscious of these bonds. Having no knowledge of a thing, however, does not justify denying its existence; that would be a very superficial conclusion. On that basis, those now sitting in this room and not seeing Nuremberg could easily prove there is no such place. So we must be clear that it is only because of their present-day organisation that men know nothing of their connection with the dead; it exists all the same.

However, knowledge of what is going on in the depths of the soul can occasionally be conjured up into consciousness, and this happens in dreams. It is one thing we have to reckon with when considering dream-experiences. Another thing is the knowledge that passing through death is not the sudden leap imagined by those knowing nothing about it; it is a gradual transition. What occupies a soul here on earth does not then vanish in a moment. What a man loves, he continues to love after his death. But there is no possibility of satisfying a feeling which depends for its satisfaction on a physical body. The wishes and desires of the soul, its joys, sorrows, the particular tendencies it has during incorporation in a physical body — these naturally continue even when the gate of death has been passed. We can therefore understand how strong was the feeling in this young man, meeting with death when quite unprepared, that he would like to be still on earth, and how keen was his longing to be in a physical body. This desire, working as a force in the soul, lasted on for a long, long time during his Kamaloka.

Now picture to yourselves vividly the parents, with their thoughts engrossed by this beloved dead son. Even in sleep the connecting links were there. Just at the moment when both father and mother began to dream, the son, in accordance with the state of his soul, had a particularly keen desire that we may perhaps clothe in these words: "Oh! If only I were still on earth in a physical body." This thought on the part of the dead son sank deep into his parents' soul, but they had no special faculty for understanding what lay behind the dream. Thus the imprint of the thought on their life of soul was transformed into familiar images. Whereas, if they could have clearly perceived what the son was pouring into their souls, their interpretation would have been: "Our son is longing just now for a physical body." In fact, the dream-image clothed itself in words they understood — "He has been buried alive!" — which hid the truth from them.

Thus, in dream-pictures of this kind we should not look for an exact replica of what is real in the spiritual worlds; we must expect the actual objective occurrence to be veiled in accordance with the dreamer's degree of understanding. To-day it is the peculiar feature of the dream-world that — if we are unable to go into these matters more deeply — we can no longer regard its pictures as faithful copies of what underlies them. We are obliged to say: Something is always living in our soul behind the dream-picture, and this picture can be looked upon only as a still greater illusion than the external world confronting us when we are awake.

It is only in our time that dreams are appearing to people in this guise; strictly speaking only since the events in Palestine, when ego-consciousness took on the form it has now. Before then, the pictures appeared while men were in a state different from either waking or sleeping — a third state, more like the one prevailing in the super-sensible world. Human beings lived with the dead in spirit far more than is feasible nowadays. There is no need to look back many centuries before the Christian era to realise what a countless number of people were then able to say: "The dead are certainly not dead; they are living in the super-sensible world. I can perceive what they are feeling and seeing, what they now actually are. This holds good also for the other Beings in the super-sensible world; those, for instance, whom we know as the Hierarchies."

Thus, for human beings in certain states between waking and sleeping, these were experiences of which the last degenerate echoes linger on in dreams. Hence it was very important that men should then feel this disappearance of something they once possessed. In that traditional epoch

of human evolution, when the great events were taking place in Palestine, there was indeed cause for saying: "Change your mood of soul; quite different times are coming for mankind." And among the changes was this — that the old possibility of seeing into the spiritual world, of personally experiencing how matters stood with the dead and with all other spiritual beings, was going to pass away.

The history of those olden days offers ample evidence of this living with the dead — notably in the religious veneration arising everywhere in the form of ancestor-worship. This was founded on belief in the reality and activity of those who had died. And whereas it continued almost everywhere during the transitional period, men's experience was this, though perhaps not put clearly into words: "Formerly our souls could rise to the world we call that of the spirit, and we were able to dwell among the higher Beings and with the dead. But now our dead leave us in quite another sense; they disappear from our consciousness and the old vivid contact is no more."

We come here to something exceptionally difficult to grasp, but the intelligent mind, the intelligent soul, can learn to do so. It was the early Christians who felt most vividly the loss of direct psychical contact with the dead, and it was this that made their worship of God so full of meaning, so infinitely deep and holy. They compensated for what was lost by the reverent feeling they brought to their religious ceremonies; when, for instance, they sacrificed at the graves of their dead or celebrated the Mass, or observed any other religious rite. In fact, it was during this period of transition, when consciousness of the dead was seen to be wanting, that altars took the shape of coffins. Thus it was with a feeling for mortal remains of this kind — unlike that of the ancient Egyptians — that the service of God, the service of the spirit, was reverently performed. As I have said, this is something not easy to understand. We need, however, only observe the form of an altar, and allow our hearts to respond to this gradual change in men's whole outlook, and feeling and understanding will then arise for the change and its consequences.



We see, therefore, that slowly, gradually, the present state of the human soul was brought about. From indications given yesterday it can be gathered that what has thus come into being will again be succeeded by a different state, for which people are already developing faculties. The example I gave you yesterday of how a man will see, in a kind of dream

picture, his future karmic compensation for some deed, means the re-awakening of faculties that will lead the soul once more to the spiritual worlds. In relation to earthly evolution as a whole, the intermediate state when the soul has been cut off from the super-sensible world, will prove to be comparatively short. It had to come about for men to be able to acquire the strongest possible forces for their freedom. But something else of which I have spoken was bound up with the whole progress of human evolution — that only in this way was a man able to acquire a feeling of the ego within him; to have, that is, the right ego-consciousness. The farther men advance into the future, the more firmly will this ego-consciousness establish itself within them, always increasing in significance. In other words, the force and self-sufficiency of men's individuality will be increasingly accentuated, so that it becomes necessary for them to find in themselves their own effective support.

Thus we see that the ego-consciousness men have to-day does not go back as far as is usually imagined. Only a few incarnations ago, men had no ego-feeling such as is characteristic of them to-day. And as the ego-feeling is intimately connected with memory, we need not be surprised that many people should not have begun, as yet, to look back on their previous incarnations. Because of the undeveloped state of this feeling for his ego during early childhood, a man does not even remember what happened to him then; so it seems quite comprehensible that, for the same reason, he is unable yet to remember his earlier incarnations. But now we have come to the point when man has developed a feeling for his ego, and the forces are unfolding which will make it necessary in our coming incarnations to remember those that have gone before. The days are drawing near when people will feel bound to admit: "We have strange glimpses into the past, when we were already on the earth but living in another bodily form. We look back and have to say that we were already then on earth." And among the faculties appearing more and more in human beings will be one which arouses the feeling: It can only be that I am looking back on earlier incarnations of my own.

Just think how in the human souls now on earth the inner force is already arising which will enable them, in their next incarnations, to look back and to recognise themselves. But for those who have not become familiar with the idea of reincarnation this looking back will be a veritable torment. Ignorance of the mysteries of repeated earthly lives will be actually painful for these human beings; forces in them are striving to rise and bear witness to earlier times, but this cannot happen because all knowledge of these forces is refused. Not to learn of the truths now being proclaimed

through Spiritual Science does not mean neglecting — let us say — mere theories; it is on the way to making a torment of life in future incarnations. In these times of transition, accordingly, something is happening; the slow preparation for it can be gathered from our second Mystery Play, "The Soul's Probation," where we are shown earlier incarnations of the characters portrayed — incarnations of only a few centuries before. The event was then already in preparation; and now, thanks to the wisdom of cosmic guidance, human beings will be given positive opportunities of making themselves familiar with the truths of the Mysteries.

At present comparatively few find their way to Spiritual Science; their number is modest compared with that of the rest of mankind. It may be said that interest in Anthroposophy is not yet very wide-spread. But, in our age, the law of reincarnation is such that those now going through the world apathetically, ignoring what experience can tell about the need for exploring the riddles of life, will incarnate again in a relatively short time, and thus have ample opportunity for absorbing the truths of Spiritual Science. That is how it stands. So that when perhaps we see around us people we esteem, people we love, who will have nothing to do with Anthroposophy, are even hostile towards it, we ought not to take it too much to heart. It is perfectly true, and should be realised by Anthroposophists, that refusing to look into Spiritual Science, or Anthroposophy, means preparing a life of torment for future incarnations on earth. That is true, and should not be treated lightly. On the other hand, those who see friends and acquaintances they care for showing no inclination towards Anthroposophy can say: "If I become a good Anthroposophist myself, I shall find an early opportunity, with the forces remaining to me after death, to prove helpful to these souls" — provided the living link we have spoken of is there. And because the interval between death and rebirth is becoming shorter, these souls, too, will have the opportunity of absorbing the Mystery-truths that must be absorbed if torment is to be avoided in men's coming incarnations. All is not yet lost.

We have, therefore, to look upon Anthroposophy as a real power; while on the other hand we must not be unduly grieved or pessimistic about the matter. It would be mistaken optimism to say: "If that is how things are, I need not accept the truths of Spiritual Science till my next incarnation" If everyone were to say that, when gradually the next incarnations come, there would be too few opportunities for effective aid to be given. Even if those wishing for Anthroposophy can now receive its truths from only quite a few people, the situation will be different for the countless hosts of those who, in a comparatively short time, will be eagerly turning to

Anthroposophy. A countless number of Anthroposophists will then be needed to make these truths known, either here on the physical plane, or — if they are not incarnated — from higher planes.

That is one thing we must learn from the whole character of the great change now taking place. The other is that all this has to be experienced by the ego so that it should rely increasingly upon itself, becoming more and more independent. The self-reliance of the ego must come for all souls; but it will mean disaster for those who make no effort to learn about the great spiritual truths, for the increasing individualism will be felt by them as isolation. On the other hand, those who have made themselves familiar with the deep mysteries of the spiritual world will thereby find a way to forge ever stronger spiritual bands between souls. Old bonds will be loosened, new ones formed. All this is imminent, but it will be gradual.



We are living at present in the fifth post-Atlantean period, which will be followed by a sixth and then by a seventh, when a catastrophe will come upon us, just as one came between the Atlantean and post-Atlantean periods. When the lectures on the Apocalypse were given here in Nuremberg, you heard a description of this coming catastrophe, of how it will resemble and how it will differ from the one in old Atlantis.

If we observe life around us, we might express the particular feature of our age in this way: The most active element in human beings to-day is their intellectualism, their intellectual conception of the world. We are living altogether in an age of intellectualism. It has been brought about through quite special circumstances, and we shall come to understand these if we look back to the time before our present fifth post-Atlantean culture-epoch, the Graeco-Latin, as it is called. That was the remarkable period when human beings had not reached their present state of detachment from the outer manifestations of nature and knowledge of the world. But at the same time it was the epoch in which the ego descended among men. The Christ-event had also to happen in that epoch, because, with Him, the ego made its descent in a special way.

What then is our present experience? It is not just of the entering-in of the ego; we now experience how one of our sheaths casts a kind of reflection upon the soul. The sheath to which yesterday we gave the name of "faith-body" throws its reflection on to the human soul, in this fifth epoch. Thus it is a feature of present-day man that he has something in his

soul which is, as it were, a reflection of the nature of faith of the astral body. In the sixth post-Atlantean epoch there will be a reflection within man of the love-nature of the etheric body, and in the seventh, before the great catastrophe, the reflection of the nature of hope of the physical body.

For those who have heard lectures I am giving in various places just now, I would note that these gradual happenings have been described from a different point of view both in Munich and in Stuttgart; the theme, however, is always the same. What is now being portrayed in connection with the three great human forces, Faith, Love, Hope, was there represented in direct relation to the elements in a man's life of soul; but it is all the same thing. I have done this intentionally, so that Anthroposophists may grow accustomed to get the gist of a matter without strict adherence to special words. When we realise that things can be described from many different sides, we shall no longer pin so much faith on words but focus our efforts on the matter itself, knowing that any description amounts only to an approximation of the whole truth. This adherence to the original words is the last thing that can help us to get to the heart of a matter. The one helpful means is to harmonise what has been said in successive epochs, just as we learn about a tree by studying it not from one direction only but from many different aspects.

Thus at present it is essentially the force of faith of the astral body which, shining into the soul, is characteristic of our time. Someone might say: "That is rather strange. You are telling us now that the ruling force of the age is faith. We might admit this in the case of those who hold to old beliefs, but to-day so many people are too mature for that, and they look down on such old beliefs as belonging to the childish stage of human evolution." It may well be that people who say they are monists believe they do not believe, but actually they are more ready to do so than those calling themselves believers. For, though monists are not conscious of it, all that we see in the various forms of monism is belief of the blindest kind, believed by the monists to be knowledge. We cannot describe their doings at all without mentioning belief. And, apart from the belief of those who believe they do not believe, we find that, strictly speaking, an endless amount of what is most important to-day is connected with the reflection the astral body throws into the soul, giving it thereby the character of ardent faith. We have only to call to mind lives of the great men of our age, Richard Wagner's for example, and how even as an artist he was rising all his life to a definite faith; it is fascinating to watch this in the

development of his personality. Everywhere we look to-day, the lights and shadows can be interpreted as the reflection of faith in what we may call the ego-soul of man.



Our age will be followed by one in which the need for love will cast its light. Love in the sixth culture-epoch will show itself in a very different form — different even from that which can be called Christian love. Slowly we draw nearer to that epoch; and by making those in the Anthroposophical Movement familiar with the mysteries of the cosmos, with the nature of the various individualities both on the physical plane and on the higher planes, we try to kindle love for everything in existence. This is not done so much by talking of love, as by feeling that what is able to kindle love in the soul is prepared for the sixth epoch by Anthroposophy. Through Anthroposophy the forces of love are specially aroused in the whole human soul, and that is prepared which a man needs for gradually acquiring a true understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha. For it is indeed true that the Mystery of Golgotha came to pass; and the Gospels have evoked something which yesterday was likened to how children learn to speak. But the deepest lesson — the mission of earthly love in its connection with the Mystery of Golgotha — has not yet been grasped. Full understanding of this will be possible only in the sixth post-Atlantean culture-epoch, when people grow to realise more and more that the foundations for it are actually within them, and out of their innermost being — in other words, out of love — do what should be done. Then the guidance of the Commandments will have been outlived and the stage reached that is described in Goethe's words: "Duty — when one loves the commands one gives to oneself." When forces wake in our souls which impel us to do what we should through love alone, we then discover in us something that must gradually become widespread in the sixth culture-epoch. Then in a man's nature quite special forces of the etheric body will make themselves known.

To understand what it is that must come about increasingly in this way, we have to consider it from two sides. One side has certainly not come yet and is only dreamt of by the most advanced in spirit; it is a well-defined relation between custom, morals, ethics and the understanding, intellectuality. To-day a man may be to a certain extent a rascal, yet at the same time intelligent and clever. He may even use his very cleverness to further his knavery. At present it is not required of people to combine their intelligence with an equal degree of morality. To all that we have been

anticipating for the future this must be added — that as we advance, it will no longer be possible for these two qualities of the human soul to be kept apart, or to exist in unequal measure. A man who, according to the reckoning-up of his previous incarnation, has become particularly intelligent without being moral, will in his new incarnation possess only a stunted intelligence. Thus, to have equal amounts of intelligence and morality in future incarnations he will be obliged, as a consequence of universal cosmic law, to enter his new incarnation with an intelligence that is crippled, so that immorality and stupidity coincide. For immorality has a crippling effect upon intelligence. In other words, we are approaching the age when morality and what has now been described for the sixth post-Atlantean epoch as the shining into the ego-soul of the love-forces of the etheric body, point essentially to forces having to do with harmonising those of intelligence and morality. That is the one side to be considered.

The other side is this — that it is solely through harmony of this kind, between morality, custom, and intelligence, that the whole depth of the Mystery of Golgotha is to be grasped. This will come about only through the individuality who before Christ-Jesus came to earth prepared men for that Mystery, developing in his successive incarnations ever greater powers as teacher of the greatest of all earthly events. This individuality, whom in his rank as Bodhisatva we call the successor of Gautama Buddha, was incarnated in the personality living about a hundred years before Christ under the name of Jeshu ben Pandira. Among his many students was one who had at that time already, in a certain sense, written down a prophetic version of the Matthew Gospel, and this, after the Mystery of Golgotha had been enacted, needed only to be given a new form.

There have been, and will continue to be, frequent incorporations of the individuality who appeared as Jeshu ben Pandira, until he rises from the rank of Bodhisatva to that of Buddha. According to our reckoning of time this will be in about 3,000 years, when a sufficient number of people will possess the above-mentioned faculties, and when, in the course of a remarkable incarnation of the individual who was once Jeshu ben Pandira, this great teacher of mankind will have become able to act as interpreter of the Mystery of Golgotha in a very different way from what is possible to-day. It is true that even to-day a seer into the super-sensible worlds can gain some idea of what is to happen then; but the ordinary earthly organisation of man cannot yet provide a physical body capable of doing what that teacher will be able to do approximately 3,000 years hence. There is, as yet, no human language through which verbal teaching could exert the magical effects that will spring from the words of that great

teacher of humanity. His words will flow directly to men's hearts, into their souls, like a healing medicine; nothing in those words will be merely theoretical. At the same time the teaching will contain — to an extent far greater than it is possible to conceive to-day — a magical moral force carrying to hearts and souls a full conviction of the eternal, deeply significant brotherhood of intellect and morality.

This great teacher, who will be able to give to men ripe for it the profoundest instruction concerning the nature of the Mystery of Golgotha, will fulfil what Oriental prophets have always said — that the true successor of Buddha would be, for all mankind, the greatest teacher of the good. For that reason he has been called in oriental tradition the Maitreya Buddha. His task will be to enlighten human beings concerning the Mystery of Golgotha, and for this he will draw ideas and words of the deepest significance from the very language he will use. No human language to-day can evoke any conception of it. His words will imprint into men's souls directly, magically, the nature of the Mystery of Golgotha. Hence in this connection also we are approaching what we may call the future moral age of man; in a certain sense we could designate it as a coming Golden Age.

Even to-day, however, speaking from the ground of Anthroposophy, we point in full consciousness to what is destined to come about — how the Christ will gradually reveal Himself to ever-higher powers in human beings, and how the teachers, who up to now have taught only individual peoples and individual men, will become the interpreters of the great Christ-event for all who are willing to listen. And we can point out how, through the dawning of the age of love, conditions for the age of morality are prepared.

Then will come the last epoch, during which human souls will receive the reflection of what we call hope; when, strengthened through the force flowing from the Mystery of Golgotha and from the age of morality, men will take into themselves forces of hope. This is the most important gift they need in order to face the next catastrophe and to begin a new life, just as was done in this present post-Atlantean age.

When in the final post-Atlantean epoch our external culture, with its tendency to calculation, will have come to a climax, bringing no feeling of satisfaction but leaving those who have not developed the spiritual within them to confront their culture in utter desolation — then out of spirituality the seed of hope will be sown, and in the next period of human evolution this will grow to maturity. If the spirit is denied all possibility of imparting to men's souls what it can give, and what the Anthroposophical Movement

has the will to convey, this external culture might for a short while be able to hold its own. Ultimately, however, people would ask themselves what they had gained and say: "We have wireless installations — undreamt of by our ancestors — to transmit our thoughts all over the earth, and what good does it do us? The most trivial, unproductive thoughts are sent hither and thither, and human ingenuity has to be strained to the utmost to enable us to transport from some far distant region, by means of all kinds of perfected appliances, something for us to eat; or to travel at high speeds round the globe. But in our heads there is nothing worth sending from place to place, for our thoughts are cheerless; more-over, since we have had our present means of communication, they have become even more cheerless than when they were conveyed in the old snail-like fashion."

In short, despair and desolation are all that our civilisation can spread over the earth. But, in the last culture-epoch, souls who have accepted the spiritual in life will have become enriched, as if on the ruins of the external life of culture. Their surety that this acceptance of the spiritual has not been in vain will be the strong force of hope within them — hope that after a great catastrophe a new age will come for human beings, when there will appear in external life, in a new culture, what has already been prepared spiritually within the soul.

Thus, if we permeate our whole being with Spiritual Science, we advance step by step, in full consciousness, from our age of faith, through the age of love and that of hope, to what we can see approaching us as the highest, truest, most beautiful, of all human souls.



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