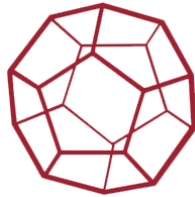


# Man's Life on Earth and in the Spiritual Worlds

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by

*Rudolf Steiner*

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## Introduction

The six lectures collected in this volume were given by Rudolf Steiner to members of the Anthroposophical Society during his visits to England in the year 1922. He came three times, giving altogether about thirty lectures on educational, social and general anthroposophical subjects. Nine years had elapsed since his preceding visit in May 1919 when he had spoken so significantly of the new Michael Age and of Christ-event of the 20th Century. The intervening time was marked by the catastrophes of war and social revolution. Meanwhile the first Goetheanum had been built at Dornach, Switzerland, as a centre for the world-wide movement.

During the years of war, Rudolf Steiner had put forward his epoch-making conception of Threefold Man and of the Threefold Social Order, on which was based the attempt, in the years 1913–21, to give shape to the social events of the time out of a deeper spiritual understanding. It was in the midst of this attempt that many practical activities, notably educational and medical, evolved under Dr. Steiner's guidance, bringing the truths of Initiation Science to bear on the concrete tasks of daily life. Thus in the year 1913 the Waldorf School had been founded at Stuttgart by Emil Molt, with Rudolf Steiner as its educational director. The quick development of the school attracted the attention of thoughtful men and women in England, many of whom had been impressed by Dr. Steiner's book on the social and international problems of the time, the first English edition of which, *The Threefold State*, had been published by Messrs. Allen and Unwin in 1920.

The sculptress Edith Maryon, one of Dr. Steiner's closest and most trusted fellow-workers at the Goetheanum, had in the past been linked by ties of friendship and common spiritual endeavour with the distinguished educationist Professor Millicent Mackenzie. Arising out of their correspondence. Professor Mackenzie arranged for a party of English teachers and educationists to visit Dornach at Christmas and New Year, 1921–22. Here, in the famous *Weisse Saal* of the Goetheanum, where the fatal outbreak of fire was discovered a year later. Rudolf Steiner gave a course of sixteen lectures for the special benefit of the visitors from England. Among those present were Miss Margaret Cross of The Priory

School, King's Langley, and also some of those who were to form, three years later, the College of Teachers of the newly founded school, now known as Michael Hall.

Miss Cross was a member of the 'New Ideals in Education' Committee, whose annual conference for 1922 was to be devoted to the subject of Drama and Education, in connection with the Shakespeare Festival. At her suggestion it was decided to invite Dr. Steiner, both as educationist and as a distinguished Goethe scholar, to take an active part. So then in April 1922 he spoke at Stratford-on-Avon, side by side with eminent representatives of English life and letters — John Masefield and John Drinkwater among others, also Professor Cornford and Sir Henry Newbolt. The interest aroused is shewn by the fact that Dr. Steiner was invited to give a third lecture in addition to the two original planned.

It was decided to arrange a more extensive conference at Oxford during the long vacation, where Rudolf Steiner would have the opportunity to speak at greater length, both on the theory and method of the Waldorf School and on the Threefold Order. Through the kind hospitality of Principal L. P. Jacks, who found in *The Threefold State* ideas akin to his own, the Conference on 'Spiritual Values in Education and Social Life' was held at Manchester College during the second half of August. The joint organizers were Professor Millicent Mackenzie and Mr. Arnold Freeman of the Sheffield Educational Settlement. Principal Jacks. was present at the beginning and gave the address of welcome. Among other well-known speakers who took part were Mr. A. Clutton Brock, Mr. C. Delisle Burns, Professor J. S. Mackenzie and Dr. Maxwell Garnett. During the morning sessions Dr. Steiner gave the course of nine lectures since published under the title *The Spiritual Ground of Education* and three further lectures on the social question. A group of Dornach artists gave Eurhythmy performances at Keble and there was also a small demonstration by children, to illustrate the part of Eurhythmy in education.

During his three visits to England in the year 1922 Dr. Steiner gave a number of other public and semi-public lectures — on the anthroposophical path of knowledge, on the knowledge of the Christ-Impulse, and on education. Some of these have since been printed. They include for example the memorable address on *The Mystery of Golgotha* given in Manchester College Chapel, Oxford, on Sunday evening, 27th August.

In the midst of these many activities, opportunities were also found for the members' lectures here reproduced. The different local groups which had been working side by side throughout the war were joining forces to create what afterwards became the 'Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain.' In the autumn of 1921 a small library-office and the use of a lecture-hall had been rented at Grosvenor Street from the Royal Asiatic Society, and it was here then that Dr. Steiner gave the first of these members' lectures. Meanwhile a more permanent headquarters was acquired at 46 (now 116) Gloucester Place. Save for the one at Oxford, the remaining lectures were given here. Dr. Steiner gave every encouragement to the efforts which were being made to enlarge the scope of the spiritual movement in this country, and to the practical activities arising from it.

We have translated freely, believing that a free translation will be most able to call forth an immediate impression of the words as Rudolf Steiner spoke them. It should be remembered that all the lectures to English audiences had to be interpreted as they were given; Dr. Steiner generally divided them into three sections, each of which was followed immediately by the interpretation. The resulting breaks are in most instances apparent. The present written translation is based on the full shorthand reports of the original. Though of outstanding excellence, these reports themselves are not free from occasional uncertainties.

The titles here chosen, for the series as a whole and for the single lectures, are not due to Dr. Steiner himself. All through the later years of his life he was lecturing frequently to the members of the Anthroposophical Society, at Dornach and wherever else he traveled, no special subject being indicated, as a rule, beforehand, except for conferences and other such occasions. We came to the lectures with unbounded expectation, knowing always that some fresh illumination would be given, some further insight awakened, concerning the spiritual world and its relation to human life.



# 1

## The Threefold Sun and the Risen Christ

*24 April 24 1922, London*

It is of the first importance that there should be in this present time a certain number of people who know where man stands in his spiritual evolution, and know also what must be his next Step if civilisation is not to go completely under. For what is happening today? In speaking to you, my dear friends, I can use anthroposophical terminology and say at once that the Ahrimanic forces, which are at work wherever man thinks or acts on a materialistic basis, are in our day trying to chain man to the Earth by gaining possession of his intellect. They are at this moment very powerful, these Ahrimanic forces, and they are searching out all kinds of ways to get access to the souls of men, with the object of enticing them to the adoption of a purely materialistic outlook, a purely intellectual understanding of the world. It is on this account important that there should be, as I said, a certain number of persons who know how the evolution of man has to proceed in order for him to reach his goal.

Let us look tack a little into the past. We could go back very much farther, but for the moment we need go no more than three or four thousand years before the Mystery of Golgotha. And then let us follow, from one point of view, the course of man's evolution since that epoch.

In the age of which I want first to speak, a civilisation flourished in the East that in my book "Occult Science" I have called the Ancient Persian civilisation. The teacher of mankind during the height of this civilisation was Zarathustra, Zoroaster. Not the Zarathustra of whom history tells; he lived later. The Zarathustra I mean is a much more ancient teacher of mankind. In those olden times it was, you know, quite a common custom for the pupils of a great and lofty teacher to continue for a long time to bear his name; and the Zarathustra we read of in history is in reality the last of a succession of pupils of the great Zarathustra. Now, this great teacher of mankind was initiated in a most wonderful and remarkable manner into the secrets of existence, and he could stand before the men of his time and teach them as an eminent and sublime initiate. Zarathustra knew — and it was his initiation that enabled him to have the knowledge — that in that place in the heavens whither our eyes are turned when we look

at the Sun, lives a great and all-embracing Spirit. He did not at first see the physical Sun at all; in the place in the heavens where we today with our ordinary consciousness see the physical Sun, Zarathustra beheld a great and omnipresent cosmic Spirit. And this cosmic Spirit influenced him in a spiritual way, whereby he was able to know that with the sunshine, with the rays that fall from the Sun upon the Earth, come also spiritual rays, rays of divine-spiritual grace and bounty, which enkindle in the soul and spirit of man that 'higher man' to which the ordinary man in us must continually aspire.

In those olden times initiates were not given names on any external grounds, their names came to them on account of what they knew. And so this sublime initiate of whom we speak was called by his pupils — and he also called himself — Zarathustra, Zoroaster, the Radiant Star; he was named from the radiant Godhead Who sends to Earth the rays of wisdom. The initiation of Zarathustra was, in relation to all initiations that came after him, more lofty and more sublime. When he looked upon the spiritual cosmic Sun, he was looking into the source of all the forces that make the stones on the Earth to be hard and solid, that make the plants to come forth from their seeds and grow, that make the animals; to spread abroad over the face of the Earth in their different kinds, and that make man to flourish and thrive upon the Earth. The oldest of the Zarathustra's, the Radiant Star, had knowledge of everything that took place on the Earth; and he had this knowledge because he was able to experience the Spiritual Being of the Sun.

Then came a time when man was no longer able to penetrate so deeply into the Mysteries of the worlds, — the time that I have named, in my *Occult Science*, after the civilisations of Chaldea and Egypt. Man still looked up to the Sun, but he no longer saw it as *radiant*, as sending forth rays; he saw it only as *shining*, as illuminating the Earth with its light. Men spoke in those times of Ra, whose representative on Earth was Osiris; Ra signified for them the Sun that moved round the Earth, giving light. Some of the secrets had been lost; the initiate was no longer able to see with full inner clarity the radiant cosmic God, as had the initiates of an older time. He could only see how the primal astral forces come from the Sun. Zarathustra saw in the Sun a Being, he was still able to see in the Sun a Being. The initiates of Egypt and of Chaldea saw in the Sun the forces that come to, the Earth, — forces of light, forces of movement. What they saw was deeds, — something inferior of Being; spiritual deeds, it is true, but not a



spiritual Being. And the Egyptian initiates spoke of One who represents on Earth the forces of the Sun that man carries within him; and they called him Osiris.

When we come to the age of Greece, we find that by the eighth, seventh, fifth century before the Mystery of Golgotha, man had lost all power of looking into the Mysteries of the Sun, he could see only the effect of the Sun's influence in the environment or the Earth. Man beheld the working of the Sun in the ether that fills all the space around the Earth. And this ether, that spreads out around the Earth and permeates also man himself, the Greek initiates — not the people generally, but the initiates — called Zeus.

There have been then these three stages in the cultural evolution of mankind. First there was the stage when the initiates beheld in the Sun a Divine-Spiritual Being; then came a second stage, when the initiates beheld the Sun's forces that are working there; and finally a third stage, when the initiates beheld only the influence of the Sun Being in the Earth's ether.

Now, there was in a later time a man who came as near to the teachings of initiation as it was possible to come in the time in which he lived, and who was acquainted with the teaching of these three aspects of the Sun — the aspect of the Sun according to Zarathustra, the aspect of the Sun that is associated with Osiris, and the aspect of the Sun as seen and understood by Pythagoras and Anaxagoras. I refer to Julian the Apostate. Julian the Apostate was not able himself to behold the Sun in all three aspects, but he knew of the teaching; he knew it as a tradition that had come down in the Mystery Schools. And so impressed was Julian the Apostate by this teaching of the three aspects of the Sun that to him that which Christianity brought seemed small in comparison. For he still knew of the inexpressible glory and splendour into which Zarathustra had gazed; he had learned to know also of the activities of fire and of light, of the cosmic chemical forces, and of the cosmic life-forces, as man had been able to behold them in the ancient Mysteries. Of all this he, Julian, could in his time still learn, — although only by tradition. And the whole teaching seemed to him so sublime, so mighty, that he found himself unable to accept Christianity. The thoughts and purposes of his mind were, in fact, turned in quite another direction. He seized with the desire to impart to mankind the ancient Mysteries into which he had himself been initiated up to a certain degree. And this, my dear friends, was what led at last to the unsheathing of the dagger that brought his life to a violent end. The hand that lifted the dagger belonged to one of those who counted it a sin to communicate the Lofty teachings of initiation to the general run of

mankind, and who wanted that people should hear the Sun spoken of in an external manner only, — that is, of course, in such external terms as were customary in that age.

Julian the Apostate declared that the Sun has three aspects: first, the aspect of the Earthly ether; secondly, the aspect of the light of heaven that is behind the Earthly ether, — which is the aspect also of the chemical, the warmth of fire, and the life forces; and lastly, the aspect of pure spiritual Being. For this he was put out of the way. And indeed it must be admitted that the moment had not yet come when mankind in general was ripe to receive such weighty and solemn truths.

A study of history can, however, bring to light something else in this connection, that is of very great significance. A good deal of this threefold teaching of Zarathustra, Osiris, and Anaxagoras — the teaching of the spiritual Sun; of the elemental Sun; and of Zeus, the Sun-flooded ether environment of the Earth — found its way into the external exoteric culture of Greece. And the world would never have had such a sublime Greek art, nor such a wonderful Greek philosophy, would never have had a Plato and an Aristotle, were it not that into the art and philosophy of Greece, streams from this ancient wisdom were able to flow. A time came, however, when the initiation truths that were handed down from past epochs were no longer sufficiently protected from profanation. Many teachings that had their source in initiation wisdom passed into the hands of distinguished Romans, more especially the Romans, more especially the Roman emperors. Among them all, perhaps of Augustus alone can it be said that he still knew how to value the initiation wisdom that was imparted to him. In the Roman world there was, generally speaking, no understanding for the esoteric factor in Greek art and Greek wisdom, no recognition that these contained elements which could be traced back to the very most ancient wisdom teaching. Consequently, the hopelessly prosaic, the semi-barbarous civilisation of Rome took over what we may call the surface brightness, the sheen, of Greek culture, but was quite incapable of handing on, in its true form, to later generations what lived at the heart of this culture. And so when Roman influences began to permeate the Christianity that had, ever since the Mystery of Golgotha, been making its way into the world, there was no possibility for Christianity to receive, along with all that came from Rome, the true essence of the ancient culture.

When I describe historical events in the way I have just been doing, you must not take it as an expression of blame or of criticism. It was necessary for the evolution of mankind that things should happen as they did. It is,

however, also necessary that we should not be blind to the fact that because Rome did not know how to value and guard initiation, the genuine initiation truths of earlier times have been prevented from finding their way over to the West. We must realise that we, as human beings possessing the ordinary consciousness of modern times, have been debarred from the sacred truths of olden times because Rome was unable to understand these truths. As we know, it was a man who hailed from Rome that drove out of Europe the last remaining Greek philosophers and obliged them to seek refuge in the East.

I have to call these things to mind; the consideration of the subject we have in hand made it necessary to begin by referring to them — taking our thoughts back, even if only for a brief while, to the far-off time when the spiritual teachers of man could still turn their gaze to the starry heavens and behold up there the threefold Sun. The only remnant of this knowledge that has been left for later generations is the symbol of it in the triple crown worn by the Popes of Rome. The outer symbol remains; the inner reality is lost. But through the new initiation of modern times, a way has, opened once again for man to look back into those earlier epochs of his evolution. This new initiation of which our anthroposophical teaching has to tell enables us to look back and behold how, it was for man, when he looked up from Earth to the Sun and listened to hear what the Sun should teach him of the mysteries of human evolution.



My dear friends, when the pupils of the old initiates looked out into the wide universe and spoke of what they saw living out there beyond the Earth in the workings of the Sun, yes, in the Sun itself, — when they spoke of the sublime Spirit-Being of the Sun as proclaimed by Zarathustra, they were speaking of the very same Being Whom, in these later times, we designate as Christ. So that we are adhering strictly to truth when we say that the initiates of olden times beheld the Christ outside the Earth in the Cosmos, in the Cosmos that has its centre and representative in the Sun. The real essence of the Mystery of Golgotha does not lie in the fact that it teaches of the Christ. The initiates of olden times also knew and taught of Him. Only, they spoke of Him not as living on the Earth, in the forces of the Earth, but as living within the forces of the Sun. It is a mistake to think that the old initiates did not speak of the Christ Being. Christ was spoken of continually before the Mystery of Golgotha, — as a Being who is outside and beyond the Earth. Men have lost sight of this truth and are apt to

regard the statement of it as unchristian. But why should such a statement be regarded as unchristian, seeing that the Early Church Fathers undoubtedly held this view? They said: "The wise men of olden times who are often described as heathen are, in a deeper sense, Christian. The Early Church Fathers did not hesitate to speak of the heathen as Christians before the Mystery of Golgotha."

What took place at the Mystery of Golgotha was really nothing less than that the Being Who, previously, was not to be found on Earth, Whom one could find only outside the Earth when one had been initiated into the Mysteries of the heavens, — this Being incarnated in Jesus of Nazareth, lived on Earth in Jesus of Nazareth, was crucified and laid in the Earth, and appeared to his initiated pupils as Resurrected — as One who has risen in the spiritual body. The great and sublime Sun Being descended from cosmic heights, descended to Earth — that is the event that came to pass in the Mystery of Golgotha. And when He had descended from spiritual worlds and passed through death, and His body had been laid in the Earth, then this same Christ — after His death, after His resurrection — had initiate pupils. And it is important that many should know today what Christ taught at that time to His initiate pupils; it is important that many should know of this teaching of the risen Christ, in order that they may be able to participate in the forces that are now at work for the further evolution of mankind.

Let us look back once more to the initiate of olden times. How did he receive his teaching? All initiates of olden times were instructed by Beings who were outside and beyond the Earth. And the instruction was carried out in the following manner. The pupils of the Mysteries were trained and prepared to be able to see when outside their body, and then through this kind of seeing they came to know Beings. We have spoken of how Zarathustra came to a knowledge of Christ as a sublime Sun Being. The initiates of old came to know also other Beings of the Hierarchies. And the language, the spiritual language that was used by a Being who descended in this way to teach the initiates, was a language by means of which, it was in those times still possible to impart teachings to men.

There were thus in olden time[s] divine teachers. And the Christ, — He was also such a divine teacher. For those to whom He gave instruction after His resurrection He was the divine teacher. And what He was able to teach them was new; it was more than what the earlier divine teachers taught.

The divine teachers of earlier ages spoke to men of the secrets of birth, but they did not speak of the secrets of death; for in the divine world whence the earlier divine teachers descended to teach the initiates of olden time, there were no beings who had undergone death. Death was something that could only be undergone on Earth by man. The Gods looked down and saw man who dies; their knowledge of death was an external knowledge merely. But Christ learned to know death on the Earth. For He did not merely become incorporated, shining forth in some human being at certain times, as was the case with the divine being teachers of long ago. Christ learned to know death inasmuch as He, a God, lived on Earth as a human soul in a physical human body. Thus, He learned to know death in actual reality. He *went through* death. And He learned also something more.

My dear friends, if the Christ had undergone only what took place from the time of the Baptism in Jordan until the time of the Crucifixion and the Death on the Cross, then, having undergone all this, He would still not have been able to speak of the Mysteries of which He did speak to His initiate disciples after His resurrection. I must explain to you that, to the divine teachers who were able to descend to Earth, and to the initiated teachers in olden times, all Mysteries were open in the whole wide world save only the Mysteries of the interior of the Earth. The initiates knew that down there within the Earth spiritual Beings hold command, of quite another kind than the Gods Who before the Mystery of Golgotha used ever and again to descend to human beings. The Greeks, for instance, were not unaware of the Spiritual Beings in the interior of the Earth; they called them in their mythology the Titans. But Christ was the first of the Upper Gods to learn to know the interior of the Earth. That is an important fact. The Christ, because He was buried in the Earth, brought knowledge to the Upper Gods of a region of which before They had no knowledge. And this secret, that the Gods too undergo evolution — this secret Christ communicated to His initiate pupils after His Resurrection. This secret Paul also learned through the natural initiation that he experienced outside Damascus. What stunned and shook Paul to the depths of his being was the knowledge that the Power that had formerly been sought in the Sun had now become united with the powers of Earth.

For what was the reason why Paul, when he was still Saul, persecuted the followers of Christ? The reason was, he had learned in the old Chaldean initiation that the Christ lives outside the Earth in the Cosmos, and that those who declare that Christ lives in the Earth are in error. But when Paul received enlightenment on his way to Damascus, at that

moment he knew that it was he himself who had been mistaken, in that he was ready to believe only what had hitherto been true. For now he saw that what had been true, had become changed; the Being Who dwelt formerly only in the Sun had now descended to Earth and continued to live in the forces of the Earth.

Thus was the Mystery of Golgotha, for the understanding of those who first made it known to men, not an event for Earth alone, but a cosmic event, an event for all the worlds. This was how it was understood in early Christian times. And the true initiates described the event in the following way.

They were deeply initiated, the earliest Christian initiates; and they knew that the Christ, Whom we think of today as the Being Who passed through the Mystery of Golgotha at the beginning of our era, — they knew that the Christ, Who came hither from the Sun, had also descended to the Sun from yet more distant heights. It was in the *Sun* that Zarathustra beheld Him. Then His power went over into the rays of the Sun. The initiates of Egypt beheld Him in the rays of the Sun. And then His power lived in the *environment of the Earth*. It was there that the initiates of Greece beheld Him. And now in this present time — so said the earliest Christian initiates — it is given to man to behold Christ as One Who walked on Earth in an earthly body, and Who is seen by us in His true form when we behold Him as the Risen One — the Christ Who is in the Earth, and has seen the Mystery of the Earth and can now bring it about that this Mystery shall gradually flow into the evolution of mankind.

There was a wonderful warmth and glow about the whole way in which this esoteric teaching was communicated, in scattered and lonely schools of initiation, during the first centuries after Christ, — coming over from the East and spreading continually westward by secret channels. Yes, make no doubt of it, there was verily such an esoteric teaching of Christianity. The Early Church Fathers knew more than is known today. But they saw also at the same time the attack that was threatening from the side of Rome. Modern historians have very little idea of the magnitude of that collision between the early Christian impulse and the anti-spiritual world of Rome. What the Roman world did was to throw a cloak of externality over the deepest Christian Mysteries.

The men of old had a living relationship to the powers of the Universe, such as is scarcely possible for us to imagine today with our ordinary consciousness. Men who lived three, four, five thousand years before Christ

knew quite well that when they ate this or that substance, it went on working in their body and brought the powers of the Cosmos to manifestation within them. Look, for example, at the kind of instruction Zarathustra gave to his pupils. He used to teach them in the following manner. "You eat the fruits of the field. These fruits have been shone upon by the Sun, and in the Sun lives the high and lofty Spirit Being. The power of the high Spirit Being, coming from the distant Cosmos, enters with the Rays of the Sun into the fruits of the field. You eat the fruits of the field; what the substance brings forth in you fills you with the spiritual forces of the Sun, when you enjoy the fruits of the field, the Sun 'rises' in you, I will tell you what you should do at Solemn festival times. Take something that has been prepared from the fruits of the field. Meditate upon it. Remember that the Sun is within it. Meditate upon it until the piece of bread becomes radiant to you. Then eat it, and be conscious of how the Spirit of the Sun has come from the vast Universe, has entered into you and become alive within you."

What is left of all this? Merely the outer expression of it, — the eating of the bread in the Mass and in the Communion Service. And those who continue to celebrate this rite in the spirit and understanding which Rome has introduced into Christianity are the very ones who oppose most fiercely any suggestion that man needs cosmic wisdom in order to understand the teachings of Paul; for Paul beheld the Radiance, raying inwards from the clouds, of that force which is the Power of the Sun, the super-corporeal Being, the Christ, Who in the Mystery of Golgotha descended to Earth, — the Cosmic Godhead united with the forces of the Sun. In the first three or four centuries of Christian evolution, a good deal was still known of this Mystery. Afterwards the external knowledge of the world gained such a hold upon man that it is hardly possible for us today, when we read the accounts that have come down to us of the first Christian centuries, to recognise from these how deeply spiritual was the early Christian conception of the Event of Golgotha. But now the time has come when it is of the highest importance for man to look back and call up once again in memory the spiritual understanding of Christianity that he had in the first centuries after Christ. Since that time man has gone through a development that has enabled him to attain a wonderful earthly wisdom. Through this he has become a free being. In olden times even the initiates were not free. When they wanted to work out of really deep impulses, they suffered themselves to be guided by the Gods. By the attainment of earthly wisdom, and by that alone, is man able to become free. In the near future

this will, however, have the result that the anti-divine, the anti-Christian forces, will be able to seize hold of the souls of men. These anti-Christian forces, — I call them the Ahrimanic forces.

We have in our day a highly developed science, but it is not yet Christianised. We talk a great deal about our civilisation and culture, but no one sees any occasion to Christianise the natural science upon which they are founded. It must, however, be Christianised; otherwise we shall be deprived of all that we stand in need of from the Cosmos. We shall lose it utterly. Long ago, when men were more sensitive, they were able to receive understanding along with the nourishment that they enjoyed. But as time went on, they became more and more estranged from the cosmic life. In the later part of the Egypto-Chaldean epoch of culture, the initiates were still able to speak of the forces of the Gods, — the forces that enter into plant and stone. And so there could arise in this time a science of healing and medicine. And as a matter of fact, our most effective remedies today come from that ancient epoch, little as people suspect it. Yes, in the realm of healing too, we shall have to turn again to the true sources of knowledge, and develop an art of medicine that is based on insight into the deeper forces of the things that are around us. It rests with modern initiation science to find the way. The anthroposophical movement is really there for nothing else than to impart to man that which is attainable for him today. For since 1879, the Dark Age — as the prophets of old called it — is past and over. All around us is the spiritual world, the living spiritual world that can reveal itself to us; we can perceive it and take cognisance of it. And it is for us to listen and hear what the spiritual world is revealing to us. That is the aim and purpose we have in view in this anthroposophical movement of ours; we want to make men attentive to the revelations of the spiritual world. Verily, that is a task and mission that is no affair of mankind alone, it concerns the cosmic worlds.

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My dear friends, when we begin to communicate single, concrete facts from initiation knowledge, we must not be surprised if one or another truth is met with ridicule and even scorn. Remember what I said at the beginning of my lecture, — that there is need today for persons who have clear and detailed knowledge concerning the evolution of mankind, there is need in the world today for persons who have acquired such knowledge from initiation science. And you will, I think, have seen from the descriptions that have been given, how important it is that we should not



rest content with the recognition of broad and general truths, but should bring these truths right into the everyday world of humanity, and let them come to life there. This we shall indeed be able to do, for the truths of initiation science have in them the vigour of life and can speak with strength and precision of the life of man on Earth. Let me give you an example.

During the time of one of the later Crusades there was living in a monastery in Italy a young monk, who was remarkably gifted and who devoted himself to a special study of the knowledge that came — not in writings, but handed on by word of mouth — from early Christian times. For such knowledge continued to live on for a long time as tradition, notably in some of the monasteries. An older monk would, for instance, impart it to a younger when they were alone together; and the young monk of whom I am speaking learned a great deal of early Christian knowledge in this very way. He then left Italy and joined the Crusade. He fell ill in Asia Minor, and while he was being tended, met a still older monk who had been initiated into the Mysteries of Christianity. As a result of this meeting, an intense longing was awakened in the young man to come to a real knowledge and understanding of the deeper Christian Mysteries, Then he died, out there in the East. And he was born again in our age, born again as a person in whom the forces that came from his earlier incarnation worked strongly and showed themselves in the following remarkable way. As I said just now, when one begins to speak on the ground of initiation knowledge about practical matters of life, it is really no more than can be expected if people turn it to ridicule. Nevertheless, it is absolutely necessary that this should be done in our day; and the time will come when we shall have the perception to see that things which are discerned spiritually can be spoken of as historical fact with the same directness and assurance with which we speak of the facts of external science. The personality of whom I speak is none other than Cardinal Newman. Follow the course of his life from youth upwards; look at the knowledge he possessed, read his own words. You cannot, I think, fail to see that in Cardinal Newman we have a strong personality imbued with a Christianity that is different from the Christianity of his environment. You will understand why he wanted to get away from the intellectual type of Christianity that he found around him, and dreamed of another kind of consciousness such as had been possessed by the first disciples of the Risen Christ. Follow his life further, note the significant words that he uttered at the time of his investiture, when he declared that there can be no salvation for religion, unless man receives a new revelation. Ponder it

all, and it will grow clear to you that this earnest seeking is born of a deep and powerful longing that had come over from former lives on Earth. The man sensed the presence and impulse of those spiritual forces of which I spoke in the second part of my lecture. He felt — if but dimly — that it might be possible in our day, by undergoing special development, to attain a new initiation knowledge to receive a new revelation. And yet he himself ultimately accepted for his understanding of Christianity — a tradition! I need not tell you whither his search led him; you can read the story for yourselves. He strives to reach through the "gloom" to a "light" that is beyond, but remains all the time within the cloud. A deeper knowledge of his being reveals to us that Newman was not really to blame for this, rather was he in this respect a sacrifice, a victim of his age, a victim of the Ahrimanic forces — as I named them just now. These Ahrimanic forces had an extraordinarily strong influence on Cardinal Newman; they fell upon him and took captive his power of thought, which was consequently unable to develop freely and find its way into spirituality. For he who would today unfold his life in freedom must first of all be free in his thinking, must liberate his power of thought from the bondage of the brain.

Ahriman achieves his greatest successes by shortening the second half of man's life after death. You know how a certain time elapses between death and a new birth. I have described in my Mystery Plays how this time consists of two halves, the second half taking its course after what I have called the Cosmic Midnight. It is this later half — the period from the Cosmic Midnight to the moment of new birth — that Ahriman tries to shorten. And by so doing he gets hold of the human brain and its thinking. With impetuous and savage energy, he fastens on the brain, and tries to hold men spellbound to the Earth. That is how the Ahrimanic forces are working today, — and in ever increasing measure; they try to bring man's power of thought ever more deeply into the earthly realm, away from the spiritual world. Human beings are thus incarnated one or two centuries too early. This method of attack on the part of the Ahrimanic forces must be overcome with spiritual energy and determination. At the time when Cardinal Newman was still holding the rudder of his life, he was even then incapable, for all his spiritual energy, of freeing his thought sufficiently, — or he would not have spoken as he did of the need for a new revelation, he would instead have found the way to it himself. We cannot omit from our considerations a person like Cardinal Newman when we are calling attention to the spirituality that can bring man in our age to a new life. For this spirituality will help men, as I have already indicated, to understand the Mystery of Golgotha. It will enable them to summon their fullest human

powers to its comprehension; and the Mystery of Golgotha shall then live within them, within their very inmost being. Speaking here in England, I have purposely cited Cardinal Newman as an example. The study of tragic figures such as his can bring home to us very forcibly the need of our time; and you will find many similar instances here in England. That is why it is so urgent that there should be understanding in this country of the need for that spiritual knowledge and spiritual life, from which Cardinal Newman was snatched away by the Ahrimanic forces. Spiritual knowledge and spiritual life must again be made accessible to mankind, if civilisation is to be saved from ruin.

Insight into such connections as we have been considering can stimulate in us the resolve to do all in our power for the furtherance of the spiritual life of mankind. There is really no other possible course for us today. Let us, however, not be blind to the fact that the Ahrimanic powers are very strong. The truth to which we would bear witness has fierce and stubborn enemies, who are inspired by these Ahrimanic powers. Stronger, and ever stronger grow these powers! I want to say this to you today, that you may not be taken aback when you find that as soon as the anthroposophical movement begins to stand forth in the world, it will have to fight continually and increasingly with terrific enemy forces. May my words rouse you, on the one hand to have insight into the will and intention that lies behind all our anthroposophical efforts, and on the other hand to be on your guard against attacks — which will often be grossly slanderous — from enemies who want to stifle this movement in the moment of its birth. Strong as these enemies may be, not a whit less strong must we be, — each one of us in the positive power of his own energy and initiative. The anthroposophical world-conception must be put before the world clearly and truthfully, even if in the way it is put forward it should often meet with misunderstanding, and with an inclination to distrust the aims and purposes of our movement.

It is therefore my earnest desire that there may be many among you who will be stirred and quickened to work unremittingly for the time when this spirituality, in spite of all that is being done to misrepresent and obscure it, shall prevail in the world. That you feel an urge to do so will mean that you are awake to the fact of how urgently necessary this spirituality is for the further evolution of mankind.

If, my dear friends, we have come a little nearer to one another in a common understanding of the inmost nature of the Being Anthroposophia, and of its importance for our age, then will this meeting for which we have

had to wait for some years, have borne fruit, borne indeed what I for my part shall be ready to recognise as good and beautiful fruit. Carrying this hope in our hearts, let us then resolve to remain together in soul, even when in terms of space we are far apart.



## 2

# The Cosmic Origin of the Human Form

22 August 24 1922, Oxford

Our subject for today will relate in a wider way to many of the spiritual truths which will be known to you as anthroposophists. You are no doubt familiar with the kind of description given, for example, in my book *Theosophy*, of the spiritual worlds through which man has to go between death and a new birth. Today I will tell of those spiritual worlds from a rather different point of view. For in *Theosophy*, *Imaginations* are mainly used to describe the world of soul and the world of Spirit through which man passes when he has gone through the gate of death to advance into a new life on Earth. In today's lecture I shall relate these things not so much from the standpoint of Imagination, but rather from the aspect which is revealed by *Inspiration*.

To gain some access to it for our understanding, we may take our start from the experiences which are ours during earthly life. At any given moment between birth and death, we are here in our physical body, face to face with the outer world. We should describe as ourselves, our human being, what is contained within our skin, within the confines of our physical body. No doubt we take this "human being" to include not only the anatomical and physiological data; we take it for granted that processes of soul and mind are also somehow going on in there. Yet, speaking of "ourselves," we generally have in mind what is contained within our skin, and now from here we look out into the world. There all around us is the world we call our "outer world." And as you know, we make mental images of this outer world. We have the outer world around us, and mirror-images thereof — or something like it — in our life of soul.

Now in the life between death and new birth the essence of the matter is that we are in this very world which, here on Earth, is external to us. All that is now your "outer world," including what you see in full, clear focus and what you but distantly divine, is then your inner world, — to that you say "mine I." Just as you now regard your lung as belonging to your I, so, between death and new birth, do you regard the Sun and Moon as your organs, — in other words, as being *in* you. The only *outer* world which you then have is you yourself, such as you are on Earth — your earthly organs.

Whereas on Earth we say; "In us — a lung; in us — a heart; outside of us a Sun, a Moon, a Zodiac," during the life between death and new birth we shall say; "In us — a Zodiac, in us the Sun, in us the Moon; outside of us, lung and heart." Between death and new birth all that we now carry inside our skin increasingly becomes our outer world, our Universe, our Cosmos. Our view of the relation between World and Man becomes completely opposite when we are living between death and a new birth.

When we live through death — when we go through the gate of death — we have a distinct picture, to begin with, of what went before, of how we were on Earth. True, it is only a picture, but it is like the outer world. This picture, then, shines forth in you to begin with. Thus in the first period after death you still have a consciousness of the man you were on Earth — consciousness in the form of earthly memories and earthly pictures. But these do not last long; ever increasingly you have this other outlook upon man: "I' is the World; the Universe is Man." This becomes ever more enhanced. Of course, you will not imagine that the human lung, for instance, looks the same as it does now; that would not be a sight to compensate for all the greatness and beauty of the Sun and Moon. Yet in reality, what lung and heart there *become* is vastly greater and more sublime even than Sun and Moon are, here and now, to human vision.

Only in this way do you gain an adequate idea of that which Maya is. People speak of Maya — the great illusion of this present earthly world — and yet they do not quite believe in what they say. Deep down, they cherish the belief that things are as they look to be to earthly eyes. But it is not so. The human lung as we now see it is a mere semblance; so is the heart. In truth, our lung is but a part — a mighty part — of our Cosmos; and even more so is our heart. The heart in its true essence is vastly greater and more majestic than any Sun.

Thus we begin to see an immense and sublime cosmic world arising — a world of which we speak in this way: Beneath us are the Heavens. In saying this, we mean: Beneath us is all that which is preparing the human head of the next incarnation. Above are, we then say, what *was* below. For it is all inverted. Above are all the forces which prepare man for his earthly walking — prepare him to stand firm on his two legs in the next earthly life.

All this can then be summed up in the saying: The nearer we approach a new earthly life, the more does this Universe which is Man contract for us. Majestic it is indeed, notably in the middle period between death and a

new birth. But now we grow increasingly aware of how this Universe, with all its erstwhile majesty and greatness, is shrinking and contracting. The planets which we bear within us — planets in their, weaving movement — become what then pulsates and surges through the human ether-body. The fixed stars of the Zodiac become what forms our life of nerves and senses. All this is shrinking, to become a body — spiritual to begin with, and then ethereal. And not until it has grown quite tiny, is it received into the mother's womb, there to be clothed with earthly matter.

Then comes the moment when we draw near to earthly life. Vanishing from us we now feel the Universe which until recently was ours. It shrinks and wanes, and this experience begets in us the longing to come down again to Earth, — once more to unite with a physical body on the Earth. For the great Universe we had before, withdraws, eludes our spiritual gaze; now therefore do we look to become Man again.

All this involves, however, quite another scale of time. Life between death and rebirth goes on for many centuries, and if a man is born, say, in the 20th century, his descent will have been prepared for gradually, even as early as the 15th century. All through this time moreover he himself has in a certain sense been working down into the earthly conditions and events.

A great-great ... grandfather of yours, way back in the 15th century, fell in love with a great-great ... grandmother. They felt the urge to come together, and in this urge you were already working in from spiritual worlds. And in the 17th century when a rather less distant great-great ... grandfather and great-great ... grandmother loved each other, you once again were in a sense the mediator. So did you summon all the generations to the end that at long last those should emerge who could become your mother and your father.

In that mysterious and intangible quality that pervades the relationships of earthly love, forces are indeed at work, proceeding from human souls who look for future incarnations. Therefore full consciousness and freedom are never there in the external conditions which bring men and women upon Earth together. These things still lie outside the range of human understanding,

What we call history nowadays is in the last resort far too external. Little is known to us in outer life today of the *soul-history* of human beings. Even as late as the 12th or 13th century A.D., souls of men felt very differently than they do now. Yet this is quite unknown. Not indeed as distinctly as I

have just been telling, but in a more dream-like way, the men and women of the 10th, 11th, or 12th century were aware of these mysterious forces working down to Earth from spiritual worlds, — working down, in effect, from human souls. Little was said in Western countries of repeated earthly lives — reincarnation — but there were human beings everywhere, who knew. Only the Churches always eschewed, not to say anathematized all thoughts about repeated lives. Yet you should realize that even as late as the 12th and 13th centuries there were not a few in Europe who were aware that man undergoes repeated lives on Earth.

Then came the time when mankind in the Western world had to go through the stage of intellectuality. For man must by and by acquire spiritual freedom. When the dream-like clairvoyance of olden time prevailed, there was no spiritual freedom. Nor is there freedom — there is, at most, belief in freedom — in those affairs of human life, governed, shall we say, by earthly love, of which we have been speaking. For here the interests of other souls, on their way down to Earth, are always mingled.

Yet in the course of earthly evolution mankind must grow freer, yet ever freer. For only by man's growing freer, will the earth reach her goal in evolution. Now to this end, during a certain period intellectuality was necessary. The period in question is, of course, our own. Look back into earlier times and conditions upon Earth, when human beings still enjoyed dream-like clairvoyance. Living in this dreamlike clairvoyance there were always spiritual beings. Man at that time could never say, "I have my own thoughts in my head," — that would have been quite untrue. In very olden times he rather had to say "I have the life of Angels in my head"; and then in later times: "I have the life of elemental beings in my head." Then came the 15th century, and at long last the 19th and the 20th. Now man no longer has spiritual beings in his head, but only thoughts — mere thoughts. And by not having any higher spiritual life but only thoughts in his head, he can make for himself pictures of the outer world,

Could man be free, so long as Spirits were indwelling him? No, he could not, for they directed him; everything was due to them. Man could only become free when spiritual beings no longer directed him — when he had mere pictures, mere images, in his thoughts. Thought-pictures cannot compel you to do anything. Say you confront a looking-glass; the mirror-images of other men may be howsoever ill-disposed, they cannot hit you, for they are not real — they are mere pictures. And if I am resolving on some action, I may cause the mirror-image in my thought to picture the resolve, but the picture can of itself make no resolve.



Thus in the epoch when intellectuality puts only thoughts into our heads, freedom is born, inasmuch as thoughts have not the power to compel, In that we hold our moral impulses simply in the form of pure thoughts — as described in my *Philosophy of Freedom* <sup>[1]</sup> — we can achieve true freedom in the present age. The intellectual age, therefore, had to be.

Yet, strange as it may sound, in essence this age is already past. The age in which it was right for man to develop mere intellectuality, mere thinking-in-images, has run its course. With the 19th century it has become a thing of the past. And if men now continue to develop mere image-thoughts, their thoughts will fall a prey to Ahrimanic powers. The Ahrimanic powers will then gain access to man, and having reached his freedom, man will lose it — lose it to the Ahrimanic powers. Mankind is at the threshold of this danger now. Mankind today is faced with the alternative: either to comprehend the spiritual life — to comprehend the reality of such things as I have been telling you today — or to deny them. And if man now persists in denying what is spiritual, he will no longer be able to think freely. On the contrary, Ahriman — the Ahrimanic powers — will then be thinking in mankind, and all humanity will undergo a downhill evolution.

Therefore it is in the highest degree necessary for an ever-growing number of human beings in our time to appreciate the need for a return to spiritual life. A feeling for the need to get back to a spiritual form of life, is what the men of today should try to awaken in themselves. For if they fail to seek for this, mankind will fall a prey to Ahriman. Seen from a higher standpoint, the situation of mankind on Earth today is no less grave than that, and we should put this thought before all others, testing all other thoughts in the light of this one.

So much for the first part of the lecture. If Mr. Kaufmann will now be kind enough to translate, I will then go on.

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Descriptions such as these may help illustrate the fact that the life we lead in the spiritual world between death and new birth is very different from that we undergo here between birth and death. Pictures, therefore, borrowed from the earthly life, however well conceived, will always be inadequate. Slowly and gradually we must be led to an understanding of the kind of reality that prevails in spiritual worlds. Let me give some examples.

Suppose a human being leaves his earthly body, and, with his life of soul and spirit, enters the world of soul and spirit. Suppose moreover that someone here on Earth, who has achieved Initiation-knowledge in the deeper sense, is able to observe human souls in their continued life after death. Much preparation is necessary to this end; also a certain Karma is essential, connecting the human being upon Earth with the one in yonder world. Now he must find some means of mutual understanding with the other soul. The spiritual experiences which I shall here be relating are not all easy to achieve. Generally speaking, it is far easier to describe the Universe in its spiritual aspect than to come near to a departed soul. People will with ease persuade themselves that it is not so difficult, yet in reality it is far more difficult to gain access to the dead than to achieve spiritual knowledge of other kinds.

I will now relate some characteristic features of the real intercourse with the dead. To begin with, we can only communicate with them by entering into such memories of the physical world as they are still able to evoke. For example, they still retain an echo of human speech, even of the particular language which was mainly theirs while on Earth. But their relation to language undergoes a change. For instance, in conversing with a soul who has died, one will soon observe that they have no understanding for substantives — for nouns. The living may address such words to the dead; the dead, if I may use this expression, simply do not hear them. Verbs on the other hand — words expressing action — these they will understand for a comparatively long time after death.

As a general rule you will only become able to converse with a soul who has gone through death if you know how to put your questions to him. You may have to proceed as follows. One day you concentrate on him as quietly as you are able. You try to live with him in something definite and real, for he has pictures in his soul rather than abstract notions. Therefore you concentrate on some real experience which he was glad to enter into during earthly life; thus you will gradually get near him.

You will not as a rule get an immediate answer to your question. You will very likely have to sleep on it — sleep on it, may be, several times, after some days you will get the answer. But you will never get an answer if you ask in nouns. You must take pains to clothe all nouns in verbal form. Such preparation is indispensable. He will most readily understand verbs, especially if you make them pictorial and vivid. The dead will never understand for instance the word "table," but if you imagine vividly what is astir while a table is being made — a process of becoming, therefore,

instead of a finished thing — then you will gradually become intelligible to him so that he apprehends your question and you get an answer. But the answers too will always be in verbal form, or may be not even that; they may only consist of what we on Earth should call interjections — exclamations.

Above all, the dead speak in the actual sounds of the alphabet — sounds and combinations of sound. The longer a soul has lived in the spiritual world after death, the more will he be speaking in a kind of, language which you can only make your own by cultivating a true feeling of discrimination even in the realm of earthly speech, insisting no longer on the abstract meaning of the words but entering into their feeling-content. It is as I was saying in the educational lectures here. With the sound *a* (*a*, pronounced as in *father*) we experience something like astonishment and wonder. Moreover we take the sense of wonder deep into our soul when we not only say *a*, but *ach*. (German or Scottish pronunciation of *ch* as in *Loch*. *Ach* is the German equivalent of the exclamation *Ah*) *Ach* signifies: "A — I feel wonder. The sense of wonder goes right into me: *ch*." And if I now put *m* before it and say *mach*, (*Mach*: German for 'make' or 'do.') I follow what awakens wonder in me as though it were coming nearer to me step by step — *mmm* — till at long last I am entirely within it. It is with this kind of meaning — meaning that issues from the sounds themselves — that the answers of the dead will often come. The dead do not speak English, nor do they speak German, nor Russian; their speech is such that only heart and soul can understand them, — if heart and soul are in the ears that hear. I said just now; the human heart is greater and more majestic than the Sun. Seen from the earthly aspect it is true, the heart is somewhere inside us, and will be no pretty sight if we excise it anatomically. Yet the real heart is there throughout the human being, permeating all the organs; so too it is in the ear,

We must get used to the heart-language of the dead, if I may so describe it. We get used to it in learning gradually to jettison all nouns and noun-like forms and live in verbs. It is the words of action and becoming which the dead still understand for a comparatively long time after death. Then, at a later stage, they understand a language that is no longer language in the ordinary sense, and what we then receive from them has first to be re-translated into an earthly language.

Thus as man grows out of his body and ever more into the spiritual world, his life of soul becomes altogether different. Then, as the time approaches for him to come down again to Earth, once more he has to

change his life of soul. For now the moment draws ever nearer, whereat he is confronted with a mighty task. He will himself now have to put together — first in an astral and then in an etheric form — the whole future human being who will one day be standing physically here on Earth. The tasks which we fulfil on Earth are external. For while our hands are at work, something external to us is always being made or altered. In the life between death and re-birth it is the inner being of our soul that is at work, putting the body together. Truth is, it only seems as if man came into existence by hereditary forces. In reality, only the outermost aspect of the physical body he then wears is due to heredity. He has to make for himself even the forms of his organs. I will give an example, — if one of you will kindly lend a glove.

On his way down towards a new earthly life, man, to begin with, still has the Sun and the Moon within him. But they begin to contract. It is as though you were to feel the lobes of your lungs shrinking within you. So do you feel your cosmic life and being, your Sun- and Moon-organ, shrinking. And thereupon, something detaches itself from the Sun and from the Moon. Hitherto, you had Sun and Moon within you, but now you have before you a kind of image of Sun and Moon. All glistening and luminous, you have before you two immense spheres — immense they are, to begin with. One of them is the Sun in spiritual form, the other is the Moon. The one is all alight and sparkling, the other glimmering in its own warmth, more fiery-warm, holding the light as though more egoistically to itself.

Now the two spheres which thus detach themselves from cosmically transmuted man — even from 'Adam Kadmon' who is a reality to this day — draw ever nearer to one another. We, on our way to Earth, say to ourselves: Sun and Moon are becoming one. Moreover it is this that guides us — far away back you must imagine it to be, even from our great-great-great-grandmother, great-great-grandmother, great-grandmother, grandmother and so on — guides us at last to the mother who will give us birth. Sun and Moon are our guides — Sun and Moon, drawing ever nearer to each other.

And thereupon we see another task before us. Far in the distance like a single point we see the human embryo that is to be. We see the single entity that has become of Sun and Moon, drawing near our mother. And now we see a task before us, which I can describe as follows. Take this (the glove) to represent what goes before us there — the Sun-and-Moon united. We are aware that when our cosmic consciousness will have vanished and we shall go through a phase of darkness (for so we do when

we dive down into the embryo after conception), then we shall have to turn inside-out this entity that goes before us. And as we do so a tiny aperture will arise, through which, as Ego, we shall have to go.

This, in its image, will then be there in our human body upon Earth. It is none other, my dear Friends, than the pupil of the human eye. For the one entity becomes two again, as though two mirror-images were to arise. These are the two human eyes: for they were once united — they were the united Sun-and-Moon, and thereupon they turned inside-out.

Such is the task which then confronts you. You do it all unconsciously. You turn the whole thing round and inside-out, and go in through the tiny aperture that remains. And then it cleaves asunder; *two* physical images become of it in the growing embryo. For the physical embryonal eyes are but images, representing what has thus become of Sun and Moon.

In this way we elaborate the several parts of the human body. Experiencing the entire Universe, we gather it and give to every item its destined form. What is thus formed in the Spirit, only then gets clothed and permeated with plastic material. It clothes itself in matter; as to the forces however, which have formed it, we ourselves had to develop them from the entire Universe.

For example, there is a time between death and new birth when we go through the Sun while the Sun is in the sign of Leo. (It need not be at birth; it can be farther back in time). We do not fashion then the eye of Sun and Moon which I described just now — we do that at a different time, — but we unite with the interior of the Sun. What do you imagine the interior of the Sun to be? If you could enter there, you would find it altogether different from what our physicists naively and unwittingly suppose. The interior of the Sun is no mere ball of gas; it is in fact something less than space — a realm where space itself has been taken away. If you begin by imagining an extended space in which some pressure is prevailing, you must conceive the interior of the Sun rather as a realm of suction. It is a *negative space* — space that is emptier than empty. Few people have an adequate idea of what this means. Now when you go through there, again you have a definite spiritual experience which you are able to elaborate and work upon, and as you do so it becomes the form of the human heart. Not only is the form of the eye made of Sun and Moon; the heart form too is fashioned from the Sun. But this is only possible when the Sun contains forces which issue from it as from the constellation of Leo.

So does man build his entire body both from the movements of the stars and from the constellations of the stars in the great Universe. The human body is indeed an image of the world of stars. Much of the work we have to do between death and new birth consists in the building of our own body from the Universe. Man as he stands on Earth is indeed a shrunken Universe. Science is so naive as to suppose that the human form is produced from the physical germ-cell alone. Suppose a man is looking at a magnet-needle, one end of which always points to the North and the other to the South. Perhaps another man to whom this is explained does not believe it, but begins looking for the cause inside the magnet-needle only, failing to see that the whole Earth is acting as a magnet. It is no less naive when someone thinks that man originates from the physical human germ-cell, whereas in fact he springs from the entire Universe. Moreover his life of soul and spirit between death and re-birth consists in working with the spiritual Beings — working at the super-sensible form of man, which is created first in the ethereal and astral realm and only then shrinks and contracts till it is able to be clothed in physical material. Man in reality is but the scene of action of what the Universe, and he himself with his transmuted powers, do thus achieve when the physical body in its true nature is being formed.

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Such then is the development man undergoes. It begins with language when he no longer uses nouns but finds his way into another and more verbal form of speech. Thence he goes on to an inner beholding of the world of stars, until at last he lives right in the starry world. Then he begins to detach from the world of stars what he himself is to become in his next incarnation. Such is man's pathway: out of the physical, via the transmutation of language into the spiritual, and then on the returning journey transmuting the Universe once again into Man. Only if we can understand how the soul-and-Spirit, having thus lost itself in language, becomes one with the world of stars and then recovers itself from the world of stars, — only then do we apprehend the complete cycle of human life between death and a new birth.

These things, dear Friends, were still clear to many people at the time when the Mystery of Golgotha took place on Earth. At that time the idea did not prevail that Christ Jesus was, first and foremost, the Being whom they saw developing on Earth. They thought of Him as One who until then had belonged to the self-same world to which man himself belongs during

the life between death and new birth. Therefore they pondered on the question: How did He descend from thence and enter into the life of Earth? It was the Roman world which then exterminated Initiation-Science. Only the dogmas should remain — such was their intention. There was in Italy in the 4th century of our era an actual organization, a specific body of people who left no stone unturned in seeing to it that the old methods of Initiation should not be transmuted into new ones. There should be left to men on Earth only the knowledge of the outer physical world, while of the super-sensible there should be no more than dogmas — dogmas which men would by and by receive as mere concepts into their intellectual life, till at long last they would no longer even have the power to conceive and understand, but only to believe them. So was the knowledge, which had in fact existed at one time, rent asunder into a knowledge of the earthly world alone, and on the other hand a mere faith, a mere belief in another world, till even this is so attenuated that for one group of believers it is a set of dogmas they do not understand, while for another it is no more than a *point d'appue*; there must be something to start from, to have any faith at all. For in effect, what is the substance of a modern man's belief, when he no longer holds to the ancient dogmas about the Trinity? He believes in something vaguely spiritual; the content of his belief is altogether nebulous.

We now need to return to a genuine perception of the Spiritual, into which we can enter livingly and fully. We need once more a Science of Initiation, able to relate such things as you have heard today of the human eye, — that we should look at it with wonder, for it is verily a shrunken Universe. This is no mere figure of speech; it is real and true, and as I have been explaining. For in the life between death and new birth this eye of ours was single, and from the unity it was — merging the images of Sun and Moon — it was then turned inside-out.

Truth is, we have two eyes because if it were our nature to see with a single eye like the Cyclops we could not attain to Egohood in an outward and visible world; we should attain it only in the inner world of feeling. Helen Keller for example has quite a different world of feeling and ideation than other people; she is only able to make herself understood because language has been taught her. We could never reach the idea of 'I' without being able to lay our right hand over our left, or, more generally speaking, to bring any two symmetrical members into coincidence. Thus in a subtle way we reach the idea of 'I' inasmuch as we cross the axes of vision of our

two eyes when focusing upon the outer world. Just as we cross our hands, so do we cross the two axes of vision of our eyes: whenever we look at anything we do so.

Materially two, our eyes are one in spirit. This single spiritual eye is located behind the bridge of the nose. It is then reproduced in a twofold image — in the two outer eyes you see. By being left-and-right-hand man, man is enabled to feel and be aware of himself. If he were only right or only left — if he were not symmetrically formed — all his thinking and ideation would merge into the world; he would not become self-possessed in his own 'I'.

In that we weld the twin images of Sun and Moon into one, we get ready for our coming incarnation. It is as though we were saying to ourselves: You must not disintegrate into the wide world. It is no use to become a Sun-man and have the Lunar man there beside you. You must be one; but you must also be able to feel your own oneness, you must be aware of it. So then you form the single Sun-Moon eye of man, which in its metamorphosis becomes the eye as we now bear it. For our two eyes are the twin images of the single archetypal Sun-Moon eye of man.

These are the things I wished to say to you today, my dear friends, about the kind of experience we have when we are in the spiritual world, — so very different from our experiences in the physical. They are related to one another none the less, but the relationship is such that we are turned completely inside out. Suppose that you could take the human being as you see him here and turn him inside out so that the inside of him — the heart for instance — would become outer surface. Physical man, you will readily believe, could not stay alive under these conditions. But if one could do this, taking hold of him in the inmost heart and turning him inside out like a glove, then man would not remain man as we see him here; he would enlarge into a Universe. For if we have the faculty to concentrate in a single point within the heart and thence to turn ourselves inside out in spirit, we simply do become the Universe which in the normal course we experience between death and a new birth. Such is the secret of the inner man. It is only in the physical world that he cannot be turned inside out. The heart of man however is in effect a Universe turned inside out, and that is how the physical and earthly world is really joined to the spiritual. We must get used to the 'turning inside out.' If we do not, we gain no real idea of how the physical world which surrounds us here is related to the spiritual world. These are the things which I was wanting to impart today.





### 3

## Man's Life in Sleep and After Death

*30 August 1922, London*

When we can meet so seldom, one has naturally the desire to put as much as possible into a lecture, and it may sometimes happen that one gives perhaps too much. I intend nevertheless making the bold attempt to give you today a description from one point of view of what may be called the *other side* of man's earthly existence; and I want to make clear to you at the same time the importance and significance for our age of this deeper kind of knowledge, — this spiritual knowledge.

How much, after all, does man know ordinarily of his existence here on Earth? What can his senses and his sense-bound intellect tell him? With ordinary consciousness he is conscious only of his waking life, Yet it is surely not without meaning that the guiding Spiritual Powers of the World have inserted into man's life on Earth the condition of sleep.

Between the time of falling asleep and the time of awaking a very great deal takes place. In fact, of all that the Spirit has to accomplish on Earth through man, by far the greater part is accomplished during sleep. As long as we are awake, what happens on Earth through us is limited to what we do, — either to ourselves or to the things that are around us. When we go to sleep, however, another activity begins. Whilst we are asleep, lofty Spiritual Beings work upon the human soul, with the object of bringing man to his full and complete evolution in Earth existence,

It is possible for one who has acquired modern initiation knowledge to have clear and detailed insight into the significant events that take place during sleep. We must not of course make the mistake of imagining that these events take place for the initiate alone; they are experienced by all human beings alike. Indeed, human evolution is entirely dependent upon these events that happen with us between the moment of falling asleep and the moment of awaking. The difference with the initiate is just this, — that he is able to draw our attention to these events. And it is increasingly important that all who give any thought at all to the meaning of existence on Earth should be alive to the significance of what happens in sleep.

Let me now sketch for you in bold outline the influences that play into the sleep of man. Suppose someone goes to sleep. As you know, we describe the process in the following way. His astral body, we say, and his I loosen themselves from the physical body and the ether-body, and are in the Spiritual World; they no longer permeate the physical and etheric bodies as they do in the waking state. But when we try to go a little further and form a picture of what really takes place with man during the condition of sleep, we find that it is necessary first to come to a clearer perception of the nature of man's connection with the Earth during waking hours. How is man connected with the Earth while he is awake? First of all, through his senses. With the aid of his senses, he perceives and cognizes the phenomena of the various kingdoms of Nature. But this is not all. Man is also connected with the Earth through activities he performs unconsciously, — unconsciously, that is, even while he is awake. Man breathes, for instance, and is thus connected with the whole Earth. The whole Earth plays into the air man takes in with his breath. In the air he breathes, countless substances are present in a highly rarefied condition. And the very fact that they are present in this rarefied state enables them to exercise an influence that is of no small importance when they are received through the breath into the organism of man. What man perceives with his senses enters into him consciously; but subconsciously, even during waking life a vast amount enters into man that is more substantial than what enters him by the more tenuous and ideal paths of perception and thought. By way of the breath man's environment comes into him in a more material and substantial manner. Nor need I remind you of how utterly dependent the human organism is on what it receives in the way of earthly nourishment. So that altogether we have to recognise many influences working from the Earth upon the awake human being.

We are not, however, at present pursuing the study of that any further; what concerns us today is the influences that work upon man in sleep. And here we find that whereas during waking hours man stands in connection with external earthly substances, when he passes over into sleep, he comes into a certain connection with the whole Cosmos. I do not mean to imply that man's astral body assumes every night the vastness of the Cosmos. That would be an exaggeration. It is nevertheless a fact that every night man grows out into the Cosmos. Just as here on Earth we are connected with the plants, with the minerals, with air, so are we connected in the night with the movements of the planets, and with the constellations of the fixed stars. From the moment we fall asleep, the starry heavens become our world, even as the Earth is our world when we are awake.

Coming now to describe rather more in detail how we take our way after falling asleep, we find we can distinguish different spheres through which we pass. First comes the sphere where the I and the astral body — that is to say, the soul of man as it finds itself in sleep — feel united with the movements of the World of the planets. When we wake up in the morning and slip into our physical body, we have in us, as we know, our lungs, our heart, our liver, our brain. In the first sphere with which we come in contact after falling asleep — and it will also be again the last sphere we enter before awaking — we have in us the forces of the movements of the planets. This does not mean of course that we receive into us every night the entire planetary movements; we carry within us a little picture, as it were, wherein the movements of the planets are reproduced. And this picture is different for each single human being. That, then, is the first experience every one of us encounters after falling asleep. We follow, as it were, with our astral body all that happens with the planets, as they move out there in the wide spaces of the Universe; we experience it all in our astral body in a sort of planetary globe.

Perhaps you will say: But how does this concern me, if I cannot perceive it? True, you do not see it with your eyes, nor hear it with your ears. But no sooner have you passed over into the condition of sleep than the part of your astral body which belongs in waking life to your heart, becomes for you an eye, — becomes, in very fact, what we may call a heart-eye; and with this heart-eye you 'see' what is now taking place. For present-day mankind, the perception is a very dim one. Nevertheless it is more assuredly there; the heart-eye perceives the experiences of this first sphere of sleep.

Very soon after you have fallen asleep, the heart-eye begins also to look back at what has been left lying in bed. Your ego and astral body look back with the heart-eye upon your physical and etheric bodies. And the picture of planetary movements that you are now experiencing in your astral body, rays back to you from your ether-body; you behold a reflection of it in your ether-body.

Present-day man is so constituted that as soon as ever he wakes up, he immediately forgets the dim consciousness that he had in the night by means of his heart-eye. There are however, dreams in which we can catch, as it were, an echo of it. Such dreams are astir with an inner movement that is reminiscent of the planetary movements. Then into these dreams

come pictures from real life; but that is only when the astral body has begun to dive down into the ether-body, which latter carries and preserves for us the memory of our life.

Let me describe for you something that can easily happen. You wake up in the morning, having passed again on your return through the sphere of the planetary movements. Let us suppose that you have experienced a particular relationship between Jupiter and Venus. Such an experience must be intimately connected with your destiny, otherwise you would not have it; and if you could bring the experience back into life — into your ordinary day-time life — it would shed a wonderful light on your faculties and capabilities. For the fact is, these faculties of ours are not of the Earth, they have come hither from the Cosmos. According as is your connection with the Cosmos, so are your gifts and talents, so is your goodness, — or, at any rate, so is your inclination to good or to evil. If you could bring back into day-life the experience of which we were speaking, you would be able to see what Jupiter and Venus were saying to one another, for you would see what you had seen in the night with your heart-eye, — I could equally well say, heard with your heart-ear, for these finer distinctions do not exist for the experiences of sleep. Since, however, all this is only very dimly perceived, it is forgotten. But the result of the experience remains in your astral body; the mutual relationship between Jupiter and Venus produces a corresponding movement within your astral body. And now there mingles with it some experience you had long ago, perhaps when you were 17 or 25 years old, — let us say at noon one day, in Oxford, for example, or in Manchester. The pictures of this long-past experience of yours intrude themselves into the cosmic experience; the two get mixed up together. As you will see, therefore, the pictures that are given us in dreams have a certain significance, yet are not the essential part of the dream; they are like a garment that weaves itself around the cosmic experiences.

Now, through this whole experience that comes to you in the way I have described, runs a vein of anxiety. In almost every case it is accompanied by a more or less intense feeling of anxiety, — anxiety, that is, of a spiritual nature; and particularly at the moment when the cosmic experience sounds back, shines back, to the soul from the ether-body, Suppose the influence due to a certain relationship between Jupiter and Venus is raying back to you from your ether-body, and one ray — I call it quite simply one ray, but it tells ever so much to your heart-eye! — one ray comes back from your forehead, while a second, that comes from the region below the heart, mingles its music and its light with the first. In every human soul that is not completely hardened, this will give rise to the feeling of anxiety

and apprehension of which I have spoken. The soul will be constrained to say to itself in sleep: The cosmic mist has enveloped me, it has received me into itself. We feel indeed as though we ourselves are becoming as dim and as nebulous as the cosmic mist, as if we are now nothing but a cloud of mist floating in the Mist of the Worlds. Such is the character of the first experience that meets the soul after falling asleep.

And then another feeling begins to arise in the soul. Out of this first experience, where we are anxious and apprehensive, feeling ourselves to be no more than a little wave of mist within the Mist of the Worlds, another mood develops within us, a mood of devotion to the Divine, devotion and surrender to the Divine that fills the Universe and pervades it.

This then is how it is with us, my dear friends, in the first sphere into which we come after falling asleep. Two fundamental feelings live in our soul; I am in the Mist of the Worlds, — I would fain rest in the bosom of the Godhead, that I be safe and protected and dissolve not away in the Mist of the Worlds. This is moreover an experience which the heart-perception must needs carry over into waking life in the morning, when the soul dives down again into the physical and ether bodies. For if this experience were not brought over, then the substances we take as nourishment during the day would assume within us their own completely earthly character and throw our whole organism into disorder. And this applies not only to what we eat but to all the substances that undergo within us the process of metabolism. For even if we go hungry, substances are nevertheless continually being taken — in this case, from our own body — and worked upon through metabolism.

Sleep has, as you see, my dear friends, immense significance for the waking condition. And we can only record our acknowledgment of the fact that in this epoch of evolution it is not left to man himself to see that the Divine forces are carried over into waking life. For it would go hard with human beings as they are in the present age, did it rest with them to bring these influences in full consciousness from the other side of existence and bear them into the waking life of day.

And now man comes into the next sphere. This does not mean, he leaves the first; no, for the heart-perception it is still there. This next sphere, which is a much more complicated one, is perceived by another part of the astral body, — the part which belongs in waking life to the solar plexus, and to the whole limb organisation of man. The part of the astral body that permeates the solar plexus and the arms and legs is now the organ of

perception, and with the aid of this organ man begins to feel the forces in his astral body that come from the Signs of the Zodiac. These are of two kinds — the forces that reach him from the Zodiac direct, and the forces that have first to pass through the Earth. For it makes a great difference whether a particular sign is above or below the Earth.

Man has therefore in this second Sphere what we might call a solar or Sun-perception. He perceives with the part of his astral body that is associated with the solar plexus and the limbs, — an organ of perception that can rightly be called a Sun-eye. And by means of his Sun-eye man becomes aware of his relationship, not now merely, as before, with the planetary movements, but with the entire Zodiac. The picture you see, is widening; or rather, man himself is growing out further into the picture of the Cosmos. And here again, man is able to behold a reflection of the experience when he looks back on his own physical and etheric bodies.

Every night it is thus given to man, — that is to say, to the part of him that goes out of the body — to come into relationship with the whole Cosmos; first, with the planetary movements, and then with the constellations of the fixed stars. In this latter experience — which may come half an hour after falling asleep, or rather later, but with many people comes quite soon — man feels himself within all twelve constellations of the Zodiac. And the experiences he encounters with the constellations are exceedingly complicated.

I verily believe, my dear friends, you might have traveled far and wide and visited the most interesting and important regions of the whole Earth, and yet not have had such an amount and variety of experiences as your Sun-eye affords you every night in connection with one single constellation of the Zodiac. For the men of an older time, who still possessed in full force the powers of clairvoyance and could perceive in a dreamlike consciousness very much of what I have been describing to you, the experiences of sleep were less bewildering. In our time it is exceedingly difficult for man to attain with his Sun-eye to any degree of clarity in regard to this complicated twelvefold experience of the night. He needs to do so, even if by day-time he has forgotten all about it; but he hardly can unless he has received, with the understanding of the heart, knowledge of the Christ and of all that the Christ willed to become for the Earth in that He passed through the Mystery of Golgotha. If we have once felt what it means for the life of the Earth that Christ has gone through the Mystery of Golgotha, if in our ordinary waking life we have thought about the Christ, then our astral body is able to receive via the physical and etheric bodies, a

certain tincture or quality which brings it about that Christ becomes our Guide and Leader through the Zodiac during sleep. For, as in the sphere of the planetary movements, so here again a feeling of anxiety comes over man. He feels: What if I lose myself in the multitude of the stars, and in all the manifold happenings that take place among them! But if he is then able to look back upon thoughts and feelings and impulses of will that he has directed in waking life to the Christ, then Christ becomes for him a Guide, bringing order into the bewildering events of this sphere. And so the fact is brought home to us that only when we turn our attention to the other side of life, are we able to appreciate the full significance of the Christ for the life of Earth, as it has been up till now; and as for what the Christ has yet to become for the life of Earth, — no one within the ordinary civilisation of the present day can really understand this.

There are of course few among us who can be said to go through the experiences of sleep aright; and these experiences are often given a false interpretation. Human beings who have not come in touch with the Christ Event bring these experiences of the night into the waking consciousness of day-time in a disordered and confused manner. We can understand how this happens when we know what it is that really takes place with us during sleep. As we have seen, when we have passed through the sphere of existence where we are enveloped in mist or cloud, we find ourselves approaching a world that confuses and amazes us. Here it is that the Christ appears before us as a spiritual Sun and becomes our Guide; and then all the confusion resolves itself into a kind of harmony that we hear and understand. That this should be so, that we should have in the time of sleep the Christ for our Guide, is a matter of the very greatest importance for us. For, the moment we enter this sphere and begin to have all around us the living interplay of constellations of the Zodiac and movements of the planets — at this moment we encounter also our *Karma*. With our Sun-eye we behold our Karma. Yes, it is indeed so, every human being has sight of his Karma — in sleep. All that is left of the perception in waking life, is a kind of faint echo vibrating in the feelings.

Suppose a man has begun to tread the path of self-knowledge. He will find perhaps that his soul is imbued at times with a mood and attitude to life that are like a distant echo of the experience he has had in sleep, where the Christ came forward as his Guide and led him in the night from Aries through Taurus and Gemini, etc., making plain to him the World of the Stars, so that he has returned with renewed strength to the life of day. For that is the marvellous experience that awaits man in this sphere, None other than the Christ Himself becomes his Guide through the bewildering



events of the Zodiac, going before him and pointing the way from constellation to constellation, that he may be able to receive into his soul in their right order and harmony the forces he needs for waking life.

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Such then is the experience man undergoes every night between falling asleep and awaking, — an experience he owes to the fact that his soul and spirit have kinship with the Cosmos. For, even as he is related to the Earth with his physical and etheric bodies, so with his soul and spirit, with his astral body and Ego, is man related to the Cosmos. And when he has come away from his physical and etheric bodies and has grown out into the cosmic world, and the experiences he undergoes there shine back to him, in a kind of inner picture, from the part of him that remains in bed, he feels very deeply connected with the Cosmos and would, in fact, be strongly drawn to go still further out, to go out beyond the Zodiac, — were it not for the presence of another force that draws him back. On account of this other element that enters into all the experiences that befall man during sleep, it is not possible for him, between birth and death, to go out beyond the Zodiac. We have here to do with an influence of an entirely different kind and quality, the influence, namely, of the Moon.

The effect of the influence of the Moon is to tinge the whole Cosmos during the night — and this happens even at the time of New Moon too — with a certain substantiality. This substantiality man experiences, in addition to all else. He feels how the Moon forces hold him back within the world of the Zodiac and bring him again to the moment of awaking. Even in the very first sphere he enters after falling asleep, man already divines dimly within him the presence of this influence; he begins to be acutely sensible of it in the second sphere, where he has a powerful and vivid experience of the mysteries of birth and death. The organ for this experience lies much deeper within man than the heart-eye or even the Sun-eye; it may be said to extend over and involve the entire man. With this organ, man experiences every night how he came down as soul and spirit from the world of soul and spirit, how he entered through birth into a physical existence, and how his body is gradually passing over into death. For the fact is, we overcome death, until the time when death really occurs as a final event. Something else too is associated with this experience. The very forces that enable us to experience how the soul goes on its journey through the earthly and bodily reveal to us also in the same moment our connections with the rest of mankind.

I would have you mindful of the fact, my dear friends, that even a most insignificant meeting or contact with another human being is not without its place and connection in our whole destiny. And whether the souls, with whom we have been together in some past Earth life or with whom we are connected in this present life, are now in the spiritual world or are with us here on Earth, all that we have had to do with one another as man to man, all human ties, intimately related as these are to the secrets of birth and death, show themselves now to the spiritual eye, if I may call it so, of the entire man. And as all this comes before our view, we feel we are indeed standing within the stream of our whole life-destiny.

This has to do with the fact that whereas all other forces — the forces of the planets and of the fixed stars — tend to draw us out into the distant Cosmos, the Moon wants to place us once more into the world of men. The Moon draws us away from the Cosmos. The Moon has forces that are directly opposed to the forces both of Sun and of Stars; it ensures for us our kinship with the Earth. It is accordingly the Moon that brings us back every night, — drawing us away from the Zodiac experiences into the experiences of the planets, and thence into the experiences of Earth, taking us back once again into our physical body.

Here you have the difference, from one point of view, between sleep and death. When man goes to sleep, he remains still in close connection with the forces of the Moon. The forces of the Moon point out to him every night afresh the significance of his life on Earth. This is made possible by the fact that he can see in his ether body the reflection of all his experiences of the night. At death, however, man withdraws his ether body from the physical body. Then begins, as you know, the memory that looks back over the last Earth life. The ether body expands and fills for a few days the cosmic cloud of which I have spoken. I told you how every night we live our way as cloud, as mist, into the Mist of the Worlds. In the night this cloud of mist which we are, is there without the ether-body; but when we die, our ether-body is present with it for the first few days. Then the ether-body gradually dissolves away into the Cosmos, memory fades and disappears, and we have — instead of a reflection of star experiences thrown back from the part of us we left lying in bed — we have now after death an immediate inner experience of the movements of the planets and of the constellations of the fixed stars.

You can read in my book *Theosophy* a description of these experiences from another point of view. You have there a description of what man finds, as it were, around him between death and new birth. But just as

here on Earth you would not have around you colours and sounds, for instance, unless you had in your body eyes and ears, and unless you could breathe and had within you lungs and a heart, so neither could you after death perceive around you what you find described in my book as "soul world" and "spirit land," unless you had within you Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Aries, Taurus, Gemini, etc. These are within you, they are your organism, your cosmic organism by means of which you experience after death. And the Moon cannot now bring you back, for it could only bring you back to your ether-body, and that has dissolved away into the Cosmos.

Man has however even after death something left in him of the force which he inherits from the Moon, enough to enable him to remain for a season in the soul world, with gaze still fixed upon the Earth. Then he passes on to spirit-land, and here he feels and knows that he is undergoing an experience where he is beyond the Zodiac, beyond the Heaven and the Fixed Stars. Such is the course of man's life in the time between death and new birth.

I could also give you another description of man's nightly journey to the spiritual world, describing it for you in a picture. Only, you must beware of taking the picture too literally, for, as you know, it is well nigh impossible to express these things in earthly concepts. Nevertheless it is a true picture that I am giving you, and it will help you to follow this journey in all its detail.

Imagine before you a meadow. From each single flower on the meadow — from the flowers too that blossom on the trees around — a spiral rises and goes out and out into cosmic space. These circling spirals carry the forces whereby the Cosmos fosters and regulates the growth of plants on Earth. For plants do not grow merely out of their seed; they need also for their growth the cosmic forces that surround the Earth with their spirally directed influences. And the cosmic forces are there in winter too; they are there even in the desert where no plants grow. When night comes for man, he has to use these spiral forces as a kind of ladder whereon he may mount up into the realm of the planetary movements. Man ascends into the movements of the planets on the ladder of the spiral rays that circle upwards from the plants. And then there is another force, the force that makes the plant shoot upwards from its root, — for there must be a force at work, to enable the plant to grow *upwards*. With the aid of this force man is carried up into the second sphere that I described.

Recall for a moment those experiences I related to you, where man comes into a state of anxiety, and feels: I am no more than a tiny cloud of mist in the great Mist of the Cosmos, — I must rest in the bosom of the Godhead. If we would relate this experience of the soul to the conditions within which we live on Earth, we would have to express it in the following way. It is as if the soul would say: I rest in the blessing of the Cosmos as it hovers over a cornfield that is just opening into flower, I rest in the blessing of the Cosmos as it hovers over a meadow whose blossoms are unfolding to the light. For what is it that sinks down to the plants in spiral lines of force? It is the bosom of the Godhead, quick and instinct with life, the same within which man finds himself sheltered and enclosed every time he falls asleep.

The Moon, on the other hand, leads man back to the animal aspect of his nature. The forces of the plants tend perpetually to carry him out — farther and farther out into the wide universe. But man has also in his make-up something that he shares with the animal kingdom, and because of this the Moon is able to bring him back again every morning, — back into his own animal nature.

Here, then, you have a picture of man's connection with the Cosmos, and of its influence upon him during sleep. We can carry the picture a little further. With the heart-eye, the Sun-eye and the eye that is entire man, we may experience in sleep the kind of feeling to which we are accustomed in waking life when we are drawn into an intimate and near relationship with some other person. It is not said to us in words, nor do we reason it out. The plants it is who tell us of it; we hear of it from the plants that lift us up, as though on a spiral ladder, into the world of the planets, whence we are sent forth again into the world of the Zodiac.

If we wanted to put into words what we experience in this way, we could say: I have a relationship to this person; the lilies tell me so, the roses tell me; the power of the rose, the power of the lily, the power of the tulip has moved me to experience this relationship. Thus does the whole Earth become a book of life which interprets for us the world of the human soul, — that world into which we have to find our way as we go through our life,

Now, these experiences that come to man during sleep have not always been the same, they have varied in different epochs. If we go back to ancient India, we find that in those times men who wanted to learn what sleep could teach them by bringing them into relation with the world of the stars, limited their search to those constellations of the Fixed Stars which

were above the Earth — above, that is, at the particular moment of time, for the constellations are, of course, continually changing their places in the Heavens. The ancient Indian had no desire to make connection with the constellations that are below the Earth, whose forces can reach man only through the Earth.

Look at the characteristic posture of a Buddha, — or of any wise man of the East who sets out to perform exercises that shall enable him to achieve spiritual wisdom; He sits with his legs crossed under him. The upper part of his body where he is in relation with the upper constellations, — that he wants to be active, and that alone. Through the Sun-eye, there is also working in him what works through the limbs; but this he does not want to activate. He wants, as it were, to eliminate the forces of the limbs during his spiritual exercises. One can see quite plainly from his posture that the Eastern seeker after wisdom desires to find relation with what is above the Earth, and only that. His whole interest is directed to knowledge that concerns the soul.

The world would however be incomplete if man's quest for knowledge had remained limited in this way, if men had continued to assume always and exclusively the Buddha posture when they set out on the path of knowledge. It was not so. In the age of Greece, men began to feel impelled to make connection also with the forces working from the constellations that are — at the particular moment — below the Earth. Greek mythology contains beautiful intimations of this. Again and again we are told of a kind of initiation where the candidate descends to the underworld. Whenever you read of some Greek hero that he goes down into the underworld, you may be sure the meaning is that he is going through an initiation which yields him knowledge of those forces of the Cosmos that work through the Earth and that were known to the Greeks as the Chthonic forces.

Each epoch of time has, you see, its own task and mission. The oriental initiate had to learn, in order that he might then communicate the knowledge to his fellowmen, about the region of soul and spirit where man was before birth — or I should say, before conception — and about man's experiences there before he descends to the earthly world. All that we feel to be so grand and majestic in the poetry of the East and in its conceptions of the universe, is due to the fact that in those far-off days men were able to look into the life they had lived before they came down to Earth. In Greece, men began to take knowledge of the Earth and of all that belongs to the Earth. The Greek takes Uranus *and Gaia* — the Earth — as the

starting point for his cosmology. He aspires to know also the Mysteries of the Earth itself, which include at the same time the cosmic Mysteries that work through the Earth. The Mysteries of the underworld, — these too the Greeks were wanting to discover, and in this way they developed their true cosmology.

Think how little there is among the Greeks — none whatever among the Orientals — but how little among the Greeks of the study of history in our sense of the word. The Greek is much more interested in the far-off beginnings when the Earth was being formed within the Cosmos, when the interior forces of the Earth, the Titanic forces, waged war on those other forces, those mighty spiritual forces which the Greek conceived as underlying the web of earthly conditions within which man finds himself enwoven. But we men of modern times are called upon to understand history; we must be able to show how man started from an ancient dream-like clairvoyance and has now arrived at a consciousness that is intellectual in character and tinged only with a memory of the mythical, and then go on to show how there is need for man now to work his way out of this intellectual consciousness and learn to look right into the world of the Spirit. For the present epoch of time marks the transition to the attainment of conscious experience in the spiritual world. That is why it is so very important for us that we should turn our attention to history. You will find that in our anthroposophical work we give ourselves again and again to the study of the different epochs of history, going back first of all to the time when men still received their knowledge from higher Beings, and then following the whole development right up to our own age.

The study of history has, of course, become hopelessly abstract in our schools and universities today. Could anything be more abstract than the lines of demarcation that people draw when they are developing some historical theme! For the men of olden time, history was still clothed in the garment of myth and was brought into connection with Nature and with all that goes on in her world. People cannot do this any more. Neither do they show any readiness as yet to enquire more deeply into the times of long ago. They do not feel any need to ask how it was with man in the days when he received wisdom from higher Beings, how it was with him later when less and less of the wisdom came through to him, or how it was with him when a God Himself descended to incarnate through the Mystery of Golgotha in a human body and carry out a sublime cosmic mission with the Earth, so that it was given her at last to have her real meaning.

The whole theology of the 19th and 20th centuries has failed, because it cannot understand the Christ in His spiritual significance. That, my dear friends, is what modern Initiation Science must bring, — understanding of the Christ. We need an Initiation Science that can penetrate again into the spiritual world, that can speak again about birth and death, about the life between birth and death and the life also between death and a new birth, and about the life of the soul in sleep, — can speak of these things in the way we have been speaking of them together today. The possibility must be there for man to come again to a knowledge of the other side — the spiritual side — of existence. Otherwise, he will simply not be able to go forward into the future.

Once, long ago, men directed their search for knowledge to the upper worlds — we see it demonstrated in the posture of the Buddha. Then, in later times, man took the evolution of the Earth as his starting-point and read his cosmology out of the evolution of the Earth; he became initiated in Greece into the Chthonic Mysteries, as we find related in many a Greek myth, where the account of such initiation is often a prominent feature of the story. *Our* search, has to take a new turn. Having studied in the past the Mysteries of the Earth and the mysteries of the Heavens, we need in our day an Initiation Science that is able to move rhythmically between Heaven and Earth, an Initiation Science that asks of the Heavens when it wants to understand the Earth, and asks of the Earth when it would inform itself of the Heavens.

And this is how you will, find the questions put and answered — insofar as they can be answered today — in my book *An Outline of Occult Science*. Let me say here in all humility that the attempt has been made in this book to describe the knowledge of which modern man stands in need, — needing it as surely as ever the Oriental needed the Mysteries or the Heavens or the Greek the Mysteries of the Earth, For it is required of us to take note and observe how it stands with initiation in modern times and what is man's relation to it in this present age. Let me endeavour therefore to describe for you quite briefly in the third part of my lecture the tasks that lie before modern initiation.

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In order to give you some idea of the tasks of modern initiation, I shall have to repeat here what some of you will have heard me say in Oxford a few days ago,

I was pointing out just now that whereas the initiates of very ancient times laid particular emphasis on the looking upwards into the spiritual worlds whence man descends to clothe himself in an earthly body, while on the other hand for the initiates of a somewhat later time it was what we find described by the Greeks as the descent into the underworld that was of first importance, the initiate of our own time has yet another task. He has to look, in search after knowledge, at the rhythmic relation of the Heavens to the Earth. To this end he has to know the Heavens and the Earth, but he must in his search hold always before him the thought of *Man*, in whom alone, among all the beings that are around us, Heaven and Earth work together to form a complete whole. Yes, Man himself must be the goal of his study. The heart-eye, the Sun-eye, the spiritual eye (which is formed of the whole human being) must all be turned upon Man. For Man carries within him, my dear friends, infinitely more secrets and mysteries than the worlds we can perceive with our external senses and explain with the sense-bound intellect. To achieve a knowledge of Man as a spirit, to achieve a spiritual knowledge of Man, is the task of modern initiation. On this path of initiation knowledge we have therefore to set out in quest of a universal knowledge, but always with this goal in view, — that, through learning to understand the world, through learning to understand the whole Cosmos, we may attain at last to understand Man.

And now compare the situation of an initiate of our own age with the situation of an initiate of ancient times. The men of those early times had faculties of soul that made it possible for the initiate to awaken within them a memory of the time we pass through before we descend into an earthly body. It was therefore for the initiate of those days a question of awakening *cosmic memories*. And for the Greeks it was a matter of looking into *Nature*, of beholding Nature. But the initiate of modern times has to set before him as his goal the knowledge of *Man*; he is called upon to learn to know Man, directly, as a spiritual being. For this, he must learn to free himself from his present limited and earthly understanding of his connection with the Universe. Let me repeat an example I gave recently to Oxford of how this liberation has to be effected.

One of the tasks undertaken by initiation knowledge, that presents unusual difficulty, is that of making connection with souls who have left the Earth and gone through the gate of death. It is not at all easy to establish such connections, but it can be done by arousing the deeper forces of the soul. It is necessary to realise from the first that one has to accustom oneself, by the careful pursuance of certain exercises, to the only kind of language it is possible to speak with the dead. This language is, in a way, a



child of our ordinary human speech. Yet you would fail completely, were you to set out with the idea that ordinary human speech, just as it is, would be of any assistance to you in establishing intercourse with the dead. One of the first things we discover is that the dead can understand only for a very short time what we call nouns. There is in their language no way of expressing a 'thing,' an isolated thing, which we denote with a word we call a noun. The words in their language all convey the feeling of movement, they are all full of inner activity. Consequently we find that when a little time has gone by since the soul passed through the gate of death, he is responsive only to words that denote activity, — that is, to verbs. In our intercourse with the dead, we shall, from time to time, want to put questions to them; we must then put our questions to them; we must then put our questions in a form they can understand. If we are able to do this, after a time the answer will come; only, we must know how to be watchful for it, how to give heed to it. As a rule, a few nights will have to elapse before the one who has died can answer the question we put to him. It is, as you see, a matter of finding our way gradually into the language of the dead, and it takes a long time before this language shows itself to us. The dead themselves have had to live their way into it; for they have, as you know, to withdraw their soul-life completely from the Earth. The proper language of the dead bears no relation to earthly conditions, it arises from the heart, — yes, it is verily a *language of the heart*. It is formed rather in the same manner as exclamations or interjections are formed in earthly languages. You know, for instance, how we say 'Ah!' when we are moved to wonder or admiration. The language of the dead takes its origin in the same kind of way. Sounds and combinations of sounds enjoy in this language as in no other their full and real significance. From the moment of death, language begins to change for us altogether. It is no longer something that is uttered forth from the organs of speech. It becomes the kind of language of which I spoke a little while ago, when I told you how what rises up from the flowers, gives tidings to us concerning some fellow human being. We begin ourselves to speak, instead of with speech organs, with that which comes from the flowers. We ourselves become flowers, we blossom with the flowers. We enter, for instance, with the forces of our soul into the flower of the tulip, and express, in the imagination of the tulip, the same that came to expression here on Earth in the formation of the word. We grow again into the spirit, the omnipresent spirit.

You will easily see, from this one example of language, that man has to feel his way into entirely different conditions, when he has gone through the gate of death. In reality, our knowledge of man is small indeed, if we know of him only what we see with our eyes. Modern initiation knowledge has to learn about the other side of man. What I have shown you in the case of language is a beginning. We shall find that the very body of man is something altogether different from the descriptions that are given us in scientific books. As we go farther in initiation knowledge, the human body becomes for us a world in itself. It was the task of the initiate of olden times to re-awaken in man a lost faculty, to bring to remembrance in him what his life was like before he came down to Earth, The initiate of the present day has an altogether different mission. He has to accomplish something new, something that means a new step forward. What he does will continue still to have significance even when man has left the Earth, — yes, even when Earth itself is no longer there in the Cosmos. *That* is the nature of the task modern initiation knowledge has to fulfil; and in the strength and power of that task, it must stand forth and speak.

It is well-known to you, my dear friends, that initiation science has from time to time taken a part in the spiritual evolution of the Earth. Again and again it has made its appearance among men. The initiation knowledge that has to come into the world today and that cannot but regard all the knowledge of our time as a mere *beginning* of the whole knowledge man should really possess, will assuredly meet with increasing opposition and resistance. So great are the forces arrayed against it, that you will need all your strength to win through. Even before modern initiation — which opens the way for man to have intercourse again with Supersensible Powers, — even before this modern initiation began to take its true place in the world in the last third of the 19th century, opposing powers were already at work, were at pains to imbue civilisation — quite unconsciously, for the most part, as far as the human beings themselves are concerned — with tendencies that would ultimately destroy modern initiation, would wipe it clean off the face of the Earth.

Have you ever observed how constantly one hears people say, when some new fact of knowledge is brought forward: "This is how I look at it! This is my point of view!" And they say this so easily, without having undergone any special development of mind or soul. It is indeed quite generally accepted that everyone has a right to pronounce his verdict, speaking from the point of view of wherever he stands at the moment. And people are even deeply offended and grow quite angry if one ventures to suggest that there is a kind of knowledge for the attainment of which it is

necessary to undergo inner development. I said just now that when in the last third of the 19th century the possibility began to arise for men to seek initiation in the modern way, enemy powers were already in action. As you see, they wanted to carry the principle of equality even into the realm of mind and spirit, so that there too all human beings shall be regarded as on the same level. I could point to many persons in whom this method of resistance to modern initiation has been at work.

My dear friends, do you think that when I have to speak out of the spirit of initiation science, the words will have the same ring as when one is speaking from an ordinary earthly standpoint? I have just been trying to explain to you how language has to change and become something quite different when it is a question of carrying on intercourse with beings of the spiritual world, and I think you will not now misunderstand me if I tell you how initiation science sees, for instance, such a man as Rousseau. Speaking from the earthly standpoint, I shall never fail to recognise the greatness and significance of Rousseau, and I am fully prepared to associate myself with the high praise and favourable criticism to which others have given expression. Should I however make bold to clothe in earthly words how Rousseau appears when one sees him from the standpoint of initiation knowledge, I should have to say: Rousseau, with his spiritual leveling of human beings, — what is he, after all, but one of the many everlasting talkers of our modern civilisation! A prince and a leader, shall we say, among them all! People do not readily understand how it is possible, from an earthly point of view to call a man great, and at the same time, from the point of view of initiation to call him an arch-talker! But if we honestly desire to attain a knowledge of man, and if we recognise that to this end we have, as I said, to take the Heavens and the Earth for our province and then discern the rhythm that beats between them, we shall find that even such a seemingly paradoxical utterance is true and requires to be said. For it is, in fact, as we learn to listen to both, — to what sounds forth from the one side *and* from the other side of existence, it is as we learn to hear these together, that guidance can come to us in our quest for a true knowledge of Man.

A true knowledge of Man has to build on the same foundation whereon the initiates of olden times built, on the EX DEO NASCIMUR; in recollection it must build on that which meets us when we look out into the universe where — all unconsciously to us — the Christ becomes our Guide, as I have described to you. It is however our task to bring the Christ more and more into our consciousness, so that we may gain knowledge under His

guidance of the content of *this* world, to which death belongs. Then shall we know for a surety that we live our way into this dead and dying world with Christ; IN CHRISTO MORIMUR.

And inasmuch as we go down with Christ into the grave of Earth life, so will there follow for us too, with Him, the Resurrection and the Bestowal of the Spirit: PER SPIRITUM SANCTUM REVIVISCIMUS.

This PER SPIRITUM SANCTUM REVIVISCIMUS the modern initiate has to set before him as the goal of all his strivings. Ponder it well, and compare it with the manner and mood of thought that belongs to the science of the present day; and you will see for yourselves that opposition to modern initiation is inevitable. A terrible resistance will, without doubt, be put up to the new initiation, — perhaps a resistance of which we can have today no conception, a resistance that will take the form of deed rather than word and express itself in drastic attempts to make initiation knowledge utterly impossible and inaccessible.

It was accordingly my earnest desire, speaking as I do now in a smaller and more intimate circle, to give you descriptions of what modern initiation science can attain to know, in the hope that these descriptions may strike home to your hearts and souls and awaken strength within them; so that there may be a few at least in this generation who know how to relate themselves rightly, — on the one hand, to that which is seeking entrance to our world from the worlds of the Spirit, and on the other hand, to that which is doing all it can to prevent and make impossible the permeation of Earth life with spirituality. This is what I wanted to lay upon your hearts, my dear friends; gathered as we are here in a smaller circle, after having had, to my great satisfaction, opportunity in Oxford for lectures of a more public character. I was able in those lectures to deal with the more external aspects, and it was important that here in this smaller circle we should be able to touch on the more esoteric side of initiation knowledge.

And it is surely time we got beyond feeling puzzled and embarrassed because statements about the spiritual worlds seem paradoxical. They are bound to do so. The language of the spiritual worlds is quite another language from the languages that belong to Earth; one has actually to take great pains and put forth all one's strength before one can render in the words of earthly speech truths that should really be expressed in some entirely different way. You must therefore be quite prepared to find that it will often give people a shock when you tell them, quite simply and directly, of something that takes place in the spiritual worlds.

I wanted in this way to draw your attention to the feeling and impulse that lay behind today's lecture, and I would like now to unite what I have said with an expression of deep satisfaction at being able once again to speak to you here in London. It is always a source of satisfaction to me to be able to do this. As we said before, it happens very seldom. But on the rare occasions when we are for a short time together, may it indeed be that we use the opportunity to stimulate anew in our hearts and souls that stronger kind of 'togetherness' that should subsist, the world over, without interruption, among those who espouse the cause of Anthroposophia. This has been my endeavour today, and it is in this sense that I would express in conclusion the earnest desire, my dear friends, that we may in future remain together, however far we are in space from one another.



## 4

# Life in the Spiritual Spheres and the Return to Earth

*12 November 1922, London*

You will remember that on the last occasion when I was able to speak to you here, I gave you a description of the experiences of the soul during sleep. Today I would like to carry the subject a little further. It will, I am sure, already be clear to you that one whose knowledge of human life confines itself to daytime existence, knows only half the life of man; for things of the very greatest importance take place during sleep. There is no need for me here to explain first the methods by which one comes to know these things; I assume from the outset that you receive what I say as coming from the exact clairvoyance which you will remember I described in my lectures here in London, a few months ago. [Knowledge and Initiation and Knowledge of the Christ through Anthroposophy. Two lectures, London, 14 and 15 April, 1922.]

When man passes from day-consciousness into sleep-consciousness — which is for the man of the present time unconsciousness — he is not in his physical body, nor in his etheric body. During sleep he is a purely spiritual being. On my last visit I gave you a description, from one aspect, of the experience man undergoes as soul and spirit between the times of falling asleep and awaking. Today I want to describe this experience from another side.

You will remember how in sleep man goes out into the cosmic ether, and feeling himself in the midst of a vast and vague unknown is at first overcome with anxiety and apprehension; then you will also remember how in this moment something awakens in the soul which one can call — borrowing the expression from conscious life — a yearning for the Divine. And we went on to speak of how in the second stage of sleep man experiences a reflection of the movements of the planets, and how, for one who has already a relation to the Mystery of Golgotha, Christ then appears, to be his Guide through the otherwise chaotic experiences that come to him while he is living his way through a kind of reproduction or copy of the life of the stars and the planets. For now comes the experience of the fixed stars. Man goes forth, from the planetary spheres — we mean of course

the copy of the planetary spheres — and enters upon an experience of the constellations of the fixed stars. So that between falling asleep and awaking, man actually covers the whole cosmic existence beyond the Earth. I told you moreover that it is the forces of the Moon (the spiritual counterpart of what reveals itself to us in the various lunar phenomena) that bring man back again in the morning — or whenever he wakes up — bring him back into his physical and into his etheric body.

And now I should like, as I said, to describe these experiences from another angle. Unless we have allowed ourselves to become completely involved and imprisoned in the materialistic ideas of modern times, the conscious life that we lead in the daytime has for us a moral and also a religious foundation. We have our knowledge of Nature; but we cannot help feeling that we have in us something more than knowledge and science, that we have as well, moral duties, moral responsibilities, and we feel moreover that our whole being is grounded in a spiritual world. This latter realisation may be described as a religious consciousness. It is, however, only because he is in the physical body, that he is able to have this religious consciousness. It is, however, only because he is in the physical body, that he is able to have this religious consciousness in waking life. For you must understand that in his physical body man is not alone, but with him are spirits of higher cosmic rank; in his physical body, man lives together with higher spirits. And man lives, in his ether-body, with the moral purposes of these higher spirits. Thus, the religious consciousness of man is dependent on his life in the physical body, and his moral consciousness on his life in the etheric body. And this leads us to distinguish two parts in the cosmic ether, from which, as you know, our own ether-body is derived. One part is warmth, light, chemical ether, life ether. But behind all this, behind the warmth and light and chemical processes and life, is a moral element — the moral essence of the cosmic ether.

Now this moral essence of the cosmic ether is present only in the neighbourhood of stars and planets. If you are living on the Earth, then you are not only within the cosmic ether, but also within its moral essence, although by day you do not know it. And when you wander through the cosmos, then whenever you are in the environment of a star, you are in the moral essence of the cosmic ether. But in between the stars, the moral element is driven out of the ether by the action of the sunlight. Note that I say the sunlight, not the Sun, which is a cosmic body within which is contained the very source and origin of the moral ether; but when the Sun shines, then by means of its light it drives away the moral essence of the

ether. And so it comes about that when we look out through our eyes on to the world, we see flowers, we see springs and brooks, we see the whole face of Nature, but without any moral element discernible within it; the sunlight has killed out the moral element. And when we fall asleep and leave our physical and etheric bodies, then we take with us what we have acquired in this way during waking hours on Earth by beholding Nature; but strange as it may sound, we leave behind us our religious feeling and our moral feeling, we leave them behind with the physical and with the ether-body, and our soul and spirit live as an a-moral being during the time of sleep.

This has an important consequence for us. We are living during this time in a world that has been irradiated by the light of the Sun. This means that the moral ordering of the world has gone out of the ether. Consequently the Ahrimanic Being has access to the ether in which we find ourselves as soon as we fall asleep. And this Ahrimanic Being speaks to man while he is asleep. And what he says is most mischievous, for he is rightly called the father of lies; he makes good appear bad to the sleeping human being and bad good.

Reference has been made in the newspapers recently to questions that are being investigated by scientists, as to why criminals sleep well, while moral people with a good conscience often sleep badly. The matter is explained when you consider what I have been telling you. In the case of a highly conscientious and devout man, who has a fine moral feeling, his moral sensibility enters so deeply into his soul that he takes it with him into sleep; with the result that he sleeps badly, believing as he does that he has been guilty of many misdeeds. A bad man, on the other hand, whose moral sensibility is very little developed, will carry with him into sleep no such pangs of conscience, — and this will mean of course at the same time that he will have, spiritually speaking, an open ear for the whisperings of Ahriman who makes evil appear good. Hence the quiet and contented sleep of the criminal! People say, it is not fair that criminals should sleep well, while good people often have poor and disturbed slumber. The fact is to be accounted for in the way I have shown.

The enticement to evil to which man is exposed during sleep is, in truth, exceedingly great, and it can easily happen that in the morning he brings over with him from sleep terrible demonic forces of temptation. Only when he has come down again into his physical and etheric body, will a man who



is not very good and upright begin to feel pricks of conscience, — not before. There is thus abundant possibility for, man to fall a victim to Ahriman during the time of sleep.

The danger has by no means always been so great as it is today. In the course of the centuries it has gradually come about that men are so gravely exposed during sleep to the seductions of demonic powers, which make evil appear good. In earlier times of the evolution of mankind things were different. Man had then, as I have often explained to you, nothing like so strong an ego-consciousness as he has now. In the daytime, when he was awake, his ego-consciousness was weaker; and that meant also that during sleep he did not sail so smoothly into evil as he does today. He was protected. The fact is, we are living today in a time that is bringing us to a certain crisis in evolution. It behoves men to arm themselves against the powers of evil that approach them when they fall asleep. In older times men were protected through the fact that when they went to sleep, they entered more into the group-soul. During sleep man lived in the group-soul. We today still live to a certain extent in the group-soul during our waking hours; we feel we belong to a particular nation, often even to a particular clan; or perhaps we are inclined to put on aristocratic airs, and like to feel ourselves as members of a certain family. But sleep takes us right out of the group-soul feeling. It is hardly possible for the man of today to be an aristocrat in sleep. Yes, sleep is a great educator, more than you would think; on the one hand it educates man, it is true, in evil, as we have seen; but on the other hand, it educates him in democracy. The man of olden time passed into the group-soul when he fell asleep; and when he awoke and returned to his physical and to his etheric body, he brought with him a strong feeling of belonging to his group.

There you have the one side of man's life, — what he is during sleep. Man, of course, carries in him all the time the part of his nature that is exposed in sleep at the present day to the temptations of demonic forces, he has it in him continuously. Only, when he is awake, he has to let it merge into the moral and religious consciousness. The religious side of man is given to him, as we saw, by the powers that live with him in his physical body, and the moral side by the powers that live with him in his ether-body.

The man of an older time, who during sleep lived strongly, as we have seen, in the group-consciousness — it was with the Mystery of Golgotha that all this became changed for the further evolution of mankind — the man of an older time, when he dived down again, on awaking, into his

physical and his etheric body, began to live then more in himself, But here we discover another difference between him and us. For when he was waking up and coming down again into his physical and ether body, before he was quite awake, he had a clear consciousness of the life he had lived ere he descended to Earth. And he had the same clear consciousness again just before falling asleep. Whilst, therefore, on the one hand he developed a strong group-consciousness, he had at the same time also a strong feeling of belonging to the life that is beyond the Earth. He knew quite well that he had come down from the spiritual world, had passed through the world of the stars, and had chosen for himself a physical body here on Earth. As time went on, this consciousness became darkened. In compensation, men became 'clever' — as we understand the word today. They developed powers of judgment and discrimination. This kind of faculty has evolved only in the course of time. It is our physical body that gives us the power of judgment, — and this is the reason we are able to exercise the power best during the morning hours. We enter more deeply in these days into our physical and etheric bodies than men did in olden times. Consequently, while they had a consciousness of their life before birth, we have a consciousness rather of earthly existence. We establish ourselves firmly in our physical and etheric body. They did not do so. They might be said to 'carry' their physical and etheric body, they carried it round with them, feeling it as something external to themselves, rather as we feel the clothes that we wear. We have quite lost this feeling. We no longer say as they did, when they were going through a door: I carry my physical being through the door. That was for them an entirely natural way of speaking. We would never say that; we say: I walk through the door. We press our I, our ego, right into the physical body; it is therefore perfectly natural for us to express ourselves in this way. And in consequence of this development, we have lost also the consciousness of our connection with the spiritual world and with the world of the stars. The man of an earlier time knew that he was connected with the world of the stars. He knew quite well that he was connected with the world of the stars, and also with the spiritual world that is behind the world of the stars: he knew that he had descended from these worlds to earthly existence.

Modern man will say: In order to live, I need meat, vegetables, eggs, etc. He needs, that is, products of the physical world, and with these he must concern himself from birth to death. Please do not imagine for a moment dear friends, that I mean to speak scornfully or slightingly of the food we eat. It is good in itself and belongs to life; let that be fully recognised. I want only to point out that the men of olden time[s] knew that in order to

have strength to live, man needs more than the forces of the Earth that reside in beef and cabbage and egg, he needs also Jupiter and Venus and Saturn, They knew for a fact that just as man, when he is here on Earth, needs to eat eggs, so too has he need to have received, before he came down to Earth, the strength of Jupiter and of Venus; otherwise he could not be earthly man at all. Modern man feels united with the Earth and is very much concerned about what he must eat to keep his body in health. The man of an older time felt a need to be in right relationship with the *stars*. He said to himself: If I suffer, here on Earth, from some inability or lack of skill, it must be that I did not acquit myself well while descending into the world of the stars; I must put that right next time I make the journey from death to a new birth.

It is indeed so that in those times man evolved what might be called a spiritual diet. In the Mysteries there were leaders and guides who were not unlike our modern doctors of medicine. The modern doctor gives his advice about man's body. That is quite understandable, and no reproach is intended. But the leaders in the Mysteries, who were also physicians, would for example, if a man suffered from some physical infirmity, give instruction as to how he could better his relationship to Venus, or it may be to Saturn. It was thus advice for the *soul* that these leaders in the Mysteries gave. Let us suppose a physician of this kind found that the person who had come to him for healing was too strongly attracted to his physical body. Instead of feeling his body merely as a garment for his soul, he was firmly bound to it, rather like a man of the present day who persisted in sleeping in his clothes. The physician would say to such a person: When the Moon is full, try going out for a walk in its light, when it is rising in the evening; and while you walk, repeat a certain mantram.

Why did the physician of the ancient Mysteries give this advice? Because he knew that when a person goes for a walk in the light of the Moon, repeating the while certain mantrams, that will counteract the Saturn force, and so it will come about that Saturn has less power over him. For, you see, this physician of olden times knew that the clinging to the physical body, the being so closely knit with it, was due to the fact that the person in question had held on too strongly to Saturn when he was passing through the world of the stars, on his way from the spiritual world into earthly life. This excessive attraction to the life of Saturn had given him the infirmity from which he was suffering. But now the two heavenly bodies, Moon and Saturn, tend to counteract one another. In order, therefore, to

cure an affliction due to the Saturn forces, the physician would have recourse to the forces of the Moon. He would, in effect, prescribe a spiritual diet.

We have today a physical diet and that is quite right and suitable for us. In the olden times man felt the need for a diet of a more spiritual kind, and we must now learn to add to our physical diet also a spiritual diet. That is the mission of the present age; we have our physical diet, and we must regain a feeling for the importance of a spiritual diet as well. If we can do this, it will enable us to achieve the tasks that call for fulfilment at this present moment in earth evolution.

This is what I wanted to put before you in the first part of my lecture.

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It is a satisfaction to me, my dear friends, that I shall be able to give you two more lectures after today, and so I do not need to hurry — as I would otherwise be obliged to do — but can go more fully into that which lies on my heart to say to you on the occasion of this visit.

Vision of the pre-earthly life, of the life man lived in the spiritual world before he united himself here on Earth with a physical and an etheric body, was possible to the men of old, for they possessed an elemental clairvoyance. To attain such vision today we need the help of anthroposophical science. When with this help we have learned to look with the consciousness of Inspiration upon the time we pass through before we descend to Earth, we behold how we live for a long while in an entirely spiritual world, a world where there is no mineral kingdom, no plant kingdom, no animal kingdom, — a world where there are not even the stars that we see shining far away in the encircling heavens, a world, where we have around us spiritual beings, beings of the higher hierarchies. Throughout this period of the time between death and a new birth, we live among spiritual beings. And then we begin to travel through the starry heavens on our way back to Earth, passing — now with more, now again with less, sympathy — through the various starry spheres. And this is the time when we prepare our coming earthly life. For according as we relate ourselves to the starry spheres through which we pass, so will be our life on Earth. Let me give you an example of how this preparation takes place.

Coming forth from the world that is purely spiritual, we pass first through the sphere of the fixed stars. Of these I will not speak just now; that will come in the next lecture. Then we pass through the spheres of Saturn, Jupiter and Mars, through the Sun sphere, and through the spheres of Mercury, Venus and Moon, and so by gradual stages come down to Earth. You will realise from the description that we approach the spheres of the stars from the other side. When you stand on Earth and look at Jupiter, you are seeing Jupiter from one side. And when a being — in this case, a human being — is descending from the spiritual world and passes, on his way to Earth, through the spheres of the stars, then at the time when we, looking from the Earth, see Saturn, this being, as he approaches Saturn, will be seeing it from the other side. It will be the same with all the stars. Coming from the spiritual world, he approaches the stars from behind, as it were, and sees the reverse of what men see on Earth with physical sight. You will not of course imagine that the human being who is making his journey to the Earth 'sees' in the way we do. He has no eyes as yet, he will only get eyes when he has a physical body. What he sees is spiritual. He sees Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, in their spiritual aspect; Venus also, then Mercury and Moon. And according to the measure of the sympathy or antipathy with which he passes through the one or other sphere, so will be the forces he receives in the course of his descent from each sphere in turn, — forces of Saturn, forces of Jupiter, and so on.

Let us imagine a particular case. In consequence of the way in which he lived his former life on Earth, a human soul may have the feeling, when the time comes to descend to a new life: It will be good if this time I come to Earth as a woman; if this time I incarnate in a female body.

It is an important question for the descending human soul to decide, whether it shall become man or woman. Its whole destiny on earth depends on the decision; for it is by no means a matter of indifference whether in one particular incarnation we go through our life as a man or a woman. But it is not enough for the soul simply to come to the conclusion: I will be a man, or, I will be a woman. Due preparation has to be made. If the soul desires to be a woman, it will approach the Earth at the time of Full Moon. When we, looking from the Earth, see the Moon full, the soul that is approaching from the spiritual world will see it dark. Now what the soul sees is of course, the spiritual aspect of the Moon. Seeing it dark, the soul sees it 'peopled,' as it were, with certain beings. And these beings it is who will prepare the soul, so that, when it comes on Earth, it shall be attracted to a female body. On the other hand, when we, looking from the Earth, see New Moon — which means, we cannot see it at all — then the

soul that is descending and sees the Moon from the other side, will see it lit up, will see the light that rays forth from it out into cosmic space, — that is, of course, the spiritual in the light. In this case, the soul can become a man. Whether it receives the forces that bring it to a male or to a female incarnation depends, you see, on the manner of the soul's journey through the spheres of the stars.

And now, in addition to passing through the sphere of the Moon, the soul has also to go, for example, through the spheres of Mercury and Venus. While the manner of its journey through the sphere of the Moon determines whether the soul is to become man or woman, by its passage through the sphere of Venus the soul is endowed with greater or less sympathy for a particular family. For the soul could, of course, be man or woman in this or that or any other family. This attraction to a family is determined in the following way.

A human soul may be descending, for instance, at a time when Venus is right on the other side of the Earth, and the soul may thus be able to disregard the Venus sphere. Such a soul will then have no great connection with his family. Or the soul may, on the other hand, go past Venus, and it can do so in a variety of ways. It will then elect to take the path through the Venus sphere that guides it to some particular family. For the soul has this possibility; it can prepare itself for belonging to a particular family by choosing, as it were, the 'ray' that goes from Venus to this family. Coming down from the other side, the dark side, of Venus, the soul then draws near to Earth and finds its way to that family.

The same kind of thing may happen in regard to the Mercury sphere. The sphere of Mercury leads the soul to find its way into a particular folk or people. When the region inhabited by this people is receiving rays of Mercury, then the soul, coming from the other side and approaching the dark side of Mercury, will be helped to find its way to this people.

Thus are human souls prepared for life on Earth. Through the influence of the Moon — and when we speak of these heavenly bodies, it is always the spiritual in them that we have in mind — through the influence of the Moon, preparation is made for the soul to become man or woman; through the influence of Venus, for the soul to belong to some family; through the influence of Mercury, to belong to some folk or people.

The whole life of man on Earth depends, as you see, on the relationship he establishes with the spheres in the course of his descent from the spiritual world. The knowledge of this has been lost. We must regain it. We are accustomed to think of ourselves as composed of hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, carbon, sulphur, etc. But we must come also to feel — quite simply and naturally — that we are composed and are created out of the world of the stars. For we are not just physical human beings made up of protein and a few other substances. All the forces of the universe have combined to form us. These forces of the universe work upon us while we are descending. When we come to Earth, we have them within us, — and something of a memory of this remains to us in sleep. Memory is however always, as you know very well, weaker than the actual experience. When someone who is dear to you has died, think how the memory of the event grows less vivid and powerful as time goes on. And it is the same with the memory we still have in sleep, of how it was with us when we had living and present experiences of the spiritual world, and of the world of the stars. The memory grows dim; and that is why man is exposed now in sleep to the temptations I described earlier in today's lecture. Thus a dim and feeble after-image in sleep — a weak cosmic memory — is all that is left of the experience we had with the spiritual world and with the stars during the time between death and our last birth.

This, dear friends, is what I wanted to say to you today byway of introduction. We shall continue with it next time we meet.



## 5 Luciferic and Ahrimanic Powers Wrestling for Man

*16 November 1922, London*

To-day I want to speak of the spiritual powers and beings that live in man's environment. They are super-sensible powers and beings we cannot perceive them with our senses; nevertheless they are there, and they play their part in our earthly existence. The things that take place among such spiritual beings, the dealings they have with one another, are of course altogether different from the actions and deeds of man during his earthly life; it is therefore difficult to tell in human language, which has been created expressly for human conditions and human relationships, about the nature and activities of these super-sensible Intelligences, these super-sensible beings. Since, however, it is important that these things should in our age, be brought to man's knowledge, we must speak of them in the only way that is possible, — namely, in pictures. This will mean that I shall frequently describe things as if I were referring to human conditions and relationships. The things that are told in this way will be quite true and correct; only, since the language has to be borrowed from human relationships, the truth will be presented in a picture.

We have around us, to begin with, the world of Nature in her various kingdoms, mineral, plant and animal, — and we may also add to these the human kingdom, in so far as man's physical being is concerned. Behind Nature lies a kind of second Nature, — a spiritual, super-sensible Nature. The first, the Nature to which we are accustomed, man perceives with his senses. The super-sensible Nature that is behind, he does not perceive. It has, for all that, a great influence upon him.

And then we have to recognise that we human beings have something of physical Nature also within us. When we look within, we perceive this physical nature in our instincts and our passions. These are of course astral, but they rise up from the physical Nature. And this physical Nature that we have within us and that we perceive in our instincts and urges and passions, has again — this time we have to say *beneath* it, a kingdom of beings, who are intimately connected with man, but are really sub-human.



Thus, looking around us with the help of our senses, we behold the surface of Nature, her external appearance; and behind it we have to divine the presence of a super-sensible nature. When on the other hand we look within and perceive ourselves in our instincts and passions, then we have to divine beneath these the presence of a subsensible Nature.

The super-sensible Nature that is around us can be understood and appreciated only by one who is equipped with spiritual insight, and who is not always focusing attention, as Natural Science does to-day, on the strict laws of Nature and on what takes place within their framework. For Natural Science, as we know, is concerned with the investigation of what takes place in accordance with firm laws of Nature. The super-sensible that is behind external Nature will never reveal itself to these researches. It will however become manifest when we have learned to look with keen and discerning spiritual vision upon things which are not to be explained by natural law, but are generally regarded as subject to chance.

Of this character are the phenomena of the weather, all the irregularities of the atmosphere throughout, the four seasons of the year. If you stop to consider, for example, in detail how a London fog [There was an unusual thick fog in London during Dr. Steiner's visit at this time.] takes its course, you will perhaps find that in its main events you can trace the working of certain laws. You will not however be able to do this for all its continual changes and movements. When it comes to the particular single phenomena of wind and weather, there we are inclined to say that we are at the mercy of chance. You can of course read in the newspapers a description of what kind of weather we are likely to have in the near future, but you will not build upon it with certainty with which you rely on the sun rising tomorrow morning. Phenomena which show the working of natural law are in quite another category from the phenomena of wind and weather, which are more or less generally ascribed to the working of chance. People can and do acquire a certain prophetic gift in regard to these phenomena, but this prophetic gift cannot be given to place within the framework of natural law, it has more the character of inspiration or intuition.

As a matter of fact, *beings* live in all the various manifestations of wind and weather, — beings who are only not seen because they lack a body that is visible to the senses. They are present and alive, notwithstanding. The beings who live in wind and weather have a body that consists of air and warmth, a body that has in it no water — no fluidity, that is, of any kind — and no solid earth; it consists of nothing but air and warmth. And

this body is continually undergoing sudden changes. At one moment it will assume form and shape, then again it will dissolve and pass away. The changing cloud formations that we observe in the sky, the play of the currents of the wind, — these are not the body, which remains more hidden, they are but the outer expression, the *deeds*, of the beings of whom I speak. When therefore we look out into the atmosphere which surrounds our Earth, and within which we ourselves are living, we have there around us a world of beings, who are composed merely of air and warmth. They are of the same kind as the beings whom I have called in my books and frequently spoken of in lectures as the Luciferic beings.

Now these beings have a specific end in view in regard to man. Notwithstanding the fact that they inhabit an element which we often find far from agreeable and pleasant — living, as we have said, in the weather! — these beings attach great value to the *moral* element in the human social order. So highly do they prize it, that in their opinion it would be best for man not to have a physical body at all — not, at any rate, a body that partakes of the watery or earthly elements. If they could have formed man in their own way, they would have made of him a moral being, pure and simple. Man would not of course in that case have had freedom, he would have been moral without being inwardly free. As it is these beings wage a fearful battle in the course of the year, struggling to wrest man away from the Earth and draw him into their own sphere. They would like him to be cut off from the Earth, — a complete stranger to it. On this account they are particularly dangerous for people who are inclined to any kind of visionary idealism or vague mysticism. Such persons readily fall a prey to these beings who seek to entice man away from the Earth and endow him with a kind of angel nature, so that under no circumstances shall he find himself tempted to be otherwise than purely moral.

Strange therefore and paradoxical as it may sound, dear friends, — inhabiting the forces that pulsate through the encircling air in all the vagaries of wind and weather, are beings who, abhorring human freedom and desiring nothing better than its complete annihilation, want to make man a moral automaton, want to make of him indeed a kind of good angel. And they fight hard to attain their end; to use an earthly expression, they wage war to the teeth.

In addition to these beings who build, as it were, their strongholds in the air — do not cavil at the word, I told you. I am obliged to speak in pictures — there are also beings of a contrary nature, to whom I alluded in my last lecture in another connection. And this latter class of beings has to do with

all that comes to expression in man's instinctive urges and impulses, in his desires and passions. You must not however think of them as belonging first and foremost to man. In man we can see the results of their activity. But they have their home, so to speak, right on the Earth. Only we cannot see them, for these beings too have not a body that is formed in such a way as to be visible to us. They have, in fact, a body that lives entirely in the elements of earth and water. And their deeds are to be seen in the ebb and flow of the tides, in volcanic eruptions and in earthquakes. Natural Science, as is well-known, can find no satisfactory explanation for these phenomena. One who has keen spiritual perception can however see behind them a world of sub-human beings, who are under the control of the powers to which I have always given the name of the Ahrimanic powers.

Now, these Ahrimanic powers also cherish a particular aim as regards man. With the help of their various sub-spirits, which inhabit the earth and water elements of our Earth and can, for example, be recognised even in the kobolds or brownies of fairy lore — aided by these, the Ahrimanic powers have set themselves to carry out another and a different project.

If one considers these Luciferic and Ahrimanic beings by themselves, just as they are, one cannot, you know, be angry with them. Why be angry with the Luciferic beings, for instance? They want to make man into a being who is moral entirely as a matter of course. What could be better? Man would, it is true, never under their influence be free, he would be an automaton; but what they seek and desire for him can nevertheless be truthfully described as good.

Now let us see what is the aim of these other beings, who build their strongholds immediately below the surface of the Earth, and whose activities rise up into man's metabolism, — for the phenomena we observe in the tides and less frequently in volcanic eruptions and earthquakes are always present also in the ebb and flow in man's metabolism. Whilst the Luciferic spirits build, as we said, their strongholds in the air, in order to fight for the moral — as against the earthly — element in man, the Ahrimanic beings struggle to harden man; they want to make him like themselves. Were they to be successful, man would become extremely clever in the material realm — incredibly clever and intelligent. They cannot achieve their end directly, but they aim at doing so indirectly. And their efforts, which have actually been going on for thousands of years, have in fact succeeded in producing a whole race of sub-human beings. Their method is as follows.

Suppose a man has strong and rude instincts. These beings will clutch at his instinctive nature and seize hold of it. The man then falls victim to the Ahrimanic powers. He is completely given up to his passions and leads a wild and dissolute life. When a man has in this way become a prey, during his earthly life, to the Ahrimanic powers, then these powers will be able to hold on to his instinctive nature and tear it out of him after death. There exists already on the Earth a whole population of beings who have arisen in this way. They are there, in the elements of earth and water, a sub-human race. And then what is it the Ahrimanic powers intend with this sub-human race? As we have seen, they draw out of a human being his instinctive nature and make of it an earth-and-water being. These earth-water beings inhabit the strata immediately below the surface of the Earth; and those who go down into mines, if they are able to look with spiritual vision, are quite familiar with them. They are beings that have been snatched out of man in the moment of death. And with what ultimate aim? Ahriman is waiting. The Ahrimanic powers are waiting for the time when men will descend to incarnation and, on account of a karma that their instincts and passions have prepared for them, feel particularly drawn to certain of these beings and say to themselves: "I will not go back to the spiritual world; when I have left my physical body" — out of which, as you know, man generally goes forth to a super-sensible life — "I will incorporate myself in a subsensible being of this kind. And that will mean, I shall be able to stay on the Earth. I shall not die any more, but be permanently united with the Earth. Yes, I will choose to be a subsensible being,"

It may sound incredible — and indeed it is astonishing, considering how extraordinary clever they are, — but it is a fact that the Ahrimanic beings persist in believing they will ultimately be able in this way to entice such a vast number of human beings into their own race that the Earth will one day be peopled entirely with such Ahrimanic sub-human beings. By this means they hope to make the Earth itself immortal, so that the hour may never come for it to perish and be dispersed in cosmic space.

We have thus around us in our earthly environment two hosts of beings; one in the air, that wants to make man moral but to lift him away from the Earth, and then we have also, immediately below the surface of the Earth, the Ahrimanic beings who want to draw man down and fasten him permanently to the Earth.

When we come to consider the relation in which these two classes of beings stand to one another, we find that in the mineral kingdom, in the plant kingdom, in the animal kingdom, and even in the human kingdom as it is by nature before man's passions and desires begin to get the better of him, the two classes of beings have perforce to agree, they must bear with one another. In a remote primeval past the Godhead who is called in the Christian religion the Father God, established peace in this respect. Peace was established by the Father God for minerals, plants and animals, and also for man in his animal nature, in so far as he does not allow himself to be perverted and contaminated by passion and desire.

Take up in your hand a crystal, or any other mineral, or again a plant; you will not find that in that crystal or plant any conflict is taking place between these two classes of beings. But the moment you direct your observation to a man whose body is permeated and suffused with soul, you will at once discern signs of their conflict. The Luciferic beings are saying to Ahriman: "We promised the Father God that we would not fight nor do battle for the minerals, the plants, the animals, nor for man so long as he remained an unconscious being as in olden times and had not acquired the power of reflection, but lived more like an animal; but as for men who have acquired self-consciousness — for then we will fight to the teeth." And it is so: a fearful war is waged all the time between the air-fire beings and the earth-water beings; they fight to get possession of man. And it is important that man should be aware of this war that is perpetually being waged for him; he must not be blind to it. In our day we have advanced far in our knowledge of external Nature. Here, as we have seen, the conditions are quite different; here the Luciferic beings live at peace with the Ahrimanic. But man's knowledge does not reach to that which lies behind the world of the senses, does not reach to super-sensible Nature, nor has he any knowledge of sub-human Nature. And these two realms harbour beings who carry on, as I have said, a terrible warfare, fighting for the possession of man.

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The Being who in the Old Testament is called Jahve, has his seat — I need not remind you of what I said at the beginning of the lecture about the use of such expressions — has his seat in the Moon. That is to say, Jahve is that spiritual Being in the Cosmos who finds expression in the physical phenomena of the Moon. And in the whole ordering of the world this Being has the following task to perform.

When man is descending from the divine spiritual world in order that he may clothe himself in a body, then it is Jahve who leads him down to Earth. Nor does the Jahve Being lose all part in man's life when man has already come to Earth; he takes in hand the ordering of everything that is connected with generation. The Jahve Being, who has his seat in the Moon and who leads man down to Earth, claims control in man over all that has to do with the instincts and impulses of generation.

The process of generation cannot however be regular or regulated by itself, for it is connected with the other instincts and impulses. Consequently, the Jahve Being needs helpers, he needs beings who will, for instance, regulate the instincts connected with eating and drinking, and bring these into harmony with the instincts of generation. He needs helpers who will in fact see to the ordering of the whole instinctive life of man. And Jahve — the Moon God, if we may call him so — finds such helpers in Mercury and Venus.

A kind of compact has been made in the spiritual universe between the Moon, — that is, the Jahve Being and the beings that dwell with him in the Moon — and Mercury and Venus, And it is the will and concern of the beings who have joined together in this way, to control, from Moon, Mercury and Venus, the whole flesh-and-blood nature of man. Man is by no means merely an earthly being; influences play into him from the whole great Universe.

Turning now again to the beings whom I called Ahrimanic and who have their stronghold just below the surface of the Earth — the earth-water beings — how do these compare with Jahve and the Mercury and Venus beings? What place is assigned to them in the world order? They are not ripe to take up their abode in a heavenly body, in the way that Jahve has his abode in the Moon, and his helpers in Mercury and Venus. No, these Ahrimanic beings are doomed to look for a dwelling place just below the surface of the Earth, You will accordingly not be surprised to find that it is not with the air-fire beings alone that these earth-water beings feel themselves in opposition, but particularly also with Jahve and with the powers of Venus and Mercury. And this, notwithstanding the fact that they are themselves devoid of morality. (Man's instinctive nature, being regulated by Jahve from outside and beyond the Earth, is thereby subject to another rulership than that of the aforesaid 'moral' beings, but it would not under this rulership become immoral). The Ahrimanic beings wage war continually on Jahve and on the Venus and Mercury powers, and are determined to usurp from Jahve his rightful sovereignty. For it is owing to

the rightful sovereignty of Jahve that the human race as we know it has come into existence on the Earth; it needed the powers of Moon and also of Mercury and Venus for this to be accomplished.

In a spirit of retaliation, the Ahrimanic beings are founding — over against the Jahve race, which is mankind — this other race of which I have been telling you. And a prime means for them to attain their end is the device I explained in our last lecture. You will remember I told you how they approach man in his sleep and say to him: "Good is evil; evil is good," Man hearkens to this all too easily when he is asleep, and then he brings it back with him into his physical and his ether-body. The Ahrimanic beings are confident they will be able to achieve their end by means of these vicious whisperings.

Man should, you see, depend entirely — in his lower nature — on the Moon, Venus and Mercury powers. The lower nature of man is not in itself evil or degenerate; it is so only because powers that are antagonistic to Jahve insinuate themselves into it in the manner I have described. What Jahve would desire is that these earth-water beings should express themselves merely in the ebb and flow of the tides, in volcanic eruptions, in earthquakes. But they strain every nerve to establish themselves also in *man*, to make their presence felt in man too; and not content with attacking there the air-fire beings, they launch their attacks with particular force against Jahve and his helpers.

Man therefore finds himself placed right in the very midst of a conflict. On one side are ranged Jahve and his hosts, who are fighting for righteousness; on the other side the hosts of Ahriman, who, in respect of cleverness, far outstrip man, and whose concern it is utterly to repudiate man's moral nature and make him into a sheer automaton of cleverness.

Such then are the influences that stream up from earth and water, and work in man. For man is obliged to eat of the products of earth and water; he cannot nourish himself on air, nor live on warmth alone!

In the other direction are the beings who incorporate themselves in air and warmth. These also, like the enemies of Jahve, are immature. And the corresponding mature beings are in their case beings who dwell on Mars, Jupiter and Saturn. And so we find these air-fire beings making sallies from their strongholds not only upon the Ahrimanic powers, but upon the influences that should be continually reaching man from Mars, Jupiter and Saturn.

Now, the influences of these more distant planets, — or rather, of their spiritual beings — are to be found particularly in the eyes, in the ears, — in short, in the sense organs of man. So that, whilst Moon and Venus exercise their influence in the interior organs of man's body, Saturn, Jupiter and Mars work on man's exterior, work in his sense organs. The influences, for example, of Saturn are to be met with primarily in the human eye.

These beings, — Saturn beings, Jupiter beings and Mars beings — have it as their special concern to make man a real Earth man; that is to say, they want first to give him senses that are properly inserted into the human organism and that remain at its surface, and then to supply him with nerves that run from the senses and extend inwards into the organism. Saturn gives the senses, Jupiter gives their continuation in the nerves, and Mars exerts the kind of control that endows man, for example, with the faculty of speech. The whole aim and purpose of these beings is to furnish man with all that is on the surface of his body. For the senses, and the nerves too, have come about through a 'turning outside in' of the human skin.

Jupiter, Saturn, and Mars are however resisted in their activities by the air-fire beings of whom we were speaking. Here again, a furious fight goes on all the time. The air-fire beings sit fast, so to speak, in their airy strongholds and display their power and might in the fiery flashes of the lightning. They would like to make the whole of man what he should properly be on the surface only, so that the entire physical being of man should partake of the nature that is actually assigned only to eye and ear and nose. They would like to pour the surface of man's organism right through him, to make him all surface, so that he would do nothing but see and hear, — never eat nor drink, but only see and hear, be in fact a kind of angel being.

The Mars, Jupiter and Saturn beings, who work as we have seen in man's senses, acquit themselves most praise-worthily — if I may employ the expression in speaking of such sublime beings — in the world of external nature. For they permeate what to our eyes appears mere Nature, with morality. In this manner they bring morality to man; for it is actually so, morality enters into us through the senses. When therefore the air-fire beings seek to permeate man through and through with his sense nature, it is with the intention that man, seeing nothing but what is moral, may become a moral automaton.



If we look out on the world of Nature, we can know that whatever manifests as forces in that world comes from the Mars beings, whatever manifests as natural law from the Jupiter beings, and whatever manifests as colour and sound from the Saturn beings. And the air-fire beings would have man become *nothing but* force, law (that is to say, thought), colour and sound. They want man not to have a physical body at all, but to be insubstantial, rarefied; they would like him to be, as we said, an angel being.

And so you see, whilst in external nature. Moon, Mercury, Venus, Jupiter, Mars and Saturn live at peace with one another and are held in balance by the Sun, they wage a double fight for the possession of man. First of all, there is the conflict that goes on between the Ahrimanic and the Luciferic beings; and then we have on the one hand, the fight that is put up by the Luciferic beings against the planetary forces beyond the Sun, — the Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn influences — whilst on the other hand the Ahrimanic forces are waging war on the influences that proceed from Moon, Venus and Mercury.

Behind Nature and within man the hard-fought battle goes on; and it is with this conflict raging all around him that man has to press forward in his development and win his freedom. In an older time man had the teaching of the Mysteries to aid him on his path; now he must turn to what spiritual investigation can tell him concerning what lies behind Nature and below man. For ignorance on these matters would inevitably lead to the deterioration and ruin of mankind.

You will have seen, my dear friends, from the descriptions I have given you, that the beings we are accustomed to call Luciferic and Ahrimanic, are particularly highly developed in respect of certain qualities — the Luciferic beings, namely, in morality, and the Ahrimanic in cleverness and intelligence. And yet both these classes of beings never relinquish the belief that they will one day achieve their ends, and they are therefore always ready to begin the fight over again. For, time after time, when they think they are on their way to success, they experience frustration and disappointment. So that when a modern initiate encounters such beings behind Nature or below man, he sees how on the one hand they will not be deterred, but press forward again and again to their goal with renewed confidence in ultimate victory, and then how, on the other hand, they are perpetually being frustrated. This kind of being may indeed be said to live in a mood that oscillates between jubilation and triumph on the one side and constantly recurring disappointment on the other.

I will show you how this can be observed in particular instances. Let us see, in the first place, how the Luciferic and Ahrimanic beings suffer disillusionment through what happens with the physical part of man's being. One can form a very good impression of the disappointments that await Lucifer and Ahriman in this connection, when one pays a visit to one of our hospitals or asylums. Sickness, whether in mind or body, means disappointment for Lucifer or Ahriman. These beings are, you see, fighting a battle to get possession of the nature of man. But it does not help them at all, if within man's nature one of them gains a victory over the other. The situation is different if Ahriman gains a victory over the Moon Godhead; or again, if the air-fire beings gain a victory over Jupiter, Mars and Saturn. Such victories are, however, always incomplete. They can only become complete if reinforced by some success that the Luciferic or Ahrimanic beings achieve in their own mutual conflict. But, as a matter of fact, by far the greater number of these successes are only apparent; hence the disillusion that ensues. Let us suppose for a moment that the Ahrimanic powers were victorious in the physical body of some person, victorious, that is, over the Luciferic powers who try to permeate man throughout with what should by rights be only on the surface, only in the senses. The result would be that the person would succumb to illnesses producing tumours or carcinoma, or else to illnesses of the metabolism, such as diabetes. Whenever an illness of this description shows itself in a man's physical nature, it means that Ahriman has won a victory over Lucifer. Since however, as a result, that physical nature is temporarily ruined, it is of course of no use to Ahriman; he cannot possibly pull up out of it the man's instincts and impulses in order to create from these a race of his own.

We have in this way arrived at a perhaps paradoxical, but nevertheless correct picture of illness. Illness is in very many cases the sole means left to the good Powers, to rescue man from the fangs of Ahriman.

If on the other hand Lucifer gains a victory in a man's physical nature over the Ahrimanic powers, who would like to harden man and drag him down into their race of earth-water beings, — if Lucifer gains a victory over these powers, then the person concerned succumbs to illnesses of a catarrhal nature, or else to insanity. Once again, for Lucifer this time, the victory turns out to be quite indecisive.

The Ahrimanic and Luciferic powers, who work unceasingly with all their might for the attainment of their ends, are thus compelled to turn away sad and disappointed from beds of sickness, from hospitals and from

mental asylums. These show them all too clearly that though they may continue to carry on their fight, they cannot ever be really victorious.

And now, if you are able to look with real insight into man's etheric nature, — not merely into his physical, but into his etheric nature — you will find there too, occasion for disappointment to the Ahrimanic and Luciferic powers. For when the Luciferic powers are victorious over the Ahrimanic in the ether-body, then the person becomes a liar, he becomes an habitual liar. In that case he is obviously not moral; and so he falls out of the world within which Lucifer would like to secure him. Instead of making him a moral automaton, Lucifer has turned him into a liar. And, strange as it may seem, the fact that the person becomes addicted to lying is a weapon in the hands of the good Powers, to aid them in rescuing him from Lucifer. For when someone turns liar, — well, that can be ameliorated in the further course of karma; whereas if Lucifer were really to gain the victory he seeks, the Earth would lose that human soul, it would soar right away above the Earth. If, on the other hand, Ahriman were to conquer, or come near to conquering, in the ether body, then the person would become possessed — possessed by his own cleverness. And since he is inwardly possessed by it, the cleverness must needs remain within him. It has hold of him; his ether-body is absolutely charged with it. And so there is no possibility for Ahriman to draw out the instincts and impulses; they are stuck fast in the ether-body, because the person is possessed by his cleverness. Here too, then, will be plenty of opportunity for Lucifer and Ahriman to experience bitter frustration and disappointment, when addiction to lying, or on the other hand, obsession follows as a consequence of their apparent victories.

Let us now see what can happen with the astral body. Suppose the Ahrimanic powers come near to being victorious in the astral body. The person in question will in this case tend to become an out-and-out egoist. But that will mean that he, as an egoist, keeps fast hold of his instincts, and there will be no chance for Ahriman to snatch them away. So once more, Ahriman's prize escapes him. Suppose on the other hand. Lucifer nearly gains a victory. Then the person is liable to turn into a dreamer in the astral body, to become an ego-less dreamer, who is, as one says, "not in his right mind." Such things happen; it can well be that people succumb, if only for a time, to such a condition. The Luciferic and Ahrimanic powers are thus subject to disillusionment on earth in many directions.

But do you see in what a critical situation man stands to-day? In olden times it was different. Let us look back and see how things were for man in the past. The first great teachers in the Mysteries were messengers of the Father God. They had disciples, the Gurus; and then there were the Chelas who were disciples of a second grade, for they were disciples of the Gurus. The highest Gurus however received their instruction direct from the messengers of the Father God, And these messengers of the Father God were able to find remedies with which to heal man. Illnesses are, as we have seen, the occasion of deep disappointment and frustration to Ahriman and Lucifer, so much so that they leave these beings quite benumbed and bewildered. For, outstandingly clever and moral as the Ahrimanic and Luciferic beings are, just because their consciousness is so particularly keen and wide-awake, they are all the more liable to suffer a clouding of it; and so the messengers of the Father God were on this account able to approach the sick person undisturbed by Lucifer and Ahriman, and could then find the remedy for the illness. I told you last time, you will remember, how an illness due to Saturn influence could be cured with a remedy taken from the Moon, and so on. This, then, is how things were in the time of the ancient Mysteries. The messengers of the Father God were able to intervene directly and extricate man from the confusion in which he finds himself owing to the fight which is going on, as, I have explained to you, all the time, behind Nature and below man.

My dear friends, the confusion that reigns within man to-day is no whit less than it was in olden times. That man is unaware of it makes no difference, the confusion is there, just the same. Man is perpetually being torn and tossed, this way and that, while the powers behind Nature and below himself fight to get possession of him. And when one crosses the Threshold and, looking consciously into the spiritual world, observes this terrific battle that is going on, this complicated game that is being played with man as the prize, then one may look now in vain for the messengers of God who in an earlier age would come forward with the staff of Mercury, for example, and with other symbols of that nature, ready to give them into the hands of the Mystery doctors, who could then use them to bring healing to man. At the present time, when you cross the Threshold, you find yourself only in the midst of the terrific conflict of which we have spoken, between beings of the upper planets who have remained behind in their evolution, — immature Mars, Jupiter and Saturn beings — and beings of the lower planets who have remained behind, — immature Moon, Mercury and Venus beings. Like two armed encampments they stand facing one another; on one side, the air-fire beings, — Saturn, Jupiter and

Mars beings that have failed and fallen out of their true evolution; and on the other side, facing them, the earth-water beings, — Moon, Mercury and Venus beings who have also failed and fallen behind. And there, beyond the Threshold, the fight goes on with such fury that the Sun becomes first of all fiery and aflame, and then grows darker and darker, until at last it shows like a terrible black disk. It was not so for the initiates of long ago. They saw right *through* the black disk; and from the direction of the black disk itself came towards them the messengers of God, of the Father God, who were also in those times the bearers of the knowledge of healing. But for us, when we cross the Threshold and see before us the terrific battle and behold how the Sun becomes fiery red and then black, — for us, the Sun remains black, it remains a black disk. And we are rebuffed, we are turned back; for if we men of modern times are to find our way amid all this confusing and perplexing conflict, it is on the *Earth* that we must look for help.

And then, my dear friends, then we are guided to turn our eyes to the Christ, Christ stands before us, the Spirit Being who, through the Mystery of Golgotha, united Himself with the Earth. And He says to us: Be not dismayed that the Sun has become black; it is black because I, the God of the Sun, am no longer in it; for I have come down and united myself with the Earth.

And if, with inner devotion, and with quick and sensitive recognition of all that a knowledge of the Mystery of Golgotha can bring, we draw near to Christ, and then the Sun does not, it is true, become bright again, it remains the black disk that it was, but the Sun begins to make audible for us what Christ is saying to us. And this experience reveals to us the relationship of Christ with the Sun. Yes, the Sun, although still a black disk, becomes a being who enables us to listen to the Christ, if we are duly prepared and approach Him in the right mood and attitude of soul.

And it is the Christ who provides now for man the means of reconciliation so that in man too the upper then the lower powers may be reconciled, — the powers that are above the black Sun disk and that make themselves known around our Earth as air-fire beings, and the powers that manifest as lower beings. And we can receive guidance, we men, for the healing of diseases, and for the true understanding of all the other evils that are constantly leaving Lucifer and Ahriman disappointed. Through the power of Christ and through the power of the Mystery of Golgotha we then become able to speak to these beings, and what we say to them is wonderful enough. "Ye creatures of Lucifer and Ahriman," we say, "the

disappointment and great frustration that you meet with, time and again, are due to evils of your own making, evils that are bound to arise on Earth in consequence of your own partial victories. And that must go on; for you will not cease from making people sick and ill and obsessed, nor from turning people into liars and self-seekers and ego-less dreamers. And so you have no choice but to continue this restless alternation between triumphant joy and the grief of acute disappointment."

But as for man, if he can find the right relation to the Christ, then it will be given him not to despair, even in face of the despair of higher beings than himself, — beings however whose will it is to go another way than the way of the Gods to whom man belongs and to whom he should remain true throughout the further course of the Earth. At the centre of these sublime God Beings is the Christ Being, who spoke to the initiates of old through the Sun disk and who speaks also to us — but now from the Earth with the help of the Sun.

When therefore we speak of Christ to-day, we are speaking of One who can be at our side here on Earth as our Leader, guiding us out of the terrible conflict that the Luciferic and Ahrimanic powers are waging, — with one another and with the worlds of the Upper and Lower Gods.

In my next lecture, on Sunday at 7 o'clock, I will say more of this.



## 6

# Christ and the Metamorphoses of Karma

*19 November 1922, London*

To-day I would like to bring our recent studies to a certain conclusion. To begin with, as I may remind you, you are already aware what awaits the human being immediately after death. His physical body being laid aside, he is in a condition in which he can never be, in the prevailing consciousness of our time, during earthly life. Within and about him he has his I, his astral body and his ether-body. From birth till death, as you know, the ether-body remains united with the physical. Even in sleep it is only with the I and astral body that the human being is outside the physical, — and thus outside the etheric body too. Now, however, then for a short while after death (only a matter of days, you will remember), man still inhabits his etheric body — his body of formative forces — and he is thereby enabled to look back on the whole course of his past earthly life, which is in fact always contained in the etheric body. As I have mentioned in the recent public lectures, this can happen in Initiation too; when man is able to set the etheric body free, he beholds the entire vista of his earthly life.

Yet it is not for long that we can retain the etheric body after death. Belonging as it does to the entire Cosmos, the ether-body is always wanting to expand. Even during life, if we lost hold of our physical body for a single instant, our ether-body would at once be tending — drawing as it were by an elastic power — to dissolve into the whole Cosmos. Only the physical body, in which it stays throughout our life, holds it together. And then when the physical body's coherent power, is no longer ours, straightway the ether-body begins to expand, so much so that in a few days' time it is there for us no longer. It is as when you take a little drop of water; the drop is there before you; warm it and it evaporates and expands in all directions; then it is there no more — you can no longer see it. So does the ether-body expand into the Cosmos after death; after a very few days it is there no more.

Initiation-wisdom shows that this can last only for few days. For by Initiation we are able — as it were, artificially — to make use of the ether-body even during earthly life. Though it remains in the physical body, we

become able to disregard the latter, using the ether-body as such. At once we have the panorama of our earthly life until the given moment. Yet at the same time we see glistening and shining forth in our etheric body a reflection of the great Universe. The entire starry Heavens are there in the etheric body. Indeed you cannot ever see the ether-body apart from the physical without its showing you at once the starry world on every hand — the planets and the fixed stars too. It is the planets and the fixed stars which at long last receive our etheric body. Initiation-science shows that we can hold the pictures in our etheric body only for three or four days at the most; then they vanish, and to avoid being disconnected altogether we must return into our physical body before this happens, otherwise the ether-body will no longer hold together. And thus indeed, a few days after death the ether-body vanishes, we have it no longer. Yet we ourselves are thereby progressively received into the world of stars.

At first, when divested of our ether-body, we feel like strangers amid the world of stars. Only the Moon, only the Lunar forces seem as it were familiar to us there. The Moon emerges on the one hand as in an after-image of its physical appearance. Yet at the same time we now begin to discover what kind of spiritual forces are connected with it. We realise how with the Moon the Jahve-power of the Universe is connected, as was explained in our last lecture. For the soul who has passed through the Gate of Death, the Moon is transformed, as it were, into a colony of spiritual Beings, and Jahve is their Leader. Now after death, we really learn to know what Initiation Science tells of, for pictures of these spiritual truths can be received by Initiation Science even into earthly life. We learn to know what it signifies that man on Earth must die. Yes, it is through the Moon — through the Jahve Powers — that we learn the significance of death.

Looking at death from the earthly standpoint, we see the physical body of a human being rendered lifeless, while all the soul and spirit and the etheric life that filled it hitherto have disappeared. The physical body is received by the forces of the Earth, that is to say, the Elements, — earth and water if it is buried, or air and fire if cremated. The human physical body, laid aside by the human being who indwelt it, is now received by the forces of the Earth. Yet we must ask: What does it mean for the physical body to be thus laid aside by man and given over to destruction? Truth is: When man is born and has in him the force of childlike growth — nay, even before his birth, when, as an embryo in his mother's womb, as to the body he belongs already to the Earth — it is these very forces, made manifest as destroying forces when man dies, which help to build his body. The self-same forces which take leave of the human physical body at death, made



manifest in death in that the physical body is disintegrated, play an essential part in building up this very body. Through his ethereal and subsequent astral experiences the man himself goes on into the Spiritual World, yet something of importance happens also here on Earth. From the physical body a spiritual apparition is released, emerging, as it were, out of the human body. While the real human being goes upon his way, here on the other hand, we might say, another being issues from the human body. Truly it is so when a human being dies. There lies his physical body the man himself is departing from it, and simultaneously another being leaves it. What *is* this other being? It is the forces of the Moon, living as they do also here on Earth. Concentrated though they be in the cosmic entity we call the Moon, the range of these forces extends far and wide, and on the Earth they are made manifest in the powers of Death. Moreover the powers of Death are at the same time those of Birth. They lead the human being into earthly life and are made manifest when he leaves it. We thus begin to realize the deep connection between birth and death. Take all the human beings who die in successive times. From each of them in turn the apparition of death, as it were, comes forth and joins a spiritual atmosphere which is there around the Earth no less than is the air we breathe. This spiritual atmosphere contains what death gives up and birth receives. From the very forces that soar upward, as it were, from human corpses, human beings in their turn, are born. Spiritually, our powers of growth are intimately connected with this sphere of death-force — or forces made manifest in death — which surrounds the Earth.

Now, my dear friends, think of the following: These spiritual forces — at once of death and birth, as we have seen — are forces of the Moon, and into them is mingled all that the dead human being, all along the way from birth till death, accumulated by way of moral powers, moral values. Have you been good in any way, — in the sphere of these death-Moon-forces you will find, as it were, a specific being, imbued with inner force deriving from your goodness. Yet the same being is imbued with all that derives from your badness. It is a being we ourselves engender, all the time, while living on the Earth. Unaware of it as we are in our normal consciousness, we bear it in us. We leave it every night when we are sleeping, for in effect this entity remains in the physical body when we but go out of it in sleep. I told you, did I not, that our moral and religious feelings are left behind in sleep in the physical and ether-body? There too is left behind this real being which we ourselves give birth to during earthly life — the bearer of our Karma.

This being now remains with us after death so long as we are in the realm of the Moon forces. Indeed, just because this being keeps us amid the Moon-forces, that is, in the near neighbourhood of Earth, during the first time after death we are obliged to remain connected with these Lunar forces and with our own Karma, so much so that we live again through all the deeds we did on Earth from birth till death. We have to live them through again in a spiritual form of being, three times as fast as we did on Earth. We live them through again in backward order. So do we spend a period of time after death, obliged to do things intimately connected with our earthly deeds. We are united, it is true, no longer through the physical body with the Moon-forces of death (for we have laid the physical body aside), and yet as beings of soul and spirit we are obliged to carry out deeds intimately connected with our deeds on Earth. And as we thus go through our life again in backward order, our Karma is ever more convincingly brought home to us.

Yet with all this, my dear friends, you must remember to mostly judge spiritual matters in a spiritual way. If you were fond of a human being on the Earth, you may now be feeling: Today, alas, after his death, he will be living again through all that was bad or faulty in his actions! From your physical and earthly standpoint you are sorry for him. But if you asked the soul himself who has gone through the gate of death, whether he too judges it thus, he would answer: "No. I should not want to be undergoing this after-death life in any other way than with the judgment which is mine here and now, as a being of pure soul and spirit experiencing all things again, so to impress them ever more deeply into the true being of my soul. If I have been responsible for any deed which makes me appear a morally imperfect man, and if I were not to go through it all again deeply and inwardly as I am doing now, I should not feel the strong impulsion to make it good. I should not want to free myself from this my failing. Precisely by experiencing the deed all over again in soul and spirit, the urge is born in me to overcome it by a better action." Not for anything in the world would the dead forgo this opportunity to make good again, for this alone will give him power to achieve his full humanity, — will give him strength to be made whole. In this respect you may be sure, even as a landscape looks very different seen from the valley or from a mountain-top, so life itself looks different seen from this physical world where we are now and from yonder side. Only too often the relationships of earthly life to the life after death, which after all transcends the physical, are misjudged for this reason. Think of another example, my dear friends. Maybe you are a really good anthroposophist, very keen on spiritual science, but you are living in

the same house and in very close connection with someone else who detests it, who regards Anthroposophy as his greatest enemy. Now you may say, you are extremely sorry to be causing him so much pain by your attachment to what he detests. From the aspect of earthly life this may be rightly judged. Seen from the other side however, very often it turns out in such a case that it lay in the other person's Karma not to be able to come near to Anthroposophy owing to hindrances brought from a former life, making him in his head a very hater of it. As to his head, he simply cannot bear it. He becomes vexed and excited every time he hears tell of anthroposophical truths. Yet all the time, in his inmost heart he may not be averse to them at all, and when he dies it may well be that he has after death a very deep longing for Anthroposophy. Often therefore you will be doing just what is needed for one who hated it during earthly life, if after his death, you turn to him with thoughts derived from Anthroposophy, so as to bring them to him. Paradoxical as it may sound, not a few relatives who raged and stormed when another member of the family became [an] anthroposophist have become deeply attached to it after death. In this respect once more, you must take seriously what I said during my last sojourn here: we judge life very differently from yonder side than we do from this side.

Yes, man becomes very different after his death. For you should also think of this: In physical and earthly life there is your brain inside and in the cavity of your skull; a little farther down there is the lung, and then the other organs. More outwardly, towards the surface of the body, there are your senses. Through all that is thus contained within the limits of your skin, you are enabled to perceive the outer world. Now after death you yourself go out into the world. At first the stars are only shining *into* your etheric body, but when the etheric body too has been laid aside, you will actually identify yourself with the stars. Before, you had in you a brain; now you will have in you the Spiritual essences of Venus, Mercury, the Sun, and so on. You can truly say: Even as on the Earth I had in me my lung, my heart, my kidneys and so forth, so Moon and Mercury and Sun are in me now. You in your inner being are at one with the great Universe. Do you imagine that the Universe will provide you with the same kind of perception and understanding as your brain does? The world will look very different to you now! The Earth itself looks different when we behold it from the Sun than when we ourselves are on Earth and looking upwards to the Sun.

So then we undergo in all reality this backward recapitulation of our life, during which time we still remain in close connection with Moon and Mercury and Venus, while our relation to the more distant stars — to Mars and Jupiter and Saturn, and to the Fixed Stars above all — is as yet feebly developed.

When we have thus retraced our actions all the way backward until birth, then do we judge them from the standpoint of the stars; and in our judgment of ourselves we are no longer merely looking backward now, but forward. We have the kind of judgment which tells us: You must do thus to balance out this action, and thus to balance out another action, and so on.

We are immersed in the recapitulation of our life during the first twenty or thirty years after death, according to the age we reached, — it takes a third as long as earthly life. (Children who have died go through it quickly: while for very little children, you will easily conclude, it scarcely comes into question.) Connected still in soul and spirit with your past earthly life, you live it through again in backward sequence. And when at last you have arrived at birth, only the "memory" of it will remain with you. It is as though at this moment you were to lay aside yet another body. We are accustomed to say, we lay aside the astral body. What happens in reality is that the living action in which you were hitherto immersed is now transformed for you into a thought-picture, — only it is a consciousness pertaining to the stars that thinks it, whilst here on Earth an earthly consciousness was thinking.

As you set forth now on your further way within the spiritual world you will be living with the Beings of whom the physical refulgence are the Sun and Moon and Stars. With the spiritual Beings of the Stars you will now live on. Moreover into this life amid the Stars you bear with you the memory of the Karmic entity you had to lay aside with your astral body. Once more, the "laying aside" means nothing else than that the life we were immersed and actively engaged in is but a memory to us now — a memory which we as cosmic Man take with us. Weighted with this memory — the legacy of our earthly life — we step forth into a purely spiritual world.

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While undergoing the aforesaid recapitulation of his past earthly life, man is essentially within the planetary sphere. Advancing from the spiritual forces of the Moon to those of Venus, Mercury, Sun, Mars, Jupiter and at last Saturn, — living therefore between the spheres of Moon and Saturn,

feeling within himself the Planetary Cosmos — throughout this time man is still undergoing the backward recapitulation of his recent Earth-life. A few days ago I was telling you of how the Moon- and Saturn-forces which bring man down into the earthly realm, seeking ever and again to hold him fast on Earth, Saturn on the other hand seeks to bear him out into the Universe of Stars. Yet we must understand this truly, for when man goes into the Universe of Stars between death and new birth, he is no longer seeing the physical reflection of the Stars; he is living now with the *Beings*, to whom the several Stars belong.

When after death we have passed the sphere of Saturn, we become ripe to experience the pure spiritual world. In the book "[Theosophy](#)" this moment is described as the passage from the soul-world into Spirit-land. Trammeled however as he is by the memory of his past earthly life, man is unable to achieve the crossing by himself. He needs a helper in the spiritual world, — and of this too, you will recall, I was telling in recent lectures. In the age before the Mystery of Golgotha, the Initiates in the Mysteries could say to their disciples: If you have duly sent your religious offerings up into the spiritual world, you will be able to find the sublime Being of the Sun who goes with you from the time when you with yourself take leave of the Sun-sphere. He in His spiritual Being will accompany you to the other side, where, so to speak, the Sun shines spiritually outward into cosmic space, even as He himself shines physically down on to the Earth. The sublime Being of the Sun will then go with you; He will escort you to the Saturn sphere and farther out from thence into the sphere of Stars. The spiritual Sun will, as it were, be shining for you; thus and thus only will you win your passage from the soul-world into Spirit-land.

Now through the Mystery of Golgotha it has grown different. The Being of the Sun came down to Earth, — took on a body in the Man, Jesus of Nazareth. By turning now in heart and mind and feeling to the Christ and to the Mystery of Golgotha, already here upon the Earth, man receives power that will enable him to get beyond the spheres of Sun and Saturn, so to gain entry into Spirit-land, — in other words, into the world of Stars.

Then comes the state in which man undergoes his further life between death and new birth. If I am now to tell you more about this state, in the way man of present time — after the Mystery of Golgotha — can undergo it by virtue of the power of Christ which he has received, I must insert the following. In the first place I must point out what it really means, when we are out yonder in the world of Stars, in Spirit-land, for us to have the "memory" of our earthly life. The following will help you understand it.

Getting beyond the Saturn sphere, we enter into what was named the Zodiac, in ancient world-conceptions. Though it was meant to typify the fixed-star-heavens as a whole — the Spirit-land, in other words — in the sum-total of the stars which constitute the Zodiac we have a comprehensive picture of the path which Man must undergo, to build from the entire Cosmos, with the help of the Beings of the Hierarchies, the Spirit-seed of his physical body for the next incarnation. If you should say: "Here upon Earth we have such interesting work to do, building up civilisation, working for our fellowmen and so on; how meagre it must be to be engaged only in forming a body for ourselves," you would be making a great mistake. Nothing that you can ever do on Earth can be as great and manifold as what you have to do when from the starry worlds you build this temple of the Gods, the human body. This is by far the greater task and the more manifold. Nor do you merely make your own body for yourself. As we shall see in a moment, you really make it so that it belongs to mankind as a whole. Associated as you are by Karma with one human being or another, while building your new body you imbue it with the tendency to bring you together again in a beneficial way, so that you and they together can make good. You are working for mankind in a far higher degree out there than you are able to do while here on Earth. Now as to how you work amid the Stars, let me describe it in more detail, only remember please what I said before. Telling of yonder worlds sublime, I can speak only in pictures; the human concepts of our time are not so formed as to enable one to express it otherwise.

In its entirety, once more, you have to build the spiritual seed of your next physical body. From the ingredients of the whole Universe you built it. When for example you are living in and with those spiritual Beings who have their physical reflection in the constellation of Aries, the Ram, you will work with the Hierarchies of Aries in forming your future head, which is indeed a Universe in itself. No matter how contracted here in the physical body, in your head you carry the entire Cosmos — the Cosmos seen from the aspect of Aries. And while, upon the scene of Aries, you are at work with the Hierarchy of that constellation, meanwhile the planets are shining; as they shine physically down on to the Earth, so do they shine spiritually to the other side. Say for example that you have worked your way from Aries to the next constellation — Taurus, the Bull. While working with the Hierarchies in Taurus, you elaborate the region of your larynx in its connection with the lungs. Mars in the meantime, from the planetary spheres, shines up into the sphere of Taurus, and in the movements of Mars there is expressed all that you did with your organs of speech, rightly

or wrongly, while you were on the Earth. Every untruth which a man uttered shines at him spiritually from the planet Mars while he is working through the Taurus sphere. You may imagine therefore, what is the nature of the "memory" we there retain of our own deeds. We find it after death, written into the Universe — nay, as the very Logos, speaking from the Universe towards that other side of world-existence.

Thus for the region of the speech-organs we have to work at our future body, hindered or helped according as we lied or told the truth. And so it is, to take another example, when we are going through the constellation of Leo. It is the Sun now that sheds spiritual light on all the imperfections of our heart — more or less deep or superficial as we have been in our feelings and in our sympathies and antipathies, belonging as these do to our temperament and blood-circulation while on Earth. So while we work and build at our future body, the language of the Planets, sounding into the cosmic spaces, utters forth the whole of our preceding life. It is so in deed and truth, strange as it may seem from an earthly standpoint. We watch the planetary movements from yonder side, even from without, — Mars for example moving in the face of Taurus. The movements form themselves into a cosmic writing, but the writing is not mute, it actually sounds into the Universe. Such is the writing of the Stars, by our own deeds inscribed into the cosmic spaces. Small wonder if on our return we prepare what will then be ours — the measure of our Karma. For we can only build the physical body for our future life under the ceaseless influence of this speaking of the Stars.

So then we work our way through the spiritual realm. We spend the longer time upon this spiritual journey, the greater the proportion of our full consciousness in the past earthly life to the dim consciousness we had as a little child. For we are now in a state of consciousness transcending the consciousness we had on Earth, even as our earthly consciousness as grown-up men and women transcends the dreamy state of childhood. There are distinctly these three stages. If a man lived to the age of thirty and spent the first five years in the dream-consciousness of childhood, he will have lived in fuller consciousness six times as long. So now again he lives six times longer than his entire Earth-life in the still fuller consciousness which pertains to him out there amid the Stars. We understand it therefore quite simply: a child who dies will live only for a short time between death and new birth. The older a man grows, the longer must he spend there. For by his longer life on Earth his higher consciousness was darkened for a longer time, — I mean the higher-than-

earthly consciousness which he underwent in the spiritual world after his former death. The longer this was darkened, the longer must he work to make it light again. For we must enter right fully into the light.

When we are fully in the light, then comes the time between death and new birth which you will find described in one of the Mystery Plays as the midnight hour in the spiritual life of man. It is about the middle of the time between death and new birth. This is the time when our consciousness, amid the Beings of the Hierarchies in the spiritual world, is most steeped in Spiritual light. Yet at this very time we also experience most deeply: Down yonder in the planetary sphere is the abiding record of all that you, man, did. You may not abandon it, you cannot leave it thus, — so say we to ourselves — nor can you ever alter it while you are here; you can change it only by going down to Earth. And so the urge arises, to descend again to Earth, — to resolve, as it were, between Moon and Saturn. The forces of the Moon are drawing for us once again and we resolve to follow them, so to set forth on our returning journey. If a man grew to adult life in his last incarnation, it will be centuries later.

The nearer we now come to the planetary sphere and notably to the spheres of Mercury, Venus and Moon, the more we lose the consciousness of community with the Beings of the Hierarchies. To tell it more precisely: the consciousness we enter into now contains only the revelations of these spiritual Beings, whereas we felt ourselves till lately living among them and within them. While preparing the human head of our next incarnation for example, we felt ourselves working, very intimately with them. Now they appear to us as if in pictures. Meanwhile the forces of the Moon arise within us. We feel once more: we are a being destined to live a life of our own. Although not yet in a physical body, we have a premonition of living in and by ourselves, a stranger to the Cosmos. No longer do we see the spiritual Beings as they really are; all that we now possess are the pictures of them.

Whilst we are going through these pictures, the spiritual seed of the physical body which we were preparing falls ever farther from us and disappears. We are obliged to witness this: the spiritual seed has fallen from us; it has gone down into a physical mother and father, entering into the forces of generation, into the stream of generation upon the physical Earth. So it is in all reality. The physical body's we also were preparing shrinks and contracts and falls into the streams of generation, — into a physical father and mother upon Earth, — while we ourselves as soul and spiritual being are left behind, feeling that we belong to what has fallen



from us, yet cannot unite with it directly. In this condition — it is our only means of re-uniting with it — we now begin to draw to ourselves the forces of the Ether that are there throughout the Cosmos; we begin to form our ether-body. We do this when the spirit-seed of our physical body has already fallen from us and is down there on Earth, preparing the physical body in the mother's womb, while we are gathering the forces with which we form our ether-body. With this etheric body we then unite ourselves, when the human seed has already been for a time in the mother's womb.

Such is the process of return to earthly life. We have been living with the pictures — no more than the pictures — of the spiritual Beings; now we incorporate what we can take into ourselves only through the forces of the Moon. What until now was but the "memory" of our own Karmic entity, we now take in as real effective forces, right into our ether-body. Therefore we afterwards appear on Earth in such a way that we of ourselves bring about the unfoldment of our destiny, our Karma. It is while passing through the Lunar forces that we conceive the longing thus to live and fulfil our Karma upon Earth.

Such, my dear friends, is the cycle through which man lives from death till birth. First he experiences the ascent to independent consciousness within the spirit-sphere. Thereafter, this consciousness is gradually steeped again in twilight; the Spirit-sphere remains with him in pictures only, and he receives into himself the will to Karma. He comes back to Earth, to work once more in a physical body. So he goes on, till through a sequence of such Earth-lives he shall become capable of yet another metamorphosis, another mode of being.

In present earthly time it is as I have been relating. In his descent from the starry spheres, man has the memory of his former Earth-existence and from this memory he now takes his start. Having prepared it for himself within the starry spheres, at his descent he now unites with his own physical body. But we are living now in a very important period of Earth-existence, the significance of which we can understand only if we first know what has just been related — how in the starry spheres we prepare and work and win for ourselves the physical body which we eventually put on when we come down again to Earth. For at this very point something of great significance is about to happen in our epoch. I will say more of it in the third part of the lecture.

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I have often drawn attention to the fact that in the last third of the 19th century changes whose origin is in the spiritual world began to affect the whole course of human earthly life. The gates of knowledge were in a way opened to the spiritual world. If man is duly active on his own part he can now reach into the spiritual world with true cognition, whereas for many centuries before, while material knowledge was developing, this possibility had not been given.

The change took place to begin with in the spiritual world, in that the Beings who had been leading hitherto were replaced by that spiritual Being who for his likeness in character to what is traditionally known by this name may be described as the Being of Michael. Michael, we may truly say, has taken over the Spiritual guidance of mankind. The fact that Michael is now entering the soul-life and spiritual life of mankind has its visible counterpart on Earth. An ever growing number of people begin to realize that man is livingly and constantly connected, not only through his physical body with the Earth, but through his soul and spirit with the spiritual world.

Man is thus growing into conscious spiritual knowledge. This is the one aspect of the leadership of Michael, but there is also another. To be sincerely filled with spiritual knowledge also affects the human heart, the human soul. The more the light of Spiritual Science spreads, the less will it remain a mere theory; it will pour out into human feeling, — it will be present in the form of true human love, in ever widening circles.

What, in effect, is the relation to the human being of all the learning and information accumulated in the last few centuries? It lives as knowledge in the human head; it does not reach the entire man, — it fails to flow from the head into the human being as a whole. Knowledge of this sort then becomes a kind of tumour in the soul. Failing to receive the proper forces from the rest of the human being, it gradually hardens. This is what happens when we merely grow more clever in our head, and the appropriate feelings, springing from the rest of our human being, no longer permeate our increasing cleverness. A kind of cancerous growth becomes established in our soul and spiritual life. The head itself cannot truly thrive if the whole human being is not living in the world with heartfelt love, and also willing what he loves.

Yet man will never understand what the leadership of Michael intends unless he goes out to meet it with his own active contribution — unless he opens out his mind to spiritual enlightenment and becomes filled with the

human love which springs from such enlightenment. When he does this, then also will he realize with ever growing comprehension the significance of Michael's leadership and guidance.

The people of the Old Testament, — they too spoke of a leadership of Michael, and in so speaking they conceived Michael to be the servant of Jahve. Michael therefore, in the Old Testament times, worked with those spiritual forces which are the forces of Jahve. He was the minister of Jahve. He helped in the inexorable fight of which I spoke before — the fight with the Ahrimanic powers. In our age, on the other hand, Michael's leadership now begins to help regulate the historic destinies of mankind, it also is signifying that the word shall presently come true: the leadership of Christ will spread over the Earth. It is as though Michael goes before, bearing the light of spiritual knowledge, while after Him there comes the Christ, calling man to universal, all-embracing love. Now this entails a change not only for the Earth; it involves changes also for the life man undergoes between death and a new birth.

Since ancient times of earthly evolution it has been as I today described it. The human being prepares the spiritual seed of his own physical body, which he takes over when he steps forth into his new life on Earth. Now however, since the Christ-Michael-leadership has begun, men will be able ever increasingly to make another important decision before they come down to Earth. Today as yet only a few will do so; a growing number will as time goes on. For spiritual knowledge sheds its light not only on the Earth, but out into the higher realms as well. Through the present leadership of Michael man will now learn to make a very significant decision at the moment when he has already taken on his Karma — taken it into his new ether-body — but is still only setting out upon the way into the physical. With the increasing spread of spiritual knowledge on the Earth and with man's growing experience within himself of universal human love, the following possibility will arise for mankind in coming time. When at the point of descending into a next earthly life, man will be able to say to himself: 'This is the body I have been preparing; yet, having sent it down to Earth and having now received my Karma into the ether-body which I have drawn together from the Cosmos, I see how it is with this Karma. Through something that I did in former lives I see that I have gravely hurt some other human being.' For we are always in the danger of hurting others through the things we do. The light of judgment as to what we have done to another man will be particularly vivid at this moment when we are still living only in our ether-body, having not yet put on the physical. Here too in future time the light of Michael will be working, and

the love of Christ. And we shall then be enabled to bring about a change in our decision, — namely to give to the other man the body we have been preparing, while we ourselves take on the body he prepared, whom we have injured.

Such is the mighty transition which will be taking place from now onward in the spiritual life of men. It will be possible for us of our own decision to enter into the body prepared perforce by another human soul to whom we once did grievous harm; he on the other hand will be enabled to enter into the body we prepared. What we are able to achieve on Earth will thus bring about Karmic compensation in quite another way than heretofore. We human beings shall be able even to exchange our physical bodies. Indeed, the Earth could never reach her goal if this did not take place; mankind would never grow into a single whole. In preparation for future planetary embodiments of the Earth, a time must come in earthly evolution when it will be impossible for one individual to enjoy things on the Earth at the expense of another. As in a plant the single leaf or petal feels itself a member of the whole and shares — pictorially speaking — in the weal and woe of the whole plant, so must a future come for the planet Earth when one human being will not want to enjoy happiness at the expense of the whole, but man will feel a member of mankind. And it will be the true spiritual counterpart of this when we shall learn to prepare the physical body even for one another.

We are in fact emerging from the epoch when each of us had so to speak, his own continuation to himself as to the physical body. In the new epoch that is now beginning — brought on by the present leadership of Michael — we shall work at the spirit-seeds of the physical bodies of men in such a way that one works for another. Moreover, as our incarnations of the Earth go on, this will lead even further. For in thus working for one another in the spirit, we shall prepare for a yet later time, to tell the character of which will sound completely strange and paradoxical, yet it is true. For in that more distant future, human souls even while on Earth will be able to go across into the bodies of those to whom they have done some special hurt and to receive the other soul into their own body. That will be when the Earth herself will have passed into quite new conditions. Yet it is also being prepared for by the actual and impending change of which I have been telling, and which is coming about in the spiritual world through the leadership of Michael.

From this example you can see most vividly the essence of "ideal magic". If while on Earth you are receptive to the illumination that comes from Spiritual Science, then you are truly helping on the leadership of Michael. Then you are helping on those spiritual forces which will enable men so to live for one another, that even in deciding upon the physical body they are to take, they will consider what is best for all mankind. When we are choosing our physical body, this will determine our decision. If you prepare for this event even now on Earth — prepare for it by the Wisdom-of-Man and by the Love-of-Man — what you are doing will have reality in the spiritual world. And this is true "ideal magic". It is the true "white magic" as it was called in olden times, and into it mankind is now about to enter.

I wanted to tell you of this most vital factor which has now come into the evolutionary pathway of mankind. We must not shrink for want of courage when it is needful to unveil facts of the spiritual world entering deep into the life of man. For the whole future of mankind depends on man's learning really to live with the spiritual world as naturally as on the Earth he lives with the physical. Mankind must learn to be at home again in the spiritual world as it was in the beginning, in primeval time. Only by doing so shall we be helping mankind's future. In the true sense we must understand the word of Christ: "My Kingdom is not of this world". How then shall we understand it? Did He not after all come down to Earth? Should He not therefore have said:

My kingdom *is* of this world? No, He did not say that, for He intended gradually to transform the Earth into a Kingdom that should not be utterly absorbed in earthly things, but should pass over, ever more and more, into a spiritual state. Christ's Kingdom is not as the Earth was until the Mystery of Golgotha, nor as it still continued, running on in the old lines as if by dint of inertia. The Spirit shall prevail upon the Earth, — such is His Kingdom! And this will come to pass when mankind truly comprehends the leadership of Michael. Nor is true comprehension proved in any other way than by the quest I have now indicated — the quest of spiritual illumination and of human, Christ-filled love.



# Notes

1. [△](#) Philosophie der Freiheit, 1894. The later English editions have been entitled Philosophy of Spiritual Activity.



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