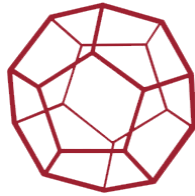


# Memory and Habit

GA 170



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by

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# Introduction

Unless we acquire the faculty for the perception of truth in this physical world we shall never be able to unfold it in regard to the spiritual world. The capacity to find our true bearings in the spiritual world must be developed here in the physical world.

It is for this purpose that we are placed in the physical world, where it behoves us to seek agreement between idea and objective reality, in such a way that this may become natural to us, may become a habit and a faculty which we then carry with us into the spiritual world.

But in these days there are so many who make statements with utter disregard of their conformity with objective fact, simply out of their feelings and emotions! This tendency is the very reverse of what is needed for the onward progress of humanity.



# Lecture I

When we study the human soul in its development within the physical body between birth and death, we are struck by the fact that in order to have a full and complete earthly existence, the soul must make two attributes or faculties its own.

On the one hand: memory. Just imagine what it would be like if memory were not one of our faculties in earthly existence! And think how different our life of soul would be if we could neither look back over the course of the past day nor recall from unfathomed depths what we have experienced since a certain moment of time after our birth. The cohesion of experience is necessary if there is to be true Ego-consciousness. I have called attention to this fact on many occasions. You all know that memory begins to function at a certain point of time during our earthly life and that experiences occurring before this point of time are sunk in oblivion. We can therefore say that from a certain point of time in our physical earthly life, our life of soul enters into relationship with our bodily life and this enables us, in the present, to remember the experiences through which we have passed.

One of the tasks of earthly life is to unfold the faculty of memory. During our long evolution as beings of the Old Moon incarnation of the Earth, we did not possess memory in the form in which we know it to-day. Memory has only been able to develop since the Earth-organism with its mineral forces has been incorporated in our being. Memory is essentially an outcome of the interaction between the human soul and the physical body. In the spiritual world, memory, as developed in the physical life, has only been needed since the beginning of the Earth-period. Until the time of the Earth-period it was not needed, for the reason that in the power of the dreamy clairvoyance possessed by man during the Old Moon period, he possessed a different faculty — a faculty which was able to take the place of our memory to-day. Suppose that every time you experienced something, the experience was inscribed somewhere in a place remaining accessible to you, and that it was so with every subsequent experience. Under such conditions you would merely have to look at the spot where the experience was inscribed. You would be able to look outwards, because the experiences would be preserved in the outer world. So indeed it was in the time of the Old Moon. All that was experienced in that old dreamlike,

clairvoyant consciousness, was engraved, as it were, in a certain delicate ether-substance. All that the Moon-humanity experienced through this dreamy, clairvoyant consciousness was written into the cosmic substance; and the activity of the human soul which might be compared with memory to-day was that the dreamy clairvoyant gaze was directed to the 'engraving' in the delicate ether-substance. The Moon-man saw his own experiences in the traces left by them, just as we now see the objects of the outer world. He only needed to look round upon what he had experienced in his dreamlike imaginative life and he found it inscribed in the cosmic substance. This was quite a different mode of 'living-together' with the world from that of to-day. Suppose everything that now becomes a thought in your minds were to flash after you like a comet's tail so that you could re-think it. If this were so, you would have transferred into your present life of thought conditions that actually obtained during the period of the old dreamlike consciousness. This condition had necessarily to come to an end because man was to become individual, an individuality. But this is only possible when the experiences through which his soul passes remain his own inner possession, are not immediately inscribed into the cosmic substance but only into his own, delicate ether-substantiality. So long as man lives on the Earth, his etheric body lives and moves within him in his hours of waking consciousness. To this movement, the form of the physical body sets the boundary. It cannot pass beyond the boundary set by the skin. And so through the whole of the life between birth and death, the fine ether-substantiality — within which thoughts, ideas, experiences of feeling and of will circulate — remains rolled up as it were within the confines of the physical body. When the physical body is laid aside at death, the scroll unrolls and is now given over to the cosmic substance. So that after death we begin to look back upon what was engraved in our individual ether-substance which now, after death, is given over to the cosmic ether.

As with memory, which evolves because a force of resistance is offered by the physical body, so too is it with regard to something else of importance for our earthly existence.

*Habits* are something else which we have to acquire during earthly existence. Neither memory in its present form, nor the capacity to acquire habits were ours during the Old Moon period of existence. [*An Outline Of Occult Science*. Rudolf Steiner.] If we observe the development of the human being from childhood onwards, we can see how habits are acquired by the constant repetition of actions. Through instructions given during our

upbringing, actions steadily repeated become habitual. We are first led to do something which by constant repetition becomes a habit and the habit, once formed, becomes more and more an automatic action of the soul.

The development of habits in the right way during earthly existence is necessary to the unfolding of Ego-consciousness. For what had we in the place of habits during the Old Moon period of evolution? At that time, whenever anything had to be carried out by us or through us, we came under the direct influence of the higher Beings of the spiritual world. We were impelled to action by impulses sent into us from the Beings of the spiritual world. We needed no 'habits,' for what we had to do, the Beings of the higher world did, in a certain sense, *through us*. We were more intimately part of the whole 'organism' of the Hierarchies than is the case now, in the Earth period.

But it would never have been possible for us to develop the force of *freedom* had we remained in this condition where our every action involved an impulse from higher spiritual Beings. The foundations of freedom (free spiritual activity) could only be laid within us by our having been emancipated from the sphere of the Beings of the spiritual worlds and thus — having arrived at the stage of being able to form a habit by the steady repetition of some act — it finally comes from our own being. It is so indeed: the attainment of the possibility of freedom for man is intimately connected with the acquisition of habits.

When we enter physical existence through birth, we come from a world in which, during the Earth period itself, we are living *in* conditions somewhat similar to those obtaining during the Old Moon period. In the spiritual world, before entering through birth into earthly existence, we live under the strong influence of higher spiritual impulses. In that world there are exalted spiritual Beings who guide us to what we have to do in order so to prepare our earthly existence that it may take its course in accordance with karma. With the entrance into the physical body we are reft away from that world in which there are no habits but only the continuous and unceasing impulses of lofty spiritual Beings. Having entered physical existence, an *echo* still remains within us of this life in the spiritual world. This echo is expressed in the fact that as children, up to the time of our seventh year, we are governed less by habit than by the power of *imitation*. We imitate what is done, what goes on around us. This is an echo of our life in the spiritual world. In the spiritual world we had to receive the impulse for every single activity. Therefore it is that as children we react to our immediate impulses, and imitate. Independent activity of the life of soul

begins only in the course of time, just as we gradually unfold the capacity to live according to habit. Memory and habit are important constituents of our life of soul, being metamorphoses, transformations of forces of quite a different nature in the spiritual world. Memory is a metamorphosis of the enduring traces of imaginative, dreamlike experiences. Habits arise because we are torn away from the impulses of the higher spiritual Beings.

When we study these things and meditate upon them, we arrive at a concept that is necessary for understanding the very different nature of the world lying beyond the Threshold. Again and again it must be emphasised that the world beyond the Threshold is altogether different from the world this side of the Threshold. Even when we employ words used in connection with the physical world to characterise the spiritual world from any particular point of view, we must constantly remind ourselves that true and adequate ideas of the spiritual world can only be acquired by gradually accustoming ourselves to shaping these ideas of the spiritual world *quite differently* from those which apply to the physical world. At the same time, however, the study of such things as memory and habit, will help us to unfold insight into the nature of our physical existence.

It is sheer folly to imagine that physical existence is something to be despised. I have pointed out this mistake from many different points of view. Physical existence has its task in human evolution as a whole, just as all other phases of evolution have theirs. It is to our eternal gain that in the course of the evolution of the soul we have a physical body and by means of this physical body pass through certain earthly experiences under the influence of memory and habit. Gradually, by means of repeated earth-lives, we become firmly possessed of these earthly acquisitions. Between death and re-birth, however, we must continually return to the conditions of the Old Moon period of existence. We must surrender as it were the power of memory, as indeed we do directly after death, and give over to the cosmic substance that which we have engraved within our being during earthly existence. And again we must surrender ourselves to the impulses of the higher spiritual Beings in order that by following their impulses we may transform them, in the physical body, into habits.

Here, however, we have reached a point where I will again draw attention to something which on account of its importance can never be over-emphasised.



Memory and habit are acquired during earthly life. Let us first consider memory. Memory may appear to be an acquisition of earthly existence. You know, moreover, that however weak a man's memory may be, it is always possible to develop it. Suppose for a moment that nothing else were to be done in the way of developing the memory than what is absolutely natural, under the influence of the earthly, physical organism which is permeated with mineral substance. If this were the case, memory would unfold in quite a different way. As it is, we do more — as you know, we do much more. It would perhaps be more correct to say that much more is done *with* us in this matter of training the memory. For one thing we are made to learn by heart, to memorise. At a certain age in our upbringing we are told to learn by heart. There is a difference between acquiring the natural faculty of memory and being set down to do something, else in addition. If we read a poem many times, or if it is often repeated aloud to us, at last we remember it, we know it by heart. Modern methods of education, however, are not content with this. Children are set to work to memorise a poem and are sometimes punished for failing to have committed it to memory when bidden to do so. This is very characteristic of the present phase of evolution.

I must beg you not to misunderstand me. It must *not* be said that I am denouncing memorising or have demanded its abolition. I am demanding no such thing. Our times are such that certain things must necessarily be memorised, precisely because this present phase of evolution corresponds to a definite phase in the development of the faculty of memory.

But what is it that really happens in the soul when memorising is called to the assistance of the naturally unfolding faculty of memory? It is a case of summoning *Lucifer* to our aid! It is indeed a Luciferic force which is thus summoned to the aid of memory.

Once more I must beg you not to exclaim: 'Lucifer! But we must guard against him. From now on our children shall never be allowed to learn by heart!' Some people have the mistaken idea that they must persistently guard themselves against Lucifer and Ahriman and do everything possible to hold them at a safe distance. But as a matter of fact it is precisely when they are thus on guard that they make it easy for them to approach them!

The Luciferic and Ahrimanic forces have to be reckoned with in cosmic evolution. They must necessarily be part and parcel of world-evolution. The only question is that they shall be kept in their proper place. Consider the special case already mentioned: Why is it that the Luciferic power must be

summoned to the aid of memory? In very ancient times of evolution, memory was powerful to an extent undreamed of by men to-day. We, in our day, need a considerable length of time in which to learn a long poem by heart. The ancient Greeks did not need nearly such a long time. Numbers of them knew the poems of Homer from beginning to end. But these ancient Greeks did not memorise in the way we do to-day when we learn something by heart. In those times the power of memory was quite differently constituted.

Now what was really happening in that fourth Post-Atlantean epoch of civilisation? The Græco-Latin age was to a certain extent a recapitulation of the Atlantean epoch itself which has been described in my writings dealing with Atlantis. What had come over from the Old Moon period of evolution as a force enabling man to draw his dreamlike, imaginative experiences after him like the tail of a comet — this force, instead of working outside as a channel of communication with an outer universe, passed into the *inner* being of man. As a result of this transference from the outer to the inner life, memory in the Atlanteans was like a flashing-up of something which the world at that time gave of itself. In the days of Atlantis there was no need for man to make any great efforts to develop his memory, for it was like an influx into the inner being of a force operating in communication with the outer world. In the fourth Post-Atlantean epoch of civilisation there was a recapitulation of this state of things. In the *inner* being there was a recapitulation of the operation of a force which in earlier times had worked in constant interplay with the world, without any activity on the part of man himself. Inasmuch as man has passed now into the fifth Post-Atlantean epoch, he must make greater and greater efforts to come into real possession of the power of memory. Because memory has to contribute to man's progress towards individuality and freedom, the power which came spontaneously in the Atlantean age and in its recapitulation, the fourth Post-Atlantean era, has now to be *acquired*. When something corresponding to an earlier power has to be acquired in a later age, when, for example, memory is helped by means of a force which was formerly there by *nature*, we always have to do with a Luciferic activity. You see, the memory we now cultivate artificially but which in Greek times was a natural endowment, now becomes Luciferic. This conception of the Luciferic activity helps us to realise the part played by Lucifer in the evolution of mankind. To some extent limits were still set to his working in Greek and Latin times, for he was then still in his right place. Nowadays this is no longer the case. If memory is to be developed in our age, man has to enter into a pact with Lucifer. By dint of his own self-activity man must now do

for his memory what was done without any participation on his part during the Græco-Latin era. But for this reason, what happened then without man's participation becomes a Luciferic deed in our age.

The moment, however, a Luciferic activity sets in, the other side of the balance begins to operate: the Ahrimanic impulse. While on the one side we memorise, calling Lucifer to our aid in this respect, on the other side we make more and more use of the Ahrimanic support to memory, namely, we write things down. I have often said that it was a true conception in the Middle Ages which made men speak of printing as one of the 'black arts.'

This external method of assisting memory is wholly of an Ahrimanic nature. Again, I do not say that it is right to flee from everything that is Ahrimanic, although in this respect it may perhaps be said that precisely among us too much is done in the direction of summoning Ahriman. There is a tendency to have an exaggerated affection for him!

## Influences of Lucifer and Ahriman

Man's task is, however, to cultivate the position of balance and not to believe that he can simply escape from the clutches of Lucifer and Ahriman. Calmly and courageously he must admit to himself that both Beings are necessary for world-evolution, that in his own development he needs both Lucifer and Ahriman in his active life, but that the balance must be maintained in every sphere of life.

Our activities, therefore, must be such that the balance is maintained between Lucifer and Ahriman. It was for this reason too that Lucifer and Ahriman had necessarily to play a part in earthly evolution. At the beginning of the Old Testament there is a significant picture of the influx of the Luciferic forces into world-evolution. Luciferic forces enter earthly evolution by way of the woman, and man is beguiled by way of the woman. This biblical picture symbolises the influx of the Luciferic element which occurred in the age of old Lemuria.

Then, during the subsequent Atlantean age, there came the entrance of the Ahrimanic element into earthly evolution. Just as during the fourth Post-Atlantean period human knowledge had to come to an understanding of the Luciferic symbol, so now, during our fifth Post-Atlantean epoch, as I have said before, it was necessary to place before the soul in an adequate but yet sufficiently indicative form — the opposite symbol. The figure of Faust has Ahriman at his side, as Eve has Lucifer. Lucifer approaches the

woman, Eve; Ahriman approaches the man, Faust. And just as the man, Adam, was indirectly beguiled through Eve, so here, the woman, Gretchen, is deceived through the man, Faust. The seduction of Gretchen is the result of deception, because Ahriman is at work. Ahriman is the 'Lying Spirit' in contrast to Lucifer who is the 'Tempter.' This, then, is how they may be described: Lucifer, the Tempter; Ahriman, the Lying Spirit.

Much exists in the world for the express purpose of guarding mankind from temptation by Lucifer: rules of conduct, maxims, moral precepts, instituted customs and so forth. But there is less to help man to protect himself in the right way from falling prey to the Ahrimanic impulse — namely, untruthfulness.

All that is Luciferic in man has to do with the emotions, the passions. On the other hand, the Ahrimanic influence which asserts itself in human evolution has to do with lying, with untruthfulness. And in our age man must be armed not only against the attacks of Lucifer. It is high time for him to forge his armour against the attacks of Ahriman.

One of the *motifs* in *Faust* is that man is overcome by Ahriman, to the point of misunderstanding the word. Goethe shows us in this poem how Faust goes through different Ahrimanic dangers. True, the figure of Mephistopheles is a mixture and often a confusion of both Lucifer and Ahriman. But on the whole, as I have just now shown, Goethe is right to have chosen the figure of Ahriman and not that of Lucifer for his drama. Much of Ahriman is to be found in both the first and the second parts of *Faust*, up to the point where he plays in the misinterpretation of words. At the end of the second part Faust confuses 'Ditch' and 'Grave.' The Ahrimanic impulse plays even into the misinterpretation of words. Goethe indicates this with extraordinary subtlety, interweaving it most effectively into the play, instinctively rather than consciously realising the nature of the Ahrimanic impulse in what is untrue and distorted. This is a point of great significance.

Now just as memory and habit are metamorphoses of different kinds of activity in the spiritual world, so too, other spiritual faculties we may gain are in their turn metamorphoses of something acquired in physical existence. Let us consider something which first appears in physical existence. Memory and habit have been described as transformations, metamorphoses of the spiritual experiences of earlier times. But what emerges for the first time in the physical world is the relation of our ideas with the facts in the external world. The facts and objects are around us

and we make images of them in our conceptions and ideas. The agreement of the images in our thought with the facts or objects or events, we then call physical truth.

When we speak of physical truth, this implies that our conceptions fit the facts of the physical plane. In order that this truth-relationship may arise, it is absolutely necessary to live in a physical body and perceive things in the outer world through the physical body. It would be nonsense to imagine that such a relationship to truth could have existed during the epoch of the Old Moon evolution. It is an acquisition of earthly life. It is only because we live in a physical body that this agreement between ideas and external facts can arise at all. But here Ahriman's field of action is opened up for him. In what sense is it thus opened up before him?

From what has been said we can perceive the interplay between the spiritual and the physical world. Ahriman has his own good task in the spiritual world and must, furthermore, send forces from there into the physical world. But *he* must not enter the physical world! The fact that this realm is denied him makes it possible for ideas we acquire in the physical body to fit the facts in the outer world. If Ahriman introduces into earthly life activities in which he was engaged during the Old Moon period of evolution, he upsets the agreement of our ideas with the outside facts. He should, if I may be allowed to use the expression, 'keep his fingers off' the realm in which man makes his ideas harmonise with the outside facts. But this is precisely what Ahriman does not do. If he did, there would be no lying in the world!

I do not know whether it is necessary to prove that lying undoubtedly does go on in the world! But whenever there is lying, it is a proof that Ahriman is at work in the physical world in an unjustified way. This particular activity of Ahriman in the world is something which man has to overcome. It is, of course, easy to say: Although there is much beauty in the world, there is also much that is the reverse of beautiful. A perfect God would have succeeded in so creating human beings that they would never have taken to lying. A perfect God would have said to Ahriman: In the physical world it is not for you to interfere. — God, however, has not succeeded in warding off Ahriman from the world; therefore He is not so perfect after all. — So it might be said. And, as a matter of fact, there is not only Ahriman to reckon with — Ahriman, who feels a certain satisfaction on account of the evil that is in the world. There are also philosophers whose pessimism is derived from observation of the bad characteristics of humanity. There were pessimists among philosophers in

the nineteenth century but there were also those who voiced not merely pessimism but out-and-out woe! That too is a view of the world which actually exists and of which *Julius Banzen* is a typical representative.

Why, then, has Ahriman been allowed access to the physical world! On previous occasions I have shown *how* deeply he has entered, taking as an example an occurrence where a pre-arranged programme, strictly adhered to, was witnessed, not by a lay audience, but by thirty Law students and young barristers, men, that is to say, who were being trained to be judges of the actions of human beings. Everything happened according to the scheduled programme. But when, after the event, these thirty young lawyers were asked what had actually happened, twenty-six of them gave an absolutely incorrect account and the remaining four only a very approximately correct one. You can see from this example what kind of relationship actually exists between the ideas in people's mind and the outer physical facts. Thirty people can be present when a certain procedure has been carried through according to a pre-arranged programme and twenty-six of them afterwards give a false account of it. In such a case we see Ahriman at work literally before our eyes. But now, suppose Ahriman were not there at all! If he were not there we should be like innocent lambs, for the impulse would continually be *never* to form concepts which did not tally with the facts. We should only express what we actually observed as fact — but we should do this of *necessity*. It would be impossible for us to do anything else and there would be no question of free spiritual activity. In order to be able to speak the truth as free beings, the possibility to be must also be in us. In other words, we must acquire the power to conquer Ahriman within us at every moment.

Ahriman must be there 'enticing, working, creating, as the devil.' Ahriman must be there, but the trouble is that men follow him so closely and do not recognise him as the devil who entices, works and creates, and who must be overcome.

To pull long faces and say: 'That is certainly Ahrimanic. I cannot allow myself to have any dealings with it,' means nothing more or less in many cases than a comfortable surrender to Lucifer without freedom. The whole point is that we shall learn to recognise the impulses which must be overcome, wherever they exist. We need Ahriman on the one side and Lucifer on the other in order to set up the balance between them.





## Lecture II

I should like to add something to what I have said on the subject of memory as it exists in our age. As it manifests on Earth, memory is a metamorphosis of other forms of the life of soul which belonged to the Old Moon period of evolution. I said that during that period of dreamy, imaginative vision, man had no need of memory such as he now possesses; he had no need of it because he drew after him, like a comet's tail, impressions (which were inscribed in an objective world) of what he experienced in his dreamlike imaginations. During the Earth period proper this mode of experience disappeared. A different factor then began to operate which we must bear in mind if we are fully to understand the subject. An experience in consciousness can be engraved into the cosmic substance only when it has to some extent been 'pre-experienced,' that is to say not experienced for the first time by man, but beforehand. This will show you that all experiences in the consciousness of the Old Moon period were merely after-echoes of what had already lived in the thoughts of the Beings of the Higher Hierarchies. In the thoughts of the Beings of the Hierarchies there lived, in advance, what the Moon-humanity then 'dreamed.' The thoughts of the Moon-men came at a later stage — if indeed we can speak of 'thoughts' at all in connection with what was really a dreamlike, imaginative consciousness.

A different state of things appears in the Earth period. Human life is no longer so constituted that what a man thinks has already been thought, or remains visible. When he thinks, the thoughts are retained within his own being by the force of resistance offered by his physical body. His thoughts are engraved into his *own* etheric substance and only after death are they given over to the cosmic substance. Man can then look back, just as in earthly life he could look back on all that he experienced in consciousness. In the period between death and a new birth man lives through what was thus engraved in his ether-body and which, when he has passed through the gate of death, is borne out into the substance of the cosmos where it is destined to undergo a gradual change, inasmuch as in repeated earthly lives he has experienced the whole gamut of Earth-existence. Consider for a moment all that human beings think! Would it not be terrible if every human thought were objectively engraved in cosmic substance and remained there for ever and ever? That, however, is what would happen if man were not able, through repeated earthly lives, either to correct



thoughts that are not worthy of permanence or entirely reject and substitute others for them. This is provided for in evolution by the repetition of earthly lives, for man is thus enabled to better what is impressed upon the etheric substance of the cosmos every time he passes through death and he can strive to the end that after his final incarnation on Earth only that will have been given over to the etheric substance of the cosmos which is worthy of permanence.

This is quite a different process from what took place in the dreamy, imaginative consciousness of the Old Moon period, when the thoughts were first evolved by the Beings of the higher Hierarchies and also to some extent by Elemental Beings and then echoed by the humanity of the Moon period. The thoughts evolved in this way remain visible, whereas during the Earth period everything a man thinks (as well as the feelings and impulses of will which are connected with his thoughts) is impressed upon his own ether-body, into his own etheric substance, and only when he has passed through the gate of death is it imparted to the etheric substance of the cosmos. But there it would remain if he were not able, in the course of subsequent incarnations, to correct it in so far as it needs correction.

This holds good for the whole of the normal life of soul during the Earth period, that is to say for the life of soul unfolded in waking consciousness between birth and death, though not for the consciousness which is ours in the period stretching between death and a new birth. The Spiritual Science which from now onwards must flow into human consciousness if humanity is to reach its earthly goal, springs, however, from sources other than those of normal waking consciousness. Spiritual Science must, as you know, come to birth in this *earthly existence itself*. It cannot be evolved in the life between death and rebirth. It must be acquired during earthly life and from this earthly life it streams out into the world where the dead are living between death and rebirth.

Spiritual Science is not a product of ordinary waking consciousness. It cannot, in its immediate form, be brought over into this world through the event of birth. Spiritual Science must evolve as the outcome of a different outlook, a different mode of thought and perception. Two kinds of consciousness have been described in these lectures: the consciousness of the period of the Old Moon and the consciousness of earthly life — objective consciousness. Memory in these two periods is different in character.

Now the consciousness by means of which man is able to assimilate the content of Spiritual Science is intelligible to healthy human reason. He can absorb it without actual vision of the spiritual worlds, but to bring it down from the spiritual worlds demands a very special kind of consciousness. It is this special kind of consciousness which, if it is understood, will enable man to shape future existence on Earth in the way in which it must be shaped if humanity is not to fall into decadence. Understanding of the in-streaming of the truths of Spiritual Science from the super-sensible into our earthly world must develop if mankind is not to fall into the decadence at the threshold of which it is perceptibly standing in our time.

If as they make their way from the spiritual into the physical world the truths of Spiritual Science are to fulfil their task in the future evolution of mankind, a certain insight into them must be acquired. The ordinary memory which functions in our waking consciousness ceases in a certain respect when we really begin to find our bearings in the spiritual world. Memory is something which, as you know, has in a way actually to be *overcome* in the consciousness that is able to penetrate to the mysteries lying on the other side of the Threshold. A new factor comes into play. That which has been consciously experienced must not, of course, be ignored, but this new factor is that a sentence or an utterance which, in the sense of Spiritual Science, has a true spiritual content, does not merely remain in a man's own ether-body until his death but is immediately engraved into the spiritual ether of the cosmos. An utterance which really voices a spiritual truth penetrates into and finds its place in the cosmic ether. In ordinary waking consciousness the thought is engraved first on a man's own ether-body and remains with him until he is able to correct it. Wrong thoughts, therefore, are corrected as karma takes its course. A thought which truly expresses the Spiritual is engraved into the cosmic ether. This is something that must be more and more understood. The process of world-evolution itself needs what can now be inscribed in the cosmic ether through Spiritual Science. Some people may say: 'If this is what happens I prefer to leave Spiritual Science alone for then I need not fear that what I think will immediately be engraved into the etheric substance of the cosmos.' — During the Græco-Latin epoch of civilisation, such a statement might have had some meaning. In our age it has none, for although what I said earlier, namely that man can correct what is inscribed within his own being, is true, we cannot say the same of what happens under the influences of Lucifer and Ahriman. In the future, Lucifer and Ahriman will only be overcome when man has succeeded in setting up the balance between them. From our fifth Post-Atlantean period onwards,

all that men produce out of themselves is capable of rectification. But under the influence of Lucifer and Ahriman, if men do not learn how to be on their guard, those thoughts and actions which have been influenced by Lucifer and Ahriman will be engraved into the etheric substance of the cosmos. Human thought and human action will be borne out into the ether just as the fruits of Spiritual Science are borne out into and inscribed into the ether.

There are fine distinctions here between what is engraved *only* into our own being, the content of Spiritual Science which is in any case inscribed into the cosmic ether, and what is inscribed there because Lucifer is working as the Tempter and Ahriman as the Lying Spirit.

Constantly to repeat the phrase that one must be on perpetual guard against the influences of Lucifer and Ahriman is of no value whatever. If, however, we are to realise the necessity for and the mission of Spiritual Science, we must face this question with all its implications, fairly and squarely: What do those who have insight into the need for Spiritual Science to-day realise to be the great issue at stake? Very much depends upon a knowledge that we are actually now passing over into and preparing the period of world-history in which all that we *ourselves* think will be carried into the cosmic ether. If we seriously consider what this means, a sense of responsibility will arise in regard to everything that happens in our world of thought, a sense of responsibility for what we think. People are so apt to believe that thoughts have no objective significance — and up to a certain period of time which has now come to an end, this was, as a matter of fact, the case. But in our own age, downright untruth is taken hold of by Ahriman and imprinted upon the cosmic substance. This indicates the attitude which it behoves us to adopt to our thoughts. If people do not quite understand what has here been said, they may feel perturbed. But it need not be so if they will think about the matter coolly and collectedly. There is no need to get into a panic and say: 'I must feel an awesome sense of responsibility for all my thoughts.' But in the immediate future and indeed for many thousands of years to come it will be very necessary to acquire this sense of responsibility for our *thoughts*. And we may take this to apply to thoughts which have come to the point of being put into words and thus communicated to others.

So long as we have not actually formulated a thought to the point where it can become a communication, this thought has not reached the stage where Ahriman can do very much with it. But the moment we consider the thought ripe for the telling, and are ready to communicate it, Ahriman is on

the alert to seize the thought and bear it out into the cosmic substance. In addition to taking care that our thoughts shall be formulated in a way that enables us to take full responsibility for them, we must learn to regard the process of thinking as a searching and a seeking. As a heritage from the fourth PostAtlantean period, and as an immature product of the fifth period, we are still too firmly convinced to-day that we can immediately formulate every thought. The faculty of thinking is not bestowed upon us for the purpose of immediately formulating thoughts but rather in order that we may seek out and collect the facts, turning them round, and round in our minds and viewing them from every angle. As human beings now are they like best to form their thoughts instantaneously and then with all possible speed utter them or write them down on paper so that they may be rushed into the world. The gift of thinking was not bestowed upon us for the purpose of a precipitate formulation of thought but for the purpose of searching and seeking. Thinking as such should be regarded as a process which should remain such for as long as possible. And when a thought *has* been formulated it should be held in abeyance until we can feel assured that the facts have been turned over and over and looked at from every possible angle.

Very much will depend upon whether a sufficient number of human beings can realise and understand the significance of what has just been said. It is impossible to imagine how greatly sinned against is the maxim that thought should be a process of seeking and that thoughts should be held in abeyance for as long as possible. This maxim is so sinned against that our world is entangled in a tissue of lies and lying is becoming more and more a habit. But this tendency to lying is leading mankind straight into decadence; there is a constant swinging backwards and forwards between Lucifer and Ahriman. On the one hand, untruth is spoken — either with deliberate ill-will or out of irresponsibility — but after all, as soon as these two words, 'ill-will' and 'irresponsibility' are spoken, they indicate that Lucifer is associated with the Lying Spirit. This is an easy way of approach for Lucifer! And lying, in turn, gives rise to passion. We lose the power to maintain the balance between what we feel and will on the one side, and what we think on the other.

It is very, very necessary that we should realise in clear consciousness how infinitely widespread to-day is the *opposite* tendency to what is demanded by the future, namely, a stern sense of responsibility for the truth. Of recent years this sense of responsibility has been vanishing before

our eyes in a most terrible way. The most important thing of all is to be on the alert, for in their waking consciousness men do not realise how strong is the tendency to say what is not really true.

The truth — as those who carry out experiments know well — can only be arrived at when the matter has been looked at from every possible angle, considered in every possible light, and judgment held in abeyance for as long as possible.

No precipitate declaration of views, no hastily expressed opinion can be the truth. Such tendencies have the result of driving humanity further and further into decadence. Many people tell lies with the utmost glibness: but the worst thing of all is the unconscious and subconscious lying which is the outcome of Luciferic temptation — where a half, a quarter, an eighth or sixteenth of the truth is uttered. It may be that 98 per cent of truth is spoken but yet the dynamic force inherent in the two remaining fractions turns everything to evil.

And here we must take into consideration the fact that people lay so much stress nowadays on knowing everything. They never pause to meditate, nor do they attempt to use their faculty of thinking as an instrument for seeking. No! they must immediately formulate their thoughts. Of course it does occur to people now and then that a great deal of lying goes on in the world. No great insight is needed to discern this, especially in our times. We should, however, also realise that while the generalisation holds good that a great deal of lying goes on, we ourselves must take the path of thought which will from *every* aspect shed light upon the truth about the amount of lying. Otherwise it may happen that an actual truth, too hastily or inaccurately grasped, becomes the very reverse. A day or two ago I happened to read an article on the subject of the lying that is going on in the world at the present time. No great talent is needed to characterise the lies which hum through the air nowadays, but I can really think of nothing more inherently untruthful than this very article. The whole of it is one mass of lies, in spite of the fact that what is said is, in a certain sense, true. I am not saying this in order to denounce the article in question; what matters is that people shall wake up to the necessity of going more deeply into things, of examining them from every possible angle, and of avoiding hasty opinions.

Of all things in the physical world we need, first and foremost, this sense for truth; we need it over against the spiritual world which gives us a true understanding of the impulses of Spiritual Science; and we need it for the

life we shall lead when we have passed through the gate of death. This attitude to truth is all essential, for without it there is no possibility of understanding our environment in the time between death and a new birth, or of understanding what we have to face in the spiritual world.

You see, therefore, that Spiritual Science must change man's attitude towards truth in the future evolution of the Earth. In many respects things that are happening at the present time are terrible indications of the downward path in contrast to the upward path which we must seek and find. For inasmuch as we have still to live through the rest of the Earth period and through the periods of Jupiter, Venus and Vulcan, very much that comes into being within our life of soul will be inscribed in the cosmic substance. This, then, is what I wanted to say on the subject of the metamorphosis of memory.

Of the metamorphosis of habit let me say the following. When we look back and perceive that from which habit has evolved and realise what habit was among the humanity of the Old Moon period, we say that impulses were poured into men by the Beings of the spiritual Hierarchies. In the Old Moon period there was no such thing as habit. Habit is a principle of the Earth period. But now that we have already passed the middle of this period we must prepare what is necessary for evolution in the future.

Through habit we tear ourselves away from the Beings who send down their impulses from the spiritual world. And through habit, the foundations are laid for free spiritual activity.

We must, however, now enter into a different relationship with the Beings of the higher Hierarchies. During the Old Moon period and on into the early part of the Earth period proper, we were unconsciously dependent upon these spiritual Beings. The Beings of the higher Hierarchies and also certain elemental Beings sent their impulses into us. Now we are making ourselves free. As a residuum of this, a kind of relic, there remains the faculty of *imitation in early childhood*. But we must develop this living in habit to a further stage, to the stage where habit functions not only in external action but in moral conduct as well. [See Chapters IX and XII in *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity*.] What is this life of habit in reality? Within us we have a relic of our old connection with the spiritual Beings of the Hierarchies, which we only dimly perceive in our ordinary waking consciousness. An unknown world is there. Through the gateway of the senses we pass out of this unknown world into the physical world in which we live. The original source of our being lies in the world behind the veil of the sense-world, in

the world which Spiritual Science reveals to us. We bear within us a relic of this world, although we do not realise it in our ordinary Earth-consciousness. We lived in the spiritual world with Beings of the higher Hierarchies until the end of the Moon period and during the early part of the Earth period. We left this spiritual world through the gateway of the senses. But we did not lose all sense of kinship with the Beings of the Hierarchies. A subconscious remnant still lives within us — for example, in *conscience*. Conscience is verily a legacy from the spiritual world. Gradually, as we learn again to understand the universe, as we unfold spiritual understanding, moral principles will arise which will illumine with the light of spiritual comprehension the instinctive morality that proceeds from conscience. A morality filled with a stronger and stronger light of understanding will emerge, if, that is to say, men seek for it.

Because this is so, we speak to-day in so many ways of abstract ideals, of the great abstract ideals of Truth, Beauty, Goodness. But remember what I have said on previous occasions: that Truth, Beauty and Goodness correspond to *Beings* in the spiritual world! It is to these Beings of the Hierarchies and not merely to abstract ideals of Truth, Beauty and Goodness that the human soul will evolve, although in our present human activities we simply follow after abstract ideals. From idealism we must evolve to the point where we become aware of our connection with *a living* spiritual world from which must flow the impulses for what happens here in the physical world. Spiritual Science must work in such a way that men shall receive from it the impulses for what ought to come to pass in the physical world.

Think for a moment of all the things that are said in this fifth Post-Atlantean period about the future of mankind, about what ought to be done. Much of it is good and I am not criticising it. But it is, after all, nothing but a search for abstractions. Moral ideals, national-economic ideals, all kinds of other ideals — they are nothing but abstractions compared with the living knowledge which Spiritual Science has to offer in regard to what ought to come to pass in the world. Think what it means to realise that the Hierarchy of the Angels will help us to fulfil our tasks and shape the world as it should be shaped! If you will take what is to be found in the different lecture-courses about the future evolution of humanity and compare this with the abstract moral ideals set up elsewhere, you will find the difference between what is living and what is abstract and dead. What is needed is a living consciousness that the world does not merely consist of mineral, plant, animal and man who invents all kinds of ideals for shaping the world, but rather that after mineral, plant, animal, man, come

the Angels, Archangels and Archai, and the other spiritual Beings — a living, unbroken choir onwards into the heights of the spiritual world! And from this living choir of Being a stream of life is pouring once again into human evolution.

Not until a real understanding of these things awakens can there be anything but abstract ideals. Thoughts — what are thoughts? As if thoughts could have any creative impulse in them if they were not the thoughts of the Angels or the Archangels! This consciousness of living connection with the goal of the world will come. Truth will become more moral because man will feel a moral responsibility towards it. And morality will become a wisdom-filled knowledge because man will know what Being he is serving in his deeds.

The essence of what I have just said represents the true conception of the Christ-Principle for our times. The forces which have been drawn from the Christ-Principle up to our day have not been able to prevent the modern age from falling into decadence in very many respects. But Christ, as I have said more than once, did not say: 'I am here now and only now, therefore write down as quickly as possible something of what you know about Me and let men believe that until the end of time!' — It is only a short-sighted theology, such as theology is at the present day, that teaches in such a way. Its teachings are indeed in many ways presented as though Christ had actually said: 'I have done these things and now write it down quickly. Nothing must be added. This and this alone is to be taught until the Earth comes to an end.' — This conception is based upon such untruth that even those who act in accordance with it do not venture to express it in words!

There is no greater untruth than that which lies at the basis of the impulses upon which men act to-day. For the Christ said: "I will be with you always, even unto the end of earthly time" — which means that His revelation will always be open to us. At the beginning of Christendom this revelation formed the content of the Gospels; to-day it is the content of Spiritual Science which wells up from the same source.

Those who wrote down what *could* be written at the beginning of the Christian era did not say: 'This we have written and there is nothing else to be said.' No, indeed! They said: "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written."



The forces which pulse through Spiritual Science will serve to unfold an understanding of Christ which in the present age could be unfolded by nothing else. Truly it is a need of the present age that attention should be drawn to the attitude which men must adopt in regard to the thoughts and impulses underlying their actions. Much has been written about this, but for the most part it is lacking in substance, for the reason that people prefer nowadays to take an altogether different path. They want to get through their thinking quickly and not to make it a path to a goal which can only be attained after long, long journeying. Only when finally some relation to truth has actually been gained does the time come when we know that if a matter has been considered and tested from every angle we may have got to the truth of it, but even then we need never cease to study it from still other points of view.

This is the earnest warning with which Spiritual Science should speak to our souls. And it is in order that the consciousness of this task may be aroused that our Building stands there. It stands there to provide a starting-point, imperfect though it may be, in order that these things may penetrate into the hearts and souls of men. It is of course necessary that everything that can possibly be done *shall* be done, for in these times the opposing factors are many and strong.



## Lecture III

In these lectures I have said many things which may, with some justification, be deemed strange and unfamiliar, in view of the materialism of our time. But it is the case that the knowledge which is gained from spheres beyond the Threshold has to do with a region of the universe other than that of the sense-perceptible facts to which science, so called, is alone willing to pay attention.

Let us remind ourselves at this point of the way in which the outer form and figure of man indicates his connection with the cosmos. The head, in its whole shape and form, is a structure which could not have come into being *within* Earth-existence as such, but is a product of the Moon-forces, and its individual form, in every case, is the outcome of a man's former incarnations. We have also heard that the human *body* (other than the head) is preparing to become *head* in the next incarnation. In the form of the human head, therefore, we have an indication of the previous incarnation; in the processes of the human *body*, we have indications of the next incarnation. In this way the human form is directly connected with the preceding and the following incarnations.

Study of the being of man in this light leads us to a knowledge of great cosmic connections.

It is well known to you that knowledge which is a remnant of the wisdom of ancient times relates the outer form of man to the twelve constellations of the Zodiac. [See also *Cosmic Forces in Man*. Christiania, Nov.–Dec., 1921 Anthroposophical Publishing Co.] Without speaking the superficial language that is characteristic of most modern astrological lore, it is right to call attention to the fact that behind the connections which are said to exist between the human form and the universe, deeply significant mysteries lie hidden.

Astrology, as you know, relates the human head to Aries; the throat and larynx to Taurus; the shoulders, together with all that comes to expression in the arms and hands, to Gemini; the breast to Cancer, the heart to Leo; the lower part of the trunk to Virgo; the region of the loins to Libra; the sexual organs to Scorpio; the thigh to Sagittarius; the knee to Capricorn; the shank to Aquarius; the feet to Pisces.

There we have the relation of the body, with all its parts, including the head, to the forces reigning in the cosmos and which in a certain way can be pictured or symbolised in the fixed constellations of the Zodiac.

We have spoken of the head as being a transformation of the whole body, the body as it was in the previous incarnation. The organs of sight again are of a twelve-fold constitution.

The *whole* human body is related, as we have seen, to the twelve constellations but each part of it must also, in turn, be related to all these twelve constellations.

I must point out, too, a certain characteristic of all the great laws of the universe. — Whenever we have a “twelve-hood,” then *one* member of the twelve-hood, while it belongs to the whole, is at the same time an independent member. The head, for instance, is related to *one* constellation but is, in turn, derived from all the twelve. Hence in the next incarnation, what to-day is the *whole* head, will be represented by *one* sense-organ; what to-day is the larynx (including the neighbouring organs of speech) will be transformed, will undergo a metamorphosis, and in the next incarnation will serve another part of the organism; the arms, another, and so on.

As we stand in the world we may say that our whole body is transformed, metamorphosed to become head in the next incarnation, and in so orderly a way that the twelve-fold constitution of our present body appears again in the next incarnation in the twelve-fold constitution of the head.

It may be asked: where is there any indication that the head is really twelve-fold in its constitution? Most of you will know that twelve main nerves go out from the human head. If these twelve nerves were rightly explained — not in the miserably confused way in which they are mentioned by modern cerebral physiology — we should be able to recognise in them that which, in the previous incarnation, was contained in the *whole* body. It is not necessary to be puzzled by the strange dictum that, for example, the hands will be transformed into some part of the head. Even in a crude sense we may understand what is meant. Can we not observe in the hands something that points, in germ, to organs of speech? Do not the gestures of hands and arms speak an eloquent language in themselves? Is it then so impossible to imagine them changed into something different, some thing which, at another stage of existence, will appear as a sense-organ of the head? And the idea that what is

physically expressed in the knee is preparing (when spread over the whole body) to become the sense of touch, will only be laughed to scorn by those who have no conception of the phenomenon of metamorphosis in life. It is not difficult to conceive that the marvellous structure of the human knee with its knee-cap and peculiar sensitiveness (a sensitiveness different from that of the organ of touch which is spread over the whole body) is preparing to become the organ for the sense of touch in the next incarnation.

The whole of our being undergoes metamorphosis and a study of this metamorphosis opens up deep mysteries before us. But if we are to penetrate these mysteries in the right way, we must not adopt the attitude of the science of to-day which is often that of cynicism. We must have true reverence for existence if we are ever to read its mysteries.

## The Physical Organism of Man and Technical Discoveries

For some long time now, modern man has brought his dreadful pride and presumption into all his conceptions of the universe. When these qualities are expressed in an extreme form in individual characters, this is not a matter of surprise to those who realise that it is precisely in the intellectual and scientific life of humanity that pride and presumption are the ruling factors, albeit this is unobserved by the majority of men.

In the course of our studies in Spiritual Science it has often been necessary for me to draw attention to this canker that has made its appearance in the more modern phase of evolution. Think of the way in which men write and of *what* they write about the achievements of the human race. Think of what can be read in school-books or in other works about the genius of discovery, about the invention, let us say, of paper. Paper is something that may well be a cause of regret when we think of the kind of stuff that is printed on it nowadays! Much has been said in praise of that capacity in man which has reached such a zenith of achievement! But as I have said before, a wasp's nest is composed of a substance that is the same as paper. Millions of years ago, the elemental Beings who stand behind the preparation of a wasp's nest, had already forestalled man in this discovery. And the same could be said in a thousand other instances. Take the telescope which can be turned in two directions, upwards-downwards, backwards-forwards. *Schmieg*, a man who tried in many ways to draw attention to such things, pointed to this very example of the telescope. Just think what it is that man has really achieved here. The twofold movement of the telescope — upwards-downwards,

backwards-forwards — is made possible by a double apparatus for rotation: an upper apparatus known in mechanics as a hinge-joint, and a lower apparatus known as a pivot-joint. In this way, provision is made for the double rotatory movement. Now it would be absurd, as can easily be proved in the case of the telescope, to construct it the other way round, putting the pivot in place of the hinge or the hinge below the pivot. This would be quite useless. That such an adjustment of movement has been achieved may be lauded as a deeply significant discovery on the part of man. But in a much more ingenious way — and I use the word 'ingenious' in the objective and not in the subjective sense — you all possess this apparatus in your own bodies at the place where the head is poised upon the cervical vertebrae: above — a hinge joint; below — a pivot joint. And because of this you are able to move your heads upwards and downwards and from side to side. You see, therefore, that in the human organism itself we have exactly the same thing.

In the human organism there is to be found everything that man, through his discoveries, has made, or will yet make in the way of mechanical appliances, everything, that is to say, that can really contribute to human evolution. Only such things as can contribute nothing to human evolution are *not* to be found in man, or are only to be found there inasmuch as they have been inserted into his being by forces quite outside the natural course of his evolution. If, therefore, we look back to very early times, we shall say that there must have been a time when these peculiar joint-mechanisms and a great deal more as well, came into being. They are now in actual existence. We can go further and further back in human evolution (that is to say to phases of evolution when man already possessed the form that is his to-day), and we shall never find these organic arrangements absent. If, moreover, they are said to be the outcome of purely mechanical forces, how can this possibly be explained? Just think how wonderfully suitable for its purpose this particular apparatus is — so much so, indeed that it is possible even to use it on a telescope. No other arrangement would be anything like so suitable. According to a well-known principle of superficial Darwinism (I say '*superficial*' expressly) it is the fittest who survive. But in this case, of what is the less fit supposed to consist? The less fit would make it impossible for man as he now is, to live at all. He simply would not be able to exist in the way he now exists; it is quite unthinkable that this is a case of transition from the less fit to the fit. Those who know the real truth as opposed to the dicta of superficial students of Darwinism, have always called attention to these things.

How will man in the future gain enlightenment on the subject of his connection with the cosmos? On this matter too, I have already said things that will have seemed puzzling and strange. I spoke of the modern belief that the Heavens are to be explained by the Heavens, and said that this was a mere catchword. The truth is that the secrets of the Heavens which can be investigated — and which by the Copernican school are considered to yield their own explanation — these secrets can explain what exists on the *Earth*; the mysteries of the *Earth* in their turn, can explain the mysteries of the *Heavens*.

Strange as it may appear, in times to come, in order to understand the Heavens, men will study the embryo (as it develops out of the cell) and its environment, up to the point of the existence of man as a complete and finished being. And the observations made will serve to reveal the mysteries of the great universe. The revelations of the Heavens will be explanatory of processes which, on the Earth, take their course in animal, plant and man — above all in embryonic life. The truth is that the Heavens explain the Earth, and the Earth the Heavens. This still seems a paradox to the modern age but it is a principle of real knowledge for the future and one that must be amplified and developed in many directions.

## Aberrations in Occultism

Let me now speak again of problems connected with Lucifer and Ahriman. With some justification we look for the manifestations and revelations of Lucifer in human emotions and in the passions and feelings of men. We regard the Luciferic influence as operating more from the *inner* being. That Eve could set about making herself fair to look upon, could become a being who realised her own beauty and through her beauty proceed to bring about the temptation — this necessitated the help of Lucifer. When the other influence was destined to appear in the course of earthly evolution, namely, that the Sons of the Gods should find the daughters of men fair, i.e., should find the objective world beautiful, the intervention of Ahriman was required. It was necessary for *Lucifer* to work through Eve in order that she might realise her beauty and through her beauty bring about the temptation. That the objective world should work as beauty and influence the human soul, *Ahriman* was needed.

The first event fell in the Lemurian epoch, the second in the age of Atlantis.

It behoves us to increase our knowledge and understanding of the Luciferic and Ahrimanic influences. I can, of course, only describe certain details, but these details must then be put together in order to build up a knowledge of the nature of the Ahrimanic and Luciferic influences as a whole.

Some of you are possibly familiar with strange things that are apt to take place in circles where occultism, pseudo-occultism, occult charlatanism and the like, are cultivated. These strange things happen again and again. Suppose, for example, that a Society which likes to call itself an 'Occult Society,' numbers among its adherents, certain celebrities. In these so-called 'Occult Societies' there are always celebrities whose word is taken for law. Something said or done by these celebrities is immediately laid down as dogma. Suppose it becomes a dogma that one or another of these persons is the reincarnation of some great individuality, has achieved something quite out of the common, has uttered sublime truths, thousands of printed copies of which are sent out into the world. The utterances are considered to be of a lofty order although they may be commonplace in the extreme. That, however, makes no difference! It happens again and again that the most superficial nonsense, if delivered with the necessary veneer of sentimentality, is accepted by thousands of people as the most profound truth.

When something of the kind happens — and I am not now speaking of a particular instance but of typical occurrences — a good many people will be roused, protesting vigorously that they will submit to no dogma that it is all nonsense, that they do not want it, and they will never believe in it. Opposition will immediately be set on foot against them. But then some celebrity comes along and meets one of these rebels. What happens? In a few hours the rebel is converted into the most rabid supporter! Sometimes, indeed, the conversion is effected in less than an hour. Such things happen again and again. People are puzzled, very naturally. They say 'Yes, but he or she (and it is not by any means always a 'she' but quite often a 'he') — he or she used to think so clearly about these things. How could one short conversation suffice so completely to change them over that they now believe anything and everything?'

There are people sitting here who know that such things have actually happened. But can it really be said in such a case that true conviction has been brought about? No, indeed! There can be no question of what is

known as conviction in ordinary waking life. The occurrence must be regarded in quite a different light and in order to understand it we must consider the character of Ahriman.

One of the main characteristics of Ahriman is that he absolutely ignores the unbiased relationship to truth which is a determining factor in the life of man on Earth. This unbiased relationship to truth, where we strive for truth as the accordance of idea with objective reality, is beyond Ahriman's ken. He neither knows nor is concerned with it. Ahriman's position in the universe makes it entirely a matter of indifference to him whether, in the forming of a concept, this concept agrees with reality. In everything which Ahriman conceives as truth (in the human sense, of course, one would not call it 'truth') he is concerned only with *effects*. What is said, is said *not* because it fits the facts, but in order to produce an effect. This or that is said in order that some particular effect may be produced. It would therefore be 'Ahrimanic' if I were to speak to someone about our Building, let us say, with entire indifference as to its truth, but merely for the sake of inducing the person in question to undertake this or that, knowing that he will acquiesce if I ask him to do so.

I am sure you realise that these things actually happen: that a man may think out some scheme, be utterly indifferent as to whether his ideas are in accordance with objective reality or not, and then make use of them in such a way that they will have a certain effect upon those who listen to him. On a small scale this happens every day and one can think of many examples. Just think of all the things match-making ladies say when they want to bring two young people together, of all they say of the doings of the future couple! The match-makers are quite unconcerned as to the truth of what they say. Their only aim is to bring off the match under the influence of what is said.

That, of course, is a very trivial example and Ahriman himself is above such trivialities. What I mean to convey is that in human life we can find analogies for everything. The point with Ahriman is always the effect that will be produced by what is said and he formulates his utterances in such a way that when it comes to the point of communicating them he can step in to help.

Now it would serve Ahriman's purposes well if there were to arise on Earth a number of human beings who hold such a definite belief as that of which I spoke just now. If a man has been initiated into the mysteries of corrupt occultism and as a result of the initiation he has received has no



inclination to place himself in the ranks of true occultism, then he can enter into a pact with Ahriman and declare a truth which in the *human* sense, of course, is not truth at all but which will produce certain definite effects. There is always some element of this kind at work in events such as I have described: where in an incredibly short time an out-and-out rebel succumbs to suggestion practised by means of Ahrimanic arts. In league with Ahriman a man can easily induce another to believe that some personality is an incarnation of a great individuality. It is merely a question of knowing the art of sowing the seeds where they will find responsive soil — in this case the soil of humanity itself — in such a way that the *effects* alone, and not the fact of agreement with objective reality, are of importance.

Such things go on in many circles which like to consider themselves 'Occult.' In many such circles it is not a question of ideas which accord with reality but of saying things to serve a definite aim and produce definite effects in one direction or another. Certainly, there are people who are so dull-witted and simple-minded that they immediately respond to Ahrimanic impulses quite unconsciously and without any direct application of Ahrimanic arts. But it does actually happen that Ahrimanic arts, that is to say, arts practised in direct association with Ahriman, are applied in human life. In our times, things that are done as an outcome of alliance with Ahriman play a part of great significance. For much of what has been going on for a long time now in human affairs is only to be understood in the light of a knowledge of secrets which have been lightly touched upon here.

We find, therefore, that Ahriman is never concerned as to whether *an idea fits the facts* but only with the *effects* produced.

With Lucifer it is not quite the same. Lucifer has other characteristics of which we have often spoken. But one characteristic in particular shall be mentioned here in order to further our knowledge. Like Ahriman, Lucifer is never concerned with the agreement of an idea with actuality. Lucifer is out to cultivate such ideas as will generate in man the highest possible degree of *consciousness*. Understand me well: I mean by that, cultivation of the most enhanced consciousness, of the widest possible expansion of consciousness. This expanded consciousness in which Lucifer is interested is associated with a certain inner voluptuousness in man. This again is Lucifer's sphere. You remember perhaps that in speaking of Atlantean times I once said that all sexuality was then an unconscious process. Beautiful myths of the different people point to this unconsciousness of the sexual process in ancient times. Only in the course of time was it raised to

the realm of consciousness. Lucifer plays an essential part in raising this unconsciousness greater and greater consciousness. Prematurely to induce consciousness in man, that is to say, to call forth consciousness whereas under proper conditions this particular degree of consciousness should unfold at *another* period of time — this is the aim of Lucifer. Lucifer does not want the attention of men to be directed altogether to externalities. He would like everything that works into the consciousness to work from *within*. Hence all visionary life — which is, as it were, an exudation of forces in the inner organs — is of a Luciferic nature.

When Lucifer is known — and he must be known because it is a question of keeping him in his rightful sphere and we are here concerned with spiritual forces in the universe — we realise with horror that he has not the very least understanding of any harmless delight or amusement which a man may take in things of the outer world. Lucifer has not the remotest sympathy for harmless, amused delight aroused by something outside. What he *does* understand is any emotion that is kindled by the *inner* being of man. Lucifer well understands when a desire in man awakens voluptuousness and when some process that would otherwise remain unconscious is called in this way into the region of consciousness. But in spite of his wisdom — and Lucifer has, of course, sublime wisdom — he simply cannot understand a harmless joke occasioned by some outer event. This lies outside his province. And one can protect oneself against the attacks which Lucifer is so prone to make, precisely by taking innocent joy and delight in the world outside. Lucifer cannot bear this; it vexes him terribly, for instance, if we take delight in a good caricature.

Such are the connections which are disclosed when we pass from the world of sense to the region lying beyond the Threshold, the region where things are not as they are in the world of sense but where all is *Being*, living *Being*. Even in the world of the Elements everything is living.

It is therefore correct to say that both Ahriman and Lucifer are equally unconcerned as to whether ideas agree with actuality. Ahriman is concerned with the *effects* of what is said; Lucifer's aim is to bring about an enhanced consciousness in man of what, in a particular situation, should really not become conscious.

In these two ways it is possible to achieve ends which could not be achieved if care were taken to ensure absolute agreement between idea and objective reality. And just as an alliance with Ahriman is the aim of corrupt occult circles, for reasons already indicated, so too, attempts are

made to enter into a pact with Lucifer, that is to say, efforts are made to influence human beings in such a way that vision is induced as the outcome of inner voluptuousness — vision that is kindled from the inner being.

What is consciously achieved in these corrupt occult circles, namely, a pact with Ahriman on the one side and with Lucifer on the other, enables Ahriman and Lucifer to work into the unconscious regions of man's being. And much of the criticism which must be directed against the character of the fifth Post-Atlantean epoch in the way it is expressing itself in the world, is to be traced to Ahrimanic and Luciferic impulses. That there is so much lying, direct and indirect, that so much is said with utter indifference as to whether it agrees with the objective reality or not but simply for the sake of satisfying some feeling or passion — all these things are directly traceable to the fact that Ahrimanic and Luciferic influences have gripped the world to-day and are causing chaos in human affairs. For at our present stage of evolution we should not be capable of making statements as the outcome of passion without any attempt to discover whether they are really in accordance with reality or not, if we only lent ourselves to the Powers of Good! During the Atlantean epoch and even afterwards — at any rate up to the middle of the fourth post-Atlantean period — the forces in man's own inner being enabled him to ensure agreement between his ideas and the corresponding objective realities. This faculty, as we know, has been lost. And our present phase of evolution is there precisely in order that men may learn to observe the *outer* world, to investigate it — not to make statements which are merely instigated by their own passions! To-day, when conclusions well up from the inner life and no attempt is made to ensure their agreement with objective reality, a Luciferic influence is mingling with an Ahrimanic influence, the one inducing misplaced consciousness, and the other, lying and untruthfulness. These things are very widespread at the present time. Many souls to-day ignore the necessity of ensuring that an idea shall absolutely accord with objective reality. Moreover, few enough efforts are made in this direction. When they *are* made they are not understood and cause, to say the least, a considerable amount of surprise! Least of all does one find understanding when one tries to give such characterisations of reality as are supported by what actually exists, simply taking the things of the world as they are and reproducing them in ideas. People do not understand that this is something radically different from things that are done and said as the outcome either of personal or national passion. Here lies the radical difference which is unobserved to-day. Statements are made and conclusions are formed by

men in accordance with their own lines of thought and without regard as to whether such statements and conclusions agree with the facts or not. That statements should agree with objective facts — upon this the fate of our age depends. For only so can we hope to pass onwards to an epoch wherein the spiritual world can be perceived in its true nature. Unless we acquire the faculty for the perception of truth in this physical world we shall never be able to unfold it in regard to the spiritual world. The capacity to find our true bearings in the spiritual world must be developed here in the physical world. It is for this purpose that we are placed in the physical world, where it behoves us to seek agreement between idea and objective reality, in such a way that this may become natural to us, may become a *habit* and a *faculty* which we then carry with us into the spiritual world.

But in these days there are so many who make statements with utter disregard of their conformity with objective fact, simply out of their feelings and emotions! This tendency is the very reverse of what is needed for the onward progress of humanity. Thinking in accordance with reality has become terribly foreign to our materialistic age under the influences which have here been described. Thinking in accordance with reality is rare in the extreme and when it is honestly striven for it comes into clash with whole world of unreal thinking. A terrible example of this is afforded by the conflicts that arise between our Anthroposophical Movement and unreal thinking; — conflicts which must be spoken of, however unwelcome this may be, because the facts are there and because one cannot be silent about them if one is sincere in regard to the Movement.

These conflicts of thinking that is in accordance with reality with thinking that is inimical to reality (inimical in the sense explained above) are an example of what is at stake when efforts are made really to serve the interests of truth.

In every age the fight with the opposing powers has had to be waged but the particular form this fight assumes in every age and the metamorphosis it undergoes must be recognised and understood. The influence of the Scribes and Pharisees has not died out! It is still working to-day, in a different form. And we shall only make progress with the clarity that is essential when we really understand this difference between thinking that is in accordance with reality and thinking that is inimical to reality.





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