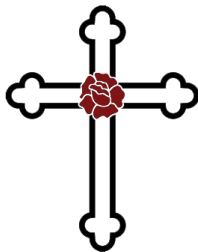


The Fifth Gospel

GA 148



The Fifth Gospel

GA 148

by

Rudolf Steiner

October 1913 – February 1914

Source: See introduction.

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Painting by [Karyn Martin-Kuri](#) († March 7, 2013), used as the cover of the 2012 reprint and new translation of this set of lectures in a book published by [Rudolf Steiner Press](#).

Translator's Note

The nature of these lectures is such that any rendering in another language can only be offered with diffidence. It can be little more than an echo — in the case of certain passages hardly even that — of the power and solemnity of the original words. These results of super-sensible investigation were communicated by Rudolf Steiner thirty-seven years ago to a small circle of Members of the Anthroposophical Society who were prepared by previous study to listen to such a theme with the reverence that is its everlasting due. As the lectures have now been printed and made available for a wider circle of readers, the following translation has been attempted, with confidence that those into whose hands the volume finds its way will be mindful of Dr. Steiner's enjoinder that the contents should not be recklessly exposed to prejudice and misunderstanding.

—D. S. Osmond



Introduction

From his clairvoyant reading of the Akashic record—the cosmic memory of all events, actions, and thoughts—Steiner was able to discuss aspects of the life of Jesus Christ that are not recorded in the four Gospels of the conventional Christian Bible. The results of such research has been called "The Fifth Gospel."

After an intense inner struggle to verify the exact nature of these events, and having checked the results of his research, Steiner described many detailed episodes from the Akashic record. For example, he speaks of Jesus' life in the community of the Essenes, the temptation of Christ in the wilderness, and a significant, previously unreported conversation between Jesus and Mary.

Steiner states that divulging such spiritual research is intensely difficult, but that "although people show little inclination to be told such facts as these, it was absolutely essential that knowledge of such facts should be brought to Earth evolution at the present time."

These five lectures are from the lecture series entitled: The Akashic Chronicle and the Fifth Gospel, Published in German as: Aus der Akasha-forschung. Das Fuenfte Evangelium. They are lectures 1 through 5 of 18 lectures in this series. This translation is by Frank Thomas Smith.

Introduction in the RSArchive for Lectures XI, X and XI

After a shattering struggle to arrive at the truth, Steiner presents here the findings of spiritual research regarding the life of Jesus before the Baptism and the life of Christ after the Baptism. Among the scenes described are Jesus in the Essene community, the conversation between Jesus and Mary before the Baptism, Jesus discovering the reverse Lord's Prayer, and the temptation of Christ after the Baptism

Note: I have added five additional lectures of GA148 (The Fifth Gospel) found separately on the RSArchive. Together these 10 lectures are out of 13 that appear in a newer translation published by **Rudolf Steiner Press** in 1995. This later translation was done by A. R. Meuss. Of the 13 that

appear in the new translation that are not (as of this work) yet available on the Archive website, the 3 missing lectures were given in Berlin in October and November of 1913. They are lectures (as numbered in GA148) VI, VII and VIII.

~Anthony

RSArchive Sources

- Lectures I – V
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Lecture I

1 October 1913, Oslo

The theme on which I propose to speak in these lectures seems to me of peculiar importance in view of present conditions. At the very beginning let me emphasise that there is no element of sensationalism or anything of that kind in the choice of the title: *The Fifth Gospel*. For I hope to show that in a definite sense and one that is of particular importance to us in the present age, it is possible to speak of such a Fifth Gospel and that in fact no title is more suitable for what is intended.

Although, as you will hear, this Fifth Gospel has never yet been written down, in future times of humanity it will certainly be put into definite form. In a certain sense, however, it would be true to say that it is as ancient as the other four Gospels.

In order that I may be able to speak about this Fifth Gospel, we shall have, by way of introduction, to study certain matters which are essential to any real understanding of it. Let me say, to begin with, that the time is certainly not very far distant when even in the lowest grade schools and in the most elementary education, the branch of knowledge commonly called History will be presented quite differently. It is certain — and these lectures should be a kind of confirmation of it — that in times to come the concept or idea of Christ will play quite a different and much more important part in the study of history, even the most elementary, than has been the case before. I know that such a statement seems highly paradoxical, but let us remember that there were times by no means very far distant, when countless human hearts turned to Christ with feelings of immeasurably greater fervour than is to be found to-day, even among the most learned Christians in the West. In earlier times these feelings of devotion were incomparably more intense. Anyone who studies modern writings and reflects on the main interests of people to-day will have the impression that enthusiasm and warmth of feeling for the Christ Idea are on the wane, especially so in those who claim an up-to-date education. In spite of this, I have just said that as this age of ours advances, the Christ Idea will play a much more important part than hitherto in the study of human history. Does this not seem to be a complete contradiction?

And now we will approach the subject from another side. I have already been able to speak on several occasions in this very town about the significance and the content of the Christ Idea; and in books and lecture-courses which are available here, many deep teachings of Spiritual Science concerning the secrets of the Christ Being and of the Christ Idea are to be found. Anyone who assimilates what has been said in lectures, lecture-courses and indeed in all our literature, will realise that any real understanding of the Christ Being needs extensive preparation, that the very deepest concepts and thoughts must be summoned to his aid if he desires to reach some comprehension of Christ and of the Christ Impulse working through the centuries. If nothing else indicated the contrary, it might possibly be thought that a knowledge of the whole of Theosophy or Anthroposophy is necessary before there can be any true conception of Christ. But if we turn aside from this and look at the development of the spiritual life of the last centuries, we are met from century to century by the existence of much profound and detailed knowledge aiming at a comprehension of the Christ and His revelation. For centuries and centuries men have applied their noblest, most profound thought in attempts to reach an understanding of Christ. Here too, it might seem as if only the most highly intellectual achievements of men would suffice for such understanding. But is this, in fact, the case? Quite simple reflection will show that it is not.

Let us, as it were, lay on one scale of a spiritual balance, everything contributed hitherto by erudition, science and even by theosophical conceptions towards an understanding of Christ. On the other scale let us lay all the deep feelings, all the impulses within men which through the centuries have caused their souls to turn to the Being called Christ. It will be found that the scale upon which have been laid all the science, all the learning, even all the theosophy that can be applied to explain the figure of Christ, will rapidly rise, and the scale upon which have been laid all the deep feelings and impulses which have turned men towards the Christ will sink. It is no exaggeration to say that a force of untold strength and greatness has gone forth from Christ and that erudite scholarship concerning Him has contributed least of all to this impulse. Truly it would have boded ill for Christianity if, in order to cleave to Christ, men had had to resort to all the learned dissertations of the Middle Ages, of the Schoolmen, of the Church Fathers, or even to what Theosophy contributes to-day towards an understanding of Christ. This whole body of knowledge would be of very little help. I hardly think that anyone who studies the

march of Christianity through the centuries with an unprejudiced mind can raise any serious argument against this line of thought; but the subject can be approached from still another side.

Let us turn our thought to the times before Christianity had come into existence. I need only mention something of which those sitting here are certainly aware. I need only remind you of the ancient Greek dramas, especially in their earlier forms. When portraying a god in combat or a human being in whose soul a god was working, these dramas make the sovereignty and activity of the gods concretely and perceptibly real. Think of Homer and of how his great Epic is all inwoven with the workings of the Spiritual; think of the great figures of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle. These names bring before our mind's eye a spiritual life that in a certain domain is supreme. If we leave all else aside and look only at the single figure of Aristotle who lived centuries before the founding of Christianity, we find there an achievement which, in a certain respect, has remained unsurpassed to this very day. The scientific exactitude of Aristotle's thinking is something so phenomenal, even when judged by present-day standards, that it is said: human thinking was raised by him to an eminence unsurpassed to this day.

And now for a moment we will take a strange hypothesis, but one that will help us to understand what will be said in these lectures. We will imagine that there were no Gospels at all to tell us anything about the figure of Christ, that the earliest records presented to man to-day in the form of the New Testament were simply not in existence. Leaving on one side all that has been said about the founding of Christianity, let us study its progress as historical fact, observing what has happened among men through the centuries of the Christian era ... In other words, without the Gospels, without the story of the Acts of the Apostles, without the Epistles of St. Paul, we will consider what has actually come to pass. This, of course, is pure hypothesis, but what is it that has really happened?

Turning our attention first of all to the South of Europe in a certain period of history, we find a very highly developed spiritual culture, as represented in Aristotle; it was a sublime spiritual life, developing along particular channels through the subsequent centuries. At the time when Christianity began to make its way through the world, large numbers of men who had assimilated the spiritual culture of Greece were living in the South of Europe. If we follow the evolution of Christianity to the time of Celsus — that strange individual who was such a violent opponent of Christianity — and even on into the second and third centuries after Christ, we find in

Greece and Italy numbers of highly cultured men who had absorbed the sublime Ideas of Plato, men whose subtlety of thought seems like a continuation of that of Aristotle. Here were minds of refinement and power, versed in Greek learning; here were Romans who added to the delicate spirituality of Greek thought the element of aggressive personality characteristic of Roman civilisation. Such was the world into which the Christian impulse made its way. Truly, in respect of intellectuality and knowledge of the world the representatives of this Christian impulse seem to be uncivilised and uneducated in comparison with the numbers and numbers of learned Romans and Greeks. Men lacking in culture make their way into a world of mellowed intellectuality. And now we witness a remarkable spectacle. Through these simple, primitive people who were its first bearers, Christianity spreads comparatively quickly through the South of Europe. And if with an understanding of the nature of Christianity acquired, let us say, from Theosophy, we think of these simple, primitive natures who spread Christianity abroad in those times, we shall realise that they knew nothing of these things. We need not think here of any conception of Christ in His great cosmic setting, but of much simpler conceptions of Christ. Those first bearers of the Christian impulse who found their way into the world of highly developed Greek learning, had nothing to bring into this arena of Greco-Roman life save their own inwardness, their personal connection with the Christ Whom they so deeply loved; for this connection was as dear to them as that with their own kith and kin. Those who brought into the Greco-Roman world in those days the Christianity that has continued to our own time, were not well-informed theosophists, were by no means highly educated people. The Gnostics who were the learned theosophists of those times had, it is true, risen to sublime ideas concerning Christ, but even they contributed only what must be placed in the rising scale of the balance. If everything had depended upon the Gnostics, Christianity would certainly not have made its victorious headway through the world. It was no highly developed intellectuality that came over from the East, causing the comparatively rapid decline of the old Hellenic and Roman culture. There we have one side of the picture.

We see the other side when we consider men of intellectual distinction, beginning with Celsus — the opponent of Christianity who even then brought forward all the arguments that are still valid to-day — down to Marcus Aurelius, the philosopher on the throne. We think of the Neo-Platonists with their subtle scholarship, whose ideas make those of philosophy to-day seem mere child's play, so greatly do they surpass them in loftiness and breadth of vision. Thinking of all the arguments against

Christianity brought from the standpoint of Greek philosophy by these men of high intellectual eminence in the world of Greco-Roman culture, the impression we get is that they did not understand the Christ Impulse. Christianity was spread by men who understood nothing of its real nature; it was opposed by a highly developed culture incapable of grasping its significance. Truly, Christianity makes a strange entry into the world — with adherents and opponents alike understanding nothing of its real nature. And yet ... men bore within their souls the power to secure for the Christ Impulse its victorious march through the world.

And now let us think of men like Tertullian who with a certain greatness and power entered the lists on behalf of Christianity. Tertullian was a Roman who, so far as his language is concerned, may almost be said to have re-created the Latin tongue; the very certainty of aim with which he restored to words a living meaning lets us recognise him as a personality of real significance. But if we ask about his *ideas*, there is a very different story to tell. In his ideas and thoughts he gives very little evidence of intellectual or spiritual eminence. Supporters of Christianity even of the calibre of Tertullian do not accomplish anything very considerable. And yet as personalities they are potent — these men like Tertullian, to whose arguments no highly educated Greek could attach much weight. There is something about Tertullian that attracts one's attention — but what exactly is it? That is the point of importance.

Let us realise that a real problem lies here. What power is responsible for the achievements of these bearers of the Christ Impulse who themselves do not really understand it? What power is responsible for the influence exercised by the Church Fathers, including even Origen, in spite of all their manifest ineptitude? Why is Greco-Roman scholarship itself unable to comprehend the essential nature of the Christ Impulse? What is the reason of all this?

But let us go further. The same spectacle stands out in still stronger relief when we study the course of history. As the centuries go by, Christianity spread over Europe, among peoples like the Germanic, with quite different ideas of religion and worship, who are, or at least appear to be, inseparable from these ideas and who nevertheless accepted the Christ Impulse with open hearts, as if it were part and parcel of their own life. And when we think of those who were the most influential missionaries among the Germanic peoples, were these men schooled theologians? No indeed! Comparatively speaking, they were simple, primitive souls who went out among the people, talking to them in the most homely, everyday

language but moving their very hearts. They knew how to put the words in such a way as to touch the deepest heart-strings of those to whom they spoke. Simple men went out into regions far and wide and it was their work that produced the most significant results. Thus we see Christianity spreading through the centuries. But then we are astonished to find this same Christianity becoming the motive force of profound scholarship, science and philosophy. We do not undervalue this philosophy but we will focus our attention to-day upon the remarkable fact that up to the Middle Ages the peoples among whom Christianity spread in such a way that it soon became part of their very souls, had lived hitherto with quite different forms of thought and belief. And in no very distant future, many other features will be stressed in connection with the spread of Christianity. So far as the effect produced by this spread of Christianity is concerned, it will not be difficult to agree with the statement that there was a period when these Christian teachings were the source of fervent enthusiasm. But in modern times the fervour which in the Middle Ages accompanied the spread of Christianity seems to have died away.

And now think of Copernicus, of the whole development of natural science on into the nineteenth century. This natural science which since the time of Copernicus has become an integral part of Western culture, might appear to run counter to Christianity. The facts of history may seem, outwardly, to substantiate this. For example, until the 'twenties of the nineteenth century the writings of Copernicus were on the so-called Index of the Roman Catholic Church. That is an external detail, but the fact remains that Copernicus was a dignitary of the Church. Giordano Bruno was burnt at the stake by the Roman Church but he was, for all that, a member of the Dominican Order. The ideas of both these thinkers sprang from the soil of Christianity and their work was an outcome of the Christian impulse. To maintain that these teachings were not the fruits of Christianity would denote very poor understanding on the part of those who claim to hold fast by the Church. These facts only go to prove that the Church did not understand the fruits of Christianity. Those who see more deeply into the roots of these things will recognise that what the peoples have achieved, even in the more recent centuries, is a result of Christianity, that through Christianity, as also through the laws of Copernicus, the gaze of the human mind was turned from the earth out into the heavenly expanse. Such a change was possible only within Christian culture and through the Christian impulse. Those who observe the depths and not merely the surface of spiritual life will understand something which although it will seem highly paradoxical when I say it now, is nevertheless correct. To this

deeper observation, a Haeckel, for all his opposition to Christianity, could only have sprung from the soil of this same Christianity. Ernst Haeckel is inconceivable without the base of Christian culture. And however hard modern natural science may try to promote opposition to Christianity, this natural science is itself an offspring of Christianity, a direct development of the Christian impulse. When modern natural science has got over the ailments of childhood, men will perceive quite clearly that if followed to its logical conclusions, it leads to Spiritual Science, that there is an entirely consistent path from Haeckel to Spiritual Science. When that is grasped it will also be realised that Haeckel is Christian through and through, although he himself has no notion of it. The Christian impulses have given birth not only to what claims to be Christian but also to what appears on the surface to run counter to Christianity. This will soon be realised if we study the underlying reality, not merely the concepts and ideas that are put into words. As can be seen from my little essay on "Reincarnation and Karma," a direct line leads from the Darwinian theory of evolution to the teaching of repeated earthly lives.

But in order to understand these things correctly we must be able to perceive the influence of the Christian impulses with entirely unprejudiced eyes. Anyone who understands the doctrines of Darwin and Haeckel and is himself convinced that only as a Christian movement was the Darwinian movement possible (although Haeckel had no notion of this, Darwin was aware of many things) — anyone who realises this is led by an absolutely consistent path to the idea of reincarnation. And if he can call upon a certain power of clairvoyance, this same path will lead him to knowledge of the *spiritual* origin of the human race. True, it is a detour, but with the help of clairvoyance an uninterrupted path from Haeckel's thought to the conception of a spiritual origin of the Earth. It is conceivable, of course, that someone may accept Darwinism in the form in which it is presented to-day, without grasping the life-principles which in reality are contained in it. In other words, if Darwinian thought becomes an impulse in someone who lacks any deep understanding of Christianity — which nevertheless lies in Darwinism — he may end by understanding no more of Darwinism than he does of Christianity. The good spirit of Christianity and the good spirit of Darwinism may alike forsake him. But if he has a grasp of the good spirit of Darwinism, then — however much of a materialist he may be — his thought will carry him back over the earth's history to the point where he recognises that man has *not* evolved from lower animal forms but must have a spiritual origin. He is led to the point where man is perceived as a spiritual being, hovering as it were over the earthly world. Darwinism, if

developed to its logical conclusion, leads to this recognition. But if someone has been forsaken by the good spirit of Darwinism and happens to believe in the idea of reincarnation, he may imagine that he himself once lived as an ape in some incarnation of the planet Earth. [The reference here is to certain assertions made by the theosophists Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater.] Anyone who can believe this lacks all real understanding of Darwinism and of Christianity and must have been forsaken by the good spirits of both! For Darwinism, consistently elaborated, could lead to no such belief. In such a case the idea of reincarnation has been grafted into the soil of materialism. It is possible, of course, for modern Darwinism to be stripped of its Christian elements. If this does *not* happen, we shall find that on into our own times the impulses of Darwinism have been born out of the Christ Impulse, that the impulses of Christianity work even where they are repudiated. Thus we find that in the early centuries, Christianity spreads quite independently of scholarship or erudition in its adherents; in the Middle Ages it spreads in such a way that the Schoolmen, with all their learning, can contribute very little to it; and finally we have the paradox of Christianity appearing in Darwinism as in an inverted picture. Everything that is great in the Darwinian conception derives its motive power from the Christian impulses. The Christian impulses within it will lead this science of itself out of and beyond materialism.

The Christian impulses have spread by strange channels — in the absence, so it appears, of intellectuality, learning, erudition. Christianity has spread irrespectively of the views of its adherents or opponents — even appearing in an inverted form in the domain of modern materialism. But what exactly is it that spreads? It is not the ideas nor is it the science of Christianity; nor can we say that it is the morality instilled by Christianity. Think only of the moral life of men in those times and we shall find much justification for the fury levelled by men who represented Christianity against those who were its real or alleged enemies. Even the moral power that might have been possessed by souls without much intellectual education will not greatly impress us. What, then, is this mysterious impulse which makes its victorious way through the world? Let us turn here to Spiritual Science, to clairvoyant consciousness. What power is at work in those unlearned men who, coming over from the East, infiltrated the world of Greco-Roman culture? What power is at work in the men who bring Christianity into the foreign world of the Germanic tribes? What is really at work in the materialistic natural science of modern times — the doctrines of which disguise its real nature? What is this power? — It is Christ Himself

Who, through the centuries, wends His way from soul to soul, from heart to heart, no matter whether souls understand Him or not. It behoves us to leave aside the concepts that have become ingrained in us, to leave aside all scientific notions and point to the reality, showing how mysteriously Christ Himself is present in multitudinous impulses, taking form in the souls of thousands and tens of thousands of human beings, filling them with His power. It is Christ Himself, working in simple men, Who sweeps over the world of Greco-Roman culture; it is Christ Himself Who stands at the side of those who in later times bring Christianity to the Germanic peoples; it is He — Christ Himself in all His reality — Who makes His way from place to place, from soul to soul, penetrating these souls quite irrespectively of the ideas they hold concerning Him.

Let me here make a trivial comparison. How many people are there who understand nothing at all about the composition of foodstuffs and who are none the less well and properly nourished? It would certainly mean starvation if scientific knowledge of foodstuffs were essential to nourishment. Nourishment has nothing whatever to do with understanding the nature of foodstuffs. Similarly, the spread of Christianity over the earth had nothing to do with men's understanding of it. That is the strange fact. There is a mystery here, only to be explained when the answer can be found to the question: How does Christ Himself wield dominion in the minds and hearts of men?

When Spiritual Science, clairvoyant investigation, puts this question to itself, it is led, first of all, to an event from which the veils can really only be lifted by clairvoyant vision — an event that is entirely consistent with what I have been saying to-day. This above all will be clear to us: the time when Christ worked in the way I have described, is past and gone, and the time has come when men must *understand* Christ, must have real knowledge of Christ.

It is therefore also necessary to answer the question as to why our age was preceded by that other age when it was possible for the Christ Impulse to spread independently of men's understanding. The event to which clairvoyant consciousness points is that of Pentecost, the sending of the Holy Spirit. Clairvoyant vision, quickened by the power of the Christ Impulse, was therefore directed, in the first place, to this event of Pentecost, the sending of the Holy Spirit. It is this event that presents itself first and foremost to clairvoyant investigation carried out from a certain standpoint.

What was it that happened at the moment in the earth's evolution described to us, somewhat unintelligibly to begin with, as the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles? When with clairvoyant vision one investigates what actually happened then, an answer is forthcoming from Spiritual Science as to what is meant when it is said that simple men — for the Apostles themselves were simple men — began to utter in different tongues, truths which came to them from the depths of spiritual life and which none could have thought them capable of uttering. It was then that the Christian impulses began to spread, independently of the understanding of those human beings to whom they made their way. From the event of Pentecost pours the stream that has been described. What, then, was this event of Pentecost? This question presented itself to Spiritual Science and with the spiritual-scientific answer to it begins — the Fifth Gospel.



Lecture II

2 October 1913, Oslo

We will begin to-day by turning our thoughts to the event known as Pentecost. I said in the first lecture that clairvoyant research may first of all be directed to this event, for as we look back into the past it presents itself as a kind of awakening, experienced on the day commemorated in the Whitsun Festival, by those who are generally known as the Apostles or Disciples of Christ Jesus. It is not easy to form clear and precise pictures of all these undoubtedly strange phenomena. And if we want to think truly about the matter we shall have to call up from deep down in our souls, many things we have learned from previous studies of Theosophy. It seemed to the Apostles that they were like men who had awakened, feeling at the moment of waking that they had been living for a long time in an unusual state of consciousness. In very truth it was a kind of awakening from a deep sleep, a wonderful, dream-filled sleep ... remember that I am speaking of how it was experienced by the Apostles themselves ... a sleep of such a kind that at the same time a man carries out all the affairs of everyday life and goes about just like a normal person, so that those with whom he comes into contact do not notice at all that he is in a different state of consciousness. The moment came when it seemed to the Apostles as if they had been living for a long time, for many, many days, in a kind of dream from which they woke at this time of Pentecost; and the awakening itself was a strange experience. The Apostles felt as if there had actually descended upon them from the Cosmos, something which could only be called the Substance of the all-prevailing Love. They felt as if they had been quickened from on high by the all-prevailing Love and awakened from the condition of dream into which they had fallen. It seemed to them as if they had been wakened to life by the primal force of Love pervading and warming the Cosmos, as if this primal force of Love had come down into the soul of each one of them. And to others who could observe them and hear how they were speaking now, they seemed altogether strange. The others knew that they were men who until now had lived in extraordinary simplicity, a few of whom had, it is true, behaved somewhat strangely during recent days, as if lost in dream. This they knew. But now it seemed to the people as if these men had been transformed, as if their very souls had been made new; they seemed to have lost all narrowness, all selfishness in life, to have acquired largeness of heart, an all-embracing

tolerance and a deep understanding for everything that is human on the earth. Moreover they were able to express themselves in such a way that everyone present could understand them. It was felt that they could look into every heart, could read the deepest, innermost secrets of the soul and so were able to bring consolation to every single individual, to say to him exactly what he needed. It was naturally amazing that such transformation could take place in a number of men. But these men themselves in whom the transformation had come about, who had been awakened by the Spirit of Cosmic Love, now felt within them a new understanding of what had, it is true, come to pass in intimate connection with their own souls, but which they had not previously grasped. Now, at this moment, there dawned in their souls an understanding of what had actually transpired on Golgotha.

And when we look into the innermost soul of one of these Apostles, into the soul of him who is called Peter in the other Gospels, it is revealed to clairvoyant sight as it gazes backwards into the past, that his normal earthly consciousness completely ceased to function from the moment referred to in the other Gospels as the Denial. He beheld this scene of the Denial, how he had been asked whether he knew the Galilean; and now he knew that at that moment he had denied any such connection because his normal consciousness was beginning to fade and an abnormal condition to set in — a kind of dream condition indicating a withdrawal into an altogether different world. Peter's experience was like that of a man who when he wakes in the morning remembers the last events of the previous evening. Thus did Peter remember the scene usually known as the Denial, the triple Denial before the cock had crowed twice. And then, like outspreading night, the intermediate condition came upon his consciousness. But this intermediate condition was filled, not with mere dream-pictures but with pictures representing a kind of higher consciousness, an experience of things belonging to the world of pure Spirit. And all that had happened, all that Peter had as it were slept through since that time arose before his soul like a vision. Above all he was now able to gaze at that event of which it can truly be said that he had slept through it, because for a full understanding of this event the quickening by the all-prevailing Cosmic Love was necessary. Now there came before the eyes of Peter the pictures of the Mystery of Golgotha, as we, looking backwards with clairvoyant consciousness, can again evoke them if the conditions necessary for such vision are induced.

Frankly, it is with a feeling altogether unparalleled that one makes the decision to put into words what is revealed when one gazes into the consciousness of Peter and of the others who had gathered together at that Whitsun Festival. The decision to speak of these things can only be fraught with holy awe. One is almost overpowered by the consciousness of treading on the most sacred soil of human vision when one puts into words what is here revealed to the eyes of the soul. Nevertheless for certain inner reasons it seems necessary to speak of these things in our time, while realising that in ages other than our own and yet to come, they will find more understanding than is possible now. For in order to comprehend many a thing that will have to be said on this occasion, the human soul will have to break free from much that has been and will be instilled into it, quite inevitably, by the culture of the times.

To begin with, there arises before the gaze of clairvoyance something that seems like an affront against the conceptions of modern science. Nevertheless I feel compelled to put into words what presents itself here to the eyes of soul — as far as I am able to do so. I cannot help it if what has to be said finds its way to inadequately prepared hearts and souls and if the whole thing is mooted as untenable in face of the scientific views by which the present age is entirely dominated. The gaze of clairvoyance lights, to begin with, upon a picture that represents an actual happening, one that is hinted at in other Gospels too, but is a particularly striking spectacle when one sees it emerging from the myriad pictures arising before the backward-turned eye of vision. This clairvoyant gaze actually beholds a kind of darkening of the earth. And one feels, as it were in aftermath, that deeply significant moment when, as in a solar eclipse, the physical sun was darkened over the land of Palestine, over the place of Golgotha. And one has the impression, which vision schooled in the sense of Spiritual Science can still confirm when an actual, physical eclipse of the sun casts shadow over the land: that to the eyes of soul the whole environment of man looks quite different during the time of an eclipse. I shall refrain from dealing with the spectacle presented during a solar eclipse and with all those things that are the creations of human artifice and technique. To be able to endure the spectacle of those demonic powers and entities which during an eclipse of the sun rise out of the creations of art-forsaken, technical science, requires great courage and the realisation that all these things were *inevitable*. I do not propose, however, to go further into this particular matter but merely draw attention to the fact that a vision, at other times only to be reached after very difficult meditation, lights up and reveals that during a solar eclipse all plant-life, all

animal life, every butterfly, take on quite a different appearance. It is an experience that in the very deepest sense brings the conviction of how intimately a certain form of cosmic-spiritual life belonging to the sun and having its physical body in the visible sun, is connected with life on the earth. And when the physical radiance is darkened by the intervening moon, this is different from when, during the night, the sun is merely not shining. The spectacle of the earth around us is quite different during an eclipse of the sun from what it is during an ordinary night. During an eclipse of the sun one feels the group-souls of the plants and of the animals lighting up ... all the physical embodiments of the animals and plants seem to pass into shadow, while the group-souls become radiant. All this presents itself very vividly when the backward-turned gaze of seership contemplates that moment in the earth's evolution when the Mystery of Golgotha took place. And then comes an experience which may be described by saying: one learns to read what this remarkable phenomenon of nature perceived in the Cosmos really signifies! I cannot help it if — in defiance of all contemporary materialism — I am obliged to read in the occult script at this particular point in the earth's evolution, a purely natural event, one that has also occurred, of course, both before and since, and to speak of the direct impression it makes. It is like opening a book and reading the script ... one feels when this event is there before one that *what* one should read comes out of the very script itself. This cosmic script compels one with a kind of necessity to read something that mankind must come to know. It appears before one like a word inscribed in the Cosmos, like a sign in the Cosmos. And when one opens the soul to it, what is it that one reads?

In the lecture yesterday I spoke of how by the time of Greek culture, mankind had evolved to the point where, in Plato and Aristotle, a very high development of the human soul, a very high level of intellectuality had been attained. In many respects the intellectual knowledge attained by Plato or Aristotle has never since been surpassed. Intellectuality in mankind there reached a certain zenith. A vast store of knowledge had been acquired. And if one pictures this intellectual knowledge to which humanity had attained, which at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha had been spread abroad by wandering preachers far and wide over Greece and Italy, if one pictures how this knowledge had spread in a way incomprehensible to-day — then it is possible to receive the impression which seems to be like a reading of that occult script out in the Cosmos. And when clairvoyant consciousness has been mustered, one realises: all this knowledge, gathered and garnered by humanity in pre-Christian times, has its symbol

in the *moon*, as for earthly sight it passes through the Cosmos. The moon is the symbol, because for all higher stages of human cognition this knowledge has acted, not as a light-bringer or solver of riddles, but rather as a bringer of darkness, just as the moon darkens the sun during a solar eclipse. That is what one reads. All the knowledge existing at that time shed darkness, not illumination, upon the riddle of the universe. And as a seer one feels the higher, truly spiritual regions of the world darkened by the intellectual achievements of antiquity which placed themselves like a screen in front of the real knowledge, just as the moon screens the sun during a solar eclipse. And the external event becomes a symbolic expression of the fact that human evolution had reached a stage where the knowledge born of man's own mind placed itself in front of the higher knowledge, like the moon before the sun during an eclipse. In that eclipse of the sun one feels the darkening of the sun of humanity in earthly evolution, engraved into the Cosmos in a stupendous sign of the occult script. I have said that the modern scientific mind may take this as an affront, because it has no understanding of the sovereign power of the Spirit in the universe. I do not want to speak of miracles in the ordinary sense of the word, of any infraction of the laws of nature, but I cannot do otherwise than convey to you how one can read that darkening of the sun — read with the eyes of soul what it is that this happening of nature expresses. With the moon-knowledge, darkness crept over the higher message of the sun.

And then there actually comes before the clairvoyant consciousness, the picture of the Cross raised on Golgotha, of the body of Jesus hanging upon it between the two thieves; the picture, too, of the body being taken down from the Cross and laid in the grave ... And here I will add that the more one tries to prevent it, the more forcibly does it present itself. And now comes a second mighty sign, whereby again there is written into the Cosmos something that one must read in order to discern it as a symbol of what has actually transpired in the evolution of humanity. One contemplates the picture of Jesus taken down from the Cross and laid in the grave, and then, while the gaze of the soul is thus directed, one has the experience of being shaken through and through by an earthquake which spread through that region.

One day, perhaps, people will understand — in the scientific sense too — more about the connection between that darkening of the sun and the earthquake, for certain theories which are already current in the world, but somewhat haphazardly, indicate that there is a connection between solar eclipses and earthquakes, and even fire-damp in mines. That earthquake

followed upon the eclipse of the sun. It shook the grave in which the body of Jesus had been laid, and the stone covering it was wrenched away; a fissure was rent in the earth and the corpse was received into it. Another tremor caused the fissure to close again over the corpse. And when the people came in the morning the grave was empty, for the dead body of Jesus had been received into the earth. The stone, however, still lay where it had been hurled. — Once again let us follow the sequence of pictures! Jesus dies on the Cross of Golgotha. Darkness breaks in upon the earth. The corpse of Jesus is laid into the grave. A tremor shakes the land and the corpse is received into the earth. The fissure caused by the tremor closes; the stone is hurled aside. These are all actual happenings. I cannot describe them in any other way. Let those who wish to approach these things from the basis of natural science form what opinion they like, bring forward all kinds of contrary arguments: what the gaze of clairvoyance perceives is as I have described it. And if anyone were to say: it is impossible that from the Cosmos there should be set up, as it were in a mighty language of signs, a symbol of something New having entered into the evolution of mankind; if anyone were to say: the Divine Powers do not write into the earth in such signs a happening like an eclipse of the sun and an earthquake ... then I could only answer: You believe in all sincerity that such things are impossible. Nevertheless they actually happened. I can imagine someone like Ernest Renan, the author of that strange work, *The Life of Jesus*, saying that such things are incredible, because one only believes in what can at any time be re-confirmed by experiment. But this thought is not tenable ... for would a man like Renan not believe, let us say, in the Ice Age, although that cannot be confirmed by experiment? It is quite impossible to reconstruct the conditions prevailing in the Ice Age and yet all scientists believe in it. Equally impossible is it that this unique cosmic sign can ever appear again to men — yet for all that, the sign was there.

We can only be led to these events when, as seers, we find the way to them as I have indicated, when we sink in deepest contemplation into the soul of Peter or of one of the other Apostles who at the time of Pentecost felt themselves quickened by the all-prevailing Cosmic Love. Only when we contemplate the souls of those men and discern the nature of their experiences, is it possible in this indirect way to gaze at the Cross raised on Golgotha, to behold the darkening of the earth at that time and the subsequent earthquake. It is not denied that in the external sense this darkening and earthquake were ordinary happenings of nature, but one who having induced the requisite conditions in his soul, follows and reads

these events with clairvoyant sight, will be emphatic that they were as I have described them. For in the consciousness of Peter, what I have now described was, in very truth, an experience that crystallised out of the long sleep. Among the manifold pictures crossing Peter's consciousness, those of the Cross raised on Golgotha, the darkening and the earthquake, for example, stood out in vivid relief. These experiences were for Peter the first result of the quickening by the Cosmic Love at Pentecost. And he now knew something he had not really known before: that the event of Golgotha had taken place and that the body on the Cross was the very same body with which he had often gone about together in life. Now he knew that Jesus had died on the Cross, that this dying was in reality a *birth*: the birth of that Spirit outpoured as the all-prevailing Cosmic Love into the souls of the Disciples assembled at Pentecost. Peter felt it as a ray of the primordial, aeonic Love ... born when Jesus died on the Cross. And this stupendous truth sank down into Peter's soul: It is only illusion that on the Cross a death took place. This death, preceded as it had been by infinite suffering, was in truth the birth of the ray now penetrating the soul. The all-prevailing Cosmic Love which had previously been present everywhere outside and around the earth, had, with the death of Jesus, been born into the earth. In the abstract, such words seem facile, but one must for a moment actually be transported into the soul of Peter to realise what he experienced then for the first time: When Jesus of Nazareth died on the Cross, at that moment there was born for the earth something that was previously to be found only in the Cosmos. The death of Jesus of Nazareth was the birth of the Cosmic Love within the sphere of the earth.

This is, so to speak, the first knowledge we are able to read from the Fifth Gospel. What I have now been describing begins with what is called in the New Testament the coming, or the outpouring, of the Spirit. The nature and character of the souls of the Apostles at that time did not make it possible for them to participate in the real sense in this event of the death of Jesus of Nazareth otherwise than in an abnormal state of consciousness.

To Peter, as also to John and James, there came, inevitably, the remembrance of another moment in their lives, the moment that can only be revealed to us in all its majesty by the Fifth Gospel. He with whom they had gone about on earth had led them out to the mount and had bidden them: Watch! And they had fallen asleep. The condition which spread with greater and greater intensity over their souls had already then set in. Their normal consciousness faded, they sank into the sleep which lasted beyond the time of Golgotha; and from this sleep the experiences I have been

trying in halting words to describe, shone forth. Peter, John and James were inevitably reminded of how they had fallen into this condition of sleep and now, as they looked back, the vision lit up of the mighty events which had transpired around the earthly body of Him with whom they had gone about together. And gradually ... as submerged dreams rise up into the consciousness of men ... gradually the Apostles became conscious of what had transpired during those past days. During those days they had not experienced these happenings in their normal consciousness. What now came into their ken had lain deep down in their souls, submerged as it were for the whole of the period between the event of Golgotha and Pentecost. This period seemed to them to have been one of deepest sleep — above all through the days between the event known as the Ascension, and Pentecost. As they looked backwards, the whole period — day by day — between the Mystery of Golgotha and the Ascension of Christ Jesus into heaven, came before their souls. They had lived through it all but only now did they become conscious of it — and in a strange and mysterious way. Forgive me if I here interpose a personal remark. I must confess that I myself was amazed in the highest degree when I became aware of the manner in which all that the Apostles had lived through between the time of the Mystery of Golgotha and the Ascension rose up into their consciousness. It is indeed remarkable.

Pictures like these came before the souls of the Apostles: You were together with the Being who has been born on the Cross, you were with Him in very truth ... Just as on waking in the morning the remembrance of a dream might tell one: during the night you were with this or that person! ... But what is so remarkable is *how* the particular events came up into the Apostles' consciousness. Over and over again they were compelled to ask themselves: Who, then, is that Being with Whom we have been together? And time after time they did not know who He was. They knew with certainty that they had gone about with Him, but they did not recognise Him in the Form which had then been before them and which now, after they had been quickened by the all-prevailing Cosmic Love, appeared to them in a picture. They saw themselves going about after the Mystery of Golgotha with Him whom we call the Christ. And they saw, too, how He had taught and instructed them from the realm of the Spirit. They came to realise that for forty days they had gone about with this Being who upon the Cross had been born, that this Being — the All-prevailing Love itself born out of the Cosmos into the world — had been their Teacher, but that they had not been mature enough to understand His words; they realised that they had been obliged to receive His teachings with the subconscious

forces of their souls, that they had gone about with the Christ like sleep-walkers, unable to understand with their ordinary minds what this Being imparted to them. During these forty days they had listened to Him with a kind of consciousness quite unfamiliar to them and which now, at Pentecost, became alive in them for the first time. They had listened to Him like sleep-walkers. This Being had come to them as their spiritual Teacher and had instructed them in mysteries which it was only possible for them to understand because He transported them into quite a different state of consciousness. Therefore not until now did they realise that they had gone about with Christ, with the Risen Christ. It was only now that they recognised what had really happened to them. And how did they recognise that this was the very same Being with whom they had gone about in the body, before the Mystery of Golgotha? This can be described in the following way: —

Let us suppose that now, after the event of Pentecost, a picture of this kind came before the soul of one of the Apostles. He saw how he had gone about with the Risen One. But he did not recognise this Being. Then another picture interposed itself, a picture which, mingling with the purely spiritual picture, represented an experience actually undergone by the Apostles in the presence of Christ Jesus before the Mystery of Golgotha. There was a scene where they felt that they were being taught by Christ Jesus about the Mystery of the Spirit. But they did not recognise Him, they merely saw themselves in the presence of this spiritual Being. And in order that they might recognise Him, this picture, while still intact, merged into the picture of the Last Supper — an experience they had shared with Christ Jesus. Try to envisage in all reality that as the super-sensible experience with the Risen One lit up in the consciousness of an Apostle, there — working as it were in the background — was the picture of the Last Supper. Then the Apostles knew that He with whom they had gone about in the body was the very same Being who was teaching them now — in the quite different Form in which He appeared after the Mystery of Golgotha. Remembrances from the state of consciousness that had been like a sleep were interwoven with the memory-pictures of events preceding the onset of this sleep. The Apostles experienced this as if two pictures were superimposed: one picture was of their experiences after the Mystery of Golgotha and another of the time before their consciousness had clouded. Then they realised that these two Beings belonged together: the Risen One and He with whom, a relatively short time before, they had gone about together in the body. And now they said to themselves: Before we were awakened by the all-prevailing Cosmic Love, we were as if transported

from our ordinary consciousness. And Christ, the Risen One, was with us. All unknowing, we were taken up into His Kingdom; He went about with us, revealed to us the mysteries of His Kingdom of which we are now becoming conscious as if we had once experienced them in dream. — That is what causes amazement: the invariable coincidence of one picture of an experience of the Apostles with Christ after the Mystery of Golgotha with a picture of a happening which before the Mystery of Golgotha they had actually lived through in their normal consciousness while together in the physical body with Christ Jesus.

A beginning has thus been made to impart what can be read in the so-called Fifth Gospel. And at the end of this first communication to-day it may be allowable for me to add a few additional and necessary words. In an occult sense I feel it my duty to speak about these things now. What I want to say is the following. I know well that we are living in a time when many things are being prepared for the near future of mankind on earth, and that within our Anthroposophical Society — as it has now become — we must feel ourselves as those in whom an inkling is dawning that something essential for the future has to be made ready in the souls of men. I know that times will come when it will be possible to speak of these matters in a way quite other than present conditions allow. For we are all of us children of the age. But a time will come in the near future when it will be possible to speak with greater precision, when a great deal that can at present only be of the nature of indication may perhaps be discerned with far, far greater exactitude in the spiritual chronicle of World-Becoming. Improbable as it seems to the modern mind, such a time will come. For this reason it is a certain matter of duty to speak about these things to-day by way of preparation. And although I have had to overcome a certain reluctance in speaking as I have done, this was outweighed by the duty to the preparation that must be made in our time. This was what led me to speak on this subject to you here. When I speak of having overcome reluctance, please take this exactly as it is meant. I ask explicitly that what I have to say on this occasion shall be taken merely as a kind of stimulus, as something which in the future it will be possible to express much more adequately and with greater precision. You will better understand what I mean by "overcoming reluctance" if you will allow me not to withhold a personal remark. I know full well that in the spiritual research to which I have devoted myself, many things can only be extracted with the very greatest difficulty and effort from the spiritual record of the world's happenings — particularly things of this nature! And I myself should not be in the least surprised if the word "indication" which I have used in

connection with them were to prove to have still weightier and wider implications than need to be attributed to it now. I do not say — most emphatically I do not say — that I am already in a position to say with all precision what presents itself in the spiritual script. For particularly in my own case I am aware of all kinds of difficulties and of the labour required when it is a question of drawing from the Akasha Chronicle pictures relating to Christianity. It costs me great effort to make these pictures sufficiently concrete to be able to fix them and I regard it, so to speak, as my karma that the duty is imposed upon me to say what I have now brought myself to say. For without any doubt it would cost me less effort if, as in the case of many of our contemporaries, circumstances in my early youth had enabled me to have a genuinely Christian education. I had no such education. I grew up in an entirely free-thinking environment. My own education was of a purely scientific character. And that is why it costs me great effort to discover these things of which it is my duty to speak. This personal reference may be justified for two reasons. — One is that with an utter lack of probity, an absurd story [It had been alleged by Annie Besant that Dr. Steiner had been educated by the Jesuits.] has been sent broadcast through the world about my having been connected with certain Catholic influences. There is not a single word of truth in this. And it is easy to judge the pass to which things have come in what calls itself Theosophy nowadays when such dishonest statements and rumours emanate from its soil. As, however, we cannot ignore them but must confront them with the truth, this personal reference is justified. Just because of my remoteness from Christianity when I was young, I feel all the freer from bias in regard to it; I believe that the Spirit has led me to Christianity and to the Christ. Especially in this domain I think I have a certain right to claim freedom from bias and prejudice. Perhaps — in this particular epoch of world-history — more reliance can be placed upon the words of a man who has come from a scientific education, who in his youth stood at a distance from Christianity, than upon the words of someone who has been connected with Christianity since early childhood. If you ponder these words you will realise that they indicate something of what lives within me when I speak of the mysteries which I will designate as the mysteries of the Fifth Gospel.



Lecture III

3 October 1913, Oslo

When I said in the lecture yesterday that those personalities who are generally called the Apostles of Christ Jesus experienced a kind of awakening at the time commemorated by the so-called Feast of Pentecost, this does not in any way imply that the Apostles were at that time immediately or fully conscious of the content of the Fifth Gospel as I am relating it now. It is quite true that when clairvoyant consciousness penetrates deeply into the souls of the Apostles, the pictures of which I spoke are discerned; but in the hearts and minds of the Apostles themselves at that time, these things lived less as pictures and more — if I may put it so — as very life, as vivid experience, as feeling, as power of soul! And the words the Apostles were then able to speak, words which captivated even the Greeks and gave the impetus for the development of Christianity — what they thus bore within them as power of soul and of feeling — all this blossomed forth from the living power of the Fifth Gospel. They were able to speak as they did, to work as they did, because they bore within their very souls those things we are now deciphering as the Fifth Gospel — though they did not speak of them in the words in which this Fifth Gospel has to be narrated now. They had been quickened, awakened as it were by the all-prevailing, Cosmic Love and under the influence of this quickening they now worked on. What lived within them was the Power which Christ Himself had now come to be. And here we have reached a point where we must speak about Christ's earthly life, according to the Fifth Gospel.

It is not easy to put these things into words which give expression to concepts and ideas of the modern mind. But many ideas acquired from our studies in Theosophy will help us to approach this greatest of all Earth-mysteries. If we want to understand Christianity we must apply to the Christ Being concepts already familiar to us from Theosophy — only in a somewhat different form.

In order to achieve some measure of clarity, we will begin by considering the event usually known as the Baptism by John in the Jordan. In respect of the earthly life of Christ, the Fifth Gospel reveals that this event was something like conception in the case of a human being. And we

understand the life of Christ from then onwards until the Mystery of Golgotha when we compare it with the life of the human embryo within the body of the mother. From the Baptism by John until the Mystery of Golgotha, therefore, the Christ Being passes through a kind of embryonic existence. The Mystery of Golgotha itself is to be understood as the earthly birth — that is to say, the death of Jesus is to be understood as the earthly birth of the Christ. His earthly life in the real sense lies *after* the Mystery of Golgotha, when He communed with the Apostles while they were in an abnormal state of consciousness. This was what followed the real birth of the Christ Being. And with reference to the Christ Being, we must conceive the event described as the Ascension and the subsequent outpouring of the Spirit as the passing into the spiritual world which, as we know, takes place after the death of a human being. The further life of Christ in the Earth-sphere after the Ascension or after Pentecost is to be compared with the life passed through by the human soul in Devachan, in the Spirit-Land. And so we see, my dear friends, that Christ is a Being in respect of whom all ideas and concepts otherwise acquired concerning the successive stages and conditions of human life must be completely transformed. After the brief intermediate period known as Kamaloka, the time of purification, the human being passes over into the spiritual world proper, in order to prepare for the next earthly life. After his death, therefore, the human being lives through a spiritual life. From the event of Pentecost onwards, the Christ Being passed through experiences which signified, for Him, what the transition into the Spirit-Land signifies for the human being: for Christ, this was His entry into the sphere of the earth. And instead of passing, as does a human being, into a world of Devachan, a world of Spirit, after death, the sacrifice offered up by the Christ Being was that He made the earth His heaven, sought His heaven upon the earth. The human being leaves the earth in order, as we say in ordinary parlance, to exchange his dwelling-place for heaven. Christ left the heavens in order to exchange this, His dwelling-place, for the earth. I beg you, my dear friends, to understand this in its true meaning and then associate with it the feeling of what came to pass through the Mystery of Golgotha, through the Christ Being — the feeling of what Christ's sacrifice really signified. It was the forsaking of the sphere of Spirit in order that living together with the earth and with men on the earth, He might lead them onwards, lead evolution on the earth to further stages through the Impulse thus bestowed.

This already indicates that before the Baptism in the Jordan, the Christ Being did not belong to the earthly sphere. From worlds beyond the earth, from super-earthly spheres He had come down to the earth. And the

experiences between the Baptism in the Jordan and Pentecost were necessary in order that Christ, the heavenly Being, might be transformed into Christ, the earthly Being. Infinite depths have been expressed when it is said of this Mystery: Since the event of Pentecost the Christ Being has been together with human souls on the earth; before then He was not together with human souls on the earth!

The experiences undergone by the Christ Being between the Baptism in the Jordan and the event of Pentecost took place in order that His abode in the spiritual world might be exchanged for His abode in the earth-sphere. They were undergone in order that Christ, the Divine-Spiritual Being, might take upon Himself the form in which alone it would be possible for Him to live, henceforward, in communion with the souls of men. To what end, then, did the events of Palestine take place? To the end that Christ, the Divine-Spiritual Being, might assume the Form which enabled Him to live in communion with human souls on earth.

Here we have a direct indication that the event of Palestine is unique and without parallel — as I have so often stated. A higher, non-earthly Being comes down into the earth-sphere — until under the influence of this Being, the earth-sphere shall have been duly transformed. Since the days of Palestine the Christ Being has therefore been a power in the earth itself.

To form a really clear conception of the event of Pentecost according to the Fifth Gospel, necessitates the use of certain concepts that are elaborated in Theosophy. We know that in earlier times there were Mysteries, Initiations, that the human soul was lifted through these Initiations into participation in the spiritual life. The most graphic picture of the pre-Christian Initiation is provided by the so-called Persian or Mithraic Mysteries. In these Mysteries there were seven stages. [See *Christianity and the Mysteries of Antiquity*, by Rudolf Steiner. Rudolf Steiner Publishing Company.] He who was to be led into the higher levels of spiritual experience attained, first of all, the rank called symbolically a "Raven." Then he became a "Secret One," a "Hidden One." In the third degree he became a "Fighter;" in the fourth, a "Lion;" in the fifth degree the name of the people to which he belonged was conferred upon him. In the sixth degree he became a "Sun-Hero," in the seventh a "Father." In regard to the first four degrees it is sufficient, now, to say that in them a man was led by stages to deeper and deeper spiritual experiences. In the fifth degree he was ready for an extension of consciousness, giving him the power to

become the spiritual guardian of his people, whose name was therefore conferred upon him. An Initiate of the fifth degree in those times participated in a very special way in the spiritual life.

From a Lecture-Course given here [See *The Mission of the Folk-Souls*, Oslo, 1910. Rudolf Steiner Publishing Co.] we know that the peoples of the earth are led and guided by those Beings of the Spiritual Hierarchies known as the Archangeloi, the Archangels. An Initiate of the fifth degree was lifted into the sphere where he participated in the life of the Archangeloi. Such Initiates of the fifth degree were needed in the cosmos; that is why, on the earth, there was an Initiation into this fifth degree. When such a personality initiated in the Mysteries, had lived through the deep experiences and acquired the enrichment of soul proper to the fifth degree, the gaze of the Archangeloi was directed to this soul, reading in it as we read in a book which tells us certain things we need to know in order to perform some deed. In the soul of one who had been initiated in the fifth degree, the Archangeloi read what was needful for this people. To enable the Archangeloi to lead the people aright, there must be Initiates of the fifth degree upon the earth. These Initiates are the intermediaries between those who are the actual leaders of a people, and the people itself. They bear upwards, as it were, into the sphere of the Archangeloi, what is essential for the right leadership of the particular folk.

How could this fifth degree be attained in ancient, pre-Christian times? It could not be attained if the soul of the human being remained in the body. The soul must be raised out of the body. Initiation consisted precisely in this lifting of the soul out of the body. And outside the body the soul underwent experiences which imparted to it the content I have just been describing. The soul must leave the earth and rise up into the spiritual world in order to attain the goal set before it.

When the sixth degree of the old Initiation had been attained, the degree of the Sun-Hero, there became active in the soul of this Sun-Hero a power required not only for the leadership, the guidance, the directing of a people, but for still higher purposes. Study the evolution of mankind on earth and you will perceive how peoples and nations arise and then pass away, how they are transformed. Peoples are born and peoples die — like individual human beings. But what a particular people has accomplished for the earth must be preserved in the whole onward march of evolution. Not only has a people to be directed and guided, but the results of the earthly labours of this people must be led out beyond it. In order that the achievements of a people may thus be led onwards by the Spirits whose

task this is, the Sun-Heroes were needed. For what has been brought to life in the soul of a Sun-Hero can be read by Beings in the higher worlds. This was a means of acquiring those forces by which the results of a people's labours may be integrated into the* labours of mankind as a whole. The power living in the Sun-Hero transcended the activity of a single people. And just as one who was to become an Initiate of the fifth degree in the ancient Mysteries must pass out of his body in order to undergo the necessary experiences, so too, he who was to become a Sun-Hero must pass out of his body and, during this time of absence, actually have the Sun as his dwelling-place. These things seem almost incredible, possibly sheer folly to the modern mind. But here too the saying of Paul holds good: that what may be wisdom in the sight of God is often foolishness in the sight of men.

During his Initiation the Sun-Hero lived in communion with the whole solar system, having as his place of abode the Sun, as the ordinary human being lives on the earth as his own planet. As mountains and rivers are around us here, so were the planets of the solar system around the Sun-Hero during the time of his Initiation. During his Initiation the Sun-Hero was transported in consciousness to the Sun. In the ancient Mysteries this could only be achieved outside the body. And when he came back into his body he remembered what he had experienced and was able to use these experiences as a potent force for furthering the evolution and well-being of all humanity. The Sun-Heroes were transported away from the body during the process of Initiation and came back again into the body, having within them then the power of incorporating the achievements of a people into the evolution of humanity as a whole. And what was it that these Sun-Heroes experienced during the three and a half days of their Initiation while their dwelling-place — for so we may truly call it — was on the Sun? They experienced communion with Christ, who before the Mystery of Golgotha was not fully upon the earth! All the Sun-Heroes of old had been transported into the higher worlds, for in ancient times it was only in those worlds that communion with Christ could be experienced. From this world into which the old Initiates must rise during their Initiation, the Christ came down to the earth. And so we may say: what could be attained by a few single individuals in ancient times through Initiation, was attained as the result, so to say, of a natural happening during the days of Pentecost, by those who were the Apostles of Christ Jesus. Whereas before then it was necessary for men to rise up to Christ, Christ had now come down to the Apostles. And the Apostles, in a certain respect, had become men who bore within them the substance and content that had belonged to the souls

of the ancient Sun-Heroes. The spiritual power of the sun had poured into souls of men, working on henceforward in the evolution of humanity. In order that this might be, the events of Palestine were necessary.

Of what was Christ's *earthly state of being* the outcome? It was the outcome of infinite suffering — transcending in intensity anything that the human mind can conceive. If we are to think correctly about these matters, certain obstacles again due to the modern attitude of mind, must be put aside, and I am obliged at this point to make an interpolation in the narratives of the Fifth Gospel.

I would strongly recommend the reading of a book lately published, because it is written by a man with a certain genius, and is evidence of the nonsensical statements that can be made about spiritual things by men of such calibre. I refer to Maurice Maeterlinck's book, *La Mort*. Among many meaningless passages in this book there is also the statement that when the human being has died, he is a spirit and can no longer suffer because he has laid aside the physical body. Maeterlinck, a man of some genius, is therefore labouring under the illusion that the physical alone can suffer and that for this reason, one who is dead cannot suffer. He is entirely oblivious of the phenomenal, almost incredible folly here implied, that the physical body which is composed of physical forces and chemical substances alone can suffer ... as if a stone were capable of suffering. The physical body cannot suffer; suffering lies always in the realm of *soul*. Things have come to such a pass that in the simplest matters people think the opposite of the truth. There would be no suffering in Kamaloka if there could be no suffering in the spiritual life. Suffering in Kamaloka is caused precisely by the deprivation of the physical body. Anyone who holds the view that a spirit cannot suffer will be incapable of any true conception of the infinite suffering undergone by the Christ Spirit in Palestine.

But before I speak of this suffering, I must call your attention to another matter. It must be remembered that at the Baptism in the Jordan, a Spirit came down to the earth and lived thereafter for three years in the physical body which then passed through death on Golgotha — a Spirit who before the Baptism in the Jordan had lived in conditions of existence altogether different from those of the earth. What does it mean — that this Spirit had lived in conditions of existence altogether different from those of the earth? In theosophical parlance it means that this Spirit was subject to no earthly karma. Please pay attention to this. For three years there dwelt in the body of Jesus of Nazareth a Spirit who lived through this period on the earth without any earthly karma in His soul. Because of this, all the experiences

undergone by Christ are fundamentally different from those undergone by a human being. If we suffer, if this or that experience comes to us, we know that the suffering has its basis in karma. It was not so in the case of the Christ Spirit. For three years He lived through experiences on the earth without becoming involved in karma. What, then, did this entail for Him? Suffering without any karmic reason, utterly undeserved suffering, the suffering of guiltlessness! The Fifth Gospel is the theosophical Gospel and reveals to us that absolutely unique earthly life of three years to which the concept of karma is not applicable.

But further study of this Gospel reveals to us other things as well concerning these three years. This life of three years on earth which we have conceived as an embryonic life, produced no karma, incurred no guilt. A life of three years which neither engendered nor was conditioned by karma was spent on earth. If the concepts and ideas arising from these things are taken in the really deep sense, much will be acquired for a true understanding of these extraordinary events in Palestine which otherwise remain, in so many respects, incomprehensible. For just think what has been the outcome of it all in the evolution of humanity, think of how it has been misunderstood! And yet, what an impulse has been given! But these things are not always taken in their deep and essential meaning. When they are, people will think differently in many respects. Matters that are, in reality, profoundly significant are so often unheeded. Probably many of you have heard of the book which came out in 1863 — Ernest Renan's *Life of Jesus*. This book is usually read without heed being paid to the real gist of it. Perhaps in time to come the world will be astonished that countless people have read this book without discovering what is really the most remarkable thing about it. What makes it remarkable is that it is a mixture of very noble, beautiful writing and cheap fiction. The fact that a very high-minded and beautiful exposition is mixed up in this book with writing like that of a cheap novel, will be regarded one day as quite extraordinary. Read Ernest Renan's *Life of Jesus* with this in mind, read what he makes of Christ — who is, of course, for him, paramountly Christ *Jesus*. Renan makes Him an heroic figure whose intentions, to begin with, are altogether good, who is a great benefactor of humanity, but who is then carried away by the people's infatuation and more and more falls in with what they like to hear and to have said to them. In magnificent style, Ernest Renan applies to Christ what one often finds being applied at a lower level. For it does, after all, happen that when people see something spreading, like Theosophy for example, they criticise it by saying: At the beginning your intentions were altogether praiseworthy, but then came mischievous

adherents merely for the purpose of hearing what everyone likes to hear, and you were driven from one stage to another ... This is how Renan speaks of Christ Jesus. He had the effrontery to describe the Raising of Lazarus as having been in the nature of a fraud, condoned by Christ Jesus as an effective means of making a stir among the people! He goes so far as to depict Christ Jesus in the grip of frenzied rage and succumbing more and more to the folk-instincts. In this way an element of cheap fiction is mingled with the noble discourses also contained in this book. All healthy feeling must — to put it at its mildest — recoil from descriptions of a being who to begin with is full of the highest intentions but finally succumbs to the folk-instincts and allows all kinds of frauds to be perpetrated. Strangely enough, however, Renan is not repelled but writes in a most beautiful and moving way of this being. Curious, is it not? But it proves how strongly men are drawn to Christ, even when they understand nothing about Him. It can actually happen that a man like this makes the life of Christ into so much cheap fiction and yet finds no words of admiration too strong for the purpose of turning men's minds and hearts to this personality. Such things are only possible in connection with a Being whose circumstances were those of Christ Jesus. Oh, the karma that would have piled up during those three years of Christ's life on earth had that life been as Renan describes it! But in times to come it will be recognised that such a description becomes null and void in the light of the knowledge that a life was once lived on earth without creating karma. This is the message of the Fifth Gospel.

Let us turn again to the event we know as the Baptism by John in the Jordan. The Fifth Gospel tells us that the words contained in the Gospel of St. Luke are a correct rendering of what could have been heard at that time by highly developed clairvoyant consciousness: "This is my beloved Son; this day have I begotten Him." And that is a true rendering of what actually came to pass: the begetting, the conception of Christ into the sphere of the earth. This was what happened at the Baptism in the Jordan. As in the next two lectures we shall be speaking of the Being who came down to the body of Jesus, we will, to begin with, only consider the fact that there came one, Jesus of Nazareth, who gave up His body to the Christ Being. The Fifth Gospel reveals — and this is what we read with the backward-turned gaze of clairvoyance — that at the beginning of Christ's earthly pilgrimage, He — the Christ — had not fully united with the body of Jesus of Nazareth, that there was only a loose connection between the Christ Being and the body of Jesus of Nazareth. The connection between the bodily form and the soul was not as it is in an ordinary human being but of such a kind that at any time — for example when it was necessary

— the Christ Being could leave the body of Jesus of Nazareth. And while the body of Jesus of Nazareth lay somewhere as if in sleep, the Christ Being went His way in the Spirit hither and thither, wherever His Presence was needed. The Fifth Gospel reveals to us that the body of Jesus of Nazareth was not always present when the Christ Being appeared to the Apostles, but that often the body of Jesus of Nazareth had remained in some place, while the Spirit, the Christ Spirit appeared to the Apostles — but this Appearance was such that they might well confuse it with the actual body of Jesus of Nazareth. True, they were aware of a certain difference but the difference was too slight to enable them always to perceive it clearly. The other four Gospels give little indication of this but it is there, in very truth, in the Fifth Gospel. The Apostles were not always able to distinguish quite clearly: Now we have Christ Jesus before us, or, now we have only the Christ Spirit before us. The distinction was not always obvious and they did not invariably know whether the one or the other condition held good. Mostly they took the Appearance to be that of Christ Jesus, that is to say, the Christ Spirit in so far as they knew Him in the body of Jesus of Nazareth. But what came to pass in that earthly life of three years was that through the course of those three years the Spirit bound itself more and more closely to the body of Jesus of Nazareth; the Christ Being — as an etheric Being — assumed an ever greater likeness with this physical body. Notice once again how different it was with the Christ Being from what it is with the body of an ordinary man. The ordinary man is a microcosm in relation to the macrocosm, he is an image of the whole macrocosm. Such is the body of the individual human being — that is to say, what comes to manifestation in the physical body of a man. What man becomes on earth reflects the great universe. With the Christ Being the opposite is the case. The macrocosmic Sun Being shapes Himself into likeness with the form of the human microcosm, narrows and contracts more and more into the human microcosm. Exactly the opposite!

At the beginning of Christ's life on earth, directly after the Baptism in the Jordan, the connection with the body of Jesus of Nazareth was only very slight. The Christ Being was still quite outside the body of Jesus of Nazareth. The power operating in the Christ Being as He went about the land was still an entirely super-earthly power. Cures were performed such as no human power could have performed. In His discourse with men the Christ Being spoke with the impressiveness of a god. As though fettering Himself to the body of Jesus of Nazareth only when He so willed, Christ worked as the super-earthly Christ Being. But in increasing measure He took on likeness with the body of Jesus of Nazareth, contracted into earthly

conditions of existence and experienced the gradual ebbing of the Divine power. All this was undergone by the Christ Being as He identified Himself more and more closely with the body of Jesus of Nazareth ... in a certain respect it was a retrogressive process of evolution. It was the lot of the Christ Being to feel how the Divine power steadily waned in this process of self-assimilation to the body of Jesus of Nazareth. Stage by stage the God became a Man. Like someone who in the throes of unceasing pain becomes aware that the body is steadily declining, so was the Christ Being aware of the waning of His spiritual power while as an etheric Being He was gradually identifying Himself with the earthly body of Jesus of Nazareth ... until the similarity was so complete that He could feel anguish like a man. This is also described in the other Gospel when it is said that Christ Jesus went out with His disciples to the Mount of Olives where He — the Christ Being — had upon His brow the sweat of anguish. Stage by stage the Christ had become Man, had become human, had identified Himself with the body of Jesus of Nazareth. In the same measure in which this etheric Christ Being grew to greater identity with the body of Jesus of Nazareth, in the same measure did the Christ become Man. The miraculous, god-begotten power ebbed from Him. There before us is the whole Way of the Passion — beginning from days shortly after the Baptism by John in the Jordan, when the people, amazed at His deeds, exclaimed: Such wonders have never yet been wrought on the earth! This was the time when the Christ Being had as yet assumed but little likeness with the body of Jesus of Nazareth. In three years the path had led from this astonished gaze of the people standing in wonder around Him to the point where the Christ Being had so identified Himself with the body of Jesus of Nazareth that in this sickly body with which He had made Himself one, the Christ Being could no longer answer the questions of Pilate, of Herod, of Caiaphas. The Christ Being had become so identical with the body of Jesus of Nazareth, with this steadily weakening body, that when the question was put: "Hast thou said that thou wilt destroy the temple and in three days build it up again?" — the Christ Being no longer spoke from the frail body of Jesus of Nazareth and remained as one dumb before the high priests of the Jews, dumb before Pilate who asked: "Hast thou said thou art the King of the Jews?" That was the Way of the Passion — from the Baptism in the Jordan to the point where all power had departed from Him. And forthwith the multitude who had once gazed in amazement at the manifestations of the super-earthly, wonder-working powers of the Christ Being, no longer stood in astonishment around Him but stood before the Cross, mocking the powerlessness of the God who had become Man, in the words: If thou art a God, come down from the Cross! Thou hast helped others, now help

thyself! This was the Way of the Passion — a Way of infinite suffering, to which was added the sorrowing for a humanity that had come to be as it was at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha.

But this suffering gave birth to the Spirit which was poured upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost. Out of this suffering was born the all-prevailing Cosmic Love which at the Baptism in the Jordan had come down from the super-earthly, heavenly spheres into the sphere of earth, had taken on the likeness of man, of a human body, and had endured that moment of utmost, divine powerlessness in order to bring forth the Impulse we know as the Christ Impulse in the further evolution of mankind.

These are things of which we must be mindful if we would understand the real significance of the Christ Impulse in the sense in which it must be understood in times to come. Men of the future will need such understanding if they are to make progress along their path of evolution and of culture.



Lecture IV

5 October 1913, Christiania

When I set myself to the task of speaking to you to-day on the contents of the Fifth Gospel, the concluding words of St. John's Gospel afford me a certain consolation. As you know, this concluding passage is to the effect that the events which took place around Christ Jesus are not by any means all recorded in the Gospels, for if in those days attempts had been made to record them all, the world itself could not have produced books in sufficient numbers. On one point, therefore, there can be no doubt, namely, that as well as what has actually been recorded, many other things may have happened. In order to make myself intelligible when I am speaking, as I wish to speak in these particular lectures, about the contents of the Fifth Gospel, I will begin to-day with narratives of the life of Jesus of Nazareth approximately from that time in his life of which indications have been given on other occasions, when brief portions of the Fifth Gospel have been communicated. (See e.g. *Gospel of St. John*, *Gospel of St. Mark*, *Gospel of St. Matthew*, *Gospel of St. Luke*, and *From Jesus to Christ*. Rudolf Steiner Publishing Co.)

I want to speak to-day of certain happenings in the life of Jesus of Nazareth from about his twelfth year onwards. As you know, this was the year when the Zarathustra-Ego which had incarnated in one of the two Jesus children born at that time, had passed over, through a mystical act, into the other Jesus child — the child who is described at the beginning of St. Luke's Gospel [See [Note 1](#)]. Our narrative begins, then, from that year in the life of Jesus of Nazareth when the Jesus of St. Luke's Gospel had received the Ego of Zarathustra. In the Gospel, this moment in the life of Jesus of Nazareth is indicated in the story that on a journey to Jerusalem for the feast, the Jesus child of St. Luke's Gospel was lost and when he was found he was sitting among the learned doctors and scribes, amazing them by his lofty answers. We, however, know why it was possible for him to give these astounding answers. It was because everything that welled up as it were from the Spirit into the Zarathustra-Ego like remembrances hidden in the soul, worked in such a way that Jesus of Nazareth was able at that time to give those astounding answers. We know too that after the

death of the mother in the one family and of the father in the other, the two families amalgamated into one and that the Jesus child, endowed now with the Zarathustra-Ego, grew up in this family.

As the Fifth Gospel reveals, it was a truly remarkable development that took place during the following years. Those in the immediate environment of the young Jesus of Nazareth held him in highest repute because of the astounding answers he had given in the temple. They saw in him the future doctor of the law, one who would attain outstanding eminence among the learned scribes. Those around Jesus of Nazareth entertained the highest hopes of him. They began to drink in his every word. But in spite of this he became more and more silent — so silent, indeed, that he often caused great displeasure to those around him. Between the twelfth and eighteenth years of his life, however, a mighty struggle was going on within him. It was as though deep-lying treasures of wisdom were springing to life in his soul, as though the radiant sun of Zarathustrian wisdom had flashed up within him in the form of Hebrew learning. At first the boy listened with the greatest discernment and concentration and gave astounding answers to everything said by the many learned doctors and scribes who came to the house. To begin with, in the house at Nazareth too, he astonished the learned doctors who came there and who regarded him as a wonder-child. Then, however, he became more and more silent, merely listening to what others were saying without himself speaking a word. But while this was going on, great and sublime thoughts, ethical truths, and above all powerful moral impulses came to life in his soul during those years. What he heard from the learned scribes assembled in the house made a certain impression upon him — but one that caused him bitter sorrow, because he felt — mark well, even in those early years — that much uncertainty, much that tended to error was contained in what they said about the ancient traditions and the writings compiled in the Old Testament. Heaviness oppressed his soul when he heard that in ancient times the Spirit had descended upon the Prophets, that the word of God Himself had inspired those ancient Prophets and that now the inspiration had departed from a later generation. But to one thing he always listened with deep attention, because he divined that one day it would happen so to him. The learned doctors and scribes said many a time: "That sublime and mighty Spirit who once descended, for example, upon Elias, speaks no longer; but what still speaks" ... and many of the scribes still believed it to be an inspiration from spiritual heights ... "what still speaks is a feebler voice, yet a voice which many regard as issuing from the Spirit of Jahve himself."

The "Bath-Kol" was the name given to that mysterious voice of inspiration — a voice feebler and less significant than that of the Spirit who had inspired the ancient Prophets. Nevertheless this voice represented something similar. Many of those around Jesus spoke in this way of the Bath-Kol and much concerning it is related in later Jewish writings. I now interpolate into this narration of the contents of the Fifth Gospel something that does not actually belong to this Gospel, merely for the purpose of explaining the nature of the Bath-Kol [See [Note 2](#)]. At a somewhat later date, controversy broke out between two Rabbinic schools. The famous Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus upheld a certain doctrine and maintained in support of it that he was able to work miracles (this is related in the Talmud). He made a carob-tree rise out of the soil and take root again a hundred ells away; he made a stream flow backwards; and thirdly he called upon a voice from heaven to proclaim the truth of his doctrine. But nevertheless those in the opposing school of the Rabbi Joshua did not believe in it. And Rabbi Joshua retorted: "Even if Rabbi Eliezer does make carob-trees transplant themselves from one spot to another, even if he does make a stream flow backwards, even if he does call upon the Bath-Kol ... it stands written that the eternal laws of existence must be established through the mouth and in the heart of man; and if Rabbi Eliezer would convince us, let him not call upon the Bath-Kol but upon what the human heart can comprehend." I narrate this story because it indicates that soon after the dawn of Christianity, respect for the Bath-Kol had greatly diminished in certain Rabbinic schools, although in a way it continued to be a voice of inspiration among the Rabbis and the Scribes.

As the boy Jesus listened to and pondered all these things, he himself became aware of the inspiration of the Bath-Kol. The remarkable thing was that because he bore within him the Zarathustra-Ego, Jesus of Nazareth was able very rapidly to absorb all the knowledge possessed by the others around him. Not only had he been able in his twelfth year to give astounding answers to the learned doctors, but he now heard the Bath-Kol within his own breast. But this very inspiration through the Bath-Kol gave rise to bitter, inward struggles in Jesus of Nazareth during his sixteenth and seventeenth years. For the Bath-Kol revealed to him — and he was convinced that he discerned it with all certainty — that in times to come the voice of the same Spirit who had inspired the ancient Hebrew teachers would speak no longer in the stream of events recorded in Old Testament history. And one day — it was a truly terrible experience in the soul of Jesus of Nazareth — he believed that the Bath-Kol made known to him the following: "I no longer reach to those heights where the Spirit can reveal to

me the truth about the continued progress of the Jewish people!" It was a deeply moving and terrible moment for Jesus of Nazareth when the Bath-Kol seemed to be declaring to him that it could no longer continue the ancient revelations, that it was no longer capable of perpetuating the old Hebraic wisdom. Jesus of Nazareth felt as though all the ground were swept from under his feet, and many a day he said to himself: All the forces of soul which I believed had been bestowed upon me, only lead to the realisation that in the evolution of the Jewish people there is no longer the capacity to scale the heights of the Divine revelations.

Let us try for a moment to enter into the soul of the young Jesus of Nazareth at the time when these experiences were thronging in upon him. It was in his sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth years, when, partly for reasons connected with his handicraft and partly owing to other circumstances, he made many journeys about the country. On these journeys he came to know many regions in Palestine and places outside. Now in those times — and to clairvoyant sight this is clearly perceptible in the Akasha Chronicle — a certain Asiatic cult was very widespread in Western Asia and the regions round about, even in certain parts of Europe. It was a mixture of several different rites but in the main it represented the Mithras cult. Temples dedicated to the worship of Mithras were to be found in many widely scattered regions. The rites often contained elements of the Attis cult, but were in essentials a form of Mithraic worship. Temples and centres dedicated to the worship of Mithras and of Attis were numerous and widespread. It was a form of ancient heathen religion but comprised many practices and ceremonies common to Mithras- or Attis-worship. The fact, for example, that the Church of St. Peter in Rome stands over the site of one of these earlier places of worship shows that this cult had spread far and wide. Although to many Catholics it may sound sacrilegious, the truth obliges one to say that in its outward form the ceremonial practised in the Church of St. Peter in Rome and everything deriving from it, is by no means without resemblance to the ancient Attis cult on the site of which St. Peter's stands. And the cult centred in the Church of St. Peter is in many respects a continuation of the Mithras cult. When in his sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth years, Jesus of Nazareth began to journey about the country, he came to know these centres of heathen rites. Later on too, he discovered still more about them. In this way he learnt to understand the souls of the heathen peoples by actual, physical observation — if one may put it so. At that time, as the result of the mighty act whereby the Zarathustra-Ego had passed over into his soul, Jesus of Nazareth possessed, as it were by a process of natural development, a

power of clairvoyance such as others could achieve only by intense effort and struggle. Therefore in witnessing these cults he experienced many things that remained hidden from others — many terrible things. Fabulous as it may seem, I have to testify that when the priest was enacting the rites of the cult at many a heathen altar and Jesus of Nazareth witnessed the whole act of worship, he saw that numbers of demonic beings were attracted to the spot. He discovered that many idols worshipped by the people were, in reality, images not of the good spiritual Beings of the higher Hierarchies but of demonic powers. He also perceived that many a time these demonic powers passed over into the believers participating in these rites. For reasons easy to understand, these things have not found their way into the other Gospels. And indeed it is only now, within our spiritual Movement, that such things can be disclosed, because it is only in our time that the human soul is ripe enough to understand the deep and overwhelming experiences which came to Jesus of Nazareth while he was still a young man.

These journeyings continued on through his twentieth, twenty-second, twenty-fourth years. It was always with feelings of bitter sorrow that he witnessed the power wielded by the demons — by the demons issuing as it were from Lucifer and Ahriman — that he witnessed how the heathen peoples had in many respects actually come to the point of taking the demons for gods, even of having in their idols the images of wild, demonic powers which, attracted by these images and rites, entered into the people while they prayed, and obsessed them. Many bitter experiences fell to the lot of Jesus of Nazareth. And these experiences led up to a certain culmination.

Round about the age of twenty-four, a new and heavy experience was added to that caused by the disillusionment in connection with the Bath-Kol. In narrating this experience of Jesus of Nazareth, I have to say that I am not yet in a position to indicate precisely at which place in his journeyings this came to pass. It was possible for me to decipher the scene with a high degree of certainty but I cannot to-day indicate the exact place. It seems to me that the event took place on a journey outside Palestine. But although I cannot say this with certainty, I must relate the scene. In the twenty-fourth year of his life, Jesus of Nazareth came to a place where, in a heathen cult, a certain Deity was worshipped. But the people round about were in a state of dire misery, afflicted with all kinds of terrible illnesses of soul and body. The priests had long ago forsaken this place of worship. And Jesus heard the people crying: The priests have forsaken us, the blessings of the sacrificial offering do not descend upon us

and we are leprous and diseased because the priests have forsaken us. — Jesus of Nazareth grieved for the people and an infinite love for them flamed in his soul. The people around must have remarked something of this infinite love welling up within him; a deep impression must have been made upon the sorrowing people, who had been forsaken by their priests and, as they believed, also by their god. And now, as if at one stroke, there arose in the hearts of the majority of the people something that made them say as they recognised the expression of infinite love in the countenance of Jesus: Thou art the new priest who has been sent to us! And they pressed him towards the altar of the sacrifice, they placed him at the altar. And there he stood — at the heathen altar. The people besought him to offer the sacrifice, in order that the blessing of the god might come upon them. While this was happening, while the people were lifting him to the altar, he fell down as if dead. His soul was as if transported away and the people around who believed that their god had returned to them, witnessed the terrible spectacle that the one whom they had held to be the new priest sent from heaven, had fallen down as if dead. But the soul of Jesus was aware of being transported into spiritual realms, into the sphere of sun-existence. And now, as if resounding from the spheres of the sun, this soul heard words such as it had often heard through the Bath-Kol. But now the Bath-Kol was utterly transformed; moreover the voice came to Jesus of Nazareth from quite a different direction. And that of which he now became aware can — if one translates it into our language — be rendered in words which I was able to communicate for the first time when just recently we were laying the Foundation Stone of our building in Dornach [See [Note 3](#)]. Certain occult duties exist! And obeying one such occult duty, I then communicated what came to Jesus of Nazareth through the now transformed voice of the Bath-Kol on the occasion of which I have been speaking. Jesus of Nazareth heard the words:

AUM, Amen!
Es walten die Übel,
Zeugen sich lösender Ichheit,
Von andern erschuldete Selbstheitschuld,
Erlebet im täglichen Brote,
In dem nicht waltet der Himmel Wille,
Da der Mensch sich schied von Eurem Reich
Und vergass Euren Namen,
Ihr Vater in den Himmeln.

*AUM, Amen!
The Evils hold sway,
Witness of Egoity becoming free,
Selfhood-Guilt through others incurred,
Experienced in the Daily Bread,
Wherein the Will of the Heavens does not rule,
In that Man severed himself from Your Kingdom,
And forgot Your Names,
Ye Fathers in the Heavens.*

In no other way can I render in the German language what Jesus of Nazareth heard at that time as the transformed voice of the Bath-Kol. Verily, in no other way than this! This was what his soul brought back when he awoke from the state of insensibility during which he was transported into the spiritual worlds on the occasion I have described. When Jesus of Nazareth had come to himself again and turned his eyes towards the crowd of wretched and miserable people who had brought him to the altar, they had all fled. And letting his clairvoyant vision widen into the distance he discerned a host of demonic powers and beings, all of them connected with the people. That was the second significant event, the second significant climax in the various periods of the life of Jesus of Nazareth since his twelfth year. Truly, my dear friends, the events which most deeply affected the soul of Jesus of Nazareth in his adult years cannot be said to have conduced only to inward elation, inward happiness! It was the lot of this soul before the Baptism in the Jordan to know human nature in its darkest depths.

From this journey, Jesus of Nazareth returned to his home, where the father had remained. The father died about this time — it was when Jesus of Nazareth was in his twenty-fourth year, or thereabouts. When Jesus came home his soul was still under the mighty impression of how demonic powers held sway in much that was contained in the old heathen religion. But just as it is the case that certain stages of higher knowledge can only be attained by plumbing the darkest depths of life, so too, in a certain sense, did it happen to Jesus of Nazareth. At a place unknown to me, in about the twenty-fourth year of his life, he had gazed into infinite depths of the human soul, he had gazed into souls in whom all the grief of the humanity of those times was as it were concentrated. He was also steeped in the wisdom which pierced his soul like red-hot iron but also imparted a faculty of clairvoyance powerful enough to gaze into the radiant worlds of

the Spirit. And so this comparatively young soul was able to read the things of the Spirit with discerning, clear-sighted vision. Jesus of Nazareth had become one who gazed deeply into the mysteries of life, more deeply than any man living on the earth hitherto. Nobody before him had been able to witness to what degree of intensity human misery can reach. He had seen misery in its direst, most concentrated form ... had seen how sacred rites themselves can evoke all manner of demons! In very truth, no human being on the earth had ever gazed with such deep penetration at all this wretchedness as had Jesus of Nazareth; none had been capable of such infinite depth of feeling when confronted with those who were possessed by demons. Nor was any other being on the earth as ready as he to face the question: How, how can an end be made of this misery?

And so Jesus of Nazareth possessed not only the vision, the knowledge that is wisdom, but had in a certain sense become an Initiate through the experiences of life itself. This came to the knowledge of certain people who in those days had gathered together in an Order, known very widely as the Order of the Essenes. The Essenes were people who practised a kind of secret cult and secret tenets at certain places in Palestine. It was a strict, rigorous Order. One who desired to enter it was required to pass through a year, at the very least, of strict probation, to show by his conduct during this period, by his moral principles, by his obedience in worshipping the supreme Powers of the Spirit, by his sense of justice and of equality among men, by his disregard of earthly goods and the like that he was worthy to be initiated. There was a succession of grades through which he had to pass, leading to that Essenian life which strove to approach the spiritual world in a certain separation and aloofness from the rest of humanity, through strict monastic discipline and rules of cleanliness, in order that all impurity both in body and in soul might be purged. These principles were expressed in many symbolic rules of the Order. The deciphering of the Akasha Chronicle has shown that the name "Essene" derives from or at any rate is connected with the Hebrew word "Essin" or "Assin." This means something like a trowel, a little shovel, because the Essenes always wore as their badge a little shovel — a symbol that has been preserved in many Orders to this day. And certain symbolic customs gave expression to their aims: they were not allowed to carry coins about with them nor to pass through any gateway that was either painted or had images in its neighbourhood. As the Essene Order at that time was to a certain extent recognised by the outside world, unpainted gates had been erected in Jerusalem so that the Essenes too might enter the city. If an Essene came to a painted gate he must always turn back. In the Order itself, ancient lore

and ancient traditions were preserved, and concerning these the members kept strict silence. They were allowed to teach but only what they themselves had learned within the Order. Everyone who entered the Order must give to it all his worldly possessions. At that time the Essenes numbered from four to five thousand, and people from all parts of the then known world came to dedicate themselves to the austere life of the Order. If they possessed a house far away in Asia Minor or even farther off, they always presented it to the Essene Order which consequently became the owner of small properties, houses, gardens, even extensive fields, widely dispersed over the land. No one was accepted who did not present all he had to the community. Everything belonged to all the Essenes in common; no individual possessed anything for himself. A law that in the conditions of life to-day seems extraordinarily austere but is comprehensible none the less, was that an Essene might use the assets of the Order to help any who were in need, with the exception of members of his own family.

In Nazareth there was an Essene settlement which had been one of these gifts. The Essene Order, therefore, had come within the purview of Jesus of Nazareth. Tidings reached the centre of the Order of the profound wisdom that had sunk into the soul of Jesus of Nazareth in the way that has been described. Especially among the most eminent Essenes a certain attitude of soul prevailed. With a kind of prophetic inkling, they said: From among men living in this world a new soul must arise, one who will be a Messiah! Therefore they looked around for souls of outstanding wisdom. And they were deeply moved on being told of the wisdom that had come to flower in the soul of Jesus of Nazareth. No wonder, therefore, that without compelling Jesus of Nazareth to undergo the testings of the lower grades, the Essenes received him into their community — I will not say into the Order itself — as a kind of extern, or outside member, and that even the most learned Essenes spoke about the secrets without reserve to this wise young man. In the Essene Order, Jesus of Nazareth heard far, far deeper teachings concerning the secret lore than he had ever heard from the scribes and doctors of the law. He also heard many things that had already flamed up as illumination in his own soul, from the Bath-Kol. To put it shortly, a lively exchange of thought took place between Jesus of Nazareth and the Essenes. And in his intercourse with them from about the twenty-fifth to the twenty-eighth years of his life and even beyond, he came to know almost everything that the Essene Order could impart. For what was not communicated to him through words revealed itself to him in all manner of clairvoyant impressions. Great and impressive clairvoyant impressions came to Jesus of Nazareth, either within the Essene

community itself or very shortly afterwards at his home in Nazareth where, in a more contemplative life, he yielded himself to what thronged in upon him from forces of which the Essenes had no inkling but which were experienced in his soul.

One of these experiences, one of these inner impressions must be brought into particularly strong relief because it can shed light upon the whole course of mankind's spiritual evolution. It was a great and significant vision into which Jesus of Nazareth was as if transported, in which the Buddha appeared to him as a real presence. It was indeed so: the Buddha appeared to Jesus of Nazareth as a result of the exchange of thoughts with the Essenes. And one can truly say that at that time, converse took place in the Spirit between Jesus and Buddha. It is possible, and moreover it is necessary to-day, to touch upon these deep mysteries of the evolution of humanity. In this discourse with Buddha in the Spirit, Jesus of Nazareth became aware of words coming from the Buddha, somewhat to this effect: — If my doctrine, as it actually is, were to be led to full fruition, then all human beings would have to live the life of the Essenes. But that cannot be. That was the fallacy in my doctrine. Even the Essenes can only make progress by separating themselves from the rest of humanity; their mode of life would not be possible were it not for the existence of human souls other than they. If my doctrine were fulfilled to the uttermost, men would all have to become Essenes. But that cannot be. — This was a momentous experience which came to Jesus of Nazareth as a result of his contact with the Essenes.

Another experience was that Jesus of Nazareth made the acquaintance of a man who was still young at that time, of almost the same age as himself. This man's association with the Essene Order had come about in quite a different way but he too was not an Essene in the strict sense of the word. This man, living as a kind of lay-brother with the Essene community, was John the Baptist. During the winter, he, like the Essenes, wore garments of camel's hair. But he had never been able inwardly and completely to exchange the doctrines of Judaism for those of the Essenes. As, however, the tenets practised by the Essenes and their whole mode of life made a deep impression upon him, he lived the Essene life as a lay-brother, allowed himself to be stimulated and inspired by his association with them and gradually grew to be all that the Gospels narrate of John the Baptist. Many conversations took place between Jesus of Nazareth and John the Baptist. It happened one day ... I know what it means to narrate these things so simply, but nothing can deter me for I know that they must be told ... it happened one day that while Jesus of Nazareth was conversing

with John the Baptist, he saw the physical form of John the Baptist disappear and there came to him the vision of Elias. This was the second overwhelming experience in the community of the Essenes. But there were others as well.

For some time already, Jesus of Nazareth had witnessed a strange spectacle when he came to places where gates had been made for the Essenes, that is to say, gates without images or pictures. Jesus of Nazareth could not pass through such gates without great inner bitterness and sorrow. He saw these bare gates, but he perceived spirit-forms around them; at either side of these gates there always appeared to him the Beings we know in our theosophical studies under the names of Ahriman and Lucifer. And gradually the vision, the impression had been confirmed in his soul that the aversion of the Essenes for pictures on their gates must have something to do with the evocation of spiritual beings; that pictures on the gates were, in reality, images of Lucifer and Ahriman. Jesus of Nazareth had many times been aware of this.

Anyone who experiences such things will *not* find it good to brood upon them unduly; for they are too overwhelming. One also very soon feels that human thoughts cannot fathom their depths, that human thoughts are not capable of approaching them. But the impressions not only engrave themselves deeply into the soul — they become part of the soul's very life. One feels bound up as it were with the part of the soul in which such experiences have been gathered — bound up with the experiences themselves, and one carries them on through life.

Thus had Jesus of Nazareth carried on with him through life the two pictures of Ahriman and Lucifer that he had seen at the gates of the Essenes. To begin with, the only effect this produced was to make him realise that a mystery prevailed between these spiritual Beings and the Essenes. Moreover, since these experiences had come to Jesus of Nazareth, mutual understanding with the Essenes was not as easy as it had been before. For there was something in his soul of which he could say no word to the Essenes — something seemed lacking as they conversed together. For always there came in the way what he had experienced at the Essene gates. One day, after a memorable conversation on lofty spiritual matters, when Jesus of Nazareth was passing out through the gate of the main Essene building, there came before him the figures he recognised as Lucifer and Ahriman. And he saw Lucifer and Ahriman fleeing away from the gate of the monastery. And a question sank into his soul ... not as if he himself were asking it, but as if it were being driven

into his soul with a mighty, elemental power: Whither are these Beings fleeing, whither are Lucifer and Ahriman fleeing? For he knew that the very sanctity of the Essene monastery was responsible for their flight; but the question: Whither are they fleeing? — ingrained itself into his very soul, burned like fire in his soul, and never left him. As he went about during the weeks following it was with him every hour, nay every minute. Whither are Lucifer and Ahriman fleeing? This was the question that burnt like fire in his soul when after that deep conversation he had gone through the main gate of the Essene building. What he did under the impress of this question, what he had heard as the now changed voice of the Bath-Kol when he had fallen as if dead at the altar of the heathen cult, and the significance of the happening of which I have just told you — of these things we will speak further in the lecture to-morrow.



Lecture V

6 October 1913, Oslo

In the lecture yesterday we turned our attention to the life of Jesus of Nazareth from about his twelfth year to approximately the end of his twenties. You will certainly have realised from what I was able to tell you, that during this period many things took place of profound significance not only for the soul of Jesus of Nazareth but for the whole evolution of mankind. For your theosophical studies will have brought you the knowledge that everything in the evolution of humanity is interconnected, and that an event of such importance in the life of a human soul so deeply bound up with the destiny of mankind is also of importance for the whole of evolution. From many different points of view we are learning to realise what the Event of Golgotha signified for the evolution of humanity. In this particular course of lectures we are learning to realise it by studying the actual life of Christ Jesus. And so having turned our minds yesterday to the period described, we will turn once again to the soul of Jesus of Nazareth and ponder what lived in this soul after the significant events had taken place which led up to his twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth years.

We may perhaps begin to glimpse something of what was living in this soul, from the description of a scene which took place when Jesus of Nazareth was approaching the end of his twenties. This scene which I have to relate concerns a conversation between Jesus of Nazareth and his mother — she who since the amalgamation of the two families had for long years been his mother. For all these years there had been a very deep and intimate understanding between Jesus and this mother, a far closer understanding than prevailed between him and the other members of the family in the house. Jesus himself could have understood them but they, on their side, did not quite know what to make of him. Even in earlier years he had spoken with his mother about many of the impressions that had gradually taken shape within him. But in this particular period of his life there took place a memorable conversation which lets us see very deeply into his soul. The experiences through which he had passed had brought him increasing wisdom; infinite wisdom was stamped upon his very countenance. But as is often the case on a lesser scale, a certain inner sadness had come over him. The first fruit of this wisdom had been that the penetrating insight with which he could behold those around him

brought him deep sorrow. Added to this, in hours of quietude at the end of his twenties, his thoughts turned more and more to one particular event in his life — to the great inner change, the revolution that had taken place in his twelfth year as the natural result of the transference of the Zarathustra-Ego into his own soul. During the subsequent years he was aware only of the inexhaustible riches of the Zarathustra-Ego within him. At the end of his twenties he still did not know that the Zarathustra-Ego had reincarnated in him, but he knew well that in his twelfth year a tremendous change had come about in him. And now he often felt: Ah! how different was my life before that change! His thoughts often went back to the preceding years and to the infinite warmth of heart that had characterised his life. As a boy he had lived entirely aloof from mundane affairs; he had been keenly sensitive to everything that speaks to man from the world of nature, to the whole greatness and splendour of nature. But he had little talent for the treasures amassed by human wisdom, human learning. Scholarship as such interested him little. It would be a complete mistake to imagine that up to his twelfth year this Jesus child was, in the outward sense, especially gifted. He had an inner gentleness, a profound understanding of human life, deep and sensitive feelings, tenderness, an angelic quality of being. Then, in his twelfth year, it seemed as if all this had been driven out of his soul. And now he was often mindful of how, before his twelfth year, he had lived in the most intimate communion with the deeper spirit of the universe, how open his soul had been to the infinitudes. Then his thoughts went back to what his life had been since his twelfth year, how he had found himself able to assimilate Hebrew learning which seemed, however, to well up quite spontaneously in his soul, how his journeys had then acquainted him with the heathen cults, with heathen knowledge and religion; he thought of how between his eighteenth and twenty-fourth years he had been brought into contact with the external treasures accumulated by humanity, of how, in about his twenty-fourth year, he had entered into the community of the Essenes and had there become acquainted with a secret doctrine and with men whose lives were dedicated to this doctrine. Many a time his thoughts turned to those years. But he also knew that it was only the store of learning accumulated by men since days of antiquity that had risen up into his soul-treasures of human wisdom, of human culture, great moral achievements. And he often thought of what he had been before his twelfth year, when he felt as if he were united with the divine ground of existence, when everything in him was pristine, spontaneous, welling up from a warm and loving heart and flowing into other forces of the human soul.

All these feelings led to a memorable conversation between Jesus of Nazareth and the mother. The mother loved him very deeply and had often spoken with him about all the beauty and greatness of the gifts that had shown themselves in him since his twelfth year. But he had concealed from his mother in earlier years the inner schism caused within him, so that she had seen only what was great and beautiful. Therefore in this conversation which was really like a full confession, much was new to her; but she received it with a warm and tender heart. She had a profound and intimate understanding of his mood of soul, of his yearnings for all that he had been before his twelfth year. And so she tried to comfort him by speaking of all the noble and splendid gifts of which he had shown evidence since then. She reminded him of the revival of the great Jewish doctrines, the Jewish wisdom-teachings and codes of the law. She spoke of all that had revealed itself through him. But his heart grew heavy while his mother was speaking in this way, prizing so highly what he himself felt had been surmounted. And he replied: Be that as it may. If through me or through another it were possible to-day to bring new life to all the spiritual treasures of ancient Hebrew wisdom, what significance would it have for mankind? All this is, in reality, meaningless. If among the humanity around us to-day there were any with ears still able to hear the wisdom of the ancient prophets, then a revival of that wisdom would be of value. But if Elias himself were to come to-day — so said Jesus of Nazareth — and were to proclaim to our humanity the greatest of his experiences in the realms of heaven — there are no men who would listen to the wisdom of Elias, of the older prophets, even of Moses, and back to Abraham. Everything these prophets might proclaim to-day would fall upon deaf ears. Their words would be preached to the winds. Everything that I believed had been bestowed upon me is valueless for the world to-day. —

This was the sense in which Jesus of Nazareth spoke. He also spoke of a man who had been a great teacher and whose words had only lately ceased to be effective. For — so said Jesus of Nazareth — although the good old Hillel [Hillel lived from 75 B.C. to A.D. 4.] could not rank as an equal of the ancient prophets, nevertheless he was a great and profound teacher. Jesus knew well what the aged Hillel had meant for very many souls in the Jewish world even during the days of Herod when it was hard for any teacher to gain authority. He knew how profound had been the words spoken by Hillel. It was said of Hillel: The Torah [The Torah is the collection of the oldest and most important Jewish laws.] has disappeared within the Jewish people and Hillel has established it once again. To those who understood him, Hillel seemed as one who had revived and restored

to life the primal, original Hebrew wisdom. Hillel was a teacher who, like other teachers of the wisdom, journeyed about the land. He came among the Jewish people like a kind of new Messiah. All this is narrated in the Talmud and can be confirmed by external scholarship. The people were full of praise for Hillel and had much good to say of him. I can only single out one story in order to indicate the mood and vein in which Jesus of Nazareth spoke of Hillel to his mother ... Hillel is described as a man of gentle and mild disposition, who achieved mighty things through this very gentleness and loving-kindness.

One story that has been preserved about him is deeply indicative as showing him to have been a man of infinite patience with everyone who came to him. Two men once laid a wager about the possibility of rousing Hillel's anger; for it was known that nobody could ever make him angry. Having laid a wager, one of the two men said: I will go to any lengths to make Hillel angry. In this way he sought to win his wager. Just at the time when Hillel was most fully occupied, when he was deeply engrossed in preparations for the Sabbath, this man knocked at Hillel's door and shouted rudely, without any form of deferential address — although as chief of the highest ecclesiastical court Hillel was accustomed to be addressed with respect — Hillel, come out, come out quickly! Hillel threw on his garments and came patiently out. The man said brusquely: I have something to ask thee! Hillel answered: What then hast thou to ask me, dear son? I wish to ask why the Babylonians have such narrow heads? Hillel replied gently: The Babylonians have narrow heads because their midwives have so little skill. The man went off. Hillel had remained unruffled. After a few minutes the man came back again and called out gruffly: Hillel, come out, I have something to ask thee! Hillel threw on his mantle, came out, and said: Now what hast thou to ask, dear son? I wish to ask why the Arabs have such small eyes? Hillel answered gently: The vastness of the desert makes their eyes small; the eyes get small because they are always gazing at the great desert. The man who had laid the wager now grew very uneasy. Hillel returned to his tasks. But after a few minutes the man was back again and called out gruffly for the third time: Hillel, come out, I have something to ask thee! Hillel put on his mantle, came out, and asked as gently as before: Now what hast thou to ask me? I wish to ask why the Egyptians have such flat feet? Because the ground there is so swampy, answered Hillel, and went inside the house again. After a minute or two the man returned and said to Hillel that now he had nothing to ask — he had laid a

wager that he would make him angry but he saw this was impossible. Hillel answered mildly: Dear son, better it is that thou shouldst lose thy wager than Hillel his temper ...

This legend is told as evidence of Hillel's patience with everyone who importuned him. Such a man — so said Jesus of Nazareth to his mother — is in many respects like one of the prophets of old; many utterances of Hillel sound like a revival of the ancient wisdom of the prophets. He cited many beautiful sayings of Hillel and then he said: The people say of Hillel that he is like an ancient prophet who has come again. Moreover it is dawning upon me that the knowledge I possess does not come from Judaism alone. And in fact Hillel was born in Babylon and only later found his way into Judaism. But Hillel was a descendant of the House of David, was connected from very early times with the House of David from which Jesus of Nazareth and his kinsmen also traced their descent. And Jesus said: Even if I too, as a son of the House of David, could speak as the great Hillel spoke ... to-day there is nobody to listen; such teachings are untimely. In olden days men would have listened to them but there are no longer any ears to hear. It is useless and meaningless to speak of these things. And as it were gathering together what he had to say on this subject, Jesus of Nazareth said to his mother: The revelation of ancient Judaism is no longer suitable for the earth, for the old Jews have passed away; the ancient revelation is worthless on the earth as it is now. With strange feelings in her heart the mother listened to what Jesus was saying about the worthlessness of what she held most sacred. But she loved him tenderly and was aware only of her infinite love. Therefore deep understanding of what he was saying welled up in her heart. Then, leading the conversation further, he spoke of how he had wandered into places where heathen rites were performed and of what he had experienced there. Remembrance came to him of how he had fallen to the ground while standing at the heathen altar, how he had heard the Bath-Kol in its altered form. And then there flashed up within him something that was like a renewal of the old Zarathustrian teachings. He did not yet know with certainty that he bore the Zarathustra-soul within him, but the Zarathustrian teaching, the Zarathustrian wisdom, the Zarathustrian impulse rose up within him during the conversation — and in communion with his mother he experienced the reality of this mighty impulse. All the beauty and glory of the ancient Sun-wisdom came up into his soul. And he reminded himself of the words of the Bath-Kol as I rendered them yesterday, and repeated them to the mother:

*AUM, Amen!
Es walten die Übel,
Zeugen sich lösender Ichheit,
Von andern erschuldete Selbstheitschuld,
Erlebet im täglichen Brote,
In dem nicht waltet der Himmel Wille,
Da der Mensch sich schied von Eurem Reich
Und vergass Euren Namen,
Ihr Vater in den Himmeln.*

*AUM, Amen!
The Evils hold sway,
Witness of Egoity becoming free,
Selfhood-Guilt through others incurred,
Experienced in the Daily Bread,
Wherein the Will of the Heavens does not rule,
In that Man severed himself from Your Kingdom,
And forgot Your Names,
Ye Fathers in the Heavens.*

And with these words came a realisation of all the greatness of the Mithras worship. He spoke to his mother at length about the grandeur and the glory of what had been contained in the ancient Mysteries of the different peoples, and of how much of this had merged into the Mystery-cults scattered over Asia Minor and Southern Europe. But at the same time his soul remembered how this worship had gradually deteriorated and fallen prey to demonic powers which he himself had experienced in his twenty-fourth year. All that he had experienced at that time came back to him. The ancient Zarathustra-wisdom itself seemed to him to be something which the people of his day could no longer assimilate. And then he made the second significant utterance: Even if all the ancient Mystery-cults were united into one and all that former greatness could be revived, there are no longer any to respond. Those things are of no avail! And if I were to go forth and proclaim to men what I have heard as the altered voice of the Bath-Kol, if I were to disclose the secret of why it is that in their physical life men are no longer able to live in communion with the Mysteries, no human beings would understand. To-day it would all be distorted into demonic teaching. Even if I were to proclaim it, it would neither be heard nor understood. Men have ceased to be able to hear what was once heard

and accepted. — For Jesus of Nazareth knew that what he had heard as the altered voice of the Bath-Kol gave expression to a sacred, primeval teaching and had been an all-powerful prayer in the Mysteries everywhere, a prayer once offered by men in the Mystery-Centres but now forgotten. This prayer had been revealed to him when he had fallen to the ground at the heathen altar. But at the same time he realised and emphasised in that conversation that there was no possibility of making it comprehensible to men. And then in this conversation with the mother he went on to speak of what he had learned among the Essenes. He spoke of the beauty, the greatness and the grandeur of the Essene doctrine, of the gentleness and meekness of the Essenes themselves. Then, however, he made the third mighty utterance, arising from his converse with the Buddha in a vision: that it is neither possible nor is it meet for all men to become Essenes. Hillel spoke words of profound truth when he taught: Sever not thyself from the community but toil and labour in the community: for if I stand alone, what am I! But that is what the Essenes do; they separate themselves from men who thereby suffer unhappiness. — And then Jesus spoke memorable words to his mother, telling her of the experience I described in the lecture yesterday. He said: Once when I was leaving after an intimate and most significant conversation with the Essenes, I saw Lucifer and Ahriman fleeing from the gate. Since then I have known that by their mode of living and their secret doctrine the Essenes protect themselves in such a way that Lucifer and Ahriman must flee from their gates; but thereby the Essenes send Lucifer and Ahriman to other human beings, in order that they themselves may live in blessedness. These words struck with tremendous force into the tender, loving heart of the mother. And she felt as if she herself were transformed, she felt as if her very being had become one with his. And Jesus of Nazareth felt as if with this conversation everything he had hitherto borne within him had passed away. He was aware of this and the mother, too, perceived it. The more he spoke and the more the mother listened, the more deeply did she discern all the wisdom that had been alive within him since his twelfth year. But from him it all seemed to have departed. He had laid as it were into the heart of the mother what had lived within him and what he had experienced.

And he too, after that conversation, was as if transformed — so greatly changed that the stepbrothers and other kinsmen around him began to think that he had lost his senses. It is sad, they said, for his knowledge was so great. True, he was always very silent but now he has completely lost his senses. He was given up as hopeless. And indeed for days he went

about the house as if lost in dream. The Zarathustra-Ego was on the point of leaving this body of Jesus of Nazareth. And his last resolution took the form of impelling him to leave the house as if mechanically and to make his way to John the Baptist with whom he was already acquainted.

And then there took place the event I have often described — the Baptism by John in the Jordan. At that conversation with the mother, the Zarathustra-Ego had withdrawn. The being whom Jesus of Nazareth had been up to his twelfth year was present once again, but now with an added greatness. And at the Baptism in the Jordan the Christ Being sank into this body. At the moment of this Baptism in the Jordan, the mother too was aware of something like the climax of the change that had come about in her. She was then between her forty-fifth and forty-sixth years. She felt as though pervaded by the soul of that mother who had died — the mother of the Jesus child who in his twelfth year had received the Zarathustra-Ego. Thus the spirit of the other mother had come down upon the mother with whom Jesus had held that conversation. And she felt herself as the young mother who had once given birth to the Jesus child of St. Luke's Gospel.

Let us try to picture the infinite significance of this event! Let us try to feel it deeply and also to realise that an absolutely unique Being was now living upon the Earth: the Christ Being within a human body, a Being who until now had never lived in a human body, had had no earthly life, had dwelt only in spiritual realms, to whom the worlds of Spirit were known, not the world of Earth! Of the earthly world this Being knew only what had been garnered as it were in the three bodies: physical body, ether-body and astral body of Jesus of Nazareth. The Christ Being sank into these three bodies, into what these bodies had grown to be under the influence of that life of thirty years. He therefore passed through His first earthly experiences as a Being completely free of all antecedents.

The Akasha Chronicle and the Fifth Gospel reveal to us that the Christ Being was led, first of all, into "the loneliness." Jesus of Nazareth, in whose body the Christ Being dwelt, had abandoned everything that had previously connected him with the rest of the world. The Christ Being had just come down to the Earth. To begin with, He was drawn to the impressions, engraved paramountly in the astral body, which had been made upon that body and had remained as it were in the memory. It was as though the Christ Being said to Himself: This is the body which experienced the fleeing of Ahriman and Lucifer, the body which perceived that the Essenes, by their very aspirations, drive Ahriman and Lucifer to other human beings. It was to these other human beings who had been delivered into the power

of Ahriman and Lucifer that the Christ Being felt Himself drawn; for it is with these powers that men have to battle. And so the Christ Being, living for the first time in the body of a man, went out into the loneliness to the contest with Ahriman and Lucifer.

I believe that the following description of the Temptation scene is very largely correct. But it is very difficult to observe such things in the Akasha Chronicle and I therefore emphasise that one point or another could be slightly modified. But the essentials hold good. The Temptation scene is, of course, included in other Gospels but it is narrated there from different standpoints, as I have often stressed. I have made great efforts to investigate this scene of the Temptation and will relate it as it actually transpired.

First of all, the Christ Being within the body of Jesus encountered Lucifer in the loneliness — Lucifer with all his power and influence, who draws near to men when they prize the Self too highly and are lacking in humility and self-knowledge. Lucifer's aim is to play upon the false pride, the tendency to self-aggrandisement in man. Now he confronted Christ Jesus and spoke approximately as recorded in the other Gospels: Behold me! The other kingdoms into which man's life has been set, the foundations of which were laid by the primeval Gods and Spirits — these kingdoms have grown old. I will establish a new kingdom. If thou wilt enter my realm I will give thee all the beauty and the glory contained in these old kingdoms. But thou must sever thyself from the other Gods and acknowledge me! And Lucifer described all the glories of his world, everything that makes an appeal to the human soul whenever an iota of pride exists. But the Christ Being came from the spiritual worlds and knew who Lucifer is, knew how souls on earth must act if they desire to resist the temptation of Lucifer. Untouched as He was by this temptation, the Christ Being knew how the gods are truly served — and He had the power to repel the onslaught of Lucifer. Then Lucifer made a second attack but called Ahriman to his support and both addressed the Christ. The one, Lucifer, desired to goad His pride; the other, Ahriman, to play upon His fear. Therefore it came about that the one Being said to Him: If thou wilt acknowledge me, through my spiritual power, through what I can give to thee, thou wilt be able to dispense with what is now essential for thee inasmuch as thou, the Christ, hast entered into a human body. This body subjugates thee, compels thee to obey the laws of gravity. But I have power to cast thee down, since the human body prevents thee from breaking through the law of gravity. If thou wilt acknowledge me, I will nullify the effects of the fall and no harm will come to thee! Ahriman said: I will keep thee from fear:

cast thyself down! And both set upon Him. But as in their onslaught the one held the balance against the other, Christ Jesus could save Himself from them. He found the strength that man must find on earth if he is to stand firm against Lucifer and Ahriman. Then Ahriman spoke: Lucifer, I cannot use thee, thou dost but hinder me, thou hast not enhanced my power but weakened it. Then Ahriman bade Lucifer depart, made the final attack as Ahriman alone, and spoke words of which the Gospel of St. Matthew contains an echo: Turn mineral substance into bread! Turn the stones into bread if thou wouldst boast of Divine power! Then said the Christ Being: Men do not live by bread alone, but by the spiritual forces which come from the spiritual worlds. None knew this better than He for He had just descended from the spiritual worlds. Then Ahriman said: Thou mayest indeed be right but that cannot prevent me from keeping a certain hold upon thee. Thou knowest only how the Spirit acts, the Spirit who descends from the heights; thou hast not yet lived in the world of men. There below, in the human world, there are men who must perforce make stones into bread, who cannot draw their nourishment from the Spirit alone. That was the moment when Ahriman communicated to Christ something that could indeed be known on earth but that the God who had for the first time come to earth could not yet know. He did not know that there below it was necessary to turn mineral substance — metal — into money, into bread. Ahriman had said that men on the earth below must nourish themselves by means of "gold." That was the point where Ahriman still retained power. And he said: I shall use this power. That is the true account of the Temptation. And so one thing remained unsolved at the Temptation. The questions were not all of them finally solved: the questions of Lucifer, yes; but not the questions of Ahriman. For that, something more was necessary.

When Christ Jesus went out of the loneliness He felt transported above everything He had experienced and learned from His twelfth year onwards; He felt that the Christ Spirit had united with all that had been alive in Him before His twelfth year. He felt no longer any connection with what had become old and withered in humanity. He was indifferent even to the speech used in His environment — and to begin with, he kept silence. He wandered around Nazareth and still further afield, visiting many places He had known previously as Jesus of Nazareth. And then a very singular thing happened. — Remember, please, that I am relating the contents of the Fifth Gospel and there would be no point in looking for contradictory passages in the other four Gospels. I am narrating from the Fifth Gospel. — In quiet reticence, as if having nothing in common with the

environment, Christ Jesus wandered, to begin with, from one dwelling-place to another, working among the people and with the people wherever He went. Ahriman's words concerning bread had left a deep impression upon Him. And everywhere He found people who already knew Him, with whom He had worked before. They recognised Him and He found among them those to whom Ahriman actually had access, simply because it was necessary for them to turn stones into bread — to turn money, metals, into bread. His presence was not, after all, essential among those who observed the moral precepts given by Hillel or by other teachers. Christ Jesus consorted with those whom the other Gospels call the publicans and the sinners for it was their lot to make stones into bread. He was constantly among these men.

But now this strange thing happened. Many of these men had known Him in the period preceding his thirtieth year, for He had already been among them. They had come to know His gentle, tender wisdom when He had gone about as Jesus of Nazareth, and in every house, in every dwelling, He had been deeply loved. This love had remained. In these dwellings the people spoke much of the man Jesus of Nazareth who was so dear to them, who had visited their houses and villages. And the following happened — as if through the operation of Cosmic Law. I am narrating scenes which were very frequent and are revealed again and again to clairvoyant investigation. There were families among whom Jesus of Nazareth had worked and who after their labours would sit together after sunset, liking to speak of the man who as Jesus of Nazareth had come among them. They spoke constantly of His love and gentleness, of how their own hearts and souls had warmed when He had lived under their roof. In many of these dwelling-places, when for hours together they had been talking in this way, it would happen that the picture of Jesus of Nazareth appeared to them in the room, as a vision shared by every member of the family. He came to them in the Spirit, or they, on their side, conjured up a spiritual picture of Him. You can imagine how deeply such families were moved when He appeared to them in a vision in which they all shared, and what it meant to them when after the Baptism in the Jordan He came back again and they recognised His outward form ... only now the light in His eyes was stronger; they gazed at the radiant countenance that had once been so dear to them and the Being whom they had seen among them as a spiritual Presence. You can imagine, too, what an extraordinary stir was created among such families, among the publicans and sinners whose karma had brought them into an environment where all the demonic beings held sway at that time! And now, through the

presence of Christ in Jesus of Nazareth, the change in this Being was revealed very clearly to these particular men. In earlier years they had felt His love, His goodness, His gentleness; but now a magic power went forth from Him. If in former days they had merely felt comforted by His presence, now they felt that they were actually healed. They went to their neighbours when they too were in distress and brought them to Christ Jesus. And so it was that after He had conquered Lucifer and only the sting of Ahriman remained in men under Ahriman's domination, Christ Jesus was able to perform the deeds described in the Bible as the expulsion of the devils. Many of the demonic beings He had seen when He was lying as if dead at the heathen altar, now departed from the people when He stood before them as Christ Jesus. The demons recognised their adversary. And as He passed in this way through the land, the behaviour of the demons in the souls of men reminded Him ever and again of how He had lain at that ancient altar where instead of gods, demons had gathered and where He had not been able to perform the sacrificial rites. Inevitably His thoughts turned to the Bath-Kol which had proclaimed to Him that ancient Prayer of the Mysteries of which I have spoken to you. And the middle line of the Prayer, especially, came into His mind: "Experienced in the Daily Bread." These men among whom He sojourned were compelled to turn stones into bread; there were many who depended for their sustenance on bread alone. And the words from that ancient, heathen Prayer, "Experienced in the Daily Bread," engraved themselves deeply in His soul. He realised and felt the whole process of man's incorporation into the physical world. He felt that because physical embodiment was a necessity in the evolution of humanity, men were prone to forget the "Names of the Fathers in the Heavens," the names of the Spirits of the higher Hierarchies. And He felt that there were no longer any ears to hear the voices of the old prophets. Now He knew that what had severed men from the Heavens, what must inevitably drive men into egoism and lead them into the clutches of Ahriman, was the life that is bound up with the "Daily Bread."

As with these thoughts He went about the country, those who were most deeply aware of the change that had come about in Jesus of Nazareth became His disciples and followed Him. From many dwelling-places one or another went with Him, followed Him — followed Him because of the feeling and conviction I described. And so very soon a band of such disciples had gathered together. In these disciples He had around Him people who in their whole mood and attitude of soul were new beings, who

had become, through Him, quite different from those men of whom He had once been compelled to say to His mother that they had no longer any ears capable of listening to the ancient wisdom.

And then there dawned in Him ... it was the earthly experience of the God: What I have to tell human beings is not how the gods prepared the path from the Spirit to the Earth but how men can find the path leading upwards from the Earth to the Spirit. And now there came back to Him the voice of the Bath-Kol, and He knew that the ancient supplications and prayers must be re-cast, *made new*; He knew that now man must seek the path into the spiritual worlds from below upwards. He transposed the last line of the old Prayer, adapting it to the needs of men living in the new era and making it bear reference now not to the multiple spiritual Beings of the Hierarchies but to the one supreme Spirit: "Our Father in Heaven." And the second line He had heard as the penultimate line of the Mystery-Prayer: "And forgot Your Names," He transposed into: "Hallowed be Thy Name" as the words must run for men of the new era. And the third line from the end of the old Prayer: "In that Man severed himself from Your Kingdoms," He transposed into: "To us may Thy Kingdom come." And the line: "Wherein the Will of the Heavens does not rule," He transposed into the form suitable for the ears of men now, since they had no ears to hear the old setting of the words — He transposed them because the direction of the path leading into the spiritual worlds was to be completely reversed: "Thy Will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven." And the mystery of the Bread, of incarnation in the physical body, the mystery of the sting of Ahriman which had now been fully revealed to Him, He transposed so that men should discern the truth that the physical world too issues from the spiritual world even if this truth is not within their immediate ken. He made this line concerning the Daily Bread into a supplication: "Give us this day our Daily Bread." And the words: "Selfhood-Guilt through others incurred," He transposed into: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us." The line which came second in the old Mystery-Prayer: "Witness of Egoity becoming free," He transposed into: "But deliver us," and the first line: "The Evils prevail," He changed into: "From the evil. Amen." And so the altered voice of the Bath-Kol heard by Jesus of Nazareth when he fell at the heathen altar, was transposed into the "Lord's Prayer" known to Christianity ... it was the Prayer of the new Mysteries taught by Christ Jesus, it was the new Lord's Prayer. In a similar manner — and much remains to be said about this — arose the Sermon on the Mount and other teachings given by Christ Jesus to His disciples.

Christ Jesus worked upon His disciples in a strange and wonderful way. Please remember that I am simply relating what is to be read in the Fifth Gospel. As Christ Jesus went about, His environment was affected in a strange way. He was together with the Apostles and disciples and in communion with them, but — because He was the Christ Being — not as if He were merely present there in the body. As He went about the country, many a one felt as if He, Christ Jesus, were reigning within his own soul, as if this Being were actually within him, and he would begin to speak words which, in reality, only Christ Jesus could have spoken. This band of disciples went about and came into contact with the people ... and the one who spoke was by no means always Christ Jesus, but was often one of the disciples, for everything — even His wisdom — was shared with the disciples. I must confess that I was astonished in the highest degree when I discovered that the words in the conversation with the Sadducees related in St. Mark's Gospel were not spoken by Christ Jesus out of the body of Jesus but out of the lips of one of the disciples. It was a frequent phenomenon, too, that sometimes when Christ Jesus left the band of disciples, He was nevertheless still among them. He either went about with them spiritually or He appeared to them in His ether-body while He was actually far away. His ether-body was among them and also went about the land; and often it was not possible to distinguish whether He was present in the physical body or whether it was the ether-body that had become visible. Such was the manner of the intercourse with the disciples and with individuals among the people when Jesus of Nazareth had become Christ Jesus.

The experience He Himself underwent was as I have indicated. Whereas in the first periods the Christ Being had been comparatively independent of the body of Jesus of Nazareth, He had more and more to become one with it. And the longer His life continued, the more closely was He knit with the body of Jesus of Nazareth. In the last years, the union with the body of Jesus of Nazareth — which had itself become increasingly frail — caused Him deep suffering. Nevertheless a great multitude now accompanied Christ Jesus as He went about the country. Here or there one among the band of the Apostles would speak — here or there, another — and the people might easily believe that the speaker was Christ Jesus, for He spoke through all of them. One can listen to the scribes speaking together to this effect: It would be possible, after all, to pick out any one of these followers and put him to death in order to frighten the people; but it might be the wrong one, for they all speak alike. Such an act would be of no use to us, for the real Christ Jesus might still be living. We must find which one He

really is. — Only the disciples themselves could distinguish Him but they most certainly did not divulge to the enemy who was the right one. But because of the question that had remained unsolved, the question that Christ could not solve in the spiritual worlds but only on the earth, Ahriman had gained sufficient power. As a result of the most terrible of all deeds, Christ must experience what it means to turn stones into bread. For Ahriman made use of Judas from Karioth. On account of the way Christ worked, there would have been no spiritual means of discovering among the men who revered Him which was, in truth, the Christ. For wherever the Spirit was working, wherever even a trace of convincing power was working, He could not be taken. Only where there was one who employed the means which Christ did not know, which He could only learn to know as the result of the most terrible deed wrought on earth — only where Judas was working could He be seized. The only means of recognising Him was through one who placed himself in the service of Ahriman, who in actual fact betrayed Him for the sake of money alone. Christ Jesus was connected with Judas because at the Temptation there remained something which, in a God, is comprehensible — He did not know that it is only true in the heavens that stones are not needed for bread. Because Ahriman had retained this sting, the Betrayal took place. And then Christ must come perforce under the dominion of the Lord of Death — and Ahriman is the Lord of Death. Such is the connection of the story of the Temptation and the Mystery of Golgotha with the Betrayal by Judas.

Much more could be said about the contents of this Fifth Gospel than has been said here. But as the evolution of humanity proceeds the other portions of this Gospel will assuredly also come to light. What I have tried to do by means of the narratives selected is rather to give you an idea of its character. At the conclusion of these lectures there comes before me what I said at the end of the first, namely, that it is a necessity of the times to speak now of this Fifth Gospel. And I would beg you, my dear friends, to treat what has been said as it should be treated. We have quite enough enemies to-day already and the way they act is really very curious. I do not propose to enlarge upon this for you probably know about it from the News Sheets. You are certainly aware of another strange fact. There are people who have been saying for a long time that the teaching I give is tainted by every kind of bigoted Christian dogma, even by Jesuitism. This malicious allegation is made chiefly by certain devotees of "Adyar Theosophy" as it is called and they talk sheer, unscrupulous nonsense. But our teachings have also been indescribably falsified from a quarter which had violently attacked the intolerance, the distortions and the allegations. A

man from America who spent weeks and months getting to know our teachings, transcribed and carried them off in a watered-down form to America, where he has given out a plagiarised "Rosicrucian Theosophy." True, he says he learnt a good deal from us over here but that he was afterwards summoned to the Masters and learnt more from them. He keeps silence, however, about the source of the deeper information contained in the then unpublished lecture-courses. When something like this happens in America, one may of course emulate the aged Hillel and be lenient; nor need one stop being lenient when these things make their way across to Europe. In a quarter from which the most violent attacks were launched, a translation was made of what these circles in America had taken from us and it was said in an introduction to this translation: True, a Rosicrucian conception of the world is making its appearance in Europe too, but in a bigoted, Jesuitical form; this kind of thought can really only thrive in the pure air of California. Well ... here I will pause! Such are the methods of our opponents. We may regard these things with leniency and even with compassion — but we should not shut our eyes to them. When things like this happen it behoves even those who for years have been remarkably forbearing with people who acted so unscrupulously, to be wary. Perhaps one day everyone will have their eyes opened. If the service of truth did not demand it, I should much prefer not to speak about these matters, but they must be faced fairly and squarely.

Even if on the one side these allegations are spread by others, we are not protected, on the other side, against the battle waged by people — and such there are — who find these things displeasing for rather more honest reasons. I will not bother you with all the foolish stuff which between them these two parties have written. The curious writings of Freimark, Schalk, Maack and others now being published in Germany may be ignored, for they are really too second-rate. But there are people who cannot bear the very thought of anything that resembles the nature of this Fifth Gospel. And perhaps no hatred was as sincere as that voiced by the critics who at once rose up in arms when something of the mystery of the two Jesus children — which also belongs to the Fifth Gospel — reached the outside world. True Anthroposophists will treat this Fifth Gospel which has been given in good faith, as it should be treated. Take it with you, speak about it in the groups, but also say how it ought to be treated! See that it is not irreverently bandied about among those who may scoff at it!

With things of this nature, based as they are upon the clairvoyant investigation that is necessary for our time, we stand opposed to the whole present age, above all to the kind of learning by which the age is

dominated. Of this too we have tried to be mindful. Those of us who were together when the Foundation Stone of our Building was laid, tried to envisage the urgent need for spiritual teachings to be proclaimed with faithful observance of truth. We tried to picture what a wide distance separates the culture of our times from this search for the truth. It can verily be said that the cry for the Spirit rings through the age but that men are either too arrogant or too limited to be willing to know the actual truths of the Spirit. The sense of truth in the degree essential for understanding the proclamation of the Spirit, has yet to grow. For in spiritual culture as it is to-day, this sense of truth is not present in the requisite degree and — what is worse — its absence is not noticed. Treat what has been given here in connection with the Fifth Gospel in such a way that it is treated reverently in the groups. This we must ask, not out of egoism but for quite other reasons. For the Spirit of Truth must abide in us and the Spirit must stand before us in Truth. People to-day talk of the Spirit but even when they do so, they have no inkling whatever of the realities of the Spirit. There is a man — and why should names not be given — who has won great respect simply because he is forever talking about the Spirit. I refer to Rudolf Eucken. He talks the whole time of Spirit, but when one reads through all his books (just try it sometime) one finds *ad infinitum*: The Spirit exists, we must experience the Spirit, commune with the Spirit, be mindful of the Spirit ... and so on, in endless phrases running through every one of these books. Spirit, Spirit, Spirit! This is how men speak of the Spirit to-day because they are too lazy or too arrogant to go to the very wellsprings of the Spirit. And such men are greatly respected nowadays. For all that, it will be difficult in the modern age to make headway with anything drawn from the Spirit in such a concrete form as was necessary in describing the contents of the Fifth Gospel. Earnestness and an inner sense of truth are required for this. One of Eucken's most recent publications is a volume entitled: *Können wir noch Christen sein?* [Leipzig, 1911. An English translation, *Can we still be Christians?* was published in 1914.] Pages and pages follow one another merely reiterating Soul and Spirit, Spirit and Soul, and so it goes on through many volumes. For one gains immense repute and authority if one declares to the people that one knows something about the Spirit. In their reading, however, people do not perceive the inner untruthfulness of it all ... One would like to think that ultimately people really will learn how to read ... On one of the pages we find the sentence: Humanity to-day has passed beyond the stage of believing in daemons; one cannot any longer expect people to believe in daemons! But at another place in the same book there is this remarkable sentence: The daemonic arises when Spirit touches Soul. Here the man is speaking

seriously of daemons, after having spoken, on another page of the same book, the words I quoted. Is not this the very deepest inner untruth? The time must come at last when such inwardly untruthful teachings about the Spirit are refuted. But I have never noticed that many of our contemporaries are alive to this inner untruthfulness.

And so when we serve the truth of the Spirit to-day we stand opposed to the times. This has to be remembered in order that we may see clearly what we have to do in our hearts if we would be co-bearers of the proclamation of the Spirit, co-bearers of the new life of the Spirit that is essential for mankind. When efforts are made through spiritual teaching to lead the souls of men to the Christ Being, how can one hope for much response in face of contemporary thought which contents itself with truths put forward to-day by all the shrewd philosophers and theologians: that there was a Christianity in existence before Christ! Evidence is produced to show that the cult and also certain typical narratives were already current in the East in pre-Christian times. And then these clever theologians explain to everyone who will listen to them that Christianity is simply the continuation of what was already there before. This kind of literature commands great respect, really tremendous respect among our contemporaries and they have not the slightest inkling what the real relationship is. When the Christ is said to have come down to the Earth as a Spiritual Being and then, later on, is found to be worshipped in forms of cult the same as those connected with the worship of heathen gods — and when such arguments are used, as they are to-day, to disavow the Christ Being ... this is a kind of logic of which the following is an illustration. Somebody or other goes into a house and leaves his clothes behind. It is known that the clothes belong to this particular man. A little later, such a man as Schiller or Goethe comes to the house and owing to certain circumstances is obliged to put on these clothes. Then he comes out in the clothes belonging to the other. And now somebody who has seen Goethe in these clothes, goes about saying: What are people talking about? Why is he supposed to be a man of special importance? I have examined the clothes minutely and I know that they belong to so-and-so who is a person of no importance whatever. Because the Christ Being made use of the garments, so to speak, of the ancient cults, there come these clever people who do not understand that the Christ Being clothed Himself in these forms as a garment only, and that the spiritual reality present in these old ritualistic forms now, is the Christ Being Himself.

And now — look through whole libraries, look through the countless dissertations of scientific monism to-day. All this kind of literature brings evidence concerning the garment around the Christ Being — and moreover the evidence, in itself, is correct! Dabblers in the field of the evolution of culture stand in high repute to-day and their science is accepted as profound wisdom. This is the picture we must have before us if we desire to realise not only intellectually but also in our feeling, what the communication of this Fifth Gospel means. It means that together with the truth known to us we must be alive to how and where we stand in the world to-day, realising how impossible it is to make the new tidings of the Spirit comprehensible to the thought-life of the past. And so when we have again to take leave of one another, reference may be made to words from the Gospel. With the way of thinking now prevailing in humanity, no progress is possible in the coming phase of spiritual evolution. Therefore this way of thinking must be changed, must be given another direction! Those who like to compromise and are unwilling to form a clear picture of things as they are and must be in the future, will not be able to contribute much to the spiritual teachings and spiritual service necessary for mankind.

It was my duty to speak of the Fifth Gospel which is very sacred to me. And I take leave of your hearts and souls with the wish that the bond created between us by many other things, may have been strengthened through this spiritual investigation of the Fifth Gospel — for this investigation is precious to me. Your hearts may perhaps be warmed by the thought that even if we are physically separated in space and in time, nevertheless we will remain together and feel together what we must inwardly assimilate and what is demanded by the duty laid upon the souls of men to-day by the Spirit. May the labours of every individual soul further our aims in the right way.



Lecture IX

6th January, 1914, Berlin

Our study of the life of Christ Jesus according to what I have called the "Fifth Gospel" will certainly have brought home to us all the significance of what took place after the conversation between Jesus of Nazareth and the mother, of which I spoke here. And I want now to speak, in the way that may be possible in the intimate circle of a group like this, of what transpired immediately after that conversation, that is to say, of what happened to Jesus of Nazareth on his way to the Baptism by John in the Jordan.

What I have to tell consists of a number of facts which are revealed to the eye of Intuition; they are simply narrated, so that it is for each of you to form your own thoughts about them.

We have heard that after the life of Jesus of Nazareth from his twelfth until about his twenty-ninth or thirtieth year, a conversation took place between him and the mother who was, actually, his step- or foster mother. In this conversation, the effects of the experiences through which he had passed poured with such intensity into the words uttered by Jesus of Nazareth that together with his words a mighty force flowed into the soul of the foster-mother, a force of such power that the soul of the mother who had borne the body of the Nathan Jesus was able to descend from the spiritual world (for since the twelfth year of the Nathan Jesus the soul of his mother had been in the spiritual world), and permeated the soul of the foster mother. From then onwards, the foster-mother bore within her the soul of the mother of the Nathan Jesus. What had happened in Jesus himself was that together with the words, the Zarathustra-Ego had to a certain extent gone out of him. The being who now made his way to the Baptism in the Jordan was the Nathan Jesus as he had been up to his twelfth year, that is to say, *without* the Zarathustra-Ego; but the effects left by the Zarathustra-Ego were still present — the effects of all that the Zarathustra-Ego had been able to pour into the threefold sheath. And so we can understand that Jesus was prompted to make his way to the Baptism in the Jordan by an undefined Cosmic urge — that is to say, in him it was an undefined urge, but in the Cosmos it was definite and deliberate. It is also obvious that this being was not like an ordinary human

being, for the Zarathustra-Ego had gone out of him and only the effects remained. The "Fifth Gospel" reveals that as this being, Jesus of Nazareth, made his way to the Jordan, he met, firstly, two Essenes. They were two with whom he had often conversed on the occasions of which I have told you. But as the Zarathustra-Ego had gone out of him, for to physical eyes the outer physiognomy — which had developed under the influence of the indwelling Zarathustra-Ego — had not changed. The two Essenes addressed him with the words:

"Whither go you, Jesus of Nazareth?"

Jesus of Nazareth said: "I go whither souls of your kind are unwilling to gaze, where the pain of humanity can feel the rays of the forgotten Light!"

The two Essenes did not understand his words, and they perceived that he had not recognised them. Then they said to him:

"Jesus of Nazareth, do you not know us?"

And he said:

"You are like lambs gone astray, but I was the shepherd's son from who you strayed. When you truly recognise me you will stray yet again. It is so long since you fled from me into the world."

The Essenes were greatly perplexed for they did not understand how such words could be uttered by any human soul, and they gazed at him questionly. He spoke again:

"What manner of souls are you? Where is your world? Why do you wrap yourselves in sheaths of deceit? Why does there burn within you a fire that was not kindle in my Father's House? You have upon you the mark of the Tempter. With his fire he has made your wool shining and glistening. The hairs of this wool prick my eyes, you erring lambs. The Tempter has filled your souls with pride. You met him on your flight."

When he had said this, one of the Essenes answered:

"Have we not shown the Tempter the door? He has no longer any part in us!"

And Jesus spoke:

"True, you showed him the door, but he ran and came to the other men. Therefore he leers at you from the souls of these others. Do you then believe that you can exalt yourselves by abasing others? You do not exalt yourselves when you abase others; you think yourselves exalted but this is only because the others have been abased. You remain as you were, and it is only because you have abased the others that you imagine yourselves to be great."

The Essenes were afraid, but at this moment Jesus of Nazareth vanished from their sight. And after their eyes had been as if clouded for a little while, they beheld in the distance a kind of Fata Morgana, revealing to them, but enlarged to gigantic proportions, the countenance of the one who had just stood before them. And then from this Fata Morgana they heard words which filled their souls with dread:

"Vain is your striving, for your heart is empty. Your heart is filled only with the spirit which conceals pride in the deceptive guise of humility."

And when they had stood there for a time as if stupefied by this countenance and these words, the Fate Morgana vanished. But Jesus of Nazareth too had passed further on his way. The two Essenes went home and spoke to no one of what they had experienced, keeping silence about it their whole life long.

As I said before, I shall simply narrate the facts as they present themselves in the Akashic Record, and each one of you must think about them as you will. This is important at the present time, because it is possible that this Fifth Gospel will be revealed in greater detail as time goes on, and any kind of interpretation at this stage might well be a disturbing factor.

When Jesus of Nazareth had gone a little further on his path to the Jordan, he met a man in whose soul there was deep despair. And Jesus of Nazareth said:

"Whither hath thy soul led thee? Aeons ago I saw thee; then thou wert different."

And the despairing man said:

"I was of high degree; I have risen to high positions in life; I have filled offices of distinguished rank. And often I said to myself that my learning and accomplishments had made me an exceptional human being. Then one night when I was asleep, I had a dream and in the dream it was as if a question were put to me. I knew at once that in the dream I was beholding myself, for the question was thine Who hath made me great? And there stood before me in the dreams, being who said: *I have raised thee up, and in return for this thou art mine!* — And I was ashamed, for I had believed that I owed everything to myself. And now this being was telling as that it was he who had raised me to a high position! Then, in the dream, I took flight; I left all my offices and honours behind and now I wander about seeking for something but not knowing what I seek."

As the despairing man was speaking, the being he had seen in the dream again stood before him, between him and Jesus of Nazareth. And a feeling came to the despairing man that this being had something to do with Lucifer. Then Jesus of Nazareth vanished, and the other being too; and the man saw that Jesus of Nazareth had already passed on. And he went on his way.

As Jesus of Nazareth continued his path, he met a leper, and to him he said:

"To what hath thy soul led thee? Aeons ago I saw thee; then thou wert different."

The leper answered:

"Men have thrust me away; they have made me an outcast because of my disease; none would come near me; I could not even beg my bread. Then I wandered about, and in my wanderings I came one night into a wood. There I saw a shining, luminous tree which drew me towards it. And as I drew near, it was as if a skeleton came from the shimmering light of the tree. Death himself stood before me, and said: I am in thee. I feed on thee. Fear not! Why art thou fearful? Didst thou not once love me? — And yet I knew that I had never told him! And as he said: 'Didst thou not once love me?' his nature changed into that of a beautiful Archangel. And when I awoke in the morning I found myself beside the tree and my leprosy grew steadily worse."

Then the being who had been transformed into the Archangel stood again before the leper and he knew: Ahriman or a being of Ahrimanic nature is standing before me. While he was still gazing, the being disappeared, and Jesus of Nazareth also, and the leper was left to go on his way.

After these three experiences Jesus of Nazareth came to the Jordan for the Baptism. And here too, I repeat that the Baptism in the Jordan was followed by an event that is also described in the other Gospels, namely, the Temptation. But in this Temptation Christ Jesus was confronted not only by the one being — the Temptation took its course in three stages. First there came a being who was now known to Him because he had seen him when the despairing man had come to him; hence he could recognise him as Lucifer. And then, through Lucifer, came the Temptation that is expressed in the words: "All these kingdoms and their glory I will give to thee if thou wilt acknowledge me as thy Lord." Lucifer's attack was repulsed, but now came two attacks. Lucifer came again, but with him the being who had stood between Jesus of Nazareth and the leper, and whom He therefore now recognised as Ahriman.

And then came the Temptation which in the Gospels is clothed in the words: "Cast Thyself down; nothing can happen to Thee if Thou art the son of God." But as Lucifer and Ahriman mutually paralysed each other's power, their attack failed. It was only the *third* Temptation — "Make stones into bread" — that was not fully answered. This Temptation came from Ahriman alone. And the fact that Ahriman was not completely satisfied, led to events taking the course they did. Because of the unanswered Temptation, Ahriman was able to work through Judas, and all the later events became possible in the way of which we shall hear.

You see, my dear friends, an "Akasha-Intuition" here sheds light on the moment that is of such infinite significance in the whole development of the life of Christ Jesus and in the evolution of the Earth. It was as if the connection of Earth-evolution with the Luciferic and Ahrimanic forces were mirrored in the events between the conversation with the mother and the Baptism by John in the Jordan. He who was the Nathan Jesus, who for eighteen years had borne the Zarathustra-Ego within him, was made ready, by these events, to receive the Christ Being.

And this brings us to the point where it is of vital importance to have right and true conceptions. That is why I have tried to bring together various results of occult investigation which can make our human evolution on the Earth intelligible. It may, perhaps, be possible to speak here too about matters that were the subject of the Lecture-Course in Leipzig, where I tried to indicate the connection between the Christ Event and the Parsifal event. To-day I will speak of one or two points only.

I want to show you how the whole meaning and course of the evolution of humanity comes to expression in manifold events if only they are understood in the right light. I do not want to go into the idea behind the story of Parsifal and its connection with the development of the Christ Impulse, but to speak of something that underlay everything that was said in Leipzig. I shall begin by asking: How does the figure of Parsifal come before us? — Parsifal was one who some centuries after the Mystery of Golgotha was destined to represent an important stage of the further development of the Christ Impulse in a soul. We know the story. Parsifal was the son of an adventurous knight; his mother was Hezeleide. The knight had ridden away before Parsifal's birth. His mother suffered deep pain and grief before he was born. She wished to shield her son from the vaunted qualities of knighthood and she reared him in isolation, protecting him from the consequences of intercourse with others. He was to know nothing about what goes on among other human beings. We are also told that he knew nothing about what the external world calls religion. From his mother he heard only that there is a God, a God behind all things, a God whom he must serve... but more he did not know. But a meeting with two knights caused him to leave his mother, in order that he might discover to what his inner urge was leading him. And after many wanderings he was led to the Castle of the Holy Grail. What he there experienced is described best of all by Christian de Troyes — a source upon which Wolfram von Eschenbach also drew.

We are told that one day Parsifal came to wooded country at the edge of a lake where two men were fishing. In answer to his question, these men directed him to the Castle of the Fisher-King. He went into the Castle and there found a man lying weak and ill on his bed. The sick man gave him a sword — it was the sword which belonged to Parsifal's mother. Then came a page carrying a lance from which blood was dripping on his blood; then came a maiden, carrying a golden Cup radiating light more brilliant than all the lights in the room. This Cup was carried into the adjoining room where lay the father of the Fisher-King, who is nourished by what this Cup contains. Now Parsifal had previously been advised by a knight to abstain

from asking many questions. At the time, therefore, he put no questions but the next morning decided that he must ask about these strange things. When he woke up the following morning, however, the Castle was empty. In the courtyard he found his horse ready saddled and when he had mounted and galloped away the drawbridge was immediately raised behind him. There was no sign of any of those whom he had found in the Castle the previous day.

As we know, the point of salient significance is that Parsifal asked no questions, although miraculous things had been revealed to him. And as the story goes on we hear again and again from those persons who meet Parsifal and who are connected with his mission, that he *ought* to have asked, that his troubles were to some extent due to this. He is told that by not asking he has brought about disaster.

And now think of Parsifal. He had remained apart from outer civilisation and culture; he is led to the Holy Grail with his virgin soul untouched by the mundane world... Now the Christ Impulse was a Deed which mankind had not at once been capable of understanding, But because the Christ had passed into the Aura of the Earth, He was working on — as indeed men had conjectured in their dogmas and teachings. Christ was working in the hidden foundations of the human soul, in the hidden depths of historical evolution, *not* in the surface consciousness of men or in the wranglings of Theology. In Parsifal we have a picture of the moment when a further stage was to be reached; therefore he had learned nothing of the teachings of the Gnostics, the Apostolic Fathers or the various theological movements. He was to know nothing of these things; his connection with the Christ-Impulse was to be purely in the life of soul, in his sub-consciousness, where standards of contemporary life played no part. His connection with the Christ Impulse would have been impaired and clouded by knowledge of man-made doctrines. Only the *supersensible* influences in the onflowing Christ Impulse were to work in Parsifal. External doctrine belongs to the material world but Christ works in the *supersensible* and it was this supersensible influence that was to come to expression in Parsifal. He must ask only at that place where the living essence of the Christ Impulse confronts him, that is to say, in the Holy Grail. He should have asked what the Holy Grail contains, what the Christ Event actually signifies. He should have *asked!*

Mark this word my dear friends. There was another, the disciple of Sais, who was *not* allowed to ask. The disciple at Sais was doomed in that he felt constrained to ask why it was not lawful for him to ask; he desired that

the veils of Isis should be lifted. The disciple at Sais represents the Parsifal of the epoch *preceding* the Mystery of Golgotha! But in that age the disciple was told: "Take heed that what is behind the veil be not disclosed until thy soul is prepared and ready." The disciple at Sais *after* the Mystery of Golgotha is represented in the figure of Parsifal. Parsifal was to undergo no special preparation; he was to be led to the Holy Grail with a virgin soul. And he missed the vital opportunity, for he neglected to do what the disciple at Sais was forbidden to do. — Parsifal ought to have asked about the mystery of his soul... Thus do the times change in the onward march of evolution.

To begin with we can only think of these things in a more abstract sense... What was the mystery of Isis? We are told of Isis with the Child Horus, of the mystery of the connection between Isis and the Child Horus, of the Connection between the Son of Isis and Osiris. A deep, deep mystery lies here. The disciple at Sais was not ripe for the disclosure of the mystery.

When Parsifal rode away from the Grail Mountain, having neglected to ask about the wonders of the Holy Grail, one of his first experiences was that he met a woman, a bride, weeping over the dead bridegroom in her arms. — A true picture, this, of Mary mourning for her Son — the *motif* of so many *Pietàs* later on. This is the first indication of what Parsifal would have experienced if he had asked about the wonders of the Holy Grail. Knowledge would have come to him of the *new* connection between Isis and Horus, between the Mother and the Son of Man. Parsifal *ought* to have asked. Now significantly this points to the progress that had taken place in the evolution of mankind! What was not lawful *before* the Mystery of Golgotha, was now, *after* the Mystery of Golgotha, both lawful and necessary. For in the meantime the evolution of mankind had progressed.

These things are only of value when we turn them to real disciple at Sais is that in accordance with the nature of the times, we must put the right kind of questions, for here lies the secret of ascent. Since the Mystery of Golgotha there have been two main currents in evolution: one which bears within it the Christ Impulse, the other which is, as it were, the continuation of the process of decline and leads to the materialism of the present age. In our age, by far the greater part of external culture is steeped in materialism. And everything that Spiritual Science can tell us about the Christ Impulse makes us realise how deeply the souls of men need the inner impulse of spirituality to counteract the steadily increasing materialism, of external life. To this end we must all learn to *question*, to

ask! But the current of materialism leads men away from questioning. Let us compare the two currents. — There are people who really cling to materialism, even while they assert their belief in this or that spiritual dogma, or profess to acknowledge the existence of a spiritual world in words and theories. Mere words are of no account. What matters is that we shall live with our whole soul in the current of spiritual life. It can be said of those who cling to materialism that they do not question, for they claim to know everything already! It is characteristic of materialistic culture that even the young and immature think they know everything and therefore do not question. To give one's opinion at every turn is thought to be a matter of personal freedom. But it is not usually realised to what these opinions amount. — We grow up in the world, absorbing more and more without noticing it; according to our Karma, we find one thing more pleasing, another less; we reach, say, the respectable age of twenty-five and feel absolutely mature and certain in our judgment because we think it comes from our own soul. But such judgment contains absolutely nothing more than our experiences in the external world. And in that we feel obliged to assert our own judgment in the outer world, we become all the more slavishly dependent upon our inner life. We pass judgment, but we omit to *question*, to *ask*. We learn to ask aright only when we acquire that inner sense of proportion which maintains respect and reverence for the things that are holy as sacred in life, when we enter the sacred domains of life in an attitude of waiting without asserting our own judgment. A certain diffidence is necessary in face of things that are holy. We must *ask* the spiritual world — to which we bring, not our own judgments but our questionings, and a mood-of-soul which *asks*. Try, my dear friends, to understand the difference between facing the spiritual world in an attitude of "judging" and in an attitude of questioning. There is a radical difference between the two attitudes. Moreover something is connected with this to which we ought to give particular heed in our Movement, for this Movement will not thrive unless we understand the difference between questioning and judging. Naturally, we must also judge, but over against the mysteries of the spiritual life we must unfold the attitude of questioning, of expectancy. The progress of our Movement will be furthered by this attitude of questioning; it will be hindered by the contrary attitude. And when in solemn moments we ponder the story of the one who ought to have asked about the Mystery of the Holy Grail, the figure of Parsifal becomes the personification of an Ideal for our Movement.

Human souls before the Mystery of Golgotha possessed the old, inherited clairvoyance which had been carried over from incarnation to incarnation, but it was gradually fading away. This fading clairvoyance was bound up with that upon which our external sight and other sense-activities are also dependent. When human beings who lived before the time of the Mystery of Golgotha were growing up as children, they learnt not only how to walk and talk, but they also learnt clairvoyance. Clairvoyance arose from the nature and organisation of man, just as speech arises from the organisation of the brain and larynx. Human beings in those times did not stop at learning to speak, but they also learnt clairvoyance. The old clairvoyance therefore was bound up with the human organism. as it was in the physical world. Clairvoyance in one who was a libertine was tainted by his particular characteristics; clairvoyance in a pure man bore the mark of his purity. The consequence of this fact was that a certain mystery, the mystery of the connection between the spiritual world and the physical world as it existed before the descent of Christ, might not be disclosed to an ordinary, unprepared human being. His constitution must first have become mature and ready. It was not lawful for the disciple at Sais to gaze upon the image of the soul of Isis.

In the Fourth post-Atlantean age, when the mystery of Golgotha took place, the old clairvoyance had faded away. The new constitution of the human soul is such that the soul must remain shut off from the spiritual world if it does not *ask* concerning the spiritual world, if it lacks the urge that is contained in questioning. The harmful forces which in ancient times drew near any human soul who desired to penetrate into these mysteries without due preparation, cannot now approach when a man asks in the right way about the Mystery of the Holy Grail. For in this Mystery there is concealed the power which since the Mystery of Golgotha has flowed into the aura of the Earth but was not previously there. It remains shut off, however, from one who does not *ask*. There must be an urge really to unfold what is contained in the soul. Before the Mystery of Golgotha this urge was not present, for the Christ had not yet passed into the Aura of the Earth. Before the Mystery of Golgotha, merely by gazing at the image of Isis and striving to fathom the mystery in the lawful way with such powers of clairvoyance as still existed, a human being would have poured all his forces into such an act and thus have recognised the mystery. In the age after the Mystery of Golgotha, a soul who learns to *ask* in the right way will be able to perceive and feel the *new* Mystery of Isis. Hence, my dear friends, everything depends upon asking, upon the right attitude to the spiritual conception of the world that is made known in our time. One

who comes merely with the intention of judging, may read all the books and the lecture-courses, but he will gain nothing whatever, for he lacks the attitude Parsifal. If a man comes as one who truly asks, a great deal more than what the mere words contain will be revealed to him — for the words will then bear fruit in his soul as actual *experience*. And this above all is important — that the spiritual teachings should become actual experience.

These things are brought home to us by such events as transpired between the time of Jesus of Nazareth's conversation with the mother, and the Baptism by John in the Jordan. Such things will have meaning for us only when we ask what it is that distinguishes the time *before* the Mystery of Golgotha from the age that *followed* it... It is best to allow these things to work upon the soul; all that they can say to us is really contained in the story.

At this point in our study of the "Fifth Gospel" I wanted merely to indicate how important it is in this age to understand the attitude of Parsifal. It was brought to the fore by Richard Wagner, who tried to clothe it in musical and dramatic form. I do not propose to enter the lists of the fight that is going on about it in the outer world, because it is not for spiritual science to mingle in such strife. I shall not pronounce judgment as between those who wish to preserve it in Bayreuth and those who want to consign it to Klingsor's realm — which has, as a matter of fact, already happened. My aim is to show that in the onward flow of the Christ Impulse, the Parsifal attitude must come into play in domains that are beyond the reach of the power of judgment belonging to man's ordinary consciousness but to which this consciousness can more and more be directed by a spiritual conception of the world.



Lecture X

13th January, 1914, Berlin

It seems to me that our studies of what I have allowed myself to call the "Fifth Gospel" will have helped us to form a closer conception of what has so often been said regarding the evolution of humanity on the Earth and the influence of the Mystery of Golgotha upon this evolution. From very many angles we have also tried to elucidate what came to pass at the baptism by John in the Jordan, when the Christ being united with Jesus of Nazareth, and this has brought home to us the vital significance of the Mystery of Golgotha in the evolution of mankind. But now, having heard the story of the youth of Jesus of Nazareth as it is revealed to spiritual-scientific investigation, we may be able to picture how Jesus of Nazareth makes his way to John the Baptist when the Christ is to descend into him.

With the knowledge gathered from these detailed studies of the Fifth Gospel, we will now try to enter more deeply still into all that is connected with the Mystery of Golgotha. To-day we will think, primarily, of the figure of John the Baptist and of certain aspects of his mission. To understand John the Baptist and Christ Jesus' relation to him (there are indications of this, too, in the Gospel of St. John) it will be necessary to think of the character of the spiritual life from which John the Baptist had issued. It is, of course, the world of ancient Hebrew culture. And now let us consider once again all the essential features of this culture. It had, as we know, a special mission in the evolution of humanity. We remember that Earth-evolution has proceeded from the Saturn-, Sun- and Moon-evolutions and that during this Earth-evolution the Ego, or "I" is added to those principles of man's being — physical body, etheric body, astral body — which came over from the earlier stages. The "I", however, cannot unfold as an active principle all at once. Indeed the purpose of the Whole of Earth-evolution is to enable the "I" to develop in such a way that man may find his place in the stream of Eternity. Realising this, we must regard the Earth as the theatre in the Cosmos that is allotted to man for the development of the "I". Ancient Hebrew culture venerated Jahveh or Jehovah as the Being of the higher Hierarchies under whose influence it had been established. The biblical story of Creation shows very clearly how the first Elohim — Jahve or Jehovah — issues from the sevenfold Elohim, the sevenfold host of the Beings of that Hierarchy. By way of comparison let us say that just as the

whole human organism develops into its highest expression in the head, so are the seven Elohim represented in *one* of themselves, in Jahve or Jehovah who becomes the leading Being in Earth-evolution. Ancient Hebrew culture recognised this and worshipped Jehovah, seeing in him that Being of the higher Hierarchies with whom man must be related in order to unfold the "I". Ancient Hebrew culture represented a definite stage, in the process of the development of the "I" in mankind and the influence of Jehovah was felt to be such that by establishing relationship with him, the "I" could gradually be awakened. This is connected with what I said in the lectures at Leipzig. (*Lecture-Course XXXI. Christ and the Spiritual World*)

What is the nature of the being Jahve or Jehovah? We must conceive him as a Being who is most intimately connected with Earth-evolution. He is the Lord, the Regent of the Earth, or better said, he is the Being whom Hebrew antiquity regards as the Lord of Regent of the Earth. The whole of ancient Hebrew culture looks upon Jehovah as the God of the Earth, conceives the this Divine-Spiritual Regent is interwoven with the Earth and that men who aspire to be conscious of their connection with the Universe as beings of Earth must cleave to Jehovah, the God of the Earth. The ancient Hebrew conception that Jehovah had made man out of Earth is expressed by the very name given to the original man — "Adam" — that is to say, the 'being who was created from Earth'. And whereas the aspirations of neighbouring religious systems were directed to that which does *not* derive from the Earth but comes into the Earth from higher worlds, whereas these neighbouring religions sought in the *higher worlds* for the Gods they worshipped, the ancient Hebrews sought and worshipped their God Jehovah in the realm of the Earth and its Elements.

Certain peoples of antiquity looked to the stars — their religion was "astral" religion. Other peoples observed the forces manifesting in thunder and lightening and asked: How are the Divine-Spiritual Beings expressing themselves here? The religions of the peoples around the ancient Hebrews took their symbols from phenomena connected with the stars or the atmosphere beyond the Earth; they sought in these spheres for the signs indicating man's connection with the *super-earthly* reality. It was inherent in the nature of the ancient Hebrews to think of themselves as connected wholly and entirely with what comes from the *Earth*. This is a point to which far too little attention is paid. All the indications show that connection of the ancient Jews with the Earth, with what originates from the Earth. If in a phenomenon produced by the forces of the Earth. If in certain volcanic districts of Italy a piece of paper is lighted, clouds of

smoke at once come out of the ground. We must conceive the pillar of fire to be a phenomenon produced by the forces of the interior of the Earth. In the same way the column of water or mist must be thought of as originating in the wilderness, *not* in the upper atmosphere. We must also look for the origin of the Great Flood itself in forces which surge in and through the Earth; the Flood was the result of tellurian, not of cosmic causes. This was at the bottom of the protest put up by the ancient Hebrews against the neighbouring peoples — for the God of Hebrew antiquity was the God of the *Earth*. The ancient Hebrews felt that everything coming from above, from outside the earth, did not really belong to the mission of Earth-evolution; they conceived it as having been preserved in Earth-evolution by the Being who had remained at a backward stage during the Old Moon-period, namely, Lucifer. In the other religions men felt: We must look *away* from the Earth, out in the Cosmos; we must revere and worship that which has its origin in the forces of the Cosmos... But the ancient Hebrews said: We worship the one true God and the one true God is connected with the *Earth*. — Far too little notice is taken of this because at the present time people assume that a word like "God" must always imply the same. Because, after nearly two thousand years of development under the influence of the Christ Impulse, humanity now rightly looks upwards once again, it is thought that the ancient Hebrews, too, looked upwards. On the contrary! The ancient Hebrews felt that what came from above was symbolised in the Serpent of Paradise.

But the Jews absorbed a very great deal from the neighbouring peoples. This too is comprehensible. Of all religions in antiquity, theirs was the subtlest. They believed — and this is well-nigh incredible to the modern mind that Jehovah is an *Earth* God, who works in the Moon-forces that are connected with the Earth and who is therefore also a Moon God, as described in the book *Occult Science*. It seems incredible to-day that men can ever have looked towards the centre of the Earth when they spoke of their God, but it was indeed so. Nevertheless the impulse to look upwards was, in the nature of things, not entirely absent from the Jews, above all when they saw the neighbouring peoples worshipping what comes from above. But the great difference between those who had knowledge of the Jewish secret doctrine and those who had not, was this. — The former knew that it was a temptation to be obedient to laws other than the laws of those forces which work from the Earth as far as the Moon-sphere. (Certain elements that come to light again to-day in our own spiritual-scientific teachings were present in ancient Hebraic wisdom). But as the

time of the Mystery of Golgotha approached, Hebrew culture was veering more and more from its original direction and looking *upwards* for the Gods.

Then came one who felt it his mission to point to the path which the Jews ought, in reality to follow. This was John the Baptist. He felt it his mission to bring home to the Jews, where their true strength lay. And perceiving what the religion of the Jews had become, he spoke the significant words: "You call yourselves children of Abraham! If you were Abraham's children you would know that your God Jehovah who is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is a God of the Earth — as witnessed by the fact that he formed the first man out of the Earth. But you are no longer children of Abraham; you have allowed yourselves to be led astray by what other peoples believe; you have been led astray by those who look upwards by what belongs to the Serpent. *Ye are of the brood of the Serpent.*"

These words of John the Baptist are of deep significance. If only people to-day would be a little more candid and admit that they do not really understand what they read! What is the expression "generation of vipers" taken to mean to-day? That John was heaping abuse! But if it is desired to make a deep appeal to human souls, no particular purpose is served by invective. Neither can it be said that John the Baptist's words gave vent to a divine wrath within him— for others too may voice their divine wrath. The meaning here is that John the Baptist was striving to bring home to the Jews: "You no longer understand your true mission; you no longer call upon the forces of the Earth but upon the forces of the Serpent, upon what has been made known to you as the Serpent."

And now let us try to understand the attitude of John the Baptist. Had he not his reasons for speaking in this way to those who came to him at the Jordan? (This is not derived from the Fifth Gospel for in speaking of the content of the Fifth Gospel we have not yet come to the figure of John the Baptist, I am speaking now from other sources). He had his reasons for speaking as he did to those who came to him at the Jordan, for he observed that they had adopted certain customs of the heathen; the very names they gave to these customs were abhorrent to him. In the region where John the Baptist was preaching, certain ancient teachings were prevalent — somewhat to the following effect. — At the beginning of the evolution of humanity, man and the higher animals were endowed by Jahve with the power of breathing air, but in consequence of the deed of Lucifer, this power was contaminated. Only those animals which do not breathe air have remained uncontaminated, namely the fishes. Many

people went to the waters of the Jordan (indeed it happens to this very day) at a certain season of the year and shook their clothes in order that their sins might be cast to the fishes and carried away. John the Baptist had witnessed such customs which had been adopted from the heathen peoples and this was in his mind when he cried: "You have understood more of the Serpent than of Jehovah; you call yourselves unlawfully the children of Jahve, the children of Abraham. I say unto you that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob could return to his original mission and produce from the stones, that is to say, from the Earth, a race of men who would understand him better."

Let us think of such words in the Bible as: "God is able of these stones to raise up children of Abraham." In the language of those days many words had more than one meaning and were used with the deliberate purpose of indicating a deeper meaning lying underneath. But we cannot really understand these things, my dear friends, unless we connect what has here been said with the mission of Paul. I have spoken many times of the mission of *Paul*. Why was it that Paul, who had not allowed his experiences in Jerusalem to convince him of the significance of the Mystery of Golgotha — why was it that the Event at Damascus convinced him of the truth of Christ's Resurrection? We must here consider the manner of Paul's preparation, and his background. Schooled as he was in the wisdom of the Jewish Prophets, he knew that up to a certain point of time the evolution of humanity involved adherence to the God of the Earth; but he also knew that a time must come when the "Above", that which comes into the Earth from *super-earthly* worlds, would again assume significance. It is of the utmost importance to realise that before Christ entered into the Aura of the Earth through the Mystery of Golgotha, He dwelt in *supersensible regions of the Cosmos*. We can study the religions whose worship was directed to the Powers of super-earthly worlds and discover how the Christ worked in those spheres before He passed into the Aura of the Earth through the body of Jesus of Nazareth. Paul knew that this time would come; but before the Event at Damascus he had not perceived Christ's actual presence in the Aura of the Earth. He was, however, prepared for this, and in Corinthians II., Chapter 12, verses 1-5, he says: It is not expedient for me to boast: I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ above 14 years ago... and so on. Paul is, of course, referring to himself. What does he really say in this passage? Nothing else than that 14 years before (chronologically this would be about 6 years before the Mystery of Golgotha) he *was already able* to look clairvoyantly into the spiritual worlds. He says that there is in him a man who can look into the

spiritual worlds; it is of *this* man he boasts, not of himself. Paul realises now that formerly he had seen Christ while He was still in the *spiritual world*. The Event at Damascus had revealed to him Christ had now passed into the Aura of the Earth and was living in the Aura of the Earth. That is the great truth concerning which so many who lived in the early centuries of Christianity uttered such strange words. They said: Christ is the *true* Lucifer. They understood: In former times it was right to adhere to the Serpent; since the Mystery of Golgotha He Who is the Conqueror of the Serpent has come and He is now the Lord of the Earth.

Now all these things are part of the evolutionary process of mankind. For what is the meaning behind the protest put up by ancient Hebrew culture against "astral" religion, against religions which have clouds, lightening, thunder, as their symbols? The meaning is that the human soul must so prepare to receive the "I" that the revelation of the Spirit is no longer received through the starry script, no longer through the forces manifesting in lightening and thunder, but through the Spirit itself. In former times when men strove to look upwards to the Christ, they could only do so by gazing, as Zarathustra had gazed, at what may be called the physical sheath of Christ, the "Ahura Mazdao", the physical Sun and its forces. Therein dwelt the Christ. But now the Christ had departed from the realm of the physical forces of the Sun, had passed into the spiritual Aura of the Earth. After those who worshipped Jehovah had prepared the way, Christ was able to permeate the Aura of the Earth. In this sense and in this sense only are the words of John the Baptist to be understood.

And now, as the time of the Mystery of Golgotha drew near, Christ Jesus and John the Baptist came face to face. — I shall now speak rather more abstractly. — Bearing in mind what has just been said, we shall understand this meeting between Christ Jesus and John the Baptist. Christ stands before one who knows what it signifies to worship the Spirit of the Earth. The Jews, and others too — for there were others as well as the Jews — were endowed with faculties which enabled them to worship the Spirit of the Earth in the right way. Whence were these faculties derived? Prior to the Mystery of Golgotha these faculties were bound up with physical heredity! What I am going to say will, of course, be considered utter foolishness by modern science, but it may be the kind of foolishness that can be wisdom before God.

Prior to the Mystery of Golgotha, the faculties of knowledge as they are called, were dependent in a certain way upon heredity conditions. And the progress of human evolution is constituted by the fact that intellectual

knowledge becomes independent of the factor of heredity. In certain Mysteries therefore, it was a true and right principle to allow an office to pass from father to son. But as evolution progresses, knowledge becomes an affair purely of the *soul*. The innermost core of the human soul becomes an affair of the soul itself, no longer depending upon the external factors of heredity. Now by what means did it become possible for man to keep intact the innermost core of his being? Let us realise what is meant by saying that man can no longer, in the real sense inherit his faculties from his forefathers. — Certainly many people think that they inherit their faculties and talents from their forefathers — but it is not so, in reality. Goethe was one among countless others whose genius was not transmitted to his descendants. But if man had not derived spiritual power from another source, what would have been the inevitable result? Their faculties of knowledge would have been orphaned! The position of the human being on the Earth would have been such that each according to his karma would have been obliged to wait for what the Earth bestows for the impressions bestowed by the Earth upon his senses. But this would have been of essential or lasting value to him and under such circumstances he would have been glad to slip away from the Earth. Buddha's teachings emphasise this very clearly for they draw man away from the realm of sense-perception and from all connection with the Earth.

Christ, in Jesus of Nazareth, could speak concerning Himself somewhat as follows. — At the Baptism by John something came down from the supersensible world which can be a quickening power in the "I" that has now been left to its own resources, and hereafter the human soul will contain within it forces that are *not* merely inherited. Whatever knowledge was formerly available to man, came to him through heredity, was transmitted from generation to generation by physical heredity. And the last man who unfolded *higher* faculties from the soil of heredity is John the Baptist, "the greatest of these born of woman." This is an indication of how the ancient times are to be distinguished from the now. In ancient times man spoke truly when he said: 'If I seek for the power which ought to live in my soul and lead me to the heights I must remember Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, for the faculties through which the heights of human existence are attained came down to me in the line of heredity from these ancestors.' But now these faculties must be derived from regions *beyond* the Earth. No longer to look to the Earth alone and to find in Christ the God of the Earth, but to be conscious of the inflow of the Heavens — it is this to which Christ points when he speaks of John the Baptist as "the greatest of those born of woman."

Here, my dear friends, we have the answer to a question of paramount importance for our age. At the time when the Third Epoch began to re-emerge in the life of our Fifth Epoch, the consciousness of men began to turn again to what can be revealed to the earthly human being as *super-earthly* reality. Men could not, however, experience this re-born "astral" religion as the ancient Egyptians or Chaldeans had experienced it. In this later age it came to them in the form in which it was experienced by one well-qualified to speak. In 1607, the following words were written... (Here followed a long extract from one of Kepler's works. See also: Günther's *Kepler und die Theologie*. 105-111.) Thus in the 17th century we again find evidence that the soul is gazing *upwards*, but now the experience is permeated with the Christ Impulse. These words were written by a profoundly spiritual man. By whom were they written? By the one who was the founder of all modern astronomy, without whom our modern astronomy could not have existed, namely, *John Kepler*. Is there a single Monist who will not sing the praises of Kepler? The attention of those who profess to be Monists should be called to the words just quoted for so much of what is said about Kepler is... well, something to which I prefer to give no name.

These words of Kepler are an indication of the new tendency, the new way of gazing upwards to the heavens, of that reading of the starry script to which we aspire in Spiritual Science. The question indicated at the beginning of the lecture is thus answered, namely: — How can we draw near to Christ? How can we understand Him? How can we make our life of feeling worthy to receive Him? By learning to speak with the same ardour the same depth of feeling as did an ancient Hebrew, when he said: 'I look up to Abraham, the primal Father when I speak of the foundation of whatever is valuable in me.' ...but to-day, with the same intensity of feeling, we must look upwards to the Being Who quickens us spiritually — to the Christ! When we ascribe our faculties and gifts, all that makes us truly Man, not to any earthly power, but to Christ, then we enter into living relationship with Him! Just as a Jew in ancient times spoke of being carried by death into Abraham's bosom, so do we truly express the nature of the age *after* the Mystery of Golgotha when to the ancient "*Out of God we are born*" we add the "*In Christ we die.*" Therefore when we understand the Mystery of Golgotha we can enter into a living relationship with Christ, just as in the age of Hebrew antiquity men felt their living relationship with the God who was the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This relationship was

expressed in the avowed belief: 'I return to Abraham, the primal Father' —
In those who live after the Mystery of Golgotha there must live the
consciousness; "*In Christ we die.*"



Lecture XI

10th February, 1914, Berlin

(The German transcript has been slightly abbreviated)

The information revealed by the "Fifth Gospel" sheds new light upon the great steps taken, as it were in the whole Cosmos, in preparation for the Mystery of Golgotha. Spiritual Science conceives the Mystery of Golgotha to be a kind of interim culmination of other happenings with which it is connected in the streams of world-realities.

We have heard that the Jesus boys were born in preparation for the Mystery of Golgotha. One of them was the "Solomon Jesus Child" who bore within him the Ego of Zarathustra. The age of the two boys was approximately the same and when they were twelve years old, the Zarathustra-Ego passed over into the body of the other Jesus boy who had descended from the "Nathan line" of the House of David. Then — from the source of the Fifth Gospel — it was possible to give details of the life of Jesus of Nazareth. His three bodily sheaths were those of the Nathan Jesus Child and the Zarathustra-Ego was present these three sheaths until Jesus of Nazareth reached his thirtieth year. You have also heard of the conversation with the mother which then took place and how, as he poured his very Self — his Ego — into the words, the Zarathustra-Ego departed from the bodily sheaths. Then, at the Baptism by John in the Jordan, the Christ Being descended into the threefold bodily sheaths of Jesus of Nazareth.

This conception of the Being Christ Jesus gives us an infinitely deeper and grander impression than is possible to those who draw only upon the sources of hitherto existing knowledge and the information contained in the Gospels.

Thee Event which, together with the "Crucifixion" and the "Resurrection" we call the Mystery of Golgotha, followed three other Events as a kind of culmination.

One of these other Events had taken place in very ancient Lemurian times; the second in the early period of the Atlantean epoch, and the third towards its end. These first three Events, however, transpired in the

spiritual worlds, not on the physical plane. We have therefore to turn our eyes to four Events, of which the last only — the Mystery of Golgotha itself — took place on the physical plane. The three others were Events in the spiritual world, as it were in preparation for the fourth.

I have told you that the altogether unique character of the Being we know as the Nathan Jesus was revealed in that immediately after his birth he spoke certain words — albeit in a language unintelligible to everyone except his mother, who in her heart and feeling was able to discern what the words implied. It must be realised that the Nathan Jesus boy was not an ordinary human being; unlike the Solomon Jesus boy who bore within him the Zarathustra-Ego and, as other human beings, had passed through many earthly lives, the Nathan Jesus boy had no earthly incarnations behind him for the whole of his previous existence had been spent in the spiritual worlds.

I have spoken of this in earlier lectures by saying that when, from the Lemurian epoch onwards, human souls were coming down to earthly incarnations, something was as it were kept back in the spiritual worlds and incarnated for the first time in the Nathan Jesus. Jesus of Nazareth therefore was not the bearer of a human Ego in the ordinary sense, for the "human Ego" passes on from one earthly incarnation to another, whereas the previous existence of this Being had been spent in the spiritual worlds. And only the Initiates in the ancient Mysteries who were able to see into the spiritual worlds knew that this Being — who would eventually be born as the Nathan Jesus and become the bearer of the Christ — had been connected with certain previous Events in the spiritual worlds. In order to understand the nature of these Events we must remind ourselves of the following.

Most of you will remember that in lectures on *Anthroposophy* given here some years ago, I spoke of the human *senses*. I emphasised then that in reality man possesses *twelve* senses — the five usually enumerated forming only a part of these twelve. We will not enter into this in greater detail to-day but speak of something else, namely, that the senses of man, the senses in the physical body, would have suffered a fate portending ill for human nature had not the *first* Christ Event taken place in the spiritual worlds during the epoch of ancient Lemuria in preparation for the Mystery of Golgotha. In the Lemurian epoch the foundations of the senses were actually present in man's bodily structure. But we know, too, that in this same epoch the Luciferic powers began to operate in human evolution and influenced the whole organism of man. If in the Lemurian epoch nothing

else had happened than the descent of man to earthly incarnations and the onset of the Luciferic influence, the senses would not have developed into the organs they are to-day. They would have been hypersensitive, over-sensitive. We should have gone about the world with 'untempered' senses. The colour red, for instance would have affected the eye so strongly as to cause actual suffering; other impressions too would have caused pain to the senses. For example: the eye would have felt as if it were being drawn away, sucked away by the colour blue. And it would have been the same in all the other senses. The human being would have been obliged to go about the world with senses over-susceptible to pain or to immoderate, and therefore unhealthy, sensations of pleasure. Sensory activity would have been stronger and more intense than is healthy; the senses would have been affected by every single impression coming from the world outside. This would have been the outcome of the Luciferic influence, and it was averted from humanity not by anything that transpired in the physical world but by the first of the three Events which took place in preparation for the Mystery of Golgotha. In the Lemurian epoch, the same Christ Being Who later on, at the Baptism in the Jordan, came down into the body of Jesus of Nazareth, united at that time with a being still living in the spiritual world — the being subsequently born as "Nathan Jesus boy."

If we say of the Event in Palestine that the Christ Being then united with a body, of this *first* Event we must say that in the spiritual world, during the Lemurian epoch, He "*ensouled*" (verseelte sich) a Being who in a later epoch came down to the Earth as the Nathan Jesus boy.

Thus there was present in the spiritual worlds a Being of soul-and-spirit Who through this union with the soul of the later Jesus of Nazareth and through all the consequences of this Deed, averted the calamity that would have befallen the human senses. It was as though this Being radiated His light from the spiritual worlds upon humanity in order that the senses might be saved from the suffering attendant upon over-sensitiveness. The first Event in preparation for the Mystery of Golgotha was for the well-being and salvation of the *senses*. The fact that we can go about the world with senses functioning as they now do, is due to this first Christ Event.

A second Event took place towards the beginning of the Atlantean epoch. The same being — the later Jesus of Nazareth — was again "ensouled" by the Christ Being, with the result that another evil was averted from human nature. Although the first Christ Event had brought salvation to the senses, the Luciferic and, later on, the Ahrimanic influences had so affected the seven *life-organs* of man that if the second Event had not taken place,

human life in the world could not have been as it now is; man would have vacillated between wild, inordinate desire (in certain limits this is what we not call 'sympathy') and utter disgust for what he imbibes through his life-organs, for his means of nourishment. In the lectures on "anthroposophy" I also spoke of these seven life-organs. In the physical body they are vesicular organs, but what underlies them is actually a certain formation of the etheric body. Moreover for everything that found its way to his organs of breathing, too, man would either have felt inordinate desire or deepest loathing. Therefore the seven life-organs too would have become over-active as a result of the influence of Lucifer and Ahriman. The second Christ Event took place — again in the supersensible worlds. And this Event brought 'moderation' into the life-organs, enabled them to function with a certain restraint. Just as our senses would never have been able to face the world "in wisdom" if the first Christ Event had not taken place in the Lemurian epoch, so our life-organs could never have functioned with temperance and moderation if the second Christ Event had not transpired at the beginning of the Atlantean epoch.

But man was faced by yet another evil. This third evil threatened the *astral* body, in connection with thinking, feeling and willing and their due fields of activity. A certain harmony is maintained to-day in man's thinking, feeling and willing, and when this harmony is upset, the healthy life of the soul is disturbed. When thinking, feeling and willing do not interact in the right way, a man falls into conditions of extreme hypochondria, melancholy or actual insanity. As a result of the Luciferic and Ahrimanic influence, therefore, men's thinking, feeling and willing would have lapsed into utter disorder if, towards the end of the Atlantean epoch, the third Christ Event had not taken place. Once again the Christ Being united with the "Nathan-Jesus soul" in the supersensible worlds, bringing order and harmony into the soul-powers of thinking, feeling and willing.

These three Events all worked upon man from the spiritual worlds; they were not Events of the physical plane. But memories of the third Event in particular, have been well preserved in myths and legends; and as in many other cases, spiritual knowledge leads us to a much deeper understanding of the wisdom they contain.

We are all familiar with imagery often used for the portrayal of supersensible beings; the Archangel Michael, or St. George overcoming the Dragon, vanquishing death. This is a pictorial presentation of the third Christ Event: St. George or the Archangel Michael is inspired by the Christ

Being; and the 'Conquest of the Dragon' indicates the overcoming of those elements in the desire-nature of man which would bring confusion and disorder into thinking, feeling and willing.

There is deep meaning in these pictures; they have not been created for the intellect but for the feeling, in order that what eludes intellectual understanding may be presented to the human soul in the form of visible symbols.

In earlier lectures we have heard how in its world of Gods and Spirit-Beings, Greek culture preserved the shadow-images of the Divine Spiritual Beings who in the Atlantean epoch had been present, in all their reality, in the sphere immediately above the world of men. The Greeks had preserved definite consciousness of the third Christ Event, the Event that is portrayed elsewhere as St. George or the Archangel Michael overthrowing the Dragon. — In their *Apollo* the Greeks portrayed the Christ Being permeating the soul of the later Jesus boy. And we may say with truth that in ancient Greece, St. George and the Dragon are real beings, cosmic beings. The Greeks had their Castalian fountain on Parnassos; vapours arose from a gorge in the earth and these vapours, winding around the mountain like snakes, were a picture of those wild tumultuous passions of men which cast thinking, feeling and willing into confusion and disorder. At the place — it was the abode of Python — where these curling, snake-like vapours issued from the gorge, the Greeks erected the sanctuary of the Pythian Oracle. Sitting there on her tripod above the gorge, she was transported by the rising vapours into a state of visionary consciousness and her utterances were conceived to be the words of Apollo himself. Those who sought advice addressed themselves to the Pythian Oracle and received it from Apollo through her mouth.

In Greece, therefore, Apollo was a *real and living Being*. We know now that he was the Being who was ensouled by the Christ and later on became the Nathan Jesus boy. This being was known to the Greeks as "Apollo." He eliminates the effects of the Luciferic and Ahrimanic influences from what rises out of the earth into the soul of the Pythian Oracle. And because the Luciferic and Ahrimanic influences no longer creep into her soul with the vapours which had been purified by Apollo, the forces issuing from her no longer bring thinking, feeling and willing into confusion but into order and harmony on the Earth.

And so we perceive in the figure of Apollo the idea that the God whom we in later time call Christ sent His influence into the thinking, feeling and willing of men. — He was the God Who sacrificed Himself at that time by uniting with the soul of the later Nathan Jesus, in order that harmony and order might prevail in the thinking, feeling and willing of the human soul, instead of the confusion wrought by the influence of Lucifer and Ahriman.

In the supersensible worlds, therefore, three Christ Events take place in preparation for the Event of Golgotha.

What was actually achieved by this Event? What is it that would have fallen into chaos and disorder if the Event of Golgotha had not taken place?

In the Fourth post-Atlantean epoch, the Greco-Latin epoch, humanity was ready for the development of the 'I'. The first peoples who were ready for this were those who inhabited the lands stretching from Western Asia across Southern Europe and into Middle Europe. The encounter between the Roman peoples and the Germanic peoples in Middle and Southern Europe was to give a strong impetus to this development of Ego-consciousness. The 'I', the Ego, was to develop in the fourth post-Atlantean epoch — but something would have gone wrong with this development had not the Mystery of Golgotha taken place in that same epoch. Just as the senses would have been impaired in the Lemurian epoch if the first Christ Event had not taken place; just as irregularity would have crept into the development of the seven life-organs if the second Christ Event had not taken place at the beginning of the Atlantean epoch; just as thinking, feeling and willing in man's life of soul would have been cast into disorder if the third Christ Event had not taken place towards the end of the Atlantean epoch... so, too it would have been with the development of the 'I', if the fourth Christ Event — the Mystery of Golgotha — had not taken place in the Greco-Latin epoch. For as we know, in this fourth post-Atlantean epoch men had reached the stage of Egohood, of 'I'-consciousness.

For human beings not belonging to this particular phase of evolution, a different kind of revelation was given. The characteristic difference between the *Buddha* revelation and the *Christ* revelation is that the Buddha revelation was given to human beings not destined to unfold consciousness of the 'I' which passes through the series of incarnations. Without understanding what this implies, it is not possible to have a true conception of Buddhism. I have often spoken of a simile employed in a later phase of Buddhism, to the effect that the true Buddhist likens what passes over

from one incarnation to another to the fruit of the mango which, when it is laid into the earth, produces a new tree upon which new fruit grows; the new mango fruit has in common with the old only 'name' and 'form.' The 'form' alone remains, the individual entity disappears and nothing that has real being passes on. Buddhism teaches nothing about the transmission of the Ego — for the reason that the Eastern peoples had not yet reached full consciousness of the 'I'. And to this very day we find that when adherents of purely oriental teachings endeavour to understand Western thought and philosophy, they come to a standstill at the point where Egohood becomes an essential and basic factor. The Ego was destined to come to birth in the peoples of the *West*.

The time for the birth of the Ego was the Fourth post-Atlantean epoch, but if nothing had intervened, irregularity would have set in. This is indicated by something that made its first appearance in the fourth post-Atlantean epoch, namely Greek *Philosophy*. Greek philosophy is a significant sign of the birth of the Ego, but side by side with Greek philosophy we find the *Sibylline soothsayers*. Unlike the Pythia under the influence of Apollo, the Sibyls were women whose life of soul lacked order and harmony, who allowed the revelations they received to work chaotically in their thinking, feeling and willing. Great and sublime truths were often contained in these Sibylline revelations which began to play a part from about the eighth century B.C. and continued right on into the Middle Ages. — But the wisdom was confused and chaotic, fraught with all kinds of extravagance. Sibylline 'wisdom' is a striking example of the fact that the birth of Ego-consciousness (just as would have happened to the twelve senses in the Lemurian epoch, the seven life-organs in the earthly Atlantean epoch and the three soul-faculties at the end of the Atlantean epoch had it not been for the first three Christ Events. In the fourth post-Atlantean epoch, disorder would have crept into the development of *Ego-consciousness* if the Mystery of Golgotha had not taken place.

The Mystery of Golgotha comes down as it were by stages, from those lofty heights of Spirit where the Christ Event had taken place in the Lemurian epoch, to the physical plane itself — as our earthly Mystery of Golgotha.

Here again we have an indication of the supreme significance of this unique Event in Earth-evolution, prepared for as it had been by great and momentous happenings in the spiritual worlds. The connection with the sublime Sun Being we know as the Christ is revealed, too, in the Greek Apollo, for Apollo is the 'Sun God.'

I have spoken in bare outline only of matters which help me to realise the significance of the Mystery of Golgotha. All these things could be expounded in detail and would reveal the untold Cosmic significance of this Event.

We have been considering the Mystery of Golgotha from the aspect of the Cosmos; but it is possible, too, to make a different approach.

A human being passes into the spiritual world through the Gate of Death or through initiation, but we will think now only of one who enters the spiritual world through death. He lays aside his physical body and this outermost sheath is given over to the earthly elements through burial or through cremation. Suppose that after death a man looks back from the spiritual world upon what is happening to his physical body as it passes over through decay or through cremation into the physical elements of the Earth. — What he beholds in the processes here taking place can be called a 'happening of Nature', like any other, in which no *moral concepts*, for example, are involved — for we do not apply moral concepts when clouds form, when lightening strikes from one cloud to another, and so forth. Man looks at his physical body in process of dissolution, just as he looks at these phenomena of Nature. But for a few days, as we know, his connection with the *ether-body* remains and then the second separation, the separation of the ether-body from the astral body and Ego takes place.

As man looks back upon the discarded ether-body, the processes in which it is involved are not of the same character as those operating in the discarded physical body. After death we can by no means look at what the ether-body is and what is becoming of it, as if it were a 'phenomenon of Nature'. The ether-body reveals its own individual character, coloured by the feelings and sentiments we have harboured during life. The whole gamut of our feelings — good or bad — is revealed to us by the ether-body. The temper and tenor of our soul is stamped into the ether-body and becomes visible to us after death. Then by a complicated process it dissolves into the universe of ether, is absorbed into the other world.

Looking back in this way upon what becomes of our ether-body, we have before us an image of what we ourselves were in earthly life. And this image tells us: 'If your feelings were good, if you were truly devoted to the spiritual worlds, then you have given over to the universe of Ether something that is good and beneficial; if your feelings were unrighteous, if

you turned a deaf ear to information concerning the spiritual worlds, then you have given over to the Cosmos of Ether something that is injurious and harmful.

In the spiritual world it is part of the destiny of our soul, that is to say of our astral body and Ego, to behold *ourselves* in the fate of the ether-body — which cannot be changed once the separation from the physical body has taken place. It is a moment of paramount significance after death when we realise that just as in the world of sense we saw clouds and mountains, so now, after death, we see, as a kind of background, all that we ourselves laid into our ether-body through our feelings and tenor of soul. The picture expands as the ether-body dissolves, becomes as it were a "firmament" against which everything else stands out in relief. After death, therefore, man sees what is happening to his ether-body.

Something else is revealed as well, namely, two different kinds of properties, or forces, in the now dissolving ether-body: one of these properties gives rise to an impression that must always weigh heavily upon the soul after death. The best way to understand what this means is to think of the destiny confronting the *physical Earth*.

The destiny of the physical Earth is recognised to-day even by the physicists, who rightly speak of the "Wärmetod" (equilibration of heat and cold) to which the physical Earth will succumb. The relation of heat to the other physical forces is such that as scientific calculations already show, a time will come when all temperature will be reduced to a dead level. No life or existence in the physical kingdom of Earth will then be possible; the whole physical Earth will perish.

Materialists are bound to assume — for otherwise they would be inconsistent — that this equilibration of temperature, the *Wärmetod*, also entails the end of everything known to them as culture, the end of all human thinking, reflection, aspiration, endeavour, in short the disappearance of all human existence.

Those who understand the conditions as revealed by Spiritual Science know what this means, namely, that the physical Earth will fall away from the Spiritual like a corpse, just as the physical corpse falls away from that part of a man's being which passes onwards through the Gate of Death. At death, the corpse is discarded and as a being of soul-and-spirit, man lives through an intermediate period between death and a new birth, passing over from one state of existence to another. In the same way the spiritual

part of the Earth will pass over to the 'Jupiter existence' when physical existence comes to an end. This 'Jupiter existence' will be a further embodiment of everything that is connected *spiritually* with the Earth.

And so when we are able after death to look back at the ether-body, we realise that in very truth one part of the ether-body has to do with everything in the realm of Earth that will ultimately perish. Certain forces in our ether-body have to do with the process by which the Earth is led onwards to its end. But the ether-body contains other forces too, quite different forces. We can picture the relation of these forces to the physical Earth by thinking of the seed of the plant surrounded by substance out of which the next plant arises. Similarly, we perceive in the ether-body, forces which have only to be active as long as the Earth exists, until the Earth comes to an end with the *Wärmetod*. But there are other forces too, 'young', fertile forces, and these are connected with everything that makes the Earth capable of germination in the Cosmos, of passing over to its next embodiment. This 'fertile' part of the ether-body can only be perceived — and here we come to another significant secret disclosed by Spiritual Science — when the human being has established a certain relationship with the Christ, the Christ Impulse. For this part of the ether-body is permeated with the Christ Forces which since the Mystery of Golgotha have poured into the sphere of the Earth. It is these Christ Forces in the ether-body which enable the 'fertile seed' in the human soul, too, to pass over to the Jupiter embodiment of the Earth. Our connection with the Christ Impulse therefore, enables us to perceive the fertile seed, the seed of the future within our ether-body. And this brings the certain knowledge that the power of the Mystery of Golgotha has flowed, in very truth, into the Earth-sphere and that this power was responsible for quickening the spiritual forces of the Earth with which we ourselves, as human beings, are inwoven. When a human being who has attained Ego-consciousness in the real sense — as is the case in the West to-day — gazes upon his ether-body after death, he must not find this ether-body devoid of the forces flowing from the Christ Impulse. For it means a life of unblissedness after death if the vista of the ether-body reveals that ether-body is not permeated by the Christ Impulse.

I have said many, many times that Christ has come to the Earth as a Real Being and that even those who in their surface-consciousness to-day resist the Christ Impulse... they too will gradually find their way to it, although perhaps one or two incarnations later than the peoples of the West. Man's blissedness after death depends upon the realisation that the Christ Impulse is present in the ether-body; whereas he is doomed to tribulation

if he can perceive in the ether-body only that which must inevitably perish with the Earth. A man belonging to Western civilisation, born as he is with the clear Ego-consciousness to which the Oriental peoples have not yet attained, is doomed to a state of unblestness if, after death, he must look back upon an ether-body lacking the 'substance' of the Christ Impulse and containing only those forces by which Earth-evolution is finally led to its end. When a man cannot perceive the young, fertile forces of the Christ Impulse in his ether-body, it is rather like having to live after death under the constant impression of an earthquake or a volcanic eruption.

These young, fertile forces of the Christ Impulse... what are they?

Of one aspect I have spoken many times, namely, of the part played by the blood in the physical body of Christ Jesus. The blood is, of course, one of the physical components of the body, and in the case of an ordinary human being it dissolves away at death in the physical Elements. This did not happen to that part of the blood in the body of Christ Jesus which flowed from the wounds on Golgotha. This blood was 'etherised', was actually taken up into the etheric forces of the Earth. The blood that flowed from the wounds on Golgotha became Ether-Substance. And perceiving this Ether-Substance gleaming and glistening in the ether-body after death, man knows it to be the young, fertile life by which he is borne onwards into the future.

These quickening, freshening life-forces pour into the human ether-body from yet another source. Contemplation of the Fifth Gospel reveals — it is a deep and solemn impression — that after the body of Christ Jesus had been laid in the Grave, a certain happening led, in actual fact, to the scene described with such marvellous exactitude in the Gospel of St. John: the clothes lay scattered around the empty Grave. The Fifth Gospel reveals that it was indeed so. An undulating earthquake had produced a rift in the earth and into this rift the body of Christ Jesus fell. The rift then closed again and, as described in St. John's Gospel, the clothes in which the body had been shrouded were hurled about the empty sepulchre by the tempest. When these things are revealed to one from the Fifth Gospel, it is a deeply moving experience to find them confirmed in the Gospel of St. John.

And so something else too flowed into the human ether-body. What had been received into the rift in the earth poured through the blood now a gleam in the Ether, making this gleaming blood visible in the human ether-body. As I said before, the ether-body expands after death and man sees it as a 'firmament' against which everything else stands out in relief.

And the feeling arises: The body of Christ Jesus, empty of blood, spreads through the expanding ether-body like a basic substance. The body which had fallen into the chasm passed into the Earth, and the etherised blood now reveals itself in the tableau of the human ether-body, filling the tableau with life. And from this revelation arises the certainty: Mankind does not perish, but lives on as the spiritual essence of Earth-existence when the Earth falls away, just as the corpse falls away from the indwelling spiritual being on man. True, the 'I' and astral body guarantee freedom and immortality for man; but he would live on only for himself, he would pass over to Jupiter only to find himself in an alien world if the forces poured by the Christ Impulse into the Earth-sphere were not carried over to Jupiter.

If individual human beings were not rooted within an Earth-sphere that has been pervaded by the Christ Impulse, they would pass over to Jupiter in 'poverty of soul', with faculties hardly richer than those belonging to the Lemurian epoch. And this 'poverty of soul' which would give the conviction that earthly life is doomed to perish would betoken a state of unblestness for man between death and rebirth; whereas realisation of what the Christ Impulse has wrought for the spiritual part of the Earth brings blessedness to the soul in the life between death and rebirth.

Since the Mystery of Golgotha, every experience by which the human soul is quickened and enriched comes from what was poured into the spiritual aura of the Earth by the Christ Impulse.



Lecture XII

Cologne, 17 December, 1913

This evening and tomorrow I feel obliged to speak to you of what we have become accustomed to call the Mystery of Golgotha, but I will attempt to speak of it in a somewhat different way than until now. What has been said previously, although certainly esoteric, has had a more esoteric-theoretical content. I have spoken about the essence and significance of the Mystery of Golgotha for humanity. That it is to a certain extent the central phenomenon for the whole evolution of humanity on earth and to what extent it is the central phenomenon has been considered. This has been taken wholly from sources of occult investigation. The thought-sources have been broached which stream out from the Mystery of Golgotha and which develop and are living in our earthly evolution. If human evolution on earth is observed from a clairvoyant vantage point, the significance of the Mystery of Golgotha can be grasped.

Now, however, I am obliged to speak more concretely about the events which took place at the beginning of our [Christian] era. I will speak of the events, the forces which live on in the aura of the earth, and which may be observed esoterically. Tomorrow I will speak of the reasons why now, in our times, these things must be revealed within our anthroposophical circles. Today I will try to indicate some of the things that occurred in Palestine at the beginning of our era. And I hope that in your hearts, in your souls, when the event of Golgotha, which [until now] has been characterized more in conceptual form, does not lose any of its significance if we look directly and concretely at what happened at that time.

In lecture cycles about the Gospels of Luke and Matthew, I have already had the opportunity of speaking about this subject. It is a fact that two Jesus children were born at approximately the same time at the beginning of our era. I pointed out that those two Jesus children were very different as far as character and capabilities are concerned. The Jesus very well described by the Gospel of Matthew descended from the Solomon line of the House of David. In him lived the soul, or the "I" of the person we know as Zarathustra.

[Translator's note: In other places, Rudolf Steiner went into more detail about the two Jesus Children. But as his audience here was familiar with the subject, he only gave a kind of resumé. For the interested readers I suggest they compare the birth stories in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. They will note immediately that the genealogies of the two boys are completely different from King David to Joseph, the father of Jesus. They will also see that in Luke there are shepherds and "no room at the inn" and the famous stable where Jesus was born, and there are no kings or magi. In Matthew the three kings/magi are indeed an important presence. But they do not adore a carpenter's son born in a stable. No, they have come to Bethlehem to salute the new or future King of the Jews. Although Matthew does not describe the birthplace, it is unlikely to be a stable. The flight to Egypt does not occur in Luke, only in Matthew, whose parents had more to fear, living as they were with the future king. Furthermore it is most strange that Jesus the carpenter's son was so well educated that he could teach the rabbis in the temple. Ah, but that was the Jesus according to Luke. The Jesus described by Matthew descended from a royal family and would be in infinitely better condition to do so. Taking all these things, and more, into consideration, it can be considered obvious that there were indeed two Jesus children.]

When we consider such an incarnation, we must be especially clear about one thing: that even when such an advanced individual, as Zarathustra certainly was, is again incarnated — namely in the time he was born as Jesus — in no way must he know in childhood or youth that he is that individual. It is not necessary to be able to say: I am this person or that person. That is not the case. It is, however, true that in such cases the enhanced capacities gained by having passed through such an incarnation become evident early and thus define the child's character. So it was that the Solomon Jesus child — as I would like to call him — in whom the I of Zarathustra lived, was endowed with enhanced capabilities which enabled him to easily absorb the culture and the knowledge to which his earthly contemporaries had attained. In that child's environment — especially in those times — existed the whole cultural civilization of humanity in words, gestures and deeds — in short, in all that could be seen and heard. A normal child absorbed little of what he saw and heard. This child, however, absorbed with great ease all the sparse indications in which existed everything humanity had achieved by then. In short, he proved himself to be greatly gifted at absorbing all the available scholarly knowledge. Today we would call such a child "highly gifted". Up until his twelfth year he quickly learned everything to be learned in his environment.

The other Jesus was completely different. His character is well reflected in the Gospel of Luke. He descended from the Nathan line of the House of David. He had no gift for scholarly learning, nor did he show interest in it

up until his twelfth year. On the other hand, he showed to a high degree what we can call capacity of the heart, compassion for all human happiness and suffering. He showed himself to be especially capable in that he concentrated less on himself and was less able to attain exterior knowledge. But from earliest childhood on he felt the suffering and the joy of others as his own suffering and his own joy. He could transpose himself into the souls of others; he possessed this ability in the highest degree. The Akasha Record indicates that the differences between the two Jesus children could not have been greater.

After both boys had reached their twelfth year, an event occurred which I have often characterized: that when the Nathan-Jesus traveled to Jerusalem with his parents, the I of Zarathustra, which had been in the other, the Solomon-Jesus, left his body and took possession of the Nathan Jesus's physical, etheric and astral bodies. The result was, therefore, that everything that this royal-I was capable of was now active in the soul of the other, the Nathan-Jesus child. And this boy, now possessing all of Zarathustra's power, without knowing it, caused astonishment in the scholars among whom he emerged teaching — as it is also described in the Bible. I have also indicated how the other, the Solomon-Jesus, from whom the I had departed, soon thereafter declined and, after a relatively short time, died.

It must be understood that when the I of a person leaves him — as was the case with the Solomon-Jesus child — he does not necessarily die immediately. Just as a ball continues to roll on for a time under its own inertia, so does such a person continue to live on through the strength which lives within him. Now someone who cannot observe human souls in a precise way will notice little difference between a person who has lost his I and a person who still has one. Because in normal life the I in a person we are observing does not play such a dominant role. What we experience in another person is to a very small extent a direct manifestation of his I, but rather the manifestation of his I through the astral body. That other Jesus-child retained his astral body, however, and only someone who can carefully distinguish — and it is not easy — whether old habits and thoughts still continue to act in a person or whether new elements are present, can thereby determine if the I is still present or not. But a decline begins, a kind of dying out, a withering away. And such was the case with this Jesus boy.

Then, through a stroke of karma, the biological mother of the Nathan-Jesus and also the father of the Solomon-Jesus died soon after the passing over of the Zarathustra-I from one boy to the other. And the father of the Nathan-Jesus and the mother of the Solomon-Jesus became a married couple. The Nathan-Jesus had no physical siblings, and the step-siblings whom he now acquired were the siblings of the Solomon-Jesus. From the two families one was formed, which henceforth resided in the town now called Nazareth — so that when we refer to the Nathan-Jesus, in whom the Zarathustra-I lived, we use the expression: Jesus of Nazareth.

Today I would like to relate something about the life of Jesus of Nazareth as a youth — from research in the Akasha Record — in a way that enables you to understand a certain important moment in the earth's evolution which the Mystery of Golgotha had prepared.

For a seer the life of Jesus can be clearly divided into three phases. The conversation with the scholars in his twelfth year had already shown that he possessed an inner capacity, provided by the passing over of the Zarathustra-I, to be enlightened, to receive enlightenment and to connect it with the capacities which lived in the soul of Zarathustra. It was shown that an enormous force of inner experience was in his soul, so that as he developed from his twelfth to his seventeenth and eighteenth years it can be seen how inner enlightenment became richer and richer, and especially enlightenment related to the evolution of the ancient Hebrews and the Hebrew people in general.

At the time Jesus lived in the Hebrew people, the grandeur of what had existed as secrets of the cosmos during the times of the ancient prophets was no longer present. Many of the old revelations of the prophets lived on, but the original capacity to receive spiritual secrets directly from the spiritual world had faded out long before. They were studied from the preserved scriptures. There were still some, such as the famous [Rabbi Hillel](#), who, because of his individual development was still able to perceive something of what the ancient prophets had proclaimed. But that force, which existed during the ancient epoch of the Hebrew people, the time of the prophetic revelations, was long since no longer present in those few individuals. A decline in the spiritual development of the Hebrew people was clearly apparent. Now, however, what had once been revealed during the time of the prophets emerged from the depths of Jesus of Nazareth's soul as inner enlightenment.

But I wish to draw your attention less to the historical fact that in one person what had been revealed during the prophets' time appeared again by means of inner enlightenment. I would rather like to emphasize to you what it felt for such a relatively young soul — the soul of the thirteen to fourteen year old Jesus of Nazareth — to feel a revelation coming to him in total isolation, a revelation which no one else in his surroundings felt. At most the best of them perhaps had a dim glimmer of it.

Try to imagine yourselves in such a position, in the soul of someone possessing such great knowledge alone, and understand that the Mystery of Golgotha had to be prepared by such feelings of loneliness and isolation taking possession of Jesus of Nazareth's soul. When you stand alone on a psychic island as he did, who from his childhood on had felt such solidarity with all men, but **now did not feel that he could share his knowledge with them because they had sunken to a level where they could no longer receive the revelation. He suffered greatly having to know something which the others could not comprehend, but also wishing so strongly that it could also arise in their souls** that a mission was being prepared.

All that gave him the fundamental impulse to say: **a voice resounds in me from the spiritual world. If humans could hear it, it would provide an infinite blessing for them.** In olden times there were people who could hear it. **Now, however, they have no ears with which to hear.** That pain of solitude pressed ever deeper on his soul.

Such was Jesus of Nazareth's inner life from his twelfth to his eighteenth year. For this reason he was not understood by his biological father and his stepmother, and even less so by his step-siblings, who often mocked him and considered him half mad. He worked hard in his father's carpentry. But while he was working the feelings I have just described lived on in his soul.

Then, when he was around eighteen, he left home to travel. He went through Palestine and the surrounding pagan areas, working at his trade. He was led by his karma. As he wandered through Palestine his extraordinary character was seen by all the people he met. During the day he worked, evenings he sat together with the people. And the people with whom he sat from his nineteenth until around his twenty-fourth year had the feeling, although they were not always conscious of it, that he was an extraordinary individual, such a one as they had never encountered before; they could not even have imagined that such a one existed. They did not know what to make of him.

If you wish to understand this, to penetrate into the secrets of human evolution, it is necessary to take into account that experiencing what the young Jesus of Nazareth did — as I have just described — causes deep sorrow in the soul. But this sorrow is transformed into love. And much deep love in life is transformed sorrow of this kind.

Deep sorrow, pain, has the capacity to transform itself into love, which does not merely act like ordinary love, but through the very existence of the loving being streams out like far reaching auras.

So those people who were together then with Jesus believed that they were in the presence of much more than a mere man. And when he had departed from a place and they sat together evenings, they had the sense of his real presence. They felt as though he were still there. And it happened more and more that the people with whom he had stayed, when they sat together around the table, had visions in common. They saw him enter as a spirit-figure. Each one had this vision at the same time, that Jesus was once again among them, that he spoke with them, told them things just as he had once done in physical form. He was visible among them long after he had left. What caused this effect was pain and sorrow transformed into love. The people with whom he was felt themselves to be united with him in a special way. They felt that they were never again separated from him. They felt that he remained with them and that he always returned.

But he did not only travel around in Palestine, his karma also led him to pagan places. (It would take too long to describe here the reasons for his karma doing this.) This was after he had recognized the declining developments in Judaism. And he learned how in the religious rituals of the pagans, just as in Judaism, what was originally revelation had also died out. Thus in the second phase he had to experience the decline of humanity from a previous spiritual plateau. But he perceived how paganism declined differently than Judaism.

His perception of Judaism's decline was a more inner experience, gained by enlightenment. He saw how the revelations from the spiritual world which were once proclaimed by the prophets had ceased because there were no longer ears to hear them. He learned about how it was with paganism in a place where the ancient pagan religious services had fallen into disrepair, and where the fall of paganism was physically evident. The inhabitants of the place had fallen victim to leprosy and other hideous diseases. Some had become malignant, others lame. The priests abandoned them and had fled. When Jesus was first seen, the news

spread like wildfire that someone very special had arrived. For now even in his outer appearance he had achieved the transformed suffering which was love. They saw that a being had come like none who had ever walked on the earth. Soon the news spread and many came running to him, for they thought a priest had been sent to them who would again officiate at the sacrifices. Their own priests had fled — so they came running. The Akasha record shows this, just as I am describing it.

He had no intention of officiating at the pagan sacrifice. However, he now saw in vivid imaginations the enigma of the decline of pagan spirituality. He could directly perceive what had flowed into the secrets of the pagan mysteries: that the forces of high divine beings had flown down to the sacrificial altars. But now instead of the forces of the good spirits streaming down, all kinds of demons, emissaries of Lucifer and Ahriman, streamed down to the holy altars. He perceived the fall of pagan spiritual life not by inner enlightenment, as with Judaism, but through external visions.

It is very different to get to know things theoretically than to visualize how once divine-spiritual forces flowed down to an altar and now demons did so, which caused abnormal mental states, diseases and so forth. Such spiritual visualization is quite different from knowing something theoretically. But Jesus of Nazareth was to see this in direct spiritual visualization, see how the emissaries of Lucifer and Ahriman worked. He was to see how they did harm to the people.

Suddenly he fell down as though dead. Frightened, the people fled. But as he lay there as though carried off to a spiritual world, he received an impression of all the ancient revelations that had once been told to the pagans. Therefore, just as he had perceived the secrets which had been proclaimed to the old prophets and which were now not even a shadow in Jewish culture, through spiritual inspiration he was able to hear in which way they had been proclaimed to the pagans.

The strongest impression made on him was what I attempted to investigate, and what I spoke of for the first time on the occasion of the foundation stone laying of our building in Dornach. It could be called *The Reverse Our Father*, because it was the reverse of the substantial content of the prayer the Christ Jesus' disciples attributed to him. Jesus of Nazareth perceived something like a reverse Our Father, so that he was able to feel in these words the secret of human evolution and incorporations in earthly incarnations in a concentrated format.

*Amen,
Es walten die Übel,
Zeugen sich lösender Ichheit,
Von ändern erschuldete Selbstheitschuld,
Erlebet im täglichen Brote,
In dem nicht waltet der Himmel Wille,
Indem der Mensch sich schied von Eurem Reich
Und vergaß Euren Namen,
Ihr Väter in den Himmeln.*

*Amen,
Evil rules,
Witness of the dissolving I,
Selfhood's guilt to others attributed,
Experienced in daily bread,
In which heaven's will be not done,
For man deserted your kingdom
And forgot your names,
You fathers in the heavens.*

That is — in stammering words — what expresses something like the laws governing how human beings incarnate from the macro-cosmos into the micro-cosmos. Since I came to know these words, I have found them to be an extraordinarily meaningful meditation form. They exercise a force on the soul which is quite extraordinary, and the more one studies them the more force they have. And then when one tries to resolve and understand them one realizes that in them the secret and destiny of humanity is condensed and how the reversal of the words reveals how the microcosmic Our Father which Christ proclaimed to his followers could originate.

But Jesus did not only perceive this secret of the original pagan revelations. When he awoke from the vision, he learned from the fleeing people and the demons the entire secrets of paganism. That was the second immeasurable pain which sank into his soul. First he learned decisively about the fall of Judaism by recognizing what had been revealed to Judaism before its fall. Now he learned the same about paganism. In this way he consciously experienced the fact that in his surroundings the people had to live in the sense of the words: "They have ears but do not

hear what the secrets of the cosmos are." Thus he attained to the unlimited compassion he had always felt for humanity and can be expressed as follows: now that he could see such things, humanity should receive the content of his visions — but where were the beings who would communicate it to humanity.

He had these experiences until his twenty-fourth year, approximately. Then his karma led him back home at the time his father died. He lived there with his step-siblings and his foster or stepmother. Whereas his stepmother previously had shown little understanding for him, now she showed more understanding for the great pain he bore within him. Then other experiences followed from his twenty-fourth to his thirtieth year, during which he found ever more understanding from his stepmother, although things were still somewhat difficult. These were also the years in which he came to know the Essenes better. Today I will only indicate the main points of how Jesus learned of the Essene Order. This was an order of men who separated themselves from the rest of humanity and developed a special life of body and soul in order to again ascend to the ancient revelations of the spirit which humanity had lost. With strict exercises and strict ways of life, the striving souls were to reach a stage where they could reunite with the spiritual region from out of which the ancient revelations had originated.

In this group Jesus of Nazareth also met John the Baptist, although strictly speaking neither were Essenes. The Akasha Record shows this clearly. But from what I have explained it is clear that an exceptional person was present who made an extraordinary impression on everyone. He so impressed the Essenes that despite guarding their spiritual activities as holy secrets, which they revealed to no outsider, they willingly spoke with Jesus about important secrets of their order concerning what they had achieved for their souls. Thus Jesus learned that in those times there were still ways for people to rise to the heights where humanity once sojourned and from whence it had since descended.

But what also made a deep discomfoting impression on him was that an Essene, if he wished to ascend to those heights, had to separate himself from humanity and live a life outside the society of others. That was not the way of universal human love, as Jesus of Nazareth felt it. He could not tolerate that a spiritual wealth exist that is unavailable to all, but only to a select few in detriment to humanity as a whole.

What he felt can be expressed as follows: **They are a few individuals, and there will always be fewer who find their way back to the ancient revelations, but it is just when those few separate themselves that the rest must live in decadence, for they must accomplish the material work for those who are no longer there.**

Once as he was leaving the Essene Order community he saw in spirit two figures fleeing from the gate. He had the impression that the Essenes protected themselves from these two figures, whom we call Lucifer and Ahriman in anthroposophical terms, driving them away by means of their spiritual exercises, their ascetic way of life and the strict rules of their order. Nothing of Lucifer and Ahriman should touch their souls. Therefore Jesus of Nazareth saw Lucifer and Ahriman fleeing, but he also knew that because of such a community having been established, where Lucifer and Ahriman could not enter and the Essenes wanted nothing to do with them, they turned even more to the other people. That was evident to him. Again it is completely different when one knows this only through theory and when one sees what individuals do for their own advancement and as a consequence Lucifer and Ahriman are sent to other people because they have been expelled from the presence of the former. **He realized that it was no path of salvation which the Essenes followed, but was one which through separation and at the cost of the rest of humanity only seeks their own advancement.**

An immense compassion engulfed him. He felt no joy at the ascension of the Essenes, for he knew that other people must sink lower while a few ascended. It all became clearer to him when he saw the same image at other Essene gates — there were more such communities — the image of Lucifer and Ahriman standing before the gates but unable to enter — and fleeing. Thus he realized that the methods and rules of orders such as the Essenes' impelled Lucifer and Ahriman to the other people. And this was the cause of the third extreme pain he experienced concerning the decadence of humanity.

I already mentioned that his stepmother had more and more understanding for what lived in his soul. So what now happened was meaningful as preparation of the Mystery of Golgotha: a conversation took place — according to research in the Akasha Record — between Jesus of Nazareth and his step or foster-mother. So advanced had her understanding become that he could speak to her about the threefold suffering he endured because of the decadence of humanity which he had

experienced in the areas of Judaism and paganism as well as the Essenes. And as he described to her his lonely suffering, and what he had experienced, he saw that it affected her soul.

It belongs to the most wonderful impressions one can receive in the occult field to learn the content of this conversation. For in the entire field of human evolution nothing similar — I don't say greater, because naturally the Mystery of Golgotha is greater — but something similar one cannot see. What he said to his mother were not words in the usual sense, but they were like living beings which passed over from him to his stepmother and his soul gave wings to the words with its own force. Everything which he had so painfully endured went in this conversation as though on wings into the soul of his stepmother — words of his infinite love as well as his infinite suffering. So he was able to describe to her what he had thrice experienced as in a great tableau. It was then enhanced when Jesus of Nazareth gradually steered the conversation to his conclusions about the threefold decadence of humanity.

It is very difficult to put into words how he summarized his own experiences to his stepmother. But as we are prepared by spiritual science, we can use spiritual scientific terms and expressions to attempt to describe the sense of the conversation's ending. Naturally what I now say was not expressed in the same words, but it will provide an approximate idea of what Jesus wanted his stepmother to grasp:

When we look back at the evolution of humanity on earth, it is similar to an individual human life, only changed in later generations, and unconscious for them. The Post-Atlantis life of humanity revealed itself to Jesus of Nazareth — that after the great natural disaster in Atlantis, first an ancient Indian culture developed in which the great holy Rishis communicated their vast wisdom to humanity. In other words, it was basically a spiritual culture. Yes, he went on, just as an individual human being is a child between birth and the seventh year, in which different forces are at work than in later life, so spiritual forces were active during that ancient Indian time. But because those forces were not only present until the seventh year, but extended over the Indian's entire life, humanity was in a different stage of evolution then. During the course of their entire life they knew what today the child knows and experiences until its seventh year. Today we think the way we do between the seventh and the fourteenth and the fourteenth and twenty first years because we have lost the childhood forces which are suppressed in the seventh year. During that ancient time, because these forces extended over an entire lifetime, which

today are only present until the seventh year, people in the first post-atlantic epoch were clairvoyant. They rose higher with the forces which today are only present until the seventh year. Yes, that was the Golden Age of human evolution. Then came another age, in which the forces extended over the entire life, which otherwise are only active between the seventh and fourteenth years. Then came the third epoch, in which the forces were active which otherwise are active between the fourteenth and twenty-first years. Then we lived in an epoch in which the forces which are active today between the twenty-first and the twenty-eighth years, were active during the entire lifetime.

Now we are approaching the middle of human life, Jesus of Nazareth said, which is in the thirties, where the forces of youth cease to grow and begin to decline. We are now living in an age that corresponds to the twenty-eighth to the thirty-fifth year of the individual person, where his life begins to decline. Whereas in the case of some individuals other forces are present, in humanity in general they are no longer there. That is the great suffering, that humanity should become aged, having its youth behind it, being in the epoch corresponding to the twenty-eighth to thirty-fifth year. Where should new forces come from? The forces of youth are exhausted.

That is what he told his stepmother about the impending decadence of humanity, which caused him so much pain, for it was clear that humanity's situation was hopeless. The forces of youth were exhausted, humanity now faced old age. The individuals, he knew, would continue to live on from the thirty-fifth year until death as before, because they retained residues of the forces, but humanity as a whole did not have that, so something else must come: what for the individual is necessary from the twenty-eighth to the thirty-fifth year. The earth would have to be illumined macro-cosmically with the forces with which the individual must be illumined from the twenty-eight to the thirty-fifth year.

That humanity as such was becoming old, that is what is read in the Akasha Record and felt during what Jesus of Nazareth related. As he spoke in this way to his mother about the meaning of human evolution, at that moment he realized that what he was saying was part of himself, and something of himself flowed from his words, for his words had become what he himself was.

That was also the moment when in the soul of his stepmother flowed the soul which had lived in his biological mother who — after the Zarathustra-I crossed over to him from the other Jesus-child — had died and had lived in

spiritual regions since Jesus was twelve years old. From then on she could spiritualize the stepmother's soul. Thus the latter now lived with the soul of the Nathan Jesus-child's biological mother.

But Jesus of Nazareth had united himself so intensely with the words with which he had expressed his pain about humanity, that it was as if this self had disappeared from his life's [physical, etheric and astral] sheaths, so that these sheaths became as they were when he was a small boy — only impregnated with all he had suffered since his twelfth year. The Zarathustra-I was gone and what lived in his three sheaths was only what remained through the power of the experiences. An impulse arose in these three sheaths which led him on the path to John the Baptist at the River Jordan. As in a kind of dream, which however was not a dream, but an enhanced consciousness, he went his way with only the three sheaths spiritualized and driven by the effects of what he'd experienced since he was twelve years old. The Zarathustra-I was gone. The three sheaths led him on, hardly noticing what was around him. He lived, with the I gone, wholly aware of humanity's destiny and its needs.

On his way to John the Baptist at the River Jordan, he met two Essenes with whom he had often spoken. Without his I he didn't recognize them. But they knew him and therefore spoke to him: **Where goest thou, Jesus of Nazareth?** What he answered I have tried to put into words. He spoke in a way that they did not know where the words came from. They came from him, yet not from him. **"There where souls such as yours do not wish to see, where the suffering of humanity can find the rays of forgotten light."**

Those were the words which seemed to come from him. They didn't understand him; they realized that he didn't recognize them, so they asked: **"Jesus of Nazareth, don't you know us?"** Now even stranger words were spoken. It was as if he had said to them: **You are like lost lambs, but I was the shepherd's son from whom you fled. If you recognized me, you would flee anew. It was long ago that you fled from me to the world.**

The Essenes didn't know what to make of him, for while speaking to them his eyes took on a very special aspect. They seemed to be looking outward, then also inward. They seemed like eyes showing an expression of reproach for the people spoken to. They were eyes through which showed gentle love, but a love which became a rebuke for the Essenes, one which came from their own hearts. We can characterize what the

Essenes felt when they heard him like this: **"What kind of people are you? Where is your world? Why do you wrap yourselves in deceptive robes? Why does a fire burn within you which is not kindled in my father's house?"**

They were silenced by these words. And he spoke further: **"You carry the tempters mark, who caught you when you fled. With his fire he made your wool glisten. The hair of this wool stings my eyes. You lost lambs! He has filled your souls with pride."**

When he spoke these words, one of the Essenes answered: **"Didn't we show the tempter the door? He no longer has anything to do with us."** Jesus said: **"When you showed him the door he ran to other people. He attacks them from all sides. You are not elevated when you debase others. You only think you are elevated because you let the others decline. You remain as high as you are only because you make the others smaller, so you think you are great."** Jesus of Nazareth spoke in that way so the Essenes could take note. It impressed them so much that they could no longer see. Their eyes dimmed and Jesus of Nazareth seemed to disappear before their eyes. But then, when he seemed to have vanished, they saw his face from a distance, but hugely increased in size like a fata morgana [mirage], and very, very far away. And words came as though spoken by this fata morgana. They sensed them to be: **"Vain is your striving because your hearts are empty which you have filled with the spirit which hides pride in the cloak of humility."**

Then the mirage also vanished and they stood there dismayed and depressed. When they could again see, they saw that Jesus had gone farther away while they were watching the face. And they could do nothing but be aware that he had gone on. Despondent, they continued to the Essene hostel and they never told anyone what they had experienced, but kept silent about it their whole lives. And they became the most profound of the Essenes, but they were silent and only spoke when everyday understanding was necessary. Their brother Essenes never knew why they were so changed. Until their deaths they never revealed what they had seen and heard. They therefore experienced the Mystery of Golgotha in a special way. For the others though, what they had experienced was imperceptible.

After Jesus had walked on for a while he met a man who was in deep despair. But, as I said, Jesus was so removed from earthly conditions that he didn't realize that a man had approached him. And he had such a strong effect on that man who was in such despair, that Jesus of Nazareth said something which may be described as: "Where has your soul led you? I saw you many thousands of years ago; you were different then!"

The desperate man heard this as though spoken from the approaching figure of Jesus of Nazareth. Because of these words, the man felt the impulse to say the following. On one hand he felt the need to speak, on the other to find the answer to his destiny: "In my life I have been highly successful. I always studied, and due to this learning I rose higher and higher over other men. With every honor I became prouder and I often said to myself: What a unique person you are, rising so high over your fellow men. I felt that my soul must be worth more than the souls of others. My pride increased with every new honor. Then I had a dream. What a horrible dream it was! While I was dreaming my soul was filled with a feeling of shame. I was ashamed of dreaming such a thing. I was so proud in my life, and now I dreamed something I would never have wanted to dream. I dreamed that I asked myself the question: Who made me so great? And then a being stood before me and said: I made you great, I raised you high, and therefore you are mine. I felt scandalized at the revelation that I had not risen so high through my own efforts, but that another being had been responsible for my success. Still dreaming, I ran away. When I woke up I really ran away, abandoning all my achievements. I didn't know what I was seeking and so I have been long wandering about in the world, ashamed of all the things which once brought me such pride."

After the despairing man had said this, the being who had appeared in his dream stood again before him, between him and Jesus of Nazareth. This dream figure blocked the figure of Jesus of Nazareth. And when the dream figure left, dissolving in mist, Jesus had also already moved on. When the despairing man looked around he saw Jesus a good distance away. And so he had to continue on his way in despair.

Then a leper approached Jesus, one whose disease and suffering was very advanced. And because of what that soul was feeling, Jesus again was obliged to speak. He said again: "Where has your soul led you? I knew you many thousands of years ago, and you were different."

These words encouraged the leper to speak in the same way they had affected the desperate man. The leper said: "I don't know how I got this disease, it just came gradually. And other people no longer allowed me to be among them. I had to wander in the wasteland, could only beg for what the people threw to me. One night I came close to a dense forest. I saw a tree approaching me from a clearing. It blinked at me with its own light. I felt impelled to get closer to that tree. It urged me on. And when I was close to it, a skeleton came at me like a light from the tree. It was death standing before me in that form. And death said to me: 'I am you. I live off you. Fear not!' And it continued: 'Why are you afraid? Didn't you love me during many lives on earth? Only you didn't know that you loved me, because I appeared to you as a beautiful archangel whom you thought you were loving.' And then death was not standing there before me, but the archangel which I had often seen and about whom I knew: That was the image I loved. Then it vanished. The next morning I awoke next to the tree, more miserable than before. And I knew that all the pleasurable indulgences I had loved, which lived in me as egotism, are related to the being who appeared to me as death and as an archangel and who claimed that I loved it and that it was myself. And now I stand before you and I do not know who you are." And now the archangel appeared again, and then death, standing between the leper and Jesus, blocked the leper's view of Jesus of Nazareth. When the leper saw only the archangel, Jesus vanished, and then death and the archangel vanished. The leper had to continue walking and saw that Jesus of Nazareth had already advanced farther.

Those were the events which occurred on the path Jesus took between the conversation with his stepmother and the baptism by John in the Jordan.

Tomorrow we will see how these events — the meeting with the two Essenes, with the despairing man and with the leper — continued to affect Jesus of Nazareth's physical, etheric and astral bodies when he barely understood the world from which he was so detached, and were enlivened by what he received with John at the baptism in the Jordan.

If these events, which I have described as having taken place between the conversation with his stepmother and the baptism in the Jordan, seem unlikely or strange, then I can only say: Although they may seem strange, they are truly revealed by research in the Akasha Record. They describe events which are as singular as they must be, for they are in preparation for an event which can only happen once — what we call the Mystery of

Golgotha. Whoever does not wish to consider the idea that something so special happened at that moment in the evolution of humanity will find human evolution difficult to understand.



Lecture XIII

Cologne, 18 December, 1913

Before continuing with the study of the life of Jesus Christ, I would like to mention some indications about the way such things are found. With few words such a comprehensive subject can of course only be characterized. But I want you to have an idea of what we can call occult research, at the stage where one can penetrate to such concrete facts as those which, for example, we considered here yesterday.

To begin with, we can say that this research rests on a study of the Akasha Chronicle. In general terms, I described how such reading in the Akasha Chronicle is to be understood in articles in the magazine "Lucifer-Gnosis" which appeared under the title "From the Akasha Chronicle". It should be clear that different facts about cosmic events and cosmic being must be researched in different ways, so now I would like to be more specific about what has already been said.

Basically **in the universe there is nothing but consciousness. Except for consciousness, everything else belongs in the domain of maya, or the great illusion.** You can find these facts in two places — in others as well — but especially in the description of the evolution of the earth from ancient Saturn to Vulcan in *An Outline Of Occult Science*, where the evolution from ancient Saturn to ancient Sun, from Sun to ancient Moon, from Moon to Earth, and so on, are described as stages of consciousness. This means that if one wants to reach these important facts, he must ascend to a stage of cosmic events where they consist of stages of consciousness. Therefore, if we are describing realities we can only describe various stages of consciousness. It is also included in another book published this summer: *The Threshold of the Spiritual World*. Shown there is how through a gradual ascension of the seer's vision it rises from the objects and processes around us, which disappear into nothingness, melt away so to speak, and finally reaches **the region where there are only beings in various stages of consciousness. So the true realities of the world are beings in the various stages of consciousness.** Due to the fact that we live in the human stage of

consciousness, and in this stage of consciousness have no complete overview of the realities involved, the effect is that what is unreal appears to us as real.

You have only to ask yourselves the following question. Is a human strand of hair a reality, even in a narrow sense? Does it have an independent existence? It would be nonsense to say that a human strand of hair has an independent existence. It does make sense to consider it as growing from the human body, otherwise it is not possible for it to exist on its own. Everyone would agree that it is nonsense to speak of a strand of hair as having an independent existence. A plant is often seen as an individual being, but is no more an individual being than is a strand of hair. For what the strand of hair is to the head, the plant is to the earth organism, and it makes no sense to consider the plant in isolation. We must think of the earth as analogous to man and all plants on the earth as belonging to the earth, as does the hair on one's head. It is no more possible for a plant to exist as an independent being outside the earth organism than it is for hair to exist without a head to grow on. It is important to know when to cease considering something as an autonomous being. But everything which the human being can attain to which does not have its roots in consciousness is not an independent being. Everything is rooted in consciousness, only in different ways.

Let us take thought, that is, what we as humans think. At first these thoughts are in our consciousness, but not merely in our consciousness. At the same time they are in the consciousness of the beings of the next higher hierarchy, the angeloi, the angels. But whereas we may have one thought, **all our thoughts are the angels' thoughts**. The angels think our consciousness. Thus you can see that when we ascend to clairvoyance, we must develop a different feeling towards perceiving the beings of the higher worlds than is the case in ordinary reality. If we think as we do in the physical-sensory earthly existence, we cannot achieve higher clairvoyance. One must not merely think, one must also be thought, and be aware that one is being thought. It is not easy — for human words have not yet been devised to describe what the feeling about this perceiving is. But to use a comparison: we make all kinds of movements and if we don't observe these movements in ourselves, but in the eyes of another and see

there the reflection of our own movements we say to ourselves: by observing in this way we know that we are doing this or that with our hands or with our facial expressions. One already has this feeling at the next stage of clairvoyance. We know in general that we are thinking, but we see ourselves [doing it] in the consciousness of the beings of the next higher hierarchy. We let the angels think our thoughts. **We must realize that we are not conducting our thoughts, but that the beings of the next hierarchy are conducting them.** We must feel the interweaving, undulating consciousness of the angels. We then receive information about the continuous impulse of evolution, for example about the truth of the Christ-impulse, how it continues to be active now. The angels can think this impulse; we humans can also think and describe it, if we devote our thoughts to the angels so they think in us. We can achieve this by continuous practice, as I described in my book *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and its Attainment*. From a certain moment on we connect a feeling, a sensation with the words: "Your soul doesn't think any more, it is a thought which the angels think". And when this becomes a truth for the individual human experience, we experience the thoughts about the truths of the Christ-impulse, also other thoughts about the wise guidance of earth evolution.

Those things related to the epochs of the earth's evolution — the ancient Indian epoch, the ancient Persian epoch and so forth — are thought by the archangels. By means of further [meditative] practice we are able not only to be thought by the angels, but to be experienced by the archangels. You must then come to the point where you know that you are delivering your life to the life of the archangels. In *The Threshold of the Spiritual World* I go into this in more detail: how you have the feeling, when you continue the exercises — I also spoke about this in Munich, using a grotesque example — as if you were to stick your head in an anthill, and the ants are the thoughts in movement. Whereas in ordinary life we think that we think our thoughts, through practice we realize that the thoughts think in us, because the angels think in us. And continuing with practice we arrive at the feeling that we are brought to various regions of the world by the archangels and thus learn about those regions. To correctly describe the [ancient] Indian or Egyptian cultures one must understand the meaning of: "Your soul has been brought to this or that time by an archangel". It is as though our life body fluids knew that they support the life process and are carried through the organism as the blood is. Thus the seer knows that he is conducted through the life process of the world by the archangels. But

where individual experiences of the soul are concerned, they can only be investigated if the soul gives meaning to the words: The soul delivers itself as food to the Archai, the spirits of personality.

What I just said sounds grotesque, but it is nevertheless true that one cannot investigate such concrete facts as the life of Jesus of Nazareth before one gives meaning to the words: One is eaten as spiritual food and thus serves the Spirits of Personality. Obviously this sounds like madness to people who live in the outer world. Of course it does! Nevertheless it is just as true as the piece of bread that enters our stomachs becomes our food, and if it could think it would know that its existence has meaning and purpose in that we make it our food. It is just as true that we humans have the purpose of serving the Archai as food. While we walk around here on earth we are at the same time beings who are continually consumed, eaten by the Archai. You will not deny that people in ordinary life don't know this, and that they would call it madness if someone told them something like this. Man is for the Archai what a grain of wheat is for you as a physical human being. Don't only know this theoretically, but live in respect to the Archai as a grain of wheat would live were it to be ground to porridge by our teeth and pass through our pallets and stomach with the awareness: I am human food. Therefore also know: I am the Archai's food, I am digested by the Archai; that is their life, which I live in them. To vividly know this means to enter the consciousness of the Spirits of Personality, the Archai. Just as what it means to enter the consciousness of the Archangels when one knows: Your soul is brought to this or that epoch by the Archangels; and what it means to enter the consciousness of the Angels when one knows: My thoughts are thought by the angels. If we wish to enter the higher worlds, the conditions of experience must be different. It is necessary to be knowingly consumed by the Spirits of Personality if concrete facts such as the life of Jesus of Nazareth in human evolution are to be investigated.

Perhaps what I have said will serve to show that this occult research is completely different from research in the outer world. If you can think the analogies through, they provide the correct hints: You can imagine yourselves as the grains of wheat ground into porridge by your teeth in order to have a mental image, which is an analogy for reading in the consciousness of the Archai. One must be mentally ground up and feel it. It means that higher research is not possible without inner pain and suffering. **If it is so abstract that it doesn't hurt, as is research in the physical world, then research in the higher worlds cannot be achieved if it is to be more than complete fantasy.**

Therefore my efforts yesterday in describing the life of Jesus to separate it from abstract concepts and descriptions. Remember what I said in an attempt to point out what is important. I said: this was the life of Jesus of Nazareth from his twelfth, eighteenth and up to his thirtieth year. What I described is less important than having a vivid feeling of what Jesus' soul went through, to feel the pain of loneliness, the endless pain of having to stand alone with the untruths about which there were many ears to hear. I wanted to point out Jesus of Nazareth's feelings. His great threefold compassion for humanity from his twelfth to his thirtieth year. Not by describing the events to yourselves or to others, will you know something about the meaning of Jesus' experience as preparation for the Mystery of Golgotha, but rather that by conceiving of an idea — a mental picture — which shocks and moves your souls, a picture of what that man Jesus of Nazareth had to suffer before the Mystery of Golgotha in order that the Christ-impulse could stream into the earth's evolution.

In this way a vivid idea of the Christ-impulse is brought about in that the suffering is reawakened, so that one must describe these facts which are related to such things by trying to bring to mind feelings. You can see this in how I tried to characterize in few words what Akasha research is. The more you are able to feel in yourselves the billowing, undulating feelings in a being such as Jesus of Nazareth was, the more you fathom such mysteries.

I have often spoken about what happened then — that through the baptism in the Jordan, after Jesus of Nazareth's three bodies [physical, etheric, astral] were spiritualized by the Zarathustra-I in them, the Christ-being entered them, that is, a being from the realm of the spiritual world descended whose destiny was to live bound in a human body for three years. It is important to understand what that fact means. Because this fact is fundamentally different from all other facts in the earth's evolution. Here we are entering into something which is not merely a human event in the earth's evolution. This must be clear.

We can consider this from a human standpoint. Then we say: "Once there was a man as we have described him. He received the Christ-being, the Christ-impulse". But we can also consider it differently, although the considerations are rather skimpy on representations, that's doesn't matter. By means of our spiritual-scientific preparation, we will be able to make something of them.

Imagine that we are sitting in a council considering the Mystery of Golgotha not as men, but in a council of the higher hierarchies as the beings of the higher hierarchies are considering the Mystery of Golgotha. In a spiritual sense this change in viewpoint is possible. A comparison could be: We have a mountain before us and halfway up is a town. We can see the town from below, but it can also be observed from the summit. Naturally we mostly observe the Mystery of Golgotha from a human point of view. But we could also climb up to the sphere of the higher hierarchies. How then would we speak of the Mystery of Golgotha? We would have to say: When the earth's evolution began, the beings of the higher hierarchies had certain intentions for humanity. They wanted to guide the earth's evolution in a certain way. But Lucifer inserted himself into this intended guidance of humanity's earthly affairs. So **if we are looking down at earth evolution as a being of the higher hierarchies, we see that Lucifer changed the direction of this evolution from our original intention.**

And we say: Not everything that happens down there happens through us. Lucifer is continually intervening. Due to Lucifer's intervention, and later Ahriman's, a foreign element is present in human evolution. It could be expressed in such a way that the beings of the higher hierarchies say: "To a certain extent the sphere of the earth has been lost to us. There are forces there which distance the earth with its humanity from us".

Guidance by the higher hierarchies is gradual; each participates according to its powers, first of all the lowest. All the hierarchies participate in earth's evolution, up to highest, but these latter leave certain tasks to their subordinates — to the Angels, Archangels and Archai. So they are the first to be active in the evolutionary process.

We transfer ourselves — in all humility of course — to the council of the higher hierarchies, not the council of men. Then we can say: "Our messengers, the Angels, Archangels and Archai are there; they could carry out our orders very well if foreign powers were not present in the sphere of earth". So the great council decides something like the following: "Since we were not able to prevent Lucifer and Ahriman from interfering in the earth's evolution, our subordinates, the Angles, Archangels and Archai, have lost the ability, from a certain point in time, to do for humanity what had to be done according to our intentions." And this point in time was when the Mystery of Golgotha took place.

As this point in time approached, the gods of the higher hierarchies had to say: "We are losing the possibility for our subordinates to intervene in human souls. Because we could not deter Lucifer and Ahriman, we have only been able to act through our subordinates until this point in time. Thus forces arise in human souls, which can no longer be conducted by the Angels, Archangels and Archai. The human beings are turning away from us through the powers of Lucifer and Ahriman".

That was really — if I may express it so — the mood in heaven as the point in time approached which was calculated to be the beginning of the new era. Because their subordinates could no longer sufficiently care for humanity from a certain point in time, it became the "angst" of the gods. You will not misunderstand this, for you are prepared by spiritual science to understand that expressions have a different sense and feeling value when used to characterize the higher worlds.

This divine anxiety grew, ever more tantalizing, ever more worryingly — if I may say so — in the heavens. So the decision was made to send the Sun Spirit down, to sacrifice him by deciding: "He shall choose a different lot from now on than that of sitting in the council of the gods: he shall enter the arena where human souls live. We sacrifice this Son Spirit to them. Until now he has lived among us, in the spheres of the higher hierarchies; now he will enter the earth aura through the portal of Jesus".

That's how it looked from above in the council of the gods as the Mystery of Golgotha approached. It was an affair of the gods who guide the earth, not merely a human affair. It can be understood as not merely asking: What must be done so humanity is not lost on its precipitous path? Rather the question: What should we gods do in order to create a counterbalance for what has happened because we had to allow Lucifer and Ahriman into earth evolution?

And one can then create a feeling that the Mystery of Golgotha is other than a mere earthly affair, that it is an affair of the gods, an event of the world of the gods. **Truly, it was more important for the gods that they had to give up Christ to the earth than it was for humanity to receive Christ.**

And what is knowledge of the Mystery of Golgotha more than recognizing it as earth's central event? That when one observes the Mystery of Golgotha it is seen as an affair of the gods, that the gods opened a window to heaven, that the gods revealed their affairs to human eyes for a while

and that men could observe these godly affairs! One must learn to feel this observing the Mystery of Golgotha by imagining that if one were to pass by the closed house of heaven, one could look through that window and see what otherwise is invisible behind the walls of the domicile of the gods.

The person with reverent feelings about the occult nature of the Mystery of Golgotha is like someone who walks silently around a house that is always closed, only suspecting what is happening inside. At one point there is a window through which he can witness a small part of what is happening inside. For humanity **the Mystery of Golgotha is such a window to the spiritual world**. Therefore we must feel what happened as the Christ-being descended into the body — or rather the three bodies — of Jesus of Nazareth. We should absorb this idea ever deeper, that we are witnesses to a godly affair through the Mystery of Golgotha.

When we speak of such things words must be used in a different way than in ordinary life. One must speak about such things as the gods' "angst" and "fear" before the time of the Mystery of Golgotha. One must use words about the spiritual affairs of humanity in a different way. It is very easy for those who are all too ready to denigrate what is meant in the most sacred sense — whether from stupidity, frivolousness, pride or other reasons. All they have to do is twist the meaning of words into how they are used in exoteric life. In that way it is possible to turn them into the opposite of what is meant, even though they come from the need to announce the truths of the spiritual world which are so difficult to wring from the soul. Their meanings are reversed, thereby making them sound ridiculous or satanic.

This is all too widespread in our times. And those who should be protecting the treasure of the sacred-spiritual truths, which are so necessary for human souls just in these times, are not wakeful enough.

How great is the comfort with which we like to feed our spirit! How often must we see lamentable things! If when speaking of the spirit one goes even a little beyond materialism, people declare themselves satisfied because that way they don't have to strain themselves, in particular they don't have to strain their sensibilities. What we must feel is that because we are taking part in a consideration of the most sacred developments in earthly evolution, we have a responsibility toward the treasures of knowledge relating to the spiritual world. There is great frivolity in our times about such things, and people tend to take it all lightly. You will notice it popping up here and there, but will only recognize its abominable

nature if you're alert enough and **your hearts are kindled enough for the most sacred of the spiritual truths. Perhaps then you can assess the value of the spiritual treasures and become their good guardians, for we are all called to guard them together.**

Perhaps the easiest way to speak of something so important is: that the Mystery of Golgotha is not merely a human affair, but also an affair of the gods, and that we can observe this affair of the gods. But the way this is described will be distorted in such a way that I hesitate to even mention it. The time will perhaps come when it will be realized that we must reformulate the words of the sensible world when we use them for the super-sensible world, and that it is easy to insinuate other meanings to them.

Popular Christianity says what I have just indicated with the words: "The Father sacrificed his son for humanity". These words describe what is felt by human hearts in a popular sense, though the true meaning is: *The Mystery of Golgotha is an affair of the gods.*

And if we consider all of what I have said, we can have an idea of what happened during the event which we call the baptism by John in the Jordan. The temptation, which is also described in the Gospels, followed. From the viewpoint of the Akasha Chronicle we would say: After Jesus of Nazareth took the Christ-being into himself he had to go into the wilderness. There he had clairvoyant visions, which are described fairly accurately by the words of the clairvoyant Gospel writers. It could also be said that now the Christ-being was really bound to the three bodies of Jesus. That means that he descended from the spiritual world and became limited to the capacities of the three bodies. Therefore it would be false to think that Christ, because he belonged to a higher world from which he had descended, could now immediately envision that higher world. That is not the case. Whoever finds this incomprehensible should think again about what it means to be clairvoyant. You are all clairvoyant! All! There is not one here who is not clairvoyant. So why don't you all see clairvoyantly? Because you haven't developed the organs in order to use the forces which reside in all humans. It is not a question of having the capacities, but rather of being able to use them.

The Christ-being had all possible capacities, but in the three bodies of Jesus of Nazareth he only had the capacities which corresponded to those three bodies. That is why they had to be prepared in such a complicated manner, for the capacities of these three bodies were indeed high

capacities, greater than the corresponding capacities of all the other people on the earth. But Christ was bound to them just as your clairvoyant capacities are bound to the organs which you have, only cannot yet use. It was possible through the capacities which the Zarathustra-soul had left behind in Jesus of Nazareth's three bodies, the remnants of which now served Christ to confront a being who could arouse all the pride and arrogance that a human soul is capable of. This being confronted the Christ Jesus.

At that moment he sensed what that being was attempting in the language of visions — what the Bible describes with the words: "All the kingdoms you see before you" — kingdoms of the spiritual world — "can be yours if you recognize me as the lord of *this* world." If one is full of pride and arrogance and brings it into the spiritual world, one can own this world's kingdom of Lucifer because arrogance submerges everything else if everything except arrogance is left behind. But man is not prepared for that; it would mean confronting a terrible destiny.

The Christ Jesus faced this possibility. Then two images appeared before his soul. The first was of his experience on the way to the Jordan river, which I described yesterday as having met the despairing man. And once again the figure which had appeared to that despairing man in a dream stood before Jesus of Nazareth's soul, who now said: "Recognize me as lord of the world". Then he recognized that figure as the one he had seen at the gates of the Essenes: Lucifer! Therefore he knew that now Lucifer was speaking to him, and he repulsed the attack. He defeated Lucifer.

Then two beings came to attack him, and he had the impression which was more or less what the Bible describes. They said to him: "Show all your fearlessness, your strength, show what you can do as a man by throwing yourself from the heights and not fear being injured". In such a case consciousness of strength and courage should awaken in the human soul, but it can also make him a sensualist. Two figures stood before him. Because Jesus had had the impression that it was Lucifer and Ahriman who had flown away from the Essene gates, he now had the impression that within one of them was the same being whom the leper had encountered and who had presented himself as death. Because of these experiences he recognized Lucifer and Ahriman. Thus he relived what he had experienced on the road to the Jordan. He also repulsed this attack. He defeated both Lucifer and Ahriman.

Then Ahriman came again. A kind of temptation ensued. He said to Christ Jesus something similar to what the Bible describes: "Make these stones into bread to show your power." But now Jesus could not give a complete answer to what Ahriman demanded. He was able to repulse the first and the second attacks: the attack by Lucifer alone and the attack of both together. But now he could not repulse Ahriman's attack. The fact that he could not totally repulse Ahriman's attack had meaning for the effectiveness of the Christ-impulse on earth.

I must characterize what this mean in a popular, almost frivolous way: Make these stones into bread, so they become food for humanity. The higher hierarchies were not able to completely eliminate Ahriman from the field of the earth's evolution until the Vulcan epoch. It will never be possible through purely spiritual efforts to defeat Ahriman's inner temptations: the desires, cravings and lusts which arise from within, and what arises as arrogance and sensuality. When Lucifer attacks men alone he can be defeated by spirituality. Also when Lucifer and Ahriman attack together from within, they can be defeated through spiritual means. But when Ahriman is alone, he engulfs his effectiveness in the material events of earth evolution. That cannot be completely fended off.

Ahriman, Mephisto, Mammon — they mean the same. They are immersed in money and in everything connected with human egotism. The fact that it is necessary for human life to be commingled with materialistic things means that humanity must reckon with Ahriman. If Christ was to help earthly humanity in the right way he had to allow Ahriman to act. Ahriman, the material, must be active until the end of the earth's evolution. His work had to remain undefeated by Christ, not completely overcome. The Christ must accept the struggle with Ahriman until the end of earth evolution. Ahriman had to remain.

We as humans can overcome the attacks of Lucifer and the attacks of Lucifer and Ahriman together. The struggle in the material outer world must be fought out until the end of the earth's evolution. Therefore Christ had to hold Ahriman in check, but allow him to stand alongside him. For this reason Ahriman remained active during the three years that Christ worked in the body of Jesus of Nazareth, and he entered the soul of Judas and was decisive in the betrayal of Jesus. What happened through Judas is related to the temptation in the desert after the baptism in the Jordan.

Slowly and gradually the Christ-being united with the three bodies of Jesus. It took three years. At the beginning the bond was loose, and then it gradually pressed into the three bodies. Only when death approached were the three bodies truly permeated with the Christ-being. And all the suffering and pain experienced during the three stages of his development was immeasurably increased as he gradually was able to completely immerse himself in the three human bodies. It was a continual pain, but a pain which was transformed into love — and love — and love.

And then the following happened. When we consider how the Christ Jesus lived during the first, second and third years he spent with his closest disciples, we find it to be different in each year. In the first year Christ was, as I said, only loosely bound to the body of Jesus of Nazareth. So there were moments when the physical body was in one place or another and the Christ-being was elsewhere. The other Gospels report that the lord appeared to his disciples when his physical body was somewhere else — meaning that Christ wandered about the land in spirit.

That was in the beginning. Then the Christ-being bound himself more and more to the body of Jesus of Nazareth. Later, when Christ was with the circle of his closest disciples, they were so intimately united with him that he was never separated from them. The more he lived into his body, the more he lived in the inner being of his disciples. He traveled about the land with his disciples. He would speak through one of them, then through another disciple of the inner group, so that as they went about the land it was no longer only Christ Jesus who spoke, but one of the disciples; but Christ spoke through them. He lived in the disciples with such power that the facial expressions of a disciple through whom Christ spoke changed so much that the people who heard him had the feeling that he was the master. Another, though, who was really Christ, was so modest that he looked ordinary. In this way he spoke through one then another throughout the land. That was the secret of his effectiveness during the last of the three years.

As he went about with his disciples in this way and he seemed ever more dangerous to his enemies, they wondered: "How can we hunt him down? We can't arrest the whole bunch. For we can never know when we grab the one who is speaking if he's the right or the wrong one. If we grab the wrong one, the right one escapes." That was their greatest fear. They knew that one spoke and then a different one did. And the right one was unrecognizable, for he took on the ordinary form of another.

There was something wonderful about that group. Therefore a betrayal was needed. The way this is usually described is mistaken. What is it supposed to mean that Judas had to kiss the right one? According to the usual accounts it should not have been difficult to trap Jesus of Nazareth. So the kiss would make no sense if someone who knew which was the right one had to point him out to those who could already have known anyway. But because of the reasons I have related, the enemies did not know who the right one was.

Only when the great suffering — the Mystery of Golgotha — was before him was the total union of the Christ-being with the bodies of Jesus of Nazareth accomplished. What happened then is beautifully described in the other Gospels. For the seer who reads in the Akasha Chronicle about what happened, it is a fact that while Christ was hanging on the cross something like an eclipse of the sun took place in the area around Golgotha. I can't say if it was an eclipse of the sun or a powerful darkening of the clouds, but a darkening like what can be observed during an eclipse of the sun took place in the area around the event of the Mystery of Golgotha.

When occult vision observes life on earth during such a darkening, all living things are shown to him differently than when there is no such darkening. In plants the connection of the etheric body and the physical body is different; and also in animals the astral body and the etheric appear completely different. During an eclipse of the sun it is different on the earth from when the sun is simply missing in the night. Of course this is not the case when in the ordinary sense the sky is covered with clouds; only when an especially thick darkening occurs. And such a darkening took place then. As I said, I cannot yet tell if it was an eclipse of the sun, but what can be seen was like an eclipse of the sun. While this transformation of the earth was taking place, also in the physical sense, he whom we call the Christ-being went over into the earth's living aura. Through the death of Christ Jesus the earth received the Christ impulse.

The greatest event to occur on earth must be described in such simple, stammering words, because it is impossible to even approximate this greatness with human words.

When the body of Jesus was taken down and placed in a tomb, a natural event occurred. A whirlwind arose, then the earth split open and the body of Jesus was taken into it as the shrouds were blown away from the body. It is awesome to see that the arrangement of the shrouds described in the Gospel of John coincides with this vision.

These two events: the darkening of the earth, the earthquake and the powerful whirlwind show at one point in the earth's evolution how natural events coincide with spiritual events. Otherwise such things only occur with living beings as, for example, when thinking and a decision of the will precede a hand's movement. In ordinary life we are only concerned with such mechanical phenomena. Only at a very special moment did a spiritual and two physical phenomena coincide — also in other earthly phenomena, but most especially with this one.

I don't think that the consideration of these concrete facts, which it is now possible to describe to a small number of people as a kind of Fifth Gospel, can detract from the grand ideas we have more theoretically worked through about the Mystery of Golgotha. On the contrary, I believe that if we try to let these concrete facts work on us more and more deeply we will feel what was previously presented more theoretically, more abstractly, strengthened. We will realize through these facts that in this our own time in earthly evolution important events will take place.

By means of these concrete facts you will perhaps be able to achieve the right feelings and nuance of soul about the Mystery of Golgotha, and it is this nuance of feeling that I wished to present to your souls with what I have related from the Fifth Gospel. Perhaps some of you will be able to attend other lectures on the Mystery of Golgotha, or we may be able to continue here in Cologne. For we must say: Regardless of the fact that people nowadays show so little interest in hearing about the facts we have spoken about today, there is a great necessity for such facts to flow into human evolution, especially now. Therefore they have been disclosed, although it is quite difficult to speak of these things. Nevertheless, although I may be inclined not to speak of them, I do so from a sense of inner responsibility, as long as there are people to hear them. They will be needed in humanity's evolution. Those who are hearing them now will surely need them for the spiritual work they are doing for further human development.

You see, gradually we are learning through our considerations what should arise in our souls in order to be useful members of advancing human evolution. That is the meaning of human development on earth — that human souls be more aware of their tasks.

The Christ has come. His impulse is working. For a long time he could act only in the unconscious; then he had to act through what was understood until that time. But it will be ever more necessary for man to learn to

understand him, the Christ, who through the bodies of Jesus of Nazareth has entered the earth's aura and humanity's development.



Notes

1. **△** These lectures were given to members of the Anthroposophical Society, who were familiar with Steiner's previous lectures and writings about the two Jesus children. Essentially, he maintained that the Gospels of Luke and of Matthew relate the birth and infancy of two different Jesus children, one descendent from the royal Jewish line – the Matthew Jesus; and the other descended from the priestly line – the Luke Jesus. (See the differing genealogies in these Gospels.) When they were 12 years old the Matthew Jesus died, but his "I" incorporated into the body of the other Jesus. See: **From Jesus to Christ**

2. **△ Bath Kol**

bath'-kol, bath kol (bath qol, "the daughter of the voice"): Originally signifying no more than "sound," "tone," "call" (e.g. water in pouring gives forth a "sound," bath qol, while oil does not), sometimes also "echo."

The Divine voice, audible to man and unaccompanied by a visible Divine manifestation distinguished from all natural sounds and voices, even where these were interpreted as conveying Divine instruction.

3. **△** This refers to the first Goetheanum, for which the foundation stone was laid in 1913.



First Goetheanum, front view, Dornach, Switzerland, 1922.



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