planetaryincarnationsofearth*

and the epochs of the earthen incarnation

> I recently drew your attention to the fact that what takes place in the evolution of the earth and of mankind in particular moves in a descending line. Earth humanity and the evolution of the earth itself is on the path of decadence. I drew your attention to the fact that this is today a recognized geological truth, that geologists who are to be taken seriously admit that the earth crust is in a process of decay. Mankind itself, in particular, is in a process of decay through the sensuous-earthly forces. And mankind, in its evolutionary process, must receive spiritual impulses which counteract decadence. Therefore a conscious spiritual life must enter mankind. We must be clear about the fact that we have already passed beyond the pinnacle of Earth evolution. In order that it may proceed, the spiritual must be taken up more and more clearly and distinctly.
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> At the outset, this seems an abstract fact. But for the spiritual researcher this is not an abstract fact. You know that we can trace the evolution of the *Earth* through the *Saturn*, *Sun*, and *Moon* states right into the *Earth* state. This evolution may also be characterized in the following way: if we speak of present mankind, we may consider the evolution of mankind through the *Saturn*, *Sun* and *Moon* periods as a preparation, as a pre-state. Only upon the Earth itself did man, as he received his ego, gain his true humanhood, and he will receive further elements into his true being during the subsequent evolutionary stages of the *Earth*.
>
> Mission of the Archangel Michael, Lecture 5, GA 194

Evo. Stage	Earth Incarnation	Characteristic	Humanity	The Hierarchies	Seeds of the Future & Future
1	Saturn ♄	Warmth (Deep sleep consciousness, mineral)	The beginnings of Humanity's Physical Body – Given by the Thrones (Spirits of Will) in sacrifice Time begins	The Archai receive their Ego	The seed of Spirit Man (Atma) is implanted
2	Sun ☉	Gaseous (Sleep consciousness, plant)	The Etheric body is given to Humanity by the Kyriotetes (Spirits of Wisdom)	The Archangels pass through their human stage	The seed of Buddhi (Life Spirit) is implanted into the Etheric body
3	Moon ☽	Liquid (Dreaming consciousness, animal)	Humanity receives the Astral body from the Dynamis (Spirits of Movement)	The Angels pass through their human stage	The seed of Spirit Self (Mana) is implanted into the Astral body
4	Earth ⊕ (Current)	Solid (Waking consciousness, human)	Man receives his Ego from the Exsusia (Spirits of Form, Elohim, the God of the Old Testament)		

Earth Epochs	5th Post-Atlantean Cultural Ages	Astrological Age	Major Characteristic	Archai Time Spirit Regencies (Ages)			
				Time Spirit (Archangel)	Period of Reign	Rec'vs Impulses From:	Resulting Influence on Human Affairs
Polarian	Ancient Indian (7227 - 5067 B.C.)	♋ Cancer	The beginning of religion (the world is maya)	Gabriel	1471 – 1879	Moon	The Harbinger. [1]
Hyperborean	Ancient Persian (5067 - 2907 B.C.)	♊ Gemini	Working with the Earth	Michael	1879 – 2230	Sun	Christ's Messenger [2]
Lemurian (the Fall [10])	Egypto-Chaldean (2907 - 747 B.C.) (Beginning of recorded history)	♉ Taurus	Working with the laws of space (Sentient Soul)	Oriphiel	2230 – 2590	Saturn	Divine wrath [3]
Atlantean (the Flood / "Ice Age")	Greco-Roman; (747 B.C. - 1413 A.D.) MoG (33 A.D. [15])	♈ Aries	Man becomes personality, logical deduction (Intellectual Soul [11] [12])	Anael	2590 – 2940	Venus	Great deeds of love [4]
5th Post Atlantean	Germanic-Celtic; (Present) (1413 - 3573 A.D.)	♓ Pisces	Individual Freedom (Consciousness Soul)	Zachariel	2940 – 3300	Jupiter	Bringer of wisdom [5]
Sixth Epoch [14]	Slavic (3573 - 5733 A.D.)	♒ Aquarius	Common individual wisdom and brotherhood; Christianity reaches fulfillment	Raphael	3300 – 3650	Mercury	Doctor among the archangels [6]

	Seventh Epoch	American (5733 - 7893 A.D.)	♑ Capricorn	War of All against All (End of 5th Post-Atlantean Epoch) [8]	Samael	3650 – 4610	Mars	Spirit of conflict [7]

5	Jupiter ♃	Psychic Consciousness	Imagination	The New Jerusalem	Spirit Self (Manas) evolves to Angelic Kingdom
6	Venus ♀	Super-Psychic Consciousness	Inspiration		Life Spirit (Buddhi) evolves to Archangelic Kingdom
7	Vulcan ⚴	Spiritual Consciousness	Intuition	Christ-Sophia Union	Spirit Man (Atman) evolves to Archai

* All dates are approximations. Some were explicitly given by Dr. Steiner in his lectures, which also varied slightly from one lecture to another. The timing of events fluctuates due to the constant interactions between Cosmic Events and Earthly / Evolutionary events, though all are bound by Cosmic Law.

Notes

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1. Gabriel

△ In the next immediately adjacent spiritual realm, the Beings whom we call the Hierarchy of the Archangeloi, the Archangels, unfold their activity. The Archangeloi have to do with much that also plays a part in the evolution of humanity. They have to do, not with the individual human being, but with groups of human beings. Thus, as I have said in many anthroposophical lectures, the evolution of the *peoples* is under the rulership of Archangelic Beings. But it is also the case that certain epochs in Earth-evolution receive their essential impulses from individual Archangeloi. For example, during the three centuries preceding the last third of the nineteenth century, namely during the nineteenth, eighteenth, seventeenth centuries and part of the sixteenth, we must think of the civilised world as being essentially under the dominion of the Archangel known to Christians capable of speaking of these things, as *Gabriel*. This period was therefore the Age of Gabriel.

This particular Gabriel Age is of great significance for the whole evolution of mankind in modern times, for the following reason. Since the Mystery of Golgotha took place it has been possible for men on the Earth to have this realisation: Through the Mystery of Golgotha, Christ, the sublime Being of the Sun, has come down to the Earth. He has descended from the Sun to the Earth, entering into the body of Jesus and uniting Himself with Earth's destiny. But although the Christ Being has remained united with the Earth, it has not been possible through the succeeding rulerships of Archangeloi from the time of the Mystery of Golgotha until that of the dominion of Gabriel, for the Christ Impulse itself actually to lay hold of the inner physical and etheric forces of mankind. This became possible for the first time under the Gabriel impulse which began to work about three hundred years before the last third of the nineteenth century. Thus, in reality, it is only since that time that *by way of the forces of heredity themselves* the Christ Impulse has been able to penetrate humanity inwardly. As yet this has not been achieved.

Karmic Relationships IV, Lecture 8, GA 240

2. Michael

△ Well, my dear friends, we have asked about the origin of human intelligence, about the origin of human intelligent behavior which, stating it simply, has its instrument in our head organism. And we have seen that this intelligent constitution of our soul stems from that deed of the Archangel Michael which is commonly presented in the symbol of the fall, the casting down of the Dragon. This is actually a very trivial symbol. For, if we really conceive of Michael and the Dragon, we have to visualize, first, the Michael Being, and, secondly, the Dragon who, in reality, consists of all that which enters into our so-called reason, into our intelligence. Not into a hell does Michael cast his opposing hosts, but into the human heads; there this Luciferic impulse continues to live. I have characterized human intelligence as an actual Luciferic impulse. Thus we may say: if we look back into the evolution of the *Earth*, we find the *Michael-deed*, and to this Michael-deed is joined the illumination of man by his reason.

Mission of the Archangel Michael, Lecture 5, GA 194

Then came the age, when those who can read the spiritual events taking place in the universe, became aware that Michael had rejoined the stream of intellectual life. He is pursuing a new metamorphosis of his cosmic office. Before, he sent the stream of thoughts from the outer spiritual world into the souls of men. Now, since the last third of the nineteenth century, he seeks to dwell within the human souls, where thoughts are being formed. Before, the human beings who were spiritually akin to Michael watched him perform his works in spirit-regions. Now, they know that they must give him his home in their hearts; now, they dedicate to Michael their own Thought-informed, Thought-sustained spiritual life; now, in free, individual Thought-life, they seek counsel from Michael as to their soul's right path.

The Age of Michael has dawned. Hearts are beginning to have Thoughts. The springs of spiritual fervour no longer flow from the darkness only of mystical feeling, but from clear soul-brightness — Thought-informed and Thought-sustained. To understand this, is to receive Michael into the heart. Thoughts which seek today to grasp the Spirit must spring from hearts that throb for Michael, the fiery Thought-King of the Universe.

The Michael Mystery, Lecture 1, GA 26

3. Oriphiel

△ Something quite similar to a birth took place on the astral plane in 1879. What had slowly ripened since the 14th century could now be carried into the world in a freer way, even though only for a few people. For Gabriel's rule was followed by that of the archangel Michael. He's the radiant sun that lets esoteric wisdom shine out into a small host of people. Materialism is included in the divine plan of creation and it has a purpose in the whole world. But the time has now come for the esoteric sun to shine brightly under Michael's radiant direction. For materialism's dark forces are increasing.

Michael's radiant rule will be followed by a dark, terrible age that starts about 2300.

Together with Michael, a dark God has begun his rule — the God Mammon. For occultism Mammon isn't just the God of money. He's the leader of all base, black forces. And his hosts attack men's bodies and souls to corrode and ruin them. There's a lot of talk about bacterial today, and they influence a lot of things. In future they'll increase in a terrifying way, and many human bodies will waste away from terrible diseases and plagues. The brand of sin will be stamped on men's bodies for all to see. Another archangel — Oriphiel — will rule then. He must come to shake men up to their true vocation through terrible tortures. So that this can happen in the right way a small group of people must be prepared today to spread esoteric life in the black age 400–600 years from now. [DL editor: 2307-2507]

One under Michael's rule who feels the urge to participate in spiritual life is called upon to serve archangel Michael and to learn under him so that someday he'll be mature enough to also serve the terrible Oriphiel in the right way. A sacrifice is demanded from those who want to dedicate themselves to a higher life. One should only want to receive spiritual life and experience an awakening if one later wants to use this to put oneself, one's will and everything one has in the service of mankind only.

In four to six centuries the small group of men who are being prepared today will serve the God Oriphiel so that mankind can be saved. If in that age men wanted to be spiritual leaders who hadn't been prepared to stand fast in all storms and to resist Mammon's hosts, they wouldn't be able to serve the God Oriphiel in the right way, and mankind would not be lifted out of their misery. So in order to do it we must work very earnestly now to fulfill our tasks then.

But when dark powers rage most terribly, the brightest light also shines. Oriphiel has ruled before. That was the time when Christ appeared on earth. Bad powers of degeneration and decadence were ruling everywhere on earth then. And the human race could only be shaken higher by terrible means. Oriphiel is called the archangel of wrath, who purifies mankind with a strong hand.

The story in the Bible where Christ swings a scourge to chase the money changers out of the temple has a deep meaning. Back when things were darkest on earth, Christ appeared as the savior of mankind. Oriphiel's reign ended 109 years after Christ's appearance, and he was replaced by Anael. Then came Zachariel, then Raphael; Samael ruled during the Renaissance and Gabriel from the 16th century until 1879. Then Michael began to rule, and circa 2300 Oriphiel, the terrible archangel of wrath, will be ruling things. And as once before, spiritual light will shine into darkness brightly and radiantly. Christ will appear again on earth, although in a different form than before. We're called upon to receive him and to serve him.

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4. Anael

△ After this we find the age of Anael, who draws his forces from Venus. We find the great deeds of love which spread Christianity during this age, countless deeds of love, namely those deeds of love which live in the footsteps of the Irish monks as they spread Christianity in Europe. And we find that love is also the predominant thing in the rest of Christian life during this reign of Anael.

The period in which Anael reigns is the age of love;

Lecture to Priests: The Apocalypse, Lecture 6, GA 346

5. Zachariel

△ And we find that love is also the predominant thing in the rest of Christian life during this reign of Anael. The reign of Zachariel follows; he draws his forces from Jupiter, mainly forces of wisdom, but forces which could be but little understood during this age. Instead of a real Jupiter reign, the reign of the archangels began to retire more into the background at this time.

Then comes the age in which events occur that are more or less ignored in outer history. After the age of Zachariel is over, humanity's soul is basically sick. Humanity is very sick, and pathogenic substances spread from east to west. Terrible pathogenic substances exist which are dangerous to Christianity, because the period of Jupiter wisdom has ended.

Lecture to Priests: The Apocalypse, Lecture 6, GA 346

6. Raphael

△ The age of Raphael, the doctor among the archangels, stands behind the sick things which were left behind from the age of Zachariel.

Raphael who leads man into the secrets of healing nature, of the healing cosmos. In a similar way, at St. John's time, all that can then be seen in weaving pictures would have to be transposed into powerful music, so that the cosmic Mystery, as it can be experienced by man at this season of St. John, would speak to our hearts.

The Four Seasons and the Archangels, Lecture 4, GA 229

Goethe, who was initiated between the periods of his life at Leipzig and Strasburg, knew of the harmony of the spheres. He expressed it at the beginning of Faust in words spoken by the Archangel Raphael: "The Sun makes music as of old Amid the sister-spheres of heaven. On its predestined circle rolls With roar of thunder." In deep sleep, the Initiate hears these sounds as if they were the notes of trumpets and the rolling of thunder.

An Esoteric Cosmology, Lecture 6, GA 94

7. RE the Sixth Cycle

If we wanted to write what they wrote in ancient times in a modern form, we would have to say that we are living in the 5/7 age, that is, we're in a larger, fifth cycle, and we're also in a seventh cycle which intersects this. A seventh cycle signifies an end condition. It was preceded by the sixth Gabriel cycle. A great deal is always decided in a sixth cycle; the end is prepared, and the previous age still works into this sixth cycle.

Samael

△ The Michael cycle begins about 1879, the Gabriel cycle begins about 1471. Before that was the fifth Samael cycle, and this archangel gets his impulses from Mars.

We are living in the fifth post Atlantean period, a sixth one will follow and a seventh one will follow. The catastrophe which then separates us from the next large period which will come the fifth from the sixth period will not just be an external event in nature like the ice age or flood was. This separation of the fifth from the sixth period will become manifest in a more moral way. As I have often mentioned, a war of all against all or a moral catastrophe will separate the fifth from the large sixth earth period.

Of course, this will also be connected with events in nature, but the latter will be less important. It is introduced by what comes from Mars through Samael, the spirit of conflict, when warlike elements for initiation were brought from the spiritual world. At the beginning of our fifth, smaller consciousness soul age we have a preview of the way our larger age will end after our fifth cultural epoch has been followed by the sixth and seventh ones.

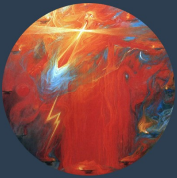
If we listen to what people who still knew something about the secret events which stand behind the public ones said around the beginning of the 15th century when Samael was reigning under the influence of Mars we will get an inkling of the way our large epoch will end. One finds one's way into apocalyptic thinking if one connects numbers with events. If one learns to look at the world in an apocalyptic way, one will, as it were, be able to read the apocalyptic universe, and one will find that countless secrets are revealed to one.

Lecture to Priests: The Apocalypse, Lecture 6, GA 346

It's verily not a pleasant feeling when we see all of what we previously had in us unconsciously objectively before us, which then accompanies us wherever we go. We heard that it's a Luciferic being, Samael, with his hosts who brings the doppelganger out of us. From this, one sees that Luciferic beings also do good things and not always bad ones. If we always carried our defects in us unconsciously, we could never become aware of the destructive, ruinous things that they do in our body and in the whole cosmic substance. As long as Samael hasn't brought our defects out from within us, as long as we don't see them objectively before us as our doppelganger, so long the Gods graciously keep us from seeing the ruinous, destructive force of jealousy, hate, envy and other passions and emotions that we stream out into our environment. A clairvoyant sees that these passions tear something down in our physical body and in the cosmos' substance, whereas the good stimulates upbuilding forces. So basically Samael is a blessing for development. He shows us our inner nature all the more accurately the more seriously we take our training in hand. We then see defects objectively which we hadn't paid any attention to previously.

Esoteric Lessons II, Lesson 40, GA 266

8. △ We have said repeatedly that our epoch will end, when the seventh age has passed away, by the War of All against All, but this war must really be pictured quite differently from the way we have been accustomed to think of war. We must bear in mind the foundation, the real cause of this war. This foundation or cause is the increase of egoism, of self-seeking and selfishness on the part of man. And we have now progressed so far in our considerations that we have seen what a sharp two-edged sword this "I" of man is. He who does not fully realize that this "I" is a two-edged sword will scarcely be able to grasp the entire meaning of the evolution of humanity and the world. On the one hand this "I" is the cause that man hardens within himself, and that he desires to draw into the service of his "I" his inner capacities and all the other objects at his disposal. This "I" is the cause of man's directing all his wishes to the satisfaction of this "I" as such. Its striving to draw to itself as its own possession a part of the earth which belongs to all, to drive away all the other Egos from its realm, to fight them, to be at war with them, is one side of the "I." But on the other hand the must not forget that the "I" is at the same time that which gives man his independence and his inner freedom, which in the truest sense of the word elevates him. His dignity is founded in this "I," it is the basis of the Divine in man.



First Seal of the Apocalypse

Arild Rosenkrantz [9]

Thus the "I" will be the pledge for the highest goal of man. But at the same time, if it does not discover love, if it hardens within itself, it is the tempter that plunges him into the abyss. For it is that which separates men from one another which brings them to the great War of All against All, not only to the war of nation against nation (for the conception of a nation will then no longer have the significance it possesses to-day) but to the war of each single person against every other person in every branch of life; to the war of class against class, of caste against caste and sex against sex. Thus in every field of life the "I" will become the apple of discord; and hence we may say that it can lead on the one hand to the highest and on the other hand to the lowest. For this reason it is a sharp two-edged sword. And he who brought the full Ego-consciousness to man, Christ Jesus, is, as we have seen, symbolically and correctly represented in the Apocalypse as one who has the sharp two-edged sword in his mouth.

We are now looking with great longing towards the sixth civilization, to that which must be described as developing out of the spiritual marriage between West and East. The sixth stage will be the foundation for the new civilizations which will arise after the great War of All against All; just as our civilization arose after the Atlantean epoch. On the other hand, the seventh race of culture will be characterized by the lukewarm. This seventh age will continue into the new epoch, just as the sixth and seventh races of the Atlantean epoch continued into our epoch as races hardened and stiffening. After the War of All against All, there will be two streams in humanity: on the one hand the stream of Philadelphia will survive with the principle of progress, of inner freedom, of brotherly love, a small group drawn from every tribe and nation; and on the other hand the great mass of all those who are lukewarm, the remains of those who are now becoming lukewarm (Laodicea).

After the great War of All against All, gradually the evil stream will be led over to good by the good race, by the good stream. This will be one of the principal tasks after the great War of All against All; to rescue what can be rescued from those who after the great war will only have the impulse to fight one another and to allow the "I" to express itself in the most external egoism. Such things are always provided for in advance in the spiritual guidance of humanity.

Do not consider it a hard thing in the plan of creation, as something which should be altered, that humanity will be divided into those who will stand on the right and those who will stand on the left; consider it rather as something that is wise in the highest degree in the plan of creation. Consider that through the evil separating from the good, the good will receive its greatest strengthening. For after the great War of All against All, the good will have to make every possible effort to rescue the evil during the period in which this will still be possible. This will not merely be a work of education such as exists to-day, but occult forces will co-operate. For in this next great epoch men will understand how to set occult forces in motion. The good will have the task of working upon their brothers of the evil movement. Everything is prepared beforehand in the hidden occult movements, but the deepest of all occult cosmic currents is the least understood. The movement which is preparing for this, says the following to its pupils: "Men speak of good and evil, but they do not know that it is necessary in the great plan that evil, too, should come to its peals, in order that those who have to overcome it should, in the very overcoming of evil, so use their force that a still greater good results from it." The most capable must be chosen and prepared to live beyond the period of the great War of All against All when men will confront those who bear in their countenances the sign of evil; they must be so prepared that as much good force as possible will flow into humanity. It will still be possible for those bodies, which are to a certain extent soft, to be transformed after the War of All against All by the converted souls, by the souls who will still be led to the good in this last epoch. In this way much will be accomplished. The good would not be so great a good if it were not to grow through the conquest of evil. Love would not be so intense if it had not to become love so great as to be able even to overcome the wickedness in the countenances of evil men. This is already being prepared for and the pupils are told, "You must not think that evil has no part in the plan of creation. It is there in order that through it may come the greater good."

The Apocalypse of St. John, Lecture 8, GA 104

9. △ From a series Rosenkrantz made for Steiner in 1923, illustrating the Seven Apocalyptic Seals. This one is the first in the series, titled "The Mystery of the Creative Word".

The mystery of the creative word represents comprehensively the entire earthly evolution of man. The images in this and the other seals can be found in "The Revelation of St. John" or the Apocalypse. "And I turned to hear the sounds which reached me; then I saw seven golden lamps, and in the midst of the lamps one like unto the Son of Man, in a long garment... with eyes as a flame...and feet of living fire... and a voice like the sound of many waters. And in his right hand were seven stars, and out of his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength."

"Here," Steiner writes, "in general images, most far-reaching mysteries of human evolution are indicated... Every sign and form in the seals is significant... This continuous development from the beginning to the end of the earth reveals itself to the seer, when he sees on the astral plane the archetype of evolving man, as it is reproduced in the first seal."

10. △ Lucifer anchored himself in the sentient soul; and there he remains.

In the Lemurian epoch the Luciferic Beings set themselves in opposition to the Spirits of Form. It was these Luciferic Beings who gave man the prospect of freedom — but therewith the possibility of evil-doing, of succumbing to passion and desire in the world of sense. Where did these Luciferic Beings actually take hold? They took hold of what had been instilled into man as his innermost member at that time — the astral body. They established their footing in the human astral body and took possession of it. Had it not been for the coming of the Luciferic Beings this astral body would have remained in the sole possession of the Spirits of Form. They would have instilled into this astral body the forces which give man his human countenance, making him into an image of the Gods, namely, of the Spirits of Form. All this man would have come to be; but in his life through all eternity he would have remained dependent upon the Spirits of Form.

Lucifer encourages the tendency in human beings towards expansiveness, inflation, egotism, sensuality, passion, and ungrounded spirituality; Lucifer is the being who tells us that we are like the gods, knowing both good and evil.

The Luciferic Beings had crept, as it were, into man's astral body, so that Beings of two kinds were now working in it: the Beings who bring man forward and the Beings who, while obstructing this constant impulse, had at the same time established the foundations of his independence. Had the luciferic Beings not approached, man would have remained in a state of innocence and purity in his astral body. No passions inciting him to crave for what is to be found only on earth would have arisen in him. The passions, urges and desires of man were densified, debased, as it were, by the Luciferic Beings. Had they not approached, man would have retained a perpetual longing for his heavenly home, for the realms of spirit whence he has descended. He would have taken no delight in what surrounds him on the earth; earthly impressions would have aroused no interest in him. It was through the Luciferic Spirits that he came to have this interest, to crave for the impressions of the earth. These Spirits impelled him into the earthly sphere by pervading his innermost member, his astral body. Why, then, was it that man did not fall away entirely at that time from the Spirits of Form or from the higher spiritual realms as a whole? Why was it that in his interests and desires he did not succumb wholly to the world of sense?

It was because the Spirits who lead humanity forward took counter measures; they inculcated into the being of man what would otherwise not have been his lot, namely, illness, suffering and pain. That was the necessary counterweight to the deeds of the Luciferic Spirits.

The Luciferic Spirits gave man material desires; as their countermeasures the higher Beings introduced illness and suffering as the consequences of material desires and interests, to the end that he should not utterly succumb to this world of sense. And so there is exactly as much suffering and pain in the world as there is interest only in the physical and the material. The scales are held in perfect balance; the one does not outweigh the other — so many passions and desires on the one side, so much illness and pain on the other. This was the effect of the mutual activities of the Luciferic Spirits and the Spirits of Form in the Lemurian epoch. Had the Luciferic Spirits not approached, man would not have descended into the earthly realm as soon as he actually did. His passion and craving for the world of sense also brought it about that his eyes were opened and he was able to gaze at the surrounding field of material existence earlier than would otherwise have been the case. If evolution had proceeded uninterruptedly along the course intended by the progressive Spirits, man would have had sight of the surrounding world only from the middle of the Atlantean epoch onwards. But then he would have seen it spiritually, not as he sees it to-day; he would have seen it as the direct expression of spiritual beings. Because man came prematurely into the earthly sphere, forced downwards by his earthly interests and desires, conditions were different from what they would otherwise have been in the middle of the Atlantean epoch.

11. △ It was in this second soul-member, the intellectual soul — the transformed part of the ether-body — that Ahriman established his footing.

The Ahrimanic Spirits mingled in what man was able to see and apprehend; thus he fell into error, into what, for the first time, can correctly be called "conscious sin". The host of Ahrimanic Spirits has worked upon man since the middle of the Atlantean epoch onwards. To what did these Ahrimanic Spirits entice him? They enticed him into regarding everything in his environment as material, with the result that he does not see through this material world to its true, spiritual foundations. Were man to have perceived the Spiritual in every stone, in every plant, in every animal, he would never have fallen into error and therewith into evil; if the progressive Spirits alone had worked upon him he would have been protected from those illusions to which he must always fall a prey when he bases himself solely upon the manifestations of the world of sense.

Ahriman tells us: There is no God and that material reality is the only reality. Ahriman represents tendencies towards contraction, reduction, splitting, materialism, over-intellectualisation, lying and a denial of spiritual realities; this leads to the idea that we are physical beings only.

How did those spiritual Beings who desire to further man's progress act in order to combat this corruption, error and illusion arising from the material world? They saw to it — the process was of course slow and very gradual — that man was actually lifted away from the material world as such; this enabled him to shoulder and work out his karma. Whereas, therefore, the Beings upon whom it fell to rectify the enticement of the Luciferic Beings brought into the world suffering, pain and what is connected with them, namely death, the Beings whose task it was to rectify the outcome of error concerning the sense-world, made it possible for man, through his karma, eventually to blot out all the error, all the evil he has wrought in the world. For what would have happened if he had become the prey of evil and error? Little by little he would have become one with the evil; no progress would have been possible for him. For with every error, every lie, every illusion, we cast an obstacle in the way of progress. We should fall back in our progress to exactly the same extent to which we had cast obstacles in our path through sin and error, if we were not in a position to rectify them; in other words, we could not reach man's true goal. It would be impossible to attain this goal if the counter-forces, the forces of karma, were not in operation.

Suppose that in some life you commit a wrong. If this wrong were to become firmly fixed in your life it would mean nothing less than that you would lose the step forward which you would have taken had you not committed the wrong; with every wrong, a step would be lost — enough steps to correspond exactly with the wrongs committed. If the possibility of surmounting error had not been given, man must ultimately have been submerged by it. But the blessing of karma was bestowed. What does this blessing mean for man? Is karma something at which to shudder, something to dread? No, indeed! Karma is a power for which man should be thankful. For karma says to us: If you have committed a wrong, remember that "God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap". An error demands that you shall right it; then, having expunged it from your karma you can again take a step forward!

Without karma, no progress would be possible. Karma is a blessing that has been vouchsafed to us, inasmuch as it obliges us to rectify every error, to re-achieve the steps that thrust us back.

Karma was thus the indirect consequence of the deeds of Ahriman.

In every illusion that matter is the sole reality, we must perceive the whispered promptings of Ahriman.

12. △ The Asuras are retarded Beings of the Hierarchy of the Archai (Spirits of Personality). They are Beings who instead of furthering man's progress to independence, lure him into gross egoism. In the negative sense they now bear the name originally pertaining to the entire Hierarchy.

The consciousness soul (spiritual soul), arising from an unconscious transformation of the physical body. Towards the end of the Atlantean epoch, the etheric body corresponding to the head came right into the physical head and gradually brought about self-consciousness in the physical body. Fundamentally speaking, man is still working at this unconscious transformation of the physical body, at the development of the consciousness soul. And in the age now approaching, those spiritual Beings known as the Asuras will creep into the consciousness soul and therewith into the human 'I' or ego — for the 'I' lights up in the consciousness soul. The Asuras will generate evil with a far mightier force than was wielded by the Satanic powers in the Atlantean epoch or by the Luciferic Spirits in the Lemurian epoch.

Asuras are superhuman beings who dwell in the Saturn-sphere of consciousness. Also known as Rakshasas, they are adversarial counterparts to the kind Archai, whose leader is the Father Arche, the Father God, Father Time. The hierarchy of Archai and Asuras is also known as the Spirits of Personality or the Spirits of Darkness. The dark Archai—the Asuras, or Lay'lah—can be pictured as personal versions of the Sun Demon (Sorat – see note 13 below), the Negation of Humanity.

13. △ There is also an opposing principle to the Lamb, there is also a Sun-Demon, the so-called Demon of the Sun, that which works in the evil forces of man, thrusting back the force of the Lamb, and it works in such a way that a certain amount of the human race is thrust out of the evolution which leads to the sun. (Rudolf Steiner, "The Apocalypse of St. John", Lecture 11)

Indeed, the invocation of Sorath leads the magician to feel the power of a god highlighting his highly potent nature. The power by which the Sun-Genius overcomes Sorath is the archangel Michael, who has the key to the abyss and the chain in his hand. The Sun Demon's color is black. Not a warm black, but a BLACK VOID. His color extends into the dark violet seen the "black light" – like neon lights of adult establishments.

The Sun Demon is visible in the most radical transgressions:

- state-directed mass murder (democide & genocide)
- self-destruction (addictions, suicide)
- sexual violation (rape, the current gender agenda)
- serial killing, etc.

If Christ was always the Representative of the Sun, namely, the Intelligence of the Sun, Sorat is, then, the Adversary of Christ Jesus.

14. △ There is lacking in human society nowadays a quality that, in the sixth epoch, will be a characteristic of those men who reach the goal of that epoch, and have not fallen short of it. It is a quality that will not, of course, be found among those who in the sixth epoch have still remained at the stage of savages or barbarians. One of the most significant characteristics of men living on the earth at the peak of culture in the sixth epoch, will be a certain moral quality. Little of this quality is perceptible in modern humanity. A man today must be delicately organized for his soul to feel pain when he sees other human beings in the world in less happy circumstances than his own. It is true that more delicately organized natures feel pain at the suffering that is so widespread in the world, but this can only be said of the people who are particularly sensitive. In the sixth epoch, the most highly cultured will not only feel pain such as is caused today by the sight of poverty, suffering and misery in the world, but such individuals will experience the suffering of another human being as their own suffering. If they see a hungry man they will feel the hunger right down into the physical, so acutely indeed that the hunger of the other man will be unendurable to them. The moral characteristic indicated here is that, unlike conditions in the fifth epoch, in the sixth epoch the well-being of the individual will depend entirely upon the well-being of the whole. Just as nowadays the well-being of a single human limb depends upon the health of the whole body, and when the whole body is not healthy the single limb is not up to doing its work, so in the sixth epoch a common consciousness will lay hold of the then civilized humanity and in a far higher degree than a limb feels the health of the whole body, the individual will feel the suffering, the need, the poverty or the wealth of the whole. This is the first preeminently moral trait that will characterize the cultured humanity of the sixth epoch.

A second fundamental characteristic will be that everything we call the fruits of belief today will depend to a far, far higher degree than is the case today, upon the single individuality. Spiritual science expresses this by saying that in every sphere of religion in the sixth epoch, complete freedom of thought and a longing for it will so lay hold of men that what a man likes to believe, what religious convictions he holds, will rest wholly within the power of his own individuality. Collective beliefs that exist in so many forms today among the various communities will no longer influence those who constitute the civilized portion of humanity in the sixth epoch of culture. Everyone will feel that complete freedom of thought in the domain of religion is a fundamental right of the human being.

The third characteristic will be that men in the sixth epoch will only be considered to have real knowledge when they recognize the spiritual, when they know that the spiritual pervades the world and that human souls must unite with the spiritual. What is known as science today with its materialistic trend will certainly not be honored by the name of science in the sixth post-Atlantean epoch. It will be regarded as antiquated superstition, able to pass muster only among those who have remained behind at the stage of the superseded fifth post-Atlantean epoch. Today we regard it as superstition when, let us say, a savage holds the view that no limb ought to be separated from his body at death because this would make it impossible for him to enter the spiritual world as a whole man. Such a man still connects the idea of immortality with pure materialism, with the belief that an impress of his whole form must pass into the spiritual world. He thinks materialistically but believes in immortality. We, today, knowing from spiritual science that the spiritual has to be separated from the body and that only the spiritual passes into the super-sensible world, regard such materialistic beliefs in immortality as superstition. Similarly, in the sixth epoch all materialistic beliefs including science, too, will be regarded as antiquated superstition. Men as a matter of course will accept as science only such forms of knowledge as are based upon the spiritual, upon pneumatology.

15.

Christ & the Mystery of Golgotha

In the course of the Earth-period man will cast away all the evil brought to him by the Luciferic Spirits together with the blessing of freedom. The evil brought by the Ahrimanic Spirits can be shed in the course of karma. But the evil brought by the Asuric powers cannot be expunged in this way. Whereas the good Spirits instituted pain and suffering, illness and death in order that despite the possibility of evil, man's evolution may still advance, whereas the good Spirits made possible the working of karma to the end that the Ahrimanic powers might be resisted and the evil made good, it will not be so easy to counter the Asuric powers as earth-existence takes its course. For these Asuric Spirits will prompt what has been seized hold of by them, namely the very core of man's being, the consciousness soul together with the 'I', to unite with earthly materiality. Fragment after fragment will be torn out of the 'I', and in the same measure in which the Asuric Spirits establish themselves in the consciousness soul, man must leave parts of his existence behind on the earth. What thus becomes the prey of the Asuric powers will be irretrievably lost. Not that the whole man need become their victim — but parts of his spirit will be torn away by the Asuric powers. These Asuric powers are heralded to-day by the prevailing tendency to live wholly in the material world and to be oblivious of the realty of spiritual beings and spiritual worlds. True, the Asuric powers corrupt man to-day in a way that is more theoretical than actual. To-day they deceive him by various means into thinking that his 'I' is a product of the physical world only; they hue him to a kind of theoretic materialism. But as time goes on — and the premonitory signs of this are the dissolute, sensuous passions that are becoming increasingly prevalent on earth — they will blind man's vision of the spiritual Beings and spiritual Powers. Man will know nothing nor desire to know anything of a spiritual world. More and more he will not only teach that the highest moral ideals of humanity are merely sublimations of animal impulses, that human thinking is but a transformation of a faculty also possessed by the animals, that man is akin to the animal in respect of his form and moreover in his whole being descends from the animal — but he will take this view in all earnestness and order his life in accordance with it.

Man does not as yet entirely base his life on the principle that his true being descends from the animal. But this view of existence will inevitably arise, with the result that men will also live like animals, will sink into animal impulses, animal passions. And in many things that need not be further characterized here, many things that in the great cities come to expression in orgies of dissolute sensuality, we can already perceive the lurid, hellish glare of the Spirits we call the Asuras.

Once again let us look back. We have said that suffering and pain, nay even death, were brought by the Spirits who are intent upon man's progress. The words of the Bible are unambiguous: "In travail shalt thou bear thy children!" Death has come into the world. Death was decreed for man by the Powers opposing the Luciferic Spirits. From whom came the gift of karma itself, who made karma possible for man? — To understand what is here being said you must discard all earthly, pedantic notions of time. Earthly notions of time give rise to the belief that what has once happened here or there will have an effect only upon what comes afterwards. But in the spiritual world it is the case that what comes to pass reveals itself in its effect, beforehand; in its effect it is already there, in advance. Whence comes the blessing of karma? Whence has there arisen in our earth-evolution this blessing of karma? From a Power none other than Christ.

Although Christ appeared only later, He was always present in the spiritual sphere of the earth Already in the ancient Oracles of Atlantis, the priests of those Oracles spoke of the "Spirit of the Sun", of Christ. In the old Indian epoch of civilization the Holy Rishis spoke of "Vishva Karman"; Zarathustra in ancient Persia spoke of "Ahura Mazdao", Hermes of "Osiris"; and Moses spoke of the Power which, being eternal, brings about the harmonization of the temporal and natural, the Power living in the "Ehjeh asher Ehjeh" (I am the I AM) as the harbinger of Christ. All spoke of the Christ; but where was He to be found in those ancient times? In the realm to which the eye of spirit alone can penetrate, in the spiritual world. In the spiritual world He was always to be found, working in and from the spiritual world. It is He Who even before man appeared on earth, sent down the possibility of karma. Then He came Himself to the earth, and we know what this has meant for man. We have described what was wrought by Him in the earthly sphere, we have spoken of the significance of the Event of Golgotha and of its effect also upon those who at that time were in the spiritual world, not incarnate in earthly bodies. We know that at the moment on Golgotha when the Blood flowed from the wounds, the Christ-Spirit appeared in the underworld, flooding the whole world of spirit with radiance and light; we have said that the appearance of Christ on the earth is the event of supreme importance also for the world through which man passes between death and a new birth.

The impulse going forth from Christ is in the fullest sense reality. We need but ask ourselves what would have become of the earth had Christ not appeared. Precisely from the opposite picture — an earth without Christ — you can apprehend the significance of Christ's coming. Let us suppose that Christ had not come, that the Mystery of Golgotha had not taken place.

Before Christ's Coming, the condition in the spiritual world of human souls who were the most progressed, who had acquired the deepest interest for earthly life, was truly expressed by the saying of the Greeks: Better it is to be a beggar in the upper world than a king in the realm of the Shades. For before the Event of Golgotha the souls in the spiritual world felt completely isolated, enveloped in darkness. The spiritual world in all its gleaming clarity was not transparent to those who entered it through the portal of death. Each one felt isolated, thrust back into himself as though a wall were between himself and every other soul. And this feeling of isolation would have become more and more intense. Man would have hardened within the ego, would have been thrown back into himself, nor could he have found any bridge to the others. And egoism, already intense, would have increased beyond all telling with every new incarnation.

Earth-existence would more and more have made men into utter egoists. There would have been no prospect of brotherhood on the earth or of inner harmony among souls; for with every journey through the spiritual world, stronger influence would have penetrated the ego. That is what would have happened to an earth without Christ. That the way from soul to soul will be found again, that it has been made possible for the mighty force of brotherhood to pour over all humanity — this is due to Christ's Coming, to the Event of Golgotha. Therefore Christ is the Power who has enabled man to turn earth-existence ultimately to good account, in other words to give karma its true configuration — for karma must be worked out on the earth. That man finds in himself the force to profit by his karma in physical existence, that advancing evolution is possible for him — all this he owes to the working of the Christ Event, to the presence of Christ in the earthly realm.

And so we see many diverse forces and beings working together in the evolution of humanity. Had Christ not come upon the earth, man would have been engulfed in error, because having hardened within himself he would have become as it were a globe on its own, knowing nothing of other beings, entirely self-enclosed, driven into that condition by error and sin.

Christ is verily the Light which leads out of error and sin, the Light which enables man to find the way upwards. And now let us ask ourselves: What was it that was lost to man in that he descended from the spiritual world, was ensnared in desires and passions under the influence of Lucifer, and then, under Ahriman's influence, in error, illusion and lying in the earthly world? — He lost direct vision of the spiritual world, he lost understanding of the spiritual world.

What, then, must he regain? He must regain full understanding of the spiritual world. As a self-conscious being, man can grasp the import of Christ's Deed only by realizing with full clarity of understanding, the significance of Christ. The Christ-Power is there in very truth — not brought by man, for the Christ-Power was brought to the earth by none other than Christ Himself. Karma has come into humanity through Christ. But now, with self-consciousness, man must learn to know Christ in His real nature and His connection with the whole universe. Only so can man work in the true sense as an 'I'. What then, does he actually achieve when, after Christ's appearance, he does not merely rest satisfied with letting Christ's power work upon him unconsciously, with saying: I am content with the knowledge that Christ came to the earth; He will redeem me and ensure my progress! — but when he says: I am resolved to know what Christ is in all reality, how He descended; I am resolved to participate through my own spirit in Christ's Deed! — what does man achieve thereby?

Recall to your minds that because the Luciferic Spirits slipped into his astral body, man has come down into the world of sense, thereby falling prey to the evil but also acquiring the possibility of self-conscious freedom. Lucifer is in very truth present in the being of man, has drawn him down to the earth, has ensnared him in earthly existence; inasmuch as the passions and desires contained in the astral body had first been led by Lucifer into the earthly realm, Ahriman too was able to invade the astral body — in the intellectual soul. Christ appeared, and with Him the force which can bear man upwards again into the spiritual world. But now, if he so wills, man can come to know Christ, he can gather all wisdom to this end. What does he achieve thereby? Something of untold moment! When a man knows Christ, when he absorbs the wisdom which begets insight into what Christ truly is, then he redeems himself and the Luciferic Beings through this knowledge of Christ. Were man merely to say: I am content with the fact that Christ appeared and to allow myself to be redeemed by Him unconsciously — then he would contribute nothing to the redemption of the Luciferic Beings. These Luciferic Beings who have brought man freedom, also make it possible for him, if he so wills, to turn it to account in order to understand Christ. Then the Luciferic Spirits are cleansed and purified in the fire of Christianity and the wrong done to the earth by them is changed into blessing. Freedom has been attained; but it will also be carried into the spiritual sphere as a blessing. That man is capable of this, that he is capable of understanding Christ, that Lucifer, resurrected in a new form, can unite with Christ as the good Spirit — this, as prophecy still, was told by Christ Himself to those around Him, when He said: "Ye shall be illumined by the new Spirit, by the Holy Spirit!" This "Holy Spirit" is none other than the Spirit through whom man can apprehend what Christ has wrought. Christ desired not merely to work, but also to be apprehended, to be understood. Therefore the sending of the Spirit by whom men are inspired, the sending of the "Holy spirit", is implicit in Christianity.

In the spiritual sense, Whitsuntide belongs inseparably to Easter. This "Holy Spirit" is none other than the Lucifer-Spirit, resurrected now in higher, purer glory — the Spirit of independent understanding, wisdom-inwoven. Christ Himself foretold that this Spirit would come to men after Him, and in the light of this Spirit their labors must proceed. What is it that works onward in the light of this Spirit? The world-stream of spiritual science, if rightly conceived! What is this spiritual science? It is the wisdom of the Spirit, the wisdom that lifts into the full light of consciousness that in Christianity which would otherwise remain in the unconscious. The torch of the resurrected Lucifer, of the Lucifer now transformed into the good, blazons the way for Christ. Lucifer is the bearer of the Light — Christ is the Light! As the word itself denotes, Lucifer is the "Bearer of the Light". That is what the spiritual scientific movement should be, that is implicit in it. Those who know that the progress of mankind depends upon living apprehension of the mighty Event of Golgotha are they who as the "Masters of Wisdom and of the Harmony of Feelings" are united in the great Guiding Lodge of mankind. And as once the "tongues of fire" hovered down as a living symbol upon the company of the apostles, so does the "Holy Spirit" announced by Christ Himself reign as the Light over the Lodge of the Twelve. The Thirteenth is the Leader of the Lodge of the Twelve. The "Holy Spirit" is the mighty Teacher of those we name the "Masters of Wisdom and of the Harmony of Feelings". It is through them that his voice and his wisdom flow down to mankind in this or that stream upon the earth. The treasures of wisdom gathered together by the spiritual scientific movement in order to understand the universe and the Spirits therein, how through the "Holy Spirit" into the Lodge of the Twelve; and that is what will ultimately lead mankind step by step to free, self-conscious understanding of Christ and of the Event of Golgotha. Thus to 'cultivate' spiritual science means to understand that the Spirit has been sent into the world by Christ; the pursuit of spiritual science is implicit in true Christianity. This will become more and more evident to men; and then they will realize that in spiritual science they have a potent asset in their lives. Men owe to spiritual science the consciousness which dawns in them by degrees, that Christ is the Spirit Who fills the world with light. And the consequence will be that here on this earthly globe, in the physical world itself, men will make progress in their moral life, in their life of will, in their intellectual life. Through physical life itself the world will be spiritualized in ever-increasing measure. Men will grow in goodness, strength and wisdom and will gaze with ever deepening vision into the foundations and origins of existence. They will bear with them into the super-sensible life the fruits acquired in this physical life, and ever and again bring these fruits back from the super-sensible life into a new incarnation.

Thus the earth will more and more become the expression of its Spirit, of the Christ-Spirit. Spiritual science will be understood in the light of the world's foundations, apprehended as a real and active power. In various respects to-day mankind is near to losing the Spirit altogether. In the recent public lecture it was said that men suffer to-day under the fear of heredity. The fear of the burden of heredity is the direct offspring of our materialistic age. But is it enough if a man simply says to himself that he need not have this fear? — By no means does that suffice. A man who does not concern himself with the spiritual world, who does not instill into his soul what can flow from spiritual science, is subject to the forces of physical heredity. Only by steeping his whole being in what spiritual science can communicate to him does he gain mastery over the forces of heredity, regards it as a factor of no essential significance and becomes the victor of everything that the powers of hindrance place in his way in the external world. It is not by arguing or philosophizing it away, or by contending: Spirit exists! — that man brings the life of the senses under his command, but by permeating himself with the Spirit, by absorbing the Spirit, by having the will to acquire intimate knowledge of the Spirit. Then spiritual science will make men healthier even in the physical world; for spiritual science is itself a therapy that brings vigor and health. And the essential power of spiritual science will become still more evident to us when we consider what becomes of the human being when he passes through the gate of death. The modern mind finds great difficulty here.

Man thinks to himself: Why need I trouble about what happens in the spiritual world? When I die I go into the spiritual world in any case and then I shall see and hear what goes on there! In endless variations one hears this easy-going way of talking: Why should I trouble about the spiritual before I die? When the time comes I shall see what there is to see. My relationship to the spiritual world will not be altered in the slightest, no matter whether I do or do not concern myself with it. — But indeed this is not so! A man who thinks in such a way will enter a world of darkness and gloom, unable to make very much of what is said in my book Theosophy about the spiritual worlds. For it is only by allying himself in spirit and soul with the spiritual world during life in the physical world that man can acquire the faculty of perception in the spiritual world; the preparation must be made in his life here on earth. The spiritual world is there in very truth — the faculty of being able to see in that world must be acquired on the earth; otherwise there is blindness in the spiritual world.

Spiritual science is therefore the power which alone makes it possible for man to enter the spiritual world with consciousness. Had Christ not appeared in the physical world, man would have gone under in that world, could not have found entry to the spiritual world. But Christ lifts him into the spiritual world in such a way that he can see and be conscious there. This depends upon his knowledge of how to unite his being with the Spirit sent by Christ; failing that knowledge, he remains unconscious. Man has to win his immortality through his own efforts, for an unconscious immortality is no immortality. A beautiful saying of Meister Eckhardt is: "What does it profit a man to be a king if he knows it not," — What he meant was: Of what use is the spiritual world to a man if he does not know what the spiritual worlds are in reality? The capacity for seeing the spiritual world can be acquired only in the physical world. Those who ask: Why was it necessary for man to descend at all into the physical world? do well to take this to heart. — Man descended in order to acquire vision of the spiritual world. He would have remained blind to the spiritual world had he not descended and attained the self-conscious manhood which enables him to return to the spiritual world now lying in radiance and light before his soul.

Spiritual science is therefore not merely a "conception of the world" in the accepted sense but something without which — even in the immortal part of his being — man can know nothing about the worlds of immortality. Spiritual science is an active power, permeating the soul as reality. And in that you are present here in the pursuit of spiritual science, you are not only gathering knowledge but you are growing into something you would otherwise not have become. That is the difference between spiritual science and other world-conceptions. The latter are rooted in knowledge; spiritual science is rooted in being.

Rightly conceived, these things will make us say to ourselves: With this illumination, an inner, fundamental connection is revealed between Christ, the Spirit, and spiritual science. In face of this connection all the superficial statements made to-day to the effect that a Western trend is being set up in opposition to an Eastern trend of occultism fall to the ground. There can be no question of any such opposition. There are not two occultisms, there is only one occultism; and there is no opposition between eastern and western Theosophy. There is only one truth. And what is our reply to be when we are asked: If eastern occultism is the same as western occultism, why is it that in eastern occultism, Christ is not acknowledged? The right reply is that it is not for us to give the answer; that obligation does not rest upon us, for we fully acknowledge eastern occultism. If asked whether we acknowledge what eastern occultism says about Brahma, about the Buddha, we shall answer: Most certainly we acknowledge it. We understand what is meant when we are told that the Buddha attained his exalted rank in this or that way. We deny no single one of the eastern truths; in so far as they are positive truths we acknowledge them all. But shall this prevent us from acknowledging as well, what goes yet further? No indeed! We acknowledge what is said by eastern occultism, but that does not prevent us from acknowledging, too, the western truths.

When people allege that it is an inferior way of thinking on the part of orientalists to say that the Buddha died from eating too much pork — as these learned gentlemen assert — and it is explained that this actually has a deep meaning, namely that the Buddha imparted to those immediately around him too much of the esoteric wisdom, so that this over-abundance caused the onset of a kind of karma — then we agree that it is so; we say: certainly there lie behind it the deeper esoteric truths as stated by you who are eastern esotericists! — But when the statement that the Apocalypse was revealed to St. John on Patmos amid thunder and lightning is held to be unintelligible, then our answer will be: everyone who is aware of what is really meant, knows that it is a truth! We do not refute what is said about the Buddha but we cannot agree when the validity of the other statement (concerning the Apocalypse) is denied. We do not contest the assertion that the astral body of the Buddha was preserved and was later incorporated in Shankaracharya. But that does not prevent us from teaching that the astral body of Jesus of Nazareth was preserved and in multiple replicas was incorporated in various individuals dedicated to Christianity, like St. Francis of Assisi or St. Elizabeth of Thüringen. We deny no single truth of oriental esotericism. Therefore when we are asked: Why is anything refuted? Why is there opposition? — it is not incumbent upon us to answer. It would be incumbent upon us to answer if the opposition came from our side. But it does not! The duty to answer rests upon one who denies, not upon one who agrees. That is obvious enough.

So we see how Powers work together in the world, how everything that appears to oppose the progress of mankind subsequently turns out to be a blessing. We realize, too, that in the Post-Atlantean epoch — from age to age — the Spirit who has brought man freedom will appear again in a new form; Luciferus, the sovereign Bearer of Light, will be redeemed. For everything in the great World Plan is good and the evil endures only for a season. Therefore he alone believes in eternity of the evil who confounds the temporal with the eternal; he who does not rise from the temporal to the eternal can never understand the evil.

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