

The Lectures of Rudolf Steiner

Man's Mission on Earth

Excerpts from the lecture cycle entitled "The Influence of Spiritual Beings Upon Man"

GA 102

The following is excerpted from Lecture IV

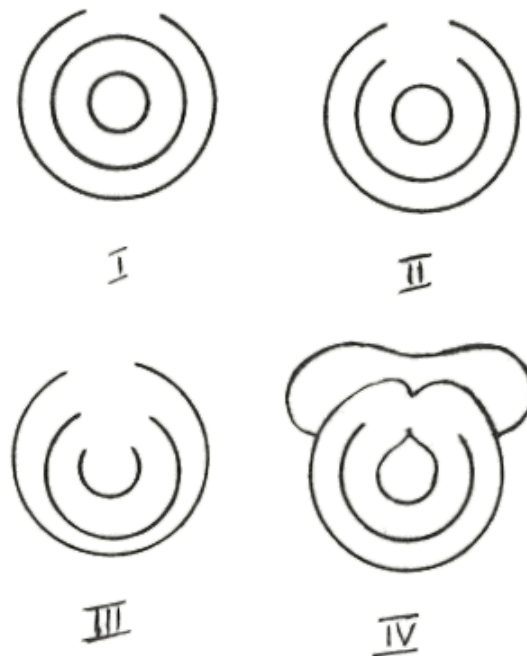


Figure 1

29 February 1908, Berlin

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We will now follow the progress of man on the Earth itself. There one can point to the spot in man where the ego was trickled in, but today we will consider it only schematically. Man receives his ego. It comes in contact first of course with the astral body which surrounds him like an auric sheath, there the ego first flows in, interpenetrates the astral body. This takes place in what we call the Lemurian Age, in the middle of earthly evolution. In the Lemurian Age, in the course of long periods of time, different for each different human being, the ego drew into the astral body and fructified it. Let us picture this developing human being.

The physical body at that time did not consist of flesh and blood as it does today; it was a quite soft structure, even without cartilage, and was penetrated as if by magnetic currents. Then there was the etheric body and then the astral body which was fructified by the ego. We must imagine this fructification as being something like an indentation which occurred in the astral body, like a turned-in

aperture. That is what actually took place, something like an opening arose at the top of the astral body through the inflowing of the ego, an opening as far as to the etheric body. (Fig. 1.) This was of great significance and produced an important result; the consequence was that the first dim perception of a physical outer world appeared. In earlier conditions man had perceived nothing but that which lived in him inwardly; he was as if hermetically sealed towards the outside. He was aware only of himself and what went on in him internally. Now for the first time there opened to him the sight of a physical outer world. But man was not yet quite independent, much was still regulated for him by other divine beings with whom he stood in connection. He could not immediately see all that was around him, as we do now; since only his astral body was opened he perceived only with that body. It was a quite dim clairvoyance, and when in this ancient primeval time the human being moved over the earth he perceived what was outside his body, he perceived if this were sympathetic or unsympathetic, beneficent or harmful. He perceived a color picture when he so moved about, a glaring-red, for instance, that arose as an auric color-picture, for it was his astral body that first opened. He knew that when a red picture appeared there was a being in the neighborhood that was dangerous to him. If a blue-red color met him, he knew that he could go towards it; thus he took his direction from these dim clairvoyant perceptions. He perceived only the soul elements, he could not perceive, for instance, what is present in the plants of today. He perceived only the soul-nature in the other human beings and in the animals, and the Group-souls, too. That was the first fertilizing with the ego.

The ego was gradually further developed and the fructifying element that entered the astral body began to permeate it more deeply so that the ego was increasingly present in the feelings of likes and dislikes. According as the ego expanded in this way in the astral body there arose what has been called in the book *Theosophy* the sentient soul. It is as if the fructifying ego spread its forces over the whole astral body, thereby producing the sentient soul. Here we still have to incorporate an important fact.

We have now seen a fairly normal advance of evolution. We have seen how the Spirits of Form on the Moon rayed in their lowest member, the ego, and how, when the Earth had arisen out of the Moon condition, they gave up the ego and fructified man with it. Now we know that certain beings on the Moon remained behind, beings who did not complete their development. What does that mean? It means that they had not advanced to the stage where they could let their ego stream out and fructify the human being. That they could not do. They still stood at the old Moon stage, when they worked with their ego into the atmosphere of the earth. There were laggard beings around man who worked on the earth as the Spirits of Form had done on the Moon. Man was surrounded in the earth's atmosphere by ego-beings who had not yet relinquished their egos. These beings now strove to accomplish on the earth what they had failed to do finally on the Moon. Man was thus exposed to influences that were not in the normal course of his evolution. These influences of the ego-spirits rayed into his astral body. While his astral body was molded through the in-trickling ego of the Spirits of Form, the ego-spirits, who were not at the stage of the Spirits of Form, rayed lower forces to him at the same time, lower than should have entered him in normal evolution. These lower forces brought it about that man divided into a higher and a lower part. Thus from the Spirits of Form an ego was instilled with the propensity to selflessness, whereas the laggard ego-spirits instilled into man the ego with the propensities towards selfishness, egotism. That is the ego which will still not free itself from instincts, desires, and passions. They press into the astral body and interpenetrate it — so that in man's astral body there is a twofold nature: selfless impulses that aspire to rise higher and those passions which are imbued with selfishness and have entered man through the influences of the ego-spirits and have anchored themselves in him.

Now we will further consider evolution itself. We have seen how the astral body has been entirely permeated by the force of the incoming ego. The next stage is when the etheric body too is seized by this force, so that here too a kind of aperture towards the outer world arises. To sketch this (Fig. 2) we must put in the middle a physical body, then an etheric body which is broken through and entirely filled with the force of the ego and then the astral body which is also entirely full of this force. So in the etheric body we now have a force desiring to expand; the etheric body opens to the outside world.

We have come in the formation of man practically into the first and second third of the Atlantean Age. There still existed an old clairvoyance which no longer saw in picture merely the beneficial and harmful, the sympathetic and unsympathetic, but a kind of living dream pictures arose before man which lasted a long time. For the etheric body is the bearer of memory and since these human beings had as yet no disturbance from the physical body, such pictures coming from outside were held for a long time. Memory at that time was an outstanding force of the soul. You can read in *The Akashic Record* what man was at that time in respect of memory. There was not of course as yet complete observation of the external world, but a kind of dim clairvoyance. This was, however, more comprehensive than perception through the astral body. It caused everything to arise in mighty pictures, definitely formed, like a dream, but with a correspondence to the external objects, whereas formerly the pictures only served to guide man in taking his direction.

Now we advance to the last third of the Atlantean time. And now the physical body too is gripped by the force of the ego (Fig. 3). Rudiments of an indentation arise in the physical body, it becomes indented and around it we have the etheric and astral bodies. We will merely imagine the whole schematically now; in the course of succeeding lectures we shall get to know the realities. In a certain way, however, such a kind of indenting had appeared, the physical body took up the ego into itself. The point where the ego was taken in lies between the eyebrows, as I have often explained. The opening that comes about through the penetration of the ego into the physical body is to be thought of particularly as the opening of the physical senses. The ego presses through the eye, through the hearing — which is not merely an opening but a whole series of openings. All this takes place in the last third of Atlantean times and the human body was so transformed that it has become what it is today.

We call the etheric body as it was transformed at the beginning of the Atlantean Age the intellectual or mind soul and the transformed physical body we call the consciousness soul. So that what is described in my *Theosophy* as the position today, we have now followed as a consequence of evolution. You see here how things come about gradually.

After the physical body too is opened to the outside, man for the first time learnt to know the external world. And now begins the conscious transforming of the astral body. It was a more or less unconscious transformation before the beginnings of the consciousness soul. To picture this condition, we must think of it schematically like this: the astral body, etheric body and physical body opened, and through the fact that man comes in connection with the outside world he forms in himself an enclosure. This represents all that the ego develops in intercourse with the outer world, all that the ego "learns" through external contacts. Now imagine that the whole of what the ego develops in this way becomes greater and greater, and that this new structure, which has been gradually developed, lays itself round the astral body here. Although this is all schematic it corresponds to the actual process, and the new structure unites with man's astral body and in course of evolution transforms it into the human Manas or spirit-self. (Fig. 4.) Man is at work on this today, when through what he acquires in his intercourse with the external world he is transforming his astral body into Manas or spirit-self. We are in the midst of this process at the present time.

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The following is excerpted from Lecture VI

24 March 1908, Berlin

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A quite different task shall concern us today — that of considering man and his evolution on Earth from an entirely different standpoint, so that this human being shall come before us with increasing clarity. If, with this in mind, we look back once more to the previous embodiment of our Earth, the ancient Moon, then we remember that the human being had physical body, etheric body, astral body, but not yet a personal ego as he now possesses on Earth. If we now examine the consciousness of such a Moon-man we find it was radically different from that of a human being of today. The consciousness of man today is really expressed in what one could call "personality." With this word much is said in the characterization of the Earth-man, for there was no "personality" on the old Moon. We have seen how this personality has been formed gradually on the Earth and how in ancient times man still felt himself much more as a member of a whole number of others who belonged to one another. Even if we go back not at all far in the regions where we ourselves are living, yes, even if we go back to the first Christian centuries, we shall still find there the last echoes of an ancient consciousness. The ancient member of the Cherusci, the Sugambri, Heruli, Bructeri, did not feel himself to the same extent a personality as does the man of to-day, he felt himself one of his tribe. And when he said "I," that signified something entirely different from what it means today. If a modern man says "I," he means the entity of his personality, that which, so to speak, is enclosed within his skin. At that time men felt with regard to their tribe as a limb feels on our organism. He felt himself in the first place as a member of the Sugambri, Heruli, Bructeri, Cherusci, and only in the second place a personal "I." You will have a better understanding of many ancient conditions if you bear in mind this radical alteration in personality, if you realize, for instance, that certain forms of family revenge, tribal revenge, are to be explained completely by the common consciousness of the tribe, a kind of group-soul-consciousness. And if we go still farther back to the classical Old Testament time, the time of the Jewish people, we know that the individual Jew felt absolutely that he was a member of the whole Jewish people. We know that when he said "I" he did not feel himself as representative of his ego, but felt the blood of the whole folk as it had streamed down in the generations since the Father Abraham: "I and the Father Abraham are one." Each member of the race felt that this was what gave him his value and position. He felt the group-soul in the blood right back to the Father Abraham. And if we go still farther back, into the earliest ages of the Earth, we find the group-soul element still more clearly expressed. The individual had a memory of what his fore-fathers had done, back to the earliest ancestor. The memory of the descendants went back for hundreds of years. In our day, in normal circumstances a man no longer remembers what his father has done, unless he has seen it. He no longer remembers what his ancestors have experienced. In ancient times man had a memory not only of what he had himself experienced, but also of the experiences of the ancestors with whom he was of common blood, not because he knew of it but because memory was continued beyond birth. And we know that the great age attributed to the Patriarchs, to Adam and the succeeding ancestors of the Jewish people, meant originally nothing but the length of memory, how far one remembered in the ancestral tree. Why did Adam live so long? Why did the other Patriarchs live so long? Because one was not designating the single personality, but remembered past generations as one remembers one's youth today. That was denoted by a common expression, personality did not come into question at all. A man remembered not only what he had gone through in childhood, but what his father, his grandfather had experienced in childhood, and so on through the centuries, and

one compressed the contents of this memory into a unity and called it — let us say — "Adam" or "Noah," and so on. In primitive ages the separated personality had nothing of the value that it has now; memory reached beyond father, mother, grandfather, and so on, and as far as it reached one used a common name. That seems clumsy and fantastic to the present-day materialistic conception of the world, yet it must be affirmed from the depths of the facts by a fundamental psychology which knows how to reckon with the facts.

On our Earth therefore man had a kind of group-consciousness connected with his group-soul. If we were to go back to the old Moon where the human being had not a restricted ego of this sort embedded in the group-consciousness, but where he had no ego at all, where he still consisted of physical body, etheric body, astral body, we should find that this old Moon-consciousness was not a smaller one but embraced immensely great groups — that in fact all-embracing group-souls were the basis of the human race on the Moon. These group-souls who, so to speak, set individual Moon-men on to the Moon merely as their limbs, were wise souls. We have, as you know, also described the animal group-souls on the Earth and have also found wisdom as their out-standing characteristic. These Moon group-souls have implanted in our planet's previous embodiment the wisdom which we know today and which we so much wonder at and admire. And when today we are amazed how every bone, how heart and brain, how every plant leaf, is permeated and imbued with wisdom, then we know that the wisdom of the group-souls trickled down from the atmosphere of the old Moon — as clouds today let the rain trickle down — and membered itself into all the beings. These received it as a propensity and brought it out again when they appeared on the Earth after the Pralaya. Thus there were present on the Moon all-embracing group-souls filled with wisdom.

Now if we were to seek on the old Moon for a quality which we find today on Earth in ever-increasing measure as evolution goes forward, we should not find it existing in the Moon beings. This quality is love, the impulse which leads beings together of their own free will. Love is the mission of our earthly planet. Hence in occultism we call the Moon the "Cosmos of Wisdom" and the Earth the "Cosmos of Love." As we today, standing on the Earth, wonder at the wisdom embedded in it, so one day the beings of Jupiter will stand before beings from which love will stream forth to them in fragrance. Love, as it were, will issue in taste and fragrance from all the surrounding beings. Just as wisdom shines towards us on the Earth, so on Jupiter there will come fragrantly towards the Jupiter beings that which is evolving here on Earth as love — from the purely sex-love to Spinoza's "Divine Love." It will send out perfume as plants send out their various aromas. Thus will the grades of love stream out as the perfume ascending out of the cosmos which, as successor to our Earth, we have named Jupiter. Thus in the course of evolution conditions alter, and whenever an advance occurs in evolution the beings advance too; they who are united with the stages of planetary evolution are ever advancing to higher stages. The human beings living on the Earth today are the instruments of the evolution of love. For the animal kingdom has developed forms of love which have stayed behind as laggard forms; and in so far as love appears among the animals, a simple reflection would show that it is all pre-stages of human love, of the love that is continually being spiritualized. As man is the instrument for the evolution of love on Earth, so when he has evolved to Jupiter he will be capable of receiving a still higher quality. So too those beings who "trickled" down wisdom from the periphery of the Moon became capable of a higher evolution when the Moon became Earth; they ascended higher. The beings who at that time were able to let wisdom trickle into the Moon-beings were in fact those who were so advanced at the time when the sun withdrew from the earth that they went out with the sun and made it their scene of action. The beings who on the Moon were spirits of wisdom — the wisdom that trickled down — were not the Spirits of Wisdom which have been so named in connection with Saturn — these spirits, or at any rate a great number of them, chose the sun as their theatre. Only the Being whom one designates Yahve or Jehovah, who had reached full maturity on the Moon, became the Lord of Form on the Earth, the Regent of the Moon forces. But we have already spoken of other beings who did not complete their development on the Moon, who remained,

so to speak, midway between human and divine existence. We have characterized them in manifold ways. We have indicated that the sun at a certain stage of its evolution put Venus and Mercury out of itself in order to give these beings a theatre which was suited to them. We have also spoken of beings who have taken part in man's progressive development and who, as Venus and Mercury beings, have been the great teachers of humanity in the Mysteries.

Today we will enlarge this picture from another standpoint.

We have already pointed out that if the forces and beings which left the earth when the sun withdrew had remained united with the earth as they were originally, then man would have been obliged to develop at a tempo too rapid for him to endure. He would never have reached his evolution if the Spirits of Wisdom had been bound up with the earth as they were on the Moon. They had to remove to a distance and work from outside if man was to have the right speed in his development. Otherwise, no sooner was he born than he would have become old, he would go through his development at too rapid a tempo. I can make that clear to you in another way.

The spirits who had evolved up to the sun existence are not at all interested in man's gradual, slow development of his spiritual nature during his bodily existence, during childhood, youth, maturity, old age. **They have an interest only in the perfected development of spirituality.** If they had remained in connection with the earth, human bodies in a certain way would have been stunted, burnt up. Without maturing the fruits won from an earthly existence the spirit would have gone towards a rapid evolution and the human being would have lost all that he can learn on the earth. Above all, the imprinting of Love into the evolution of the cosmos would have remained concealed. In order that love might develop on earth the body had first to be developed at a primitive stage. **Love had to be inaugurated in the lowest form as sex-love, in order to rise through the various stages and finally, when the perfected Earth has reached its last epochs, to be imprinted into man as pure, spiritual love. All lower love is schooling for the higher love. Earthly man is to develop love in himself, so that at the end of his evolution he may be able to give it back to the Earth, for all that is developed in the microcosm is in the end poured into the macrocosm.** The wisdom which streamed into the Moon-men shines towards the earth-man as the wisdom which permeates his structure. The love which by degrees is implanted in man during the Earth period will waft fragrantly towards the Jupiter beings out of the whole realm of Jupiter. This is the path that the various cosmic forces must take.

Thus the starting point of our Earth's mission — the impressing of Love — was in a certain way confronting the two following tendencies. The Spirits of Wisdom, the creators of wisdom, who on the Moon had streamed wisdom into the kingdoms of the Earth, were on the Earth, as such, uninterested in the physical bodily nature of man. As Spirits of Wisdom they were uninterested in it, and being interested only in wisdom they gave up the special Earth mission to the "Spirits of Love." These are another rank and as Spirits of Love they too had been able to go through their own evolution for a time on the sun. In this way we have a twofold tendency in the evolution of the Earth: an instreaming of love which, as it were, appears for the first time, and an instreaming of wisdom which works from outside, since the spirits pre-eminently interested in wisdom have withdrawn to the sun. It is very important to grasp correctly this cooperation of the Spirits of Wisdom and the Spirits of Love, for it expresses an infinitely important contrast. If I now try to put into human language what this contrast expresses, it is that the Spirits of Wisdom wholly relinquished to the Spirits of Love man between birth and death and the way in which he develops, and took for them-selves the control of the "individuality" which goes through the various "personalities" in the course of reincarnations. If you picture man in his totality you have here the analysis which shows under what two powers he stands in cosmic rulership. What man is between birth and death, what he develops in himself while living in the body, what really makes him, so to speak, an entity who stands on his two feet on the

earth, that is placed under the authority of the Spirits of Love. What weaves through the personalities as the enduring individuality, is born with the man, dies, is born again, again dies, and so on, that stands in a certain respect under the authority of the Spirits of Wisdom. But you must not treat this mechanically and say: So you state that the human individuality stands under the influence of the Spirits of Wisdom and the human personality under the influence of the Spirits of Love. — If one were to stereotype things it would only lead to nonsense. For concepts are only valid if we understand them in their relativity and know that every concept has two sides. Only if you were of the opinion that this one life between birth and death were meaningless for all the following lives then you might stereo-type it like that. But you must keep in mind what I have al-ways emphasized, namely, that the fruits of each separate earthly life, that is, the fruits of all that has been gained under the influence of the Spirits of Love stream into the whole of evolution and thus into what is guided by the Spirits of Wisdom. On the other hand you must be clear that everything in the human body, right up to the astral body (we have already described how experiences made on the earth must be transformed) proceeds under the power of the Spirits of Wisdom, so thus again the Spirits of Wisdom work on man's being since he has a physical body, an etheric and an astral body. And because whatever man as personality develops under the element of love is enduring for his individuality, the Spirits of Love work again into what is developed in the single human life via the Spirits of Wisdom. Thus they work together. Then the rulership of these Spirits is again divided inasmuch as all that is personality stands directly under the control of love, and all that happens between birth and death stands indirectly under the element of wisdom.

Thus we see how man's personality and his individuality are within two different tendencies and currents. That is important for the following reason. If the Spirits of Wisdom who are meant now, had, so to speak, arrogated authority to themselves, then that exuberant, vigorous development would have come about which one could also describe by saying that in a single incarnation man would have gone through, pressed together, all possible perfectings from all incarnations. That which the Spirits of Wisdom were to give, however, became distributed among all man's successive earthly incarnations. That is expressed in occultism quite definitely by saying: Had the Spirits of Wisdom remained in evolution man would rapidly have developed to spirituality, burning himself up bodily through-out evolution. But the Spirits of Wisdom refrained from bringing man to such a violent development. They went away from the earth in order to circle round it — in order to regulate and modify the time-periods which would other-wise have rushed past so vehemently. One therefore says in occultism that these Spirits of Wisdom became the "Spirits of the Rotation of Times." The successive incarnations of man were regulated in the successive revolutions of time which were again regulated through the course of the stars. The Spirits of Wisdom became Spirits of the Rotation of Times. They would have been able to lift man away from the earth by their wisdom-filled power, but then he would have had to forgo the maturing of fruits which can only take place in the course of time. The fruits of love, of earthly experience, would not have been gained. Those secrets which beings must possess and hide in their hearts in order to mature the fruits of love, of Earth's experience, were veiled from these Spirits of the Rotation of Time. Hence it has been recorded: "They veiled their faces before the Mystical Lamb." For the "Mystical Lamb" is the Sun-Spirit Who holds the secret of lifting not only the spirits away from the earth but of redeeming the bodies, spiritualizing them, after many incarnations have been passed through. The possessor of the Love-Mystery is the Sun-Spirit Whom we call the Christ, and since He has an interest not only in the individuality, but directly in each single personality of the earth, we call Him the "Great Sacrifice of the Earth" or the "Mystical Lamb."

Thus certain Spirits became the Spirits of the Rotation of Times and regulated the successive incarnations. The Christ became the centre, the focus, in so far as the single personalities were to be sanctified and purified. All that man can bring as fruit out of the single personality into the individuality he achieves through having a connection with the Christ Being. Looking towards, feeling

oneself united with the Christ purifies and ennoble the personality. If Earth's evolution had taken its course without the appearing of the Christ then the human body — if we speak in a comprehensive sense — would have remained evil; it would have had to unite with the earth and fall a prey to materiality for ever.

If, however, the Spirits of Wisdom had not renounced the immediate spiritualizing of man at the beginning of Earth's evolution one of the following two courses could have been taken: Either the Spirits of Wisdom, at the very beginning of earthly evolution — in the Lemurian age — would have torn man away out of the body, led him to a rapid spiritual evolution and quickly consumed his body, in which case the Earth could never fulfill its mission; — or, on the other hand, they could have said: We do not wish for that, we want the human body to develop fully, but we ourselves have no interest in it. We will relinquish it therefore to the Late-born, to Jehovah; he is the Lord of Form — and man would have been dried up, mummified. The body of man would have remained united to the earth, it would never have been spiritualized.

Neither of these ways was chosen, but in order to form a balance between the Spirits of Wisdom and the Last-born of the old Moon, the Lord of Form, who was the point of departure for the creation of the present moon, a central situation was created. This mid-way solution prepared for the appearance of Christ Who is exalted above wisdom, before Whom the Spirits of Wisdom veil their countenance in humility, and Who will redeem men if they permeate them-selves more and more with His Spirit. And when the earth itself reaches the point where man will have spiritualized himself fully, then a dried-up ball will not fall out of evolution, but through what he has been able to draw out of evolution man will lead his increasingly ennobled human form to complete spiritualization. And we see how human beings are spiritualized. If we were to see the original human bodies of the Lemurian Age — which I should never describe in a public lecture — we should find that they represented the extreme limit of ugliness, and men became more and more ennobled as love increasingly purified them. But man will evolve even beyond the present human countenance. To-day we are in the 5th race. In the 6th race the external physiognomy of man's countenance will show his inner goodness, the inner state of his soul. Man will have then quite a different physiognomy; by the outer form one will recognize how good, how noble he is, one will see by his countenance what qualities lie within his soul. Increasingly will the physiognomy receive the imprint of the nobility and goodness contained in the soul, until at the end of the earth-condition man's bodily nature will be entirely permeated by spirit and will stand out in complete relief from those who have remained attached to materiality and will bear the image of evil on their countenance. That is what will come. It is called the "last crisis" and must be described as "Spiritualization" or, as it is popularly called, the "Resurrection of the Flesh." One must only understand these things in the true sense as given by occultism, then they cannot be attacked. Enlightened circles will not be able in any case to understand that matter could someday become quite different from matter. What could be called in the best sense of the word the "madness of materiality" will never be able to imagine that matter could one day be spiritualized that is, that someday something will come about which one calls spiritualization, the Resurrection of the Body, of the Flesh.

But this is how things are, and this is the course of earthly evolution, and thus comes about the meaning of earthly evolution and the place of the Christ within earthly evolution. If we were merely to look at all we have been considering today, then we should have a peculiar picture of the evolution of our Earth. Such a picture would show that the scales were in fact held between the Spirits of Form and the Spirits who have become the Spirits of the Rotation of Time, the actual Spirits of Light. Through the fact that the Christ from the time of the Mystery of Golgotha has to guide earthly evolution, they would be in the position of equilibrium and a continuous ascent would result. But the matter is again not so simple. We know that Spirits have remained behind — Spirits who had not attained the full maturity of the development of wisdom, and who therefore had no interest in

relinquishing their authority on the instreaming of love. These Spirits wanted to work on and let wisdom continue to stream in. They did so, and hence their work on earth has not been entirely unfruitful. They have brought men to liberation. If the Christ-Principle has brought love, so have these Spirits, whom we call Luciferic Spirits, brought men freedom, the freedom of the personality. Even the staying behind of certain Spirits has its very good side, and everything, whether advance or staying back, is of divine nature. So there were Spirits of the Rotation of Time who guided progressive incarnations — that which passes as individuality through all the different incarnations; and there were Spirits of Love under the guidance of the Christ-Principle who so prepare this individuality that the personality can little by little go over into a Kingdom of Love. If we would characterize the great ideal that hovers before us as a Kingdom of Love we can do so in the following way.

In the widest circles today the radical error is still circulated that the well-being of a single personality is possible without the well-being of all others on the earth. Although men may not admit that directly, yet in practice our modern life is based on the fact that the individual lives at the cost of others and it is a widespread belief that the welfare of the one is independent of the welfare of the others. Future evolution will bring about the full community of the spirit, that is, on Jupiter the belief will begin to prevail that there is no health and happiness of the one without the health and happiness of all the rest, and indeed to an equal degree. Christianity prepares this conception and it is there in order to prepare it. A community arose at first through the love that was bound to the blood, and in this way sheer egotism was overcome. The mission of Christianity is now to kindle in man the love that is no longer bound to the blood — that is, that men learn to find the pure love, where the well-being of the one cannot possibly be conceived without the well-being of the other. Anything else is no real Christianity. In this way we can characterize the evolution of man to a higher stage. But the advance of evolution to such a stage occurs in cycles, not in continuity. You can make these cycles clear to yourself through simple reflection.

You see how a civilization arises in the first epoch of the Post-Atlantean Age, reaches its culmination and must again decline, how it attains its highest point in the flight from materiality but how it must recede because it has sought its culture on the ground of the non-acknowledgment of matter. You then see how a new cycle enters with the old Persian civilization, how it conquers the earth through the acknowledgment of matter, at all events as a power striving against man, which man subdues through his labor; again this culture reaches its culmination and sinks into decadence. But a new civilization ascends, the Egyptian-Chaldean-Assyrian-Babylonian, which no longer merely acknowledges matter, but penetrates it with human intelligence — where the orbits of the stars are investigated, where buildings are erected in accordance with star-wisdom, laid out in accordance with the laws of geometry. Matter is no longer an opposing power but is recast and remoulded to the spiritual. And after the Egyptian-Chaldean-Assyrian-Babylonian culture has fallen into decay, we go on further to the Greco-Latin culture, where in Greek art man has so transformed matter that he has formed his own image in it. It had never been the case before that, as in Greek sculpture, Greek architecture and drama, the human being imprinted his own image into matter. And with Roman civilization we see added the legal idea of the personality. It is only a quite perverted scholarship that says the legal concept had already existed earlier — a rational man can see that at a glance. The Law-book of Hammurabi is entirely different from what was created in Rome as jurisprudence. That is a genuine Roman product, for jurisprudence emerged where the personality created its image in law too; in law man is placed entirely on his own personality. One should study and compare the testament of the Roman Law with what one finds in the Law-book of Hammurabi, where man's personality was definitely given its place in a theocracy. The "Roman citizen" was a new element in the evolutionary cycle of mankind. And there will be a new cycle when men have fully grasped what comes forward today as Theosophy. We see how each cycle in civilization reaches its peak and again declines and how each new cycle has the task of carrying civilization further.

The firm position of balance gives man the certainty that he can be redeemed from the Earth, and the struggling up-wards and the striving away is the struggle for actual freedom, which the Luciferic Spirits have imprinted into mankind. Thus the Christ-Principle and the Luciferic Spirits work together in world evolution and determine the conditions of civilization. It is of no consequence that in early Christian centuries the Luciferic principle was excluded and men were referred to the Christ-Principle alone. Humanity will surely come again to their attainment of freedom by complete devotion to the Christ-Principle; for the Christ-Principle is so all-embracing that he alone can grasp it who seeks to encompass it on the level of the loftiest wisdom. Let us glance back into pre-Christian times. We find religions existing there as preparation for Christianity. We see religions, it is true, among the Indians and the Persians but religions suited to the particular people out of which they have been born. They are national, tribal, racial religions, appearing with the coloring out of which they have arisen, limited inwardly, because in a certain way they still proceed from the group-souls and are bound up with them. With the Christian religion an element entered humanity's evolution which is the true element of earthly evolution. Christianity from the beginning at once broke through the principles of all earlier religions. It sharply set itself against the sentence "I and the Father Abraham are one." It opposed in the first place the idea that one can feel oneself a unity with something that is only a human group. On the other hand the soul that dwells in every personality must be able to feel one with the eternal Ground of the World Whom we call the "Father" and Who dwells in every soul, and this is expressed in the sentence: "I and the Father are one." And in contrast to the Old Testament which begins with the words: "In the beginning was the Light," Christianity sets the New Testament words: "In the primal beginning was the Word." With this was given one of the greatest advances in humanity's evolution. For in referring to the light that arose, one speaks, in so far as one can speak of light, of something externally visible. The old records contain a Genesis that establishes the physical as a manifestation of the light. The "Word," however, is what issues from the inner nature of the being, and before any manifestation of light had appeared there existed in man "what was, what is, and what is to come," namely, man's inmost being. In the Primal Beginning was not the Light, but the Word. The Gospel of St. John is not a document that may be placed side by side with the others; it expands the others from the temporal to the eternal.

So Christianity stands there, not as a religion which might be a national religion but, if it is rightly understood, as a religion of mankind. In that the Christian feels himself one with the "Father," soul confronts soul, no matter to what people or nation it belongs. All divisions must fall away under the influences of Christianity, and the Jupiter condition must be prepared under the influence of this principle. Christianity therefore has begun as a religion, for humanity was founded on religion. Yet religion must be replaced by wisdom, by knowledge. In so far as religion rests upon faith and is not inflamed with the fire of full knowledge it is something that must be replaced in the course of humanity's progress. And whereas formerly man had to believe before he could come to knowledge, in the future full knowledge will shine with light and man will know and thence ascend to the recognition of the highest spiritual worlds. From religion mankind evolves to wisdom, glowed through by love. First wisdom, then love, then wisdom glowed through by love.

Now we can ask: If religion is to merge into knowledge, if man is no longer given religion according to the old form, namely, that according to his faith he is directed to the wisdom that guides evolution — will then Christianity too no longer exist? There will be no religion that is founded on mere faith. Christianity will remain; in its origins it was religion — but Christianity is greater than all religion! That is Rosicrucian wisdom. The religious principle of Christianity as it originated was more all-embracing than the religious principle of any other religion. But Christianity is still greater than the religious principle itself. When the outer coverings of faith fall away it will be in wisdom-form. It can entirely strip off the sheaths of faith and become wisdom-religion, and spiritual science will help to prepare men for this. Men will be able to live without the old forms of religion and faith, but they will

not be able to live without Christianity, for Christianity is greater than all religion. Christianity exists for the purpose of breaking through all forms of religion, and that which fills men as Christianity will still exist when human souls have grown beyond all mere religious life.

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