

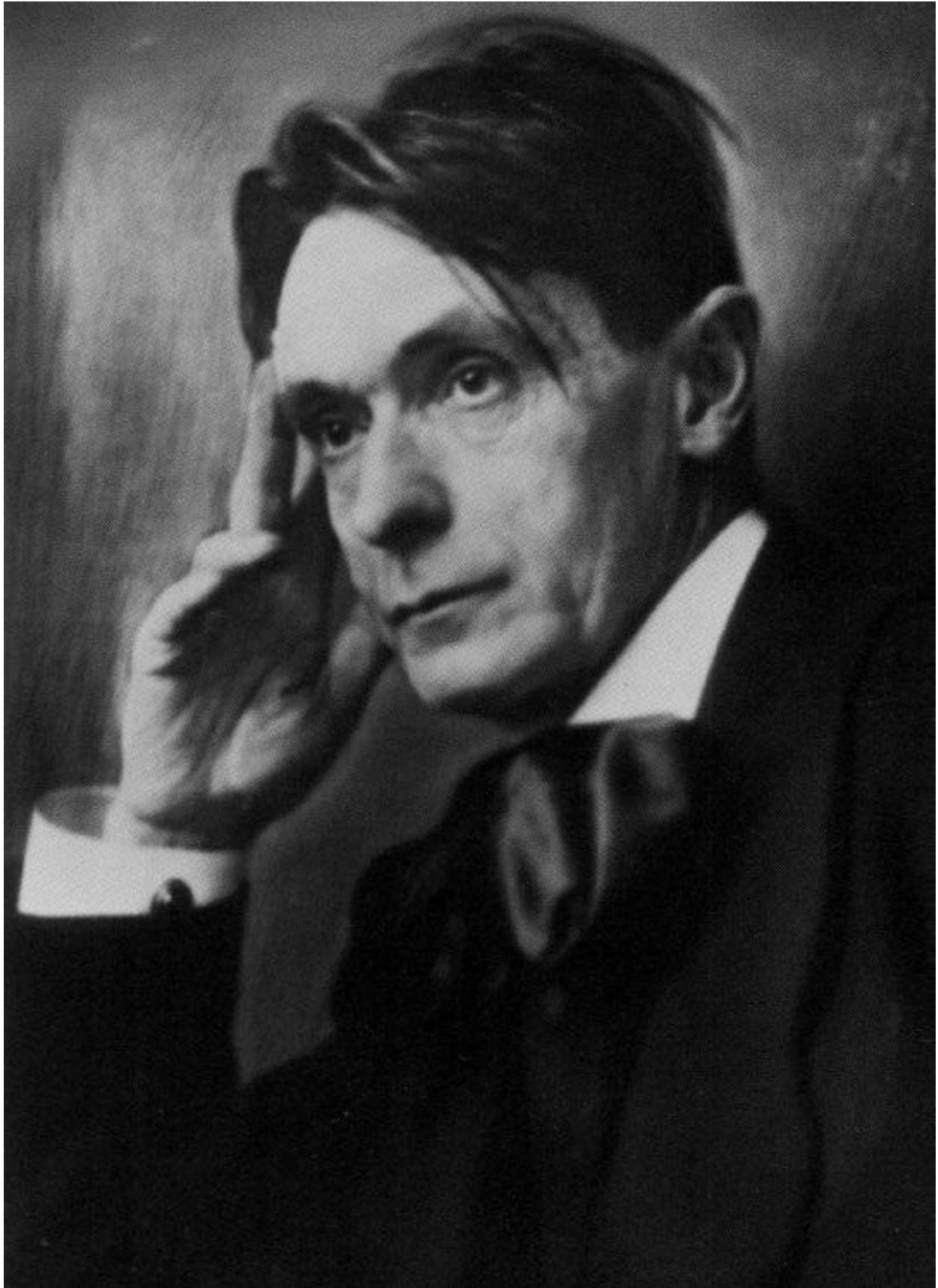
THE CHRIST IMPULSE

AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF EGO-CONSCIOUSNESS



THE COLLECTED WORKS OF RUDOLF STEINER

THE CHRIST IMPULSE
AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF
EGO-CONSCIOUSNESS



**THE CHRIST IMPULSE
AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF
EGO-CONSCIOUSNESS**

Seven lectures given in Berlin between 25 October and 8 May 1910

TRANSLATED BY CHRISTIAN VON ARNIM

INTRODUCTION BY CHRISTIAN VON ARNIM

RUDOLF STEINER

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

The present seven lectures represent a small sample of the many lectures which Rudolf Steiner gave in the Berlin Besant branch over many years when he was not travelling. He spoke at least once a week to this study group. But since these seven lectures appeared in manuscript form (cycle 17) during Rudolf Steiner's lifetime in 1921, this compilation has been retained within the complete works, although chronologically other lectures were held in between. The latter can be found in the volume *Die tieferen Geheimnisse des Menschheitwerdens im Lichte der Evangelien*, GA 117 (not presently translated as a single volume in English).

INTRODUCTION

The subject matter of the lectures in this compilation—the Christ impulse in human development—covers a very wide field from very different perspectives. They deal not just with the physical incarnation of Christ in the body of Jesus at a specific point in the development of the earth; they also discuss events in the vast cycles of time preceding Christ and preparing for his coming, as well as the way he will influence the future development of the earth and humanity. Mostly the lectures deal with the subject directly but occasionally the approach is more oblique, as in the second lecture in which Rudolf Steiner discusses aspects of the laws of karma.

Given over a period of several months, this compilation does not form a unit in the sense that the lectures were given as a single cycle, but rather looks at quite diverse aspects of the Christ theme, partly building on material which his listeners will have heard Steiner elaborate on in other contexts and on other occasions. Thus while the first lecture for example deals with the nature of the Bodhisattvas and their role in relation to Christ in the development of humanity, both in the past and in the future, other lectures discuss subjects as diverse as the Sermon on the Mount in the context of the constituent elements of the human being and various aspects of the emergence and development of conscience. Talking about duality and unity, Steiner in another lecture discusses the current duality of male and female (microcosm) and its correspondence in the cosmos (macrocosm) within the setting of northern and southern initiation in the Germanic and Egyptian mysteries, which reach their higher unity in Christian initiation.

In returning to a subject on multiple occasions at different times and looking at different aspects, Steiner deliberately used such a many-layered approach to enable students of anthroposophy to obtain the deeper understanding that was necessary for a real penetration of spiritual science. He says at the beginning of lecture two, ironically perhaps to make the point, that some people might argue that the teachings of anthroposophy could be summarized in a sixty page booklet

which people could study in order to obtain a ‘view on the nature of the human being, reincarnation and karma, the development of humanity and the earth’. Why keep returning to a subject?

But that would be to miss the point. Knowing the general principles is not enough to achieve real understanding—or rather, looking at the general principles first is to approach the study of spiritual matters from the wrong end. It is only by looking at the details of a subject as they relate to our lives from all different perspectives that we can advance to a deeper understanding of the underlying spiritual principles. In this sense Steiner makes the point that while the laws of the spiritual world can only be proven by the spiritual researcher with clairvoyant faculties, which not everybody has as yet developed, they can nevertheless be shown to exist by observation of the external world. It is just that we have to look at life less superficially than we normally do.

In that sense the facts of spiritual research and materialistic science do not contradict one another. On the contrary, spiritual science has indeed predicted findings of natural science, as Steiner points out. But in commenting on the natural science of his day Steiner draws the conclusion that unfortunately a lot of it is not based on facts but corrupted concepts. There is a contrast between the arbitrary observation of life and systematic research into the individual phenomena; only the latter will lead to a real understanding of the essence of things and the laws that govern them.

In a similar vein Steiner reminds his listeners, in lecture five, that they have to progress beyond the superficial thinking of the day for a proper understanding of spiritual science. Take a concept like the relationship between human beings and the cosmos, that is between the microcosm and macrocosm: unless we move beyond the abstract concept to an understanding of what that means in its ‘manifold variation’, we will never penetrate to the truth of the matter. Truth is a diverse and complex thing. Indeed, there are many truths—the crucial thing is to learn to judge which truths are significant for explaining existence in all its depth and which are not.

The task of our time, then, is to learn to read the great spiritual-scientific records with the tools which spiritual science provides and to do so in a continuous learning process in which one aspect throws light on another one. That applies from the most mundane to the most elevated subject matter, such as in these lectures the Christ impulse as it relates to different aspects of human

development.

These lectures were not given for a general public but were delivered for the members of the Besant branch of the Theosophical Society in Berlin. So, not surprisingly, Rudolf Steiner spoke more openly about esoteric matters in these study groups than he did in his public lectures on the same subject to audiences who might be new to spiritual science, and he expected the members of the group to work more actively with the material he presented.

Christian von Arnim, September 2014

LECTURE 1

BERLIN, 25 OCTOBER 1909

TODAY, on occasion of the Annual General Meeting,¹ it rests on me to speak about an elevated matter regarding humanity. Whereas we otherwise endeavour in the lectures about anthroposophy² to lay a foundation which tends to be rooted on the physical plane, we may speak today about something that belongs to higher worlds. So let me mention once more as a preliminary remark that we should also accustom ourselves to talking about elevated matters of humanity in such a way that we are not satisfied with the one-sided presentation of details from the higher world. So that for instance the concept of the Bodhisattvas which we intend to discuss today is defined in a general way and it is then said what their missions are. No, here too we want to accustom ourselves to move from the abstract to the concrete. We will endeavour to penetrate also such elevated matters as the Bodhisattvas with ideas and feelings which are our own on the basis of a thorough and loving observation of life through which we receive these things not just as information imparted to us but can also understand them to a certain extent. Hence in these reflections, too, I want to start at the bottom and ascend from there and set myself the goal to characterize a little the concept of the Bodhisattva and his progress through the world.

We cannot really understand what a Bodhisattva is if we do not immerse ourselves a little in the development of humanity and let pass before us some of the things which we have heard in consecutive years. Just take the fact of how humanity progresses. After the great Atlantean catastrophe humanity passed through a period of ancient Indian culture in which the great Rishis were the teachers of humanity, then a period of ancient Persian culture, a period of Egypto-Chaldean culture, then the Graeco-Roman cultural period up to our time which is the fifth cultural period of the post-Atlantean time. These cultural epochs obtain their meaning in that they signify the progress of humanity from

one life form to the next.

After all, it is the case that not only those things progress which we commonly describe in external history, but when we look at longer periods all sentiments and feelings, all concepts and ideas are renewed in the course of human development. What sense would there be in espousing the idea of reincarnation if we did not know that this is what happens in the world? Why should our soul repeatedly keep entering a physical body if every time it did not just experience something new but also sensed and felt it? Because the faculties of human beings, including the intimacies of the soul life, keep being renewed, keep changing, that makes it possible for our soul to move upwards from stage to stage not just as if it were on a staircase, but each time it also has the opportunity to take in new things from outside through the changed circumstances of life on our earth. Our soul is guided from incarnation to incarnation not just through its transgressions, through its karmic sins; but because our earth changes in all the respects of life it is possible for our soul to keep taking in new things also from outside. So the soul moves forward from incarnation to incarnation, but also from cultural cycle to cultural cycle.

But now these souls would not progress, would not be able to develop, if those beings who have already reached a higher development and so to some degree go beyond the average development of humanity were not able to ensure that new things can keep flowing into our earth culture—in other words, if great teachers were not at work who through their higher development could assimilate and carry down the experiences and experience of higher worlds to the place where the cultures on earth have their life. Such beings have always been present during the time of earth development—and we are talking here today only about post-Atlantean development—who were the teachers of the rest of humanity and for whom higher sources of feeling and possibilities of will were available. We can only understand the nature of such teachers of humanity if we understand how humanity itself progresses.

Yesterday and today you heard our dear Dr Unger³ talk in two excellent lectures: about the I, and about the I in its relationship to the not-I in philosophical and epistemological terms. Now do you think that you could have heard what you heard yesterday and today in human speech and human thought in this form about 2500 years ago? Nowhere on our earth would there have been the possibility to speak about the I, for example, in the form of pure thinking. Assume for a minute that an individuality had wanted to incarnate in our earth

existence 2500 years ago which had set itself the task before its incarnation to speak about the I in the unique form that you have heard; it would not have been able to do that. Because anyone who believes that something could have been said in human words in this form 2500 years ago has misunderstood the real progression and the transformation within cultural development. Because for that to happen requires not just an individuality that sets itself the task to incarnate in a human body but it also requires that our earth provides a physical body in its development that has the kind of brain to enable the truth which exists in quite a different way in the higher worlds to form within this brain as what we call 'pure thoughts'.⁴ Because we call this form in which Dr Unger spoke about the I the form of pure thinking. There would not have been a brain 2500 years ago—that would have been quite impossible—that could have been a tool for bringing down such truths in such thoughts.

The beings who want to come down to our earth must use the human bodies which have, in turn, been produced by this earth environment itself. But our earth has kept producing always different bodies in the course of the different cultural periods which have always been organized differently. And it is only in our fifth post-Atlantean cultural period that it has become possible because humanity itself has produced such bodies in which pure thoughts can form so that they can be expressed in the form of pure thoughts. Even in the Graeco-Roman period such epistemological observations would not have been possible because there would not have been the instrument, the tool to formulate these thoughts in a language that was comprehensible to human beings. That is the particular task of our fifth post-Atlantean cultural period: gradually to form human beings with regard to their physical organization into a tool so that those truths can also flow down in ever purer thoughts which were framed in other periods in quite different forms than the form of pure thinking.

Let us take another example. When people today approach the question of good and evil, when they have a choice of doing or not doing something, then people say that a kind of inner voice speaks which tells them quite independently of any external law: you should do this, you should not do that! Anyone who pays attention to this inner voice will perceive a certain impulse in it, an incitement to do one thing in a given situation and not something else. We call this inner voice 'the conscience'. Now anyone who holds the view that the different times of human development are really quite similar might believe that there has always been a conscience for as long as human beings have been on earth. But that would not be correct. It can be shown historically, as it were, that at one point

human beings started talking about conscience. This point is quite palpable. It lies between the two Greek tragic dramatists Aeschylus,⁵ who was born in the sixth century before the Christian era, and Euripides,⁶ who was born in the fifth century. Before that you will not find anyone talking about conscience. With Aeschylus we do not yet either have what we describe as an inner voice but with him there still appears what is an astral image for the human being: apparitions appear which approach human beings as avenging beings, the Furies or Erinyes. Then the point came when the astral perception of the Furies was replaced by the inner voice of conscience.

In the Graeco-Roman time, in which hazy astral perception still existed, anyone who had done an injustice could perceive how each injustice created astral figures around them filling them with fear and dread for the injustice done. They were the educators, the impulse at that time. And when human beings lost the last remnants of astral clairvoyance, such perception was replaced by the invisible voice of conscience; in other words, what was initially outside entered the soul and there became one of the forces which are now in the soul. That happened because humanity, because the external instrument into which human beings are incarnated changed in the course of development. Five thousand years ago a human soul would never have been able to perceive the voice of conscience; when it did an injustice it perceived the Furies. That was the way in which a soul at the time learnt to establish a relationship with good and evil. Then it kept being incarnated and was finally born into a body which was organized in such a way that now the capacity of conscience was able to make an appearance in this soul. In a future cycle of humanity other capacities and other forms of the soul will exist.

I have often emphasized that anyone who truly understands anthroposophy and does not take a dogmatic standpoint will not think that the form in which anthroposophy is expressed today is eternal and can stay like that for the whole of the future of humanity. That is not the case. In 2500 years it will no longer be possible to render the same truths in these forms but they will have to be decanted into other forms depending on the instrument that will then be available. If you take that into consideration, you will understand that people have to be addressed in a different way in each epoch and that the great teachers have to speak about matters in different ways depending on human capacities. But that means that these great teachers of humanity have to undergo development themselves from cycle to cycle, from age to age. So we find the cycles which humanity passes through and we find above that, as it were, a

progressive development of the great teachers of humanity. And just as human beings pass through certain stages in which they come to a turning point, as it were, these great teachers also pass through certain stages of development in which they come to a turning point.

Consider what we have often said before: we now live in the fifth period of our post-Atlantean cultural development. This fifth period is in a certain respect a repetition of the third period, the Egypto-Chaldean one. The sixth period will similarly be a repetition of the ancient Persian period and the seventh a repetition of the ancient Indian time. That is how the cycles interact. The fourth period will not have a repetition. It is positioned in the middle, on its own, as it were. What does that mean? It means the people will go through what they went through in the Graeco-Roman period only once in one cultural epoch—not in the sense that they would only be incarnated once in it but they only pass through it in one form. In contrast, what human beings passed through in the Egypto-Chaldean period is repeated in our time, so it is passed through in two different forms. So there are developmental stages which represent a kind of crisis whereas other periods are such that they are similar in certain respects, that they repeat one another although not in the same way and form. In the way that human beings develop in the post-Atlantean period, they undergo a number of incarnations in the Indian period and a number in the seventh cultural epoch which are similar to one another. The same applies to the second and sixth and the third and fifth epoch. In between there is the fourth epoch for which there is no repetition, it is positioned in the middle. What does that mean? It means that human beings have to pass through this period only once. Not that they only incarnate once in the fourth period but that there are a number of incarnations which are not similar to any others. Human beings thus pass through a descent and ascent. In the same way the great teachers of humanity pass through their development in a descent and an ascent and they are something different in the one set of periods from what they are in the others.

Now since human beings in the first post-Atlantean period had quite different faculties from later on, they also had to be taught in quite a different way. To whom is it due, then, that in our time wisdom can be clothed in a logical and concise way in the form of pure thinking? That is due to the circumstance that in the present time within earth development it is the consciousness soul which is developing as the common characteristic of humanity. In the Graeco-Roman period it was the intellectual or mind soul, in the Egypto-Chaldean period the sentient soul, in ancient Persian culture the sentient body and among the ancient

Indians the etheric body, but—please note—as a factor of cultural development.

The etheric body was to the members of ancient Indian culture what the consciousness soul is for us. Hence they had a quite different way of comprehension and understanding. If you had approached ancient Indians with pure thinking, they would not have understood a thing. They would merely have heard sounds which did not make any sense. The great teachers could not teach the ancient Indians by transmitting things in the form of pure thinking which they explained through speech. A great teacher in ancient India spoke very little, for example, because at the stage at which the etheric body was then there was not the receptivity for the word which encompasses the thought. It is very difficult for people today to imagine how such teaching might have been. There was exceptionally little speaking and it was more in the colour of the sound, more in the way that the word was spoken, that the other soul recognized what actually flowed from the spiritual world. But that was not the main thing. The word was more like a ‘knock’, a sign that a relationship should exist between the teacher and the other. The word in ancient Indian times was not much more than if we ring a bell today to indicate that something is beginning. It was the crystallization point around which there was the interweaving of indefinable, delicate spiritual currents which went from the teacher to the pupil. Of very special importance was the character of the teacher in his innermost personality. What the teacher said was not important but the crucial thing was his quality of soul, because it was transmitted to the pupil as a kind of inspiration. Because the etheric body had especially been developed, one also had to behave towards the etheric body in a corresponding way and people understood the unspoken teaching much better than what was spoken. Because in order to understand the spoken word human beings first had to prepare themselves through the subsequent cultural epochs. Hence it also was unnecessary for any of the great teachers in ancient India to have a particularly developed intellectual or mind soul because it would have been completely useless as an instrument for that time.

But these great teachers required something else. In developing his own etheric body, the teacher had to be at a higher level than the other. If he had stood at the same level of development as the other, he would not have been able to act on him in any particular way, could not have brought to him the message from a higher world, could not have given any impulses to stimulate progress. In a certain sense, human beings had to be given what they were to grow into in the future. The Indian teacher had to pre-empt, as it were, what the others would

only be able to assimilate in the Persian cultural epoch. What ordinary people would only be able to take in during the Persian epoch with their sentient body had to be brought down by him into the etheric body. In other words, the etheric body of such a teacher was not allowed to act in the same way as the etheric body of other human beings; it had to act in the same way that the sentient body would act in Persian culture. If a clairvoyant in today's sense had stepped before a great Indian teacher, that clairvoyant would have said: what kind of etheric body is this? Because such an etheric body would have looked like the astral body did subsequently in the Persian time.

But such an etheric body could not act like a later astral body just like that. It could not happen through some kind of anticipatory development at that time. It was only possible because a being which was already a stage higher than the others descended and incarnated in a human organism which was not actually suitable for that purpose, but into which it entered in order to be understood by the others. Certainly, outwardly it looked like the others but inwardly it was something quite different. It was complete smoke and mirrors to judge such an individuality by external appearances. Because while in an ordinary human being the outer accords with the inner, the outer contradicts the inner in such a teacher. So that we have the fact here that we have the ancient Indian people and within these ancient Indian people an individuality which did not for itself need to descend but which descended to the appropriate level in order to be able to teach the others. It descended voluntarily, incarnated in human form but was something completely different.

As a result it was also in turn an individuality which was not affected by the destinies experienced by human beings because they are normal human beings. Such a teacher lived in a body with an external destiny and had no part in that destiny; he merely inhabited that body like a house. And when the body died, death for him was a quite different experience from what it was for other human beings; the same applied with regard to birth and the experiences between birth and death. Hence such a personality also worked in this human instrument in quite a different way.

Let us imagine now how such an individuality might make use of the brain for example. Because even if perception was with the astral body at the time, the brain, although it was organized differently, was still used to register the images in which perception took place. So there were two types of human beings: one type who used their brain like an ordinary human being, and the type of the

teacher who did not use his brain in the same way at all but left it unused in a certain respect. It was not necessary for the great teacher to use all the brain in every detail. He already knew things which the others could not know until they used the tool of the brain. Such a great teacher thus did not represent a real, proper incarnation on earth, a real, proper incarnation of a person as was otherwise the case. It was really something that represented a kind of dual nature: a kind of spiritual being was in this organization. Such beings also existed in subsequent Persian times, in the Egyptian time and so on. It was always the case that they extended beyond the dimension of the human organization, as it were, with their individuality, that they were not absorbed in it. This enabled them to act on other people in those more ancient times. And that was the case until the time came when in the Graeco-Roman period an important crisis in human development occurred.

In the Graeco-Roman period it was particularly the intellectual or mind soul which gradually began to bring the inner capabilities to appearance. Whereas in the previous time the main things flowed from outside into human beings—as we could see in the example of the Furies, where human beings had avenging figures around them—it begins to happen in the Graeco-Roman period that something streamed from inside outwards, as it were, towards the great teachers. That led to the occurrence of quite new circumstances.

In earlier times, beings thus descended from higher worlds and found a situation in which they could say: it is not necessary for us to enter the human organization completely because we can act as we should if we carry down from higher worlds into human beings what they cannot yet do and let that flow into them. At that time human beings did not yet carry anything towards the teachers. But if the great teachers had continued this policy, then it could have happened from the fourth period onwards that such an individuality would have descended, appeared in a region, but then found something on earth what did not exist up there. For as long as the avengers, the Erinyes were visible on earth, it was not necessary to concern oneself with what existed on earth. But now something completely new appeared down there: the conscience. That was unknown up there, there was no opportunity to observe it up there. It was something new which approached those who were up there.

In other words, then, it became necessary in the fourth period of post-Atlantean culture that these teachers actually descended to the level of humanity and within the level of humanity acquainted themselves with what came to meet them from

the human soul up in the spiritual world. So the time now started in which it was no longer possible not to have any part in human faculties. And now let us look at that unique being to whom we refer in its earthly incarnation as the Gautama Buddha.

The Gautama Buddha was previously a being which could live in such a way that it was always able to incarnate in earthly bodies of the corresponding cultural periods without needing to make use of everything in such a human organization. It was not necessary for this being to go through real human incarnations. But now an important turning point occurs for the Bodhisattva, namely the necessity to become acquainted with all the destinies of the human organization in an earthly body into which he had to enter fully. He had to experience something which can only be experienced in an earthly body. And because he was a higher individuality, this one incarnation was sufficient to truly see all the things which can develop from such a human body. For other human beings it was the case that they gradually had to develop their inner faculties through the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh period of post-Atlantean cultural development.

The Buddha, in contrast, was able to experience everything in this one incarnation which the latter contained as developmental possibilities. What human beings would unfold as 'conscience' and what would keep growing—that he saw in its initial embryonic state as he lived through his incarnation as the Gautama Buddha. As a result he was able to ascend to the divine spiritual worlds again immediately after this incarnation and did not subsequently need to undergo a second incarnation. What human beings will in a certain area develop out of themselves in future cycles he was able to present as a great directive force in this one incarnation. This happened through the event which is indicated to us through his 'sitting under the bodhi tree'. It was at this time that he came to understand—in accordance with his particular mission—the teaching of compassion and love which is contained in the eightfold path. This great ethic of humanity, which human beings will obtain for themselves as their property in the following cultures, was laid like a basic force into the mind of the Buddha who descended at that time and turned from a Bodhisattva into a Buddha, that is, underwent a real higher stage. Because here he learnt through his descent.

This is, paraphrased a little, the great event which is described in eastern culture as the transformation of the Bodhisattva into the Buddha. When this Bodhisattva, who had never truly incarnated previously, turned 29 years old, the

individuality of the Bodhisattva, which had not previously taken full possession, flashed into the son of Suddhodana and took hold of him completely. And he experienced the great teaching of humanity of compassion and love. Why did this Bodhisattva, who then became the Buddha, incarnate in this people in particular? Why not within the Graeco-Roman people, for example?

If this Bodhisattva was really to become the Buddha of the fourth post-Atlantean cultural epoch, he had to bring something of the future. Now human beings will become mature enough through the consciousness soul, as it develops, gradually to understand from out of themselves what was given by the Buddha like a resounding strike of the bell. In the time in which human beings had only developed the intellectual or mind soul, it was necessary for the Buddha to have already developed the consciousness soul. He therefore had to use the instrument of the brain in such a way that he overcame it, overcame it in quite a different way from a person who had progressed to the Graeco-Roman cultural period. The Graeco-Roman brain would have been too hard for him. He would only have been able to develop the intellectual soul in it but he needed to develop the consciousness soul. Hence he needed a brain which had remained softer. He used the soul which was subsequently to develop in an instrument which had been in use in humanity before and which had been preserved in the Indian people.

There you also have a repetition: the Buddha repeats a human organization from the past with a soul capacity of the future. The things which happen in human development are necessary even to this extent. And the Buddha had the task to immerse the consciousness soul in the human organization in the fifth to sixth century before the Christian era. But as a single individuality he was not able to take on the full task, he was not able to do everything to ensure that this consciousness soul developed in the right way from the fifth period onwards. He only had a part of this task as his special mission, namely the task to bring the teaching of compassion and love to humanity. Other tasks were the responsibility of other similar teachers of humanity. The ethic of humanity which was decided upon in this part, the ethic of love and compassion, was sounded by the Buddha and it continues to vibrate. But humanity has to develop a whole raft of other faculties for the future, for example thinking in pure forms of thought, sculpting thoughts in crystallized thinking, placing one thought next to another in pure thinking. This faculty was not part of the Buddha's mission. It was his task to develop what leads human beings to find the eightfold path on their own.

Thus there had to be a different teacher of humanity who had quite different

faculties and carried down quite different streams of spiritual life from the higher spiritual worlds into this world. This other individuality had the task to carry down those things which today gradually show themselves in humanity mainly as the faculty of logical thinking. A teacher also had to be found who carried down those things which are needed to express oneself in the forms of logical thinking, because logical thinking has also only developed in the course of time.

What the Buddha did had to be introduced into the intellectual or mind soul. Because it is located in the middle between the sentient soul and the consciousness soul, this intellectual soul has the very particular feature that there is no crosswise repetition. Just as the ancient Indian period will be repeated in the seventh, the ancient Persian in the sixth period, and as the fourth one stands all alone, so the intellectual soul also stands all alone. The forces for our intellectual faculties that could only arise in the consciousness soul could not be developed in the intellectual soul; but they did have to be prepared and set in train at an earlier stage already although they were only to appear at a later stage. In other words, the impulse for logical thinking had to be given at an earlier time than the impulse for the conscience was given through the Buddha. Conscience was to be organized into the fourth period; conscious pure thinking was to emerge from the consciousness soul in the fifth period but already had to be prepared as a seed for what is emerging today in the third cultural period.

That is why that other great teacher had the task to inoculate the sentient soul with the forces which come to appearance today as logical thinking. Hence it is easy to imagine that the distance of this teacher from the normal human being had to be even greater than that of the Buddha from the ordinary human being. Something was to be stimulated in the sentient soul which basically was not present in any human being at that time. People had no use for concepts, for those things which were to develop in the future. That individuality therefore had the task to sow the seed for certain forces, but it was not allowed to or could not use those forces itself. That was not possible. It therefore had to use quite different forces.

Now I set out this morning in the second lecture about ‘Anthroposophy’⁷ how insight forces are at work in the sentient soul which actually only come to consciousness on a higher level and come to appearance as forces of thinking. If therefore such a great teacher individuality could manage to stimulate this sentient soul in such a way that the forces of thinking penetrated it roughly in the same way as the thinking life unconsciously does in the act of seeing, without

human beings needing to be aware of it, then this individuality could bring it about that these forces could later be used at a higher level. That was only possible in one way. In order to stimulate the sentient soul, to inoculate it with the thinking element, so to speak, this individuality had to act in a very special way: it had to teach not in concepts but in music! Music provides forces which trigger in the sentient soul those things which when they rise to consciousness and are processed by the consciousness soul become logical thinking. This special music was used by a being, a mighty being which taught in this way—through music.

You will find it strange and perhaps believe that something like that is not possible. But that is how it was. Particularly in the regions of Europe there existed before the Graeco-Roman period an ancient culture among peoples who had been left behind with regard to the characteristics which were strongly developed in the East. Because they were to develop in quite a different way, human beings in these European regions could think very little; they had little of what are the forces of the intellectual or mind soul. But their sentient soul was particularly receptive for the impulses which came from a special kind of music which was not quite similar to what we have today. Here we go back to a time in Europe in which ancient, what we might call ‘musical cultures’ existed, in which it was not just the ‘bards’ who were the teachers as in times in which things had already become decadent, but in which an enchanting music went through all the European regions. During the third cultural epoch there was a profound musical culture in Europe and the mind of the people who waited quietly for what they were destined to do in later times was receptive in a special way for musical effects. Those were the effects on the sentient soul which act in the same way as the substance of the thinking acts on the sentient soul for the eye. The sentient soul was worked on; consciousness was to arise in it which at the higher level in the consciousness soul was revealed as logical thinking. But all consciousness comes from the regions of light, just like music and song. That is why through music, which works on the physical plane, the sentient soul had the subconscious feeling: that comes from the regions from which the light comes, music, song from the realms of light!

It was a very ancient teacher within the European cultural regions—a very ancient teacher who in this sense was a very ancient bard, the leader of all the ancient bards. He taught on the physical plane through music and he taught in such a way that through his activities something communicated itself to the sentient soul as if the sun were rising and shining. What has remained in outer

tradition about this great teacher was subsequently summarized by the Greeks, who had still been influenced by him from the West just as they were influenced in a different way from the East, in their conception of Apollo who is a sun god and at the same time the god of music. But this figure of Apollo takes us back to the great teacher of the past who placed in the human soul the faculty which today emerges as logical thinking.

And the Greeks also named a pupil of this great teacher of humanity, although this was a pupil who became such in a very peculiar way. How could someone become a pupil of this being? In the following way.

In the times in which it was at work as we have described, this being was of course such that it was not absorbed in the physical organization of the human being, that it was more than the physical human being walking about on earth. A human being with an ordinary sentient soul could have assimilated the musical effects but could not have generated them. A higher individuality had descended and what lived externally was like appearances.

But in the fourth post-Atlantean cultural period, in the Graeco-Roman age, it was necessary for this individuality to descend again, down to the human level as it were, and use all the faculties which are in human beings. But although it used all these faculties it was nevertheless unable to descend completely. Because in order to achieve what I have just described, in order to cross-link this effect it required faculties which went beyond the measure of what a human organization possessed in the fourth post-Atlantean period. After all, the musical effects already contained everything which is in the consciousness soul. But that could not exist in that time in an individuality which was not yet suited for anything beyond the mind soul. That is why this individuality, although it was incarnated in that form, had to hold something back. It had to incarnate in such a way in the fourth period that although it filled the whole human being, the person living at that time still had something in himself which extended beyond himself. He knew something about a spiritual world which he could not use. He had a soul which extended beyond this body.

It was, if we were to look at it in human terms, something of a tragedy that the individuality which had been at work as a great teacher in the third cultural period had to incarnate again in a figure which in its soul extended beyond itself and yet could not make use of a soul capacity extending beyond the normal extent. This kind of incarnation is therefore called 'son of Apollo' because what

was there previously is not directly incarnated but in a very complicated way—a son who carried that as soul within himself which is usually designated with the feminine symbol in mysticism. But it was present in him in such a way that he could not have it completely because it was in a different world. He carried his own soul and female element within himself in a different world to which he did not have access but which he longed to enter because a part of his own self was there. This wonderful inner tragedy of the reincarnated great teacher individuality from the past has been recorded in Greek myth in a wonderful way in the name which it gave to the reincarnated Apollo or the ‘son of Apollo’, in Orpheus.

The myth of Orpheus⁸ and Eurydice presents this tragedy of the soul in a wonderful way. Eurydice is soon snatched from Orpheus. She is in another world. Orpheus descends into the realm of shadows. He still has the ability to touch the beings in the underworld with his music. He receives permission to take Eurydice back with him. But he must not turn around because the sight would kill him inwardly, or at least bring great loss if he looks back at what he was previously and what he cannot now take into himself.

Thus in Apollo turning into Orpheus we have once again a kind of descent of a Bodhisattva, to use the oriental name, who turns into a Buddha. And so we can list a number of such beings who stand as the great teachers of humanity from one age to the next and who at the point of their deepest descent, when they become a Buddha, experience something very special. The Buddha experiences the bliss of inspiring the whole of humanity. The Bodhisattva who outwardly is preserved under the name ‘Apollo’ experiences something individual; after all, it was his task to prepare the individuality, the characteristic of the I. He experiences the tragedy of the I, he experiences that this I is not fully in itself because of the way that human beings are today with regard to this feature of humanity. Human beings strive upwards towards their higher I. That is prefigured in what the Buddha or Bodhisattva is correspondingly in Orpheus for Greece.

Thus we have moved from individual details to a general characteristic of those great teachers of humanity and can now picture something with regard to such concepts. If you now draw together what I have just said, you will see that I have always spoken of beings who have developed for example the sentient soul, the intellectual or mind soul, and the consciousness soul in a specific way as inner faculties—as faculties which have to enter human beings from inside. Since we

are only looking at this period, we can to begin with only picture these two: the trainers of the sentient soul. But there are many such beings because the inner nature of the human being is developing gradually, step-by-step.

Let us now compare what takes hold of the inner aspect of human beings with another being. And let us do so because we have to tell ourselves: whenever teachers come who provide spiritual nourishment from higher regions for the continuously developing inner faculties, there have to be other individualities who do other work, who put their hand above all to changing the earth itself and what develops there from age to age. If the Buddha in the fourth cultural epoch grasped the intellectual soul through the consciousness soul from inside, then the intellectual soul on the other hand also had to be grasped from outside. Something had to approach it from the outside. This being now had to approach from another side and work in a quite different way.

A teacher of the kind we have just characterized, in placing himself before human beings, had to decant into the human interior what he brought from higher regions. He was a teacher. What did the other being have to do which brought progress to the earth so that it developed from one generation to the next? It had to take hold not just of something inward, not just approach human beings to develop one or the other faculty, but it had to descend to earth as such a being, as a being. It was not just a teacher of the intellectual soul who had to descend but a being which formed the intellectual soul. A being which formed the intellectual soul itself had to come which was what we might call the direct expression of this soul of the fourth period, this exceptional period located in the middle. This being had to come from quite a different direction. It had to enter human nature itself, incarnate there itself. If the Bodhisattvas recreated the human interior, this being recreated the whole of human nature. It first made it possible for the teachers to find suitable soil in the future. It transformed the whole of human nature.

Let us recall how the various souls are integrated in the human being into the individual bodies: the sentient soul into the sentient body, the intellectual or mind soul into the etheric body and the consciousness soul into the physical body. The Bodhisattvas act where the consciousness soul integrates into the physical body, that is where they grasped the human being from the one direction. Another being took hold of the human being in the fourth period where the intellectual soul or mind soul acts into the etheric body. When did it do that?

It happened at the time when the etheric body of human beings could be directly grasped, when the being which we have described in greater detail as Jesus of Nazareth⁹ left the physical body at the moment of the baptism in the Jordan. As the whole body was submerged—whereby occurred what we have described as a ‘shock’—the Christ being descended into the etheric body of this individuality. This is the individuality who comes from the other direction and who is now also of quite a different nature. Whereas we are dealing in the other great leaders with individualities who are in a certain sense human beings at a higher stage of development, with human beings who at least once passed through all human destinies, we cannot say the same about the Christ individuality. What is the lowest level of this Christ being? From the bottom upwards it is the etheric body. In other words, when in the future human beings have transformed their whole astral body with their Spirit Self and act into the etheric body, then they will work in an element in the etheric body in which Christ already worked at that time in the same way. Christ gives an impulse of the most powerful kind which acts right into the future and which human beings will only achieve when they start working on their etheric body in a conscious way.

As human beings pass through life, they go from birth or also from conception to death, then from death to a new birth. On the way to a new birth they initially pass through the astral world after death, then through what we call the lower part of the world of devachan and thereafter the upper part of the world of devachan. If we use European terms, we call the physical plane the little world or the intellectual world, the astral the elemental world, the lower devachan the heavenly world and the upper devachan the world of reason. And because the European spirit is only gradually working its way upwards to have the corresponding real terms in its language, what lies above the world of devachan has been given a religiously tinged term and is thus called the ‘world of providence’, that is the same as the Buddhi plane. Although ancient clairvoyance had an overview of what lies above that and ancient traditions were able to give it to humanity, it could not be given a name in European languages because only today are clairvoyants working their way up to that level again. So that a world lies above the world of providence for which in a wholly honest and correct way there cannot yet be a name in European languages. It really exists but the thinking has not yet progressed to the stage of being able to characterize it, because there cannot just be any arbitrary name given to something which is otherwise called in oriental terminology ‘nirvana’ and which lies above the ‘world of providence’.

Human beings, as I said, progress upwards between death and a new birth to the upper devachan or the world of reason. There they look into higher worlds which they are not themselves in and see the beings higher than themselves active in these higher worlds. Whereas human beings spend their life in worlds from the physical plane to the devachan plane, it is normal for a Bodhisattva being to rise as far as the Buddhi plane, which in Europe we call the world of providence. That is a good word because it is its task to guide the world from age to age with providence. What, then, happens when the Bodhisattva has passed through incarnation—as was the case with the Gautama Buddha?

When he has reached a certain stage, he reaches the next plane, the nirvana plane. That is his next sphere. We have thus characterized the Bodhisattvas which then become the Buddhas to enter the nirvana plane. A being like Christ acts on human nature from the other direction. From the other direction he also works into those worlds to which the Bodhisattvas rise when they leave the region of humanity to become learners themselves so that they can then become teachers of humanity. There they encounter from above, from the other direction, a being such as Christ. Then they become pupils of Christ. Twelve Bodhisattvas surround a being such as Christ and we cannot ever talk of more than twelve because when the twelve Bodhisattvas have achieved their mission we have exhausted the period of earth existence.

Christ was physically here at one time and passed through what is descent, arrival on earth and ascent. He comes from the other direction and is the being which is in the middle of the twelve Bodhisattvas who collect from there what they have to carry down to earth. Thus the Bodhisattva beings rise between two incarnations up to the Buddhi plane and to the Buddhi plane extends what comes to meet them in full consciousness as a teacher: the being of Christ. And if human beings progress and develop the characteristics which are instilled into them by the Bodhisattvas, then they will also gain in maturity to penetrate up to the same sphere. Meanwhile it is a matter of human beings learning to recognize that the Christ being was incarnated—that is, appeared in human form, in Jesus of Nazareth—and that this human form has to be penetrated to reach the true being of the Christ individuality.

Thus twelve Bodhisattvas belong with Christ who have to prepare and develop what he brought as the greatest impulse of our cultural development. So we see the twelve and in their middle the thirteenth. We have thus risen to the sphere of the Bodhisattvas and entered a circle of twelve stars with the sun in the middle

which illuminates and warms them, in which they have that source of life which they in turn have to carry down to earth. How is what happens up there reflected on earth?

Projected down to earth it looks like this, that we can say: Christ who lived on earth brought an impulse to earth development for which the Bodhisattvas had to prepare humanity and will again have to develop what Christ gives to earth development. The picture on earth appears like this: Christ at the centre of earth development, the Bodhisattvas as his heralds and successors who have again to make his work accessible to humanity.

Thus a number of Bodhisattvas had to undertake preliminary work in humanity so that humanity would be ready to receive Christ. But human beings, having obtained the maturity to have Christ among them, are by no means mature enough to recognize, to feel and to want what Christ is. And just as many Bodhisattvas as were necessary to prepare human beings for Christ are required to distribute in humanity those things which are to flow into humanity through Christ. Christ contains so much that the powers and faculties of human beings will have to keep growing in order to understand him fully. Only a tiny part of him can be understood with today's faculties. Humanity will acquire higher faculties and with each new faculty we will look at Christ in a new light. And only when the last Bodhisattva who belongs with Christ has done his work will humanity feel what Christ is; then it will be ensouled with a will in which Christ himself lives. Christ will enter human nature through thinking, feeling and the will and humanity will be the outer manifestation of Christ on earth.

LECTURE 2

BERLIN, 22 DECEMBER 1909

LET us devote today's reflections to things which might be of interest to anthroposophists in the wider meaning of the word and which are intended to cast a more detailed light on this or the other matter for those who have taken part in these branch evenings for a longer period of time. It is especially a good thing if we recall to mind every so often that in spiritual science it is not just a matter of knowing this or that in general as a theory or teaching but that the important thing is to keep concerning ourselves with greater precision and in more detail with the corresponding questions and riddles of life. Someone might say, for example, that what we need to know about spiritual science with regard to our lives could comfortably be accommodated in a booklet of perhaps 60 pages if we want to include everything, and then people could study this 60-page booklet. They would then have a view on the nature of the human being, on reincarnation and karma, on the development of humanity and the earth, and could then make their way through life with these views. And people who would like that might say: well, why does the anthroposophical movement not distribute as many copies of these key points as possible in the world so that every person can acquire a view about them? Why does this movement do this apparently peculiar thing of calling together once a week all those who want to study spiritual science in order to keep describing to them something that could comfortably be accommodated on 60 pages? What, people might ask, do these anthroposophists need to tell their people week after week?

Now, it might correspond to certain faiths in our time to have such a concise creed in their top pocket also with regard to spiritual research in order thus to study the most important points. But it is something we should always call to mind that such 'outline knowledge' is not enough in spiritual science—that basically the knowledge is not the crucial thing at all, although spiritual science

consists of knowledge, of insights. It is not enough to see the nature of spiritual science in general phrases but it has to be seen in very specific insights. But it is not enough either to have acquired such insights in the sense of the present time as a general conviction and to be satisfied with that. Because it is not about having obtained such a conviction, knowing that human beings live more than once, that there are causal relationships which go from one life to the next, that there is reincarnation and karma. That is not the actual beneficial aspect of spiritual science, of spreading these ideas, but studying these teachings in intimate detail is, specifically with regard to the details, so as to let them constantly work on our souls. Because basically we do not benefit at all from a conviction which simply has us believe: human beings live more than once between birth and death, they live many times; there is reincarnation and karma and so on. The belief in such things does not basically give us a great deal. And there is not fundamentally a great deal of difference in relation to the real depths of life between the soul of a person who does not know that reincarnation and karma exist and one who does. Our soul only changes in an anthroposophical sense when we keep studying not just the generalities but the specific depths which spiritual science tells us about. That is why it is a good thing if we keep discussing the anthroposophical view about this or the other detail of life. Only knowing in general that there is a great law of destiny which creates a connection between past deeds, past feelings, past thoughts of a human being and between current and future experiences, only knowing this in general is simply not enough. Spiritual science only becomes something that relates to our lives if we apply these general teachings to the individual experiences of life, if we are able to adjust our soul, as it were, to a perspective through which we see life in a new way. That is why we will undertake a small reflection today about the law of karma, that great law of destiny regarding the details of life. We will summarize things from the perspective of the law of karma which are already familiar to most of you but which for once also need to be looked at from the perspective of karma.

‘Karma’ says in general that there is a connection in the spiritual world between what happens today and what will happen in the future and what happened in the past. It is not even particularly good to call the law of karma or destiny the law of causation and then to compare it with the law of cause and effect in the external world. If we want to find a comparison for this great law of destiny, then we always also have to see that the comparison is correct as such, that it really does illustrate what the law of destiny says.

Let us take the following comparison. We have two containers filled with water and also two metal balls which are at normal room temperature. We throw the one ball into the one water container: the water remains as it is. Now we take the other ball and, having made it red-hot, throw it into the other water container: the water in the latter heats up. Why did the water heat up in the second container? Why not in the first one? It heated up because the ball itself, before it was thrown into the water, underwent a change and that change which made it hot resulted in the water being heated up. Something happened that was the consequence of another event, namely the heating up. A previous experience or activity is connected with what we encounter in the present or future as an experience or phenomenon.

If we look at the law of the spiritual connection between the past, present and future in this way, we will find it confirmed even in ordinary life if we just look, in the life which occurs around us and which we can observe, even if we are a long way from having developed any clairvoyant faculties. Because this is what we have to keep noting as a golden rule: a law of the spiritual world can only be really proven with clairvoyant observation, by the spiritual researcher. Nevertheless, such a law can always be shown to exist by external confirmation through the experiences in the external world. However, in order to find the law of karma confirmed in external life people will have to learn to get into the habit of looking at external life a bit more closely than is normally the case, because people normally do not look at life further than the tip of their nose, metaphorically speaking. They stop observing anything a bit further away. But anyone who looks at external life a bit more deeply will be able to find the law of karma sufficiently confirmed here or there between birth and death.

Let us keep to concrete situations as far as possible; so assume the following case. A young person is torn at the age of 15 out of the previous course of his life by some event. Say that the situation of his parents enabled him to study until the age of 15 and then, because his father lost his wealth, he had to stop his studies and go to work for a merchant. So he was taken out of one occupation and thrown into another one. This is not, of course, about one occupation being more valuable than another; it is about a change occurring in someone's life when something like this happens. Now, if we look at life in the materialistic way as is common today, we will probably not look for anything significant arising from the influence of such a phenomenon in the life of a person, nor will we find it. But anyone who looks more closely will find that a person who enters a different occupation in this way will, to begin with, be happy and positively inclined

towards his new job, will grow into it with interest, as one might say. But then something curious can occur. The experiences of the soul, the sympathy and antipathy towards the new occupation, can start to take a different form at the age of 18 or 19. Work can stop being enjoyable, the person can start to behave quite differently towards his work. In a certain sense we become puzzled by what then happens in the soul of such a young person if we have never heard of anthroposophy.

What has happened here? What has happened is that the person at the age of 15, when he started his new occupation, was interested in finding his way into the occupation. This interest initially pushed back those feelings and soul moods which developed when this person was still doing something completely different. But then a time comes when all those latter things break through with all the greater force. Just like when we push on an elastic body—we can push for a while, but then the mass springs back with all the greater force—the result can be that the interests which were pushed away for a while now bounce back all the more. At the age of 18 or 19 everything then erupts which pressed into the soul in terms of emotions and moods three years before the change, in other words, all those things at the age of 18 or 19 which pushed into the soul at the age of 11 or 12. And we will only understand the life of a person if we can say to ourselves: a nodal point occurred at the age of 15 and events happen after this time which in their outer actions lie as many years later as their causes lay before this nodal point.

Think for a minute how we can help a person with regard to soul moods and difficulties in life if we are in a position to ask ourselves: where does such a nodal point in the soul of this person lie? It can lie in a deeply personal place. But if we discover such a nodal point, then we can calculate backwards and we then have a spiritual effect as many years after this nodal point in life as we have a cause an equal number of years before. In this way we can get an idea of karma. This knowledge can help us to progress in life and we can say: such causes and effects in the life of a person are connected in certain time spans so that they are governed by a certain point in life; and if we count forwards and backwards from this point we can find the connection between cause and effect.

Now such things can, of course, be hidden by the occurrence of other events. Someone might come, for example, and say: the example you gave us is wrong! I have just had an experience with a young person in whom that is not the case. Indeed, I have also already had the experience of two people playing billiards

and a passing waiter knocked the one who was just about to play and the ball went in quite a different direction to where it would have gone otherwise. But that does not make the law of causation wrong but different circumstances occurred. But we have to remember that we will never learn about the law if we do not disregard those things which are detrimental to the law. After the age of 15 other things can occur which cross the law. We do not learn about laws by simply observing life but by in the first instance adopting the correct way to bring the phenomena of life together. Because in life things are constantly disrupted. Then it is not so easy to see the laws. Yet we can only regulate life if we know about the laws as they must be found.

If we know the details, we can say to ourselves with regard to such a young person whose life has turned over in this way: it is a task of the educator to look out for these things! Here karma becomes a law of life, here there is a case where we can apply this law in life, this is where it can be of use. In such a case, in which we are no longer able to give the child what we could give him previously, we might become his counsellor. But we can only be that if we know about such connections, if we know what a person is missing and can intervene and take action where the shortcoming in life sets in. If we do not know that, we cannot be a counsellor for the young person. In that case the law of karma simply impacts on life. We learn to become counsellors in life if we view the law of karma as a law of life.

It is not, of course, just such connections which exist in life but the law of karma between birth and death also comes to expression in other ways. Thus there is a curious connection between the experiences of a person in the first half of his or her life and those in the second half of life, only people do not see it. We might become acquainted with a person, for example, when they are young and then we lose track of them before they reach a certain age. Or we become acquainted with a person who is older and do not know about their younger years. Or if we do know about their youth we forget what happened many years ago. Looking at the start and end of life in those cases where that is possible would provide the nicest confirmation of the law of karma in the existence between birth and death.

In this context you might remember something that was said in the public lectures, about the anger, for example, which appears as the noble anger of youth.¹⁰ We spoke at the time about the way that young people cannot yet see through an injustice which occurs in their surroundings; their intellect is not yet mature enough completely to see through an injustice which occurs. But wise

cosmic governance has ensured that we can make a judgement in our feelings before we can come to a judgement in our reason. If a good person has the disposition, a noble anger arises in childhood when an injustice occurs which simply exists as a feeling and which is the only way in which the soul can experience the injustice. That person is not yet mature enough to see through the injustice with his or her intellect. But if the character of a person gives rise to such noble anger, then we should take note of it. Because all the things that are experienced as such a judgement in the feelings with regard to an injustice remain in the soul. Such noble anger in the time of youth penetrates the soul and is transformed in the course of life. And the things which are transformed in the course of life appear again in a different form in the second half of life: it appears as an inclination in the feelings for loving gentleness and bestowing blessing. So the noble anger of youth of the first half of life is transformed so that it appears in later life as loving gentleness, as an attitude of blessing.

And—all other things being equal—we will not find that loving, benedictory gentleness occurs in the second half of a person's life without it having come to expression in his or her younger years through a noble anger caused by foolishness, stupidity or ugliness in life. In this way we have a karmic connection in ordinary life and we can clothe it in an image and say: the hand which could not clench in noble anger on occasion in the first half of life will not easily extend in blessing in the second half.

However, these things can only be observed by people who, as I said, extend their observation of life rather further than the end of their nose. But people do not do that in ordinary life. I could show by means of a very trivial example how little people are inclined to observe such things in life.

I have often mentioned in the past that for anyone who wants to obtain an intimate understanding of life, specifically to deepen occult soul relationships, it is exceptionally helpful to have worked as a tutor or educator for a number of years. In that way we obtain a quite different understanding of souls than through ordinary educational psychology which is normally quite useless as regards any knowledge of the soul. We acquire a knowledge of the soul if we not only observe the soul but if we are called upon to guide the life of others on our own responsibility for year after year. In that situation we also learn to observe more deeply. During my many years as a tutor¹¹ I was able to observe not just the children which had been entrusted to my care but, as you know, families come together on occasion and in that situation we also learn to know something about

other children, not just children at various ages but also children from the first moment, as it were, when they enter the world.

It may be perhaps 25 to 30 years ago that there was a particular view in medicine—which, as you may have noticed, changes its view every five years about what is ‘healthy’ for human beings—that it was particularly fortifying for weak children if they were given a good glass of red wine at the age of three, four and five. I have seen children¹² who were given such a glass of red wine and children who were not. I waited initially with my observations—because of course medicine is infallible to begin with. Speaking out against it would not have led anywhere given the preconceptions of the time. So I waited with my observations. Now the children who at the time when they were three to five years old were given a glass of red wine for their fortification each day have become young people aged between 25 and 27. And I found—being mindful of it because the effects of such a view do not appear until that time—that all the children who were given their red wine have turned into fidgets. Their astral body is fidgeting and they cannot do a great deal with it; they cannot cope with their arbitrarily active soul life. But those who ‘unfortunately’, as people said at the time, could not be fortified with that glass of red wine have become well grounded in themselves and are not now so fidgety in their astral body or in their nervous system, as it is called in materialistic terms.

So here we have such a connection in life. It is only a trivial one and not one which particularly illustrates karma, but it is one in which we can see that the observation of life should not just go as far as the tip of our nose but that we have to look at longer periods and that it is not enough to determine that this remedy works in this way or that. Because what is actually triggered can only be determined by the observer many years later. Only the greater connections in life and everything that teaches us to seek the greater connections in life can in truth enlighten us about the way that cause and effect are connected in human life. Thus we have to try to bring together phenomena in life which lie further apart with regard to the actual soul characteristics. Then we also see the law of karma already between birth and death, then we can frequently find how the events in later life are connected with what was experienced in the first half of life.

You will also recall what I said about the mission of reverence,¹³ about the importance of being able to look up with veneration to a being, a manifestation which we do not yet understand, which we venerate precisely because we are not yet equal to it with our reason. And I like to point out how nice it is when a

person can say to himself or herself: as a child I was once told of a particularly venerable family member who was incredibly venerated. I had not met that person but there was deep veneration in me for that personality. Then, when the occasion arose, I was once taken to that venerated family member. And with the innermost, holy awe I entered the room in which that important personality was to appear.

We will be grateful for that feeling of reverent veneration in later life because we owe an awful lot to what we can venerate in the first half of life. And reverent veneration is particularly good in every life. I have known people who were made aware of the feeling of reverent veneration towards something divine-spiritual and who countered: I am an atheist, I cannot venerate anything of a spiritual nature. To such people we can say: look at the starry heavens. Can you make that? Look at the wisdom in the way they are built and think to yourself: into that can be immersed a feeling of real, true veneration. There are many things in the world which we cannot penetrate with our reason but to which we can look up in veneration. And particularly in youth there exist many things to which we can look up with veneration without being able to understand it.

Reverence in the first half of life in turn is transformed into a very special characteristic of life in the second half. We have no doubt all heard of personalities who through their nature are a blessing for their surroundings. They do not even need to say anything special; they just need to be there. It is as if through the way they are something invisible streams out from them and communicates itself to the other souls. Their nature as a whole has a refreshing and wonderful effect on their surroundings. To what do these souls owe this power to act in a beneficial way on their surroundings through their soul characteristics? They owe it to the circumstance that in their youth they had the opportunity to experience a life of reverence, that they had a lot of reverence in the first half of their life. Reverence in the first half of life turns into the power to act in an invisibly benedictory and refreshing way in the second half of life.

Here we have another karmic connection which clearly comes to expression between birth and death if we just observe it. And it was spoken out of a lovely karmic feeling when Goethe chose the following nice words as the motto for one of his works: 'What we desire in youth we obtain in plenty in old age!'¹⁴ Of course if we only look at short connections in life we will often find unfulfilled wishes, less so if we look at longer connections.

All the things which we have characterized in this way can now in turn be transformed into real practice in life. And fundamentally only a person who looks at life in such a spiritual-scientific way can be a real educator, because he or she will be able to give a person in the first half of life the things which he or she knows will be of use in the second half. Today people do not know anything about the responsibility which we take on when we inculcate young people with this or that. But it has become common today to talk about these things from on high, to speak about these things from the high road of materialism, as it were. And I would like to illustrate what I have just said with a small experience which we ourselves had here in Berlin.

A visitor once came, one of those who thinks that if he attends one or two meetings just once in his life he can make a judgement about the matter. Such people in particular seek to make a judgement about spiritual movements such as ours so that they can subsequently write 'properly' about the matter. The people who today wish to supply the world with newspaper articles, they in particular have the belief that one can come to a judgement in this way. You go somewhere once and then you know all about it! The visitor whom I mean also wrote something and it was odd to read about one of our branch meetings in an American magazine. Of course the description was also rather oddly appropriate. But as I said, something of which we want to gain a real understanding through spiritual science cannot of course be acquired in this way but we have to be clear that we only get into spiritual life if we have the purpose to be involved in and go through the details.

Now I only told this whole story to characterize the judgement of the visitor concerned, which he made and with which he did not hold back. This visitor said what he did not like about spiritual science was that it categorized everything, that the world was categorized into the physical world, astral world, devachan world and so on. Why was that necessary, to categorize everything? He got all of that from one or two visits. What dreadful effect might it have had on him if he had still heard about the other categorizations! The visitor concerned was of the view that it was not necessary to look at things like that but that people talked about the spiritual world 'in general', so why make the distinction into categories? That is what people say in the field of education today. That is how people talk in all fields of life. That is also how basically science talks today. The world talks out of the arbitrary observation of life and not out of the relevant research into the individual phenomena in life. That is why it is also so terrible how these reforms and programmatic speeches must act on anyone who can truly

observe the world because they bring about something that can be compared with a terrible physical pain. All we need to do is pick up a normal scientific book today. The observations might have been carried out with great conscientiousness, but the way in which they are presented is simply terrible because there is no concept as to how the phenomena should be observed. And so we admire many people today who shout this or that into the world because it happens to have come into their minds.

That is precisely the important thing. That anthroposophists should obtain an awareness that life should be observed down into the details precisely in accordance with the methods which karma and the other laws of life give us for practical life. That is why we can only hope for something beneficial for the future development of humanity also with regard to education questions if the anthroposophical view penetrates as far as the principles of education. Karma is something which at the same time provides firm support for example with regard to all observations in life dealing with education.

Here it is infinitely important, for example, that we know the karmic context of a certain phenomenon in education which is expressed in the view: if a child develops properly, it has to become like this or like that. That is what I want for life! And then we think the child is like a sack which can be stuffed full with everything which we happen to think is right. We force our being and what we feel as sympathy and antipathy on the child. If we knew the result this produces in a karmic connection we would look at the matter differently. We would see that what has been stuffed into the child like into a sack is fulfilled in terms of karma in that it makes the human being arid and dry, that it causes the child to age prematurely and kills off precisely the centre of its being.

If we want to bring up a child we have to approach him or her indirectly, as it were, if we believe that it should acquire one or another characteristic. We should not ensure that this or that characteristic is grafted onto the child but we first have to awaken the need for this characteristic, a demand in the child to acquire this characteristic. So we have to take one step back. If we know that this or that food is good for the child, we even have to avoid forcing the child to eat it but have to ensure that he or she first acquires a taste for it so that he or she demands that food himself or herself. We have to direct demand and desire so that the child asks by himself or herself for the things that are good for him or her. That is a different way of doing things from packing everything into a sack and saying: in it goes! So if we start by directing the demands, we encounter the

vital core of the child and then we will see that these things are karmically fulfilled in the second half of life in that human beings in turn exude a joy and vitality of life; in that such people are not arid and dry in the second half of life but remain full of vitality from out of the centre of their being.

If we look at the law of karma in this way, we will say to ourselves that it is not enough to have written into a booklet: there is a law of karma, a connection between earlier and later lives. But we have to look at life from the perspective of the law of karma. Only when we rise to the details of life do we have anthroposophy in its true form, but then we also have to have the will to keep on working, in other words, never again to abandon it. We have to find the time to move the phenomena of life into the perspective of anthroposophy.

These were some of such perspectives intended to show the connections in life between birth and death. Now we can, of course, also follow the law of karma sufficiently beyond birth and death, combine one life with another or others. What we experience today in this life between birth and death also has to be connected with things we experienced previously or are experienced by us later in life. We could once again talk about many details. I will restrict myself today to illuminating an important question of life from a karmic perspective in so far as karma extends from one life into the other, and that is the question of health and illness, and particularly the latter.

Someone might believe when they suffer an illness that it would be correct to say in the context of karma: it is something which serves me right, it is my destiny. But karma is not always characterized in the right way in that way alone. With an illness we first of all have to be clear about its nature from a spiritual perspective. Here we would do well to begin with to concern ourselves with what pain actually is, for example. From there we will then be able to make the transition to a spiritual understanding of illness.

What is pain actually? Let us look at a completely external pain, when we have cut our finger for example. Why does that hurt? We will never be able to achieve an understanding of the nature of pain if we do not know that this physical finger is penetrated by an etheric finger and an astral finger. What is represented by the physical finger, the way it is formed, how the blood flows in it, how the nerves run—all of those things have been formed by the etheric finger. It is the formative agent and keeps ensuring even today that the nerves are organized in the correct way, that the blood flows properly and so on. Now the way that the

etheric body forms the finger is guided by the astral body which penetrates the whole thing. Let us use an outer comparison to clarify why, then, it is painful when we cut ourselves in the finger.

Let us assume that it is one of your favourite occupations to water the flowers in your garden every day. You feel a certain satisfaction when you do that. But one morning your watering can is broken or someone has stolen it and you cannot water your flowers. That makes you sad. That is not a physical pain; but you can feel something like a physical pain when you have to do without your favourite occupation. You cannot undertake an activity because the instrument is not there to do it. What is externally lacking here, and what therefore can only call forth a moral pain, becomes a physical pain through the following.

The etheric body and the astral body are set up to keep the finger organized in the way it is now. I can never cut the etheric finger or the astral finger. When I cut my finger, then it happens that the etheric finger can no longer properly intervene. It is used to having the proper context of the finger and that context has been disrupted, just like my activity when I wanted to water the garden. So the astral body and the etheric body cannot properly intervene and that comes to expression in the astral body as pain, as a loss. Not being able to undertake the habitual activity, not being able to intervene in the habitual way, that comes to expression in the astral body as pain.

But in the moment in which the etheric body and the astral body can no longer properly intervene, a greater effort also makes itself felt. Just as in our case where we want to water the garden we make an effort to find the watering can or suchlike, the astral body and etheric body also have to make a greater effort to bring the matter back into order. And this greater effort which has to be expended is the actual healing element. Here the spiritual is called upon to act more vigorously and that is the actual healing element. The thing which can call on the spiritual components of the human being to become more active also produces healing. Now each illness is based on the spiritual parts not being able to intervene in the right way through a disorder in the human physical body or also the etheric body, being prevented from doing so as it were, and healing consists in calling up a stronger force of resistance against the disorder. Now an illness can either progress to healing or we can die of it. Let us look at both cases from a karmic perspective.

If an illness takes such a course that we regain our health, we put into our

component elements which we brought with us from earlier incarnations those strong life forces at the time which can intervene to heal. And when we look back at our earlier incarnations, we can say: not only were we able to look after our body in the right way through what we normally have in life, but we brought a reserve fund along with us which we can extract from our spiritual vital components.

Now let us assume that we die. What has happened then? Then we will have to say: when the attempt to heal was made we also called on the stronger forces in us, but they were not enough, they were insufficient. But whenever we call up forces so that they are strongly applied they are not useless. We would indeed have had to make even stronger efforts. But even if we were not yet able in this life to restore order in some area of our organism, we have nevertheless become stronger. We wanted to resist. It was just not enough. But even if it was not enough, the forces we called up have not been lost. That passes over into the next incarnation and the organ concerned becomes stronger than if we had not had the illness. And we will then be in a position to develop the organ with particular strength and regularity which prematurely caused us to die. So there will still be a beneficial effect even if we were not able to overcome the illness with the correct treatment. From a karmic perspective we have to see something in an illness in such a case as well which can come to more favourable expression in a future life. In a future life we can then in one case or another have particular strength because we fought the illness although we did not overcome it. But we should not say as a result: then it might perhaps be a good thing to let the illness run its course, because if we allow the illness to come to full expression and do not intervene to cure it then the forces inside us will become stronger and karma will be all the better fulfilled. That would be nonsense. It is absolutely necessary to organize treatment in such a way that the balancing forces can intervene in the best possible way—in other words, that we do as much as is possible to achieve real healing irrespective of whether healing occurs or not. Karma is always life-affirming, never hostile to life.

The law of karma, as it extends from one life to the next, has shown itself as strengthening life in a particular example. And we can say: if one or another of our organs is particularly strong then this points to a previous life in which this organ, in which we are now particularly strong, was once particularly ill. We were not able to heal it completely at the time. But forces were called up for that purpose which now make this organ appear as a particularly strong one. Thus we can see how events, how the facts reach from one life into another, how the core

of our being grows stronger and stronger if we are also aware in the right way that we can strengthen it. And in this way we can increasingly come to a living understanding of the spiritual core of our being through the law of karma.

Now we can find an answer to our question: why do we meet so often? We meet so often because we not only want to extend our knowledge when we take in our teachings, but because the teachings if they are given in the right way are suitable for making the core of our being stronger and more vigorous. We fill our affairs with vital spiritual extract when we meet and concern ourselves with anthroposophy. In this way anthroposophy is not a theory but an elixir of life which is repeatedly poured into our soul and of which we know that it makes the soul ever stronger and more vigorous. And when anthroposophy is no longer for human beings what it is today through the lack of understanding of the external world, when it acts on our whole spiritual life, then human beings will see how the well-being also of physical life, of all of external life, is dependent on the strength which can be obtained through anthroposophical reflections, through the joint experience of anthroposophy.

The time will come in which such anthroposophical gatherings can become the most important means of strengthening human beings so that they can go out and say: our faculties, our health, our strength in life is due to the situation that we keep strengthening ourselves in the essential core of our being, in the centre of our being. Only when people feel that anthroposophy through its reflections on individual subjects gives them something which strengthens them and makes them healthy right down into the physical body, only then will they feel the mission of anthroposophy. And today the people who concern themselves with anthroposophy should see themselves as pioneers for anthroposophy as something that strengthens life. Only then will it be the right thing and obtain the right point of application against something which so frequently is debilitating in life today.

In conclusion, let me draw attention to one more thing. There is no phrase heard more often today than 'hereditary affliction'. How could anyone be thought of as educated who does not mention the phrase 'hereditary affliction' at least three or four times a week? After all, an educated person should at least be aware that academic medicine has determined what hereditary affliction means in human life. And anyone who is not able to say of a person who does not really know what to do with themselves that the latter was suffering from hereditary affliction is not an educated person but something else—perhaps even an anthroposophist.

This is the point at which science today starts to go wrong not just theoretically but where it starts to do harm to life. This is the boundary at which theory comes close to morality, at which it becomes immoral to hold a wrong theory. Here our vitality, our security in life depends on knowing the right thing. Those who strengthen themselves on the basis of the right spiritual views in their soul, by administering the elixir of life to themselves, what will they be capable of doing?

Whatever they may have received through heredity, it has been inherited in the physical body or at most the etheric body. Through their right views about life they will continually strengthen the core of their being and will overcome what is the burden of heredity because the spiritual, if it exists in the right sense, is capable of balancing the physical. But those who do not strengthen the spiritual core of their being, those who say the spiritual is only a product of the body, they are subject to the burden of heredity because they do not have a strong inner life, in them it has a detrimental effect.

It is no surprise that what we call hereditary affliction today has such terrible effects because to begin with people are talked into believing in the power of hereditary affliction and what could counter it is taken away from them. First the belief in hereditary affliction is cultivated and then people with a spiritual world view are deprived of the best method of fighting it. First the omnipotence of hereditary affliction is invented and that is how it can then have an effect. People not only have a wrong view which allows something hostile to take effect, which knocks the weapon out of their hand, but we have the start of a theory here which is based wholly and completely on a materialistic view. Here a materialistic view strays into the moral sphere and it not only has a wrong effect as a theory but also an immoral one. Neither can we get away from that by saying: those who make such claims are simply wrong. We need not be too hard on those who postulate such theories. We should never aim to target the individual representatives of science; we can understand what it is about with them. We can even cannily understand that they are immersed in it, that they have no alternative to such erroneous views. Some may not be able to extract themselves from a scientific tradition. We can also excuse others in that they might have a wife and child and might end up in a difficult situation if they stopped professing support for the prevailing views. But we have to draw attention to the whole thing as a contemporary phenomenon because here science is not only starting to spread wrong theories but also to knock the life-supporting resource out of the hands of people—a resource which as a spiritual world conception is meant to supply life with strength and which alone is

capable of fighting against the power which would otherwise overwhelm human beings, against the physical. The physical is only an overwhelming power for as long as human beings do not develop any strength to counter it within themselves. If they develop such strength, then a warrior against everything physical will grow in them.

We cannot expect that to happen from one day to the next. But those who understand these things in a true sense will gradually become acquainted with the spiritual-scientific understanding of phenomena against which human beings initially appear to be powerless. What is not balanced out in one life is balanced out in life as a whole. And when we look both at individual lives and life from one incarnation to the next, then the law of karma, properly understood, will not be a law that weighs us down but a law that gives us comfort and strength and which makes us grow stronger. The law of karma is a law of vitality and we should understand it as such. It is not a matter of knowing individual abstractions but of pursuing the spiritual truths of life in each individual life and never tiring of working on our knowledge of the spirit by allowing the individual truths of spiritual science to fill us.

If you bear that in mind you are living anthroposophically in the right sense. Then you will know why we are not satisfied with having read this or that book but consider anthroposophy to be a matter of the heart which never stops occupying us, to which we repeatedly like to return and about which we know that the more we return to it, the more it can enrich our lives.

LECTURE 3

BERLIN, 2 FEBRUARY 1910

AS we noted in our last reflections,¹⁵ the great secret of Golgotha is represented from a particular aspect in each of the Gospels. We drew attention to the fact that the Gospel of Mark places the secret of Golgotha, the secret of Jesus Christ, into the great cosmological context, while the Gospel of Matthew presents the development of this secret from out of national traditions, namely the ancient Hebrew tradition. We saw how gradually this ancient Hebrew national tradition developed from one generation to the next since the time of Abraham in order then to produce as its flower that human being which was able to accommodate the individuality of Zarathustra, of Zoroaster. We saw how all the characteristics of the ancient Hebrew people, which gradually had to keep intensifying through enhancement from one generation to the next, were based on the principle of physical heredity. That is how was characterized the difference between the mission of the ancient Hebrew people and the missions of other peoples.

The mission of the ancient Hebrew people lay in having to hand down certain characteristics which could only be passed down and enhanced by physical heredity from the oldest generations at the time of Abraham to Jesus. But the Gospel of Matthew contains many other secrets, as do all the other Gospels. And even if we will in the course of the winter still open up individual views, individual perspectives on the Gospels, we can only to begin with motivate understanding. Because in order to understand the Gospels in full would require sheer unending spiritual work. Today we will begin by throwing a light on the Gospel of Matthew from a very specific side and then we will look at how such teachings can be utilized by the souls which are part of the anthroposophical spiritual stream today.

If we look back today at some of the things we have learnt in the course of the

years, we can say that the development of humanity, as we have set it out in terms of spiritual science, goes through various crises, reaches key points, then continues more regularly for a time, then reaches another key point and so on. We have, indeed, often emphasized that such a most important point in the earth development of humanity was reached at the time in which the Christ impulse was given at the start of our era. If we go further back from there we find, skipping various things, an important point to which we have repeatedly referred. When we go through the Atlantean period and back to Lemurian times, we find the point in time there at which the first predisposition for the human I was planted into the human being.

If such things are to be understood, we have to be very precise with our words. We have to distinguish very precisely, for example, what happened in ancient Lemurian times, when we say that the first predisposition for the I was planted into the human being, from saying that at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha the period, the age started in which humanity became fully conscious of this I. That is a significant difference: initially possessing the I as a predisposition, as something which works in human beings, or to be directed with our knowledge to having the I. These things have to be kept strictly separate otherwise we will get into a mess with the real laws of development.

We know that the implantation of the I into human beings is founded in the overall development of the earth. The earth passed through the Saturn, Sun and Moon periods and only then became the entity which it is today. On Saturn the predisposition for the physical body was laid, on the Sun for the etheric body, on the Moon for the astral body and on earth the predisposition for the I has been added. So this predisposition for the I was laid within earth development in the Lemurian period. But now something else was happening during the Lemurian period, namely the thing that we have always called the luciferic influence. So in that period human beings on the one hand were gifted with the seed of the I, which was intended to keep developing in the course of the subsequent earth periods, and at the same time the astral body was implanted with the luciferic influence. This luciferic influence changed the whole of human nature, including everything in human beings by way of forces, elements in the etheric body and in the physical body. The whole of human nature turned into something different during the Lemurian period from what it would have become if there had not been any luciferic influence. Thus we have human beings turning into something else in a twofold respect in the Lemurian period: we have them turning into ego beings and also turning into beings which carry within themselves the luciferic

principle. If the luciferic principle had not come the I influence would still have occurred.

What, then, happened in human beings because the luciferic influence made itself felt during the Lemurian period?

If we describe these matters from various perspectives, I would ask you very much never to take such a description as the whole answer. We can only ever pick out one aspect. Over the years a lot has been said about all the things that have happened in the course of development through the luciferic influence. That is also all part of it but we cannot repeat it right now. Today we will highlight only one aspect, which characterizes one particular side. This aspect is that human beings reached a developmental stage through the luciferic influence at an earlier stage than was actually intended for them, than was destined for them through the wise cosmic guidance, as it were. Through the luciferic influence human beings descended more deeply into the three component parts of their being which had come across from earlier incarnations of the earth, the astral body, etheric body and physical body, became more enmeshed with them than if there had not been any luciferic influence. Human beings would have remained closer to the spiritual world with their I, as it were, would have felt themselves to be a part of the spiritual world with their I for longer if the luciferic influence had not had the effect that the I descended more deeply into the astral body, etheric body and physical body. We might say that human beings descended more deeply down to earth in the Lemurian period because of the luciferic influence.

We can name the time when human beings—had there not been any luciferic influence—would have descended so far down to earth or into physical matter as they did in reality in the Lemurian period through the luciferic influence: it would have been the middle of the Atlantean period. In other words, if there had not been a luciferic influence human beings would have had to wait until the middle of the Atlantean period before descending down to earth. As a result of the luciferic influence they descended earlier. That is how they became free beings acting on their own impulses. Because otherwise they would have remained in complete dependence on the spiritual world until the middle of the Atlantean period, would never have chosen themselves in any way between good and evil, would never have been able to unfold any free impulse but would have acted on their soul impulses, that is, out of forces which the divine-spiritual beings had planted in their souls. But the luciferic beings made it possible for

them to decide earlier than would otherwise have been the case between good and evil, not just to let themselves be guided instinctively by the laws of the divine-spiritual world order but to decide for themselves, to create their own laws in a way.

This fact is expressed for us in a profound way through the description of the Fall which represents in a wonderful imagination nothing other than what I have just said. It is represented in the Old Testament by the description that the living soul was implanted in human beings by the divine-spiritual beings. If this living soul had just remained as it was, human beings would have had to wait until at a later time the living soul, that is, the still undeveloped I, had matured enough through the divine-spiritual beings to take decisions. But then the luciferic influences arrive, represented by the serpent in the Bible. They lead human beings not just to follow instinctively what comes from Yahweh or the Elohim, but to decide for themselves about good and evil.

Humans thus turned from beings that until then were guided and led by divine-spiritual beings into beings which could take their own decisions. This is also represented quite clearly in the Bible, that through the serpent, that is, through the luciferic beings, autonomous decision-making of human beings was brought about. And then words resound from the Bible, spoken by the gods: human beings have become like us—that is, like the gods. Or if we wish to put it in radical terms: human beings have acquired something through the luciferic influence which until then had only been appropriate for the gods. The gods took the decision about good and evil, not the beings which were dependent on the gods.

Then human beings became autonomous in their decision-making through the luciferic influence, that is, they became beings which developed divine characteristics within themselves at too early a stage. Thus something entered human nature through the luciferic influence which would otherwise have been preserved for human development until the middle of the Atlantean period. Now you can imagine that human beings would have been quite different if such a descent into matter had not been given to them until the middle of the Atlantean period, because then their souls would have been affected by that descent when they were more mature. They would have arrived in matter as better, more mature human beings. They would therefore have introduced different characteristics into the physical, etheric and astral entities and would have acquired quite a different capability for deciding between good and evil. Because

human beings turned themselves into decision-makers about good and evil from the Lemurian time to the middle of the Atlantean period, this meant that they made themselves worse than they would otherwise have been and therefore arrived in a less perfect state. They would otherwise have undergone the whole period to the middle of the Atlantean period in a much more spiritual way but in this way they passed through it much more materially. But this had the effect that if human beings had not additionally been given what the gods intended them to have in the middle of the Atlantean period they would have fallen completely.

What would have been given to human beings in the middle of the Atlantean period if until then they had been instinctively guided and led by divine-spiritual beings?

They would have been given what they—once the luciferic influence was there—were given through the Mystery of Golgotha. The Christ impulse would have been given to them in the middle of the Atlantean period. But now, because the luciferic impulse was there, they had to wait as long for the Christ impulse as the time from the luciferic influence to the middle of the Atlantean period. As much earlier as Lucifer sought out human beings before the middle of the Atlantean period, as much later the Christ impulse came. Thus we have to note a delay of the Christ impulse because human beings acquired their god-likeness earlier than should have happened. Because human beings had first to undergo all the things that accrued to them in earthly karma as a result of the bad things that entered them through the luciferic influence. This first had to be suffered, as it were, by humanity. Human beings had to wait not just until the luciferic influence had made them a decision-maker between good and evil but also until everything had happened in the course of earth development that had to come as a result of the luciferic influence. They had to wait for that.

Only then could the Christ impulse descend to earth. The divine cosmic guidance did not intend human beings to go without what they obtained through the luciferic influence for eternity but they were to receive it in the middle of the Atlantean period. They were to receive it at all events. But in other circumstances they would not have received it in the form that they did through the luciferic influence. Through Lucifer, human beings have not just received free decision-making powers regarding everything connected with spiritual things, they also received the faculty to develop a passion for what is good and noble, wise and great. In the way that we are as people today, we cannot just decide in a cold and sober way about good and evil but we can also become

passionate about what is beautiful, what is noble, good and wise. That is because something was introduced into our astral body which would otherwise, had it only been added in the middle of the Atlantean period, have been introduced into the I, into the judgement-making I. So everything that we have by way of feelings, of idealism, of passion for the good, for high ideals, we owe to the circumstance that something entered our astral body before we obtained godlikeness in our I, the acceptance of Christ in our I. That is the key thing, that this godlikeness, this equality with God, this possibility of finding the good within ourselves, was to be imparted to human beings. If the luciferic influence had not come, this impulse would have come in the middle of the Atlantean period; but thus it came in the time in which Jesus Christ was at work.

So the consciousness entered human beings through the Christ impulse that they have something of divine substance and being in their I. This is what underlies all the deeper sayings also in the New Testament, that human beings can take the divine into their I and that this divine aspect can work in it and make a decision between good and evil. We can therefore say that with the acceptance of the Christ impulse into the inner human being, human beings obtained the possibility of saying to themselves: I am my own guide regarding insight into my existence, regarding decisions about good and evil.

When we now look back to pre-Christian times, we have to say: since the impulse which makes human beings the real deciders between good and evil did not exist at the time, the decision between good and evil, the judgement and knowledge of goodness, beauty and truth was of necessity incomplete in the pre-Christian period and one which could not, actually, arise from the innermost nature of human beings. Before the arrival of the Christ impulse, human beings did not have the possibility to make a decision about good and evil from out of their innermost being. A decision on true goodness, on real truth, on real beauty could only be made in pre-Christian periods because single individualities such as the Bodhisattvas reached up into the divine worlds with a part of their being over the course of time, in other words, did not fetch the decision about good and evil from the innermost part of human nature but from the divine worlds. They obtained it through their interaction with the divine-spiritual beings and then instilled it into the human soul like a suggestion. Without such guides, humanity in pre-Christian times would only ever have made defective decisions about good and evil. If these guides had relied on their own heart, they would not have managed it either; they received the impulses which human beings needed to be able to implant goodness in a preparatory way into the earth

nevertheless in times of flawed decisions about good and evil only because they descended into depths of the soul which were not yet available to human beings, because they left the being of their own I to enter the realms of heaven.

Thus human beings in pre-Christian times were beings who had obtained godlikeness for characteristics which had not yet sufficiently matured, for something which was not yet at all suitable to be godlike. As a result human beings have done everything since Lemurian times more badly, more inadequately than they would otherwise have done. Above all, the luciferic influence in the pre-Christian period meant that they did everything more badly and inadequately which relates to themselves. Because of the way that things transpired, the astral, etheric and physical bodies developed in a worse and more material way. They would have remained more spiritual had it not been for the luciferic influence. As a result all the bad things which developed over time also entered human life. They developed over a long period of time.

Bad things developed in the physical body, etheric body and astral body from Lemurian times to the Mystery of Golgotha. High-grade egoism developed in the astral body, the possibility of making errors when we want to judge something developed in the etheric body, and the possibility of lying. If human beings had remained under the influence of divine-spiritual beings, had acted instinctively in accordance with their impulses, then today, when they wanted to obtain knowledge about their surroundings, they could neither have fallen prey to error nor been seduced into telling lies; but in this way the inclination to tell lies and the danger of error entered human development. And because the spiritual always causes the physical, and because the luciferic influence and its consequences have eaten deeper and deeper into the etheric body from one incarnation to the next, the possibility of illness entered the physical body. Illness is the bad thing in the physical body which came through this development.

But something even more important came. If human beings had not succumbed to these influences, if they had not let them act on them, then the awareness would also not have arrived that in the moment when the physical body falls away from us anything happens other than a transformation of life: the awareness of death would not have arrived. Because if human beings had descended less deeply into matter and had retained the threads which link them with the divine-spiritual, they would have known that when casting off their physical mantle it merely meant the start of a different form of existence. They

would not have looked at it as the loss, the end of an existence to which they had become attached. So all things in development would have had a different face.

Because human beings descended deeper into matter they made themselves freer and more independent. But they also made their development more flawed than it would otherwise have been.

All the things which became flawed in human beings are healed again through the Christ impulse. Now we should not demand that they be healed in a significantly shorter period than they were caused, or even in a very short time. The time from the Lemurian epoch to the Mystery of Golgotha is a very long one. And slowly and gradually, acting from incarnation to incarnation, came egoism, error and lies, illness and the feeling of death. Because the Christ impulse is at work in humanity, these characteristics are transformed back in an ascending development. We might say that human beings are being guided back into the spiritual world with these characteristics which they obtained down below. It will even happen faster than the descent happened. But we should not demand that through what they can assimilate through the Christ impulse human beings will be capable in one or two incarnations of overcoming their selfishness, of healing themselves in their etheric body to such an extent that the danger of lies and error no longer existed, or that they could act in a health-giving way right down into their physical body.

That has to happen slowly and gradually. But it is happening. Just as human beings were led in their descent to all the characteristics we have described through the luciferic influence, in the same way they will be led upwards again through the Christ impulse. Selfishness will be transformed into selflessness, lies into truthfulness, the danger of error into assuredness and true judgement. Illness will become the substratum for all the greater health. All the illnesses we have overcome will become the seeds of a higher health. And when death is gradually understood in such a way that the death on Golgotha acts as the model of death in our own souls, then death will have lost its sting. Human beings will know why from time to time they have to discard their physical mantle in order to penetrate ever higher in the course of their incarnations. But what the Christ impulse has specifically made possible is that the impetus has been given to make good something that concerns human knowledge and human observation in particular, the knowledge of human beings about the world.

We have said that human beings became more enmeshed in matter, made

themselves more deficient in their three bodies than would have been the case if no luciferic influence had come. That allowed an impetus to take hold of human beings which made them descend ever deeper into material existence, to hurtle with ever greater thoroughness into mere matter. That happened in particular with human knowledge. But it also happened slowly and gradually. Human beings did not sink down immediately so deeply after the luciferic influence took hold that all the gates to the spiritual world were locked behind them. Human beings long remained in contact with the spiritual world which they had grown out of and in which they would have stayed with their whole being if the luciferic influence had not come. Human beings for a long time still shared in this spiritual world, felt for a long time how the threads of the divine-spiritual world led into their finer, spiritual instincts. They still acted for a long time in such a way that the impulse was not merely a human one but one as if the gods were behind it. That was particularly the case in the oldest times. Human beings were only gradually thrust into matter and with that they also lost their awareness of the divine.

The spiritual streams and world conceptions in humanity which had a knowledge of these things therefore always indicated that there was a time in which although human beings had already been thrust a little way down into material existence through the luciferic influence they had not been thrust down so far that this divine influence was not strongly active in them. This age was called the golden age in ancient times of human development. That is not some product of the imagination but the expression 'golden age' is simply an expression which those followers used who in ancient times still had an idea that there was once something like an original period of human development as has just been described. This golden age, which is described with a term of oriental philosophy as 'Krita Yuga', has proportionately lasted the longest of all the ages which we will go on to characterize.

This golden age was followed by the so-called silver age. Here human beings had already been thrust further down into the physical world. But everything happened slowly and gradually. The gates to the spiritual world had not been closed yet completely either. Human beings still had strong moments in which they still noticed the gods driving their instincts in dreamlike clairvoyance. Although human beings could no longer be called the companions of the gods in this silver age, they did still notice that gods stood behind them. This age is called 'Treta Yuga' in oriental philosophy.

Then there comes an age which extends into our post-Atlantean age; its last spurs extend into historical times in which there were still people gifted with ancient, dreamlike, hazy clairvoyance. But the consciousness of the spiritual world which human beings had grown out of now only existed as a kind of memory that had remained from previous incarnations. It was like as if you think of your youth, your childhood and your present age. In our childhood we directly experienced our childhood experiences; similarly the human beings in the Treta Yuga still directly experienced the impulses of the divine spiritual world. In the age which then followed, which is also called the bronze age, only something like a memory of it remained. We could compare it with the way that an adult looks at his childhood. Because you will say: I experienced my childhood, it is not a dream. That is what it was like in the third age; human beings knew: we experienced the connection with the divine in earlier times but now it is no longer present except as a memory. I have shown in detail how a memory of the Atlantean time remained in ancient Indian culture. That is why the holy Rishis were able to proclaim their great teachings about the divine at that time in particular because of the after-effect of this memory. This bronze age is called 'Dwapara Yuga' in oriental philosophy.

Then there follows an age in which the memory of the divine-spiritual world is lost, in which human beings are completely placed into the physical world with their knowledge and perception. This age starts about the year 3101 before the Christian era, before the birth of Jesus Christ, and it is called—also with a term from oriental philosophy— 'Kali Yuga', the dark age, because then human beings had lost all connection with the spiritual world and had completely coalesced with the physical world.

I say expressly that I use these terms here to refer to smaller periods of time, but they can also be extended over larger periods. Here, however, we refer to an understanding of the periods which correspond to begin with to the smaller periods of time and have Kali Yuga start, as Indian philosophy teaches, with the year 3101 before the Christian era. Here the period is in preparation in which human beings are instructed only to see that which hides the divine-spiritual world like a veil, like a cover, in which they only perceive the physical world accessible to the outward senses. Although many people still existed at the start of the Kali Yuga who could look into or recall the divine-spiritual world, for normal humanity a time now started in which they could no longer perceive anything except with their physical senses.

That was the descent of human beings as far as a Kali Yuga. It was the time of the deepest descent. Into that the impulse had to fall for ascending again. That is why the impulse to start the ascent again, the Christ impulse, comes in the Kali Yuga, the dark age.

The Christ impulse had been prepared by the religion of Yahweh or Jehovah. Human beings were made aware of the deficit in their earlier decisions through the religion of Yahweh. After all, during the period from ancient Lemurian times to the proclamation on Sinai we have the period in which human beings became their own decision-makers about good and evil, but where on the other hand they fell into error about good and evil and increasingly brought to earth what is called sin in the Bible. This is where sin eats its way into earthly life. Human beings have obtained godlikeness but they used it for characteristics which were not at all mature enough for godlikeness. What, then, had to happen next?

To begin with, human beings had to be shown what the divinity wanted from them if they were to become a self-aware I. And that was shown to them through the proclamation from Sinai, through the proclamation of the Ten Commandments.¹⁶ Moses told human beings: what you have developed so far about good and evil is inadequate. I will show you how the laws would sound if you had not descended and claimed the decision about good and evil as your own with your deficient characteristics. That is how the law from Sinai, the Decalogue, relates to what human beings had become, so that it was pronounced down to them from the spiritual worlds what would be the correct thing in relation to what they had developed as something defective. The Ten Commandments stand as an iron law, as a beacon which shows human beings all the things they have not become. They must subject themselves to this law with everything they have become. Human beings could not at first give themselves these Ten Commandments because they had become lacking in their decision-making, in giving themselves their own laws. That is why they had to be given the Ten Commandments through a person who had been inspired, through Moses, that is, through divine inspiration from above. But they were given in such a way that they were all directed at the I. They told human beings how an I had to behave if it was to achieve the goal of humanity.

That was discussed in detail in the lecture about the Ten Commandments of Moses on 16 November 1908.¹⁷ There it was shown how the I should behave towards the spiritual worlds in the first three Commandments, how it should behave towards its fellow human beings with regard to its deeds and actions in

the next commandments, and how it should behave with regard to its sentiments and feelings in the last commandments. The education, the cultivation of the I is commanded in the Ten Commandments. That was the preparation for the I to learn in its innermost part to give itself the impulse after it had descended into the dark age in the Kali Yuga. Human beings were to be shown a law from above. But what was intended to become the law of our own I could only happen if the I assimilated the great example of Golgotha, if the I said to itself: if I take into my soul such thoughts as the being thought which sacrificed itself on Golgotha, if I take such feeling into myself as the being felt which sacrificed itself on Golgotha, if I take such a will into myself as the being had which sacrificed itself on Golgotha, then my being will find the decision within itself, will increasingly develop godlikeness, will no longer be forced to follow an external law, the Ten Commandments, but an inner impulse, its own law.

Thus Moses initially placed the law before human beings, but Christ was the model and the power which the soul should assimilate in order to develop. That is why everything that existed as a spiritual impulse had to be deepened into profound inwardness through Jesus Christ; everything had to be carried into the depths of the soul, into the I itself. That could only happen if the following was considered, if Jesus Christ spread the following as an impulse.

Human beings have descended as far as the dark age, as far as the Kali Yuga. Before this dark age human beings looked into the spiritual world in a dull, hazy clairvoyance. In doing so, they were not able to use just the instruments of the physical body but in observing the physical world with their eyes, ears and so on something spiritual appeared to them everywhere: around flowers, plants, stones, and so on. These human beings were rich with regard to their observation of the spirit. The spirit was made a gift to them in ancient times. Now, in the dark age, they became beggars in spirit because the spirit was no longer made a gift to them. They became poor in spirit. The Kali Yuga approached closer and closer in which human beings had to tell themselves it was different in ancient times. Then the spirit was still given as a gift to human beings, then they could look up into a spiritual world, then they were rich in spirit, then they had access to the realms of the heavens. But now human beings have been pushed down into the physical world. The gates of the spiritual world have closed to human senses and the physical body offers no view of the realms of the heavens.

But Christ said: grasp the I where you should grasp it now, then the realms of heaven come closer again. They will arise in your I. Even though your eyes close

off the spiritual light behind the external sensory light, even if your ears close off the spiritual sound behind the physical one, if you rise to Christ himself you will find the realms of the heavens within yourself. Ill-fated were those who had been made poor by the dark age; they had become beggars in spirit. But now they could become blessed again after the impulse had been given that Christ could penetrate right into the human I, Christ the being who was able to give them knowledge of the spirit, of the realms of the heavens. So in relation to the impoverishment of human beings in spirit the highest Christian proclamation is: blessed are those from now on who are beggars in spirit, who no longer are given the spirit as a gift through ancient perception; but they can become blessed from now on if they take in the Christ impulse, then the realms of the heavens will open to them through the development of the I.

Let us move on to the etheric body which shapes the physical body. What entered it? Illness only comes to expression in the physical body. The suffering itself begins in the etheric body and the suffering in the etheric body is expressed in a later incarnation in the physical body as illness. But now something has entered the world, Jesus Christ said, through which an impulse can arise internally which gradually washes away suffering out of the etheric body. Now those can become blessed, if they take the Christ impulse into themselves, who have entrenched suffering in their etheric body—because there is something within them through which they can find what leads beyond suffering, the inner solace, the inner Paraclete, the inner Comforter.

And what had become of the astral body through the luciferic influence? It had become more defective than it had been before. It received the opportunity, which we described as a good characteristic, to enthuse itself for the good and the great, to have enthusiasm for the noble possessions of truth, beauty and goodness. But for that it also had to accept the other: to become passionate to the greatest extent for the possessions of the earth in sympathy and antipathy. Those who take in the Christ impulse will learn to calm what fills their physical body with emotion with regard to the possessions of the earth, the astral body, to bring it under the control of the spirit, and thereby it will become happy or blessed. Blessed will become those who create serenity in their astral body with regard to earthly things, but in doing so the latter will accrue to them. Because when it is enflamed in emotion, in sympathy and antipathy, for earthly things, then it throws away what could accrue to it. But if the astral body comes under the power of the spirit, if we develop serenity with regard to earthly things, then we are given the earthly realm as our lot.

Let us ascend to what acts in the astral body as the sentient soul. Therein we have an I working in a muted way which has not yet properly emerged and which therefore still develops the worst kind of passionate egoism. For as long as the I is still thoroughly stuck in the sentient soul, it develops the most selfish egoism. It is then devoid of any wish to allow others what it has itself. Egoism dulls the sense of justice because the I wants to have everything for itself. But if now the I places itself in the discipleship of the Christ impulse, then it becomes an I which thirsts for justice for all beings surrounding it. Blessed will be those who have a thirst and hunger for the feeling of justice in their sentient soul, because they will be satisfied. They will be able to bring about circumstances on earth and in the whole world which in the proper new spirit out of the depths of the soul correspond to such states of justice.

Let us ascend further to the intellectual or mind soul. It is the element which effects to an even greater extent the acceptance of human beings side-by-side and does so not just out of a feeling of justice, like the sentient soul, but out of empathy, real empathy with the joy and sorrow of the other. Those who take in the Christ impulse will obtain a feeling not just of their own feelings but also of what the other I feels; they will be immersed in the other I and as a result are blessed in their intellectual or mind soul. Blessed are those who develop empathy because only by feeling their way into the soul of the other do they prompt the other soul to feel its way into them. They will achieve empathy in the other soul when they themselves emit empathy. Blessed are those with empathy because they will receive empathy.

You can already see, having moved forward in time in these reflections, how we are now able in quite a different way to understand out of the depths of human nature and its essence the words in the Gospel of Matthew which are normally encapsulated in the Sermon on the Mount. Every sentence in the Sermon on the Mount relates to one of the nine components of the human being. We will deal with that in greater detail the next time. The Sermon on the Mount will stand transparently before our inner eye as the deed of Jesus Christ through which he gave a completely inward form to what was contained in the old law of Moses, through which he turned it into an inward impulse by which the human I can become active as it should become active in all nine components of the human being. Because if the I accepts the Christ impulse it acts on all nine components of human beings. Thus we can see how deeply true it is what we have indicted here previously, that Christ enables the human I in the Kali Yuga to find something in the physical world which leads human beings into the spiritual

world, into the realms of the heavens. Christ has given the human I a share in the spiritual world.

On old Saturn the physical body had come directly out of the spiritual world. It was still completely immersed in the spiritual world because at that time the physical body was still more spiritual and did not have a consciousness through which it could have separated from the spiritual worlds. On the sun the etheric body was added and on the moon the astral body, and not until earth was the possibility given through the development of the I to separate from the womb of the divine-spiritual in the world. And the consequence was that the I had to be guided back, that the God had to descend to the physical plane and had to show human beings on the physical plane how they can find the way back to the realms of the heavens.

What happened through the Christ impulse was thus an important event. But let us now ask: did all people who lived at the time that Jesus Christ worked on earth know that such an important event was happening? Consider that the great historian Tacitus¹⁸ refers to the Christians as an almost unknown sect. A hundred years later he only tells about the Christians that a sect had arisen in a side-street in Rome which was led by a certain Jesus and carried on its business there. A long time after the Christ event many people in Rome still believed that Jesus was their contemporary, as if he had just appeared. In short, important things can happen in human development without contemporaries noticing anything. The most significant things could pass by if people were disinclined to obtain an understanding of them. But then humanity would fail to experience such significant events, would wither and waste away in that regard. 'Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand' was the message of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ himself. That is how they indicated to whoever had ears to listen that something of the utmost significance was happening. Not knowing about something of utmost importance in the world is no proof that it does not exist.

Those whose task it is to interpret the signs of the times today, who know what is happening today, they must point to an event which— even if it is not of ultimate importance—is nevertheless an important one. It is true that something of infinite importance is developing in our time. And if in his time John pointed to Christ, and then the latter pointed to the coming of the kingdom of heaven, to the I, we have today to point to another important event.

Christ descended to earth in the flesh only once. He dwelled on earth in the flesh

at the start of our era. In accordance with the wise guidance of our cosmic development, human beings will not see Christ again incarnated in the flesh as a physical human being—and they will also not need to see him like that again—because Christ will not return in the flesh. Yet we nevertheless have to speak of a new relationship of human beings to Christ. Why? Because the age we call the dark age, the Kali Yuga, has ended specifically in our time with the end of the nineteenth century, and because with the start of the twentieth century a new age is beginning in which new faculties of human beings are in preparation, the faculties which were lost in the dark age. New faculties are slowly and gradually in preparation. New faculties will develop to the degree that there will be individual people who will have the latter as a natural aptitude. These faculties will be particularly revealed in a number of people between 1930 and 1940 and through these new faculties a new relationship with Christ will arise in a number of people.

With that we have indicated something very important in the development of humanity. And spiritual science exists to help people understand these new faculties which will be revealed in the human world. Spiritual science does not exist in the world because individual people are willing and inclined to spread the results of spiritual research but because knowledge of the spirit is necessary if people want to understand what is happening in the first half of our century. Because only through what a spiritual science can give human beings will we become capable of understanding what will happen in the first half of our century. And if we become capable of understanding in the spirit what will then happen, then we will also be able to avoid confusing such events with erroneous depictions. Because the continuing spread of materialism means that it is also spreading into the spiritual view of the world and this is where its effect is particularly bad. That could lead to people failing to understand what must be grasped in the spirit, truly grasped in the spirit, and seeking it in the material world. And because a new relationship with Christ should occur in the first half of our century, it will keep being emphasized in the next decades until the event occurs that false Messiahs, false Christs will appear who will bank on those who in the fields of spiritual science can only become materialists and who are only able to imagine a new relationship with Christ in such a way that they have him before them in the flesh. A number of false Messiahs will use that and say: Christ has reappeared in the flesh.

But the relationships which can only be obtained purely through human faculties in the first half of our century—those relationships must be prepared by

anthroposophical wisdom. That increases the responsibility of anthroposophical striving enormously in that spiritual science is preparing for an event which will come and which will either be understood if spiritual science finds a place in the human soul, and will then bear fruit for the further development of humanity, or which will pass by humanity without being understood if human beings refuse to accept the instrument through which that event can be understood— the instrument of spiritual science. But if people rejected spiritual science to such an extent that nothing remained of it, then they would also not know that this event exists or would interpret it wrongly. The benefit of this event would be lost to the future of humanity and as a result humanity would be plunged into immense misery.

Thus we refer to a new relationship between human beings and Christ as something which grows towards Christ in the human soul in a relatively short period of time.

LECTURE 4

BERLIN, 8 FEBRUARY 1910

THE subject of today's reflections was indicated last time. Today we will refer once more to that important record which is contained in the words of the Sermon on the Mount in order then to look from this record at our present time and the immediate future of humanity.

The Sermon on the Mount in the Gospel of Matthew can only be understood if we grasp its spirit as a whole and comprehend it out of the spirit of the development of the whole of humanity. If we take a brief look at what passed before our soul the last time, that the old hazy clairvoyance of human beings gradually receded, that human faculties, human knowledge had to be more and more restricted to the physical plane and that for this reason the connection of human beings with the spiritual worlds had to be grounded in an event on the physical plane, if we consider all these things together, we will understand that the divine-spiritual being which we have characterized as the high sun being, as Christ, had to incarnate in a physical body at a time in which human beings were restricted to the physical plane in their perception. It happened so that it would be possible to tell the essential stages from the life of the divine-spiritual being in a form of expression, in words related to the physical plane. Because the important thing is not just that those few in relation to the whole of humanity who were able to see and observe Jesus Christ physically did so on the physical plane, but the important thing is that the things that can be told about Jesus Christ represent events on the physical plane.

Because with regard to everything that was previously told about other divine-spiritual beings, it could not be said that the narrative which used the words on the physical plane reflected real events. Everything that was told in relation to the highest divine beings had to be understood such that the words could only be

seen as an indication, but that the things that happened could only be understood by those who were able to apply the words to events on the higher plane. But the life of Jesus Christ, as it occurred, can be understood by everyone even if they are only able to apply what is told to the events of the physical plane. And in this context we can say: the Christ being descended down as far as a physical incarnation, completely down into a life in a physical body. That had to happen because human faculties at that time had the character which they did because the human I was to and had to become aware of its nature in that time if the development of humanity was to proceed as intended.

We have already seen that the most important intermediary of the event in Palestine from the ranks of the older individualities was Zarathustra or Zoroaster. But in order for him to become what he had to become at that time, a body had to be created which contained everything within itself like an extract that had been given to a whole people—a people which was meant to give humanity those faculties which have to be transferred through physical heredity. This is what we must see as the essence of the ancient Hebrew people from Abraham to Jesus: that the faculties had to develop from generation to generation, passed down from father to son, from son to grandson and so on, always being enhanced, so that they would then appear in their highest and most usable form in a body which had been passed down from Abraham through Solomon to Jesus, the bearer of Zarathustra.

A great deal will still need to be said before we will be able to understand the mission of the ancient Hebrew people in all its detail through the reflections which we will continue in the future. Because this includes that we truly begin to understand how from one generation to the next those characteristics were refined which the body of Jesus needed. This body had to be made as capable as possible for its world-historic calling. That was only possible if everything that belonged to the body of the Jesus from the line of Solomon was as perfect as possible with regard to these faculties.

Now we know that the four parts of human nature—the physical body, etheric body, astral body and I—have been working on each human body since ancient times and that in future Spirit Self, Life Spirit and Spirit Man will be at work. But we should not imagine that suddenly the activity of the astral body, for example, stops and that the later elements are not prepared in the earlier ones. In a certain sense everything that comes later must be prepared in what comes earlier. Human beings cannot work on themselves out of their own strength

today in such a way that, for example, the Life Spirit comes to specific expression. But other divine-spiritual beings are undertaking such work in human beings which can be described as the activity of the Life Spirit. That also applies with regard to the Spirit Man. Thus all seven components of the body of Jesus of Nazareth, or rather the human organization of Jesus of Nazareth, had to be refined with regard to the relevant characteristics. That required very special preparation. Today this preparation will give us at least some idea to begin with of the secrets which are actually concealed in the development of humanity and the earth.

The seeds for that perfection of the body of Jesus of Nazareth had to be prepared a long time in advance. We have seen how in the period from Abraham to Solomon or David the first period worked on the sexes as it otherwise works in the individual person physically in the time from birth to the change of teeth. This work was now carried out in such a way by the forces active behind the development that indeed there existed at a particular time an ancestor of Jesus who already had the predisposition for the most perfect possible faculties which then emerged in the body that became the vehicle of Zarathustra. So we might say the predisposition existed in an ancestor of Jesus for the proper development of all seven components of human nature. In other words, if we go back up the series of ancestors of Jesus of Nazareth we will find such an ancestor who contained the seeds of sevenfold human nature—even if not as perfectly formed as in the body of Jesus of Nazareth, then predisposed for such perfection. Even if that is not expressed in the outer tradition, this fact was known in ancient Hebrew esoteric teachings. They knew that a human being had once lived of whom it had to be said that the seven human components worked in him in such a way that they must be described as especially remarkable. Thus the initiates in ancient Hebrew esoteric teachings indicated that there was an ancestor of Jesus of Nazareth of which they were aware: we have to look at the seven human components in a very special way in this ancestor.

And so they called the I ‘Itiel’ in this ancestor in order to indicate by this means that in this ancestor the I had to have the power—because the word ‘Itiel’ would roughly mean ‘possessor of strength’—had to have the power, the boldness which, when it was passed down through the generations, could become the right bearer of the I for the high being which was then to reappear in Jesus of Nazareth. Thus they called the astral body of that ancestor ‘Lamuel’; that would roughly describe an astral body which has developed in such a way that it feels the laws, the principles not just outside itself but as carrying them within itself.

Thus they called the etheric body of this ancestor ‘Ben Jake’; that would roughly mean: having been thoroughly worked through in itself and in a certain completeness being able to assimilate habits within itself. And they called the physical body of this ancestor ‘Agur’ for the reason that the physical activity, the faculty of this ancestor on the physical plane, consisted of collecting what existed as ancient traditions that had been handed down; for ‘Agur’ means something like ‘the collector’.

Just as later all the ancient teachings of the world were collected through what happened in the body of Jesus, it already developed as a predisposition in this ancestor through the collection of ancient records. And what worked like Atma or Spirit Man in this ancestor that they called—because the love of the divine-spiritual beings worked with particular care on this predisposition for the Spirit Man—with the word which would roughly mean ‘beloved of God’, ‘Jedidjah’. And what worked as Buddhi or Life Spirit into this ancestor—of which they said: a Life Spirit must work in this ancestor which can act like a teacher for the whole people so that what this Life Spirit contains can flow out over all the people—that they called ‘Kohelet’. And finally they called Manas or Spirit Self of this ancestor—because they said such a Spirit Self must contain the predisposition to be inwardly complete, to be in balance with itself—by a word which means ‘inner balance’, ‘Salomo’.

So this ancestor, who is normally only known under the name ‘Shelomo’, ‘Shlomo’ or ‘Salomo’, had the three main names Jedidjah, Kohelet, Salomo; and he had the four subsidiary names Agur, Ben Jake, Lamuel, Itiel because these names refer to the four mantles whereas the three first names designate the divine inwardness. This personality had seven names in ancient Hebrew esoteric teaching.¹⁹

And when subsequently people, including some sects among the Jews themselves, were unhappy with Salomo [Solomon]—we will leave aside here whether rightly or wrongly—it can be explained in that Salomo contained great, very great aptitudes which were then to be passed on to achieve the given goal, and that individual human beings at a specific level of development by no means always need to show in their outer life what they are meant to pass on to their descendants as a predisposition; precisely because great forces are contained within such people, they are exposed to greater possibilities of failing in relation to such forces than someone else who does not have such forces within themselves. What we might see as moral failures in Salomo does not necessarily

stand in contradiction to what ancient Hebrew esoteric teachings see in Salomo but, on the contrary, such failings in Salomo could be explained by this fact.

In this way ancient Hebrew esoteric teachings looked at an ancestor of Jesus of whose importance in relation to the whole mission of the ancient Hebrew people they were fully aware. Everything that was predisposed in this personality was then passed down the generations and appeared in essence in the further course of history as it was needed. This is something which should give us an idea about the esoteric laws which are concealed behind the development of humanity.

If, then, the mission of the ancient Hebrew people consisted primarily of having inoculated into its blood, as it were, the faculties which this people was to give humanity from out of the spiritual world, humanity had advanced to a stage at the time that John the Baptist and Jesus appeared that through these refined characteristics it was to take up the impulse to ascend into the spiritual world again; in other words, it was to take up the Christ impulse. This was said to indicate all the preparation which was necessary to create a mantle within the physical development of humanity which could enclose the Christ being.

Now we might feel and sense the radical nature of the progress in the mission of humanity which arose from this divine mission of the Jewish people carried down as far as the physical element, we might feel how the divine was carried down to its deepest point into physical matter so that from this turning point onwards humanity could begin to ascend again from refined physical matter to the spiritual. The ascent to the spiritual had to start at that time. But to that end humanity had to be given an impulse which in a manner of speaking laid everything which humanity should want and expect from the development of the world into that deepest centre of the human being which we can designate as the I. That impulse was to enter the deepest innermost part of human beings through Christ. Such an impulse spoke out of the body of Christ, appealing to the deepest essence of human nature. So what was meant to change with this impulse?

Before this impulse arrived, the situation was such that human beings in a certain sense received and expected from outside what made them happiest, what made them feel most blessed or filled with God. If we look at world history not just according to the outer records but also according to what the spiritual records can provide, we have to say to ourselves: we look back to ancient times in which human beings ascended to the realm of the spiritual beings through—be it more

or less normal—the gift of clairvoyance awaking in them. But this gift of clairvoyance awoke in a dreamlike way while divine-spiritual forces were at work in it and the I was suppressed. Human beings were outside the I to a greater or lesser extent. If even in a normal state they were not as aware of the I as they were in later times, they were completely outside themselves, outside their I, in times in which the spirit was at work in them and carried them up into the spiritual world. They were completely given over either to the divine-spiritual outside them or to the divine-spiritual in their soul. But in these states of ecstasy, of being enthused, they were not aware of their state at all. But that was precisely what was meant to come, that human beings would find a connection to the spiritual out of their I and from there would be able to penetrate the deepest core of their being in the consciousness: I belong to a divine-spiritual realm.

That could only happen because Christ lived on earth, instilled his being into the being of the earth and because the I could imbue itself with what arose as the example of Christ. As a result human beings could say: I am now in the spiritual realm, in the realms of heaven with my I just as previously human beings were in the realms of heaven outside the I. ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand’, that was the new teaching. To that end the state of soul, the mind of human beings was to be changed in order for them to stop thinking that it was only possible to be borne into the spiritual world in a state of ecstasy, but that they could find their connection with the realms of heaven in a state of full ego-consciousness.

That this had to happen can also be seen in that the state of the old clairvoyance worsened in the course of the millennia. Whereas in ancient times human beings ascended to the good divine-spiritual powers in their ecstatic states, ascended to their divine-spiritual home, the ecstatic states of human beings which remained at the time that Christianity was founded were such that now, when they were outside themselves, they were not led to the good spiritual powers but to the bad, evil spiritual powers. That, indeed, is the great difference between these two states of development: when in ancient times human beings ascended in a dreamlike state to spiritual worlds by suppressing the I, as we would say in psychic terms today, then they communed with the good spiritual beings. But that had changed by the time that human beings were supposed to find the ties to the realms of heaven through the I; and when they now sought or developed ecstatic states, then they were described as states of ‘possession’ which connected human beings with evil spiritual powers hostile to them. Thus at the time that Jesus Christ appeared, it had to be proclaimed as something quasi

healing: it is not right that you should try to enter into states by means of which you perceive the spiritual worlds through the exclusion of your I, but now the right thing is that you should seek the ties to the divine-spiritual realms in the deepest core of your being.

This teaching is essentially contained in the Sermon on the Mount of the Gospel of Matthew. To paraphrase, in ancient times there was dreamlike clairvoyance. Human beings entered the spiritual worlds through ecstasy. At that time they had a rich spiritual life, they were not beggars in the spirit as they had become at the time that Christianity was founded. When in ancient times they were imbued with the spirit, with what in Greece was called pneuma, they ascended into the divine-spiritual worlds. Now Christ could no longer say 'filled with God are those who become rich in spirit through ecstatic states'—because they precisely were the ones who needed to be healed from being possessed. That is why there is mention beforehand of the healing of the possessed. Now he had to proclaim 'the time has come in which those are filled with God who have become beggars in the spirit'—in other words, those who could no longer rise to ecstatic, to dreamlike clairvoyant states but who were dependent on seeking the kingdom of heaven in themselves, through their I.

When human beings in earlier times were placed into pain and suffering on earth, they only needed to evoke the state which existed in their being through which they could be removed into the divine-spiritual worlds. They did not need to suffer grief but when they were struck by grief they could seek a state in which they were filled with spirit or God and in this state, in their removal from their I, they could find healing for the suffering and pain on earth. But that time too had to be described by Jesus Christ as one that was over. Now those were to be filled with God who were no longer able to experience succour in their suffering from outside but who sought that power within themselves through strengthening their own I, who found the Paraclete within themselves. Filled with God are those who do not drive away pain by rising in ecstasy to God but who bear it and develop the power of their I through which they find the Paraclete within themselves, later called the 'Holy Spirit' which is revealed through the I.

Even someone as late as Buddha did not recommend bearing suffering but shedding it, shedding it together with all the thirst for earthly things. As little as six hundred years before Jesus Christ, Buddha described as the worst consequence of the thirst for existence what exists as pain on earth. Six hundred

years later Jesus Christ said in the second declaration of the Sermon on the Mount that suffering should not be shed in this way but that it should be borne, that it was a test so that the I would develop the strength which it can find within itself: the inner assistance of the 'Paraclete'. That is literally contained in the second declaration of the Sermon on the Mount except for the expression 'Paraclete'. You only have to read these things in the right way. That is precisely the task of our time, to learn to read the great spiritual scientific records with what spiritual science gives us.

A third thing is this: when in ancient times human beings imbued themselves with what arises out of ecstasy, what is called pneuma, spirit, in Greek, they were instinctively guided on their path. All impulses, actions, passions, urges and lusts, in short, everything that is present in the astral body of human beings, was guided through instinct. It was guided to the good if human beings were able to ascend to good spiritual beings. But the inner strength had not yet come through the I which could tame passions, urges and so on, cleanse them and bring them into balance. But now the time had come—that is something else that Christ had to proclaim—in which, when they tame and cleanse and create serenity in their passions, urges and lusts in their astral body, human beings themselves achieve what is the goal of current humanity and which is expressed by referring to the great course of development.

We have often reflected on this course of development in the following way. Human beings began their existence on old Saturn, continued it through Sun and Moon existence, and were assigned their I on earth. But only when they become aware of their I, when they tame and make serene what was still given them in their astral body on the Moon, can they truly reach the goal of the earth's mission. Those can become filled with God through the Christ impulse who create serenity in the urges and lusts in their astral body, tame them. Thus the following is said in the third declaration in the Sermon on the Mount, something which is actually always translated with a word which does not make sense: those who create serenity—not meekness—in their urges, lusts and passions will inherit the earth.

Here we have before us the first three declarations of the Sermon on the Mount in all their world-historical importance: what was possible at a physical level through the special development of the physical body in ancient periods of humanity, that people saw the spiritual in clairvoyant states, this is addressed in the first declaration of the Sermon on the Mount for the physical body which is

now impoverished with regard to its inner spiritual fulfilment. For the etheric body, through which we become aware of suffering even if to begin with it comes to consciousness in the astral body, it is indicated that human beings have to develop a power within themselves to find assistance against suffering which they bear as a test. Then we said for the astral body that through taming and cleansing their urges, passions and so on human beings find that strong power within them through which they become a real I and receive the earth's mission as their inheritance.

If we now ascend to the I, we know that this I works in the sentient soul, in the intellectual soul and in the consciousness soul. The I works in the sentient soul, in other words, it spiritualizes the sentient soul. This precisely turns what can be spread through Christianity into an important matter for human beings in the external world: human fraternal love out of which comes universal justice. What is otherwise felt only at a physical level by the sentient soul, thirst and hunger, it must learn to feel in respect of the spirit through Christianity: a hunger and thirst for universal justice. Those who in this way find the centre of the human being in the I, will, in working on themselves, be satisfied in their longing in the sentient soul for universal earthly justice. Those who through the Christ impulse learn to thirst and hunger for justice, like we hunger and thirst for physical food, will be filled with God because through the strong power inside them they will be satisfied through working for justice in the world.

Now we come to the intellectual soul. We have often emphasized that while the I still vegetates dully in the sentient soul, it begins to shine as an actual human I for the first time in the intellectual soul, in order then to come to full consciousness in the consciousness soul where it becomes a pure I. So here we have something very unique; the human I, the thing which makes all of us humans equal, which everyone carries within themselves, begins to shine in the intellectual soul. Wherever we find a human being in the world, he or she is a human being and like us because an I shines in his or her intellectual soul. We will obtain a proper relationship with our fellow human beings because precisely in the intellectual soul something arises which we should carry out into the external world in the way we can receive it. We are meant to develop something in the intellectual soul which we allow to flow out into the surroundings in such a way as it should flow back into ourselves. That is why this is the only occasion in the Sermon on the Mount when the subject of the sentence is the same as the predicate: filled with God, or blessed, are those who develop love because in spreading love they in turn will receive love.

This can show you the immense profundity of such a record, that even in its sentence structure it can be understood in great detail if gradually over years we have collected together what spiritual science can provide for an understanding of the human being and the world. The fifth declaration in the Sermon on the Mount cannot be understood at all in its difference to the other statements, which all have a different predicate from the subject, if we are not aware of the reference that this statement makes to the intellectual or mind soul.

Now we ascend to the work of the I on the consciousness soul. This is where the I first becomes pure, as it were, where it first can become fully conscious of itself. This is expressed in very nice terms in the Sermon on the Mount in that it is said: it can only be in the I that the divine substance of the human being is realized. Filled with God are those who are pure in blood or heart—which are an expression of the I—and who allow nothing to enter other than what is pure egohood, because in that they will recognize God, see God.

Now we ascend to those things in the Sermon on the Mount which are already directed towards the Spirit Self, the Life Spirit and the Spirit Man. Here human beings can no longer work just through themselves, here they have to appeal in the current stage of development to the divine-spiritual worlds who have been brought into connection with the world through Christ; they have to look up with their I to the renewed divine-spiritual worlds. Whereas previously strife and disharmony entered humanity through egohood, and still does so today, peace is meant to spread across the earth through the Christ impulse. And those who take in the Christ impulse will become peacemakers in that part of human nature which will only gradually develop in the future as Spirit Self; and they will thereby become ‘sons of God’ in a new sense in that they will bring down the spirit from spiritual realms. Filled with God are those who bring peace and harmony to the world; that makes them sons of God. Because that is what those have to be called who are truly inwardly filled with a Spirit Self which is meant to bring peace and harmony to the earth.

Now we have to be clear that in everything that develops on earth, residues from earlier times remain in later times. These residues are in a certain way hostile to what appears as a seed in later times. Thus what the Christ impulse brings is set into the whole of human development, though not all at once but in such a way that residues remain of what was brought by previous human development. In this context it is necessary that those who first understand the Christ impulse stand firmly on the ground of the latter, are completely imbued within

themselves by its strength. And if they are inwardly imbued with the strength which originates from the seed which came through Christ, and if they stand firmly on that ground, then precisely because they develop the strength of that firmness they will be filled with God in the new sense. Filled with God are those who under the new order which is subject to Christ suffer persecution by that which still reaches in from the old order. And the last declaration of the Sermon on the Mount points directly to the Christ impulse itself in that he says to the apostles: and you shall be filled with God who are specially called to carry the name of Christ into the world.

Thus we can see how Christianity is directly derived in the Sermon on the Mount out of the great cosmological teachings of humanity and that reference is made everywhere to that power of inwardness which has to find its centre in the I itself. That has to be clearly understood. That must be understood to the present day and it has to be understood to the present day in such a way that those who believe they are Christian in the true sense must not seek Christianity in some dogmatic subsidiary meaning; people are Christian in the true sense who understand the meaning of the statement: amend your state of soul or your attitude, because the realms of the heavens have descended as far down as the I. They can be called Christian in the true sense who see that as the essence and who further understand that the things which are Christian in a true sense have to be expressed differently at the beginning of the Christian era and differently again today.

It is a bad misunderstanding of Christianity if people were to believe that what was described as Christian in the words of two thousand years ago had failed to continue to develop to the present day. We would have to describe Christianity as a dead cultural stream if we had to speak today in the same terms as two thousand years ago. Christianity is something living. It develops and will forever continue developing. And as true as it is that Christianity had to take as its starting point the time when human beings had descended to the physical plane, had to take as its starting point a divine being turned human in a physical human body, it is just as true that human beings particularly in our time have to learn to start their ascent again in order to understand Christianity and the Christ being itself from a higher spiritual perspective. What does that mean?

As true as it is that the ancient dreamlike clairvoyant powers have been lost so that at the time of Christ those who were filled with spirit in the old sense could no longer be described as filled with God, but those could who found the realms

of heaven within themselves, it is just as true that in this full ego-consciousness human beings will ascend again to the spiritual world and will again develop new powers and faculties. And as true as it is that in the time of the Baptist the time had come when human beings had brought those faculties to a crisis which led down to the physical plane, it is just as true that we are currently in a most important time. What is called the dark age, which started in 3101 BC and which reached its height when Christ incarnated, came to an end at the conclusion of the nineteenth century. The Kali Yuga came to an end in 1899 and we are progressing towards a time in which new powers and faculties will develop among human beings in a natural way which will come to clear and distinct expression as soon as the first half of our present century. These new powers and faculties will have to be understood. Particularly those parts of humanity which have grasped the task of spiritual science will have to understand that such an ascent into the spirit is possible again. Because in the important times which will follow the year 1930, individual people will become seemingly naturally capable of developing the powers through which will become visible what we call the etheric body. Etheric clairvoyant forces will develop in a number of people.

Two different things will then be possible. Either the materialism of our time continues, in which case people will not understand when such forces show themselves that they lead up into the spiritual worlds; they will be misunderstood and as a result they will be suppressed. If that were to happen, it would not provide justification for people to say at the end of 1940 out of that materialistic spirit: well, just look what great prophets we had at the start of the twentieth century! Nothing came true! Because if the new faculties do not appear, that will not disprove what now can and must be said; it will only be evidence that an ignorant humanity has nipped these faculties in the bud and will thereby have deprived itself of something which humanity will have to have if it wants to avoid withering away and atrophying in its development. That is the great responsibility of anthroposophy. Anthroposophy has come about from an understanding of the necessity that preparatory work has to be undertaken for something that will come, which could also be ignored and suppressed. Anthroposophy has to undertake preparatory work for the understanding of the spiritually developing forces of humanity. If these forces are suppressed, then humanity will continue deeper into the morass of materialism.

Alternatively, anthroposophy has the good fortune with its teachings to spread an understanding of the ascent of human beings into the spiritual world, and has the good fortune to succeed in lifting human beings out of their materialistic

thinking. But then something else will have to happen from out of the anthroposophical spiritual movement which was prepared in earlier centuries but which now has to develop fully in our age at a particularly important turning point.

The earlier centuries were well suited for increasingly fostering the materialistic attitude of humanity. That is why it was possible to believe previously under the influence of materialism that the Christ impulse and the Christ being would enter into a relationship with the earth once more, or perhaps several more times, in such a way that it would incarnate into a physical body, into a material body. Instead of obtaining a clear understanding for themselves that human beings would grow upwards with their faculties in order to experience in greater numbers, and finally in totality, the Damascene event—that is, experience Christ in the earth's atmosphere, see him in the etheric body—people always believed that Christ would descend again into a physical body. This satisfied the materialistic attitude of human beings who do not want to believe in the spirit, in what Paul saw during his experience on the road to Damascus: Christ is in the earth's atmosphere, he is always there. 'I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.'

Those who develop upwards to obtain a vision of the spiritual world by means of clairvoyant methods will find what could not be found in spiritual worlds in the pre-Christian era: Christ in his etheric body. That is the most significant progress in the development of humanity, namely that even before the first half of our century has passed the faculty will develop in many human beings in a natural way that will allow them to experience the Damascene event on a personal level and see Christ in his etheric body. Christ will not descend into the flesh but human beings will ascend once they have obtained an understanding of the spirit. This means the return of Christ in our age because in this twentieth century human beings have to work their way out of the Kali Yuga into an age of clairvoyance for which the first seeds need to be laid in this century. Human beings will ascend to Christ through the faculties that will come, to Christ who is here and who can be seen by the vanguard of those human beings who through the revelations of anthroposophy are led to what in the course of the next 2500 years will be experienced by more or less all human souls.

That is the great event which faces humanity in the near future, that once again those people will be filled with God who now in full consciousness ascend to an etheric vision of Christ in his etheric body. But for that to happen, the

materialistic attitude has to be thoroughly overcome and humanity has to develop an understanding of spiritual teachings, of spiritual life.

In past centuries it was relatively harmless when people kept being led astray through materialism with regard to the so-called reappearance of Christ. Particularly in times which to a lesser extent were times of transition, in which was prepared what today has reached its climax as a sense of materialism, it was announced in wide circles in France for example that in 1137 the Messiah would appear. And a 'Messiah' did indeed appear at the time but he led people astray because the belief in him was born out of a materialistic attitude, because people believed that the Messiah would appear in the flesh. Thirty years earlier, another 'Messiah' had appeared in Spain; there too it had been prophesied that a 'Messiah' would appear in the flesh. And at about the same time another 'Messiah' appeared in North Africa. There, too, it had been prophesied that he would come from the East and appear in the flesh. And throughout the time that the materialistic attitude was preparing itself by taking hold of the highest things, such prophesies appeared that are not unfamiliar to anyone who knows these times, extending as far as into the seventeenth century when it was being preached all over the place that a kind of Christ, a Messiah would appear.

That in turn found belief in the materialistic religious attitudes of people. As a result, a false Messiah could appear in Smyrna in 1667 on the back of these prophesies who was called Sabbatai Zevi.²⁰ He wrote letters and epistles from Smyrna which rocked the world in the same way that long before that time the epistles of Paul had rocked the world, even though Zevi's writings were nothing but deceitful because they were framed in a materialistic attitude as deceitful things. In the seventeenth century the news spread from Smyrna: a Messiah was living there in the flesh. And Sabbatai Zevi, 'the righteous one in God', was viewed such that people said that the cosmic calendar would take a completely different form: he would wander through the world with his trusted followers and all who wanted to see the truth, who wanted to see Christ in the flesh should believe in him. It was preached to them that they should celebrate his physical birthday as the greatest festival of humanity on earth. Hordes of people went on pilgrimages there not just from Asia and Africa but also from Poland, Russia, Spain, France and so on. Whole processions of pilgrims went to Smyrna to Sabbatai Zevi who presented himself as Christ in the flesh until things got too much out of hand and Sabbatai Zevi was thrown in prison by the Sultan. People then said that this was only the prophecy being fulfilled because it was foretold that he would be imprisoned for nine months. The Sultan could think of no other

course of action than to have him presented unclothed, telling him: I will test whether you really are the Messiah, Christ in the flesh, I will have arrows shot at you. And at that point Sabbatai Zevi finally confessed that he was only an ordinary rabbi.

Such temptations are the result of the materialistic attitude of our time. And these kinds of things will return because human beings will make use of such materialistic attitudes. It will frequently be repeated in the coming decades what has now been said, that human faculties will develop up as far as seeing Christ in the etheric. And people will be able to believe in the reality of that with the same conviction as Paul himself. That is the immediate future of humanity for which spiritual science is meant to prepare people today. But the materialistic attitude of people will also bring times of strong temptation in which false Messiahs will appear again in the flesh. Then we will see whether the theosophists have understood theosophy properly.²¹ Those who have not understood it properly will be badly affected to such an extent because of their materialistic attitude that they will fall prey to temptation. Although they believe in Christ, they will believe in a Christ in the flesh. But those who have developed an understanding of spiritual life as it really is will understand that the 'reappearance of Christ' in our century, the greatest event, means Christ will come to human beings in the spirit because human beings through their development towards the spirit have developed towards Christ. And as a result the Sermon on the Mount will be completely modified in our century. Everything will be restructured, as it were. Filled with God or blessed will be those who through begging for the spirit in past incarnations have got so far that they will have ascended to those regions in the realms of the heavens in which Christ will step before their spiritual eye.

Thus every statement in the Sermon on the Mount could be reproduced in its new form in this sense. Christianity will only be able to recapture that record if it is grasped in a living way, if we know that it is not something dead but something alive. At a time—and that is our time—in which materialistic research deprives, we might say, human beings of the Gospels and traditions of Christ, spiritual research will give human beings back the Gospels; that has often been emphasized. That is a concurrence which is not coincidental but necessary. Even if people appear in our time who out of a misguided philosophy have come to the strange view that there can be cause without effect, that there was no historical Jesus Christ, because their materialistic attitude, which has developed to its greatest extent, has fallen into crisis, that is something which should be comprehensible to anthroposophists. They should even know they should look at

such poor people with a certain compassion who despite their philosophy are so enmeshed in their materialistic attitude that they have got rid of the faculty which would give them a sense of the spirit and therefore constantly administer a slap in the face to the proposition which they otherwise readily admit: there is no effect without cause. Christianity as an effect cannot exist without a cause.

It will be anthroposophy which will teach human beings on the basis of spiritual research about Christ in the shape in which he is filled with life if these human beings are willing to meet such teachings with understanding, even to the extent that they clearly recognize: Christ will reappear but in a higher reality than the physical one, in a reality which we will only see if we have first acquired a sense and understanding of spiritual life.

Inscribe in your hearts what anthroposophy should be: a preparation for the great epoch of humanity which lies ahead of us. Do not in this context think of it as being important whether or not the souls who are incarnated here today will still be incarnated in a physical body when Christ reappears in the way I have described or whether they will already have passed through the portal of death and be in that life between death and a new birth. Because what happens in the twentieth century is relevant not just to the physical world but to all worlds to which human beings are related. And just as the people who will be incarnated in the years 1930 and 1950 will have the experience of looking up to the etheric Christ, so a mighty turnaround will occur in the world in which human beings live between death and birth.

Just as Christ descended into the realms of the underworld after the Mystery of Golgotha, so the effects of the events which will happen in our time for the inhabitants of the physical plane will extend up into the spiritual worlds. And the human beings who have not prepared through spiritual science for the great event will miss the mighty things that will take place in the spiritual worlds in which human beings will then live. These human beings will have to wait for a new incarnation in order then to learn on earth what makes them capable of receiving the new Christ impulse; for we need to acquire the faculties for all Christ impulses on the physical plane, however high they may then carry us. It is not for nothing that human beings have been placed in the physical world like this; here we have to acquire what leads to an understanding of the Christ impulse. Spiritual research is the preparation for the impending Christ event of the near future for all souls who are alive. Such preparation is necessary. And this Christ event will be followed by others in the developmental processes of

humanity.²² That is why it will represent an important omission for those human beings who in our century do not want to ascend to the Christ event although they have the opportunity to do so.

If we look at spiritual science in this way and inscribe it into our souls, then we can begin to feel what it represents for each human soul and what it should be for the whole of humanity.

LECTURE 5

BERLIN, 9 MARCH 1910

WITH today's lecture I want to give a kind of summary of what we heard in the various winter lectures, building on the reflections on the Gospel of Luke and the Gospel of Matthew, and the lectures here after the lectures on the Gospel of John as given most recently in Stockholm.²³ From the way that these lectures were given, it will have become clear to you that everything in them was designed in such a way that they were not an explanation of the Gospels in the narrow sense. But in the truths which, firstly, are indeed truths and, secondly, are evident in the Gospels if these Christian records are properly understood, it is always clear that the other riddles of life too can be interpreted and illuminated through them in the greatest variety of ways.

If we go back beyond the foundation of Christianity, we will find two forms of initiation: the initiation of the North, which was characterized in greater detail in those lectures given in Stockholm, and the initiation of the South, which was characterized in particular by linking it with the initiation processes in ancient Egyptian culture. Human beings in the ancient world had the possibility from two sides to enter the spiritual world. If the person to be initiated in ancient Egypt wanted to reach the spiritual world, he climbed down into the depths of his own soul, climbed down beyond everything which is present in normal life as thoughts, feelings, will and so on. There he found what had brought forth the soul itself: the divine-spiritual existence of the world. So climbing down beyond the regions of the soul that are illuminated and penetrated by the I was the essence of Egyptian and southern initiation as such. In contrast, going out of oneself, merging with the phenomena of the world in ecstasy was the important thing in northern initiation, above all in the Germanic mysteries of the Druids and Troten. Then we also characterized how in what we call Christian initiation these two types of initiation came together and how in a sense the Christian

initiation represented the higher unity of the ecstatic initiation of the North and the mystical contemplation of the South.

With that we have referred to a profound basis of the cosmic mysteries which flows through all things. Basically all discussion of even such a great and mighty fact as the flowing together of the two forms of initiation of antiquity into the Christian initiation is but an example of an even more comprehensive great law which penetrates all human existence and at the same time is interwoven with all existence of external phenomena in so far as humanity can recognize it. Because we find everywhere that we encounter like a contrast the elements of a duality. We see these elements of a duality like opposites in the northern and southern initiation. That is only one example of how we can find opposites, we could also say polarities, in cosmic existence. And the other, the way in which these two forms of initiation flow together and enter a spiritual marriage, as it were, in the Christian initiation, is an example of how opposites, dualities as a whole unite in the world. It happens constantly that unities divide into dualities to take development forward and that dualities in turn unite again. We were able to point in an external way to a great, mighty fact extending across humanity, as we might say, which represents this division of a unity into a duality and the flowing together again of the duality into the unity.

We have often spoken about the Lemurian age which also saw, among other things, the great fact of cosmic development that the moon split off from our earth. But this age also saw the first beginnings of what we call in today's meaning of human development the contrast between man and woman. We would find a unity of the sexes in preceding ages of the world. Thus we have an original unity dividing into man and woman. But we have also already pointed out that in future this duality will come together into a unity again. That is in an external way an indication of the comprehensive sequence of facts which lie in this relationship of two to one and one to two.

But what we encounter in this way in the development of humanity is basically the expression, the illustration of an even greater cosmic contrast which is rooted in a unity, which we encounter in today's cosmic life as a duality and which in a far distant future will dissolve into a unity again. It is necessary for us to take every thought that is given us through spiritual science today in its full depth; it is necessary that we do not get into the habit of taking anthroposophical thoughts in the same superficial way as other thoughts and concepts which flutter through the world today and which are accepted because of the vapid and superficial

banalities of our present culture. Anthroposophical thoughts have to be taken at the deepest possible level. Hence a thought such as is often expressed and lies concealed in all of our teachings—that human beings are born as a little world, a microcosm, out of the macrocosm, the great world—is not just as an abstract thought but it is infinitely great in content with manifold variations. Above all we must be aware that the world is deeper than we normally think and that if we have once understood a contrast or a truth in one direction we have by no means exhausted the truth about this relationship or that contrast; rather we have patiently to keep watch all around, so that if something applies on the one side we also get to know it from the other side.

Human beings are born out of the whole cosmos and must look up to the cosmos as though to a maternal and paternal being of which they themselves represent an image. Indeed, human beings are an image of the whole world which they can know about; and there is nothing in human nature which would not in some way express a relationship which cannot also be found in some way in the great cosmos. If we could compare human beings as we see them today—that is, see them from a spiritual-scientific perspective—with human forms in a relatively very early time, then we would see in today's human being a characteristic of immense importance, alongside others of course, for elucidation about the nature of human beings. This characteristic can teach us that as regards what we know about the world it is not just important that the things are true but there is also something quite different. In proving to us that something is true, a person has not yet revealed the most important moment of that truth. There is much that is true, for example, in what superficial science says about the comparison of human beings with the higher mammals. That human beings have the same number of bones and muscles and so on is true, indisputably true. But when something has been proved to be true, that is not yet the end of the matter. Human beings specifically must make clear to themselves through spiritual-scientific deepening and study that the important thing about each truth is to develop a feeling of how heavily that truth weighs, whether it is important or unimportant, significant or insignificant with regard to explaining a matter. Hence there can be people who come and repeatedly prove to us out of their trivial consciousness that what they say is true. We have no wish to dispute that. But the important thing is whether the true weight of something is recognized in terms of explaining the world.

Now there is a certain fact which is undoubtedly true and which everyone knows because they encounter it innumerable times each day and which, if we want to

weigh its importance for the human being, we have to experience in the right way—namely the fact that humans are beings who stand and walk upright and can look up into the cosmos with their countenance. Only human beings can do that. Because we have to say even about apes that they look as if they had tried to achieve this possibility but made a mess of it. They cannot do it. Humans are the only beings who have come to earth with this intention of being able to lift their countenance freely up towards the cosmos. This fact is of infinitely greater importance than anything which a trivial science can tell us about the position of humans at the top of the evolutionary tree. That is all true, of course, but this is much more important. Anyone who wants to obtain a feeling for this fact must acquaint themselves with the cause of why human beings are upright beings, beings which, although they are tied to the earth, rise up into the cosmos in spirit through their outlook, indeed just through their sensory perception.

The cause resides in a certain contrast, a certain duality that acts in the cosmos like a second duality in human beings. We can refer to a duality in the cosmos and a duality in the human being as two contrasts that correspond in the microcosm and macrocosm. The contrast we mean in the macrocosm, the great world, is the contrast between sun and earth. And the same contrast that exists in the cosmos between sun and earth also exists in human beings: it is the contrast between head and hands and feet, between the head and the limbs. These things will be explained in increasingly greater detail over time but you must acquaint yourself with these things in outline to begin with and learn to feel that in a certain respect head and limbs as a duality in human beings behave in the same way that the sun and earth behave in our solar system itself. For forces do indeed rest in our earth which have developed over the course of time, mysterious forces which consolidate human beings on earth and have brought about the current configuration and movement possibilities of our hands and feet; but the forces which lift their countenance upwards into the cosmos, which have turned them from beings which look at the earth to ones that look out into the infinite spaces of the cosmos have their seat in the sun. And those who can feel it will be able to feel the same thing, when they look at the contrast between head and limbs in human beings, as they feel when they let the contrast between sun and earth act on their feelings. That is such a type of contrast which will at a later time in human life unify, as it will unify in the cosmos. Just as the sun and earth were one being long ago and separated, became a duality, similarly they will unite again. In the same way what is the contrast between head and limbs in human beings will become a unity once again in the future, as difficult as it might be to imagine for people today who are not used to such concepts.

Thus we have pointed to a contrast in human beings and indicated the corresponding contrast in the cosmos. But there are still other contrasts in human beings which also have their corresponding counter-images in the cosmos. With regard to the difference between head and limbs, all people on earth are equal, as it were. Men and women have this contrast in the same way. There is no difference here between men and women because everything else which otherwise appears as a contrast, for example in the soul configuration, is not affected by this contrast. If this were the only contrast in the microcosm and macrocosm, men and women would be altogether the same. But men and women are a different contrast in human nature. And now we can ask ourselves: can we find a contrast in the cosmos which in human life corresponds to the contrast between men and women? Is this contrast, which comes to appearance in earth existence as man and woman, also born out of the cosmos? That too exists. And in order to find this contrast we have to acquaint ourselves a little in an occult sense with the contrast between men and women. In doing so, we will not fall into the trap which our materialistic age falls into when it applies to the whole of the cosmos the contrast between male and female as it appears simply as a gender difference in the physical world. That is not just a trivial matter but a bad habit of our scholars when they extend what appears in one area to all other areas as well.

What manifests on earth as the contrast between men and women corresponds in the cosmos to another contrast which we cannot call male or female. That would be nonsense. But we do have to take a look at this contrast particularly with regard to its occult basis. This contrast between male and female in our earth development does not, mind you, have anything to do with the 'human being' which is the human part in men and women. So when we speak about men and women we stop at the configuration of the physical body and etheric body, which is not in any way connected with the inner part of the human being and so we must not in an occult sense say the things which are spoken today in our materialistic age. Men and women also have an astral body and an I whereas ordinary opinion has no knowledge at all about what makes human beings human and therefore can only refer to men and women. So we are not speaking about the human being as such in men and women but about what makes human beings into men and women, and that is only the external mantle. That has to be well understood. If we apply what I will say in the following words to human beings as human beings everything will be wrong. The contrast between men and women within these limits lies in the following.

The outer human form was quite different in the original ancient times of humanity. The current human form, in other words the current male and female form, only formed out of an earlier, unified form, which had not yet separated into the contrast of men and women. So we have an earlier unity and today's contrast between men and women. Now we also know that the earlier unity was a finer, more spiritual one. Human beings worked their way out to the denser material form only in the course of time. We are therefore going back not just to a unity of form but also to a unity which in comparison to today's form was a more spiritual one. We therefore have an archetypal human being who was represented neither as man nor woman but as the not yet occurred separation of this contrast, as the unity, and who was finer, more etheric and spiritual than the later material human being who lives in the contrast of man and woman.

Why, then, did man and woman subsequently arise from the original unity? It is due to the fact that when the unity entered the duality, women formed a physical body that did not completely make the transition from the earlier form into the normal material form, if we can describe it like that. The female body has remained at a more spiritual level, did not descend into the material element to the full extent. It did become material, dense, but in this materiality it retained an earlier, more spiritual form. Thus a spiritual stage became material. The female body has retained an earlier spiritual form, as it were, which has not descended fully into matter. It did so with regard to matter but not with regard to form. It retained the form which human beings had previously. Hence we can say: women are the revelation of an earlier form which should actually be spiritual and which is actually wrong, Maya, an illusion in the form it is represented today.

If we assume a specific point in development at which the material crystallized, we can say: women did not penetrate as far as this specific point and crystallized in an earlier form. That is why for anyone who has a real feeling for the facts of life or can recognize them imaginatively, the human female body is a relatively true form, an expression of the underlying spiritual entity, only with regard to the head and limbs; in other words, only the head and limbs express something which as a material phenomenon is similar to the underlying spiritual entity. That is why the underlying spiritual entity is dissimilar to the rest of the material form because it is a wrong form.

Thus the saying that the world is Maya applies to all regions. It has to be taken really seriously. It is convenient to think of the world as Maya in abstract terms.

But only those people have understood this saying who take it seriously and ask: in what respect are these shapes an illusion? Some are more so, others less so. There are forms which at least approximately express the underlying spiritual entity in the external comparison; these are the head and limbs. But there are forms which are directly wrong, which have been wrongly drawn, and they include the rest of the human body. It is directly wrongly drawn. And when at some point the world comes to understand this, people will no longer say such foolish things as they do today but they will see that there is a certain deeper, finer artistic sense which says that the female form is wrongly drawn, if we disregard the head and limbs, and that it has to be corrected if we want to represent it artistically. In better artistic times this was actually done, because no one who has a real eye for form can ignore the insight that to a certain extent the forms are corrected in the Venus de Milo. It is just that ordinary people do not see it.

So we have the human being separated into parts some of which are truer, less of an illusion, and some which are more of an illusion, wrongly drawn. But that is not only true of women. For men the matter is simply reversed. That is the contrast. Just as the female form did not descend as far as the ordinary point at which the corresponding spirit would be expressed in matter, but crystallized at an earlier stage, so the male body jumped beyond it and went just as far beyond it as the female form stopped before it. As a result the male body descended further into materiality than would have normally been the case and that is also reflected in its shape. It would look quite different if it had not jumped beyond the mid-point. The human body is in any case just an approximation of the truth with regard to the head and limbs. But with regard to the rest of its form we have to say that the female body stopped at a certain point, consolidated, before it threw itself into the waves of material existence and therefore shows us a quite different form from what it would be if it had crystallized when the waves of material existence came into contact with it; but the male body dived in even deeper and represents a wrongly drawn form to the same extent as the female body. Thus the female body represents a form which is wrongly drawn with a spiritual emphasis and the male body one in contrast with a material emphasis. The true form would lie in the middle, would be the average form of both.

That of course influences the whole human being in his earth existence in so far as he or she has a physical mantle. This has nothing to do with the contrast between head and limbs, but what has just been said is transferred to the whole human being in the individual incarnation between birth and death. After all, we

incarnate as male or female. As a result we have to anticipate what comes to expression as wrongly drawn in men and women. But that extends to the whole human being and the consequence is that in one incarnation we have a female body and that the whole female body is influenced throughout by having retained its original softer state of form. And in a male incarnation this whole male body is instilled with too great immersion in coarse, solid matter. Once we have grasped even just to the tiniest degree what it means to think in the spirit, live in the spirit and use the physical body purely as a tool—provided we do not feel inserted into it to such an extent that we identify with it—then I could tell you a thing or two about the misery of having to use a male body, which of course also infiltrates its brain, in an incarnation. We notice that the forms of the brain, because they have entered into matter more coarsely, are more difficult to handle than the softer forms of the female brain, which have not entered matter to such an extent.

It is indeed a difficult matter, if we have to ascend to higher worlds, to train ourselves to transform truths into thoughts in a male brain than it is in a female brain. It is therefore not surprising for people who can think that a world view which has entered the world as something new, like spiritual science, can more easily be understood with the more easily trained female brain than the male brain. For the latter has greater difficulty in getting away from certain thoughts which it has assimilated today because the male brain is more difficult to work on, more difficult to handle. That is also the reason why spiritual science has such difficulty in gaining a foothold among the men who are the transporters of culture in the world today and are afflicted with the ordinary cultural ideas of life today. We have to appreciate the unwieldy nature of the brain of an academic not just with regard to understanding spiritual science but also for using what it can assimilate from spiritual science for thinking. But we must not stand these matters on their head and draw any kind of conclusion from them—or at most the one that we have to see it as all the more significant if quite a number of men handle their brain in such a way that they come quite intimately close to spiritual science. We can, to begin with, only give an outline of these things but if you allow them to work on you and reflect on them you will find immense perspectives on human life.

If we look at human life in its contrast of men and women, then we have something which we can describe as having remained at an earlier stage and something which has actually gone beyond a certain stage of the present, which in a certain sense brings the caricatured state of a future form into the present

and as a result appears as a caricature. An earlier form of the body has conserved the feminine and a later form has taken in the masculine and formed itself in such a way as it must not be in the future. That is why the male body has gone wrong, because it has introduced later circumstances of life into an earlier period of life.

Is there something in the cosmos that corresponds to this contrast between male and female? Is there something in the cosmos which on the one hand shows us an existence, a developmental stage, which has retained earlier forms and carried them into a later existence? And are there on the other hand forms which have gone beyond a certain stage and represent a future state in a caricatured form? If we look at the concrete development as we know it from the Akashic Record, we might ask whether there is something out in the cosmos like an Old Moon existence which did not want to enter into earth existence but which has retained something from the Old Moon existence like a female element in the cosmos? Is there something which carries a previous stage into the present like an Old Moon existence? And is there something in the cosmos which has exceeded a certain stage, has thickened and densified so that it represents a later stage, a Jupiter stage?

There is. The same contrast as we have characterized between male and female exists out in the cosmos: it is the contrast between cometary and lunar, between comets and the moon. If we want to understand a comet with regard to its nature as it wanders through space today, breaking out of the other laws of the solar system as it were, then we have to be clear that it is actually the laws of Ancient Moon existence which carry the comet into our existence. It has preserved those for itself and in that form enters our existence. It has taken on the current matter of the solar and terrestrial system but stopped in terms of its movement and nature at the level of the natural laws which our solar system had at the time that the earth was still Moon. It has carried an earlier state into a later one, into the present, just as the female body carries an earlier state into present existence.

The cometary part is the one side of such a contrast; moon existence, as its contrast, represents the other side. When the moon evolved out of the earth in Lemurian times, it took certain parts with it which had to be removed from the earth in order for human beings to be able to develop as human beings at all. The earth was not allowed to become as dense as it would have become if it had retained the moon within itself. The moon does indeed represent the caricature of the Jupiter state. In the same way that a fresh, ripe fruit shows itself in

comparison to one which is completely shrivelled and has fossilized into matter, the moon in its configuration has moved beyond a certain middle form just like the male element in human beings has passed beyond the middle in shaping its form. We have exactly the same contrast which exists in human life as the contrast between male and female in the cosmos between lunar and cometary aspects.

That is how these things belong together: like sun and earth, so head and limbs; like moon and comet, so man and woman in the human being. The only thing is that we should not simply take that away with us and say: now we have something else we can memorize nicely as a contrast. We have to take these things with profound seriousness and be clear that at other times different things were said to add to that. We have to take into consideration that men are only male with regard to their physical body and that they are female with regard to their etheric body, and that conversely women are only female with regard to their physical body. What applies to the female aspect of women with regard to the physical body also applies to the etheric body of men so that the etheric body of men also relates to the etheric body of women as the comet relates to the moon.

If you so wish, you could say: but that makes everything blurred again. But that is how things are. In every culture which has created its concepts with a thickened brain the tendency is for those concepts to create the thickest possible contours which cannot be shaken so that when we have such concepts we have to stick with them. But the spirit will not put up with that. The spirit is something flexible and when we have formed concepts we have to keep them flexible. That is why we also have to apply to the male element in women and the female element in men what we have said about the moon and comets with regard to men and women. There is no getting round the fact that what we have said applies to male and female as we see it in human life and not to men and women as we see them externally.

Thus we have found interesting connections in a pre-eminent sense between human development and cosmic development. For sure—I have referred to this before—those who today sit on the curule seat of the true scientific world conception will find such things about comets and the moon to be extremely daft and immensely entertaining. Let them. They simply do not have the will truly to engage with the truth. We who stand on the foundation of spiritual science can build the bridge between what comes from the spirit and what reveals itself to us

on the physical plane. The others do not want to do that.

In 1906, during the congress in Paris,²⁴ I drew attention to the fact that spiritual research can say on the basis of its understanding of cometary nature: because on earth compounds of carbon and oxygen play the same role which during Ancient Moon existence was played by carbon and nitrogen, that is cyanogen compounds, comets must contain cyanogen compounds consisting of carbon and nitrogen. Anyone who follows these things attentively will have remembered that. Thus spiritual science has long said that our cometary natures contain some kind of cyanogen-like compounds. In recent weeks this fact was reported in our newspapers as an external fact shown by spectral analysis. This is just one case—we could quote hundreds more—of how spiritual science can build bridges to the facts of outer research. In this case spectral analysis discovered years later what spiritual science had already said years earlier. Nowhere do the facts of outer materialistic science contradict the facts of spiritual research. We can cite such things as I have just said when those who sit on the curule seat of true science keep referring to the outer facts. We just have to avoid confusing the outer facts with the narrow concepts which people conclude for themselves. If all the things which are natural science today were facts, then natural science would very much contradict spiritual science. But they are not facts but corrupted concepts of those who through circumstances today are called upon to deal with these things.

Now we can still ask ourselves the following, having looked at the contrast which can be found both in human life and in the cosmos: what is actually thereby born out of the cosmos if we look at this whole contrast of the cometary and lunar aspect?

It is somewhat difficult to characterize the mighty thing which underlies this fact in a comparatively short period of time. You will therefore permit me to start by comparing human life as it proceeds normally when we look at its external course. To begin with we have something of which we can say it proceeds in a bourgeois way in a good sense. We get up in the morning, have our breakfast, carry on with the tasks which each day brings in accordance with the normal progression of the day. But this life which people live is also struck by events which at a stroke bring changes in the course of our everyday lives. Let us assume a husband and wife live their lives in a good bourgeois way with the usual everyday course of events which changes little. But then something else comes along which does actually produce a kind of jolt in the ordinary outer life

of the people who live in such circumstances. One such jolt occurs when a new human being incarnates, enters existence as a new citizen on earth. That represents a huge difference from the normal course of everyday life. But when a new earth citizen appears on the horizon of husband and wife something does indeed occur which gives the whole family relationship a new character. I wanted to give this comparison because it can help us to understand a little the profound occult background of cometary existence.

In the cosmos, too, life proceeds from day to day, year to year in a 'good bourgeois' fashion, as we might say. Every day proceeds the same: the sun rises and sets, the plants blossom in the spring, in the autumn they wither away; and when there is rain or sunshine, or it hails or something like that happens then this corresponds to the events which otherwise also occur ordinarily in life when, for example, a special occasion is marked with coffee and cakes instead of the normal tea break. We can quite easily see these things in their ordinary routine. All of these things are connected with the laws which underlie the movements of sun, earth and so on as they take place year by year, day by day. But into this course of events there impinge in a curious way the rarer appearances of the comets which do, however, in a certain respect repeat themselves. They extend into the course of cosmic events in the same way that a new earth citizen appears on the horizon of husband and wife. The appearance of a comet in the cosmos does indeed introduce something which could not be given in the normal course of life. If development is to continue, it is not enough just to have what is repeated from day to day but something new must be inserted into this context. In the same way that something very special enters the life of the individual family with a new earth citizen, something quite different enters the progress of humankind on earth through such an appearance of a comet which interrupts the normal progression of cosmic existence. It is indeed as if something new is born when a comet enters the world.

For those who can investigate these things spiritually, there is the opportunity to indicate very specifically how the individual comets have their functions to introduce this or the other spiritually new thing into the world. Thus Halley's Comet²⁵ is one of those which, as it appears periodically, always gives birth to something very specifically new in human life. Whereas otherwise things recur in the normal way, the comet produces a soul and cultural rebirth. I can characterize what is meant by that simply by taking the last three appearances of Halley's Comet in 1759, 1835 and the current one. What task—other comets have other tasks—accrues to these last three appearances?

New births in the cosmos are not just like those which we welcome with the same joy as when a young citizen of the earth enters a family. Everything is born in the cosmos which can bring progress to humanity but also regression. Now the appearance of Halley's Comet (by that I mean what it means spiritually for the continuing development of humanity) is connected with what humanity has to assimilate from the cosmos in the various ages of the Kali Yuga in order to descend ever further into materiality as far as the thinking is concerned. With each new appearance a new impulse was born for humanity to drive the I further down from a spiritual view of the world in order to grasp the world in a more materialistic way. That does not mean a descent into matter but what the human I has to assimilate from the cosmos in terms of spiritual substance in order to descend from a spiritual existence into the sphere of a materialistic outlook. All the views from the second half of the eighteenth century which are referred to as 'shallow enlightenment' and which Goethe ridiculed so much in his *Dichtung und Wahrheit*²⁶ as the kind of views which found their representative for example in Holbach's²⁷ *Système de la Nature* can be understood cosmically through the appearance of Halley's Comet in 1759. The banal materialistic literature from the second third of the nineteenth century was preceded by the appearance of Halley's Comet in 1835. The things which happen microcosmically on earth are connected macrocosmically with the things in the greater world. With the appearance of Halley's Comet in 1835, another impulse was born into materialism. And Büchner, Vogt and Moleschott are the ones who brought to expression on earth what appeared as a mighty sign with Halley's Comet down from out of the cosmos. And now we are about to— because humanity has to be tested, has to rise up out of itself, has to feel the resistance of spirituality in order then to develop all the more forces for its ascent—now we are about to be sent the forces out of the cosmos with the renewed appearance of Halley's Comet which can lead humanity down into an even more shallow, an even more abominable materialism. Something has the opportunity to be born which perhaps even the most shallow of shallow supporters of Büchnerism cannot imagine. This possibility must be given. Because only if people overcome the powers which hold them back can they acquire the strong forces from the cosmos for the ascent.

If we consider these things, we will be able to look in the right way at what we might call a sign from heaven. It is indeed the case, provided we do not take it in a superstitious way but in the meaning of the great cosmic laws, that the Lord is once again extending his rod to show human beings what they should do. And the current appearance of Halley's Comet is one such occasion which should be

taken note of— because there has to be a mighty impulse to ascend again if we are to get out of our immersion in a materialistic view of the world towards spirituality.

It was mentioned clearly and distinctly in the last lectures that as soon as in the first half of the twentieth century an etheric clairvoyance can develop in individual people as a natural faculty. In order that human beings do not need to descend any lower into materialism—something that is indicated to them now, in 1910, through a sign— those who have an understanding of spiritual science can see today already that forces are developing in the womb of the human soul which can take human beings beyond all materialism. If human beings understand these forces, they can teach human beings to see the etheric nature of Christ for themselves. We live at an important juncture at which human beings are being taught even through a sign from heaven that the path can take us, on the one hand, further into the morass but also, on the other hand, to where the forces have to develop in human beings that lead to etheric clairvoyance following the end of the Kali Yuga.

We are indeed in a situation in which the call of John the Baptist—change your state of soul!—also applies with regard to our time. That should be emphasized. Just as we are given the opportunity on the one hand to perish in the materialistic swamp, we are given the opportunity on the other hand—because the sun has reached a certain point in the constellation of Pisces at the spring equinox—to obtain what is a certain etheric clairvoyance. The signs are also present in the cosmos with regard to a certain spiritual ascent, showing us how the forces come from the cosmos. Human beings have to develop an understanding of that decision by finding their way into spiritual science. And only those will understand spiritual science in the right way who obtain the ability to understand that decision. We have to pass through the tests which are set us by signs of heaven and which we have now recognized for example in the appearance of Halley's Comet.

Let us imagine how Christ will appear to the first members of the vanguard in the next 2500 years, as was the case with Paul at Damascus. Human beings will ascend to knowledge of the spiritual world, will see the world permeated with a new country, with a new kingdom. The view of our physical environment will change for human beings in the next 2500 years in that an etheric realm will enter which is there but which human beings first have to learn to see. This etheric realm already lies spread out before those who have advanced their

esoteric training to enlightenment, as it does before the initiate in the Kali Yuga. So that which human beings will increasingly see in future already exists to great heights for the initiate. And after a certain time, when he needs it, the initiate will repeatedly gather forces from this region. When he has to do something, he will fetch his forces from those regions of the earth's surroundings visible to the initiate; they are there, but only for the person who can look into them. It can help our understanding if we know that a part of the land from which initiates repeatedly gathered their forces during the Kali Yuga will be spread out before a large part of humanity in the next 2500 years.

Previously, during times of ancient clairvoyance, human beings were able to look into the spiritual world without a strong ego-consciousness so that they saw in a certain sense what will now be seen again—but now they will enter with their new self-awareness. In earlier times they saw it in dreamlike, ecstatic states or when looking into their own soul. At that time this world was open to the gaze which turned into a physical gaze during the Kali Yuga. That is why the traditions which have kept a remembrance of the old clairvoyance tell of an unknown fabled land which has vanished from the gaze of people today. In eastern literature there are wonderful writings which contain a peculiarly sad magic and which say something like: the possibility once existed in the human realm to go on a pilgrimage to a country from which flowed all things spiritual into something for the physical senses. It is the land from which at the corresponding time the initiates and from which the Bodhisattvas always drew their strength. The oriental writings speak about this land with deep wistfulness. In some of them it says, for example: where is it? We are told what these places are called, paths are named, but they have been hidden even from the most respected lamas in Tibet. Only the initiates have access to it. But it is told that this country will return to earth. And that is true: it will come to earth. And the guide to it will be the one whom people will see when they will have entered the land of 'Shambhala' through the Damascene event. Shambhala, that is what the country is called which has withdrawn from the gaze of human beings. Today it can be entered anew by those who as initiates have to fetch their renewed strength from there after certain periods. The old forces no longer lead to the land of Shambhala. But the Christ event, which will be given to people through the awakened new faculties in this century, will bring back the fabled land of Shambhala which during the Kali Yuga basically only the initiates could know about.

Thus humanity is faced with a decision: either to be led down with what comes

through Halley's Comet into a darkness that lies below even the Kali Yuga or, through anthroposophical knowledge, not to ignore what is there as a predisposition for new faculties for finding the paths to the land which today has disappeared according to oriental literature but which Christ will show to humanity again: the land of Shambhala. That is the great point at the crossroad: either down or up; either into something which as a cosmic kamaloka lies even under the Kali Yuga or into what enables human beings to enter that region which in truth is meant with the designation Shambhala.

LECTURE 6

BERLIN, 2 MAY 1910

IN these winter lectures, the question concerned us a great deal from a variety of angles as to the being of Christ. And we tried to set out in many different ways what we call the Christ impulse in the development of humanity as the most powerful thing within all of our earth development. As a result we may understand that this subject can never be exhausted but that an infinite amount of work would be required if we wanted to clarify the Christ impulse from all sides. On the other hand it may also be clear that in accordance with all our prerequisites basically everything that can be of interest to human beings can be linked to the discussion of the appearance of Christ. We have seen, after all, that the Gospels themselves attempt to approach the being of Christ from four different sides and we have indicated various things regarding the secrets of the individual Gospels.

We were able to throw light on the Gospel of Matthew only to a certain degree. It will have to be left to subsequent lectures to return to the secrets of the Gospel of Matthew in their context in order then to get into the depths of the Gospel of Mark.²⁸ If, at the end of the winter, we were to refer even with just a few quickly drawn indications in our branch to what still remains, that would very much destroy the cohesion of the lectures for the immediate time ahead. Hence today and the next time I will touch on the question as to the connection of the human conscience with the impact of the Christ impulse on human development. That will also at the same time achieve another thing. Next Thursday we have the public lecture on human conscience,²⁹ and today we will talk about the same subject here in the branch. In doing so, we pursue a very specific purpose, a purpose which later will continue to appear frequently before our inner eye. Because the aim is to show that the same subject has to be discussed in a different way in a study group such as we are in and in a public lecture intended

for those who are not yet members of the spiritual-scientific movement.

After all, among the characteristics which anthroposophists should establish in their minds there should also be a sense that we should approach the things in the world from the greatest variety of standpoints and sides and that someone who already fulfils certain conditions can talk and hear differently about a matter than someone who does not have those prerequisites. When we speak in a study group we assume that the mind has lived its way to a certain extent into an idea of the spiritual world, is immersed in feelings about the spiritual world and that on the basis of these feelings and thoughts which have been assimilated about the spiritual world an idea can be assembled about a matter such as human conscience. The answers to such questions can therefore be drawn from much more intensive depths in a working group than in a public lecture which is given to a non-anthroposophical public. After all, it is the task of these public lectures to gradually provide something like evidence through phenomena of our soul life, of which we initially make use like external events, that the truths of which we are aware in spiritual science really are truths. That is a different task from talking before spiritual scientists themselves who already have certain prerequisites and convictions, perhaps also certain views about the spiritual world. For the spiritual scientist should gradually learn to acquire the concepts and ideas which explain things to him or her in many different ways and from all kinds of different sources and angles, and the spiritual scientist should get rid of the bad habit, which is however necessary in outer life, as if there were only one way of talking about a matter.

Human conscience is something which must touch us in the depths of our soul. And where for centuries we have encountered philosophers and other thinkers about the world, it is as a rule also the question about what we call human conscience that interests them. Now it would be very easy to harbour an illusion particularly with regard to a phenomenon such as the conscience—the illusion which has often already been described as an illusion here and which would consist of believing that everything that is present in the soul today had always been there. But we have seen that the great number of faculties and processes in the soul which human beings have developed over the millennia were quite different in ancient times from what they are now. And there are many things which we today possess in our soul life as the most valuable, the most important thing, which were not possessed by our souls when they walked on earth many millennia ago in other incarnations. There is, after all, a purpose to going through the various incarnations. We have often emphasized this. Its purpose is

that the soul should acquire ever new faculties and forces from one incarnation to the next: the soul really should go through a history; its earth existence should be an apprenticeship; it was something different when our incarnations began from what it is now and it will be something different again in the future.

The human conscience, too, this precious possession of the human soul, which calls like the voice of God with regard to good and with regard to evil in each individual person, this precious possession of the inner human being too has not always been there. The conscience is also something that has developed. And it is only a relatively short time ago that the human conscience proclaimed its presence and since then has developed ever further. And even if it is a precious possession it is not therefore called upon always to live in the human soul in the same way as now through all subsequent incarnations. It will continue to develop, it will take on different forms, will turn out to be something which human beings have to acquire, which will bear fruit for them and which in later times, when they will have obtained those fruits, will be something to which they look back and say: there was an age when it became possible for me in passing from one incarnation to the next to incorporate into my soul existence what is the conscience and now I have the fruits of what I once incorporated into my soul.

When we look back today to a time in which our souls were in other incarnations and did not yet have what we call conscience today, then in future times our souls will look back to our present incarnations and will say: we salute that past! We are grateful for those gifts which we were given in the past as the human conscience. If we had not been able to develop the human conscience in our souls at that time, we would now be lacking what we need for our present life.

From that alone we can see that the conscience belongs to the possessions of the soul in the present and that it is something like an understanding of our present time, an understanding of the soul life of our present time, if we understand something of the nature and being of the human conscience. We have already drawn attention in various contexts that it emerged. Reference will also be made to that next Thursday, so that we can pinpoint, as it were, the point at which the conscience was first discovered for the human soul. If we go back several centuries to ancient Greece, we find barely five hundred years before the Christian era the great poet Aeschylus. When we look at this mighty genius, this original Greek dramatist, if we let his characters work on us, we find in his dramas what we describe today with the term conscience not yet designated with

a similar term. Five hundred years before the start of our Christian era the greatest dramatist does not yet have an expression for what today we call the human conscience. If he wants to give expression to the human soul process that corresponds to what we call conscience today, he has to do it in a way such that someone who has, for example, committed matricide looks into the spiritual world as a result of the violence of this event and sees figures in the spiritual world which in ancient Greece were called the Erinyes and in later Roman times the Furies. In other words, anyone who committed an injustice like matricide will not hear in Aeschylus what today we call the accusing voice of conscience inside them but something presses them to view spiritually the figures which surround their deed like avengers.

That is some of the special evidence you can find in the historical development of humanity for what has just been characterized in a comprehensive way. Human soul faculties were quite different in ancient times. We have always emphasized that the human soul only gradually developed to its present ability to perceive the physical and sensory world with the senses in the way it can do today and to use reason in the way it does. We emphasized that the soul in ancient times had a certain clairvoyance as a normal faculty. This clairvoyance only persisted at the time of Aeschylus in special cases. The soul for example became clairvoyant to see what it had done in the physical world through its injustice. The soul of Orestes becomes clairvoyant after he has committed matricide. Then it can see the spirits it has awakened in the spiritual world through its deed. They push towards it. Something like conscience does not sit inside the soul but clairvoyant consciousness comes about so that the disorder is seen which is called up because an injustice was committed in the physical world. We would find that everywhere in ancient times; anyone who committed an injustice does not yet hear the warning voice of conscience because the soul in ancient times in a state of clairvoyance sees what has been created in the outer world through the injustice.

What, then, happens when an injustice is committed? Something is created by ourselves in the spiritual world. It is only a materialistic preconception that an injustice can happen without something being created in the spiritual world. The injustice gives rise to very specific processes in the spiritual world, effects which radiate from us invisibly for external sensory observation but present for spiritual vision. And such spiritual processes which radiate from a person who has committed an injustice mean food for certain beings which really exist in the spiritual world. Such beings cannot always get to human beings. If human beings

do not have what radiates from an unjust deed such beings cannot get to them. It is rather like a room with them: if the room is very clean, no flies will come. But if there is all kinds of dirt in the room, food residues and so on, the flies come immediately. In the instant that human beings emanate through their bad deeds a certain spiritual radiation, they are surrounded by beings who feed on that. The great Greek tragic dramatist Aeschylus has these beings surround Orestes. The Greek tragic dramatist Aeschylus is still so aware of what we hear today as an inner voice that he has it appear as outward figures because he knows that in certain cases something still occurs which in older times was the common property of all souls: a certain clairvoyant consciousness. Of everything that was there before, something is retained for later times and then occurs atavistically, but only in abnormal cases. Hence it is not something that should be criticized if in Shakespeare³⁰ for example something similar still occurs, an objectified conscience as it were.

But then we only need to move a little forward in Greek art from Aeschylus to Euripides, and Euripides the later tragic dramatist shows us that he already has the concept of conscience. So we can see in ancient Greece how in the five hundred years before the Christian era the concept of the conscience gradually comes to appearance. Try and find a word in the Old Testament for what we call conscience today: you will not find it. Conscience is something that only entered human souls as a faculty later. And if we do not look at short time periods but larger spans of time then we can see that the conscience is something which entered the human soul at about the time that the Christ impulse gained ground in the soul. We might say that the conscience follows the Christ impulse almost like a shadow as the latter enters into world historical development. And in order to understand that, we have to bring a number of things in us to life today which we acquired in the course of the years and which we have to make productive to understand what human conscience actually is.

If we want to understand at a deeper level what conscience is, we have to look specifically at the time when human development approached the Christ impulse, assimilated this impulse within itself and then progressed onwards into our time. We know that we are dealing here with three cultural epochs in the development of humanity which we called Egypto-Chaldean culture, Graeco-Roman culture and our present culture. We can here leave the two preceding cultures, the ancient Indian and the ancient Persian one, out of account because then our souls were still far removed from even an inkling of what we today describe with the term conscience. In Egypto-Chaldean culture we gradually see

how everything was prepared which then rose to the highest level it could achieve in order then in Graeco-Roman culture to obtain the important impulse which has been assimilated as the Christ impulse. And we then see in our own time the epoch in which this impulse is processed. And this processing will become ever greater and more important in the coming age.

If we now recall a little more precisely the development which takes place from the Egypto-Chaldean time through the Graeco-Roman time to our own time, we see before our soul that in each of these epochs one component in particular of the human soul was developed. Of the three components of the human soul what we call the sentient soul was developed in the Egypto-Chaldean time; in other words, we had to be incarnated in Egypto-Chaldean bodies to be in a position to assimilate properly those faculties which are suited for the particular development of the sentient soul. Then souls took with them those characteristics into the next incarnations during the Graeco-Roman epoch in order then to develop the intellectual or mind soul. And with the fruits we obtained in the Graeco-Roman epoch we now live in our present incarnations in order gradually to bring to higher development what we call the forces of the consciousness soul. That is how our soul as a human being develops during these three epochs. And when our time has passed, our soul will rise to the development of the faculties of the Spirit Self. That will be in the sixth cultural epoch. Here we can see the profound meaning in undergoing consecutive incarnations. That meaning is that we gradually acquire those faculties which we know as those of the human soul and in a wider context also those which then go beyond the soul life alone.

So during Egypto-Chaldean culture our souls acquired the forces of the sentient soul and brought these forces to development, while in the Graeco-Roman period they did so with the forces of the intellectual or mind soul. Normally people had to ascend as far as the intellectual soul, then the Christ impulse could be exercised on them.

But now this development took place in quite different ways at various locations on the earth. Because if we believe with a certain convenience of soul that all kinds of things simply happen in the development of humanity, we will never come to an understanding of human development. Many things have to be learned if we are to follow the thoughts in a reasonable way of the leading cosmic beings. And it is the greatest arrogance if people say that truth simply is; because then they want to shape the truth to their convenience. It is simply the product of convenience when people say that truth simply has to be. But the

truth is complicated because the spirit of the cosmic beings can only be understood by us if we make the greatest effort to immerse ourselves into the thoughts of the leading cosmic spirits—even as far as their most subtle thoughts. So we must not think either that we have already exhausted everything when we say: our souls have developed upwards through Egypto-Chaldean culture, through Graeco-Roman culture and through our current cultural epoch. Let us put ourselves for a moment into the time in which a Graeco-Roman being did not yet exist, but only Egypto-Chaldean culture.

At this time people also lived in areas of Greece and in the countries of the Roman Empire; we might say that they lived in the countries of the later Graeco-Roman culture before Graeco-Roman times. And in our regions, too, on the ground which we tread today, people lived in the time when Egypto-Chaldean culture took its course in Asia and Africa. While in Asia and Africa certain souls went through in a pre-eminent sense what was to prepare them for receiving the Christ impulse, other souls lived in the regions of the subsequent Graeco-Roman culture who were preparing to bring something quite different into the overall development of humanity. People equally lived in our regions who were preparing for something different. It is not just that souls assimilate different faculties in consecutive periods, but souls also live alongside one another in the same periods. That means that souls are worked on in different ways which creates a further complexity in development. More is provided for human development in this way than if everything proceeded in a straight line.

It was indeed necessary to make preparations both on Graeco-Roman soil and in our regions so that the right things were introduced to cultural development from all different sides. The Asian and African peoples had one task, the southern European peoples quite a different one, and another task again the peoples of central and northern Europe. All of them were to contribute quite different things to the overall development of humanity and they were able to contribute those different things because their aptitudes and their whole development were essentially different from those of the others.

Because if we look at the Egypto-Chaldean peoples, at the souls which reached their peak during Egypto-Chaldean culture, we have to say that these peoples developed certain faculties of the sentient soul at that time which can particularly be developed if the wonderful teachings are assimilated which then flowed out of the Egyptian holy places or the wonderful astrology which came from the Chaldean holy sites. The things which flow from the various cultural sites are

there to help souls progress. Because basically the true meaning of the things which flow out of the various cultural sites are not the content of these cultural streams but what they contribute to the development of the human soul. The content passes away. And only those who in a deeper sense are out of their minds can believe that in a few centuries our present science will not just as much have sunk into oblivion as certain things in Egypto-Chaldean culture have sunk into oblivion.

Anyone who believes that achievements which will last an eternity are contained in the Copernican view of the world has made a mighty mistake; it will become something that has been outgrown just as the achievements of Egyptian culture are today. In terms of their content these things pass, like many other things in human development. We step up, for example, to the wonderful painting which all of you will know at least in copy, The Last Supper by Leonardo da Vinci. If we want to see it in Milan today we can only see it in very faint outlines and we know that it will not be long before nothing will be left to see of the painting into which Leonardo da Vinci poured his best effort. In the same way, eventually nothing will be left to see of the magnificent works of Raphael³¹ which touch our souls so deeply today if we let them work on us. All these works will crumble into dust and there will be no memory of them on the physical plane. The content of these works, like the content of cultures, will pass over into death. But when we stand before these paintings, for example, then we should remember that they flowed from Raphael's soul and that Raphael's soul changed after it had produced these paintings from what it was before. And the millions and millions of people who are uplifted by them take the content of these paintings into their soul and become something different as a result.

And when the time comes that the whole earth will have turned to dust—as will undoubtedly happen—nothing will be left of the external institutions of cultures but what the souls have assimilated will pass over into eternity. What these cultures offer, what flowed out of the Egyptian and Chaldean holy sites in sublime wisdom for that time, is present in human souls. Humanity was intended to progress accordingly. And in making that progress, it became mature enough to achieve new possessions—those possessions which then brought souls another step forward in Graeco-Roman culture. If our souls had not assimilated what they were able to assimilate in the Graeco-Roman period, they would not be able to find their way into the consciousness soul now. That is the progression of time.

If we recall some of the things that were also said in the public lectures, then we know that what we call the I works in the three components of the soul. The I gradually develops, crystallizes out of the chaos of soul experiences which we encounter in the sentient soul, the intellectual soul and the consciousness soul, but it does not do so in the same way in different places on earth. Whereas for example in Asia and Africa, when the Egypto-Chaldean culture was at work there, people developed in such a way that they allowed the revelations of the Chaldean and Egyptian holy sites to work on their souls for a long time further, the peoples in Europe who were far removed from that developed in such a way that they anticipated something. In European regions people had already developed the I in a certain way, a strong feeling, a strong sense of the I.

Here we have reached an infinitely important point. Human beings went to Asia and Africa who at the time waited with their I in which that had already been developed in the sentient soul which could be developed through the Egyptian and Chaldean holy places. Souls were incarnated in the region of Egypto-Chaldean culture which assimilated high teachings of a high culture without a more or less clear feeling of egohood. The high culture which existed at the time in ancient Chaldea is lowered into a sentient soul which is not yet conscious of its I. Here in the north such a high culture is not lowered into souls. Here souls remain more or less uncultured but instead they develop in this lack of culture, in this sentient soul which is not aglow with holy revelations, a consciousness of the I. We can say: in the Egypto-Chaldean peoples the I-consciousness is delayed, and the sentient soul first assimilates a certain culture before the subsequent elements of the soul are developed. In Europe the I does not wait but already develops in the sentient soul. But in return it waits with the assimilation of certain cultural possessions until the subsequent elements of the soul have been developed.

Thus we have souls incarnated in Asia and Africa which are almost unaware of their I but instead have inspirations, high revelations in their sentient soul. In Europe we have souls which do not have a particularly high culture but which emphasize their individual I, which look into themselves as human beings and feel themselves as human beings. Between both these extremes we have the Graeco-Roman peoples who had the particular task of developing the faculties of the intellectual soul. With them it was the case that they developed the I in the intellectual soul while at the same time also being able to assimilate certain cultures in the intellectual soul. So Egypto-Chaldean culture waits with the I until a later time while European culture develops this I prematurely. In Graeco-

Roman culture this was held in a certain balance in that a certain culture was developed simultaneously with the I.

That points to a great mystery of our human development. Without knowledge of it, we will never understand why specifically the Christ impulse found that unimpeded influence and entry in Europe.

How so? Would Christ have been able to appear in Europe, incarnate in Europe in the flesh? No, he would not have been able to do that. He appeared in the Graeco-Roman period in which the intellectual soul was developed. It was particularly suited for receiving Christ. It would never have been permissible for Christ to appear in Europe because that is where the strong ego-feeling had been retained. This strong individual ego-feeling was not suitable for producing a single person who had the virtue over everyone else of being able to assimilate the very highest. A premature ego-feeling, a too great feeling for the equality of human beings had developed in the European countries. It would not have been possible there for one personality to stand out so much above everyone else as the personality stood out above its contemporaries which in Palestine was to form the vessel for Christ.

It was not permissible for the ego-feeling to appear at an early stage with the intensity with which it occurred in Europe if Christ was to find a body for his incarnation. He therefore had to appear in the place where at the dividing line of Egypto-Chaldean and Graeco-Roman culture it was possible to develop a body which did not yet carry within itself that premature ego-feeling but which nevertheless had the profound faculty for understanding the spiritual world which was part of Egypto-Chaldean culture. But if Europe was not able to provide a body for Christ, it did—as a result of developing the I too prematurely in the dawn of the new existence—have a full understanding before all other attainments, once Christ was here, to bring to human beings full consciousness of the I, to understand the I consciousness, because the European peoples had assimilated the ego-feeling too early and had fused with it, as it were.

We have to take this into account if we want to understand the whole rise of the more recent cultures. In Asia and Africa we find human beings who know a lot about the secrets of the world, who have many abilities with regard to the production of certain symbols. In short, they cultivated their sentient soul in such a way that they had a rich soul life but the ego-feeling was weak. In Europe we find people who have little culture through what can be acquired externally by

means of revelation but instead we find the type of human beings there who seek themselves within themselves, who find firm support within themselves. Thus the ground for the appearance of Christ was prepared in Asia, that is where there was a body into which Christ could enter; and in Europe we find the human beings who are best prepared to understand the bringer of ego-consciousness. He brought to European peoples what they had been longing for. That is why that wonderful mysticism developed particularly in Europe which wanted to take Christ into its own soul, into the I: Christian mysticism.

In this way humanity is prepared at the various locations on earth through the wise guidance of the world in a way that allows each developmental moment to avail itself of its rights. That is one of the great achievements of the spiritual-scientific view of the world, that the feeling grows in us as to the wise way in which everything has proceeded in human development and in the whole world; how over millennia souls were prepared on European soil so that they had a firm point within themselves at the earliest possible stage, and that in order to obtain that firm point they were even held back in the forces which were developed so highly in Asia. Hence the cultural stream from Asia makes its way across while the strong feeling of the ego-personality arises in Europe. We can virtually point with our fingers at the Adriatic which practically forms a fixed boundary between a somewhat weaker ego-feeling in Greece on the one hand, where people did not yet feel themselves so much to be individual personalities but more as Athenians, Spartans or Thebans, members of a polis, and the Roman cultural regions on the other hand where the strong ego-feeling was significantly developed in the consciousness of the Roman citizen who stands firmly on the ground of his personality. In Greece we still see something in people which could be described as follows: the I is still somewhat reticent, and a lot is still taken from the outside world in a way such that the I is not required.

And when we cross the Adriatic we come to Rome and see the Roman citizen with feet firmly planted on the ground through the I he can feel. All of these things are connected with deeper, with important substrates. These things do not happen in the world, on the physical plane, without the corresponding events happening in the spiritual world. We see that in Greek culture there is still a strong element of the I which has been held back. Many things there are still taken at an impersonal level. Greeks did not feel themselves to be individual citizens but parts of the Athenian, Spartan or Theban organism. That had to be shed. The longing of human beings to receive things from outside had to wane and human beings had to enter the interior of the soul as they increasingly

became occidental human beings.

The great leaders, the great individualities of humanity must lead by example with regard to the things which are intended to educate the great masses. Here we can see something, if we allow it to pass before our soul, to which we have repeatedly alluded, namely that the Greeks still had a strong consciousness that the things that were given them from outside, without the interior of their personality being much developed, were of particular value. Once again let me remind you of the words of a highly cultured Greek who gives us a deep insight into the longing of the Greek people: rather a beggar on earth than a king in the realm of shades.³² The great value of the invisible, of supersensory life was not yet understood. Those things are gathered from the surroundings which can be gathered without the I. And it is deeply moving to see with regard to this point in particular how at the turning point of time a great leading personality stands there like a landmark ready to put away the outlook of what came before and to take up the outlook of what is to come in order to say in resounding tones for the spiritual world: a time must now come in which things should no longer be assimilated which flow into the human personality without the I, but in which those things are to be assimilated which enter the human personality through the I.

This deed was fulfilled in one of the great wise men of Greek antiquity on the island of Sicily, in Empedocles. Exceptionally deep things are present in many a legend which today is told without much thought. Legend, but also occult truth, tells about Empedocles—one of the great wise men who was not just a philosopher but an initiate into the secrets of his time, who was one of the greatest statesmen of all time and also a sacrificer in Agrigentum—that after he had fulfilled his task in Sicily he plunged his body into Etna in order to unite his bodily mantle with the soil of Sicily to make the statement: the time has come for a firm belief in the I even if the outer body has disappeared. The sacrifice of the bodily mantle of Empedocles was made at that time when he cast his body into Etna. A profound occult truth lies behind this. Anyone who goes to Sicily will today still have the following spiritual experience: they will find the after-effect of Empedocles' deed in the air of Sicily if they breathe it spiritually. Empedocles' soul underwent further incarnations; his body acquired a special importance because it was consciously given over to the elements so that it can be found today in the spiritual atmosphere of Sicily. Empedocles' body is a component of the spiritual atmosphere of Sicily.

It was an important moment for me—and we can, after all, talk about these things together in our branch—when a few weeks ago I was able to tell our friends in Palermo³³ about their Empedocles in direct proximity of that event the same thing I have told you now: anyone who consciously spiritually enters your location here in Sicily will today still breathe spiritually what entered the air of Sicily through the self-sacrifice of Empedocles.

So we can see how what we indicated externally, geographically with the Adriatic—the border between East and West—is indicated by a great leader of humanity who, tasked with continuing his work in the West, consciously shed what enabled people to grow in the East, wanting to save for further development the existence of the thing which is elevated above all the elements of the outer physical plane.

It is a powerful thing to look into these differences because they show how in separate regions separate things were prepared so that through diversity the greatest could be achieved. The goal of the overall development of humanity must be achieved through the collaboration between things that are diverse. We can see from this that Christ, having appeared in the East, moved to the West and was accepted there by those who were prepared with a strong ego-consciousness so that they could understand the bringer of strong ego-consciousness. That was the secret of the entry of Christ to the West, that he found souls who were prepared and that these souls accepted him. So we see humanity in the East preparing everything which enabled a body or corporeality to be created which consisted of a physical body, an etheric body and an astral body which Christ could enter who through ego-consciousness and with ego-consciousness brought the impulse of love to earth. It is love which in its most soul-like and spiritual form is brought to earth by Christ. Love, as it arose in its soul and spiritual form in the East, that is what we observe first; and how it then spread westwards and was understood there, that is how we observe this development next.

Why was it that it was particularly in the West that ego-consciousness was able to work in such a way that it felt an affinity with Christ? What had happened with the souls which had prematurely assimilated ego-consciousness?

The Egypto-Chaldean peoples waited with the development of the I until the consciousness soul; the Graeco-Roman peoples had already developed their I in the intellectual or mind soul; the culture of the European north had already developed the ego-feeling prematurely in the sentient soul. Thus it was contained

in the human soul at an early stage. So the sentient soul had worked together with ego-consciousness here in a quite different way from anywhere else in the world. The sentient soul and ego-consciousness penetrated one another first in human development in northern Europe. What happened as the result of ego-consciousness establishing itself in the sentient soul of European peoples before Christ entered human development and before they had assimilated what developed in Asia?

The result was that a human soul force developed in the sentient soul which was only able to develop because the sentient soul, which was still completely virginal and uninfluenced by other cultures, had been permeated by ego-feeling. And that soul force became conscience: the penetration of ego-feeling with sentient soul. Hence the curious innocence of conscience. How does conscience speak? It speaks in the same way in the simplest, most naive person as it does in the most complex soul. It says directly: that is just, that is unjust. Without any theory, without any teaching. The thing which tells us that something is just or unjust has the power of an urge, an instinct. Nowhere else will you find anything of the type I have explained today which developed in the West in this way. That is why it throws its first rays like dawn towards Greece and from there to Rome, and there we already encounter it very strongly.

Here we first come across the word conscientia in Roman writers. While we only find it sporadically among the Greeks, with first indications of it in Euripides, we find it very strongly emphasized among the Romans as a word in common usage. That is the influence of the cultural stream which arose because the sentient soul and the ego-feeling penetrated one another, because the ego-feeling which carries human beings from below upwards already speaks in the sentient soul like a divine voice in the way that otherwise only urges, desires and passions speak in the sentient soul; and there it speaks, urging us to do the right thing in order to ascend to the higher I.

Thus we see conscience arise first in human development in the European peoples. From there it rays out and communicates itself to the other human beings on earth. Thus a wise cosmic guidance made preparation that humanity in one location was prepared in such a way that conscience could be brought as a contribution to the overall development of humanity. With this we basically already have given everything that explains conscience to us. We have given that indefinable element of conscience, the issue of conscience from the depths of the soul. Conscience speaks like an urge and yet it is not an urge. Those

philosophers who describe it as an urge are far off the mark. It speaks with the same magnificence with which the consciousness soul itself speaks when it appears; but it speaks at the same time with more elementary, with more original forces.

So we see how on earth love appears in the East and conscience here in the West. They are two things which belong together: how Christ appears in the East, how conscience awakens in the West in order to accept Christ as conscience. We see an infinite wisdom at work in our development in this simultaneous fact of the occurrence of the Christ event and the understanding of the Christ event, and in the preparation of these two things at different locations on earth. With that we have indicated the past of conscience.

If we now recall what we have often emphasized, that we are now in a transition at the end of the Kali Yuga in which new forces have to be developed, then we will find it understandable that we are approaching important questions today regarding the development of our conscience. On the last occasion we emphasized, emphasized strongly and sharply, that we are heading towards a new Christ event in that the soul is becoming capable of perceiving Christ in a certain etheric clairvoyance and experiencing anew the Damascene event within itself. Hence we can raise the question: how will it be with the parallel event, with the development of conscience in the periods we are living towards? We will ask ourselves that question next Sunday, on 8 May. And in that way we will also celebrate our commemoration day³⁴ in the best possible way by speaking about the living element in the spiritual-scientific movement and setting out how the human soul forces are in a transitional stage.

We will see that a light can be thrown on conscience from many different sides. That will happen quite exoterically in the public lecture next Thursday.³⁵ But even there we can make certain assumptions because these public lectures have been given for a number of years now. We can speak as deeply about the conscience as we spoke today, we can speak as exoterically as next Thursday, and we can speak even more deeply about the conscience. It will be some time yet until we are able to do so.

LECTURE 7

BERLIN, 8 MAY 1910

ON 8 May, today, we celebrate White Lotus Day as the Theosophical Society, a day which in the external world, which has various names for these things, is designated as the day on which the initiator of the spiritual stream within which we stand died. For us it is more natural to choose another designation for these our celebrations today, a designation which arises from our knowledge of the spiritual world and which should approximately say: the transition from action on the physical plane to different action in the spiritual worlds. For it is probably not just an earnest conviction in the normal sense of the word for us but a growing understanding that in what the outer world calls death we are dealing with something that is a transition from one form of work, one activity which is instigated by the impressions of the external physical world to another activity which is instigated directly out of the spiritual world.

And as we remember the great initiator H.P. Blavatsky³⁶ today, and those who as leading personalities have also already passed over into the spiritual realm today, we will try in particular to obtain an idea how we should keep our spiritual movement so that it can represent a continuation of the activity which our founder accomplished on the physical plane until her departure—a continuation of her activity on the one hand, but also an opportunity for this founder to continue working from out of the spiritual worlds in our present and into the future.

On a day like this it is only proper that we suspend, as it were, the way in which we normally devote ourselves in these meetings to spiritual-scientific reflections and spiritual life and that we undertake what we might call a kind of examination of our conscience, a kind of review that can allow us to visualize from out of the theosophical movement its nature and duties, and which on the other hand gives

us a kind of preview what this theosophical movement should become in the future, what we should do and what we should not do.

What we deal with as the theosophical movement was called into life in recent times through very specific circumstances, through certain historical necessities. As you know, this is not the same as in some other spiritual or other movements or associations where one or several personalities set themselves some ideal or other and because they feel a passion for these ideals in their feelings or their heart they attempt to create the same passion in others to found associations or societies to make these ideals, for which they feel a personal passion, a reality. That is not how we must think of the theosophical movement if we understand it in the right way. We will only understand it in the right way if we think of it as a historical necessity in our present life, as something which had to come irrespective of how people feel about it, because it lay in the womb of time, as it were, and had to be born. As what should the theosophical movement be understood, then? It can be understood as a descent, a new descent of spiritual life, of spiritual wisdom and spiritual forces from the supersensory world. Such a descent of spiritual life, spiritual wisdom and spiritual forces had to happen and will in future happen repeatedly again for the progress of humanity. It cannot of course be our task today to speak about all the individual great impulses through which spiritual life flowed down from the supersensory worlds for the soul life of humanity, which had aged so to speak, to be renewed. That has happened quite often in the course of time. We will just refer to a few things.

In the very ancient past, not long after the great Atlantean catastrophe had happened which has been retained in the memory of various peoples as the Great Flood, the impulse occurred which we can describe as the entry of spiritual life into human development through the holy Rishis. Then we have that other stream of spiritual life flowing down into the movement of humanity through the great Zarathustra or Zoroaster. Then we find another different such stream of spiritual life in what was given to the ancient Israelites in the revelation of Moses. And finally we have the greatest impulse, the mightiest flow of supersensory life into the sensory world through the appearance of Jesus Christ on earth. This is the mightiest impulse when compared to everything that has gone before and, as we have also emphasized, with regard to the whole future of earth development. But we also emphasized that new impulses always have to come, that new spiritual life and a new way to understanding the old spiritual life have to flow into human development. Because otherwise the tree of human development, which has to green if humanity is to reach the goal of its

development, will wither and die. The mighty wave of life which has flowed into human development through Christ must be understood better and better through new spiritual impulses which flow into our earth life.

So when our age, the nineteenth century, approached, a time had come once again for human development in which a new streak, a new life impulse was required. Once again a new stimulus, new revelations had to flow down from the supersensory worlds into our sensory world. This was a necessity which should have been perceived on earth itself but which was specifically perceived in those regions from which the guidance of all life on earth emanates in spiritual regions. It would be nothing more than a short-sighted human way of looking at things if we were to say: 'Why always the entry of completely new types of truth? Why always new knowledge and life impulses? What is given in Christianity, for example, is given and could simply continue in force as always.'

Such a way of looking at things would be a pre-eminently egoistical one from a higher perspective. It really would be! And that such a way of looking at things comes to expression so frequently particularly in those people who think that they are very pious and religious is all the greater proof that there is a need to refresh our spiritual life. How often do we hear people today say: why bother with these new spiritual streams? We have the old traditions which have been preserved for us in the course of history; let us not spoil them through the things which those want to know who always pretend to know everything better. That is an egotistical expression of the human soul. It is just that those who act in that way do not know that this is what it is. Because those who act in this way only want to take care of the needs of their own soul. They feel in themselves: we are satisfied with what we have. And then they set up the dogma, that terrible dogma of conscience: if we are satisfied in our way, then those who are supposed to learn from us who are our descendants must be satisfied in the same way that we are. Everything has to be in accordance with our heart, our knowledge. That is a phrase which we hear very often in the outer world. And it is not just a narrowness of soul, it is something which is linked with what we have just characterized as an egotistical trait in the human soul. And in religious life souls can perhaps be the most egotistical under the mask of piety.

Looking at what surrounds us, if we do so with understanding, could teach this one thing to those who are serious about the spiritual development of humanity: that the human soul develops and that the way in which people have regarded the greatest impulse in human development, the Christ impulse, is crumbling away. I

do not generally like to refer to contemporary things because what happens today in outer spiritual life is mostly too unimportant to address the deeper side of the serious observer. But it should nevertheless be a question of conscience for the contemporary observer as to what frequently happens in spiritual life today. It was not possible, for example, to walk past any advertising hoarding in Berlin in the last few weeks without finding a lecture or meeting announced on it on the subject 'Did Jesus live?' You might all know that this discussion, which is being conducted in the widest circles, often with quite radical weaponry, was set in train by the views of a German philosophy professor—a pupil of the author of the *Philosophy of the Unconscious*, Eduard von Hartmann—Dr Arthur Drews,³⁷ and particularly his book *Die Christus-Mythe* (*The Christ Myth*). What we find in this book then became known more widely through a lecture by Professor Drews which was given here in Berlin under the title 'Did Jesus live?'

Now it cannot of course be my task today to discuss Drews's reflections in detail. I just wish to put a few central thoughts before your soul. The author of *The Christ Myth*—that is, a modern philosopher who claims to be a vehicle of the science and thinking of our time—goes through the individual records which purport to show historically that a certain personality bearing the name Jesus of Nazareth lived at the beginning of the Christian era. And from what the critique of these documents, what science has determined, he attempts to compile something which allows him to ask: are the individual Gospels historical documents from which it can be proved that Jesus really lived? And then he takes everything that modern theology has produced in this or that respect and attempts to show that none of the Gospels could be a historical record and that it cannot be proved from the Gospels that Jesus lived. And he goes on to try and show that all of the other information of a purely historical nature which people possess is irrelevant as well so that it cannot be used to conclude that there was a historical Jesus.

Now everyone who is aware of these things knows that, from a purely outward perspective, there is a lot in favour of Professor Drews's way of looking at things and that it comes to expression as a kind of result of a modern theological critique. I will not go into the details here. Because what is important here is that in our time someone who claims to represent an academic approach from a philosophical perspective can say: there are no historical documents which can be used to show that Jesus lived. The historical documents through which people attempt to show that are all irrelevant. However, what Drews and all those who go along with him adhere to is what we have from the Apostle Paul. More

recently there are even people who cast doubt on the authenticity of all of the epistles of Paul but since the author of *The Christ Myth* does not go that far we do not need to waste our time on that.

So Drews now says the following about Paul: Paul did not start from any personal acquaintance with Jesus of Nazareth but from what he experienced as a revelation in the Damascene event. We know that this is absolutely true. Drews then comes to the following view. What concept of Christ does Paul, then, develop for himself? He forms the concept of a purely spiritual Christ who can live in every human soul, as it were, and can gradually come to realization in each human soul. But nowhere is there a necessity for Paul to have Christ, whom he sees as a purely spiritual being, present in what would have been a Jesus whose existence cannot be historically proved. Hence one could say: we do not know whether a historical Jesus lived or not; Paul's image of Christ is a purely spiritual one, a pure idea, which only reflects something that can live in each soul as a kind of impulse to achieve perfection, as a kind of God in human beings.

Now the author of *The Christ Myth* further points out that certain ideas similar to those of the Jesus Christ of the Christians also existed previously already as a kind of pre-Christian Jesus and he establishes that various oriental peoples had a concept of the Messiah. That then causes Drews to ask further: what is the actual distinction between the idea of Christ (of which in his thinking it cannot be denied that Paul had one), what distinguishes this image of Christ in the head and heart of Paul from what people previously possessed as the concept of the Messiah? And Drews answers his question by saying: human beings before Paul had an image of Christ as a god, an image of the Messiah as a god who did not properly become human, who did not descend as far as becoming an individual human. They celebrated in their various festivals, mysteries and so on the suffering, death and resurrection as a symbolic event; but they did not have an individual person on the physical earth who really went through suffering, death and resurrection. It was a general idea, so to speak. Then the author of *The Christ Myth* asks: what is the new element in Paul? How did Paul himself develop the idea of Christ further?

So now Drews himself says: the progress which Paul made in contrast to what came before is that he does not just imagine a general god floating in higher regions but a god who became an individual human being. So I repeat: in the understanding of the author of *The Christ Myth*, Paul imagines a Christ who has

really become an individual person. But now we come to the very peculiar thing: Paul is then considered to have stopped at this idea; in other words, Paul is said to have come to the idea of a Christ who really became a human being but this Christ as a human being is then thought not to have existed as far as Paul is concerned. Paul supposedly said to himself: the highest idea is this, that a god, a Christ not only floats in the higher spheres but comes down to earth and becomes a human being. But he did not have in mind that this Christ had really lived on earth as a human being—in other words, the author of *The Christ Myth* ascribes a concept of Christ to Paul which in itself makes a mockery of any healthy thinking. Paul apparently said to himself: Christ must really have been an individual human being but although I preach about him I deny that this Christ existed in history.

Here we are at the heart of the matter we are discussing, which presents itself to us not as something that requires a lot of critical theological scholarship to refute it, but here we can legitimately take the author of *The Christ Myth* as a philosopher. Because such a concept of Christ is impossible even just in philosophical terms. The Pauline concept of Christ, if understood in the meaning of Drews, cannot exist without assuming a historical Jesus. Therefore this book by Drews in itself requires the existence of a historical Jesus. It is thus possible for a book to be accepted as a serious academic work in the widest circles which has such a contradiction at its core, which makes a mockery of all internal logic. It is possible for human thinking today to go astray in this way. How is that possible? Anyone who wants to obtain some clarity about the development of humanity should answer this question for themselves: how is that possible?

It is possible because what people in this or any other age believe and think is not ultimately decided by their logic but by their feelings, that is, what they want to believe and think. And it is a profound trait in those preparing the concept of Christ for the coming age that in their heart they want to exclude everything contained in external records but at the same time have the urge of wanting to prove everything through external records. But these records lose their value after a time if we look at them in purely material terms. The time will come—and just as it is already here for Homer and Shakespeare, so it will come for Goethe—in which people will try to prove that a historical Goethe never existed. Historical records, taken purely materialistically, must lose their value over time. What, then, is necessary, since we already live in an age which can have its best representatives think in a way which creates the goal in their heart to deny the historical Jesus? What is necessary as a new impulse in spiritual life? The

possibility is required to understand the historical Jesus in a spiritual way.

How else does this fact come to expression?

We all know that Paul started from the Damascene event. And we also know that this was the great revelation for him whereas all that he heard in Jerusalem as direct news on the physical plane was not sufficient to turn Saul into Paul. What convinced him was the revelation from the spiritual worlds on the road to Damascus. Christianity only really arose as a result, and that is where Paul gathered the strength to proclaim Christ. But did he gain from that the mere abstract idea which in itself is contradictory? No! What he saw in the spiritual world gave him the conviction that Christ lived on earth, suffered and was resurrected. 'And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain,' Paul rightly said.³⁸ He did not just acquire the idea of Christ from the spiritual worlds but the reality of Christ who died on Golgotha. That for him was the proof of the historical Jesus.

But if the time is now approaching in which through the materialism of the age historical records lose their value and anyone can show without much effort that they can be called into question so easily that nothing can be proved any longer in an external historical way, what is required next? Then people will have to learn to recognize that we can know Christ as the historical Jesus also without historical records in that the Damascene event can be renewed for every person through training, or indeed in the near future for the whole of humanity, so that it is possible to be convinced of the historical Jesus in this way. That is the new manner which has to enter the world to find the path to the historical Jesus. Because whether the facts which happened are correct or incorrect is not important but the fact that they exist is. The important thing is not whether a book like *The Christ Myth* contains errors of this or that kind but that it could be written at all. This shows that we require quite different methods to retain Christ for humanity and for him to be found again. Anyone who considers humanity and its needs and the manner in which the human soul comes to expression will not take the view: why should I bother about all the people who think differently from me? I have my convictions, that is sufficient for me. Most people are not even aware of the terrible egoism contained in such an attitude in particular.

It was not because of some outer idea, an outer ideal or a personal hobby that a movement arose through which people were to learn that it is possible to find a path into the spiritual world and that among the things which can be found there

Christ can also be found. This movement arose out of necessity. This necessity occurred in the course of the nineteenth century; and through it the possibilities were to flow down from the spiritual worlds into the physical world by means of which human beings could become capable of obtaining spiritual truth in a new way because the old way had died off. And we have seen in the course of this winter how productive this path has turned out to be.

We have always emphasized: the first thing we have to do within our movement is not to base ourselves on some record or external document but first to ask: what gives us clairvoyant consciousness when we ascend into the spiritual worlds? What would independent spiritual consciousness say if through some disaster all historical records pointing to the historical Jesus, the Gospels and the epistles of Paul had been lost? What does the path, which can be embarked upon each day, every hour, say about the spiritual worlds? It says: you will find Christ in the spiritual worlds even if you have no historical knowledge of Christ having been on earth at the time in which our era begins. That is the fact which can be repeatedly determined through a renewal of the Damascene event. There is archetypal proof of the historical personality of Jesus of Nazareth. And just as pupils are not simply told at the blackboard, you have to believe that the three angles of a triangle make 180 degrees because that was determined by some person in antiquity, but just as we can prove to them today that the three angles of a triangle make 180 degrees, so we can show today out of spiritual consciousness that Christ has not only always been there but that the historical Jesus can be found in the spiritual worlds, that he is a reality and particularly a reality for the time which we know about through tradition.

Then we went on to show how that what we determined through spiritual knowledge without the Gospels can be found again in the Gospels. And now we feel that great respect and esteem for the Gospels which cannot be exceeded by anything because we find in them what we found independently of the Gospels in the spiritual worlds. And now we know: they must have originated from the same sources of supersensory illumination on which we draw today; they must be records from the spiritual worlds.

That such reflections are possible at all, that spiritual life should enter human scientific method, that is the purpose of what we call the theosophical movement. And the stimulus had to be given by the Theosophical Society for that to happen which had to happen. That is the one side of the matter. The other side is this, that this stimulus had to fall into the period which was least ready to

accept it. That can be seen in the fact that today, after the Theosophical Society has been present in the world for 30 years already,³⁹ people carry on with the same old tune about the 'unhistorical Jesus' and so on. How many people outside our movement know today that it is possible to find the historical Jesus in quite a different way from outer records? People just continue with what they did in the nineteenth century: undermining the authority of the religious records.

Thus the necessity for humanity to be given this new possibility was as great as it could be and on the other hand the preparation of people to receive these revelations was at its lowest possible level. Or does it seem to you that the people, that the philosophers of today were particularly prepared for that? The level which the philosophers at the start of the twentieth century have reached can be seen in the idea which they have developed about the Christ of Paul. Anyone who knows our academic life knows that it is the greatest and final consequence of what has been preparing for centuries as materialism, that although it claims to want to move beyond materialism, what is revealed as the way of thinking in materialism is nothing more than something which is perishing. Scholarship as it exists today may be a ripe fruit but it shares the fate of every ripe fruit: it starts to perish. Anyone who understands this scholarship will find it hard to understand how it could bring forth a new shoot to renew its way of thinking and argument.

If we consider this, then we will understand the weight of the impetus that came with H.P. Blavatsky, irrespective of anything else and what we might think about the details of her life and abilities. She was the instrument for giving that impetus and she showed herself to be a suitable instrument in that respect. And as members of the theosophical movement we are in a very special position when we celebrate a day like today. We celebrate a very personal festival which points to something very personal. Now the blind belief in authority is something very dangerous even in the ordinary world. But it is not half as dangerous there because jealousy, envy and so on play such a great role that even if there is an outer show of veneration of individual personalities with much smell of incense, egoism and envy nevertheless breathe down their neck. But in the theosophical movement the danger of the harm caused by any kind of personality cult and blind belief in authority is exceptionally great. That is why we are in a very special position when we celebrate a festival dedicated to a personality. And we are in a particularly difficult situation not just as a result of the habits of our time but as a result of the matter as such, because revelations from the higher worlds always have to take the detour via a personality.

Personalities have to be the bearers of such revelations and yet we should take great care not to confuse the personalities with the revelations. We have to receive the revelations through the medium of the personalities. How quickly does the question suggest itself: is that personality credible? What did he or she do on this day or that which does not accord with our ideas? Can we therefore believe in the matter?

That corresponds to a certain inclination in our time which we might characterize as a certain lack of devotion to truth. How many times can we experience today that people support the activities of a personality, perhaps over decades: they are quite happy with this or that and are too lazy to examine anything. But then when it turns out perhaps decades later that the private life of this personality was not everything that it was made out to be, then that personality is dropped. The point is not whether this is justified or not, but that we should develop a feeling that although the personality is the means through which spiritual life comes to us, it is incumbent on us to examine things for ourselves—and that means testing the personality against the truth and not the truth against the personality. We should always behave like that particularly with regard to the personalities in our theosophical movement. And we basically venerate them in the best way if we do not festoon them with a blind belief in authority, as people would so much like to do; because we know that the activity of a deceased personality has merely moved after death into the spiritual world.

We are justified in saying: the activity of H.P. Blavatsky continues and in what she has inspired we can either promote or impair that activity. We impair that activity the most if we have a blind belief in Blavatsky, if we swear on what she thought when she walked on the physical plane, if we believe what she happened to believe and respond to her with a blind belief in authority. And we support and venerate her in the best way if we are aware: she gave the impetus for a profound movement rooted in the necessity of human development. We ascribe this service to her in the understanding that this movement had to come. But years have passed since then and we endeavour to show ourselves worthy of this impetus by saying: what has been inspired must be developed further. We understand that the motivation had to come through this mind. We will not stick our nose into the private affairs of H.P. Blavatsky, particularly not on a day like today. We know what this impetus means but we also know that the impetus can only represent what is meant to happen in the most incomplete way. And when we consider what has come before our souls last winter we have to say: what H.P. Blavatsky set in motion is something incisive, but what did Mrs Blavatsky

not manage to do through her initial deed?

What has not been shown until now, the necessity of the theosophical movement for the Christ experience, that was completely closed off to Blavatsky. It was her task to point to the kernel of truth in the religions of the Aryan peoples. An understanding of the revelations in the Old and New Testament was completely closed off to her. We venerate the positive achievement of this personality and do not linger on what she could not do and what remained closed off to her; that is something which we will simply have to supplement. Anyone who is encouraged by H.P. Blavatsky and wants to go further than she went herself will say to themselves: if the impetus which H.P. Blavatsky gave is carried further in the theosophical movement, we will reach the point at which we can understand the Christ event.

But that is precisely the lack of the first theosophical movement, that the religious life of the Old and New Testament could not be understood. That is why basically everything is out of kilter which is contained in this first impetus. And the theosophical movement has the task of making that up again and adding what was not there at all the first time round. If we feel this fact in us today, it is also at the same time a challenge to our theosophical conscience.

Thus we see in H.P. Blavatsky in particular the bringer of a kind of dawn of a new light. But what use would that light be if it did not illuminate the most important thing which humanity has possessed? A theosophy which does not have the means to understand Christianity is of absolutely no value to the present culture. But if it is the instrument for understanding Christianity, then we have to use this instrument in the right way. Because what do we do if we fail to do what I have just characterized, if we do not use the impetus which H.P. Blavatsky gave to understand Christianity? Then we inhibit the action of Blavatsky's spirit in our time. Everything is in development, including Blavatsky's spirit. And this spirit is at work in the spiritual world so that the theosophical movement progresses. But if we position ourselves before H.P. Blavatsky with the books she wrote and say: with these works we will build a monument to you, you have to stop at what you did in physical life—who is it then who makes the spirit of Blavatsky into an earthbound one, who condemns it to not being able to leave behind what it instigated on earth? It is we ourselves. So we honour and appreciate H.P. Blavatsky if we go further than she did, just as she went further than what preceded her, for as long as the grace of cosmic development can give us spiritual revelations from the spiritual world.

Let us place this before our souls today as a question of conscience, and it is also something which to the greatest extent is in the spirit of our contemporary who has also now already entered the spiritual world, H.S. Olcott,⁴⁰ the first president of the Theosophical Society. That is what we should very specifically inscribe into our souls today. It is precisely because the vitality of theosophical life fails to be recognized that the shadow sides of the theosophical movement have arisen: if the theosophical movement were to continue its original great impulses undiminished with a sacred conscience, it would easily through its strength be able to put to flight what has occurred over the course of time and will continue to occur by way of pernicious influences. And that is something that we have seriously to do: continue to develop the impulses in a living way. But today we see in many places where theosophists think they are at work that they feel particularly comfortable when they say: we are now doing things which are confirmed by external science. Some leading theosophists are very happy when they can point out that researchers of religion also confirm what has come from the spiritual worlds without taking any account of the fact that it is precisely the unspiritual way of comparing religious records which should be overcome.

Here theosophy comes very close, for example, to what was dying off and led to the denial of the historical Jesus, and there is indeed a certain affinity with these things. Originally theosophy also just accepted the historical Jesus in the same way as it did the other founders of religion. It would never have occurred to Blavatsky to deny the historical Jesus. She did put him back by a hundred years,⁴¹ which is an error. So she did not deny him but she did not understand the being of Jesus Christ either. She did give the impulse that in the future it would be possible to understand the nature of Christ in the movement she started but was unable to do so herself. Here the initial state of the theosophical movement touches in a peculiar way with what the deniers of Jesus are doing today.

Thus Professor Drews points out today, for example, that the occurrences which precede the event of Golgotha can also be found in the accounts surrounding the ancient gods such as the cults of Adonis or Tammuz, for example. There we see a suffering divine hero, a dying divine hero, a resurrected divine hero and so on. Various religious traditions are compared and then the conclusion is drawn: tales are told about a suffering, dying, resurrected Jesus of Nazareth who was Christ but as you can see, other peoples also celebrated that in Adonis, in Tammuz and so on. Reference is made everywhere to the similarity between this or the other ancient divine figure and the events in Palestine.

This is what was basically done to a large extent in the theosophical movement as well. People no longer see today when they compare religions in this way that it does not mean a great deal to compare Adonis or Tammuz with the events in Palestine. Let me use a comparison to show you where the error in such a comparison between religions lies. Outwardly it can be absolutely correct but it is nevertheless subject to a certain erroneous view. Let us assume there is a uniform for an official who lives, say, in 1910. The uniform which this official wears in 1910 at the same time reflects the outer form of his job, his office. And let us further assume that in 1930 another person who is quite different wears the same uniform. But it is not the uniform but the individuality which determines how a person does his job. But now let us assume that in 2090 a historical researcher comes along who says: there are reports that there was a person in 1910 who wore this jacket, these trousers and this waistcoat. But in 1930 I see the same jacket, trousers and waistcoat. Thus we can see that the jacket, trousers and waistcoat have propagated and that in both cases we are actually dealing with the same being.

Such a conclusion would of course be foolish. But it is no more clever when we say: we take the Middle Eastern religions and see how suffering, death and resurrection are represented in Adonis or Tammuz. We also find the same in Christ. But that is not the point, that suffering, death and resurrection are presented, but the point is who was resurrected. Suffering, death and resurrection are a uniform in world historical development and we must not point to the uniform which we encounter in world historical development but to the individualities who are inside it. Certainly, the individualities showed themselves in the same way so that human beings could understand them, fulfilled 'Christ deeds' as we might say, which were intended to show: he can also do the deeds which a Tammuz once did. But there was always a different being behind those deeds.

That is why all comparison between religions—that for example the figure of Siegfried coincides with the figure of Baldur, the figure of Baldur with the figure of Tammuz and so on—only indicates that certain forms of legend and myth occur among various peoples. That is of no more value than if we were to show that a certain type of uniform recurs with a certain office in order to learn about human beings. This is the fundamental error which is rife everywhere and which is also rife in the theosophical movement, for example, and which is nothing other than the consequence of materialistic habits of thinking.

Blavatsky's last will and testament will only be fulfilled when the theosophical movement becomes capable of maintaining and preserving the life of the spirit within itself, when it looks to the spirit which is not revealed in books, as someone wrote, but in the vitality of life. We should cultivate the spirit. We should not just study books which were written hundreds of years ago but should continue to develop in a living way what we are given as spirit. Let us be something like an association of people who do not just believe in books and people but in the living spirit, and who not only speak about H.P. Blavatsky as having left the physical plane and continuing to live after her death, but who have a living belief in what is revealed through theosophy to such an extent that they themselves through their own being on the physical plane cannot be an obstacle for the continuing work in the supersensory sphere of Blavatsky's spirit. We will only do something positive for the theosophical movement when we think about H.P. Blavatsky like this and H.P. Blavatsky will only be able to do something positive for the theosophical movement if people exist on earth who can think in that way.

But that requires ongoing spiritual research and that we believe in particular in what was mentioned specifically in the last public lecture:⁴² that humanity is progressing and that something like the conscience really did enter history at the time of Jesus Christ and that such things arise and are important for development as a whole. The conscience is something that occurred at a certain point in time. The conscience was something different in earlier times and it will become something different again in the future after human souls will have developed for a while in the light of conscience. How the conscience will change in the future is something we have also already referred to.

With the occurrence of the Damascene event in a great number of people in the twentieth century, there will be a parallel development in the sense that people, when they have done a deed in life, will learn to look up from their deed. They will become more cautious, will have an inner image of the deed—initially just a few, then more and more in the course of the next two to three millennia. After people have done something, the image will be there. At first they will not know what it is. But those who are familiar with spiritual science will say to themselves: I have an image here. It is not a dream, not a dream at all, it is an image which shows me the karmic fulfilment of the deed I have just done. This will happen in the future as the fulfilment, as the karmic correction of what I have just done. This will start in the twentieth century. Human beings will develop the additional ability of having an image of a very far distant deed

which has not yet occurred. That will be revealed as an inner counter-image of their deed, as the karmic fulfilment which will happen in the future. Human beings will then tell themselves: I have just done this. Now I can see what I have to do in compensation and what would always hold me back from advancing if I did not provide compensation in this way. In that situation karma will become more than a mere theory and there will be an experience of the inner image we have just described.

Such faculties will become more and more common. New faculties develop but the old faculties bear the seeds of the new ones within them. Where will it come from, when human beings see the karmic image? It will come from the fact that souls will have stood for a certain time in the light of the conscience. That is the important thing for the soul: not that we experience this or that outwardly physically, but that the soul advances as a result. The soul prepares for what I have just described through the conscience. And the more incarnations people pass through in which they particularly develop the conscience, the more they have been cultivating the conscience within themselves, then the more they are doing to obtain those higher faculties which present to them in spiritual vision that divine voice which human beings in the past experienced in a different way. Aeschylus still presented an Orestes who had before him the effects of his wicked deeds. Orestes still had to watch how the effects of his deeds are set in the outside world. The new faculty which is developing for the soul is one such that human beings will see in images the effect of their deeds in the future. That is the new thing. Development always occurs cyclically, always in a circular form and what human beings possessed in the old vision will recur in a renewed way.

Thus we prepare ourselves through knowledge of the spiritual world so that we really do wake up in the next incarnation in the right way; and in doing so we also work in such a way that the people who are our descendants are appropriately cared for. As a result spiritual research is an unegotistical direction in its deepest foundation because it does not ask about the benefit for the individual but about what can bring progress to the whole of humanity.

We have asked twice: what is conscience? Now we have also asked: what becomes of the conscience which is developing today? How does conscience present itself if we look at it as a seed in the time which people are passing through now? What will the thing which the seed of conscience produces turn into? It will turn into the higher faculties we have characterized. This is the

important point, that we believe in the development of the soul from incarnation to incarnation, from age to age. It is what we are taught in learning to understand true Christianity. And in that respect we still have a lot to learn from Paul. Look at the oriental religions, including Buddhism. You will find the teaching that the external world is Maya. It is that, of course, but this is what is represented as absolute truth in the East.

Paul also knows this truth, he truly does not fail to emphasize that. But there is also something else still which Paul emphasizes, namely this: indeed, human beings do not see the truth when they look out with their eyes, they do not see reality when they look into what is external. Why not? Because they themselves turned outer reality into an illusion as they descended into matter. It is human beings themselves who have turned the external world into an illusion through their deed. Now you can call the thing which makes the outer world appear as illusion the 'Fall', as the Bible does, or anything else you like. Eastern religion blames the 'gods' for the world appearing as Maya to human beings. Point the finger at yourself, says Paul, you descended and dimmed your vision to such an extent that colour and sound do not really appear as something spiritual. You believe that colour and sound are something that is there for you as matter. It is Maya. You turned it into Maya. You, the human being, have to redeem yourself from that again. You have to obtain again what you forfeited. You descended into matter and now you have to redeem yourself, liberate yourself from that again. But not in the way that Buddha says: vanquish the urge to exist. No, you have to see the existence of the earth in its reality. You have to correct in yourself what you yourself turned into Maya. And you can do that by assimilating the power of Christ within yourself which shows you the world in its reality.

Therein lies a great impulse of western life, a new trait, and it has not yet penetrated the individual fields by a long chalk. What does the world today know about the fact that in one field an attempt was even made to develop epistemology in the spirit of Paul? Such epistemology could not argue in the sense of Kant that the thing in itself is something that cannot be understood. But it could say: it is up to you, human being. Through what you are now you provoke a false reality. To place epistemology on such a Pauline basis⁴³ was the task of my two works Truth and Knowledge and Philosophy of Freedom. These two books follow on from the great achievement of the Pauline view in the western world. That is why these books were also so little understood, except in a few circles, because they assume all the impulses which have come to

expression in the movement of spiritual science. The greatest is revealed in the smallest.

Such reflections which lift us beyond our narrow humanness and show us how in our small daily work we can connect with that which from stage to stage, from life to life takes us ever closer to spiritual existence, such reflections will turn us into true theosophists. And we can devote ourselves to such reflections on a day which is dedicated to a personality who initiated a movement which will continue to live on and on, which should not be dry theory for human beings but should contain the sap which allows the tree to keep greening which we call the tree of the theosophical world conception.

Out of this spirit we will try to make ourselves ready for preparing the ground in our movement so that it does not inhibit and hold back Blavatsky's impulses but supports their further development.

NOTES

Textual Basis: The lectures were taken down in shorthand by the Berlin member Walter Vegelahn. This volume is based on a transcript of his shorthand notes of which the original does not exist. Textual corrections in the third and fourth German editions in relation to earlier editions are based on other partial transcripts. Some minor orthographic and syntactical corrections were made in the fifth German edition, the notes were expanded and a register of names and bibliography were added.

The words ‘theosophy’ and ‘theosophical’ in the shorthand notes were replaced by the terms ‘anthroposophy’ and ‘anthroposophical’ in response to an instruction from Rudolf Steiner. He used the term ‘theosophy’ because at the time of these lectures he was still teaching with his anthroposophically-oriented spiritual science within the Theosophical Society, from which he separated, however, a few years later.

The title of the volume is also likely to go back to Rudolf Steiner although the transcripts were not revised by him.

1. The Annual General Meeting of the German Section of the Theosophical Society, which by then had been in existence for seven years, had been held on the previous day, 24 October 1909. See also Rudolf Steiner's speech in *Mitteilungen für die Mitglieder der Deutschen Sektion der Theosophischen Gesellschaft (1905-1913) und für die Mitglieder der Anthroposophischen Gesellschaft (1913-1914)*, edited by Mathilde Scholl, Dornach 1999, pp. 120 ff.
2. In *A Psychology of Body, Soul and Spirit. Anthroposophy, Psychosophy, Pneumatosophy*, GA115.
3. Carl Unger, 1878-1929, mechanical engineer. One of the most important pioneers of the anthroposophical movement. He fostered a strictly philosophical

and scientific independent examination of the basic ideas of anthroposophy and Rudolf Steiner had a very high opinion of him in these endeavours. See his collected works *Gesammelte Schriften I-III*, Stuttgart 1981. On the subject of the I and not-I, see particularly the essay from 1910 'Das Ich und das Wesen des Menschen' in *Gesammelte Schriften*, volume I.

4. See Rudolf Steiner's basic work of 1894, *The Philosophy of Freedom. The Basis for a Modern World Conception*, GA 4.

5. Circa 525-456 BC. One of the great Greek tragic dramatists. See also Rudolf Steiner's lecture of 12 May 1910 'The mission of art' in *Transforming the Soul*, volume 2, GA 59.

6. Circa 480-406 BC. With Aeschylus and Sophocles one of the three great Greek tragic dramatists.

7. Lecture of 25 October 1909 in Berlin about the structure of the senses. In: *A Psychology of Body, Soul and Spirit. Anthroposophy, Psychosophy, Pneumatosophy*, GA 115.

8. See also Rudolf Steiner's lecture of 16 January 1911 in Berlin in *Exkurse in das Gebiet des Markus-Evangeliums*, GA 124. *Background to the Gospel of St Mark*, 1985.

9. Rudolf Steiner is clearly referring here to the two Berlin lectures of 11 and 18 October 1909 in *Die tieferen Geheimnisse des Menschheitswerdens im Lichte der Evangelien*, GA 117.

10. Berlin, 21 October 1909 in *Transforming the Soul*, GA 59.

11. In 1884 Rudolf Steiner started work as a tutor in the household of the cotton importer Specht. He looked after his four sons until 1890. See also Rudolf Steiner, *Autobiography*, GA28.

12. Rudolf Steiner is referring here among others to Hans Specht, the cousin of the children entrusted to his care in the Specht household (see note 11).

13. Lecture in Berlin, 28 October 1909, in *Transforming the Soul*, GA 59.

14. Motto from the second part of *Dichtung und Wahrheit*.

15. Berlin, 2 November 1909 in *Die tieferen Geheimnisse des Menschheitswerdens im Lichte der Evangelien*, GA 117. *Deeper Secrets of Human History*, 1957.
16. Exodus 20:1-17.
17. *In Disease, Karma and Healing*, GA 107.
18. Publius Cornelius Tacitus, c. AD 56-c. 120. One of the greatest Roman historians, orators and prose writers. The passage discussed here is in the *Annals* XV, 44.
19. See the treatise by Dr R. Faerber which Rudolf Steiner had in his library and which discusses the background to these names: R Faerber, *König Salomon in der Tradition. Ein historisch-kritischer Beitrag zur Geschichte der Haggada, der Tannaiten und der Amoräer*. Vienna 1902.
20. Sabbatai Zevi, 1626-76, was a Sephardic rabbi and Cabalist. See J. Kastein, *Sabbatai Zeivi, der Messias von Ismir*, Berlin 1930, and Gershom Scholem, *Sabbatai Zwi. Der mystische Messias*, Frankfurt/Main 1992. Rudolf Steiner does not mention that Sabbatai Zevi converted to Islam after 'retiring' as Messiah.
21. This remark relates to the 'Star of the East' order which at the time had just been founded by Annie Besant and C.W. Leadbeater and which then proclaimed the Indian boy Krishnamurti to be the vehicle of the reincarnated Christ, something which Rudolf Steiner had to reject. It ultimately led to his separation from the Theosophical Society.
22. More details about this can be found in the lectures of the volume *Das esoterische Christentum und die geistige Führung der Menschheit*, GA 131. *From Jesus to Christ*, 1991.
23. During 3-5 January 1910, Rudolf Steiner gave 11 lectures on 'The Gospel of John and the three other Gospels' in Stockholm. While the lectures given in Kassel six months earlier on a similar theme (*Das Johannes-Evangelium im Verhältnis zu den drei anderen Evangelien*), GA 112, were taken down by the experienced stenographer Walter Vegelahn, the notes made by various listeners at the Stockholm lectures tend to be of a more fragmentary character. The following notes exist in the archive of the Rudolf Steiner Nachlassverwaltung: (i) detailed handwritten notes in two versions by Marie Steiner-von Sivers; (ii) a

note of all lectures in Swedish; (iii) a note of individual lectures in Swedish; (iv) notes of four lectures in German. As a result of the difficult situation faced by the editors regarding these sources, publication of these lectures as part of the complete works has for the time being been put on hold. It is not possible to specify a publication date at this time as editing the various notes is a very demanding and time-consuming task.

24. The volume *Kosmogonie*, GA 94, *An Esoteric Cosmology*, 1987, which contains Edouard Schuré's summaries of the lectures in Paris, includes a corresponding passage—although without mention of the cometary aspect—on p. 102. Rudolf Steiner returned to this subject once more in Stuttgart on 5 March 1910; see the volume *Das Ereignis der Christus-Erscheinung in der ätherischen Welt*, *The Reappearance of Christ in the Etheric*, 2003, GA 118, p. 102.

25. Named after the English physicist and astronomer Edmond Halley (1656-1742) who in 1720 became Astronomer Royal and director of the Greenwich Observatory. He observed this comet in 1682 and calculated its return for 1759. It returned again to the earth's atmosphere in 1835 and 1910. Remarks on the effects and tasks of this celestial planet can also be found in the volume *Das Ereignis der Christus-Erscheinung in der ätherischen Welt*, GA 118, pp. 106 ff. and pp. 136 ff.

26. In Part 3, Book 2, p. 57 of the *Deutsche Nationalliteratur* edition, 100 volumes, *Goethes Werke*, XIX.

27. Baron d'Holbach, 1723-89, French writer of German descent. Radical materialist and atheist, he wrote 300 articles under the pseudonym Paul-Henri Thiry d'Holbach for the *Encyclopédie* published by Diderot and d'Alembert. His work *Système de la Nature* was publicly burned at the behest of the French parliament.

28. Only a few months later Rudolf Steiner gave a whole cycle of lectures in Bern on the Gospel of Matthew, *According to Matthew*, GA 123, as well as in 1912 in Basel on the Gospel of Mark, GA 139.

29. Berlin, 5 May 1910 in *Transforming the Soul*, GA 59.

30. William Shakespeare, 1564-1616. See lecture in Dornach, 24 February 1922 in *Alte und neue Einweihungsmethoden*, GA 210. *Old and New Methods of Initiation*, 1991.

31. Leonardo da Vinci, 1452-1519, Raphael (Raffaello Santi) 1483-1520. See Kunstgeschichte als Abbild innerer geistiger Impulse, GA 292 (separate volumes for text and illustrations).

32. Homer, Odyssey, Book XI, lines 488-91.

33. Rudolf Steiner gave lectures in Palermo in mid-April 1910 (see the lecture of 18 April 1910 in the volume *Das Ereignis der Christus-Erscheinung in der ätherischen Welt*, GA 118). There is no transcript of the lecture about Empedocles.

34. See the following lecture which was given in commemoration of the anniversary of the death of the founder of the Theosophical Society, H.P. Blavatsky, who died on 8 May 1891.

35. See note 29.

36. Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (Ekatorinoslav, southern Russia 1831-1891 London) founded the Theosophical Society with H.S. Olcott in New York on 17 November 1875, which soon thereafter moved its headquarters to India (Adyar/Madras). See *Die okkulte Bewegung im 19. Jahrhundert und ihre Beziehung zur Weltkultur*, GA 254, *The Occult Movement in the Nineteenth Century*, 1973, as well as *Die Geschichte und die Bedingungen der anthroposophischen Bewegung im Verhältnis zur Anthroposophischen Gesellschaft*, GA 258.

37. Arthur Drews, 1865-1935, philosopher and pupil of Eduard von Hartmann. He was one of the representatives of the non-denominational monistic movement. *Die Christus-Mythe* was published in 1909. An amended and extended edition (10 and 11 thousand) was published in Jena in 1910 at the time that Rudolf Steiner was giving his lectures. See part 1, *The Christian Jesus*, I. *The Pauline Jesus*; and part 2, *The witness of Paul*. The lecture 'Did Jesus live?' appeared under the title *Berliner Religionsgespräch. Hat Jesus gelebt? Reden über die Christus-Mythe*, gehalten am 31.1. und 1.2.1910 von A. Drews u.a., Berlin and Leipzig 1910. There are various books by Arthur Drews in Rudolf Steiner's library, including the work *Die Christus-Mythe*. Arthur Drews is discussed in greater detail in the volume of the complete works *Die Anthroposophie und ihre Gegner 1919-1921*, GA 255b.

38. 1 Corinthians 15:14.

39. See note 36.

40. Henry Steel Olcott, 1832-1907, co-founder of the Theosophical Society, see note 36. Rudolf Steiner describes him in his autobiography as ‘a gracious personality in whom one could see how through his energy and an extraordinary organizational ability he was able to be Blavatsky's companion in founding, setting up and leading the Theosophical Society’ (Rudolf Steiner, *Mein Lebensgang*, GA 28, p. 427, *An Autobiography*, 2006).

41. See the lecture in Berlin of 23 October 1911 in the volume *Der irdische und kosmische Mensch*, GA 133. *Earthly and Cosmic Man*, 1986.

42. Berlin, 5 May 1910 in *Transforming the Soul*, GA 59.

43. Friedrich Hiebel explored this subject in a book *Paulus und die Erkenntnislehre der Freiheit*, Dornach 1959.

RUDOLF STEINER'S COLLECTED WORKS

The German Edition of Rudolf Steiner's Collected Works (the Gesamtausgabe [GA] published by Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Dornach, Switzerland) presently runs to 354 titles, organized either by type of work (written or spoken), chronology, audience (public or other), or subject (education, art, etc.). For ease of comparison, the Collected Works in English [CW] follows the German organization exactly. A complete listing of the CWs follows with literal translations of the German titles. Other than in the case of the books published in his lifetime, titles were rarely given by Rudolf Steiner himself, and were often provided by the editors of the German editions. The titles in English are not necessarily the same as the German; and, indeed, over the past seventy-five years have frequently been different, with the same book sometimes appearing under different titles.

For ease of identification and to avoid confusion, we suggest that readers looking for a title should do so by CW number. Because the work of creating the Collected Works of Rudolf Steiner is an ongoing process, with new titles being published every year, we have not indicated in this listing which books are presently available. To find out what titles in the Collected Works are currently in print, please check our website at www.rudolfsteinerpress.com (or www.steinerbooks.org for US readers).

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- CW 2 Outlines of an Epistemology of the Goethean World View, with Special
- CW 3 Truth and Science
- CW 4 The Philosophy of Freedom

- CW 4a Documents to 'The Philosophy of Freedom'
- CW 5 Friedrich Nietzsche, A Fighter against His Own Time
- CW 6 Goethe's Worldview
- CW 6a Now in CW 30
- CW 7 Mysticism at the Dawn of Modern Spiritual Life and Its Relationship with
- CW 8 Christianity as Mystical Fact and the Mysteries of Antiquity
- CW 9 Theosophy: An Introduction into Supersensible World Knowledge and Its
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- CW 32 Collected Essays on Literature, 1884–1902
- CW 33 Biographies and Biographical Sketches, 1894–1905
- CW 34 Lucifer-Gnosis: Foundational Essays on Anthroposophy and Reports fro
- CW 35 Philosophy and Anthroposophy: Collected Essays, 1904–1923
- CW 36 The Goetheanum-Idea in the Middle of the Cultural Crisis of the Present
- CW 37 Now in CWs 260a and 251
- CW 38 Letters, Vol. 1: 1881–1890

CW 39 Letters, Vol. 2: 1890–1925

CW 40 Truth-Wrought Words

CW 40a Sayings, Poems and Mantras; Supplementary Volume

CW 42 Now in CWs 264–266

CW 43 Stage Adaptations

CW 44 On the Four Mystery Dramas. Sketches, Fragments and Paralipomena of

CW 45 Anthroposophy: A Fragment from the Year 1910

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- CW 52 Spiritual Teachings Concerning the Soul and Observation of the World
- CW 53 The Origin and Goal of the Human Being
- CW 54 The Riddles of the World and Anthroposophy
- CW 55 Knowledge of the Supersensible in Our Times and Its Meaning for Life
- CW 56 Knowledge of the Soul and of the Spirit
- CW 57 Where and How Does One Find the Spirit?
- CW 58 The Metamorphoses of the Soul Life. Paths of Soul Experiences: Part O
- CW 59 The Metamorphoses of the Soul Life. Paths of Soul Experiences: Part T
- CW 60 The Answers of Spiritual Science to the Biggest Questions of Existence
- CW 61 Human History in the Light of Spiritual Research
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- CW 64 Out of Destiny-Burdened Times
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- CW 66 Spirit and Matter, Life and Death
- CW 67 The Eternal in the Human Soul. Immortality and Freedom
- CW 68 Public lectures in various cities, 1906–1918
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CW 121	The Mission of Individual Folk-Souls in Connection with Germanic
CW 122	The Secrets of the Biblical Creation-Story. The Six-Day Work in the
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CW 125	Paths and Goals of the Spiritual Human Being. Life Questions in the
CW 126	Occult History. Esoteric Observations of the Karmic Relationships of
CW 127	The Mission of the New Spiritual Revelation. The Christ-Event as the
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CW 135	Reincarnation and Karma and their Meaning for the Culture of the 19th
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CW 144	The Mysteries of the East and of Christianity
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CW 151	Human Thought and Cosmic Thought

CW 152	Preliminary Stages to the Mystery of Golgotha
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CW 163	Coincidence, Necessity and Providence. Imaginative Knowledge an
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SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF RUDOLF STEINER

- 1829: June 23: birth of Johann Steiner (1829–1910)—Rudolf Steiner's father
- 1834: May 8: birth of Franciska Blie (1834–1918)—Rudolf Steiner's mother
- 1860: May 16: marriage of Johann Steiner and Franciska Blie.
- 1861: February 25: birth of Rudolf Joseph Lorenz Steiner in Kraljice, Lower Austria.
- 1862: Summer: the family moves to Mödling, Lower Austria.
- 1863: The family moves to Pottschach, Lower Austria, near the Steyregg river.
- 1864: November 15: birth of Rudolf Steiner's sister, Leopoldine (1864–1918)
- 1866: July 28: birth of Rudolf Steiner's deaf-mute brother, Gustav
- 1867: Rudolf Steiner enters the village school. Following a disagreement with his teacher, he is expelled.
- 1868: A critical experience. Unknown to the family, an aunt dies in a fire.
- 1869: The family moves to the peaceful, rural village of Neudörfel, Lower Austria.
- 1870: Through a book lent to him by his tutor, he discovers geometry and trigonometry.
- 1871: Though his parents are not religious, Rudolf Steiner becomes a member of the Catholic Church.
- 1872: Rudolf Steiner transfers to grammar school in Wiener-Neusiedl.
- 1873–75: Through his teachers and on his own, Rudolf Steiner has made significant progress in mathematics and science.
- 1876: Rudolf Steiner begins tutoring other students. He learns bookkeeping and arithmetic.
- 1877: Rudolf Steiner discovers Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, which leads him to study philosophy.
- 1878: He studies extensively in contemporary psychology and philosophy.
- 1879: Rudolf Steiner graduates from high school with honours. He is awarded a diploma.
- October 1879–1883: Rudolf Steiner attends the Technical College in Vienna—to study engineering.
- 1880: Rudolf Steiner attends lectures on Schiller and Goethe by Karl Julius Schröer.
- 1881: January: ‘... I didn't sleep a wink. I was busy with philosophy.’
- July: ‘I am not one of those who dives into the day like an animal.’
- August: Steiner puts down on paper for the first time thoughts for a ‘new science.’
- 1881–1882: Felix Koguzki, the herb gatherer, reveals himself to be the embodiment of the ‘new science.’
- 1882: Through the offices of Karl Julius Schröer, Rudolf Steiner is appointed as a teacher.
- 1883: Rudolf Steiner completes his college studies and begins working as a teacher.
- 1884: First volume of Goethe's Scientific Writings (CW 1) appears.

1885: While continuing to edit Goethe's writings, Rudolf Steiner r
 1886: May: Rudolf Steiner sends Kürschner the manuscript of Our
 1887: At the beginning of the year, Rudolf Steiner is very sick. As
 1888: January-July: Rudolf Steiner assumes editorship of the 'Ger
 1889: Rudolf Steiner first reads Nietzsche (Beyond Good and Evil
 1890: Rudolf Steiner finishes volume 3 of Goethe's scientific writi
 1891: Volume 3 of the Kürschner edition of Goethe appears. Mear
 1892: Rudolf Steiner continues work at the Goethe-Schiller Archi
 1893: Rudolf Steiner begins his habit of producing many reviews
 1894: Rudolf Steiner meets Elisabeth Forster Nietzsche, the philos
 1895: May, Nietzsche, A Fighter against His Time appears.
 1896: January 22: Rudolf Steiner sees Friedrich Nietzsche for the
 1897: Rudolf Steiner finishes the manuscript of Goethe's Worldvie
 1898: Rudolf Steiner is very active as an editor in the political, art
 1898–99: 'This was a trying time for my soul as I looked at Christiani
 1899: Rudolf Steiner begins teaching and giving lectures and lectu
 1900: 'I thought that the turn of the century must bring humanity a
 1901: In continual financial straits, Rudolf Steiner's early friends M
 1902: Beginning in January, Rudolf Steiner attends the opening of
 1903: Rudolf Steiner holds about 300 lectures and seminars. In M.
 1904: Rudolf Steiner continues lecturing at the Workers' College a
 1905: This year, Steiner ends his non-Theosophical lecturing activ
 1906: Expansion of Theosophical work. Rudolf Steiner gives abou
 1907: Further expansion of the German Theosophical Movement a
 1908: The movement grows (membership: 1,150). Lecturing expa
 1909: An Outline of Esoteric Science appears. Lecturing and trave
 1910: New themes: The Reappearance of Christ in the Etheric (CV
 1911: The crisis in the Theosophical Society deepens. In January,
 1912: Despite the ongoing, now increasing crisis in the Theosophi
 1913: Expulsion of the German section from the Theosophical Soc
 1914: Building continues on the Johannes Bau (Goetheanum) in D
 1915: Building continues. Life after death becomes a major theme
 1916: Rudolf Steiner begins work with Edith Maryon (1872–1924
 1917: Russian Revolution. The U.S. enters the war. Building conti
 1918: March 18: peace treaty of Brest-Litovsk—'Now everything
 1919: Focus on the threefold social organism: tireless travel, coun

- 1920: The Waldorf School flourishes. New threefold initiatives. For
- 1921: Rudolf Steiner continues his intensive work on cultural rene
- 1922: The first half of the year involves very active public lecturir
- 1923: Despite the fire, Rudolf Steiner continues his work unabatec
- 1924: January 1: having founded the Anthroposophical Society an
- 1925: Rudolf Steiner, while continuing to work, continues to weak