



# *Guardian Angels*

*Connecting with our Spiritual Guides and Helpers*

Selected Lectures by  
R U D O L F   S T E I N E R



RUDOLF STEINER (1861–1925) called his spiritual philosophy ‘anthroposophy’, meaning ‘wisdom of the human being’. As a highly developed seer, he based his work on direct knowledge and perception of spiritual dimensions. He initiated a modern and universal ‘science of spirit’, accessible to anyone willing to exercise clear and unprejudiced thinking.

From his spiritual investigations Steiner provided suggestions for the renewal of many activities, including education (both general and special), agriculture, medicine, economics, architecture, science, philosophy, religion and the arts. Today there are thousands of schools, clinics, farms and other organizations involved in practical work based on his principles. His many published works feature his research into the spiritual nature of the human being, the evolution of the world and humanity, and methods of personal development. Steiner wrote some 30 books and delivered over 6000 lectures across Europe. In 1924 he founded the General Anthroposophical Society, which today has branches throughout the world.

# GUARDIAN ANGELS

*Connecting with our spiritual guides and  
helpers*

Rudolf Steiner

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## Introduction

Belief in a guardian angel appointed to guide and watch over each human being is part of most religious systems and is gaining ground again with newer spiritual teachings. It is, however, often dismissed as mere fancy or figurative speech although many stories abound of the miraculous intervention of these beings in the lives of people—especially children—when threatened with danger. According to esoteric teachings the angels are the spiritual beings closest to the human being, whom they guard, guide and lead from one incarnation to the next, bearing the ‘higher self; but the ranks of the others (9 in all<sup>1</sup>), often called ‘choirs of angels’ or ‘gods’, which were known to spiritual teachers such as St Paul, Dionysius the Areopagite and Thomas Aquinas, have become less familiar names in more recent centuries.

Due to his spiritual capacities and insights, Rudolf Steiner was very conscious that human beings today, whilst needing to develop their own independence of thought, or ‘ego-consciousness’, have become more and more sundered from their spiritual counterparts, which few now have the clairvoyance to perceive—or, if they do, they lack the discriminatory knowledge with which to discern the nature of the being in question. One of his aims was to enable people to connect again with these spiritual beings, not just for their own benefit but for the whole destiny of the earth’s evolution and the other kingdoms of nature. His intention was to lead people from *belief* to recognition, *knowledge* and *understanding* of them, through the development of the often dormant higher human faculties. But first we have to be furnished with the necessary description of those whom we may encounter.

In addition to three important cycles of lectures on these nine ranks,<sup>2</sup> he gave a number of others most of which have been published. There are, however, some which until now have lain hidden in very early publications or journals, and which throw more light on our relationship to these angelic kingdoms. Each of the chosen lectures has something specific to say about the angels—the guardian spirits, and also in some cases, about the other ranks and their interrelationships.

The first lecture was given to the workers at the Goetheanum, the centre for anthroposophy in Switzerland, in response to a dramatic account of a young boy's life being saved. Steiner takes pains to show here *how* a guardian angel is able to intervene in everyday life, throwing much light on the interpenetration of the world around us with the spiritual.

Lectures Two and Three deal with the guardian angel's relationship to the other members of the spiritual hierarchies, and how these beings live in our dreams and life of imagination. There is something else very important for us to know—different kinds of angels exist and some would hinder the evolutionary development of mankind. If we can recognize these other beings we are less likely to be misled by them. Steiner does not speak of the popularity of 'channelling', but we would do well to remember this when faced with such experiences.

Lecture Four gives us the remarkable fact that each night in sleep we plan the day ahead with our angel. *'People should be filled with the conviction that in the course of the day they should help to bring about what they prepared with their angel the previous night.'* And how easy it is to forget it. This lecture is especially potent as it was given against the background of the suffering of the 1914-18 war. It also contains some important comments on language—especially English.

The fifth lecture continues with connections to the other ranks of the hierarchies and to our own subtle 'bodies', and how the guardian angels stand back somewhat with respect to adults and their protective watch over us becomes less automatic. As adults we now have to raise our consciousness to a spiritual level, befitting an angel, and are no longer protected in the same way as in childhood. There are those adversary beings, too, who would sever the connection altogether and imprison us in a web of untruths. These are the beings who inspire materialistic thoughts, to whom Steiner gave the name 'Ahrimanic' after *Ahriman*, the Persian name for the opponent of the light.

The last lecture should interest those who want to understand the properties of minerals and crystals, especially



in relation to healing, for we learn of the angels' connection to these, and how the higher beings are alive in all the kingdoms of nature around us. The lecture concludes with some unexpected astronomical ideas on the spiralling movement of sun and earth, which Steiner was to refer to again in later astronomical lectures, but is rarely taken up and understood.

Today many people are awakening to angelic guidance in their daily lives and are seeking it consciously, and it is hoped that these lectures will offer a fuller picture to aid the understanding of their experiences and to enable them to make the communication more conscious. This growing intimacy is undoubtedly to be welcomed, but there are dangers and pitfalls of which people need to become aware. Not all 'spirits' are beneficent, any more than are all humans. It is beyond the scope here to take this further but it is hoped that the lectures will awaken seed-thoughts to help readers with their own discoveries and insights, for who knows (to paraphrase St Paul) when we may entertain an angel unawares.

Margaret Jonas

# PART I

## Lecture One

### Guardian angels

**Rudolf Steiner:** Does anyone have a question?

**One of the Workmen:** I would like to describe an experience from my childhood which is connected with destiny and which religion, for example, would explain with the term guardian angel. As a small boy of nine or ten I happened to be setting up skittles when suddenly a voice called out: 'Get out of the way!' so urgently that I immediately jumped aside. The next moment the large ball hurtled over the spot where I had been standing. I asked who had called me, but nobody had the answer to that, and the voice could not possibly have come from there.

Another example happened in a smithy where people brought their ploughshares to be sharpened. There was a huge wheel there. About five or six of us boys were playing around it. I was perhaps eleven years old. I was standing on the spoke of the wheel to pull it down. I was enjoying myself. I told the other boys to pull out the catch so that I could move up from one spoke to the next. They all pulled hard, but they could not budge it. Although I was the smallest, I went myself to have a look. The wheel whizzed round tremendously fast, and I would certainly have been killed if they had succeeded in loosing the catch.

I would be glad if Herr Doktor would tell us whether in cases such as these a higher power might be at work.

**Rudolf Steiner:** Yes, I would like to talk to you about matters of this kind, but they must of course be discussed on a scientific basis. Anthroposophical spiritual science does not take these things the way they are very often taken by people who succumb to superstition and suchlike. These things should also be looked at in a thoroughly scientific way of course—for they are far more important for life than people usually think. I

would like to begin by telling you something by way of preparation.

You know, people actually notice only a very small part of life. A large part goes unnoticed, and because they do not notice it they believe this part of life does not exist. For example if someone is going past a house and at that very moment a slate falls off the roof and kills him, people notice that very clearly, and it causes a great sensation among the acquaintances of the victim and even beyond. People have a lot to say about it. It has come to their notice, you see, and so they talk about it.

But now look at the following instance. Someone wants to go out in the morning. However, at the last moment he notices that he has forgotten to do something which absolutely has to be done, so he is delayed for five minutes. Then he sets out. In this case the slate falls down five minutes before he goes past, so when he comes along it does him no harm. If he had gone by five minutes earlier the slate would have cracked his head open. But nobody talks about this of course, for nobody can see the connections. Nobody can possibly know what would have happened if he had not been delayed for a few minutes. He himself naturally forgets about that. It is not the sort of thing people notice, yet all the same it is part of life. Innumerable things of this kind take place in which our destiny prevents us from having an accident, but we just do not notice them. The reason why we do not study them is because it is not so easy to see the connections. People follow them up only if they are so striking that they cannot help noticing them.

There was once a man who often sat at his desk, and the rest of the family lived downstairs. He spent a lot of time in his room on the upper floor. Then one day a member of his family dreamt that in a few days time a terrible accident was going to happen to this man, and he would be shot. So what did he do? When he had been told about the dream and advised to be very careful because he could be shot, he decided not to go out, but stay all day in his room. Yet he had a nasty feeling about the whole affair, for he had often been aware that such things as prophetic dreams exist—this was some while ago, when

people took more notice of these things. He had this uncomfortable feeling, and because of this he became more aware of certain things. So it happened that at a certain moment he became so restless that he had to stand up and move away from his chair. And at that very moment a bullet whizzed right past his chair! There actually was an old gun that had been hanging in his ante-room for a long time—the door was open—and a servant had taken it down. The servant did not realize it was loaded and, holding it carelessly, he triggered it off so that the shot went exactly in the direction where his master had been sitting.

If you look you will see a double interlinking of destiny. First of all there is a commonplace dream, while on the other hand, because his destiny has not yet run its course and he has to stay alive, an inner urge gets him out of the way at the vital moment. So now we can connect it up with the other matter. He could also at the vital moment quite easily have heard: ‘Get out of the way!’ like you did. How would that have come about? He could just as well have heard that. You know, when we speak about a spiritual world we must realize that we must not allow ourselves to say stupid things about it. But that is just what we would be doing if we were to believe—as a lot of people do, at least those who are spiritualists—that in the spiritual world there are Germans, French people, English people, Spaniards and Chinese people. But these people would have to be there, if you were able to hear ‘Out of the way!’ from the spiritual world, for in that case there would have to be a spiritual being who speaks your language. It would have to speak French of course to a Frenchman. For if it were to speak another language the Frenchman might think it was either an inarticulate sound or even think it was a dirty word. So it would be a very foolish thought to imagine that a spirit had spoken the words ‘Get out of the way!’, for a spirit can be neither a German nor a Frenchman nor an Englishman. In fact this is what is so ridiculous about the spiritualists, that they think a medium is putting them in touch with the dead, and when they get an answer they think spirits speak like that. Of course they don’t. Despite the fact that spirits exist they do not speak that way. No, the truth is like this.

This kind of connection with the spiritual world, which enables us to talk scientifically about it, presupposes that we get out of the habit of assuming that the spirits speak in an earthly language. We must first of all acquaint ourselves with the supersensible world, and then be able to translate into an ordinary language what the spirits say in a supersensible language. If the man sitting at his desk had heard ‘Get out of the way!’—it could very well have happened that way. But let me tell you what really happens.

You have heard me say that the whole of the human being is filled with the power of reason. I have often explained to you that the liver perceives processes in the human abdomen, and the lungs perceive things, in fact the whole human being is a sense organ. What the heart perceives is the blood circulation. In normal life, however, we do not use these organs for perceiving. We use our eyes and our ears and so on, and not these organs. These organs have a very definite characteristic. Take for instance the liver. You can cut the liver out of the body; it is an organ you know from animals because you have probably seen certain kinds of livers, goose livers at least. But this organ has an etheric body that is connected with the rest of the etheric body, it has an astral body too and finally the ego works through it. So this organ, the liver, has a certain spiritual element in it. In your head you perceive spirit, but in your liver you do not perceive spirit consciously. The way you are organized in ordinary life you are aware of none of this, just as I told you recently that you cannot perceive the spirit in the small lens of your eye. Yet you can see the whole of the sky with the small lens of your eye. Actually, spiritual beings hardly speak through the organs of the head at all. For there the whole world is speaking; the stars in their movements and so on speak through the organs of the head. But spiritual beings really do speak through the other organs, for instance the liver. The stomach speaks to the liver—but spiritual beings do so as well—and also to the lungs. Spiritual beings speak to all those organs we do not use in normal conscious life.

While the head is actually geared to perceive only what it sees outside in the outer world, the inner organism of the human being, the lower organs, are geared to have perceptions

in the spiritual world. These organs are extremely delicate. Very much so, and this can be deduced from the conditions that arise from them. These are usually not noticed because so much is lacking in medicine today. For instance you will certainly have been aware at some time that someone who suddenly becomes afraid gets an attack of diarrhoea. People don't notice it because they cannot possibly imagine that diarrhoea can be caused by fear. But it can. Something in the outer world is making itself felt. But the spiritual world can also make itself felt. And these organs do in fact perceive what is going on in the spiritual world, quite different things from those going on in the outer world. I have often told you that we human beings pass through various earth lives. If in days gone by people had been expected to pass through a number of earth lives unaided, they would not have been capable of it. When human beings grow and develop here on earth from childhood onwards, they require a guide, a teacher or something of the kind, otherwise they would remain stupid. Human beings really do have this kind of guide in the spiritual world, who leads them from one earth life to another, and who in fact does take care in each particular life, not of the things over which we have a free hand, but of the things we cannot think about, but with which our human organization is connected. So this is how it comes about that if someone is in a state of anxiety whilst sitting at his desk he can become especially sensitive to what lies ahead of him. We must assess this sensitivity in the right way. We must distinguish quite clearly whether this sensitivity is directed to the spiritual side of things or can after all be explained in physical terms. If we are not prepared to be discerning we cannot talk about such things at all.

I would like to give you another example of this kind. There was once a person who was ill, living on the fourth floor of a house, and the doctor had to visit her every day even when she was well, for her condition was rather unstable. The doctor did not visit at the same time every day but at quite different times, yet every day the invalid knew right upon the fourth floor precisely when he had arrived, even when he was still on the ground floor. Whilst he was still outside the house, outside the front door, she knew he was coming. She invariably knew

he was there whilst he was still in the entrance hall of the house, before he had put a foot on the first step of the stairs. The other residents told the doctor this, and said that she knew it clairvoyantly. The doctor was a bit dubious at first. Doctors don't believe that sort of thing immediately. But when the people kept on pestering him and telling him that their daughter was definitely clairvoyant and knew when he had arrived downstairs—he responded by saying he would put the matter to the test. He took off his boots very quietly before he went through the door, and that time she did not know he was there! Things like this do occur as well, you know, and you have to make thorough investigations. For this invalid had simply acquired very sensitive hearing through lying on her back for so long, and had heard the footsteps from below that other people could not hear.

If, without hesitation, you explain everything by saying it is clairvoyance you have of course no right to talk about spiritual worlds. One must know how to distinguish clearly between what can be perceived with the senses and the things that are beyond being perceived in that way.

The important things here, however, show that the senses can become hypersensitive in a certain way. For in normal life a person is of course not capable of immediately hearing footsteps on the ground floor from right up on the fourth floor. But just as the senses in the head and the senses in general can become more sensitive, so can the inner organs, which are sense organs too of course, become more sensitive to spiritual matters. And if the liver, for instance, senses that it could be shot that day, then it is particularly sensitive, and the result of this is that the liver hears—though not in the form of Italian or English—the warning coming from the spiritual being who is of course real.

But just imagine, now comes the miracle! The liver has to pass this message on to the head, otherwise the person cannot receive it. So on the way from the liver to the head it is translated into the language the person speaks. This is the miraculous part; in fact, this is where it becomes a riddle. This really makes you realize what a remarkable creature a human being is. He is not only capable of getting hunches but, what is



much more wonderful, of actually translating unconsciously what comes to him in a spiritual language into his own language.

From this, however, we can see that all that is written down in some spiritualistic circles is being said to the region of the abdomen. But people are determined not to admit it. They imagine the spirits speak Italian or French, yet it all comes from human beings themselves. There is nevertheless a relation to the spiritual world in these seances, only it is a very bad one. This is then explained in all kinds of different ways.

What you see from this is that when something like this ‘Get out of the way!’ occurs, we have to realize that the actual connection with the spiritual world is still an obscure one. You do not have the right idea if you imagine that your guardian angel whispers in your ear. What you have to know is the round-about way in which it happens. Then you will understand another thing too, namely that people can so easily refute something like this. For a normal person, hearing the story of the man taking his boots off, believes it to be a refutation, and says: People believe it is clairvoyance, clairaudiance, but all it is is a more highly developed hearing. So they presume it must be the same in the other case too.

That is certainly something you must first of all investigate! And then you will see, if you are careful enough, that in very fact the spiritual world is constantly working into human destinies in these round-about ways, especially strongly in childhood, of course. Why in childhood? Because the astral body is much more active then. The astral body works much more intensely in childhood than it does later on. Whilst the liver is still soft, the astral body can transmit to it what it hears in the spiritual world. Later on, when the liver has become hard, it can no longer do this.

Just imagine the full significance of an experience such as our friend over there had, namely when one is actually faced with death, and what is predestined in the outer nature of things does not take place. For at that moment, when you heard ‘Get out of the way!’, you could quite easily have come a cropper, couldn’t you? [**Reply:** Yes.] You would have been

killed. Such instances often occur in human life. But a great many of them pass unnoticed. This was one that was noticed; in fact, it came very forcibly to your notice.

Now before you entered your present earth life you went through many previous ones, and what you experienced in earlier lives needs to come to expression as it should. For instance it may be required that you have a really long life, so that everything set in motion in earlier lives can take place. This may even be in contradiction to external nature. Due to outer circumstances I may be exposed to an accident, or could have to die, and it could happen that if I die I am actually dying at a disproportionately earlier age than planned in an earlier incarnation. It is not right, according to my previous earth life, that I die so soon, because I still have something to do on earth. But I might die. Don't imagine that it is absolutely assured that I won't die! The accident could take place and I could die. But if I were to die my whole destiny would be changed. So this spiritual being who guides a human being from one life to another can step in and warn him. There is always a reason why this spiritual being is able to do it. But the circumstances are of course extremely complex, and an occasion may arise when this being, who wishes to guard the human being—if we want to say it this way—is subject to other beings who prevent it from doing so. Battles of this nature can certainly take place in the spiritual world. However, if wicked beings—if I may use this expression—have no particular interest in this matter, then the warning comes through. And in your case it did. The chances of very special things of this kind happening, even in outer circumstances, are beyond number.

With regard to the second case in your life you told us about, you were surprised, weren't you, that the wheel did not turn? For if it had done so you could not have avoided death. But the others could not start the wheel, only you could do that. Why was this? On the surface you could not see at all why this was so. [**Reply:** No!] The reason behind it was that for that moment the spiritual being who wished to warn you and keep you alive paralysed the will of the other boys. This always takes place through the human beings themselves and

not in an external way or through some other agency. In that moment the will of the others was paralysed, and they were unable to move their muscles. That is what these things are like, and this is the way they are related. So if you want to talk of the spiritual world you must always be certain that the spiritual world is working through human beings. Just as you cannot see a colour without having eyes, without this inner human activity you cannot perceive the spiritual world. You must always take notice of this if you want to be properly scientific and not become superstitious. For it is a fact that what already exists on the earth, like the various languages, does not apply to the spiritual world, for the only languages that apply there are those that we first have to learn on the earth.

If you want to enter the spiritual world—and I have described the sort of exercises you have to do to enter the spiritual world—the most important thing you have to do as you approach spiritual regions is to be able to lose the habit of thinking. Not for always, that would be terrible, but for those moments when you are endeavouring to enter the spiritual world. For human thinking is only meant for this earthly world. That is why thinking is so closely related to speaking. In the physical world we actually think in words, and we will only come near the spiritual world if we gradually get out of the habit of thinking in words.

I will now tell you what it is like when a human being really enters the spiritual world. Imagine that at the moment when our friend over there experienced those happenings and heard the words ‘Get out of the way!’ he had been clairvoyant, properly clairvoyant. What would have happened? Then he would not have needed to carry out that clever business inside, of translating first of all into German the message given him by a spiritual being, but it would have come to him in a different way. For he would have learnt that the same spiritual being can give signs by doing gestures. The spiritual beings do not speak in words but make gestures, very complicated ones—not of course the sort of gestures a deaf and dumb person does, but they do make gestures. In most instances people are not satisfied with these gestures because, like spiritualists, they

want to hear something of course. But in the actual spiritual world that is not how it is, and things are not audible with our external ears. It is incredible that a reasonable person can imagine that he can hear spirits with physical ears, for physical ears cannot listen to them. It is nonsense to believe that physical ears could hear the spirits. It has to be the astral body of one of our organs, of course, that hears the spirits. But that is not a real seeing and hearing, but knowing how to grasp the signs these beings show you.

So our friend, if he had been clairvoyant, would, instead of hearing 'Get out of the way!' have seen a spiritual picture as though someone were kind of pushing him out of the way. And if he had perceived this properly in an inward way he would not have had to translate it into 'Get out of the way!' All this, though, happens without any sound or movement, and people are not used to receiving the spiritual world quietly, peacefully, and without any words. It would not enter people's minds with the approach of danger, even to *want* to remain absolutely calm. They get agitated, and just because of this agitation they cannot perceive the spiritual world. So if nevertheless destiny has to speak out, it has to speak in the manner that needs to be translated.

There are also two kinds of people, as you know, those who can think well in a mathematical way, and those who cannot do so at all; those who are good at doing sums, and those who are no good at them. There are these different capacities. But in the very act of making a real effort to think mathematically you reach real clairvoyance more easily than if you haven't got a clue of what mathematical thinking is about. This is the reason why people have such difficulty in perceiving the spiritual world. For the people who acquire an education today are usually those who have gone through all sorts of things like Greek, Latin and literature, all the things where one can think sloppily. In fact most of the so-called educated and scholarly people have learnt to think in a sloppy way only because they think in the sort of way in which the ancient Romans and Greeks actually thought, and the others learn it from them. So today there is a terribly sloppy way of thinking, the kind of thinking that has no real energy in it. This is why

nowadays people cannot really understand the kind of things that are brought down from the spiritual world. If people had really sharp thinking they would far more readily come to understand what exists in the spiritual world. You can see from the kind of things that have gone on externally in the last few centuries how human beings are bent on not getting as far as the spiritual world. I will give you an example of this.

When a man by the name of George Stephenson first drew attention to the fact that coaches could be made with iron wheels that travel along rails, it was presented to the experts of his time.<sup>1</sup> This was not very long ago. Then the experts started to make calculations, and went into it properly. What did they arrive at? They concluded that if this is the rail and this the wheel [a drawing was made] and the wheel is expected to go along the rail, no way would the coach move forward. It couldn't happen. They went on with their calculations and came to the conclusion that the wheel would only move forward if the rail had cogs like this and the wheel also had cogs, so that they would intermesh. Then it would go. The experts calculated that if the coaches had cogwheels and the rails also had cogs into which the coaches' cogwheels fitted the coaches would move, and they proved that this was the only way to make railway trains move. But you know that it works splendidly today without the need of cogwheels and cogged rails!

What did the people do? It is not at all so long ago. They do calculations, but they keep these entirely up in their heads, and do not let the rest of their being take part in them. So their mathematics becomes fuzzy and apathetic, whereas mathematics is the very thing to make you clear and bright. But over the last century people have actually turned away from doing arithmetic, and because of this all the rest of their thinking has become chaotic. In 1835, when the point was reached when they no longer debated about 'cogwheels' but the first railway in Germany was constructed between Furth and Nuremberg, they called the Bavarian Council of Medical Practitioners together to ask them whether it would be all right on health grounds for them to build it. The document they produced is extremely interesting, and it is not as long ago as

you might think—less than a century. The verdict of this gathering of learned gentlemen was that it was better not to build railways, for the people sitting in them would become extremely stressed. If they were forced to build them, however, they would at least have to erect high fences on each side of the train, so that the farmers would not be given concussion of the brain from the speed of the passing trains. This is included in the experts' documents.

That is the sort of judgement people came to. But do not imagine that nowadays they come to any different kind of conclusions about the things that really indicate progress. They do not judge any differently today. For if we now laugh with hindsight about what happened in 1835—in another hundred years people will be able to laugh with hindsight about what is happening today. For people have altogether queer notions about things that are new. It was not at all easy to introduce railways, for they went radically against people's usual mode of thought. When, for instance, in Berlin, the first railway to Potsdam was about to be built, the postmaster general had to be consulted, for he supervised the four mailcoaches which travelled each week from Berlin to Potsdam and back, and therefore had to give his expert opinion on whether a railway should be built or not. His verdict was: He sent a mailcoach from Berlin to Potsdam four times a week and hardly anyone travelled on it; so why should they build a railway? Nowadays ten to twelve trains run from Berlin to Potsdam every day, and they are all full. Not just now at the present moment, but they used to be. This is how difficult people have found it over the past few centuries to adapt themselves to what is actually happening in the world. People do not perceive what is taking place, and at most will believe someone who represents external authority. They will sometimes believe a person of that sort. I have a story to that effect.

There was a very famous engineer in England—this episode is only about forty years ago—I believe his name was Varley, a very famous engineer, and everyone recognized how brilliant he was. This is what happened to the famous man. He and his wife went out into the country because his sister-in-law, his wife's sister, was almost at death's door, and they stayed there

for a few days. During the first night this gentleman, the famous engineer, suddenly had such a nightmare that he became paralysed. If a nightmare does not last long then it has no further detrimental effects, does it? But if it persists, and one cannot lift a finger and yet is awake, one can suffocate. He actually could not feel his limbs, so that he could only just register the thought: I am going to suffocate. Remember, however, that there was a person in the house who, they expected, would die in a few days. And apart from that, the house should be kept quiet. So he tried to muster the strength to move, but he couldn't. Then suddenly he saw the sick woman standing beside his bed and, addressing him by his first name, she said 'Get up!'—and that gave him such a shock that he was able to move his limbs again. As he was such an intelligent fellow he knew that this had saved his life. He was extremely relieved that such things can happen. You will understand this, because quite a number of other similar things have happened in the world. People dumb for fifteen or even twenty years have had such a colossal shock that they could suddenly speak again. A huge shock can have a terrible effect on a person, but it can also be beneficial and therapeutic. The following morning, after the gentleman had got up, he paid a visit to his sister-in-law who had been confined to her bed all night. And the first thing she told him, without him mentioning it first—because of course he did not want to tell her about the dream, he wanted to spare her that—was 'Guess what! I had such a strange dream last night. I dreamt I ought to go to you and give you a shock so that you would not suffocate. And I actually did so in my dream.' Her room was several doors distant from his.

This is a story you cannot have doubts about. I am telling it to you solely because it was reported by a person who normally thought very soberly, since he was a matter-of-fact electrician and very famous in his line. I would not like to tell you a story of doubtful origin, but this is one that can be vouched for as reliably as something quoted from the laboratory.

What is behind it? You have often heard me say that at night everyone's ego and astral body leaves the physical body. So

while the patient was asleep only her body as such was in bed, for her ego and astral body were outside. The being that we call the guardian angel could not approach the man directly, for his thinking was of the down-to-earth kind that people have got used to over the past centuries. If our friend over there had been a matter-of-fact thinker—which as a small boy he certainly was not, of course, for he would have been just as unscholarly in those days as he is today—he would not have heard what he heard, for it is drowned, blown away, by that kind of thinking. Remember Varley had this kind of matter-of-fact thinking. So his guardian angel would not have been able to startle him so easily. This particular guardian angel had to go the roundabout way of making use of the astral body of the sick sister-in-law while she was asleep, and he guided it to the man's bed to startle him. The sick sister-in-law would never have known anything about this, of course. If she had been in good health she could easily have forgotten about a so-called dream of this sort, or not even been aware of it. A couple of days after this she died, when the astral body anyway goes into the spiritual world. She had already been preparing for this, and so could remember more easily something that happened to her a few days before her death, because it was similar to what she would experience after she died. Thus she actually knew what had happened.

So you see, if we observe things of this kind properly we arrive at the point where we can actually speak about them in the same way we describe facts in the laboratory; for example, we have a retort over a flame, put sulphur into it and it goes yellow, then brown, and finally red. We can describe this. We can similarly describe the process behind spiritual phenomena if we apply really sound thinking. This is the chief essential. But in our time everything is thrown into confusion because the muddled thinking I have been talking about predominates. I did not tell you about it merely for the sake of talking about it, but in order to draw your attention to the fact that even in the case of a person who needed help with his destiny because he still had something to do on earth, the situation was such that he could not possibly perceive this help directly, so the patient had to be the intermediary. We have to understand the matter in the right way.



I believe I once told you what happened to me in connection with Dr Schleich who died recently in Berlin.<sup>2</sup> He was a famous Berliner, a well-known surgeon who, being cleverer than the other doctors, was inclined to understand things of this nature. The following once happened to Schleich. A man came to him one evening and told him that he had just jabbed his hand with a pen and some ink had got into it. 'You must amputate my hand immediately,' he said, 'otherwise I shall die of blood poisoning.' To which Schleich replied that he would first need to observe the hand for a while. 'No!' said the man, 'It has to be done at once!' 'That is impossible, I cannot undertake to do that,' said Dr Schleich. Then he looked at the wound and said, 'The ink can easily be drawn out, and then the hand will be all right.' But the patient insisted that his hand should be taken off. 'I cannot take your hand off,' said the doctor. To which the man said: 'Then I shall die!' He did not believe that the wound was harmless, and was convinced he would have to die.

This made the doctor very uncomfortable. Then another doctor rang him up and told him: 'This patient tells me he has been to you, but you did not want to amputate his hand. So he has now come to me.' But that doctor was not prepared, either, to cut off the hand for the sake of such a small prick. Schleich did not get a wink of sleep all night, he was feeling so worried.

The following day he went to the house where the patient lived, and found that he had died in the night! A post mortem was performed, and there was no question of blood poisoning. Yet the man had had to die. Well, Schleich came to the simple conclusion that the death was caused by suggestion— as people know today, don't they?—death by autosuggestion. All kinds of things are done under the effect of suggestion. Many things can be achieved by it.

So that you can get an idea about what can be achieved by it I will tell you the following. For example you can say to someone: 'I will put a plaster on you to draw fluid.' But all you do is put on a bit of blotting paper, and still the person gets a huge blister! The soul element is working on the body. You can produce this effect. Nowadays anyone who goes into this matter knows that you can do this. So Schleich told

himself: 'The man imagined he was going to die, and his imagination worked suggestively upon him, so it was death by autosuggestion.'

He refused to believe me when I told him that this was nonsense and that it did not add up that the man had died by autosuggestion since there was something quite different going on there in this case. You see, this man's nerves had gone to pot, because under the strain of modern office life and modern business his nerves had gradually become quite shattered. Some blood had passed into the nerves. It was an easy matter to examine the blood in the veins, and there was nothing wrong there. When the nerves were examined there was only a very small amount of blood there, and this cannot be examined by external means, yet his nerves had nevertheless been destroyed by this infiltration of blood. This had put the man on edge, and it was due to clumsiness that he had pricked his hand with his pen. Without it being very noticeable from outside he was already a marked man destined to die the following night. It was for internal reasons that he had to die, because blood had got into his nervous system. Therefore he had had a premonition and become scared, so that the soul effect was really the exact opposite. Schleich believed he had gone to his death through suggestion. This was not the case, for death would have occurred anyway because of his physical organism, but he had experienced the premonition that death would occur.

You can see that here is a brilliant example of the fact that you have to think properly if you want to see into the spirit world. You have to put your finger on the actual spot where the rub is, otherwise you may be ever such a great authority as a scholar and yet interpret the spiritual world quite wrongly. This is exactly what happened to Sir Oliver Lodge, one of England's greatest physicists.<sup>3</sup> It actually happened to Oliver Lodge that he misread the spiritual world. His son was killed in one of the battles in the recent World War. He was very sad about losing his son, Raymond Lodge, and he got mixed up in a whole network of mediums. A very skilful medium was brought to him and it was arranged that his son Raymond spoke to him through this medium after death. Being under the

impression that his son had died in the German theatre of war he was of course very impressed by this and it also gave him great comfort.

Sir Oliver Lodge, however, is an extremely learned professor, and does not so readily have belief in things. But then something else happened, and because of this he could hardly do anything else but believe. What happened was the following. In a condition of trance, as they say, that is, in a half conscious condition, the medium told him that a few days before he died his son had had his photograph taken, and that there were actually two photographs in existence.

Now it often happens that in the case of such photographs several exposures are made one after another, and the person usually sits in a slightly different position for the second one. Therefore the medium said that his son sat in a different position in the second exposure, and she described quite correctly in which way this one differed from the first. ‘Wait a moment,’ thinks Sir Oliver Lodge to himself, ‘suppose what she tells me is true, that a few days before his death he was photographed in two different positions!’ No one could have known in England at the time that the photographs were taken shortly before his death, because only a short time had elapsed, the seance taking place only a fortnight or three weeks after his son’s death. But lo and behold! a week after the seance had taken place the two photographs arrived in London through the post—parcels took a very long time in those days—and the medium had been absolutely right! Therefore Lodge could not believe anything else, in his view, than that his son had told him this from the Beyond.

Yet this was not the case, for the medium had gone into a trance, a different state of consciousness, and had only had a premonition, as sometimes happens. The people sitting around the medium at the table were hearing about the photographs for the first time, now, a week later, because they had arrived by then, but the medium had a premonition of them and saw them a week beforehand. So there was after all no connection with the son who had died, for this all happened on earth. The medium had only had a premonition, and Oliver Lodge had allowed himself after all to be deceived. One has to be as

cautious as this. That is, it is correct that human beings survive death, and that they can also give evidence of their existence, but you have to be sure. When the medium conveyed the message from Raymond Lodge in English, saying: 'I had two photographs taken of myself shortly before my death, and the positions were different'—you must first of all be sure whether the hearing of it comes out of the unconscious, out of what is not conscious in ordinary life.

As the original question led me to speak about such delicate matters today, I mentioned this last example to tell you how cautious one has to be, for one is responsible for what one says. I wanted to show you that one cannot latch on to just any idea, but one has to follow up everything appertaining to it. Not until you have reflected on it for a long time are you in a position to say: 'Yes, a guardian angel was speaking in that moment.' But that the words come to expression in the German language only happens through the agency of a human being. And if there is something that some particular group of people cannot carry out, their muscles have had to be paralysed in advance, from out of the spiritual world. Everything has to happen by way of human beings.

Then, when you have learnt this as a basis, you can proceed further. We will say more about this next Saturday.

## Lecture Two

### The human form and cosmic activity

If you take another look at the course I gave in 1914 about life between death and a new birth you will find many things there that allude to what I have been preparing over the past days and weeks and which could be a supplement to this.<sup>1</sup>

I should like today to draw special attention to the alternations in the conditions of life that occur between death and a new birth in a similar way to alternations between waking and sleeping in our life between birth and death. Our normal consciousness which, between birth and death, makes us into human beings, is of course our waking consciousness, and in sleep our consciousness is lowered. Our level of consciousness is then below that of our waking consciousness, and we have only a faint experience of the processes going on around us between falling asleep and waking. These are either very faint, in complete sleep, or are in the form of dreams, when memories of the day or inner processes taking place in the organism present themselves in pictures. A similar alternation occurs also in the life between death and a new birth, although this is as it were the reverse in comparison with the conditions we now experience.

I was describing to you only yesterday what radically different experiences human beings have between death and a new birth compared to what they have here on earth. The same applies to these alternating conditions of consciousness. As I said yesterday, between death and a new birth we experience what our ego shows us in the way of deeds and will impulses. The state of consciousness in which we are aware of having an ego is the normal state for us in that spiritual condition, just as here the waking state is the normal one. We acknowledged the fact that whereas here our organization consists of a physical body, an etheric body, an astral body and an ego, there it consists of ego, spirit self, life spirit and spirit man, but we have these only potentially at the present time. So between death and a new birth the ego is the lowest member. But just as we become inwardly conscious of our ego, here, in our waking

consciousness, there, with the consciousness comparable to this, we become conscious of our ego as an experience outside ourselves appearing in the deeds and will impulses we look back on and which we experience, as I said, as though they rayed back to us from the earth.

This condition alternates with another one. Just as here in earth life we can speak of a waking consciousness and a sleep consciousness, and can so to speak pair waking consciousness with a state of subconsciousness, we have to speak between death and a new birth of the consciousness we have just described and a kind of superconsciousness where higher beings are conscious in us, or rather higher beings fill our consciousness.

In our earthly sleep condition we sink down into a kind of plant existence. Between death and a new birth we rise up into a superconscious condition, to a kind of archangel consciousness, to a consciousness above our normal one. I have told you that when we are in our normal state of consciousness we have the hierarchies of higher beings behind us as it were. In the superconscious state we virtually move back among them. We then live within them. We learn from them more than we would otherwise know as human beings. If between death and a new birth we only experienced what we experience with our ego, which follows after us with its rays, yet belongs to us, we would not experience all those processes in the way I described, and which it is necessary for us to experience in order to construct our organism in a new earth life. We are only able to do this by having this alternation between our normal state of consciousness and the entering in of states of knowledge of the archangels, even of the archai, into our human sphere, and these, too, enter normal consciousness as a kind of memory, just as dreams come into our consciousness here from our subconscious.<sup>2</sup> So between death and a new birth we live in the kind of consciousness described yesterday, but in between we always have states of superconsciousness in which we, too, acquire superhuman knowledge of things, without which we would be unable to build up our own existence in the next earth life in the way that is necessary.

So there are analogies, you see, between the life here between birth and death and the other life between death and a new birth. Yet you must be sure to bear in mind the strong and radical differences between these two life conditions.

We shall see more precisely into these things if we look at what mediates between them, if we become acquainted with the beings of a more exalted kind that project themselves into both conditions, both those of our earthly life and those of our life between death and a new birth. In earthly life we have in the first place our external sense impressions. We know that our impulses of will and action interweave with these. But to start with we have to direct our attention to these external sense impressions.

Try for a moment to focus your attention on the fact that the whole time you are living life in a waking state you are encountering a sum of external sense impressions through every one of your human senses, and that the tapestry of the senses is being woven out of these. We usually think of these sense impressions as being attached to the objects—the simple objects or entities appearing in colours that make an impression on the eye. Other entities sound, and thereby make an impression on the ear. But let us focus our attention on this whole world of sense impressions and ask ourselves what it is in reality.

I have often drawn your attention to the fact that there is certainly not a fantastic world of atoms such as the physicists dream up existing behind our sense impressions, but a realm of spirit. So within the world of the senses there is also spirit, but it is not immediately perceptible to our ordinary consciousness. What our ordinary consciousness experiences is the tapestry of the senses. But what does this tapestry of the senses actually contain? What there is in reality is the host of beings that you find summarized in my book *An Outline of Esoteric Science* as the spirits of form.<sup>3</sup> Everything appearing to us in space has a certain form. And it is actually its surface of colour that gives an object its form. The spirits of form live in the things we experience with our senses in the world of space, and these are the same beings that are called the *elohim* in the Old Testament. These are the spirits of form.



We are justified in calling this world of sense appearance a world of phenomena. But this is only correct to the extent that initially we human beings perceive nothing further with our ordinary consciousness than these phenomena, this world of external appearance, which the Orientals call *maya*. But as soon as our consciousness awakens and becomes imaginative, this whole world of the senses is filled, or to put it better, is transformed into a world of weaving pictures. And weaving in and out of this world of pictures is the world of the angeloi, of the angels. When we reach inspiration we are inspired by this world on all sides. It becomes transformed into a world of Inspiration.<sup>4</sup> This Inspiration is interwoven by the archangeloi, the archangels. The world of Intuitions is the one we experience later. Instead of just having the world of the senses before us we then penetrate into the world of the archai.

When we have penetrated through our environment to the world of the archai, then we are actually enabled, with the help of this world of the archai, to look back once again at what has happened to us among the higher hierarchies in earlier lives between death and a new birth. We become aware that in this world behind the archai there are the beings called *elohim* in the Bible and the spirits of form in my *Esoteric Science*. Thus we can say that when we look into the world through our senses we are actually looking into the realm of the spirits of form: the world of the senses.

After we have focused our attention on the sense world and have realized that here we are mingling with the sphere of the world of the spirits of form, we can now move once again into our inner being, into that inner realm that has nevertheless a very close relationship with the external world, and which has the task of giving us an inner image of the outer world, so that we can carry it in our memory. In other words, we can advance inwards from the sense world into our world of thought.

The world of thought is given us in the first place as the world of thought images. You will in no way be tempted to regard as a reality the thoughts you have at present in your ordinary consciousness. But just as in the sense world there are hidden realities, namely the realities of the spirits of form, there are also hidden realities in the world of thought. Where



our ordinary consciousness is concerned thoughts are first of all what we know as fleeting inner structures; but just as spiritual beings can be discovered in the fabric of the sense world if, as I have described, we ascend to higher knowledge through Imagination and Inspiration, the working of spiritual beings can also be perceived within the world of thought. It is these spiritual beings that live in the phenomena which accompany our thoughts when we think. You will know from earlier lectures what goes on in us when we think. Processes are constantly taking place in us which can be compared to the dissolving of salt in a glass of water until it is totally dissolved and the water is transparent. If we then cool the water down a bit it becomes cloudy, as the salt is deposited out of the water. A clouding over of this kind takes place in us too, a process of condensation, when we think. It is really a kind of mineralizing process that goes on in us when we think. It is this mineralizing process taking place in us that the spiritual beings interweaving in the element of thought are involved in. These are the beings we have always called the archai, principalities. So we can have knowledge of the fact that when we live in our thoughts it is the archai who are within our thought life just as it is the elohim, the spirits of form, who are within our sense perception.

These spirits of form can be perceived in the external world only with Imaginative knowledge. When we study the outer world with the kind of consciousness normal to human beings today we arrive at the so-called laws of nature. These laws of nature are abstractions. As soon as we ascend to Imaginative knowledge we no longer have abstract natural laws formulated in statements, but images, a life of pictures. These are not the same images as those I was speaking of earlier, but the sort of images that we compress as cloudy, tinged images into the images we get when we look at the elohim. We can trace this both in the outer world and in our inner world.

It is perhaps particularly useful if you look not so much into the outer world, now, but look at a manifestation of life. Initially a thought lives within us, and although it is by means of this thought that we relate to the external world, and the secrets of the outer world are disclosed to us through thoughts

—the thought initially lives within our inner being. Yet it can be given expression. It comes to expression when we tell it to someone else. Language is an element in human life by means of which we bring our thoughts to external manifestation.

So, after the thought world, let us proceed to the world of language. I have often drawn your attention to the fact that human beings experience a greater part of their world of language than they do of their world of thought. This flows into speaking. Although the will also flows into the element of thought, we are only to a very small degree aware of it in our ordinary consciousness. But the human will enters strongly into speaking, to a noticeable extent. Yet we have an extremely small grasp of what actually lives in language. In this materialistic age human beings perceive very little more of what lives in a sound of speech than its sign value, as a sign of something else. For present-day humanity the inner life of a speech sound is something that has receded to a marked extent out of our consciousness. Where present-day humanity is concerned we can do no more than point out that it is possible to be mindful of the fact that in a sound, in the articulating of a sound of speech, there is something that can be recognized as a life element of its own.

Let us take as an example a word with two ‘e’-sounds (English ‘eh’) in it: *gehen* (to walk). If you have a feeling for it you can really feel in these two ‘eh’-sounds a gentle stepping whereby you stay calm. Gentle walking is definitely conveyed by these two ‘eh’-sounds. If instead of ‘eh’ you have ‘ah’, as in *laufen* (to run) you feel in the sound ‘ah’ the same as you feel when you do not move gently but move in a way that makes greater demands on your breathing. Expressing ‘au’ (‘ow’) gives you the same feeling you have when you breathe faster. You could not have a more characteristic experience of gentle walking than through the gentle feeling conveyed by the two ‘eh’-sounds in *gehen*, and of running (*laufen*) by means of the ‘au’ in it. Language contains spirituality, and I have on many occasions drawn your attention to all kinds of examples of the inner genius in language. Present-day people have very little feeling for it. But in other times, when human beings still had a real inner feeling for the sounds, they were more aware

of a spiritual vitality in language than even in sense perception or thinking.

Just as the archai live in the world of thought the archangels live in the element of speech, this world of language. And because they live in the genius of language they fit the description I have often given of them as the rightful leading spirits of the nations, national spirits. The element in which they come to expression is precisely this element of speaking.

Much more than we realize, the human being himself is a result of his language, just as on the other hand he is a result of his thought world. We get our form entirely from the outside world, and we pour form into the outer world through our will. Our life consists of an element that comes from the same region as our thoughts, and the archai live in these. The force that lives in our language, and through which we belong to a nation, expresses all those physical characteristics of ours that restrict us to a far greater degree as human beings than is the case with the element of thought. Human beings have thoughts in common with other peoples, but their languages are different. Human beings differ where language is concerned, but all the same, whether we belong to a small or large nation, our language contains something we have in common with a number of other people.

When we descend to the being of the angels we find here—as I have often explained to you, and also in this very lecture—that there is an individual relationship between each human being and his angel. This individual relationship comes to expression in two ways. The first way is in an inward direction, when a human being abandons himself to his inner nature in such a way that in his inner being he actually goes beyond himself. In ordinary life, admittedly, a luciferic trend can come into it quite easily, precisely because it is such an intimate human experience. But all the same, the human being can go beyond himself in his inner being and experience something objective there in his imagination. In many respects our imagination is something just as creative, individually creative however, as language, and fundamentally imagination is the foundation of language. Just as a human being usually has only an abstract experience of language, and does not

always feel the genius of the language—which is in the form of an archangel unfolding his wings there—he is also not aware that in his imagination—which becomes a mere fantastic dreaming if it is tinged with Lucifer—an angel is actually moving through his individual life when he is living in this imagination.<sup>5</sup>

However, a real poet, a real artist, if he has not become cynical, frivolous or superficial, will know that when he is in the process of being artistically creative, a higher spirituality is present. It is the same higher spirituality that actually, like an individual guardian spirit, leads us from one life to the other: our angel. And it is nothing else but the thinking power of our angel that plays into regular human imagination. There is no doubt about it that in certain sayings of Goethe we can recognize, although it is said discreetly, that he is aware that an unconscious element is actually playing in which takes on reality in our imagination.<sup>6</sup>

When a human being does not just go beyond himself in his inner being but is actually outside himself in sleep, and enters the region in which the imagination of our waking life is actually rooted, then the same force that announces itself consciously in our imagination comes to expression in a more subconscious way as dreaming. In the same way as our imagination can degenerate into illusion if Lucifer enters in, dreaming can also degenerate into all kinds of irregular imaginings which a human being can even take to be reality, if ahrimanic influences enter in. Dreaming as such ascends into the region of Lucifer, but it can be influenced by Ahriman. If, however, our dreamlife is innocent and on a really human level, then it is also filled with the being we call our angel, the same spiritual being who works in our imagination when we go beyond ourselves in our inner being.

The realm of speech ruled over by the archangel is dimmed down within us to a world lying between feelings and thoughts: to the world of mental images; you could also say feeling-like images [see list]. Imagination and dreaming descend to the level of actual feelings—feelings and what lives

in them in the way of will; you could also say will-like feelings.

If we descend further still, even lower than our angel, where do we arrive? We come to our own selves, to our human ego. Within the human ego we have to go beyond ourselves even more intensely than we do when our angel lives in us. And this going out of ourselves takes place when we actually turn will impulses into external actions, as I explained yesterday.

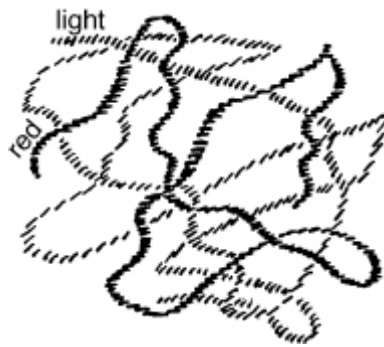
Elohim, spirits of form:	realm of the senses	
Archai:	realm of thought	
Archangels:	realm of speech:	feeling image
Angels:	imagination, dreaming:	will-like feeling
Human ego:	act of will:	will

We are certainly outside ourselves when we dream, but we only go out of ourselves spiritually. Although we do not go out of ourselves physically where an act of will is concerned we do bring our physical body into movement, and these will impulses are actually the basis of our ego. So we can say: the will lives in the act of volition, and the will imprints itself on the outside world. We have come down as far as the physical world. It is only in our acts of will that we actually develop as independent beings in the physical world. Our ego lives solely in the part of us that remains with us at death, which yesterday I called the sum of all our actions, and this is what we look back on. But in everything else, in our imagination and dreams, in the realms of speech and thought, and the content of our sense perception, there live higher beings who are constantly working into us human beings.

You see, we have now by way of ordinary life arrived at the relationship of human beings to the spiritual cosmos. But we can also arrive at it by way of the following picture brought by spiritual science out of supersensible vision. Think of your life in the sense world. You pass through the sense world and acquire certain impressions. By tomorrow you may still remember the impressions you are receiving now. I will certainly not say that everyone does, for I do not know whether I can assume that everyone now sitting here will still have an inner experience, tomorrow, of the lecture they have heard today! But we can safely say that generally speaking

what a person perceives in his environment lives on in his inner being as memory.

So that we shall get a bit further with this I should like to draw a diagram. The world around us is shown here in a light colour, and the human being is shown in red. Our environment lives on in the human being on a soul level. What you experience in conjunction with the environment—as I have drawn here—lives on in you as your soul world. In a certain sense this is a very abstract experience to begin with. But at least the environment, which we experience only in the form of sense appearance, lives on in abstract soul experiences, thoughts and feelings, and these trigger off impulses of the will. Yet you can say—and let us be quite clear about this: What I have as soul content is the result of my experience between birth and death or rather between birth and the present moment.



Let us turn our attention, now, to what we have in ourselves not merely in an abstract soul form, in the form of images, but in what I would like to call a materially real form; namely the organs inside our skin, such as lungs, heart and liver. This is also part of what we have within us. A right and proper mystic would say that this part was obviously of no interest to him at all. He would say: 'I am only interested in the spirit and soul element. I am duly satisfied that I have within me my soul impressions of the surrounding world. But the material element is of much too minor an importance for me.' Yet in talking like this the mystic is showing exactly how deeply materialistic he actually is; that he still does not know that what appears to be of a material nature is in actual reality something spiritual. For the soul experiences we have within us in an abstract way, as echoes of the external experiences

between birth and death, are not the only spiritual things about us, since our lungs and our liver are also spiritual. They only appear to us in our normal consciousness in material form; they are altogether spiritual products.



When you are by yourself, thinking, you can recollect the thought that a human being consists of physical body, etheric body, astral body and ego. You have this thought as your inner possession. At one time it was something external. It approached you for the first time out of a book or from a lecture, that is, from the outside world, and I have sketched it in, here. But you also have lungs, a heart, liver, brain and so on, within you in material form. These, too, you have as the results of experiences. So if you were simply to do a diagram of a human being with his various organs [see drawing], this inner part is the product of what he experiences between death and a new birth—not as physical material, of course, which does not arrive until conception, birth and so on, but in the inner organization of its form. Just as you are hearing what I am saying, and this then becomes your soul experience, your heart, lungs and liver are the products of what you experience between death and a new birth. Therefore we can say: The inner organization of my body is the product of my experiences between death and a new birth.

What I have within me in soul form

is the product of my experiences between birth and death.

What I have within me as bodily organization

is the product of my life between death and a new life.

A materialist will of course make the objection that all the organs in a human being are physically inherited from his parents. This is a complete mistake. It is not like that. Certainly the material part of it is inherited from his ancestors but the germ is usually quite wrongly understood. This is bound to be the case if one looks at it from the purely material point of view. For fertilization does not consist in the passing on of a human being in a material form down the generations, but that a kind of empty space arises; the material part is dissolved away and the whole universe works constructively into the human being. Matter then pushes its way into this spiritual construction—for lungs, heart and liver are most certainly spiritual constructions. The organizing forces at work there receive all their impetus from the whole universe, from the experiences undergone between death and a new birth. As I said before, this is what a person experiences in his superconsciousness when we are raised up into to the region of the archangels and the archai. We experience consciously—we should say superconsciously— between death and a new birth what we eventually build into our organs.

Our organs are built entirely to correspond with our karma, to correspond with what we bring with us from earlier incarnations on earth. What appear to be merely physical processes in the succession of generations are not so at all, but are carried out by the whole universe.

I have often used a picture we can fall back on when people of the ordinary materialistic ilk come along and say: ‘For goodness sake stop telling us that the universe is the cause of the formation of the human embryo in the body of the mother, don’t take us right out into the universe when the explanation is the continuity of the germ plasma through the generations.’ As I said, you can make use of the following comparison and say: ‘Imagine a person with a magnetic needle pointing North-South. Someone tells him there are some crazy physicists who



maintain that the whole earth is a magnet and that the magnetic South pole of the earth attracts this pole of the needle. The reasons why the magnetic needle moves in that direction have to be looked for in the needle itself. What has this magnet got to do with the earth!' This really is more or less what our biologists say when they speak of the human germ. They only look at the germ. But just as the whole earth is active in the magnetic needle the whole universe is active in the formation of the germ. The part the human being plays in it, though, is way back in his unconscious.

You see, if you look at the matter this way then the whole of human existence is brought into connection with a material and a spiritual universe. We realize that in our understanding, in our normal conscious experience, we turn the outside world into an inner world. I told you yesterday from a particular point of view that when the human being goes through the gate of death his inner world becomes his outer world and vice versa. Today I have brought you another viewpoint from which you can see that what lies before birth, or rather conception, is to be understood as meaning that we must look for the processes preparing the inner organs of our body in the outer world in the life between death and a new birth: the outer world becomes the inner world. What we experience spread out as it were over the whole universe becomes a deeply subconscious experience in our organs.

These organs we have within us are in fact of such a nature that a whole world lives in them. And if we limit our observation solely to what external anatomy and physiology show us with regard to these organs we are actually dealing with a far greater *maya* than we are faced with in the external world.

I have told you that when we look out into the world of the senses we are regarding the *elohim*. However, if in a similar way we look down into our bodily organs we must ascend further still to reach what is alive in us and builds our organs. In my *Outline of Esoteric Science*, as you know, you find other beings above the spirits of form. And these other beings are not only outside the human being but are at work within him. Although between death and a new birth we reach up with our

own consciousness only as far as the archai, we receive knowledge of these beings through the archai. In this superconsciousness we gather from them what we then pour into our organism. We actually do live our life bearing the world of the hierarchies within our inner formation.

Such things can be researched again today. In olden times people knew of such things out of a certain instinctive clairvoyant consciousness. In the days when they reached out to knowledge of the whole world through interpreting what they beheld within the microcosm of the human being they spoke of the human organism as a temple of the gods.

And now, since the time we have become conscious here in earth life, it is by means of our memory that we know about the world we live in, is it not? We can reflect on all that we can bring forth from our memory. We look within us and there is the world we have experienced externally, and we can as it were look at these pictures we carry within us in soul form and see that the life that is outside us has entered these pictures. We understand our experiences afresh when we look back at these memory pictures. If we then look at our bodily organization and understand it, we are understanding the world process. We understand our experience through the memory in our inner organs. If we know how to look at our whole human organization in the right way we understand the world process. When we have understood the human being through and through we have really reached anthroposophy.

Anthroposophy is at one and the same time cosmosophy. For just as our memories represent our life, anthroposophical knowledge is a world memory, a summing up of the whole world process, i.e. cosmosophy. Neither of these can be thought of separately. Cosmosophy and anthroposophy belong together. The human being is to be found in the world, and the world in the human being. Therefore it is not anthropomorphism when, in my *Esoteric Science*, I present the evolution of humanity hand in hand with the evolution through Saturn, Sun, Moon and so on.<sup>7</sup> World evolution is presented and human evolution is presented because the further we delve into the mysteries of existence the more do world and human being merge; and we are shown ever more clearly that the

separation we envisage existing in our earthly life between world and human being is actually an illusion; that the human being belongs to the world and the world to the human being, and the human being is to be found in the world and the world in the human being.

## Lecture Three

### Lucifer and Ahriman

As a follow-up to the presentations I have just given here it would be a good thing to look back into the evolution of humanity to the times when what we nowadays call understanding had quite a different character. We have of course already talked about this other kind of understanding belonging to earlier times. However, through what we have gained by means of these recent lectures we shall be able to throw light on several aspects of things with which you are already acquainted.

Human understanding has really assumed quite a different character than it had before the historical epoch of Greece and Rome. The kind of knowledge that preceded Greece and Rome in the Orient, in Africa, was of an entirely different kind from what was initially inaugurated in such a splendid manner by the Greeks and was later on made abstract by the Romans and made more and more materialistic in modern times. Knowledge acquired that character around the beginning of the eighth pre-Christian century, and this is what still exists today, although of course it has undergone significant modifications. Our previous characterizations of the former kind of knowledge were that we called it a sort of instinctive vision. It was not an understanding that lived in concepts but one that lived in pictures. These were not totally the same as our dream pictures because they of course had a reference to spiritual beings. Yet even if they did not have a definiteness about them like our present-day concepts do, they presented themselves to consciousness in the form of transient pictures.

Now this kind of knowledge did not actually refer to the kind of thing that is our content of knowledge today. It referred in particular to those worlds, primal worlds, from which human beings have taken their origin, and from which they were still hardly separated. During the Saturn, Sun and Moon evolution the human being was still totally a part of the entire rest of the world. Even during the earlier part of Earth evolution the human personality was not yet separated from all

that was in the world. The human being felt as though he were within the whole substance of the world. As soon as a person discards his intellectual thinking, his head thinking, and does what they still do in certain Oriental schools where they practise breathing processes to acquire a different kind of knowledge, then this sharp division between self and the world also immediately disappears. The moment a person performs the antiquated yoga exercises today—and this does still occur—he immediately feels his personality being reduced and pushed out, and he feels as though he were a breath of the world.

Knowledge was similar to this in those ancient times, yet human beings were also certainly able, by means of this pictorial knowledge, to interpret their own inner physical organization—in the sense I spoke about yesterday. I also spoke about the way a human being takes the environment into himself today, preserving it in mental images which are then his own inner possession out of which he can as it were present a picture of his world between birth and the present moment. Similarly our inner organs such as the brain, lungs and liver present a picture of the whole content of the world. Just as you can explain something that has happened to you by means of a memory image, just as you have this happening within you in the form of a mental image, you have the whole world within you in the form of your inner organs. Ancient wisdom consisted of interpreting these various organs and referring them to the whole content of the world.

The ancient kind of knowledge existing right into the ninth pre-Christian century was essentially an interpreting of the content of the world out of the inner part of the human physical body, the human physical/etheric body. They obviously saw it differently from the way a present-day anatomist or physiologist does. Every individual organ was referred to something in the outer world, but it was the nature of this inner organ that was experienced. For instance they experienced the brain structure in powerful pictures, and these pictures were referred back to the whole sphere of the heavens. So in very fact when atavistic Imagination indicated the brain structure they made a mental image for themselves of the

whole sphere of the heavens. And what this ancient wisdom said about the world arose essentially from such an interpretation of the inner human being.

But we cannot actually call the kind of knowledge they had in those times a proper human knowledge. A knowledge that is thoroughly human, even if this should not be merely dry intellectualism at all as it is often considered to be today, is not conceivable without intelligence. That ancient wisdom, however, did not contain any humanly-acquired intelligence, so that one can by no means say that this ancient knowledge was an actual human knowledge. The human being only participated as it were in a knowledge which other beings actually experienced in and through him. These were beings belonging to the hierarchy of the angels. An angel of this kind ensouled the human being, and it was actually this angel who had the knowledge. The human being only participated in it. It was like seeing into the inner being of this angel, and the human being could therefore participate in what the angel knew. This is why the owner of that ancient wisdom had a very vague conception of how he arrived at his knowledge. He simply said: 'It is Inspiration, it is there.' He did not himself bring this knowledge about, the angelic being brought this knowledge about in him.

But this angelic being did not happen to fit the picture of a normal angelic being we have been speaking about in recent days, the kind that accompanies human beings through their various incarnations. This angelic being had a luciferic character. In its whole being and its whole attitude it had remained behind at an earlier stage of evolution, the stage of Moon evolution. So we have to say that the beings who ensouled human beings and gave them their wisdom were luciferic ones—beings who actually should have passed through their normal human stage during the Moon evolution—and human beings participated in what these angelic beings experienced within them. The wisdom a human being acquired in this way was an extremely exalted wisdom. It was the same highly perfected knowledge that the angels possessed during the Moon evolution, but it was not the kind of knowledge that lent itself for human beings to do anything with on earth. On

earth human beings behaved more or less instinctively, just like higher animals. And into this being which was still like a higher animal there shone this exalted wisdom which then began to fade as the eighth pre-Christian century approached.

This wisdom, whose luciferic character I have just described, applied actually only to what human beings could know by virtue of being members of extraterrestrial worlds. Where their knowledge was concerned human beings had as it were not yet really come down to earth. Their wisdom gave them the feeling of dwelling still in higher spheres, and on earth they acted instinctively.

Then came the advent of the understanding or mind soul and all it brought with it.<sup>1</sup> The human being began to bring intelligence to life within him. He began to work out concepts. The characteristic of Greek culture was that it still so to speak had angel wisdom from ancient times, yet human beings worked on it with human concepts. This was the kind of wisdom Plato had,<sup>2</sup> and the reason why Plato's writings make such a strong impression on us is because he already had the ability to work subjectively in the world of concepts and mental images while at the same time the old instinctive wisdom still shed its light into his thinking. This makes Plato's writings such a wonderful combination of the highest wisdom and the element of the human/personal. Bearing in mind Plato's whole soul disposition, one cannot imagine him writing down his wisdom in any other form than dialogue form, for the simple reason that he was well aware of what was only a vague feeling in the ancients. Those people of old said: Wisdom simply exists, it takes hold of me, rays into me. Plato found himself having a kind of dialogue with the being who brought him wisdom. As he himself experienced wisdom as a kind of dialogue, he preferred to express it in that form.

This conceptual activity then became rapidly stronger. And in Aristotle we definitely experience knowledge assuming the form of structured theories.<sup>3</sup>

Then in the fourth post-Atlantean epoch a particular element of culture acquired a greater and greater predominance. We could describe it by saying that human beings felt that in the

past an ancient wisdom had lived in their souls. They had the feeling that supersensible beings had come down to them and brought them wisdom. But they also felt that this wisdom was becoming abstract. They could no longer grasp it; what had formerly flowed down to them from spiritual worlds was slipping away.

This activity of the human intelligence which gradually gave thoughts an abstract form is found *par excellence* in the age of Rome. As we know, the Romans acquired a dry, abstract outlook, one that contained no Imaginative pictures, but leaned heavily towards intellectualism. The Greeks give us the feeling still that the figures of their gods—that is, the elemental forces within nature—have an inner life of their own, whereas the Roman gods are abstractions, with a stiff and rigid conceptual character. Logic now acquired the upper hand compared to the quality of Imagination which had been so widespread in Greek times. Everything the Romans still had in the way of Imagination came of course from Greece. The Romans added the prose element, logic, and developed it further, later on, as Romanism, which is why the Latin language assumed the logical character it has, and which made it such a strong cultural influence over such a long period.

But one thing remained intact throughout, namely the *tradition* of ancient wisdom. It was continued in a more living form in Greece, and in Rome in a somewhat more dead one, but still it was preserved even into the centuries after Christ right into the Middle Ages, in fact even on into the dawn of the Modern Age. This tradition of ancient wisdom has been reproduced down the ages more than people realize today.

The intellect could not of course straight away grasp all that offered itself to the senses. So people tried to take hold of tradition with the intellect. By doing this they brought it about that what had previously been an inwardly enlivening luciferic element now assumed an external character that was actually ahrimanic. But that is a mask. In actual fact it is a luciferic element reproduced by tradition. And the Romanism we see reproduced from the time of the Roman caesars into the following centuries, and which became very strongly influenced by the Germanic element but was still preserved in



tradition, was essentially a luciferic element. The luciferic element lived on. Through the fact that it descended into the life of thought it shed its original character of course. It assumed the form of thought. In the Latin language a luciferic element is being preserved in ahrimanic guise.

In Greek art this element is still absolutely alive. Then it becomes more or less rigid. And it is interesting to trace the way it continues in the form of theology, which is a teaching about supersensible worlds, but in fact does not reach them in reality but only in the form of tradition. This is how the spiritual stream arose which is essentially a kind of luciferic one and leads the ancient view of the supersensible over into theology.

Christianity itself is drawn into the meshes of this theology. Christianity was turned into theology. Just as the Latin language gave logic a chance to flourish, Christianity gave theology the chance to flourish. But the actual living element of Christianity succumbed to a luciferic element in an ahrimanic mask. Living Christianity became a cultural stream for the spreading of theology. The actual personal element remained active, but in an instinctive way still. It could not yet connect itself fully with what came from above. It is particularly interesting to observe this in its most striking phase, namely the Renaissance. We see an exalted theology at work there, complete with the concepts and mental images of the supersensible realm, but no longer with a perception of it. In a traditional form the Renaissance had basically everything. What was preserved in a theological form in Romanism was the ancient wisdom, but brought down to the level of ideas. It lived on in a luciferic way in ideas.

It is wonderful what can still be seen today of these theological elements when one looks at the Raphael murals in Rome, and sees how much of this element is still present in the picture called the *Disputa*.<sup>4</sup> A deep wisdom is there, living on more or less in words, but no longer reaching to perception. For those, however, who can combine these words with perception it is still the deepest wisdom.

We can also marvel at the theology that lives in Dante's *Divine Comedy*.<sup>5</sup> Yet at the same time we know that although Dante had re-acquired certain perceptions from his teacher Brunetto Latini—as I described on occasion in detail<sup>6</sup>—most of the *Divine Comedy* is actually based on a traditional theologizing element with a strong luciferic bias. On the other hand we are aware that the very beings who bring the ancient wisdom into the theologizing element are the ones who, having previously ensouled the art of Greece, then bring it more into a state of rigidity, and yet bring it forth again through tradition still into the art of the Renaissance to such a degree that Goethe, on beholding Greek art again in the art of the Renaissance, sees, in the spirit, the actual resurrection of the art of Greece.

We have to say: A powerful luciferic element lived most certainly both in the theology and in the art brought in again from ancient times, the sort of art that, in order to be artistic at all, turned by preference to extraterrestrial realms, which nevertheless could not reach down fully to the human realm. In the instances where they did reach down they appeared to go directly, in a kind of leap, into the life of instinct. For do we not see the life of the Renaissance itself as if it contained a heaven of which it had mental images but no longer any perceptions, mental images which actually brought it vividly to life artistically in a wonderful way, but underneath, the life of the Renaissance fell into degeneration on the level of instinct. It was after all a splendid though actually sometimes intimidating spectacle of world history when a Pope, Alexander VI or even Leo X, on one hand thoroughly scholarly people, possessing mental images of the highest of supersensible worlds, yet as men of the Renaissance, could not as far as their human personality was concerned, raise themselves to those spiritual heights, but degenerated beneath into the life of instinct.<sup>7</sup> So we see these rogues, the men of the Renaissance, unfolding in one respect something like the life of a higher animal and above it, heaven, bearing a luciferic character, and being brought to the people in a way that was on the one hand wonderful and on the other hand in the form of theological ideas that were thoroughly luciferic.

This brings us to the time when powers other than these more ancient angel-like beings took hold of the evolution of humanity.

The human being stands midway between the realm of the angels and the realm of the animals. In ancient times the external physical form was very animal-like, yet it was ensouled by the powers I have just described to you. Without having the faintest notion of where the truth lies, geologists and paleontologists rummage around today among human remains from ancient times with receding foreheads and animal-like human shapes, and believe they have found the link between man and animal. Where the external physical form is concerned this is perfectly justified, but the more animal-like the ancient forms become, the more they were ensouled by primal wisdom. A few years ago some of these animal-like forms were excavated in certain areas of Europe, and the only thing present-day geologists and paleontologists could say about them was: 'These are humans with a less advanced skull, a receding forehead and protruding eyebrows and eye cavities.' Yet if one knows the truth in this field one has to say: 'This human being, though he may look so animal-like today, and seems like a more highly developed ape to the external view of paleontology, was nevertheless fully ensouled by primal wisdom, which another being thought in him. He only participated in this.'

So we can say: In ancient times human beings were permeated by a superhuman element. Human beings themselves grew to resemble this more and more in that they developed beyond animal forms until they became a kind of superanimal combining in themselves the various animal forms. At this point a being of quite another kind from the normal angels, an ahrimanic being, could make its way in and live in this super-animal. At one and the same time as the light of primal wisdom dimmed and became a mere tradition, the type of human being who drew the force of the intellect into his animal organization grew more and more in strength. So what we see happening from the eighth pre-Christian century onwards is a kind of super-animal being of an ahrimanic kind emerging from within the human being, slowly at first, and

then developing more and more distinctly, ensouling him now from the other direction.

This being who as it were meets up with the luciferic being in human beings is the other one who is trying to divert us from our true path. We could say that the luciferic beings are beings of anger who ensoul human beings, but with the intention of preventing them from finding happiness on earth, and are for ever trying to pull them away from it so as to raise them constantly on to a superhuman level. They would far rather have them as angels who do not get embroiled in the lower functions of the physical organism. The luciferic beings feel a terrible fury towards humans who go about the world on two legs and are bound to the earth through their lower functions; they would like to strip them of everything of an animal nature, and now, for instance, in the present period of human existence, they are reluctant to let them descend again into physical incarnation, but would like to keep them back in the life between death and rebirth.

In contrast to these beings we could call the other ones ahrimanic, beings of pain. For they are actually trying to acquire human form but cannot achieve it. Fundamentally speaking it is a terrible pain these ahrimanic beings suffer. It is as though an animal were dimly to feel that it ought to stand upright and ought to be human. They feel the pain completely tearing them to pieces. The ahrimanic beings actually feel this terrible pain. It can be alleviated only if they approach human beings and take hold of the intellect. The intellect cools this pain down. Therefore they are obsessed by the human intellect and hold on to it with tooth and claw. Ahrimanic beings fill themselves as it were with human intellect until it hurts. They want to merge with human beings in order to become intellectual beings themselves.

So the human being is the scene of conflict between the luciferic and the ahrimanic beings. The truth of it is that the luciferic beings have a hand in everything that is artistic or of an abstract theological nature, whereas with the ahrimanic beings it is as though they were rising up out of the material world, and having passed through the animal kingdom were reaching out with painful longing to the human condition.

They want to grasp hold of the intellect, but they are repelled by the supersensible part of the human being. They recoil from it every time, but they would like to take the intellect with them. These are beings who are trying ever and again to enter human beings and keep them at the level of the intellect, not letting them rise to Imagination or Inspiration because they want to keep hold of them to relieve their agony.

All that has taken shape in humanity since the beginning of this recent ahrimanic period, particularly in the way of materialistic science, of a science that stems from what is going on in human beings in the way of this cooling down of the pain of material existence, is of an ahrimanic nature. We actually see this materialistic science arising. Human beings are working on it, and in that they do so Ahriman connects himself, within them, with this science. Just as Lucifer has a special finger in the pie in the artistic realm, Ahriman has his finger in the construction of things of a mechanical and technological nature, of everything that works in the direction of pulling the intellect away from the human level and pushing it into machines, either mechanical instruments or the machinery of the state. This is essentially the only reason why those things have arisen, particularly since the time of the Renaissance, and are now living among modern humanity. We are tempted to say: During the time of the Renaissance luciferic activity came to a kind of impasse; ahrimanic activity then started upon the other side of the blockage. And we see the whole carry-on that has been taking place since the Renaissance; the pull towards mechanization, towards science without spirit; all this bears the hallmark of Ahriman.

The only thing it is possible to introduce into what has arisen since the Renaissance is an understanding of the Christ. Everything that has arisen in recent times in the way of materialistic science and industrial technology is of an out-and-out ahrimanic nature, and if it were to spread without there being any Christ understanding, it would chain human beings to the earth. Human beings would not progress to the Jupiter evolution. If, however, we bring an understanding of Christ, a new spiritual life, a newly-activated Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition into what is merely a knowledge of

the external world, then we redeem Ahriman. I have shown in all manner of ways in my mystery plays how this redemption can be put into the form of a picture.<sup>8</sup> It would be allowing Ahriman to overcome human beings if an understanding of Christ could not undergo further development as a real spirit-filled understanding, freed from theology. If an understanding of Christ were not to respiritualize modern materialistic science and lifeless industrial mechanization, these things would deliver human beings up to death on earth, i.e. they would construct a world in which human beings would more or less be fossils for the edification of ahrimanic beings.

So we can say: Lucifer has a hand in all traditional theology, as in every kind of art that sinks to the level of rigid stylization, to everything of a Renaissance nature; Ahriman, on the other hand, has a hand in everything to do with the kind of science that deals only with the surface of things and does not penetrate through to the spirit, and in every aspect of human action that entails mere mechanization. The luciferic angel beings who have at all costs managed to keep themselves going in traditional life right up to the present day, have every interest in actually holding human beings back from being active. They would like to keep them at least at the level of inner soul life. Human beings have become personalities. But these angel beings want to prevent human beings from performing the kind of deeds in which their will impulses really come to manifestation as an experience. They would like to hold them in inner contemplation. They seduce them into mysticism and into false theosophy. They mislead them into leading a life merely of inner contemplation instead of being active. They make them into dreamers who would like nothing better than to sit all day long and think irrelevant thoughts about all manner of puzzling world mysteries, but who do not want to bring what is in their minds into outer reality. They want science of the external world to arise purely on the basis of external observation. They are happy for a science to arise such as Father Secchi's, who was an excellent astrophysicist, because he could use a microscope and telescope and record his findings, and had nothing beyond this except things that had no connection with it, namely exalted

extraterrestrial, superhuman wisdom inspired by luciferic beings.<sup>9</sup> Whilst luciferic beings cultivate this superhuman, extraterrestrial wisdom they are tearing the soul/spiritual life of human beings away from earth existence. Then no matter how exalted external materialistic science may be, it simply dwindles to nothing and has no inner substance. It no longer possesses any real spirituality, so it holds no further interest for them.

Similarly, these luciferic beings would like art to be as lifeless as possible and lacking in spirit in the sense that spirit does not enter into the form. They want nothing but Renaissance, i.e. what lived in olden times. They instil into human beings hatred against any new stylistic form that can really spring from the modern human spirit. They want to perpetuate the old styles because these are still adopted from the extraterrestrial unearthly element.

The ahrimanic character is not to let things acquire spiritualization or style at all, but for people to have only totally prosaic utility buildings, for example, have everything mechanized, everything solely at the service of industrial existence, inspire human beings not to appreciate any form of handicraft as art, but to deal solely in models of which an endless quantity of mechanically made copies can be distributed, in the same way as Ahriman can make himself manifest in many people in an immensely large number of copies through the secret of number.

Human beings are actually right now in the throes of this battle. Only if we really take to heart the reality of what Christ has given us—an anthroposophical spirit knowledge and spiritual conception that is right for the times—and really reflect on it, will we find the way to keep a balance between Lucifer and Ahriman. We must as it were fight against the ahrimanic powers, otherwise we would fall prey to Lucifer. Yet we dare not go along with the ahrimanic stream without being very wary, otherwise we would get caught up in a totally mechanical world order. The luciferic beings want to hold human beings back from any action at all, and make them into dreamers, mystics, who in course of time would have no more use for earth existence, and could therefore be removed from

it. The ahrimanic beings want to keep human beings bound forever to earth existence. This is why they want to mechanize everything, i.e. press things down into the mineral kingdom. By doing this they would transform the earth in their way and not allow it to continue into the Jupiter existence. They do not have the desire to rob human beings of action; perhaps they want to leave them to be as busily active as they possibly can, as long as it is all done in a routine and stereotyped way. Ahriman is a great fan of convention. He it is who inspires the constant compiling of statutes. Whenever Ahriman sees a committee at work compiling statutes he is in his element: Point 1, point 2, point 3; first this will be done, then that; thirdly this member has these rights, fourthly that member ought to do such-and-such. The member would not dream, of course, of respecting these rights, nor doing what it says at all. But this part of it does not matter. The important thing is to compile the statutes and cultivate the ahrimanic spirit. Then you can point to paragraph so-and-so.

Ahriman would like nevertheless to urge people to be active, but everything should run along programmed lines. Everything should be forced into legal terms. Every morning a person should as it were find a list lying on his bedspread telling him what he has to do throughout the day, and he should do it mechanically by thinking as though only with his legs and not with his head. Whilst Lucifer has the desire to make human beings think with their heads and bring the heart up into the head, Ahriman has the desire to make them think only with their legs, to push everything into the legs.

Human beings are already in the midst of this battle, and what I am saying, perhaps more in the form of a picture, is already fundamentally the content of our civilization. On the one side we see the kind of people who regard it as their ideal to be able to raise themselves up and dream about the highest level of heaven whilst sitting like a Buddha statue with their legs crossed under them, descending into mystical depths, with enlarged heads and no legs at all. On the other side we see the people of the Occident who have to leg it as fast as they can from one office to the other, basically giving the impression that it is actually totally unnecessary for them to have a head



on their shoulders as well, because their head pays no attention to what they are doing. These are the two human extremes at the present time: the solitary dreamer with his eyes closed, so that he does not even have to see what he himself is doing, and those who actually do not need eyes at all, because attached to their legs they always have something in the nature of a rope, a lead with paragraph so-and-so on the end of it, and they are dragged through the world like a cog of a machine.

We do of course now and again see modern human beings rebelling against the work of Ahriman, grumbling about bureaucracy, which is absolutely ahrimanic, complaining about the stereotyping of education and so on, but as a rule they only fall even deeper into what they are trying to get away from.

The only thing that can lead us out of all this is a complete change of attitude, a turning towards knowledge of the spirit, to the kind of thing that will once more fill our thinking with genuine spirituality, so that the living spirit can take hold of our whole being and not merely our head. And in taking hold of our whole being it can also conquer Ahriman. And when Ahriman is conquered he will be redeemed. I am not saying anything against Ahriman. I am not censuring the justified application of registration, the making of statutes and the enumerating of paragraphs. But spirit must enter into all this.

In these modern times we can hardly avoid carrying out ahrimanic activities, for instance shorthand and typing. These things are an ahrimanizing of our civilization to the highest degree. But if we bring spirituality into our civilization we can even raise up into the sphere of the spirit things that are as obviously of a serious ahrimanic nature as shorthand and typing, and then Ahriman will be redeemed. This will only become possible if we are absolutely serious about the spirit. If people do shorthand or actually use a typewriter whilst maintaining a materialistic attitude they will become deeply enmeshed in the ahrimanic element. You must realize that I am not encouraging a reaction against it. We should not start frowning on the demonology that has set in; for what has to happen is that the demons themselves must be redeemed.

We can certainly see individual examples of this. Fundamentally speaking we can say: The sort of ahrimanic elements that have arisen out of the recent cultural trend have caught on only out of a fascination with these ahrimanic arts. For the shorthand and typing carried out in the spirit of this ahrimanic culture could just as well remain unwritten. As a rule one knows anyway what it contains. It really does not need to be put down in black and white. The content is unimportant. What has a certain significance is only the ahrimanic art involved. When we come to spiritual-scientific matters we shall need the means of making an exact rendering, because it is essential that these matters are expressed in an exact form. And then it will be precisely these ahrimanic arts that will be of considerable service in spiritual matters. This is how we shall come to see it.

What will be of special importance will be that modern spiritual science enters the various sciences we practise, so that an integrated spiritual science arises out of the various soulless sciences, and that these come together in an integrated spiritual science. This will get them out of the hold of Ahriman. And when the details are dealt with in the proper way we shall gradually enter the element I felt the need to lead up to today, arising out of the antithesis between Lucifer and Ahriman.

Do not imagine that it is unimportant to look into the particular details I have drawn your attention to today. It is quite good to familiarize oneself a little by means of pictures like these, with the luciferic type of person existing today with his Buddha legs crossed under him, and the ahrimanic type of person bustling around all over the place from one office to the other, not actually using his head at all.

Possibly it is sometimes pleasanter to hear about these things in an abstract way rather than in concrete pictures. But modern spiritual science, anthroposophical spiritual science has the task of drawing attention to real life, and to call it every time by its proper name. This is actually the only way to arrive at an outlook and attitude that is totally sound and that gets to the root of the matter every time.

This is what I wished to add today to our studies over recent weeks. On the next occasion we shall attempt to approach the human being from another aspect.

## PART II

## Lecture Four

### Reconnecting with the hierarchies

Since the middle of the fifteenth century civilized humanity has been living in a period of time in which the relation that previously existed between human souls and the three hierarchies of beings nearest to us human beings, the angeloi, archangeloi and archai, is becoming a totally different one. The relationship used to be such that these three hierarchies worked at human evolution from out of their own impulses, and for their own sakes. We now live in an epoch in which the work these beings did for us is finished. For the time being these beings are not interested in continuing to work as before on human evolution. A new relationship to humanity will come about only when we ourselves, out of our free will and of our own accord, begin to concern ourselves with spiritual worlds. If in days to come we were not, as human beings, to turn our attention to spiritual worlds, we should be bound to lose all connection with them, because the spiritual beings belonging to us have no reason to be interested in us for their own sakes. We shall only re-awaken their interest if we concern ourselves from out of our very souls with the spiritual world, that is, if we cultivate thoughts, feelings and will impulses into which spiritual forces can flow.

The question can and must be asked: How do we start concerning ourselves with the spiritual worlds so as to maintain in the future our relations to the higher hierarchies? This leads to my telling you things which on the face of it do not appear to have much to do with the matter. We shall see, however, that these will be the very things that will provide the foundation for re-establishing our relationship to the spiritual world now and into the future.

The first thing we must look at is the effectiveness of the various denominations, confessions, existing among civilized peoples. Until now there was a certain necessity for them to guide human hearts and minds to the spiritual world in the way they have done. But if, in the future, they do not allow something entirely new to enter their endeavours the

confessions will be a contributory factor to severing human beings from the spiritual world. Fundamentally speaking present day confessions are built on human egoism. We shall realize this if we reflect on a matter of such supreme importance that it forms, and always must form, a touchstone for their views, the question of the immortality of the human soul. From the way in which this question is usually handled by the confessions we can see how strongly they depend on human egoistic instincts. There are of course deeper reasons for their pronouncements which we do not want to discuss today—but as a rule, when the confessions speak of immortality, they are talking about the life of the human soul continuing after death.

It is relatively easy to speak to people about immortality if you take this point of view, for this particular subject makes the greatest possible appeal to human egoism. Quite apart from the truth of the matter people simply cannot bear to think their life will be finished at death, and therefore we always find a particular response when we speak to them of life after death. You can be quite sure that in the way the matter of immortality is usually dealt with today, the people who show an interest in it do so for egoistic reasons. They do not like the thought of their soul dying, too, at physical death. Any future conception that speaks about the immortality of the soul will obviously have to speak about the continuation of the soul's life after death, for it is an actual fact, as all of you will know from anthroposophical spiritual science. But the way in which anthroposophical spiritual science speaks of the continued existence of the soul after physical death is far from being accepted by the confessions.

There is also another important aspect, namely that in this present age people will have to hear immortality being spoken about in quite a different way than they have been used to until now. When the matter is being discussed we should speak not only of life after death but also of the life that is lived here in the physical world between birth and death. For, as you know, this life is also a continuation. It is the continuation of the life spent between our last death and the birth through which we entered into this physical existence. Humanity will have to

learn to regard this physical life between birth and death as the continuation of the spiritual life before birth or indeed conception. For in every growing child we shall have to learn to see how day by day, week by week, year by year, forces from spiritual worlds are welling up within the child, forces which enter through birth and work at the gradual development of the human being over the course of time. We shall have as it were to unveil the god within a human being, when we approach the life of a child to help with his development. Social relations between people will have to absorb something of a religious impulse that will become part of our whole social life. But the most important thing, the essential point here, will be for us to acquire the feeling that this physical life is a continuation of a spiritual pre-natal life, and that we never for a moment forget that our life in a physical body is a continuation of our pre-natal life of soul and spirit.

Many things will arise from this. One thing will be that we recognize afresh that our actual humanity lies deep within our being and emerges gradually. I have told you on a previous occasion of ancient cultures in the evolution of humanity, those we know of as the first and second post-Atlantean cultural ages and so on.<sup>1</sup> Human beings were in those days capable of continued development right into old age, in a way that happens only in a very youthful person today. A child goes through a physical change around the seventh year, with the change of teeth. There is another metamorphosis, which expresses itself in the life of the body, at the time of puberty. After that, the changes that occur are less perceptible externally. This was not so in ancient times; what went on in people's soul/spiritual life came to expression right into much later stages of life. This is not noticeable nowadays. Old age arrives now at the age of seventeen or eighteen, and the symptoms horrify us.

For instance, a young man, or an overgrown schoolboy, as he could also be called, recently wanted to tell his seniors what the real ideals of education should be. He spoke so much like an old man, in such extreme abstractions, however, that he was shouted down.\*

What is the actual nature of old age today? It is that a human being is normally only capable of change up to a certain age. Until then a person learns all kinds of things and is not embarrassed to go through changes. But at the approach of the twenties he feels embarrassment about any further change. It is a very rare experience today to see people with grey hair and wrinkles looking forward to each coming year because each year will offer their organism new chances to change, and these changes will enable them to learn new things they were not mature enough to learn before. Nowadays people do not give their organism a chance to develop. When they have reached the youthful age of thirty, people are embarrassed to learn anything further, to make themselves capable of change. What is needed is that human beings actually retain the possibility throughout life of looking forward to each new year, because each year charms forth the divine/spiritual content of our own inner being in new configurations. I would like to stress the point that we really and truly need to learn to see our whole lifetime as space for change, and not only the years of childhood. Of course a new kind of education will be necessary for this. When our elders think back to their school-days they usually have unpleasant memories. We must be able to create the kind of school-days that will provide memories which are a constant source of invigoration. You will see that this is yet another way of opening up the chance of really perceiving the soul/spiritual element in our own being, and really experiencing in ourselves something reaching beyond the kind of life stimulated in us from outside.

There are more things that will of necessity have to be recognized today. People still do not know of a secret of life intimately connected with the present period of humanity's evolution. In earlier times, before the middle of the fifteenth century, people did not need to take much notice of this secret, but today it is essential we do so. This secret of life is that because of the way a human being is now constituted—in body, soul and spirit—he views during the night the events of the coming day, though he need not always be aware of them in full day consciousness. The one who is aware of them is his angel. What he experiences in the night in the company of the being we call our angel is a preview of the coming day. But



you must not regard this as a matter for curiosity, which would be quite wrong, but from the point of view of practical life. Only if a person sincerely has this attitude will he go the right way about taking decisions and bringing thoughts across into the daytime. Let us assume that a person has something quite definite to do at twelve noon. She and her angel have already negotiated about this the previous night. Things have been like this since the beginning of the fifteenth century. She does not need to remain conscious of it, and curiosity has nothing to do with it. But people should be filled with the conviction that in the course of the day they should help to bring about what they prepared with their angel the previous night.

Various things that have happened recently bear out quite shatteringly what I have just told you. The past four to five grievous years can bring home to us that this awareness of our connection with higher beings every day by way of the nighttime experiences was sadly lacking. How different everything could have been over the past four to five years if people had been convinced of the fact that the things they do are done according to what they planned with their angel in the course of the previous night.

These are things that should be spoken about today: for one, that human beings have to learn to regard this life between birth and death as a continuation of the spiritual/soul life they lived before birth; for another, that people should throughout their lives be able to experience the revelations of the god within themselves; and thirdly, a person should be clearly conscious throughout each day of the fact that the things he does from morning to evening have been worked out with his angel between going to sleep and waking up. People must turn to feelings of this kind, which are not only much more real with regard to the spiritual world compared to the abstract notions of the confessions, but presuppose that a person's unegoistic impulses will come into play rather than the egoistic ones. Feelings such as these will create the right mood for the connection we need to build to the beings belonging to the hierarchy of the angels. Then these beings will be able to interest themselves in us again. This is the direction in which our attitude to the spiritual world must develop.

There is another thing that needs to be understood. As you know, the present confessions speak a great deal about God and his works. What are they actually referring to? They are of course speaking merely of something of which the human soul is vaguely aware. It does not depend on what you *call* something but on what is present in a person's soul. People speak of God and of Christ, but all the time they only mean their angel. For when they turn to their angel this still produces an echo in the soul. It makes no difference whether the confessions are speaking about God, or Christ, or some other divine being, the substance of the thought only reaches to the angels connected with human beings. People do not reach anything higher than this hierarchy today, because people do not want to form a relationship with the spiritual world on the basis of anything larger than egoism. A relationship to the archangeloi, the hierarchy of the archangels, has to be sought in quite a different way. The interests people have today must be considerably expanded. I will give you an example of how this has to happen so that people's feelings will take them beyond their inclination to reach the angels, and to the level of the archangels.

People must come to the following realization: Over the past four to five years we have witnessed terrible events throughout the whole of the civilized world. A lot of people have wondered what caused these events, and many people have blamed each other. A lot has been said about guilt and innocence. Yet we do not need to shed more than the first layer of superficiality and we shall lose interest in all this talk about causes, guilt and innocence, for the simple reason that it is obvious that what has been brought to the surface during the past four to five years is like waves of the sea that the ocean forces have borne upwards from the depths to the surface. As each year passed, the forces of humanity became more agitated. One nation after another joined in the tremendous human stupidity of the last few years, and all one could say was: Elemental forces are being let loose and are being thrown up to the surface. The ocean of human life has become restless. What does this mean?

We shall not understand this clearly unless we extend this fact of human restlessness over the time-span we call history. We shall have to realize: The clash of arms that has been going on for the last four to five years is only the beginning of events that will take place in quite a different domain but which have not yet occurred among humanity. Even a superficial glance at the evolution of humanity can tell us that we are not at the end but only at the beginning of the greatest battles, the spiritual battles of the civilized world. And we must at all costs see to it that we are equal to these battles. There is an ever-increasing threat that the Orient and the Occident will in the near future meet in a psychological confrontation. For the Orient and the Occident have developed in two totally different directions. If we want to gain insight into these matters we have to regard some of today's phenomena as profound riddles.

In socialist circles we have been hearing for decades that according to the Marxist view all we experience in the way of art, religion, social customs, law and science is ideology. I have presented this in greater detail in the first chapter of *Towards Social Renewal*.<sup>2</sup> This means that a view of life which has been developing for the last three to four decades among the middle classes, but which they were too cowardly to admit, has been frankly acknowledged by the socialists of the past half century. They assert that the only part of social life that is real is the things that actually happen, so there is reality only in the forces of the economy. All that has gone on in humanity in the way of art, religion, social customs, science, law and morality is only something similar to smoke rising up out of true reality. It is merely ideology, and has no reality, only a semblance of one. So the modern socialists have come to the conclusion that they need only change economic life and everything else will change. For these other things—morality, social customs, law, religion and so on—are only something unreal, an ideology that rises up like smoke out of the events of the economic sphere, which are the only reality.

If, however, we do not look at the world too narrowly but from a wider perspective we shall focus on this word 'ideology' which the middle classes could have been using for three to four hundred years, if they had not lacked the courage.

They felt that economic life was the only reality and that what we draw forth from it in the way of science, art, religion and so on is only like smoke. The whole of life was like this, and the pupils of this bourgeois world merely drew the final conclusions. For the socialists are only the pupils of this middle class world, and they have driven it to its extreme. This is the outlook which formed in the Occident and reached its climax in the second half of the nineteenth century and the twentieth century.

Other impulses have formed the Eastern view of the world, and an Oriental would say: 'I look at what is going on externally in the world. I see the impressions my senses convey to me, the instrument I use for transforming the world, all that shines down to me from the stars, the body that belongs to me. What is all that? It is *maya*! As compared with this, what is true reality, what is not illusion? The experience we have within our own souls is reality.' If we do not translate literally—and this leads to nothing—but translate according to the inner meaning, we shall realize that what in the East is called *maya* is called in the West ideology. For thousands of years the Orientals have regarded as *maya* both the outer world that affects our senses and even economic life, whereas the people of the Occident regard the outer world, which is *maya* to the Orientals, as their reality, and what arises in their own soul as ideology. Both in the East and in the West people have developed their own world conceptions to quite an extent. The leading personalities of the socialist parties are still saying in 1919 that there is no need to do anything about transforming and revolutionizing the world, for change will come about of itself.\*

Western fatalism, eastern fatalism, we know them both well. In the East—though not right at the beginning, but along with the development of the world view of *maya*— people lapsed into complete fatalism. Every world conception has within its inner structure the inclination eventually to become fatalistic. But we are now at the point when we have to realize that fatalism has to be got rid of. We must find the transition from mere observation and contemplation to will and action. We must rouse our will by developing the sort of impulses that

arise out of the attitudes I have just been indicating: that you enter life as a continuation of pre-natal life, that you remain young until your hair is white and you have wrinkles, that the nocturnal work of the angel plays into the life of the day. This is essential. The way to go about enlivening one's will is to expand one's sphere of interest by seeing not only what touches one's own personal life but the differences which come to expression in the civilized world.

Looking at the West, where we ourselves belong, we see the inner world as ideology and the outer world as reality. Looking to the East, we see the outer world as ideology, *maya*, and the inner world as reality. And the violent clashes occurring among people in the present time make it our duty to find the will to extricate ourselves from the fatalism of such a view of life. We have to find a way through, and we shall find it only if we can take seriously something that still makes people very annoyed.

There was some strange feedback once when on the occasion of a lecture I gave in a town in southern Germany I said something that really annoyed people, but which was a true statement that *must* be heard today. You cannot frame the things you say in order to please people; you have to speak the truth. In the context of my lecture I had to say that particularly those people who form the leading class today have decadent physical brains. It is unpleasant to have to say this, and it is more than unpleasant to hear it, though it is essential that people do. The very people who have brought about the present configuration of the times have, in achieving it, acquired a decadent physical brain. This is how it is! In a certain respect we are in a similar situation today as were the people of Europe during the great migrations and the spreading of Christianity. The Christian impulse came over from the East, first by way of Greece and Rome. The world of Greece and Rome was of course much more highly evolved than the Teutonic world. The Teutons were barbarians. But the brains of the Greeks and Romans were decadent, therefore they did not respond to the arrival of Christianity as the Teutons did. This was a migration of the peoples that moved horizontally. Today it is vertical. Today a surge of spiritual life

is coming from the spiritual world. Just as Christianity initially bounced off the Greeks and Romans, the spiritual world is bouncing off the bourgeois world today, for its people are decadent. The working classes are not yet decadent, they are still able to understand what is meant by the spiritual world. But the others will need to be prepared by anthroposophy, i.e. they will need to develop that part of the brain which is not yet physical, the etheric brain. We are confronted today by the stark fact that the leading classes are threatened not only with having a decadent brain but with total decadence if they will not realize that they have to understand the spiritual view of the world by supersensible means.

The tragedy of the middle class system is that it aims at understanding everything on a physical level, whereas our task today is to grasp things with the etheric brain, that is, to be open to spiritual truths. This is what modern humanity must steer towards today, and the West must take the helm. In this respect we must acquaint ourselves with something very important. Look at the way language has developed from East to West. Take German, for instance. Nowadays it is being terribly misused, but if we look back at the language of Goethe and Lessing we know that not so long ago they could speak directly about the life of the spirit. This quality is there in the language, though by now it has been terribly neglected and reduced to empty phrases. But it is not due to the language alone that it can no longer be spiritual. The farther West we go the more we find that spirit has been jettisoned; out of the language itself, out of the sounds, the tone, even the grammar. Rejection of the spiritual/soul element from the Anglo-American idiom will lead to the world mission of the Anglo-American peoples. They will have to learn—though quite instinctively alongside their acquisition of world domination—as they listen to other people speaking, to hear not only the sound but to interpret the gesture of the language, to hear more than the mere physical sound, to hear something that passes from one human being to another, but reaches beyond the spoken word. This is something that works from etheric body to etheric body. This is the secret of western languages; the physical sound is losing in significance and the spiritual part of it is gaining in significance. It is the task in the West to let

the spirit filtrate into language, and not only to hear physically but to hear intuitively more than goes into the sound. In the West, spirit will have to be sought through language itself.

If we look to the East we shall notice an everincreasing urge among the peoples whose nature it is to sink themselves into their own inner being, not to be bound by the old forms of conception regarding karma, reincarnation and so on, but to look out into the world and perceive its spiritual content, even to establish a view on nature.

These are only small examples of how we can widen our interests beyond our own personality, even beyond our own nationality, to embrace the whole of humanity, and realize that when we look at the West we see ideology, but of a different kind from the eastern one. We see, however, that elemental forces are churned up within earthly humanity as a result of these opposites. We learn to take our place within the whole of the civilized world. And in learning this we shall acquire the right foundation for the kind of feelings which will reach beyond the sphere of the angeloi. Our interests will simply have become so much wider that we shall have the inclination to reach to ideas which ascend to the sphere of the archangeloi, for the fact is that all that I have been telling you about the contrast between ideology and *maya* and so on has, as its fundamental impetus, a dynamic that belongs to the sphere of the archangels. Here we go beyond the sphere of the angels. This shows you what people really need to know in our time. If someone talks about *maya* and ideology nowadays in the way I do, and actually goes so far as to say that the essential dynamic of this lies in the sphere of the archangels, what do clever people take him for? A fool, of course, because the mental equipment they have makes them so hidebound that they take no interest in the wider concerns of humanity. To have an interest of this sort requires a spiritual vantage-point from which one can enter into the processes at work in the great concerns of humanity.

I have given you an idea of how you can work your way upwards to the sphere of the archangeloi. You can go higher still, and present-day humanity must learn how to do this too. Our educated classes had of course to steep themselves in the

culture of ancient Greece. Young men (and in recent times young women too) had to have a higher education where they became acquainted with Greek culture, and this gave them enough openings to acquire a real feeling for the Greek world. It is very significant for our civilization that in their student years our young people learn about the great accomplishments of Greek times. The Greeks themselves had a different attitude. It would never have occurred to them to teach their young men the Egyptian language. They had a direct sense for present reality, and devoted themselves to it entirely.

We on the other hand engage our young people in a way that prevents them from learning about the environment or acquiring the will to come to grips with reality. We take them back to the past. We do not realize what we are actually doing. We are teaching our children more than merely the Greek language as such, for the configuration of the sounds of a language, its grammar, contains the whole character of its people as a nation. In learning the Greek language the way people do today [1919], they acquire the kind of soul attitude to the world such as the Greeks had. Their cultural life functioned in such a way that only a small top layer of society were actually involved in it, and the rest were slaves. No occupation was worthy of a free man in Greece except science and politics, and at the most agriculture—but only in a supervisory capacity; everything else was done by slaves. This is contained in the language. So when we imbibe Greek culture, together with the language, we are taking into ourselves the inclination to think as an aristocrat. It came naturally to the Greeks to structure their whole social organism in accordance with their way of thought, for this was connected with the blood. On the one side there were the broad masses, and on the other side there were human beings of a higher type who were of a superior soul configuration through their blood. This is even expressed in Greek sculpture. Look at the way the nose and ears are placed in the Hermes type in comparison with the Zeus or Athene type. They are quite different. The Greeks knew exactly what they wanted to express in the contrast between the Hermes type and the Aryan Zeus type.



We do not realize how steeped in all this we are. When we formulate ways of thinking about the world, we basically formulate the sort of ideas that are in keeping with what the Greeks had in their blood. Our intellectual, our cultural life is saturated with what we incorporate of ancient Greece. This Greek heritage intrudes into our times luciferically. Romanism, which succeeded Hellenism, was a metamorphosis of it. Compared to the Greeks, the Romans were a prosaic, unimaginative people, who developed other aspects of life. What was instinctively in the blood with the Greeks, became abstract with the Romans. They made even the human being into an abstraction, a citizen of the state. In the Roman sense a person is not a human being but a citizen of the state. This would have been incomprehensible to the Greeks. To be a member of humanity was not what gave a person his identity but being registered on some state document.

This can sometimes lead to absurdities. I once had an old friend who told me when he was sixty-four years old that he had now saved up so much money—he had always been poor—that he intended marrying the sweetheart of his youth. He had become engaged at eighteen, but at that time he had not had the money to marry his fiancée, so the couple vowed to wait. The time had now arrived, and meantime he was sixty-four and she sixty-two. He returned happily to his birthplace, and wrote to say that there were no more obstacles, for he now had the money. But the way was still not clear for them to marry, because the parish councillor had doubts about his existence. The parsonage had burned down years before, including all the birth certificates etc., and there was no one left who could give evidence of his identity. He himself would have expected that his presence would be a proof of his person, but he had no legal evidence! Eventually the wedding did take place, but the difficulties brought home to him how much more importance attached to a birth certificate than to his own person.

So people are citizens. You are who you are in an abstract context. This view is essentially Roman, as is everything of this sort existing in ordinary life. Our education is essentially dealt with by the state, which has already become very

abstract, but will become much more so under socialist influence. People are not educated today to take their place in the world as human beings but to have a job in the service of the state, and to be slotted in there. The state lays claim to our young people—not immediately, for then they are too unpolished, so it leaves them temporarily to their parents. But later on it reaches out with its tentacles and trains them to fit its requirements, until it is sure it has got hold of them. For just look at all it gives them! It covers their consumer needs, gives them all that is allotted to them, and then gives them a pension. You have only to hear how much it means to a person when he can assure himself that in addition to employment for which he is even paid, he will also get a pension! That means a great deal, and chains people to the abstract state and even affects their whole outlook. Here too the Roman attitude has taken hold of the rest of a person's life. If you tell someone today: 'If you do not want to miss out on immortality then you must activate your soul energies so that you yourself can pass as an active soul through the gates of death'—he will not understand you. The status quo has got him thoroughly out of the habit of applying his understanding to such matters. Instead, he has been told that he need only believe in Christ and in what the state does. So he knows that first of all the state will take care of his needs, and when he has worked long enough the state will give him a pension. And the church goes a step further; it offers a person, after his death, a pension for his soul, so that he does not need to work on his soul during life nor do anything himself when his soul passes through the gate of death. Nowadays a person is registered, and politics Roman style has already become second nature to people, and this will only increase.

You can experience terrible things in this connection. I have been involved in helping to set up the Waldorf School, and whilst doing this I had to present the various curricula. When I think back to the 1870s and 1880s I realize how relatively small the curricula were; they just contained what had to be studied in each class. The educational aims and the subject matter were prescribed, and regarding everything else the teachers were left free. Nowadays you are presented with huge curricula, and the first page, headed 'official directive' tells

you how you are to teach. In other words, what should take effect solely from one person to another is set down officially according to chapter and verse, and the whole thing is a matter of rules and regulations. That is the death of the living spirit, and this death of the spirit leads directly from Central Europe back to Rome! This is the second thing we have absorbed, the political/legal element of Romanism.

Then came the arrival of an area of life that could not be transplanted from former times, the life of the economy. This has to be modern. We can go on clinging to the knowledge from Greek times (chewing the cud, as it were), and continue to be influenced by the juridical life of the Romans, but we cannot eat what the Greeks and Romans ate. Economic life has to be up-to-date. But we have gradually come to the point where we have allowed it to become crossed with Greek thought and Roman juridical life, and we now have the duty to disentangle them again. To realize that these three strata are like a conglomeration of the products of different eras, and have to be sorted out, means to extend one's interest in time (as we previously did via the East and West in space), right up to the present moment; in other words to make ourselves capable of feelings which can raise us to the archai. But how many people are there today who care about these things enough to develop an impartial interest in the amazing way the time spirit works, when he telescopes the different ages in the way I have described.

Unless we come to realize things to the point where we take up the impulses that are entering our physical world from the spiritual world, unless we realize that just as human beings are connected through their bodily organization with the animal, plant and mineral kingdoms they are also connected by way of their spiritual organization with the hierarchies of the angeloi, archangeloi and archai—spirits of personality as the guardians of personal development, national spirits as the guardians of the development of peoples in space, and the spirits of time as the guardians of development throughout the ages—unless we are able to understand the spiritual foundations of these things, we shall get nowhere. Everything depends on human beings finding the courage and the strength today to see into the

spiritual world. We are at the beginning of a hard struggle in which all the instincts will be stirred up that arise from the one half truth that the life of the economy is the only reality and everything belonging to the soul and spirit is ideology, and from the other half truth that the element of soul and spirit is the only reality and the whole external world is ideology, *maya*. These contradictions will let loose such instincts in human nature that for long ages spiritual battles will rage such as people cannot imagine today. We should know this. And we should also know that we have to raise ourselves to a vision of the spiritual world as we conceive of it, one that is in keeping with the ethos of the times.

The present time, out of its very nature, is asking this of us. We must respond.

\*This paragraph has been summarized by the translator.

\*This sentence is the translator's summary of a paragraph.

## Lecture Five

### The human being and the hierarchies

Due to the misunderstandings that came about with regard to the conception of the polarity between Ormuzd and Ahriman, human consciousness has in fact lost sight of a large part of the mysteries of the universe, of the universal laws. Most important of all, it is really this alone that has made possible modern materialism which provokes in us the feeling that we are surrounded by contradictions which are being investigated by the science of today and which will gradually lead to our grasping the nature of the universe. There is a very simple consideration that will show us that this approach will never bring us an understanding of the universe. Remember my telling you—but bring it now into the present context—that recognized scientists of today can in fact relate to the human being only when he has become a corpse. Those forces belonging to the rest of nature, which are still at work in the human body after it has become a corpse, can be explained according to the usual laws of nature. Meanwhile the forces living in a human being between birth and death struggle against these nature laws, work in opposition to them. Even if you were to put real judgements—only to a certain extent—in the place of prejudices, then nowadays you would need to realize that between birth and death, actually from the first moments of the embryonic period, a human being is fighting against everything governed by natural laws as today's science understands them.

If you think of the natural world and take stock of everything that physics, chemistry, physiology, biology and so on have to say about it, and then think of the life of a human being between birth and death, you will have to admit that this life is in constant battle against the realm governed by those natural laws. It is precisely because the human organization does not want to have anything to do with these natural laws and fights against them that between birth and death we can be human.

On the basis of this we can conclude without any doubt that if we want to think of the coming into being of humanity in a cosmic context we shall have to accept that different laws will apply. In terms of our present laws of nature we envisage a world in which human beings, even plants and animals too, are not an integral part. Today, however, we want solely to consider the human being's relation to the rest of nature. Human beings are not part of the nature to which modern science lays claim. In fact, with every breath they draw they rebel against the kind of nature spoken of by science.

Yet we are entitled to speak of the cosmos, of the universal all, for human beings in the physical form in which they confront us at present do of course come originally from the womb of the cosmos. Only we must certainly conceive of this cosmos as consisting of a different essence and substance than the kind we have in mind when we speak in the sense of modern science. We shall be able to form an idea of what we mean if we dwell on the following fact confirmed by spiritual science.

Let us think of the moment when a human being dies, either at a young age or at a normal old age. The corpse remains behind. We can compare this process—in fact it is more than a comparison—with a snake shedding its skin or a bird discarding the eggshell. The corpse is cast off and taken over by the natural laws known to modern science in the same way as a discarded snakeskin is taken over by them and then no longer conforms to the laws governing a snake's growth. So the part of a human being which becomes a corpse is taken over by earthly laws. But between birth and death a human being also has a human form, the human *gestalt*. This dissolves and ceases to exist. The corpse to a certain extent still retains this form, but only by way of imitation. The form of the corpse is no longer the same as the form we have between birth and death. For it is inherent in this form that a human being can feel himself and move about by means of it; this form possesses a certain sum of forces that function when the person moves. All this has gone, of course, when only the corpse remains. Therefore the forces that actually give the corpse its form have left the corpse; they disappear when the

person dies. A human being does not take them with him. For a time he takes his etheric body with him—we will ignore this for the moment—but at any rate he does not take his physical form with him. It is as though he were to lose this physical form. To put it more exactly: If we were to follow the movements, the mobility of a human being after he has left his body and passed through the gate of death we would discover movements that differ from those carried out by the physical form.

So the forces that make up the form in the living physical body are no longer outwardly perceptible when the person has gone through the gate of death. The corpse once had this form, and still retains it for a time, but it loses it gradually, because it is no longer an integral part of it. If I may make a rough comparison, it is as if you were to use a cake tin to put dough in. The cake acquires this same shape, but the cake does not take the cake tin into itself. You cannot say that the form is part of the very substance of the cake. It obviously acquired the form from the tin it was baked in. In the same way as the cake keeps the form of the tin after you have taken it out, the corpse keeps the human form after the form is removed. But this form itself, the form with which we move about, ceases when the person passes through the gate of death. The fact that we have this form, that this form can take shape out of the laws of the universe—just as a crystal takes shape from the laws of the universe—is part of the process of these very laws of the universe. So we may ask what becomes of this form. And the answer spiritual science gives us is that this form brings nourishment and sustenance to the spiritual hierarchy we call the archai, the primal beginnings. Therefore we can say that something passes from the human form into the realm of the archai.

It is indeed the case that the physical form we acquire at birth and lay aside at death comes from the realm of the archai, the primal beginnings, and that we actually receive it by being enveloped by a spiritual being from the realm of the archai. We are enclosed within this being who comes from the realm of the archai, and who withdraws again with what he lent us during our lifetime.



You see that this is another thing that helps us to realize how we belong to the whole of the cosmos. It is just as though the archai were to stretch out his antennae. If this is one of the archai, he stretches out his feelers and this creates the human form, and the human being can then make his appearance. You can only properly imagine how you exist within the cosmos if you picture yourself covered by a protuberance of the archai. The human being appeared for the first time in the Lemurian age as a being of earth, and only gradually acquired the form we know. From the sort of description it is possible to give—such as the one I gave in my *Esoteric Science* of the metamorphosis of the human form (remember how I described it in connection with the Atlantean world)—you will arrive at what the archai actually do, how they work from their kingdom down into the earthly realm, metamorphosing the human form. This transformation of the human *gestalt*, beginning in the Lemurian age and continuing on to the period when it will disappear from the earth, is something which is altogether constituted and fashioned from out of the kingdom of the archai. In working in this way at the human being they bring about at the same time what in the true sense of the word is the spirit of the age. For this time spirit is intimately connected with the fashioning of the human being's form, in that the skin is brought into a certain shape. The time spirit is situated essentially in the outermost sphere of human sensibility. If one understands the working of these archai then one also understands that not only the human *gestalt* changes but that the time spirits themselves also change in the course of earth existence.

As you know, behind the archai, in the order of the hierarchies, are the spirits of form, the exusiai. If you look beyond what constitutes the form of human beings in their



earthly existence to what belongs to the whole earth planet from its beginning to its end, you arrive at a realm of activity where far more all-embracing cosmic laws are at work externally than those governing the human form. For when we describe the evolution of the earth we come first, as you will remember, to the echo of the ancient Saturn epoch, which we call the Polarean age; then there is the echo of the ancient Sun epoch, the Hyperborean age, then an echo of the ancient Moon epoch, the Lemurian age. Not until then do we have earth existence proper, the first earth period, the Atlantean epoch; and now we are living in the post-Atlantean epoch. The human form developed over the course of time. The earth has to have more extensive laws than those that come to expression in the section of earth evolution in which the changes taking place in the present-day human form can happen. We must look back to the very first beginnings of the earth, when human beings had not yet acquired their form, when they were still physical/etheric beings, and forward to what is yet to happen on earth when, after many more millennia, human beings, as physical beings, will have disappeared from the earth. The physical earth will continue to exist for a while, and it will still be inhabited by human beings, but they will be etheric beings no longer in visible human forms.

If we take this whole fashioning of the earth including and going beyond the human being, if we encompass with spiritual vision the laws of which our present-day natural laws are only the minutest part, we are looking at what belongs to the kingdom of the exusiai. The earthly world was fashioned from out of the realm of the exusiai just as the human kingdom, together with everything that has to be present in the earth so that human beings can arise at all, was fashioned from out of the realm of the primal powers. So we can say: The form of the earth, when it dissolves in future time, will pass over into the realm of the exusiai.

Let us now take a look at the second member of the human being, the human etheric body. Here too we cannot at all claim that it is totally our own possession for, just as the physical form belongs to the realm of the archai, and we are enveloped in an extension of the realm of the archai, we are enveloped

where our etheric body is concerned in an extension of the realm of the archangels, the archangeloi. So we can say that on passing through the gate of death we keep this etheric body for a short while. We know that it then disintegrates, but this disintegration does not mean that it disappears into nothing but that it goes back into the kingdom of the archangels. They claim it again, they lower as it were a part of their being into the kingdom of earthly humanity, thus setting up the human etheric body for its lifespan. So we can assert that something passes over from the human etheric body into the kingdom of the archangeloi.

And where the astral body is concerned, this has a similar relation to the realm of the angeloi, the angels, as the physical form has to the realm of the archai and the etheric body to the realm of the archangeloi. Our astral body is also not entirely our own. It is an extension of the angels. So it can be asserted that after death something of our human astral body passes over into the realm of the angeloi. Our astral body is also a kind of garment coming to us from the kingdom of the angels. So you see, in that we have a physical human form, an etheric body and an astral body, we are enveloped in the realms of the hierarchies next above us. And in that we are involved in the laws governing the earth—that we can move about as human beings on the earth, can unfold will power and carry out actions—we are also involved in the realm of the exusiai, the spirits of form, the elohim.

An important factor comes into this. Think of what your physical form is like in the condition of sleep. Whilst you are lying in bed your body maintains its form, and this is still there in the morning. It certainly does not disintegrate, and one cannot say that the physical body is a corpse, that it merely has a form that has been imposed on it, for the form is really there. So the archai, through being involved with this form as part of our human physical being, are connected with it for always. The archangeloi are similarly connected with the human etheric body. But when we come to the astral body it is a different matter. The human astral body certainly does not remain bound to the physical human form whilst we are asleep. We could say that it is then in quite a different environment. The

point is that while the laws of the archai are uninterruptedly connected with the physical form from birth to death, and the laws of the archangeloi with our etheric being, the laws of the angeloi have as it were to accompany human beings from one condition to the other and back again. The angelic essence, the angel being, has as it were to go with us into sleep and return from it with us.

As you see, a new factor is involved when we speak of our angel. In fact it actually depends on human beings themselves—on their attitude, on the whole way their world of feeling is disposed to the spiritual world—whether their angels accompany them when they leave their physical and etheric bodies in sleep, or not. When children go to sleep their angel goes with them, but when a person has reached a certain maturity it actually depends on his attitude, on whether he has an inner relation to his angel. And if this relationship is not there, and he only has faith in material things, and his thoughts are entirely about the material world, his angel will not go with him.

For if you think of the human being as a whole, as a cosmic being [see drawing], with the earth as the product of the exusiai [outer red], the human physical body as the product of the archai [inner red], the human etheric body as the product of the archangeloi [yellow], then the human astral body as the product of the activity of the angeloi [blue]—if you think of all this, you can say that as long as a human being is awake his angel is in the bosom of the archangels, the archai and the exusiai, the higher spiritual beings in fact. If a person leaves his physical and etheric body in a materialistic mood, his angel would be denying his realm, his affiliation to the archangels, the archai and the exusiai if he were to accompany the human being. As you see, we are here in a sphere where a person's attitude is the decisive factor in one of the most important facts of human life, namely whether a person's angel will be with him while he is asleep, or not.



Nowadays you cannot say: ‘Well, if there *are* angels we do not need to believe in them in our waking state, of course, for when we are asleep they are bound to look after us.’ No, they do not go with us if we deny their existence during the day. This is something which leads us right into the mysteries of human existence, and which at the same time shows us that our attitude is just as much an integral part of the whole cosmic system as, let us say, our blood circulation is of the system which external science surveys—or rather does not survey.

So the human being himself, with his ego and his claim to being an independent being, is an integral part of the whole cosmos. Human beings only acquired their ego consciousness, however, in the course of earth existence; and this was a slow process. In ancient times, when there was the so-called instinctive gift of clairvoyance, human beings did not possess this ego consciousness fully. The particular kind of instinctive vision possessed by those ancient inhabitants of the earth was not actually their own vision, for their ego had not yet been awakened. The I surrendered itself to what the angel thought, archangel felt and archai willed. It lived in the bosom of these beings. Today we can look back to a wonderful primeval wisdom. But fundamentally speaking this is by no means human wisdom but the kind of wisdom which came down to the earth through archai, archangeloi and angeloi overshadowing human beings, and entering into human souls by way of that primal wisdom which actually belongs to much higher beings, and which they acquired before the earth became earth. A human being must now acquire his own wisdom, and do this with the help of his angel with whom he should be inwardly connected. We are now reaching this point

in time. And in the present, when the human ego is becoming more and more awake, a human being has come to the point where his angel and archangel no longer think in him, but he has to find strength through his own resolve.

However, through the very fact of human beings being deserted by the angels they were able, for the first time, to make a real contact with earthly existence. It is this involvement with earthly existence which makes them on the one hand free but which calls forth the need for them to strive from out of their own forces to reach the point where the hierarchies are able to live in human consciousness. We must aspire to have the kind of thoughts in which angels can live. These thoughts are acquired only from the Imagination of spiritual science. When we re-orientate our whole feeling life by means of such thoughts we shall be able once again to reach up to the sphere of the archangels. Human beings now face the real danger that when they return to their physical body out of sleep they will have no idea that they have such a thing as an etheric body, and that the substance of the archangel is at work in it. They have to recognize this once again, and they have to discover again that the primal beginnings, the archai, are active in their physical form. They have to acquire an understanding of the moment of going to sleep and the moment of waking.

For in the process of acquiring and experiencing an ego, humanity emerged from out of the kingdom of the higher hierarchies. Human beings became independent. But by this very fact they entered a different realm, the kingdom of Ahriman. The important point is that they are now entering the kingdom of Ahriman in waking consciousness.

The form of the earth is part of the realm of the exusiai

Part of the human form passes into the realm of the archai

Part of the human etheric body passes into the realm of the archangeloi

Part of the astral body passes into the realm of the angeloi

The ego is entering the realm of Ahriman (the *maya* of Ahriman)

The danger of succumbing to the realm of Ahriman was at its greatest around the year 333 BC. This was the moment in time when humanity began to make use of mere intellect, mere logic. Then the Mystery of Golgotha occurred and entered the life of humanity. And from AD 333 onwards the time began in which human beings must con-sciously strive to reenter the realm of the higher hierarchies.

They have certainly not yet raised themselves out of the realm of Ahriman because since the fifteenth century, intellectualism has come more than ever into its own. Yet precisely because they live in the intellect, which is in fact not reality, they live actually in images, in *maya*. This is their saving grace. They live not in the actual realm of Ahriman but in the *maya* of Ahriman, in mere appearance, in the sense in which I have been speaking in the last few days. This is why they can break away from it and turn in the other direction. But this can only be done in freedom. For what we are living in is *maya*, a system of pictures; our whole intellectual culture is only image. Since AD 333 human beings have been free to aspire to raise themselves out of it. The church made every effort to hinder this. <sup>1</sup> It is time this aim was defeated. Human beings must strive upward to the spiritual worlds.

333 BC  
333 AD  
666

If you add these two numbers together you get 666. That is the ‘number of the beast’ indicating the time when humanity was most exposed to the risk of really descending to the kingdom of the animals. They remain exposed to this risk even after AD 333, of course, if after entering the *maya* of Ahriman they do not aspire to raise themselves out of it. The important point is that precisely because we have unwittingly sailed into Ahriman’s kingdom, as far as the *maya* of Ahriman, we have become free beings. No providence could have prevented our

entering the realm of Ahriman, otherwise it would have left us unfree.

Think about it and you will realize that it makes a great difference whether human beings acquire a spiritual frame of mind by means of which their astral bodies remain connected with their angelos while they are asleep, or whether they acquire no such spiritual frame of mind and are not accompanied by their angel when they go to sleep. For human beings then bring ahrimanic Inspirations with them out of sleep. It is indeed the case that the whole materialistic mode of thought with which human beings are crammed full, is emerging in our time out of their sleep life, with greater and greater rapidity. The only way people can protect themselves from continually bringing with them from sleep the sort of ahrimanic Inspirations that condemn them to materialism, that is, to being bound to the earth, to becoming identified with matter and suffering the death of the soul, is by filling themselves with the frame of mind that comes when they accept spiritual scientific thoughts.

The sleeping state, then, is something which is gradually introducing materialism. But Ahriman is also making other efforts to alienate human beings from their angel, and these situations are occurring more and more often. In 1914 there was a particularly awful example, when ahrimanic forces stupefied people and took away their normal consciousness, so that they came into a condition in which their angel could not participate, and the ahrimanic influences were therefore very powerful. This was why I told so many people in 1914: It is no good believing that people will ever acquire the right view of what started the war if they look at external documents. It used to be possible to discover things out of documents in the archives. But what happened on this occasion happened more in the life of the mind, from out of the spiritual world, and the majority of the people involved did not act in full consciousness but were led by ahrimanic forces in a state of paralysed consciousness, in which the realm of the angels was obviously not involved. If we wish to understand the present time it is essential to look at the participation of the spiritual

world at this very time. There is no doubt about the necessity to do so.<sup>2</sup>



## PART III

## Lecture Six<sup>1</sup>

### How worlds and beings relate

The things we want to speak about today may perhaps not accord with our usual procedure but may nevertheless throw light on some of the subjects of former lectures. Everything I shall put forward today will serve to clarify a number of matters that you have either already heard or are about to hear. What we shall be discussing today is the succession of beings who exist in the world, from human beings upwards. We have already had occasion to speak about such beings in connection with the evolution of the earth. We shall consider them today in a slightly different connection, namely from the point of view of their characteristics, tasks and activities.

There is a kind of laziness today in the view of the world held by some people, not to want to consider the existence of any other beings between themselves and God. It is complaisant in the extreme to think of a mineral kingdom, plant kingdom, animal kingdom and the human kingdom and then to ascend directly to an all-pervading God, in the belief that one can in one way or another have a proper awareness or feeling of Him. Real spiritual science does not take such an easy line; it makes way for beings of all kinds of levels of perfection between the human level and our inner feeling for a supreme God. This succession of beings has been indicated in many connections. In esoteric Christianity they are called: angels, archangels, principalities, powers, might, dominions, thrones, cherubim and seraphim. These are nine different kinds of being, and the human race follows on below. Only when we look up beyond the realm of the seraphim can we get a feeling of what we mean by God.

Do not imagine that there is no significance attached to asserting that there is a lazy streak in a world conception that says we ascend from human beings straight to God, without inserting these beings. If human beings had not forgotten to study them and recognize their existence, then the particular aberration of materialism would never have occurred. One can combine a kind of religious sentiment, a kind of vague

religious feeling with the act of rising directly from the human level to God. Yet no real understanding of the world is possible this way; it will never give you a real picture of world evolution. This is why humanity has lost its understanding of the world; and materialistic ideas will time and again be able to out-argue that part of religion that rests solely on sentiment and dim feelings. The spiritual scientific world view, by giving people a new opportunity to hear something about these beings, is opening up an understanding of the world again. A criterion is being established to set against this denial of a higher world. The people who are resisting the recognition of this world today are preparing the soil for the most insipid and devastating materialism. The materialists are actually themselves the victims; the real instigators of the process are the ones who are complaisant enough not to want to know about what exists between human beings and God.

Having told you the reason for needing to speak about these higher beings today I will now speak freely and aphoristically about their characteristics. We will begin with the hierarchy nearest to the human race, the angels, God's messengers, the angeloi. The greatest difference between these beings and ourselves is our different approach to perceiving and knowing. Human beings have their sense perceptions and perform their actions within a world consisting of the four kingdoms of nature. Our actions function in the world of minerals, plants, animals and human beings. This is the nature of our perception and of our deeds of will.

The angels, who are one stage higher than human beings, differ from us in that the mineral world is not within the scope of their perception. Their ability to perceive starts with the plant world, and their perception extends in addition to the animal kingdom, human kingdom, and also their own kingdom, the realm of the angels. The life of the angels functions within these four kingdoms. What human beings perceive as minerals, as something in space, is to these beings empty space, cavities in space. If you remember what I told you in my book *Theosophy*<sup>2</sup> about human beings when they are in devachan perceiving the mineral world as though it were a hollow space, this gives you a rough idea of these beings

who live permanently in such a world. The mineral world is not a hindrance for them, they can pass through it, it holds no interest for them, it is too inferior for them. Their perception only begins with the plant world and extends as far as their own world. As angel beings they address themselves as 'I'. Through the fact that these beings are constituted in this way, their activity will help us to understand something we have already heard about. When the human being has passed through the gate of death the first thing he experiences is the memory picture of his past life. It comes to him in the following way. When a human being dies he first of all has the feeling of growing bigger and bigger, and this expansion is accompanied by the appearance of the memory picture. When this picture eventually ceases he is left with an extract, like the fruit of the last life. This forms a kind of embryonic force for the building up of the human being in his next incarnation. It is a kind of structured, etheric essence remaining with him as the essential experiences in his etheric body, which accompany him through eternity. If we also remember that after a human being has passed through kamaloka he takes this essence with him into devachan, and that he is not inactive there but has important tasks to carry out, then we shall understand the activities of these beings who are a stage higher than we are. The human being will not be brought to incarnate again until he can experience something new, until he can produce new fruit. The earth passes through many metamorphoses. And it is therefore incorrect to suppose that it would be unnecessary to come again and again. A human being can always learn new things, which he then takes with him into eternity.

What effect does a change in the earth's surface have? Who brings about the change? How does it happen that in a certain area quite a different picture of the plant world and quite different life conditions arise? Just as human beings with their physical forces are constantly changing the face of the earth on the physical plane—try to imagine, for instance, what things looked like three thousand years ago at the place where Munich now stands—you will be able to imagine that other changes must happen from the direction of devachan, for human beings only alter the mineral kingdom. And there again it is human beings themselves who are constantly changing the

earth from the direction of the spiritual worlds. But they could not do it by themselves. They would not know what the face of the earth ought to look like, what kind of quality it ought to have. They can carry this out only with the guidance of higher beings. The beings who give this guidance are the beings we designate as angels. They have dealings with the part of a human being that is in a different form during his sojourn in devachan. They lead and guide the eternal human ego. And they can effect this change in the earth because they reach down, in their way, to the world of the plants.

We will now easily understand that these beings are the ones who always lead and guide the human ego. Their guidance is not interrupted, either, when the ego reincarnates. The ego is ruled and led by such beings. Therefore the naive belief is not unfounded that there is a being guarding our higher ego. However, we know that on old Moon these beings we designate as angels were themselves at the human stage. They have since developed beyond this stage. You can easily see from this that human beings themselves are on the way to becoming beings such as these, and this will happen on Jupiter. So the part of the human being that today is working its way to a higher existence is moving in the direction of becoming a being of this kind. Human beings are, then, of a similar nature to angels. In this respect we are looking deeply into the spiritual aspect of world evolution. However, the names we attach must not be considered a permanent attribute but a designation of a relative level.

If now, in our own considerations, we ascend to the archangels, we again come to beings who have both a different mode of perception and a different way of performing deeds. Where they are concerned the plant world, too, holds no interest for them, and is no longer perceptible. Their level of perception starts with the animal kingdom. That is their lowest kingdom; then come human beings, angels and archangels. Those are the four realms of these beings. So we can say that we can look up to exalted beings of the kind that reach down in their actions as far as the animal kingdom. They live in the animal kingdom, human kingdom, etc. Their deeds do not reach down into the plant kingdom. Human beings knew this

at an earlier stage of consciousness, and in this respect we can see deeply into the soul life of earlier peoples and their times. Just as our ancestors sensed the deeds of angels in the plants, those peoples sensed the deeds of archangels in animals. This is why ancient peoples, e.g. the Egyptians, worshipped certain animals. This shows us what they knew. If we observe the remarkable forms of Egyptian animal worship we will be in awe of those peoples' deep wisdom. Not for nothing did they connect these animals with higher beings and human beings. If we bear in mind that human life has always been connected with animal life, that earthly progress is tied up with animals—certain areas of human livelihood are dependent on animals—we shall realize what a far-reaching basis this animal worship has.

What task do archangels have? Some people still talk of a folk spirit, but for most people this has become a meaningless expression, an abstraction. People do not know very much any more about the fact that a national entity is really and truly led by an actual folk spirit. This folk spirit, who is an archangel, lives in a national group in the same way as a human spirit lives in a human body. Archangels are the spirits of nations. Whilst angels guide individual human beings through their incarnations, archangels guide the life of whole groups, whole nations. This enables us to understand that because the life of whole national groups is deeply connected with the life of certain groups of animals, the Egyptians felt that the gods had assigned certain animals to them. They were right in seeing this as a deed of the folk spirit. They prayed to the power of the folk spirit who had assigned the animal to them.

You could now ask me whether it would be possible to think of a being who, whilst perceiving the individual organs of a human being, cannot comprehend him as a whole, cannot imagine that these organs form a whole. You could ask me whether perhaps with their current form of perception human beings do not perceive angels and archangels directly, but perceive their organs, their eyes and ears. Or we could visualize the angels perceiving plants, animals, human beings and angels, and ask where their sense organs are to be found. Are human beings perhaps able to perceive the sense organs of

angels? Where are these? They not only exist but are perceptible to human beings. Only human beings do not know this. You will be able to understand what the sense organs of angels are if I tell you that a human being possesses as part of himself two eyes for seeing the mineral world, but that he does not perceive his eyes directly as part of himself. Our sense organs are there for perceiving with, but do not perceive themselves. The same applies to the angels and the mineral world. Their sense organs are to be found in the mineral, physical world, but they do not perceive this world itself. Our precious stones are the angels' sense organs! Precious stones are the secret instrument with which angels perceive. So these organs are in the mineral world. Just as human beings have a sense of feeling, a sense of touch, these beings also have a feeling sense, and this comes to expression in chalcedony, and their sense of sight in chrysolite. They do not perceive the mineral world because their sense organs are there. In peoples of ancient times we even find a dim consciousness of this; they attributed different forces to the various precious stones. These forces are there because of the presence of angels in them.

What we call the folk spirit is a very real part of what we designate as archangels. We will now pass on to the principalities, who are a stage higher again. What do they do with regard to the evolution of humanity? If we look at their ability to perceive, we have to say that to them the mineral kingdom, plants and animals are non-existent. The lowest kingdom they perceive is the human kingdom. Their perception covers four kingdoms: the kingdom of humanity, of the angels, of the archangels and their own kingdom. They reach down just as far as human beings.

Let us now look for their deeds. Again we have an expression that people cannot connect with anything real: the spirit of an age, of an era. Every age has its special character. Take for instance our post-Atlantean era. The spirit of the age has gone through change over five epochs. Among the Indian peoples, who had just lost a dim clairvoyant faculty and were stepping forth into the physical world, the spirit of the age expressed itself in a non-recognition of the physical world and

a desire to regard it as *maya*. From then on we see the world being mastered by human beings step by step.

In the Persian age, the second epoch, human beings became aware that the earth was a sphere for active involvement, and that they had to set the imprint of their spirit upon matter. They became the servants of the benevolent spirit Ormuzd in opposition to the wicked Ahriman, to overcome him in the course of time. This was followed by the third period, the Egypto-Chaldean-Babylonian era. The spirit made further strides. The sciences appeared. Human beings comprehended the world not only as a field of work but they investigated its laws. The Egyptians discovered geometry. The Chaldeans sought for the underlying laws in the movements of the stars in outer space. They conceived of the material substance of the world as being governed by laws, by spirit.

In the fourth period, the Greek age, human beings mastered this other world a further step through art. What is so special about Greek art is that human beings imprinted their own 'ego form' on matter. This was again followed by a new epoch. And we can proceed in this way stage by stage, seeing the time spirit changing every time. Just as the face of the earth is changed by the angels, and the human ego is guided by them, and just as the various peoples are guided by the archangels, the successive epochs are determined by the principalities. It is extremely important to bear in mind the beings standing behind the processes.

The single human individuality is one thing, and the way it functions under the influences of the various spirits of the age is something quite different. Think of Giordano Bruno.<sup>3</sup> It was not he himself, alone, who did what came about through him. If he had incarnated three hundred years earlier or later he would have been just as gifted an individual; but, under the guidance of the spirit of his age, he would have had to do something quite different. The time spirits, who are the expression of these principalities who reach down as far as human beings, put people in the appropriate places. You will understand how they work if you regard the single human being as the instrument of, the material for, these principalities. Wherever people appear, whether in an



important or modest position, they have to be judged in this way, for human beings are to these principalities what the minerals are to us. Everyone engaged in spiritual science perpetually asks the question: To what extent is this or that personality the instrument of the time spirits? To be able to observe how human beings are put in their appropriate place in the world is to see deeply into the workings of evolution.

Let us ascend now to the powers, for whom human beings as such no longer exist. We shall be able, in this case, to form an idea in another way of what is involved in the evolution of the forces of nature. The lowest realm to which their perception reaches is the realm of the angels. To these highly exalted beings the angels are what the mineral realm is to us. We have referred on other occasions to the activities of these powers: everything that goes beyond the individual human being and is connected with the concerns of our whole planet are the deeds of these beings. If we trace our earth itself back to the time when it arose and, together with it, the human race as an entity gradually coming into being, we arrive at the principalities.

But if we want to look at the life and evolution of the earth itself, we have to go back to the powers. They are not concerned with individual human beings but with the development of the planet. Powers such as these are in the sun and moon forces in us. We know that humanity as such comes under the influence of these sun and moon forces. If it were only the sun forces that worked on us, the warm, fiery, light-bringing sun forces, a human being would develop very fast, and everything would happen in *one* life. The delaying forces are brought by the moon forces; it is these that thrust human beings into form. If these alone were active, human beings would live only once, have only one incarnation; they would die off, become a mummified form. The earth would be covered with statues. If the sun forces alone were active, human beings would also only pass through one incarnation, but they would experience in this one incarnation everything that they would otherwise experience in innumerable incarnations.

The interaction of both forces brings about the right balance, so that human beings can continue to develop in the way they do. By itself the moon would have a mummifying effect. The moon regulates a single incarnation; the sun regulates the successive incarnations from outside, while the angels work from inside. Thus we see the nature and activity of the powers who, in the Bible, are quite rightly called spirits of light, or *elohim*, who were there before the earth was created. One of these is Jehovah, who thrusts human beings into form. In the activities of the powers we see things that have to do with the life of the whole planet. This gives us the opportunity to look deeply into the foundations of the evolution of our whole cosmos.

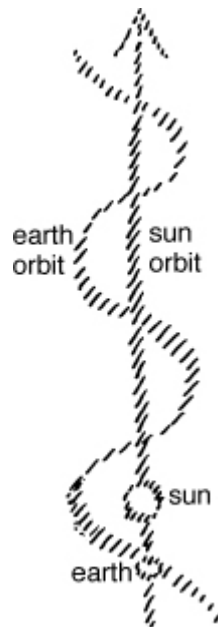
We have also heard that certain beings always remain behind in their evolution. The present powers were principalities on the Moon. But there are principalities from the Moon stage who did not complete their task on the Moon, and who came to Earth as principalities who have not developed fast enough, although they had the chance to become powers. The most outstanding of these principalities who could actually have reached the rank of a power is the being commonly called 'Satan'. He is of the rank of the principalities, and could actually have become a power. Among the spirits who advance the world, this time spirit works against the others; he is, on the Earth, the kind of force that would have been suitable on the old Moon, and he is still intimately connected with those forces. He is the master of all the hindrances and obstructions which work counter to the progressive time spirits. You will understand what it means in the life of Christ Jesus that the first thing he had to do in the moment of his greatest increase was to overcome Satan, the opponent of progress; for Christ wanted to bring human beings, humanity, a great step further, but had first of all to overcome this adversary, the hindering, obstructing force in evolution, who wanted to prevent the advancement of the Earth principalities. Esoteric Christianity calls these unlawful principalities satanic powers. What often comes to be called providence can in actual fact be seen to be specific groups of beings.

Human beings would understand many a thing more readily if they were able to research again the connection between sense phenomena and these spiritual beings. Everything that appears to us in the world is the expression of spiritual beings.

For example you know that the planets, the heavenly bodies, perform certain movements round themselves and other heavenly bodies. Why does this happen? The movement of the earth around its own axis has not always existed. Why did it start occurring? Because in their present stage of development human beings require the alternation between day and night, sleeping and waking. The macrocosm is most intimately connected with the microcosm; life is regulated by the dividing up of time. It was quite different at the ancient Moon stage. Time was divided up quite differently. There was an altogether different alternation between day and night, for the ancient Moon carried out quite different movements. The beings controlling these movements today prepared these movements in their own life, for behind these movements there are spiritual beings; they are the deeds of spiritual beings. One day human beings will recognize the deep wisdom in these movements.

The so-called rotation of the earth round the sun contains profound wisdom, and one day people will realize that something profoundly significant is happening there. Do not be surprised that I say 'so-called'. What is taught in school today about the way the earth revolves round the sun is simply the result of calculation. It is not absolutely true. This explanation will one day assume quite different forms. People could discover, even on a historical basis, that this is not so. There is something really strange about the system of Copernicus.<sup>4</sup> He based his view on three principles, only two of which have been accepted by present-day science, and the third has been swept under the carpet.<sup>5</sup> In reality the sun rushes at great speed through space towards the constellation of Hercules. People are deluded into giving the description they usually do of this movement only because the planets also move. The real path of the earth is a spiral. What we call the gradient of the ecliptic is the gravitational line between the sun and the earth. People forget that in the course of a year the

earth revolves once around the axis of the ecliptic, and this rotation combines with the spiral rotation. Copernicus made a distinction between these two movements, but we no longer do so. We have dropped the movement involving the ecliptic. So it no longer coincides with the facts to say that the earth revolves round the sun. In actual fact it is a spiral movement.



If this spiral form were a straight line the movement would be tremendously fast; the earth would have to travel on its path with colossal speed, and that would be just what human beings could not stand.

If the earth were really to traverse the amount of space which it would do if it moved along a straight line, human beings would at once grow old. But the guiding spirits, in their wisdom, gave the movement a curve. The direct advance was checked by the other kind of movement. You see what profound wisdom there is in the cosmos; this being the expression of the guiding spirits.

The angels and archangels are regulators of our evolution. The forces that work from incarnation to incarnation, that drive human beings forward so that they do not mummify, are the regulators of the future periods of rotation of Jupiter. Spirits of this kind, who are above human beings and regulate human life, are therefore called ‘spirits of periods of rotation’, because their deeds will come to expression at a later time in the periods of revolution of heavenly bodies. In the way in

which the stars move today you can see the results of what higher beings did in their time, and in present-day humanity you can already detect future periods of rotation. If we learn to observe cosmic space in this way then it becomes filled with tremendous spiritual life.

Today we shall go only as far as looking at the characteristics of the powers. We have a mental picture of the way outer aspects are the expression of inner qualities. When people once again fill their being with what is being said here, many a thing will change. We are right now at a tremendous low where education and culture are concerned. Outer progress does not go hand in hand with the progress of our mental and spiritual faculties, which would steer towards an all time low if truths of this kind did not become known in a way that can illumine science. Human beings no longer know where their materialistic science is leading them. A book on psychology appeared recently, and one must not think this book will not be effective just because the author is not well-known as yet.<sup>6</sup> He says that the law of the conservation of energy also applies to the soul, and that inner soul phenomena are only transformed food. He says roughly: We have known for certain for the last ten years that what we call the conservation of energy is identical to the way the nervous system works; for it can be proved that everything a person imbibes through his food in the way of energy is absolutely equal to the work he does. As one can have exact proof that the way things function within the human being is exactly the same as the way things function everywhere else in the world, this rules out any soul element. It is simply a matter of the transformation of food into energy that is then returned to the outer world.

This is not a very bright argument! You could just as well say: Two people are standing outside a bank counting the money that is being taken in and out; it adds up to the same amount: therefore there cannot be any bank clerks. But surely it is necessary to have officials to look after it all? This kind of psychology, and the bulk of what counts as science today, is on this level. You only have to look at it, and anyone can see what will happen to the mental level of our culture, if we are so

short-sighted. It is essential to have spiritual knowledge, for it is the only thing that can supply a real impulse for the evolution of humanity. If human beings cannot get behind the phenomena, there is no understanding of the world. We have to reach the big, all-embracing laws and arrive at the way beings and worlds relate.

# Notes

## Introduction

- 1 See Lecture Two, Note 2.
- 2 *The Spiritual Hierarchies* (GA110) Anthroposophic Press 1996; *Spiritual Beings in the Heavenly Bodies and Kingdoms of Nature* (GA 136) Anthroposophic Press 1992; *The Influence of Spiritual Beings* (GA 102) Anthroposophic Press 1961.

I would like to thank Robert Johnstone for his suggestions concerning the presentation of these lectures.

## Lecture One

- 1 George Stephenson (1781-1848), British engineer, built the first usable steam engine in 1814 and the first railway in 1825.
- 2 Karl Ludwig Schleich (1859-1922), German surgeon and writer.
- 3 Oliver Lodge (1851-1940), English physicist and psychic researcher who seriously endeavoured to reconcile science and religion.

## Lecture Two

- 1 R. Steiner *The Inner Nature of Man and our Life Between Death and a New Birth* (GA 153), Rudolf Steiner Press, Bristol 1994.
- 2 Although not all are mentioned in this book, for the sake of completeness, all the hierarchical beings are listed here showing their names from various traditions (chiefly spiritual science, Christian and Hebrew custom):

### FIRST HIERARCHY

Seraphim, Spirits of Love

Cherubim, Spirits of Harmony, of Cosmic Harmonies

Thrones, Spirits of Will

## SECOND HIERARCHY

Kyriotetes, Spirits of Wisdom, Dominions

Dynamis, Spirits of Motion/Movement, Virtues, Might

Exusiai, Spirits of Form, Powers, Revelations (Hebrew Elohim)

## THIRD HIERARCHY

Archai, Spirits of Personality, Primal Beginnings, Principalities, Time Spirits

Archangeloi, Spirits of Fire, Archangels, Folk Spirits

Angeloi, Sons of Life, Sons of Twilight, Angels

A single being from the ranks of the archai can be a 'time spirit', an archangel can be a 'folk-soul' or 'folk-spirit', and an angel a 'guardian angel'.

- 3 R. Steiner *An Outline of Esoteric Science* (formerly *Occult Science*) (GA 14), Anthroposophic Press, Hudson 1997.
- 4 Further development of the soul forces of thinking, feeling and will leads to the faculties of Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition. In anthroposophical texts, capital initials are used to distinguish these faculties from ordinary imagination, inspiration and intuition. See R. Steiner *The Stages of Higher Knowledge* (GA 12), Anthroposophic Press, New York 1967.
- 5 Within their rightful spheres of influence Lucifer and Ahriman are forces necessary for the development of humanity but they become evil when misplaced. Lucifer seeks to tempt people away from earthly reality, whilst Ahriman wants humanity to become trapped within the earthly realm. See R. Steiner *The Influences of Lucifer and Ahriman* (GA 191), Anthroposophic Press, Hudson 1993.



- 6 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), poet, dramatist, philosopher.
- 7 For a description of the seven successive ‘embodiments’ of the earth (Old Saturn, Old Sun, Old Moon, Earth, Jupiter, Venus, Vulcan) see R. Steiner *An Outline of Esoteric Science*, op. cit.

### **Lecture Three**

- 1 See Chapter ‘The Essential Nature of the Human Being’ in R. Steiner *Theosophy* (GA 9), Anthroposophic Press, Hudson 1994 for descriptions of the human body, soul and spirit.
- 2 Plato (427-347BC), Greek philosopher.
- 3 Aristotle (384-322BC), Greek philosopher.
- 4 Raphael (1483-1520), Italian painter.
- 5 Dante Alighieri (1265-1321), the greatest Italian poet.
- 6 Brunetto Latini (c. 1220-1294), Italian statesman, scholar and poet. Lecture of 29 December 1918 in *How Can Mankind Find the Christ Again?* (GA 187), Anthroposophic Press, Spring Valley 1984.
- 7 Alexander VI Borgia, pope 1489-1503. Leo X Medici, pope 1513-1521.
- 8 R. Steiner *Four Mystery Dramas* (GA 14), Rudolf Steiner Press, London 1982.
- 9 Pater Angelo Secchi (1818-1878), astronomer and Jesuit.

### **Lecture Four**

- 1 Spiritual science sees the present Earth evolution as having seven epochs: Polaris, Hyperborea, Lemuria, Atlantis, Post-Atlantean epoch (present), and a sixth and seventh epoch in the future.
- 2 R. Steiner *Towards Social Renewal* (GA 23), Rudolf Steiner Press, London 1997.

### **Lecture Five**

- 1 R. Steiner here used the term ‘catholic’ church in the sense derived from a Greek word meaning ‘universal’.
- 2 The remainder of the lecture does not specifically address the subject of this book, and is therefore included here:

But in many other respects, too, ahrimanic forces are trying to detach human beings from their relation to the realm of the angeloi, archangeloi, archai, exusiai and so on, and to connect them and their whole culture to the world of Ahriman. Just think how often you hear people saying nowadays—and I have been speaking about this for years—that when someone has yet again told a lie, a real whopper, they say: But he believes what he says, he said it to the best of his knowledge and belief. This makes just as little difference to the objective facts as it does if, acting to the best of your knowledge and belief, you stick your finger in a flame; no providence will prevent you from burning your finger, even if you do it to the best of your knowledge and belief. To appeal to good intentions helps just as little when it comes to matters of universal significance—and it would be tragic if it were otherwise. Human beings are not at liberty to tell lies out of ignorance.

On the contrary, it is their responsibility to see to it that what they say is true. They must have the kind of relation to the world where they think thoughts that have their source in the world, and not thoughts that arise in isolation from it. The only thing we know for certain regarding untrue things said to the best of a person’s knowledge and belief is that they are said in a state of isolation from the world. For if someone [Frohn Meyer] writes that there is a sculpture in the Goetheanum whose upper half has luciferic characteristics and lower half ahrimanic characteristics, and other people maintain—which is happening all the time—that he wrote it to the best of his knowledge and belief, this means that with an attitude of this kind Ahriman is being upheld as the ruler of the world. For anyone who asserts this sort of thing is

responsible for being absolutely sure whether what he says is correct or not! For it is an ahrimanic influence, even if it has nowadays infiltrated right into legal practice, if one does not keep a strict eye when a lie is being maintained, and says it was spoken to the best of the person's knowledge and belief. It is precisely this kind of good faith which is, in the worst sense, an ahrimanic temptation and seduction. Fundamentally speaking there is no expression that is more of a temptation and seduction than this one of good faith. For it is the comfortable refuge disguising the very extreme of laziness when people make an assertion and feel no obligation to make certain whether what they say is true and corresponds to the facts, or not.

Anyone who seriously and in actual practice wants to take up the fight against Ahriman getting the upper hand has, above all, to tackle this business of things being said in good faith, for it is this appeal to good faith that cuts a person off from an objective connection with the world. Things we feel justified in speaking about must at all costs conform to objective reality and not be said merely because it suits us to say them. For if something does not stand this test it has left the sphere of the angels and fallen into the clutches of Ahriman. Any lie told in good faith drives a person more powerfully than anything else into the sphere of Ahriman. Appealing to good faith in defence of lies is going the best way about delivering world civilization over to Ahriman.

If you are going to look into the actual constitution of the world it is obvious that you have to understand things like this. You must not just fantasize in general, as a mere nebulous mystic, about angels, archangels and archai, and not reach beyond theories; you must take hold of the world in its reality. For it is an actual fact that human beings lose the support of the angelic world when, out of laziness, they lean back on good faith with regard to things they assert, without putting them to the test.

These things show the real and actual life we can connect with out of our resolve to fill ourselves with

spiritual scientific truths and knowledge. These spiritual scientific truths and knowledge must send their force right into the individual details of life.

It is precisely this sort of thing that makes so many people so exasperated with spiritual science: the fact that spiritual science is not just another theory like other world conceptions but is something living that demands, first and foremost, that people shall overcome the kind of laziness—laziness in a twofold sense—that permits them to stand for an untruth and justify it on the grounds of good faith. People do not take to doing this, and the excuse is made on all sides: One person or another has affirmed something in good faith. This sort of thing has thoroughly undermined our science, and particularly the science of history. For it is easy to see why the sort of people who come out with mere assertions of the calibre I am speaking about, do not deserve to be believed in other directions, for instance, in the realm of external science; on such occasions you must first investigate whether they have copied it down from someone still belonging to the better generation, when people still felt responsible for what they said. When you see people in official positions imitating men like Frohnmeyer, you will realize how much confidence it is possible to have in official science and its representatives. The important thing is to be awake to these things. One would like, dearly like, to see spiritual science enjoying the kind of adherents who are absolutely convinced of the fact that it is essential today to stick one's neck out for perceptions that will really change the world. For we are not dealing with trifles today.

This is why one longs for anthroposophy to have the kind of adherents who are burning with enthusiasm to bring anthroposophy to realization. As I mentioned over in the *Goetheanum*, the publication of yet another sensational gutter press production is being announced from those quarters where the lies come thick and fast. These people are very active. And why? Because, with their depraved emotions they can be intensely

enthusiastic. They can lie with intense enthusiasm. We must accustom ourselves to stand for the truth with just as intense an enthusiasm, otherwise, my dear friends, civilization will make no progress.

Anyone who looks about him in the world today must come to the realization that in all seriousness we have to find the way back to the hierarchies out of the clutches of Ahriman. But this implies tackling things in detail. It is constantly happening that each time an unscrupulous opponent spreads some fabrication, even our own adherents come along and say that the first thing we should do is look into whether the person concerned was not perhaps acting out of a particular weakness. In the Anthroposophical Society, sad to say, people are always far readier to censure the source of truth than they are to censure the sort of opponents who have a natural instinct to trample truth into the mud. As long as it remains the normal practice in the Anthroposophical Society to sympathize with lies we shall make no progress.

It must be reiterated every so often that we *must* recognize a lie for what it is; for Ahriman can steal his way into lies, and it is usually in the wake of a lie that a person will justify himself to the best of his knowledge and belief. I have given you enough examples showing this appeal to good faith and to the best of one's knowledge and belief. But you must judge the facts for yourselves, and discover the ahrimanic effect of this so-called good faith making its relentless way even into our legal system, so that we have to admit that even in this sphere we are in the grip of Ahriman. We have to take a serious view of things such as this. If the Anthroposophical Society is to be what it intends being, it will have to become filled with a passionate feeling for truth, for today, this is the same as having a passionate desire for the progress of humanity. Everything else is driven by the kind of will that drives human beings further and further into the forces of destruction.

What I have been saying today was not said with the intention of keeping on repeating myself, but because the

signs of the times are urgently announcing that individual human beings should know such things.

### **Lecture Six**

- 1 From notes taken by members of the audience.
- 2 See Lecture Three, Note 1.
- 3 Giordano Bruno (1548-1600), Italian philosopher.
- 4 Nicolaus Copernicus (1473-1543), Polish astronomer, founder of the heliocentric view of the universe.
- 5 See more detailed descriptions by R. Steiner in *Man, Hieroglyph of the Universe* (GA 201), Rudolf Steiner Press, London 1972 and *The Relationship of the Diverse Branches of Natural Science to Astronomy* (3rd Science Course) (GA 323) Rudolf Steiner Research Foundation, California 1989.
- 6 Hermann Ebbinghaus (1850-1909) *Abriss der Psychologie*, Leipzig 1908, p. 37.

## Note Regarding Rudolf Steiner's Lectures

The lectures and addresses contained in this volume have been translated from the German, which is based on stenographic and other recorded texts that were in most cases never seen or revised by the lecturer. Hence, due to human errors in hearing and transcription, they may contain mistakes and faulty passages. Every effort has been made to ensure that this is not the case. Some of the lectures were given to audiences more familiar with anthroposophy; these are the so-called 'private' or 'members' lectures. Other lectures, like the written works, were intended for the general public. The difference between these, as Rudolf Steiner indicates in his *Autobiography*, is twofold. On the one hand, the lectures given to members of the Anthroposophical Society take for granted a background in and commitment to anthroposophy; in the public lectures this was not the case. At the same time, the members' lectures address the concerns and dilemmas of the members, while the public work speaks directly out of Steiner's own understanding of universal needs. Nevertheless, as Rudolf Steiner stresses: 'Nothing was ever said that was not solely the result of my direct experience of the growing content of anthroposophy. There was never any question of concessions to the prejudices and preferences of the members. Whoever reads these privately printed lectures can take them to represent anthroposophy in the fullest sense. Thus it was possible without hesitation—when the complaints in this direction became too persistent—to depart from the custom of circulating this material "For members only". But it must be borne in mind that faulty passages do occur in these reports not revised by myself.' Earlier in the same chapter, he states: 'Had I been able to correct them [the private lectures], the restriction *for members only* would have been unnecessary from the beginning.'